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Cover Picture

J Michael Brown's picture for the 1906 Life Association Calendar envisioned the surviving Open Champions gathered between the first tee and eighteenth green at St Andrews, before the 1905 Open Championship. They include, (L to R), JH Taylor (1894, 1893, and 1900), J White (1904), Mr HH Hilton (1892, 1897), Mr J Ball (1890), J Braid (1901, 1903), T Morris (1861, 1864, 1867), R Ferguson (1880, 1881, 1882), W Auchterlonie (1893), J Anderson (1877, 1878, 1879), D Brown (1886), R Martin (1876, 1885), W Fernie (1883), J Burns (1888), W Park (1887, 1889), H Vardon (1896, 1898, 1899, 1903) and A Herd (1902).

THE BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY

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Captain's Letter



I HOPE THE fine autumn weather may have given you the opportunity to play some more golf or perhaps you have also been travelling about the country looking for rare golf collectible bargains. On a personal note it has been a very busy period with

a lot of very interesting golf. I had the pleasure of attending the centenary celebrations at the North Worcestershire Golf Club. The members entered into the spirit of early 1900s golf and a great day was had by all. The course to me was a hidden gem.

I also enjoyed representing the Society at the Second Annual Meeting of the European Association of Golf Historians and Collectors in Hamburg. This Association is still in its infancy; however it is in the hands of a very capable board and I am quite sure it will continue to grow successfully. They are keen to attract many more BGCS members and a membership application form is being included with this magazine. The meeting was a mixture of some very interesting presentations on golfing themes, social gatherings and golf. We played at one of Germany's best courses, the Hamburger Golf Club at Falkenstein; and also at Wentorf-Reinbecker GC. The meeting in 2008 is to be held at Bad Ischl in Austria with the possibility of a hickory golf championship. This sounds a great idea.

It was interesting during my visit to Hamburg that on enquiring from a BGCS member who lives in Hamburg if there was an antique fair on a Sunday morning, similar to the one in Berlin, to be told there wasn't one. However on arrival in the city centre the next morning the first thing I saw was an antique and collectables market. I did not really expect to

pick up any golfing item but to my surprise I did find a silver plated condiment set in the shape of square-cut gutty balls, with nice golf club handles. There was a little damage which was repairable and I purchased it at a most reasonable price. There was also a bag of clubs with three Jack White clubs with Hardy's palakona shafts but the price of these was very high..The reason I am relating this to you is to compare the collecting methods of some people today with those in the not so distant past. On relating my story to my German host he said that he was surprised I found anything. He said he would not waste time hunting for items in markets but would prefer to use E-bay or internet catalogues. For those of us who have collected for some time I am sure the times you remember most are when out of the blue you found a real bargain. Sometimes the thrill of the hunt and finding something was the most exciting part. This is a feeling that cannot be reproduced when buying at auctions. I for one will continue to scour the country in the hope of finding that elusive bargain.

The English Hickory Championship was held as usual at Rye, the first time I have had the pleasure of playing in this corner of England. This event is played on a great historic links, which now have a most interesting additional nine holes. The weather was ideal for golf and the event was much enjoyed.

I could not write to you at this time without mentioning the Hickory Grail trip to the United States. It was great this year to have a few new 'grailers', but a pity we were still not strong enough to ward off a heavy defeat by a very good US team. Well done to our American friends for a great match played in a most friendly spirit. As hosts they were most hospitable and friendly giving the members of the European team a trip to remember.

Mavis and I would like to wish all our BGCS friends in various parts of the world a very happy Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year. Good collecting and good golfing.

John Hanna

Society News



People and Things

Networks

Tony Thorpe made an interesting contact at the time of the match against Walsall in the Spring of this year when he met Mrs Ann Smith, (née Willard Stant) a former GB & I Curtis Cup Captain. Mrs Smith told him that her grandfather, Henry Burrows, an early professional in the Netherlands was five-times winner of the Dutch Open in 1915, 1918, 1920, 1921 and 1923 and that she still had a trophy presented to him.

Tony passed on the information to **Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak**, BGCS member, and first President of the European

Association of Golf Historians and Collectors (EAGHC). Emails whizzed swiftly round European cyberspace and within hours, JBK had produced contemporary pictures of Dutch professionals, including Burrows, from **Pius Muskings**. **Robin Bargmann**, historian of the Kennemer G&CC at Zandvoort, contributed detail of Burrows's wins, the 1920 one of which had been at Santpoort, an earlier course of Kennemer G&CC. He believed that the trophy was the original one put up by the professionals themselves, before the Netherlands Golf Federation was founded in 1914.

The power of heritage networks.

The Seagle Electronic Golf Library (SEGL)

The SEGL facility at the USGA continues to provide digitised records of rare books and periodicals for access by the golf heritage community. Named after the late Janet Seagle, the first Curator of the USGA Museum, SEGL contains full-text PDF files of books and magazines. Magazines include *Golf*, *Golf Illustrated*, *The Golfer* and *The American Golfer*. Importantly for researchers into a particular subject, the contents

are indexed and searchable, – a facility lacking on the original bound copies. Some 70 books are currently searchable, and existing priorities are to scan in all USGA rule books from 1896 to the present-day. These are due to be available by the year-end. My limited experience is that the initial download of a whole magazine takes a number of minutes, but that individual pages can then be 'turned' very quickly. The only drawback even at this early stage of the facility, is the breadth of its range; beware of browsing excesses.

Given its 30,000 or so books and runs of 300 magazines, the Library will have its work cut out over many years to come. Though the major gain will be accessibility of information to world-wide researchers, an important side benefit will be reduction of physical wear and tear on original copies.

We commend the USGA on this great initiative and urge readers to check it out on

<http://www.usga.org/aboutus/museum/museum.html>

The Museum receives copies of this magazine on a regular basis. Who knows – members may one day be able to access digitised copies of *Through the Green*.



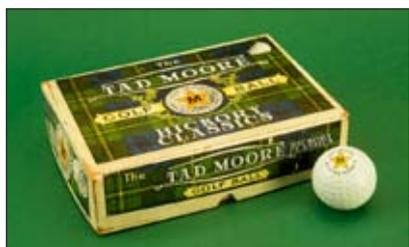
Pius Muskings' cutting from around 1914 showing Henry Burrows

Sam Martz Collection donated to The University of British Columbia Library

In these days of multi-million dollar auctions of great collections, it is heartening to see old traditions of donations to academic and public libraries being maintained, this time from the golf memorabilia collecting community. **Sam Martz**, an 81-year-old resident of Vancouver, started golf in Montreal at the age of around 10, and amassed a collection of nearly 5000 golf books over the last fifty years. Mr Martz still plays regularly and says he made the donation to the University of British Columbia Library so that the books can be maintained and protected for future generations.

Modern Mesh Balls

Tad Moore has launched a square mesh, two-piece ball suitable for play with hickory clubs. It aims to be a soft ball with good feel, has been through standard USGA testing procedures and was used by players in recent hickory tournaments in the US. The ball is due to be on sale in the UK. Members can get more information on the balls on www.Tommorrisclubs.com.



The new mesh ball is available in an attractive box of one dozen

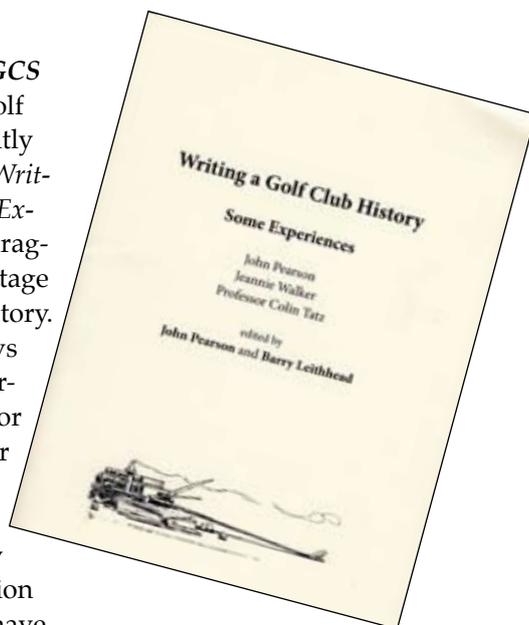
John Hanna and David Hamilton, flanking Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak and Christoph Meister of EAGHC, and Marion Thannhauser, of DGV

New Publication from the BGCS
The British and Australian Golf Collectors' Societies have jointly published a booklet entitled *Writing a Golf Club History - Some Experiences*, as a means of encouraging clubs to celebrate the heritage of golf, through their own history.

The booklet contains essays on the experiences of John Pearson, (in the UK), and Professor Colin Tatz and Jeannie Walker (in Australia) in writing club histories. Other contributions include a checklist of tasks by Barry Leithhead, and a selection of Club history reviews that have appeared in *TTG*

Copies are being distributed free to clubs with forthcoming centenary celebrations, and to any other clubs, societies or other organisations who may wish a copy. Copies are also available, free, from the Hon Secretary, Tony Thorpe, to any member of the Society who wants a copy. Tony would also be delighted to hear from members, of requirements from any clubs.

The booklet is in A5 size, with card covers, and contains 44 pages. It is assessed by Immediate Past-Captain Alan Jackson, in the *Book Review* section of this magazine



The new publication by BGCS and GCSA, available free of charge to BGCS members

Events

Second Annual Meeting of the European Association of Golf Historians and Collectors

The second annual meeting of the European Association of Golf Collectors took place on the first two days of October in Hamburg. It was organised by the International Vice-president Christoph Meister and chaired



by Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak, its President. The choice of Hamburg as the venue was to coincide with the celebration of the centenary of the founding of the German Golf Union (DGV). It is the second oldest Union on mainland Europe, after Switzerland.

For those that wished to play golf the meeting began at the famous 1930 Colt-designed Hamburger Golf Club which had been founded in 1906. It is situated at Hamburg-Falkenstein and had been host to several German Open Championships and the 2006 European Ladies Amateur Championship. This course was a delight to play and the clubhouse was very comfortable. Later in the day some 30 members gathered at the clubhouse of the Norddeutscher Regatta Verein, which is the second oldest sailing club in Germany. This is more or less the exact spot where the foundation meeting of the DGV had taken place in 1907.

This was a truly European meeting with members present from nine countries- Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Scotland and Sweden. Early discussions were followed by a most convivial dinner with presentations by the President and Vice-President. It is interesting to see an increasing interest in the playing with hickory clubs. The following morning a number of golfers played at the Wentorf-Reinbeker Golf Club which had been founded in 1901. A small number of players suitably attired played with hickory clubs, and a few German players turned up dressed as if to play but treasured their clubs too much to risk playing with them. This Morrison-designed course

was a delight to play in the Autumn colours. After a quick lunch it was down to a most interesting afternoon of various historical presentations which included *Saint Anthony, a patron of Croisseurs* by Sara and Geert Nijs; *Golf in Austria* by Christian Arnoldner; *1907 – a fabulous year for Arnaud Massy* by Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak; and *1937 – How the European Golf Union was founded*, viewed from the centenary chronicles of the DGV by Christoph Meister.

The meeting was privileged to have in attendance Marion Thannhauser, incoming President of the European Golf Union and Vice-President of the German Golf Union. She will be the first lady to be President of the EGA. She spoke in support of the EAGHC and how it can protect and promote the heritage of the game. The meeting concluded with formal business of the Association and the election of Christoph Meister as the new President. It was proposed that the Third Annual Meeting would take place in Austria at the resort of Bad Ischl, when it was hoped that a Hickory Championship would coincide with the meeting. Details have yet to be finalised. This Association is still very much in its infancy but it is being guided by very keen office-bearers and should have a great future. It appreciates very much the enthusiastic support from the BGCS and would also welcome new BGCS members. A second edition of the magazine *Golfika* has been printed and would make interesting reading for all members (it is written in English). The process of joining the Association is simple and easily affordable. Further details are available on www.golfika.com and include an application form.

Literati of the Links – The 2007 Autumn Meeting

David Hamilton initiated his 'Literati of the Links' soon after retiring to St Andrews a couple or so years ago, as an informal dining group for anyone interested in the literature of golf. Membership is fluid, depending on availability; until now, the format has consisted of conversation on golf history stimulated by good company, food and wine.

Carefully scheduling the September dinner to follow the R&A Autumn Meeting, he added another dimension in the preceding afternoon – what amounted to a seminar on golf history from illustrious presenters prepared to share with us, their researches from original sources. We would aspire to cover some of the subjects in future issues of this magazine.

Colonel **Bill Gibson**, retired from active service in the armies of the Republic of Ireland and the United Nations, told us of his work matching membership lists for some of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century golf societies, with Army Lists, as the regiments were posted round North America, India, the Continent of Europe and the (still) United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The coincidence of familiar golfing names in these locations with reports of early golf provided at least circumstantial evidence of important linkage.

Edward Playfair, a still-youthful graduate from the local university is a member of the famous St Andrews family that served in India in the early years of the nineteenth century. Collaboration with Bill Gibson in using the Army

Lists, together with access to family correspondence has given background detail on the formation of the clubs at Dum Dum, Calcutta, and Bombay. It also confirms the presence of over 300 active golfing officers in the period, and indications of widespread organised golf on the sub-continent at that time.

Wray Vamplew is Professor of Sports History at the University of Stirling, Editor of the *Journal of Sports Science*, and prolific author, including, (with Peter Lewis), the centenary history of the Professional Golfers' Association, Professor Vamplew's presentation on the child caddie problem in Victorian Britain estimated the number of children involved regularly as caddies at around 20,000. Though earnings could be attractive in relation to the average working wage, the job was seen as undesirable due to the casual nature of employment and lack of long-term prospects. Various unsuccessful attempts were made to safeguard caddie welfare, but the more important influences against continued employment were probably enforced school attendance and the introduction of national

insurance payments for over-sixteens.

David Normoyle, formerly of the USGA Museum and Library, shared with us his PhD studies at Cambridge (UK) on the contribution to golfing literature, by Bernard Darwin. David reminded us of Darwin's prolific contribution in terms of books and published articles and identified the factors giving rise to his influence. These included Darwin's privileged social background, intelligence, and skills in writing, leadership, administration and at golf itself.

Dr David Malcolm, retired academic, and honorary member of the New Golf Club of St Andrews, has long wondered about the presence of 'Golf Halls' on early eighteenth century maps of Edinburgh and St Andrews. Researches into account books and civic records show that the Golf Halls fulfilled a legal/commercial rather than a social role, following Charles II's Royal Burgh Acts of 1679.

Finally, **David Hamilton** told the fascinating story of the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* – a source he has been using in his researches into emigrant

Scottish professionals in the early twentieth century. Though now absorbed into the DC Thomson publishing empire the *Telegraph* at that time served its readership with a political stance that was distinctly liberal, in an industrial east coast area. Its golf coverage was national, with a reforming agenda, particularly in encouraging local (artisan) golfing talent to enter national competitions. As part of this campaign, it sponsored the *Evening Telegraph Trophy*, a competition designed to appeal to local artisan golfers through its free entry and coincidence with the trade holiday week.

Each presentation was followed by stimulating questions, answers and assertions that were enjoyed by the dozen or so attendees. We then repaired to the St Andrews Golf Club for a venison dinner, fine wine and more talk, preceded by a toast to St Anthony the Great, patron of early European club and ball games. Some of us ended up with a tour of the St Andrews portion of Tim Smartt's incomparable art collection.

All in all, an enjoyable and thought-provoking day.



David Normoyle makes a point



Ros Weston and Liz MacDonald at Royal Worlington, against formidable opposition of Jane Orde-Powlett and former Curtis Cup Captain, Liz Boatman

Centenary celebrations at New Mills and Blackley GCs

A hickory team represented the Society at double-header centenary celebrations at **New Mills** and **Blackley Golf Clubs**, Greater Manchester, in early September. On Saturday the 8th, the event celebrated the opening of the new clubhouse in a match against New Mills; each set of nine holes was played against different opponents from the Club, with everyone using hickory clubs. The Society team led by **Richard Atherton**, won narrowly.

On Sunday at Blackley we played a hickory am-am competition, with teams led by BGCS; **Bill Druce's** team were the winners.

East Anglia Tour

The September matches in East Anglia took place in perfect sunny weather, with both **Hunstanton** and **Royal Worlington** running fast. We played foursomes at each venue. The eight Society members at Hunstanton had some experienced players, but failed to click and were well-beaten. The team was bolstered by **Philip Truett**, **Liz MacDonald** and **Ros Weston** on the Friday against Royal Worlington, when we encountered an old friend in the opposition: **David Normoyle**, newly returned to his Bernard Darwin studies at Cambridge. The match was halved.

Report by **Nigel Notley**

North Scotland Regional meeting at Alyth. 11th September.

On a perfect day for golf some eleven members of the Society made their way from *a' the airts* to Alyth to enjoy a course which was in excellent condition. However, most found the course

and the breeze on the day a bit too tough although there were four members all on 29 points with **Warren Latham** winning third prize on a better inward half. Runner up was **Ian Nalder** with 31 points, the same score as the winner on the day, **Ron Beatt**, with a better inward half. Nearest the pin prizes were won by **Bob Strachan** and **Ian Nalder** and prizes were donated by Bob, David Hamilton and Ron.

At the end of a great day Warren and Christine left with the best wishes of us all, for their wedding later that week in St Andrews.

Report by **Hamish Ewan**

Centenary hickory match v North Worcestershire GC. Sept 19th

Situated between Longbridge and Northfield, south west of Birmingham, this Braid-designed course was laid out on land donated by the Cadbury family from neighbouring Bournville. Not to be confused with The Worcestershire GC at Malvern, North Worcestershire (now in the unloved named West Midlands county) has taken great care over the years to preserve the integrity of the original layout. A hilly and interesting course is the result. Despite best negotiations over handicapping, the Society lost heavily by 1½ / 5½ but as ever on these occasions the outcome was not of great moment.

The presence of the **Captain of the Society** and Mavis, who had both flown in from Belfast that morning, was much appreciated. **John Moreton** (who else) gave his customary illuminating talk on James Braid and a cheque for £200 was presented to the Club's Junior Section. The Society was treated most generously throughout our visit. A centenary history

will be finished at the end of this year as the Club would like to include details of the many centenary events held including this occasion. We are assured of a copy for review purposes.

Report by **Peter Heath**

Match v Beau Desert GC. 30th September

Some fourteen BGCS members turned out for a hickory match against Beau Desert GC at the end of September. The coal industry was intimately involved in the foundation of this Staffordshire club, for the Cannock Chase mines provided much of the wealth of the Marquess of Anglesey, who hired Herbert Fowler to lay out the Beau Desert course in 1912. Fowler's complex, plateaued greens, constructed before the days of power-driven earth-moving equipment, required rich sponsorship not available to many other contemporary projects. Darwin commended the course in his *Golf Courses of Great Britain* (1925), although other commentators deprecated the proximity of the surrounding spoil heaps. The coal workings are gone now – and to all intents and purposes the course is surrounded by natural oak / birchwood. The result is stunning: a natural heathland course, with good strategic holes and testing, contoured greens.

The Society was certainly tested on September the 30th, going down by six matches to two, with an overall deficit of aggregate holes well into the teens.

Beau Desert Captain **Alan Pugh** is an old friend of the Society from Machynlleth. On behalf of the Club he welcomed us generously; both sides enjoyed the splendid day.



*English Hickory Champion 2007:
Clive Mitchell*

English Hickory Championship at Rye. 12th October.

The **match against Rye** members played on Thursday the 11th of October, was played over the Jubilee Links in benign conditions. This Donald Steel-designed layout continues to mature, with a number of attractive holes of excellent strategic design. Last year's result was reversed to 3 – 1 in favour of the Society. After a relaxing drink on the Rye Terrace, **Tim Smartt** treated us to a tour of the art collection in his new house.

The warm hazy sunshine returned the following day for the English Hickory Championship – a welcome change from the full gale force conditions of 2006.

The presence of **John Crow Miller**, from Dallas, and **Rick van den Boom** from Alkmaar lent an international flavour to the day. Though not soft, the championship course was green and holding, perhaps explaining why so many members found scoring difficult. **Andrew Reynolds**, the Royal Cinque Ports professional, retained the Tony Hawkins Trophy for his scratch score of 78, while **Clive**

Mitchell repeated his triumph of 2004 to win the Founders Salver, and regain the English Hickory Championship, with a score of 31 points. For the second successive year, **John Crow Miller** took runner-up position, this time after a count back. **Liz Macdonald** won the ladies' prize from a good representative field.

The party returned to the George Hotel in Rye for a fine meal of local produce, in the distinctly grand surroundings of the refurbished ballroom. The quality of this Meeting continues to grow; the Society thanks **Tim Smartt** for the excellence of his arrangements.

Golf in Surrey

BGCS v Clapham Common GC 17th of October

Clapham Common GC used to have a course on the Common, from 1873 until the start of WWII, when its facilities were taken over for the war effort. The course might not have survived but the Club has, now with its home base at Mitcham Common.

History exists for those who can see it and learn. At another level, history exists because someone does the research, finding the facts lying hidden in libraries and archives, wearing out shoe leather in the process, then takes the time and makes the effort to write the book, as **John Hawkins** did of CCGC, and which BGCS helped publish, for others to read and learn. John revealed history so it can be respected, preserved and celebrated. And celebrate we did. The contrast of old and new play clubs displays how far the game and CCGC has come – the living testament to transition across 134 years. The Mitcham course, while bragging no famous

maker, provides an enjoyable field of play as it has done for countless thousands from nearby London in the old days, including politicians and professional men, arriving by train, to those from surrounding districts, some who now arrive relaxed and ready for this event, by modern tram. The Mitcham club room is abuzz with conversation among those who are renewing an annual pilgrimage, there are some first timers, all glad to have made it on to the respective teams.

The matches were keenly contested, with Sunningdale's help, and only one of the eight matches finished before the Seventeenth. That in itself made the effort worthwhile and reinforced the game as the winner, even though the overall result was a comprehensive defeat for the Society

Golf at Walton Heath GC v the PGA Thursday 18th October

On the following day, on another course, against another opponent (who played with hickories) the game was again victorious, but a different aspect of it. BGCS v the PGA at Walton Heath has a certain ring to it. Consider other notable challenges there: Braid v Vardon and Taylor in 1904; Leitch vs Hilton in 1910; and the USA vs. Europe in the Ryder Cup of 1981. The verdict on the day from one side, in the glow of after dinner speeches, was that we are attracted to the game of golf because competent club professionals make it more enjoyable. From the other side the verdict was that club members were the backbone of the game and provided the opportunity for professionals to assist. As in any good argument, both sides have merit and in this case both are right.

Professionals play golf seriously and this day saw some of that, but overwhelmingly the occasion was about the interaction of club members and club professionals. The PGA takes golf heritage seriously, as **David Wright**'s presence attested – David is PGA's Heritage Secretary and he made a valuable contribution to all levels of the day's proceedings. Walton Heath takes the day seriously as attested by the Club Captain, **Dr Alister Wells** being present and **Ken Macpherson**, Head Professional was in excellent form as Master of Ceremonies. And of course BGCS takes the day seriously, and was well rewarded with a 5½ to 3½ result in the matches.

The Heath is challenging and I mean the vegetation as well as the course, but that is what golf is about – responding to challenges, as best you can. Others have described well the stamp Braid put on this place; the course, the club, the members, the continuing legacy of how a club professional operates. It's nice to know his spirit walks the course with you, part of the challenge he created, part of the reward for responding to it. Maybe his spirit has been transformed in Ken Macpherson, only their third professional in 104 years, and he has a long way to go yet; as MC he is competent, eloquent, alert to everyone in the room, respectful of the experience the old players and professionals who, just by being there, add to the meeting's lustre.

John Sterling is one of golf's best after-dinner speakers and he was in fine form, along with fellow Hon Life Member of the PGA, **Geoff Cotton**. And to top it off, Ken invited questions of the distinguished guests starting with the first: 'Who do you regard as the best striker

of the golf ball that you have seen?' The answers, particularly Ben Hogan's demonstrated comparison of a 4 iron with draw and a 3 iron with fade, finishing next to each other were gems in an eclectic collection of oral history.

Report by **Barry Leithhead**

World Hickory Open and Pro-Am

Played in cold, blustery weather, on the 28th of September, the winning score of 72 in the third World Hickory Open at Craigiellaw GC, East Lothian was five strokes higher than the previous year. A familiar surname was engraved on the trophy. This time it was the turn of former Walker Cup star, and member of the host club, **Lloyd Saltman** to follow his younger brother, Zach, who won last year. The World Hickory Open, with its first prize of £1750, has thus become the first title to be annexed by Lloyd, barely three weeks into his professional career. In second place was Fraser Mann, former Scottish PGA Champion, who plays on the Tartan Tour out of nearby Musselburgh GC.

The tricky Donald Steel-designed layout was set at 6000 yards, and players were limited to six pre-1935 hickory clubs and a limited list of PGA-approved balls. An international field of 46 pros and twelve amateurs contested the championship, the winner of the net prize being BGCS's own Scott Patrick, with a score of 75. Winner of the preceding pro-am event the previous day, was the Leith Links team of four, led by Braid Hills professional Ian McCutcheon, with a score of 63.

Organiser Lionel Freedman has once again organised good sponsorship for this tournament. Next year, the pro-am and main



THAT's the way to do it.

Lloyd Saltman drives off in the World Hickory Open at Craigiellaw.

tournament have been scheduled for the 22nd-24th of September, with informal events on neighbouring courses, permitting promotion of the whole week as a festival of hickory golf..

Freebies

The Editor has a number of unwanted items surplus to his requirements, which he is happy to despatch, free of any charge, to any member who may be interested. They include: the history of Addington Palace GC (2005); BGCS Open Championship Meeting menus at Panmure (2005), Southport and Ainsdale (2006) and Scotsraig, (2007); Commemorative programme for the 2007 Hickory Grail contest at Brook Hollow GC, Dallas. Please contact him at editor@bgcs.wyenet.co.uk or telephone 01904 628711

Forthcoming Events

Chester Trade Fair

The popular Trade Fair at Chester will once again take place on Friday the 25th of January, the day before Bonhams Auction. As we go to press, the venue is uncertain, either at a local hotel, or Vicar's Cross GC, under the enthusiastic direction of **David Kirkwood**. David takes over from Graham and Ann Walters, who have done so much to establish this event in the last few years. The routine is becoming familiar: a leisurely examination of the offerings in the pre-sale viewing at Bonhams, Christleton Road in the morning, meeting up with old friends before moving down the road to the Trade Fair in the afternoon. I was mightily impressed last year with the quality of the items at both locations, and regretted missing what was reported to be a noisy dinner in the evening. Potential stallholders are asked to contact David on 01620 842744 if they wish to take a table. Costs are the same as last year, viz £20, with all surpluses going to charity.

The Welsh Weekend: 4th to 6th of April.

The first playing fixture of the year is one of the most enjoyable. The Welsh Weekend attracts

international entrants to the three hickory fixtures. These start with a gentle match against our friends at Machynlleth GC, where the pattern has been changeable weather, challenging hickory foursomes golf, slick, true greens and good apres-match hospitality. The format is repeated the next afternoon in the match against Aberdovey, followed by fine food and wine and maybe even a song or two. On the final Sunday, we go out as singles matches in late morning for the Welsh Hickory Championship. This is a popular fixture and members are advised to apply early to the organiser, **Liz MacDonald**, on the application forms enclosed with this magazine.

President's Day at Royal Liverpool: 25th April

This most popular of all our fixtures allows us to play foursomes golf in the afternoon over the historic championship links of Royal Liverpool, and still have time for our AGM and a glittering dinner in the main clubroom afterwards. The evening ends with a charity auction of items supplied by members, under the inimitable control of David Kirkwood. There has been a waiting list for both golf and the dinner in previous years; members are advised to apply early to the organiser, **Peter Heath**, using the enclosed forms.

Centenary Clubs 2008

We thank Hamish Ewan for his usual list of centenary clubs, which are again at record numbers. We wish each of them our best wishes in celebrating, though their own experiences, the glorious heritage of Golf.

England

Alton, Hants
Carlisle, Cumbria
Chester-le-Street, Co Durham
Dunscar, Lancs
Eastbourne Downs, E Sussex
Frilford Heath, Oxon
Hollingbury Park, E Sussex
Holme Hall, Lincs
Houghton-le-Spring, Co Durham
Kingsthorpe, Northants
Knebworth, Herts
Ladbroke Park, Warks
Little Aston, Staffs
Meltham, W Yorks
Mendip, Somerset
Mid Kent, Kent
Middlesbrough, Teesside
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs
Penn, Staffs
Penwortham, Lancs
Prestwich, Cheshire

Seaham, Co Durham
Selsey, W Sussex
Stoke Poges, Bucks
Stoneham, Hants
Tidworth Garrison, Wilts
Turton, Lancs
Tynedale, Northumberland
Wareham, Dorset
Werneth, Lancs
Wimbledon Common, Surrey
Worlebury, Somerset
Worplesdon, Surrey

Scotland

Elderslie, Renfrewshire
Glencruitten, Argyll
Kenmay, Aberdeenshire
Lochcarron, Wester Ross
Loudon Gouf, Ayrshire
Muckart, Clackmannanshire
Tarland, Aberdeenshire

Strathaven, Lanarkshire
Windyhill, Dunbartonshire

Wales

Denbigh, Denbighshire
Vale of Llangollen, Denbighshire

Ireland

Delgany, Co. Wicklow
Mitchelstown, Co. Cork
Monkstown, Co. Cork
Portarlington, Co. Laois
Strabane, Co. Tyrone
Westport, Co. Mayo

Denmark

Aalborg

France

Etretat, Normandy
Luchon, Pyrénées

Brigitte Varangot

French legend Brigitte Varangot has died recently in Biarritz. Born there in 1940 she was over many years a tremendous supporter of events this side of the Channel, winning the Girls Championship in 1957, and the British in 1963, 65 and 68 against Philomena Garvey, Belle Robertson and Claudine Cros respectively. In her Native France, she won the Girls Championship three times, the Closed Championship six times, the Open Amateur five times and was a member of the victorious French side in the World Team Championship at St Germain in 1964.

Former champions, including Linda Bayman, Bridget Jackson, Philomena Garvey, Liz Pook and Belle Robertson, recalled her great love and passion for the game, her competitiveness, dedication, power, rhythm and dislike of practice. Personal attributes included a well-developed sense of fun and great generosity of her time with younger players.

After her win at County Down, Pat Ward-Thomas wrote in *The Guardian*:



Brigitte Varangot 1940 - 2007

Miss Varangot is the most accomplished woman golfer in the world outside North America. There has been no finer natural talent for golf in this generation, as is proved by the fact that she has had but half a dozen lessons from a professional. The rest has been learned from observation and from the Vicomtesse de Saint Sauveur.

A trip to the States, where she could easily hold her own with the women professionals, clearly was of great benefit. She developed an absolutely solid putting method, She is also a bunker player of the highest order. Never has one seen her play a poor shot from sand, and her chipping has the authority and crispness of a first-class male player.

Miss Varangot's threequarter swing is now remarkably sound; a tendency to fade costs a little length but nothing of control, and her striking of fairway woods and irons has rarely been matched. She has, too, a positive golfing intelligence, determination, and a rare confidence

that is revealed in every stride of her jaunty walk. All this is never sabotaged by girlish frailities and combine to make an exceptional golfer ...

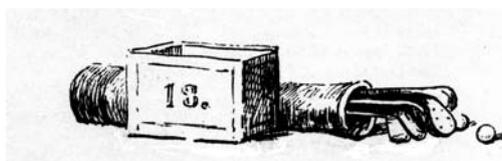
JOP

Florence Olman

Florence Olman, wife of Mort, passed away on the 3rd of June this year in Cincinnati after a short illness. Aged 87, she had been married to Mort for 65 years and died on his 91st birthday. Florence was a familiar figure on the golf collecting scene in the UK over a period of many years, invariably accompanying

Mort on his many buying trips to these shores. She was just as astute as Mort, very knowledgeable about antiques in general and was always excellent company and a pleasure to be with. Our sympathy goes to Mort and his family in their sad loss.

PEC





The Hickory Grail



THE BGCS TOURING PARTY arrived by various means at the Hilton Hotel, Luther Lane, Dallas, Texas on Friday 26th October. All appeared to have travelled well and were ready for the various events that our BGCS American hosts had organised for us. We were allocated rooms on the Executive floor, and a large envelope with a schedule of events, maps and brochures, collated by John Crow Miller, was eagerly studied and discussed.

Saturday 27th October

Our splendid team bus awaited outside to take us to Cedar Crest for a warm up round. The journey of approximately twenty minutes afforded us the opportunity to have the first rehearsal of the tour song, composed by our musical director Ron Beatt to the tune of *The Yellow Rose of Texas*. Ron sang it and we all listened and wondered if we'd ever master it! Every time we were on the bus we rehearsed the song. The bus driver must have thought us nuts. Cedar Crest is an excellent Tillinghast course which hosted the US PGA Championship in 1927 and had a fairly recent make-over by DA Weibring. It is now a municipal facility and cost a very reasonable \$40 per head.

On Saturday evening both teams and supporters gathered in John Miller's splendid home for a welcome party, hosted by the Millers, Padgetts and Farmers. A truly memorable time was had and Ron Beatt found a piano – need I say more.

Sunday 28th October

The US organisers were keen that we had a bonding session and organised a team breakfast for us in the restaurant of the hotel. Meanwhile they were bonding at the golf club. At 10am the bus arrived on time to take the party to the Grail venue, Brook Hollow Golf Club, where the members were waiting in period dress to play a Stableford with the team players. The course is of a Tillinghast design, still in its original layout, greens about 12 on the stimp, slopy Bermuda rough, tree-lined and a very good golf course. The event was very successful, and much enjoyed by the members playing with wooden shafted golf clubs for the first time.

A large scoreboard had been erected close to the clubhouse, and a four-piece string quartet played as the teams filed in front of the crowd. The two captains introduced their teams and National

anthems were sung – and even Claes Kvist joined in *God Save the Queen*.

The evening function took place in the holy of holies – the nineteenth hole or 'Men's Grill', duly open to all of us that night. A marvellous atmosphere with members, wives and Grailers all enjoying the excellent buffet. The superb string ensemble, four young ladies, played some great music and when asked if they knew *The Yellow Rose of Texas* immediately started to play it. The US team and the Brook Hollow members were then treated to the European team's best performance, the words of which follow this report. I was duly informed by John Crow Miller that NOBODY had sung in this room for 89 years and that maybe his membership would be discussed at the next board meeting. It is very hard to describe just how moving and memorable that rendition was, and I congratulate all the Europeans for taking part. I will remember the occasion for a very long time.

Monday 29th October (The Grail)

As per normal we started with foursomes and for a while things were quite bright with all but one of the matches being fairly close. Rowley and Norcott turned a four-hole deficit into a narrow win on the last green; Muller and McMullin proved too strong for Mitchell and Truett. Superstar Notley teamed with Kirkwood to edge out Aaron and Alhschwede. Local hero Miller with the baritone Holland proved too good on the greens for Stuart Gibbs and Captain Hanna. The all-Scottish foursome of Still and Beatt went down on the last green to Roger Hill and the wily veteran Tad Moore. Our secret weapon Willie Tanner was paired with John Sherwood in a couldn't lose combination – they lost to the all Texan pairing of Wehring and Farmer.

Morning Result: USA 4 EUROPE 2

The afternoon singles went very smoothly for the Americans and European successes were hard to come by. In order to get in before dark, we resorted to a two-tee start. Claes Kvist opened the batting and managed to score a point for Europe. Nigel Notley continued his strong Grail form by defeating Chuck McMullin in the second singles but sadly the fight back ended there with just one more win towards the end, by Tanner with a very welcome victory over Brian Siplo.

Match result: USA 13 EUROPE 5.

Well done USA!

I mentioned the members of Brook Hollow yesterday, but we should not forget the part played by the Brook Hollow Greens Superintendent and his staff who drove around the course providing refreshment for captains, players and supporters. The Head Professional also took a full part in the proceedings, starting us off and keeping the scoreboard updated.

A fairly sombre tour party returned to the hotel to prepare for the final function – dinner at Dunston’s Steak House. We enjoyed an evening of friendship in the company of some special guests: the evening’s speaker, the author Curt Sampson; and Johnny Henry, who is known to many of us.

We were all so pleased that Ralph Livingston III was able to attend the Grail as a member of the American Team. Ralph and David Hamilton conceived the idea of the Grail in 2000. A special presentation medal was made in Ralph’s name and was presented to Philip Truett for services to Hickory golf.

On behalf of the BGCS and the European party I would like to thank formally for the wonderful hospitality extended to the European group: US Organising Secretary John Miller; US Captain Winfield Padgett and his committee; Brook Hollow Golf Club and its board of directors.

I’d also like to thank the splendid European team, whose enthusiasm and commitment were second to none, and whose camaraderie and friendship I will cherish for ever.

David Kirkwood
European Grail team Captain.

The Grail Song 2007

We are the greatest golf team,
Sixteen of the best,
With Kirkwood, Still and Tanner
We’ll put you to the test.
You can talk about your Jensens
Your Millers and your Hills,
But Sherwood, Kvist and Bilbie
Will put you through the mill.

In our team is Captain Hanna
From the beautiful Emerald Isle
With his birdies and his eagles
He’s sure to make us smile.
You can sing about your Padgetts,
Your Moores and Farmers too
But Mitchell, Beatt and Notley
Will hit them long and true.

But company, sport and friendship
Is foremost in our minds.
We hope you liked our singing
Of a very different kind.
So please be all upstanding
And drink a toast or two.
Good luck, good golf tomorrow
To the Grail and all of you.

As sung at the Grail dinner, Dallas, Texas
Words by Ron Beatt
To the tune of *The Yellow Rose of Texas*



Both Grail teams pose before the match at Brook Hollow (Image courtesy of Ralph Livingston III)



The Haunted Major Revisited

David Hamilton

uncovers new detail in Marshall's classic golf novel

ROBERT MARSHALL'S novel, *The Haunted Major* has a unique place in the literature of golf, and has been continuously in print, through editions from many publishers, since 1902. Its only rival for longevity in the genre of golf fiction are the golf stories and novels of PG Wodehouse, which appeared shortly after this novel.

Artless comedy is the basis of the lasting appeal of *The Haunted Major* but a closer look shows that its simple tale successfully incorporates other potent and eternal themes, and overcame, for the first time, a major challenge. It was generally held until the appearance of Marshall's book that it was impossible to produce a work of romantic fiction with a golfing theme. Sir Walter Simpson reluctantly concluded:

You can ride at a stone wall for love and the lady, but what part can she take in driving at a bunker?... No! At golf ladies are simply in the road. Riding to hounds and opening five-barred gates, soft nothings may be whispered, but it is impossible at the same moment to putt and to cast languishing glances. If the dear one be near you at the tee, she may get her teeth knocked out, and even between the shots, arms dare not steal round waists, lest the party behind should call out 'fore.'

Marshall's solution to the apparently unreachable challenge of linking golf and romance was to turn to satire, then rising in importance in the literary world. He dumped the difficult-to-incorporate stereotype of the modest, adoring, but in-the-road lady and instead Marshall's cocky male hero flounders on the St Andrews links. The elegant, capable lady, herself a skilled golfer, watches and laughs at his difficulties, notably his public humiliation in Hell Bunker. Off the links, she also outwits the hapless Major in the marriage stakes.

Marshall's work may have influenced PG Wodehouse. Wodehouse's tales also feature vacuous, privileged young men whose lives are run by talented women – capable fiancées and fearsome aunts – to which is added the essential

support of a resourceful butler. In Marshall's novel, the Major also has his capable butler Wetherby – his 'irreproachable domestic' – and he has more than a hint of Wodehouse's better-known Jeeves. In addition, Wodehouse's 'Oldest Member,' the tenacious golf club bore, may have been created in another work by Furniss, the illustrator of *The Haunted Major*.

The author

Robert Marshall's golfing credentials are impeccable. He was born in Edinburgh in 1863, and was sent to Madras College, the highly-regarded school at St Andrews, about the age of seven. The College took in boarding pupils and had links with families in the Empire and the Army.

In Marshall's boyhood at Madras College school he would daily encounter the great professionals, notable caddies and all the distinguished amateurs of that generation. He would witness the epic matches in the 1870s between Young Tom Morris and his equally talented friend Davie Strath. Marshall mentions golf as a hobby in his entry in *Who's Who* of 1910, and in the novel he shows an easy familiarity with the rules, language and etiquette of golf. Though he left St Andrews in the 1870s, he also maintained an interest in the town's affairs thereafter.

His career

Marshall left St Andrews to be a student at Edinburgh University and then entered the Duke of Wellington's Cavalry Regiment, reaching the rank of Captain. In 1898 he left the army at the age of 35 and made an unusual but determined start on a new career in London as a playwright. He had a shaky debut in 1896 with his play *Shades of Night*. He followed this with *His Excellency the Governor* and *The Stage* noted that:

the piece thoroughly amused a large and fashionable audience and Captain Marshall was called and applauded... That Captain Marshall is a humorist is apparent. That he is not, at present, fully a playwright is not self-certain. More than once the play seems on the point of collapse.

He had further productions and from 1900 onwards, four of his plays were transferred to New York and Boston. *The Haunted Major* of 1902 was his only novel and only golfing work and it was therefore written and published at a busy time in his career.

After his death at the age of 47 in 1910, of his plays only *The Governor* and *The Duke of Killiecrankie* were briefly revived. But *The Haunted Major* has lasting appeal.

The Illustrator

Furniss's illustrations were an important addition to Marshall's text. Other publishers later used other illustrators, but these efforts were not successful, and recent editions of the novel have gone back to using the inspired Furniss originals.

Harry Furniss (1854-1925) was an Irishman who rose to fame in London in the 1880s as a prolific illustrator, working first on topical images for the prestigious *Illustrated London News* in the era before use of printed photographs became possible. He was one of the 'Bohemians', not starving intellectuals as is sometimes portrayed, but a group of prosperous, talented London *literati*, and he and Marshall were members of the arts-orientated Garrick Club in London. Furniss's best-known works are the illustrations for the editions of the complete works not only of Dickens but also Lewis Carroll and Thackeray. Later in his career he perceptively considered that photographs would soon replace his form of graphic illustration, and he moved into making animated cartoons, working for a while in America with Thomas Edison.

But Furniss's forte was satire and the new mood of the day was satire. Furniss lampooned many treasured British institutions, including the Oxford versus Cambridge Boat Race, and he famously ridiculed London's Royal Academy and its pompous artists by opening a rival exhibition with fake works painted by himself in the style of these serious Academicians. His books have irreverent titles and Furniss even made fun of Isaac Walton in his spoof *The Incomplete Angler*. The title of Furniss's memoirs, *Confessions of a Caricaturist*, has a modern ring to it.

Rise of satire

This satirical movement in Britain had started about 1870, and from the numerous new and mostly forgotten magazines, *Punch* emerged and thereafter was to reach its glorious and unrivalled position in British life for almost one 100 years. Among the many regular targets for their irreverent cartoons and articles were the Scottish Sunday, the Scottish weather and the Scottish Kirk's solemn ministers and elders. Adding to this, *Punch* invented the Scottish golf joke.

London had heard that when Britain's great and good took up golf on holiday in Scotland, they were treated badly by the caddies. Much was mined from this mother-lode of anecdotes in which well-bred neophyte English golfers met humiliation at the hands of the humble Scottish caddie with their well-honed repartee.

Furniss and golf

Furniss shared Marshall's interest in golf. Furniss was the activist in establishing golf at Hastings, and he once claimed that 'few have visited more [golf clubs] than I have'. His first golf artwork was the illustrations for Hutchinson's highly successful volume *Golf* in the Badminton series, and this ran to many editions from 1890.

Though Furniss delighted in attacking pomposity and pretention, golf was safe from his censure and wit. In an interesting article on golf in *Pearson's Magazine* of 1896, Furniss was uncharacteristically serious throughout and even stoutly defended the game against its critics. An illustration in the article is a drawing of a golf club's 'Oldest Member', but the senior citizen is not ridiculed. Instead Furniss takes pleasure in revealing that the apparently frail clubman is a wily player who regularly takes money off unsuspecting new, young members.

Furniss' work

It was not only the golf interest in *The Haunted Major* that attracted Furniss. There were many other opportunities in the text for his inventiveness. The novel has a pompous army officer, a rich attractive American widow and a frenetic St Andrews ghost. These were entirely to Furniss's liking and Furniss had clearly studied the project carefully. In understanding and catching the spirit of the book, he also meticulously incorporated details of the town and links of St Andrews in a way unmatched by the other illustrators of the later editions.

Furniss's graphic style in his many contributions to *The Haunted Major*, has a variety of images ranging from simple doodles to carefully crafted scenes. He illuminates in detail many of the memorable events of the novel including the spooky nocturnal happenings in St Andrews Castle, the embarrassment in Hell Bunker, and the animated action at the seventeenth hole and final green.

Even his apparently hasty background pen work in many of the illustrations are no mere fill-ins, and the detail repays study. Beyond his scene on the last hole, Forgan's and Morris's shops can be found, with an astonished Old Tom Morris in the crowd, and in an earlier drawing, in the distant skyline beyond the flat links, the Royal and Ancient clubhouse, the town's churches and Rusacks Hotel can be found, if looked for. Hell Bunker and the Shepherd's Cottage appear in the action and are accurately depicted by Furniss, as are the railway sheds at the Road Hole, and their importance was clearly known to him. The Cardinal's ancient bag of clubs contains an impressive spur-toe iron.

The author and illustrator of *The Haunted Major* were clearly made for each other. They were part of the little world of London literary and club life, and revelled in satirising the metropolitan élite. They also had links with Scottish golf. From this emerged their tale of how a London snob gets his comeuppance on St Andrews links.

Other golf themes

To the central frivolous courtship in the novel, Marshall adds other themes which were to recur in later golf fiction. A resourceful, humble, independent-minded caddie is central to the action, and this iconic figure was soon to appear in Halworthy Hall's *Dormie One*, then in Joseph Shaw's *Out of the Rough* of 1934 and the most recent incarnation is in the novel *The Legend of Bagger Vance* of 1995.

In Marshall's novel there is added the eternal dream of a rabbit-to-tiger transformation, where a hapless hacker blossoms speedily into a great player. The exhilaration of this transformation is engagingly described by Marshall and he deals with this improbable event by suggesting neatly that supernatural intervention is essential for such a miracle. Similar transcendental assistance for attaining golfing success re-appeared in Murphy's important novel *Golf in the Kingdom* of 1972.

Also running through *The Haunted Major* is the story of the search for revenge. Revenge is sought

by the Major's ghostly St Andrews helper to annul an ancient, unforgiven and unforgotten wrong at the time of the Reformation. The grudge has the intensity of the vengeance sought by Alexander Dumas's Count of Montecristo.

The events

The action is fast-moving and the tale well told. London's social whirl gives way to the breezy links of St Andrews, and feature the town's ghosts and golfing heritage together with much insider gossip and coded references to local worthies and events.

The hero of the novel is the insufferable Major The Honourable John William Wentworth Gore, who modestly describes himself as 'the finest sportsman living'. Marshall's earlier career as a Guards Officer may not have been a success and perhaps his novel allowed him to satirise the pompous brother officers he encountered formerly and knew so well. Because Gore is the youngest son of a wealthy family, he is short of money and concludes that the answer to his embarrassment is matrimony. In short, he must marry money.

London events

Marshall's sporting Major has returned to London about 1900 after some time in India, and is taken aback to find that golf has risen in popularity. Though golf was played in the British Empire, his view is that serious sportsmen hunted, or shot, or at least played team games, which were all sports with military implications. Gore is, as he recounts, a top polo player, a brilliant cricketer, the best racquet player in India, an Arctic explorer and balloonist. As for golf, it was allegedly unsuitable for training young men, a view which had been put about by Hely Almond, the dogmatic headmaster of Loretto School at Musselburgh (of all places). Worse still, in Gore's pursuit of a rich American widow, Mrs Gunter, who has appeared on the London social scene, a mere golfer, named Lindsay, may overtake him and win her hand. Even the Major's genial London host, Lord Lowchester, has taken up the game and will rent a house at St Andrews for the summer. It is just golf, golf, golf.

Gore is at a dinner party at the Lowchesters, one also attended by the lady in question and his rival. The watchful Major is certain that he is being overtaken, and, emboldened by drink, he decides to make a golfing challenge and does so with the intensity of an invitation to a duel. He invites

Lindsay his rival to play a match, at St Andrews, the winner to be first to propose marriage.

The town

With his natural sporting talent, he assumes that adding golf to his multi-sports skills is an easy matter, and travelling to St Andrews, he arranges for intensive practice and tuition from the celebrated local caddie/professional Kirkintulloch. He studies Hutchinson's instructional book *Golf* (illustrated by Furniss) which Gore slyly knocks, remarking that 'the principle of sporting journalism is to make the maximum of bricks out of the minimum of straw'. He hides away before the match, not only for secrecy, but also because a gentleman would not be seen to be practising at any sport. Great performances came naturally and immediately to great sportsmen - except for golf, as he soon realizes.

Marshall playfully renames St Andrews as 'St Magnus'. Magus (or Magnus) Muir is located nearby at the village of Strathkiness, and it was there that Archbishop Sharp was killed by the Covenanters. The Major's hotel is clearly Rusacks and the novel's castle is the ancient St Andrews Castle. The golf club is the Royal and Ancient, and the action is undoubtedly on the Old Course.

The golfing life of the town is incorporated. The townspeople, including the humble, turn out in numbers for his challenge match, and a rope is used to hold back the excited crowd. The caddies are no strangers to drink nor unfamiliar with the jail. But when sober, they are good coaches and skilled salesmen for their own unrivalled clubs. The innocent Major is sold three golf bags - one for dry weather, one for wet conditions and one for use while travelling.

Marshall pokes fun at the local Church of Scotland minister and is a little hard on the St Andrews university professors - 'chief mourners at the funeral of their own intellects'. He is kinder towards the local *literati*, notably the town's best-known author, Andrew Lang.

His caddie

He engages the best teacher, the caddie Kirkintulloch, whose powerful personality quickly crushes the military visitor. The Major, dimly aware that he is not going to be in charge, makes a confident start, telling the caddie:

'I was one of the best-known polo players of

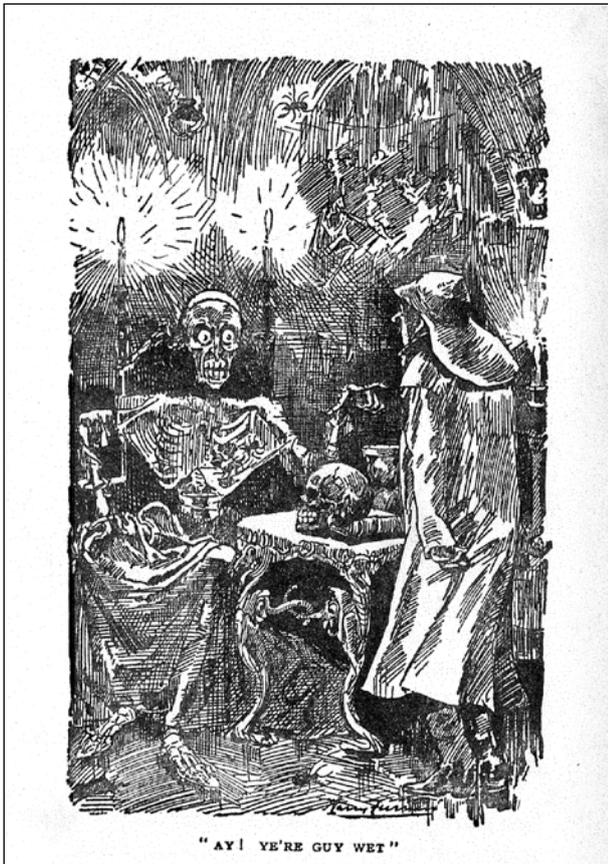
the day.' There was a considerable pause but we tramped steadily on. 'What's polo?' said he [Kirkintulloch] at length. I gave him a brief description of the game. 'A weel ye'll no hae a hoarse to help ye at goalf.'

This encounter between the urbane Major and his unsophisticated St Andrews caddie is an extended examination of the successful *Punch* magazine theme. In addition, the proud, free-spirited caddie is contrasted with the attitudes of the Major's deferential Jeeves-like butler Wetherby. Gore's talented London servant knows his place in the hierarchical aristocratic world.

The Golf Club

The Major is made a temporary member of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, and some of the Club's habits at the time, now forgotten, are featured. It seems that it was customary to announce visitors by their 'name and condition' on a club notice board, and the local paper and Town Hall notice board also listed the names of prominent visitors. This gave an entry into the local social scene and the Major receives many invitations to what he describes as 'tea-parties, badly cooked but pretentious dinners and other social barbarities'. Also offending him in the social whirl are 'female putting tournaments' namely the meetings of the ancient and distinguished St Andrews Ladies' Putting Club, pioneers of modern ladies golf. Eligible men were expected to attend, and act as coach and scorers for the Club meetings; suitable attachments might follow.

He charitably classifies the Royal and Ancient members as 'good types of Scottish county gentlemen or courteous members of the learned professions' but he deplores a new influx of English members and that club members are now affecting English accents rather than using their native Scots tongue. The novel shows that Club golf starts at 11 o'clock, and the members enjoy huge lunches and cigars afterwards. It seems that the members of the Royal and Ancient had a habit of making bets with each other even on the first hole of any interesting match starting on the first tee a few yards from the front window of the club's Big Room. The members kept a personal note of these stakes and the minimum wagered with another member was a sovereign, the next level being five pounds, then ten pounds. Settlement after the outcome was by cheque written out in the Big Room, possibly on the Royal and Ancient's own cheques, which could be then honoured and cashed at the Club.



The Cardinal in full flow at his decadent apartments in St Andrews Castle, telling the Major what is to happen next day on the Links.

The Cardinal

On the night before the match, the restless and concerned Major ventures out into a storm. He is irresistibly drawn to the Castle, a short distance from his base at Rusacks Hotel. There he encounters the ghostly Cardinal Smeaton, in a room decked out with pre-Reformation decadence. The Cardinal is the reincarnation of the infamous Cardinal Beaton (1494-1546) who burned the Protestant reformers on the town cliffs near the Castle.

The Cardinal is in top form and he wistfully digresses to recall his own golf. But then he turns to discuss the match Gore/Lindsay match, which has come to his notice. The usually-confident London sophisticate is crushed, for the second time that day, by the strength of a powerful Scottish personality. The Cardinal, is in charge. 'I'm tellin' ye' he instructs the Major, and he does tell him. He will support the Major in this apparently hopeless game in the morning by providing supernatural help in general, and in particular by loaning his own ancient, magic golf clubs to the Major. The Cardinal's motive is revenge: he wishes to settle an old score with amateur champion Lindsay's family. At the time of

the Reformation the Scottish poet and dramatist Sir David Lindsay (c1490-1555) was the most prominent and persistent critic of the pre-Reformation Church and attacked Beaton in particular. David Lindsay's rebuke still rankles with the Cardinal.

Next day

In the morning, the Major is in denial about the night's events and although the Cardinal does turn up, unseen to all but himself, Gore arrogantly decides against accepting the Cardinal's help. Gore then suffers the predictably huge and embarrassing defeat in the morning eighteen holes of the two-round match on the Old Course.

The Cardinal's help has to be enlisted and the events of the second, afternoon round are equally dramatic. Dénouement follows dénouement: read it for yourself.

The characters

It has been forgotten, if it were ever known, that *all* the characters in the novel are drawn from life. Marshall, the satirist, here pokes fun at a wide range of contemporaries, thinly disguising their identity. However, in one case, the satire is in rather bad taste.

The inspiration for the Major can be sought and is easily identified. Though the multi-sporting figure of the Major may seem somewhat overdrawn, it was a time for such iconic figures. In the British public school, sportsman's world, the all-rounder was an ideal sought. Of the Corinthian sportsmen at the time, the greatest achiever was Leslie Balfour-Melville (1854-1937). Born as Leslie Balfour, the 'Melville' soon was added and the hyphen appeared later. At cricket he played regularly for and against the MCC, and captained a Scottish eleven in a rare victory over touring Australian cricketers. He played rugby for Scotland, was an excellent sprinter, won the Scottish Lawn Tennis Championship and was the Scottish billiards champion. At golf, Balfour-Melville won all the Royal and Ancient club trophies at various times, and was Amateur Champion in 1895 after coming close for many years. In the Open of 1888, he came fifth and was leading amateur. Private means and a family estate near St Andrews assisted these natural talents, as did wintering at the new French golfing resorts. Importantly, Balfour-Melville was raised in St Andrews and was just ten years older than Marshall.

Lindsay

The Major's rival in love is 'Jim Lindsay' and there is a resemblance to the kindly John Laidlay, Amateur Champion in 1889 and 1891. Marshall treats him quite charitably.

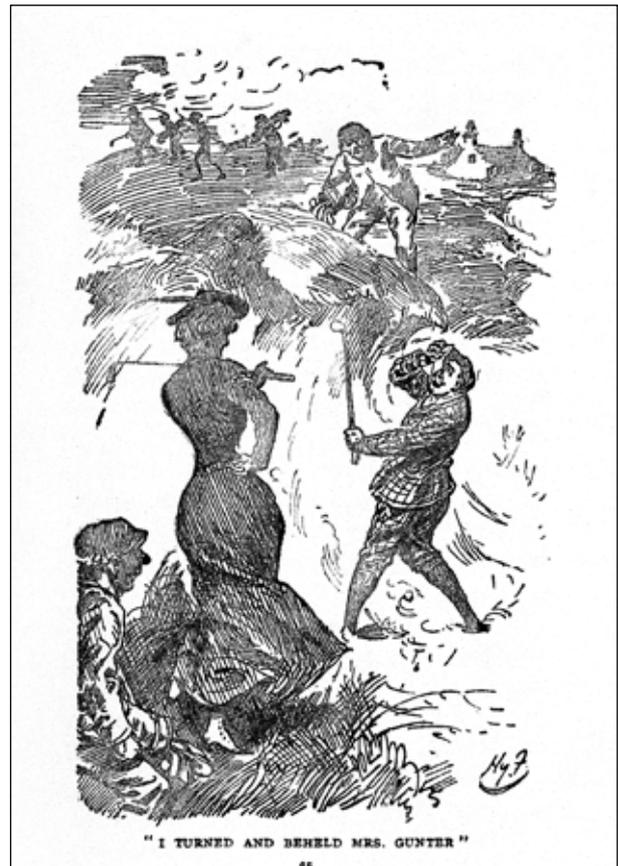
Mrs Gunter

The lady pursued by Major Gore was also a familiar figure at the time, namely a rich American wintering in Europe. They favoured the golf resorts of Pau in France and North Berwick in Scotland and a few also reached St Andrews. Mrs Gunter, a golfer, apparently spends two months of the year in Fife. The Major is well aware of her fortune, but as the story develops, he increasingly finds himself also attracted to her vivacity, independence and golfing skills. Furniss's illustrations depict her so, and she appears confidently without an escort on the links. With a mashie jauntily over her shoulder, she observes with good humour the Major's disastrous and prolonged visit to Hell Bunker. These 'new' women – feminine, spirited and with a hint of mischief – had first appeared in *Punch* and in the other London satirical magazine *Puck*. They then became even better known in America as the celebrated, liberated 'Gibson Girl' created for *Life* magazine by the illustrator Charles Dana Gibson.

Mrs Gunter is clearly a Gibson Girl and her full name is given carefully in Marshall's novel as Katherine Clavering Gunter. Since Marshall is caricaturing someone at all times, this invites a search for the original and she cannot be modelled on anyone other than the wife of the famous American novelist of the time Archibald Clavering Gunter. Gunter's 30 popular novels had made him very rich, and he had a modest link with sport, being known for publicising Ernest Thayer's celebrated poem on baseball *Casey at the Bat*. But Gunter was not greatly admired in the broader literary world. The critic Arthur Inkersley, writing of early Californian writers, said that

the most successful, from a pecuniary point of view, and worst, in a literary sense, is Archibald Clavering Gunter.... His success is striking proof (if proof were needed) that to reach the heart of the average man is the most remunerative thing in the world.

Gunter's first novel, bravely self-published, sold over a million copies from 1887, and was America's biggest publishing success to that date, with other novels and multiple translations following on. For sophisticates like Marshall and Furniss, Gunter and



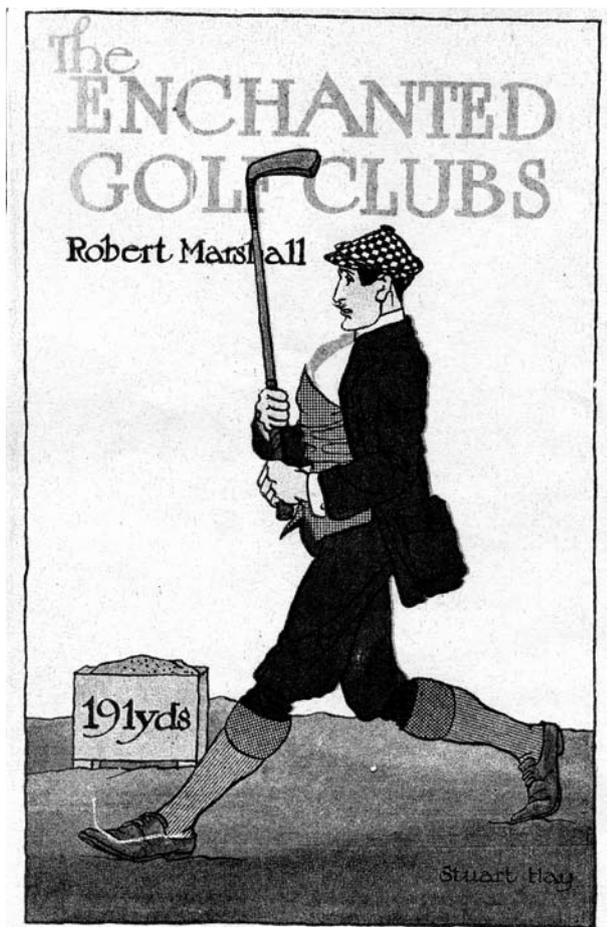
The elegant and shapely Mrs Gunter arrives unexpectedly while the Major is suffering in Hell Bunker, being urged by his caddie to make progress. The Shepherd's Cottage is seen behind.

his works were a ripe and immediate target for their satire. But for Marshall to use his wife's name for their fictitious wealthy widow was in poor taste. Mr Gunter did not die until 1907, five years after *The Haunted Major* was published. Mrs Gunter was not yet a rich widow.

When an American publisher issued their edition of *The Haunted Major* in 1920, they noticed the bad joke and loyally failed to see the humour. Accordingly, for this first American edition, the publisher changed Mrs Gunter's first names with care to Katherine Clendenin instead of Katherine Clavering. This was the only change ever made in the text, and this nuance, when looked for, tiny but telling, remains in all American editions to the present day.

Kirkintulloch

Of the other figures, the caddie Kirkintulloch is important, and there is no need to search far for the real-life equivalent. Andrew Kirkaldy, the irascible, distinguished caddie/professional at St Andrews, who lost to Park in a play-off for the Open in 1889,



For the first American editions the Haunted Major title was changed and new unconvincing illustrations substituted for the Furniss originals.

is the model. His caustic put-downs were recounted with pain by generations of visitors and it was his quips that inspired many of the famous stories of caddie insolence, beloved of *Punch*.

But Bernard Darwin had another analysis of the Scottish caddie legend:

They can express themselves with a trenchancy that is positively searing. It is, however, I think, a mistake, to regard them as deliberate humorists. On the contrary, they speak as a rule in deadliest earnest. ... The late Andrew Kirkaldy was in many ways typical of the elder race of Scottish caddies. His remarks have been endlessly quoted, and he is believed by those who did not know him to have been a wit. Yet in fact, Andrew made few intentional jokes and his most famous sayings were, as originally delivered, ferocious in the intensity of their seriousness

Local worthies

The citizens of St Andrews who appear as walk-on parts in the novel can be studied with interest. They include McBide, Twinkle, Simkins, Monkton, Wilkins, Johnson and others and (with Dr David

Malcolm's assistance) they have now been identified. These brief appearances and the affectionate nicknames suggest that the London-based Marshall still had considerable awareness of the town golf, gossip and affairs.

MacBide of whom Marshall speaks quite well, is the Reverend AHK Boyd – the local Church of Scotland minister at St Andrews Holy Trinity Church, chaplain to the R&A from 1886-1899, and a prolific author of essays and memoirs.

The Scots word 'bide' means to live or reside. Boyd was more often out of his pulpit than he was in it, enjoying visiting and travelling widely in Britain. His eleven volumes of reminiscences give a list of the great and good with whom he stayed (bided) in England on his travels. 'Bide' is also the Lowland Scots pronunciation of the name Boyd giving this irresistible nickname for the prominent much-travelled cleric.

Twinkle who witnesses the challenge match in the novel, is certainly William T Linskill, remembered as the founder and perpetual secretary of the Cambridge University student golf club. He moved to St Andrews in 1896 as the town's Dean of Guild, a now-defunct post concerned with building regulations. As Marshall suggests, he was into all town affairs, and was a star turn in theatrical events at the Town Hall. He was the town's sceptical ghost-hunter and an encounter with him is found in HV Morton's *In Search of Scotland*. Linskill also appears in Hutchinson's novel *Bert Edward* (1903).

General Simkins is General Moncrieff. 'Simkins' was the name used in *Punch* cartoons to epitomise ex-Army types, and Moncrieff was a philanthropic and well-meaning Provost of St Andrews.

Monkton is Herbert Asquith, the local Fife Member of Parliament, and Marshall's name for him derives either from the 'monkish' ambience of the mediaeval town, or from the later, narrow Presbyterian ways of St Andrews. The Asquiths took summer holidays and golf instruction in St Andrews and at Cruden Bay. In the novel, Mrs Asquith, Herbert's loyal golfing wife, appears under her own name and still has hopes for his career, or at least for high honours as a reward for his political service. He is presented in the 1902 novel as a political has-been, but Asquith's fortunes revived later and he became Prime Minister in 1908-1916.

Grayson is surely a play on words referring to the Blackwood family of publishers who rented Strathtyrum House near the links from the Cheape family in summer, and there entertained the leading literary figures of the day. Young Blackwood was a good player at the R&A. He was also prominent in London life and hence was doubtless well-known to Marshall. He is portrayed as an excitable golfing celebrity.

O'Hagan – an unidentified R&A member – is an Irishman with an affected Scots accent.

Sir William Wilkins may be Sir Ralph Anstruther. It seems that he exaggerated his skill on the Links.

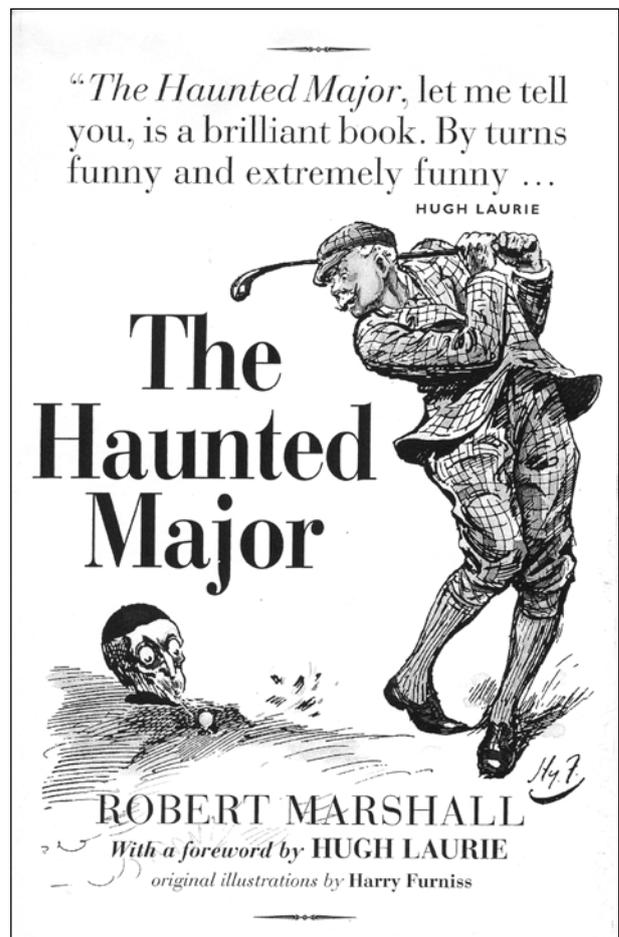
Mr Henry Grove – the ‘celebrated actor-manager’ is either Thomas Oliphant or HSC Everard, the player and golfing author, since both staged plays and tableaux in the St Andrews Town Hall and performed enthusiastically in them. Marshall doubtless knew Everard’s son, who was a London West End actor.

Hanbury-Smith may be Hall Blyth, an R&A activist, known as the ‘prime minister of golf.’

Jock Johnson described as ‘Keeper of the Green’ is certainly ‘Old’ Tom Morris. Old Tom was keen on all sports, particularly pugilism, and Johnson was a famous prizefighter at the time. Also at this time, Morris was fighting his corner to avoid forced retirement from his long-standing position as ‘Keeper of the Green’ and, being unassailable through his international fame, the Greens Committee had a problem.

The Prince Vladimir Demidoff is His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Michael (Mikhail) of Russia, brother of the Tsar, soon to be in exile for his unsuitable choice of a wife. At the time of the novel, he was ‘the most eligible man but the worst golfer in Europe’, and was an enthusiastic St Andrews golfer and R&A member. He founded the Cannes Golf Club. Though the most popular of the Russian Royals, after briefly succeeding his brother, he and his wife were executed with the Romanoff family at the time of the Revolution.

Andrew Lang is charitably noticed by name by Marshall as one of the local St Andrews ‘modern litterateurs in search of bracing health [who] give a vivacity to the free exchange of ideas’. Lang had an



In more recent editions, the Furniss illustrations were re-instated and celebrity Introductions added.

impressive literary output including his golf work *A Batch of Golfing Papers*. When Lang was appointed to give the prestigious Gifford Lectures at St Andrews University in 1888, Lord Archibald Campbell wrote:

Oh, Andrew, man, St Andrews man,
Is a' the warld to thee;
In London fogs yer cheeks are wan,
Be aff, man, to the lee,
Wi' niblick, cleek and driver, man.
Oh, Andrew man, St Andrews, man,
Man, here's a health to thee.
Professor here, Professor there,
Ye're Andrew Lang to me.
Weel fill ye the professor's chair
Wi' learned lore, and yet methinks,
I ken right weel yer heart's no there,
It's yonder ower the links.

Scots language

Marshall's upbringing in St. Andrews gave him a familiarity with the local 'broad' Scots language, the language of Robert Burns. The discourse of both the caddie and the Cardinal as constructed by Marshall

is easily the best of many attempts in any golfing fiction at the Scottish patois.

The authentic and powerful vocabulary in the novel includes :

<i>stramash</i> [disturbance]	<i>fidget</i> [restless]
<i>forbye</i> [what is more]	<i>loupin</i> [jumping]
<i>thole</i> [to suffer]	<i>callant</i> [youth]
<i>clanjamfray</i> [worthless folk]	<i>thole</i> [tolerate]
<i>gallivantin</i> [cheerful, purposeless travelling]	<i>muckle</i> [much]
<i>disjasket</i> [broken down]	<i>ahint</i> [behind]
<i>aweel</i> [now then]	<i>skite</i> [slip]
<i>jocose</i> [cheerful]	<i>fushionless</i> [feeble]
	<i>pauky</i> [wily]

And these phrases:

Nae doot [doubtless]
Dinna fash yersel [don't fuss]
Haud yer wheesht [shut up]
The moarn's moarn [tomorrow morning]

The 'Introductions' to the novel

By the 1950s, *The Haunted Major* had become a classic, and publishers could add a celebrity *Introduction* to the text. The first offering was in 1973 from Henry Longhurst, the distinguished golf journalist, who introduced the Scottish Academic Press edition.

His was a moderate piece with a disappointing metropolitan emphasis on the London part of the novel's action. The *Introduction* to the Canongate edition of 1998 had a slightly better attempt by the actor Hugh Laurie, chosen because he was to have a part in a proposed film of the book, one never made.

But the best of the three *Introductions* so far is the essay by John Updike, prefacing the otherwise spartan Ecco Press edition of 1999, and his contribution was used in the new 1998 Edinburgh Canongate edition. The eminent American novelist and golfer used his insight and skills in a masterly analysis of the Major and his *doppelganger*:

Golf is a spooky game. Occult forces are clearly at work as we play. Balls vanish in unaccountable directions, glass walls arise in the direction of the hole, putts run uphill ...

In truth, we all play golf accompanied by a demon ...

Acknowledgements

Thanks go to David Malcolm at St Andrews for identifying the locals in the novel, and to Rand Jerris at the USGA Museum and Peter Lewis at the British Golf Museum for their comments on this article.

Fakes and Forgeries

It was probably about seventeen years ago when I attended an auction just before an Open Championship. Among the lots I was interested in was a cut down version of the Michael Brown Life Association calendar for 1913, framed, showing a group of well known Royal North Devon golfers standing, with the Cape Bunker behind them, about where a reasonable drive will land on the fairway. The auctioneer started the bidding at my maximum so I dropped out without bidding. After a few bids the lot was knocked down to a book bidder. The auctioneer murmured his name and added 'in absentia'. I recognised the name.

A fortnight later in a town near home, in the window of a framing shop, on a small easel, was an unframed cut down version of the same calendar, same picture. I ventured in and enquired about the cost. Without telling me the proprietor remarked: 'you golf nuts will buy anything – sold a framed

copy the other day for 500 quid'. I made an excuse and left, certain in my mind that he had a copy of the original and access to a laser copier/printer.

Another couple of weeks later I came face to face with Mr 'absentia' and asked after his purchase. He was delighted with it until I told him of my suspicions. I understand that he returned it to the auction house, who then took the back off, confirmed that it was a laser copy and made full restitution.

An interesting set of coincidences with a satisfactory result. A year or so later I was at a Philips auction where the full, original, calendar was on offer. Fortunately Chris Ibbotsen had spent his budget earlier and it was knocked down to me for about the same price as the fake, and Chris was the first person to congratulate me. Last time we spoke he still had not been able to buy that particular Life Association calendar. Such is the life of a collector.

Peter Gompertz



Christmas Greetings from Oz



WHILE MOST of Australia's top golfers were battling it out over the Royal Sydney course in 2006, in pursuit of the Australian Open, there was an unusual activity taking place in the tented village that is now part and parcel of any modern Open Championship. As part of the Tourism NSW tent, the **Golf Society of Australia**, which is normally based in Victoria, was in attendance, represented by the President, Treasurer and a couple of Committee members. They were there helping to man the stand and answer any questions from inquisitive visitors about the history of golf, the Australian Open, and in particular, the history of club making and the development of the golf ball. On display were several early clubs and old golf balls, but the main interest was centred on the presence of a gifted club maker called Ross Baker. Ross was the Professional at the Maryborough Golf Club a couple of hours drive out of Melbourne, near the old goldfields of Castlemaine.

For at least the last two Australian Open Championships Ross has been present in the tent actually making a 'hickory' long nose putter using a piece of 500 year old Tasmanian Huon Pine for the head, and Mountain Ash for the shaft; other Australian club makers of my acquaintance use Ironbark to make modern 'hickories'. As he works away at the club head, the shaft, and the grip, Ross will explain to anyone interested what he is actually doing. At the end of the process Ross presented this work of art to the Royal Sydney Golf Club.

As the nominated 'history of golf' expert from my club I have attended most of the Golf Historians meetings through the winter. Without exception they have all been fascinatingly interesting including the one where a long time office holder at Croydon Golf Club, an outer suburban course, plotted a **social history of the State of Victoria** illustrated by the ebbs and flows of the Club's accounts. Sounds dry but it wasn't – particularly when it was pointed out that the Sex Equality legislation introduced in the State Parliament in 1983 had a profound impact on the Club's finances as the ladies' membership slumped from over 270 to about a dozen when the fees were equalised, so confirming that there is a Law of Unintended Consequences.

At the same meeting, which was held at Royal



Moirra Drew, Hon Archivist at Royal Melbourne GC, with the woven cane bag

Melbourne, a very unusual golfing artefact was a feature of the 'show and tell' – well unusual to me. I have certainly never seen a **woven cane golf bag** before, at auction, on the internet or in any collection. The 'bag', which is in excellent condition, was donated to Royal Melbourne by a descendant of Alfred Hay of Boomanoomana Station, Mulawa who became a member of Royal Melbourne in 1896. Alfred was the uncle of Gladys Hay, Australian Ladies Champion in 1922, winner of three Victorian titles and a past President of the Australian Ladies Golf Union. She gave her name to the Gladys Hay Memorial Cup that has been the trophy for the annual Australian Womens' Interstate team series since 1933.

Next May I expect to be doing my historical duty and playing in the National Hickory Championship at Bothwell in Tasmania, to be followed by a one-day tournament with steels at Barnboughe Links. Hopefully my swing will have slowed down sufficiently for me to do both courses justice. Watch this space.

Seasonal greetings from

The Mad Pom (Peter Gompertz)



Steven JH van Hengel

In the Foreword to the book Early Golf by Dutchman Steven van Hengel published in 1982, Peter Dobereiner stated: 'In the field of early Dutch golf, and that means early golf no matter how those nationalistic Scots may squirm, the ultimate authority is Steven van Hengel'. Steven had already begun publishing his findings and controversial statements around 1972. At that time they created quite a stir among most well-known golf historians.

Rick van den Boom recalls his acquaintanceship with the eminent historian.

WHEN I INTERVIEWED STEVEN in March 1982, he had really been **The 'Mister Golf'** in The Netherlands for at least fifteen years. That year he discontinued his work for the Dutch Golf Federation, after twelve years of very loyal service. Although not a highly skilled player, he had been a fierce promoter of the game of golf. He detested the explosive development of the game in the Netherlands in those days. He felt that the traditions and values of golf could be jeopardised by this extremely rapid growth.

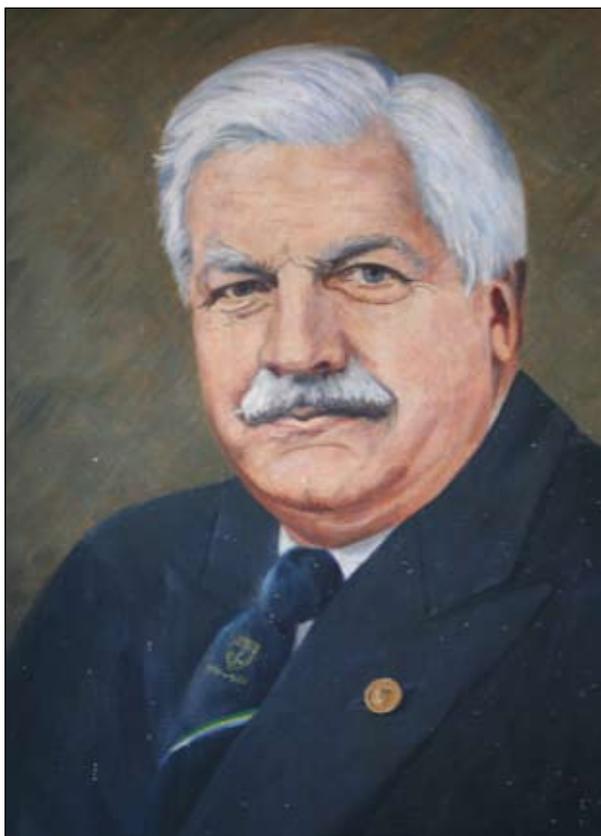
In his view the game of golf was an extremely individual endeavour. Thus when the Dutch Golf Federation started to modernise and streamline all the individual training programmes for talented young players at club level, into central practising facilities, group training programmes and the like, he felt it was no longer his 'cup of tea'.

Nevertheless we should never underestimate what Steven did for the growth and development of Dutch golf. He often took on very difficult and tricky tasks. A good example is the rather delicate first match he organised between Dutch and German

junior golf teams only five years after the Second World War. He was the referee and promoter of The

Dutch Open for more than ten years. Also he was founding member of the Netherlands' first public golf course.

This course called *Spaarnwoude* close to Amsterdam, has grown into the busiest public golf course in Europe. It began with nine holes in 1977 and now counts an additional 57 holes. Around 1977 the Dutch Golf Federation took control of golf's extremely quick growth in Holland and succeeded in shaping the sport into what it represents today. Right behind soccer and tennis it is the third largest Sports Union in The Netherlands with more than 300,000 registered players.



Early Golf

The reason why Steven's 1972 publications created quite a stir was obvious. It boiled down to the fact that according to him it could be proven that the game of golf originated in the Netherlands. His book *Early Golf*, published around ten years later is much better. The reader is allowed to form an opinion and

possibly draw his own conclusion from, Steven's facts and findings. Still there is an old Dutch saying: *The wish is the father of the thought* and this is definitely the feeling that lingers in one's mind after reading this book. A particular eye-opener for many Dutch and Scottish readers is the chapter on the very close relations between Holland and Scotland in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Not only the mingling of the royal families, but the very active trading led to cross-fertilisation in several areas, and as a logical consequence, possibly and inevitably also in sports.

Steven's incredible drive to discover the truth about golf facts (often taken for granted) could be breathtaking at times. I saw him at work making copper modelling-moulds for cutting the leather for feathery balls. I soon realised that he was trying to prove that these moulds were the same as those used for *kaats-balls* (a very old sixteenth-century Dutch type of hand-tennis) and so gently establishing another possible Dutch connection.

I personally feel that it cannot be a coincidence that the names for the very ancient Dutch games of *colf / kolf* were used for ball-games played with a club or a stick. This surely led to the word 'golf'. Steven's book is a must for anyone interested in golf history as it is a fount of interesting and absolutely correct historical facts. However, I would be wary of drawing too many, hard and fast conclusions.

Dirty Hands.

It was a challenge to understand why so many experts simply refused to accept some of the findings and facts published in this book. I therefore took a closer look at some of the statements. As also mentioned in Chapter 5, there was a strong desire to ban ball-games from the streets in the old town centres in Holland around the year 1390. *Early Golf* makes **no** reference whatsoever to a very ancient Dutch ball game called *Klootschieten*. The ball (or *kloot*), with a diameter of approximately three inches, and an average weight of approximately 500 grams, was thrown by hand at certain targets over an agreed course. Obviously these wooden balls could cause tremendous damage if thrown out of bounds.

Reviewing the history of *Klootschieten*, a very popular sport in those days, it can be traced back to the early part of the thirteenth century, so much earlier than the first signs of *colf* in Holland. In the book, reference is made to Count Albrecht of Holland who granted the city of Haarlem a course as a token of his gratitude to this city in 1389. According

to van Hengel the term 'course' was used **only** in connection with *kaatsen* (the ancient Dutch game of hand-tennis) and *colf* at the time, leaving out the at that time much more popular game of *Kolf*.

A closer look at the history of *Klootschieten* reveals that in exactly the same year and in exactly the same city (Haarlem) a course for *Klootschieten* was laid out. This can hardly be a coincidence. Maybe this was in fact the same course and could mark the beginning of golf in Holland.

The players of *Klootschieten* threw these often muddy balls around by hand. One could envisage how, one day, one of the *klootschieters* asked a *kolf*-player if he could try out his club/stick to try and replace his throw with a stroke from the *kolfer's* stick/club. At least he could keep his hands clean that way! But then again this explanation is just too simple.

It does however indicate the tenuousness of some of van Hengel's statements.

Early Golf Foundation

I strongly advise everybody to read Steven's interesting and excellent book. The so-called Dutch Golf Museum at the Purmerend Golf Club, north of Amsterdam, has many items relating to Van Hengel's and the so-called Bronger's collections, which are kept together by the Early Golf Foundation in Holland. The joint collection boasts some very interesting old clubs, balls, books, beautiful ancient Delft blue tiles and other golf memorabilia. Some of Steven's tiles were donated to the R&A and can still be seen in the showcase in the hallway of the R&A clubhouse leading to the Northern Room. Steven personified golf in Holland for a very long time. He was an honorary member of the Dutch Golf Federation and of his beloved Kennemer Golf & Country Club in Zandvoort in the dunes west of Amsterdam, one of the best links-courses on the continent of Europe. His (golf-) heart was in the right place. It gave up on him on the course of Royal Birkdale while watching The Open in 1985. Obviously his death was premature (he was only 61 years old) but I am confident that for Steven, this was undeniably, the most appropriate place for him to pass away.

Steven van Hengel's classic book Early Golf is still available at the Early Golf Foundation in the Netherlands. Members wishing a copy should contact Rick van den Boom at rvdboom@xs4all.nl and he will pass on the request. Price is £18 excluding postage.

Letter from America

by Brown Ale



THE SANDHILLS REGION of North Carolina was the site of the 2007 GCS National meeting in November and the turnout was highly commendable. There was momentum for this site in the form of the Mid Pines Hickory Open, a hickory golf event that has drawn large participation in its four years, so this year the National piggy-backed on the popularity of the Mid Pines Tournament.

The GCS Tournament was also contested over the Mid Pines course, originally laid out by Donald Ross in the mid-1920s. It followed the Mid Pines Tourney, where 88 had played with hickories several days earlier. Ben Plaunt, from near the Arctic Circle in Calgary, Canada was the GCS Tournament champion. Wayne Aaron won the Senior Champion title.

One of the features of this year's meeting was the exhibition period where collectors set up tables showing off portions of their collections to be judged for history and appearance. Dr Jay Harris gave an informative talk on fitting and preparing clubs for hickory play, a reflection on the meteoric rise in the popularity of hickory golf in the past few years. Tom Stewart, the local facilitator for this year's meeting, also spoke on collecting golf art.

If plethora is an appropriate descriptor, then plethora describes the number of BGCS members at the GCS meeting. Led by that Kirkwood chap from Edinburgh (and his charming Missus, Gillian) I am happy to say the rest of the troops featuring Messrs Hanna, Still, Gibbs, Rowley, Norcott, Mullock, Sherwood, Casey and a few others were on their best behavior—as long as they didn't keep late hours in the bar. They lent a somewhat dignified air to a decidedly undignified group and did their doggone best to boost our sagging economy. Cleveland, Ohio-based Alastair Johnston pretended to be a foreigner by wearing his Rangers FC pullover.

The **Society of Hickory Golfers** has taken two large steps forward in its development. The first is that with a large volume of member input it has written a constitution. Ratification of that document took place in November. The Society also announced

that it would conduct its first championship next summer. The dates are the 21-23 of July and the venue will be Mimosa Hills Country Club in Morganton, North Carolina. The Club's course is a 1920s Donald Ross gem which was recently renovated by Ross specialist Kris Spence. The Society has used that course twice in past years for its monthly outings and it is a favorite among SoHG members. Morganton is in the western North Carolina foothills, about an hour's drive east of Asheville. The SoHG continues to move deftly about the state of North Carolina (and occasionally South Carolina) holding monthly hickory golf meetings at a smorgasbord of wonderful golf courses. Captain Bill Engelson performs yeoman-like leadership but gets plenty of help from the brotherhood of SoHG members.

By now you have all heard of the passing of GCS co-founder **Bob Kuntz**. Many stories and anecdotes were told and retold in the days and months after he departed. Having known Bob for almost 30 years, I feel his most influential impact on the organization was the original Dayton gatherings. They were called the 'Dayton Fly In' meetings and were held at the Dayton Airport Inn on the grounds of the airport. In the late 1970s and early 1980s when air travel wasn't nearly as harrowing and exhausting as it is today, members actually flew in for a few days. Those meeting groups were fairly small and, as such, very manageable. GCS members who attended those sessions were the catalyst for the new organization for the next two decades.

Beside the obligatory trade sessions (where a lot of real trading, swapping and non-cash transactions took place) we'd all spend an afternoon at Bob's office and workshop where we would learn the various techniques of club repair and restoration that Bob made popular. Bob had a concern over his legacy and wanted to leave behind something bearing his handprint, like a book. For the longest

time he didn't know what to do until he was helped into a book project by Ralph Maltby at GolfWorks. Ralph's studio did the photography, published and distributed *Antique Golf Clubs: Their Repair and Restoration*, Bob's encyclopedia of restoration techniques for collectors.

We also played hickory golf at those sprint-time meetings and Bob reminded me, at the new—January—Dayton meeting this year, that he played a major part in starting the hickory golf movement way back in the early 1970s at those early meetings. It was the first hickory golf I had experienced and I am still using the same brassie and mashie niblick from the set I employed then over 27 years ago.

Perhaps the social event of 2007 was the auction sale of the clubs in **Jeff Ellis's collection** at Sotheby's, New York. For those who were not able to view the catalogue prior to the sale, the over 600 lots consisted of the clubs pictured and described in his books, in four sessions spread over two days. In the limelight were two square-toe irons of eighteenth century origin, the older of which sold for \$151,000. The other lot of interest was a long-headed wood attributed to Andrew Dickson which cost its buyer \$181,000. Reports are that the crowd assembled in the auction hall was somewhat less than the audiences of the auction sales of the early 1990s. It was difficult to conceive so many good clubs being thrust into a weak market at one time.

Our touring cousins, **Fiona and Nigel** were in New Jersey recently and reported on two of their experiences. They played golf at a newish club called Hamilton Farm in the town of Gladstone. The Club's golf facilities are somewhat unusual in that they have two vastly different eighteen-hole courses. The first, the Highlands Course, is a full length of championship caliber and extraordinary natural beauty. The second, called *The Hickory Course*, is 3080 yards in length and is the only USGA rated par three course in America. Fiona found it perfect for hitting her hickory clubs. Both courses were masterfully laid out by GCS member Mike Hurdzan and his partner Dana Fry. The Club is very traditional in nature. However, among the amenities it provides its members is a helipad in case they want to fly in from the Hamptons or Wall Street in a chopper.

The site of **next year's annual GCS meeting** has recently been announced. Ten years after the meeting was staged in Lexington, Kentucky it will return but to a different facility. The Marriott Griffin Gate resort will play host and a splendid facility it is. In the heart of Kentucky horse and bourbon country it is easily accessible and rich with amenities.

Another calendar item comes from the USGA. Construction of the new **Palmer Center for Golf History** is well under way. Museum Committee members, including a bunch of GCS members, toured the building site during their annual meeting in Far Hills this summer. Beside this new wing on the old museum building the USGA has several outreach programs in the making, which will be described in future *Letters from America*. The dedication of the Palmer Center is slated for September, 2008 at which time the treasures of the Museum will return to public view in new displays.

I wish you all a happy holiday season as I raise a pint in toast—awaiting Arsenal's arrival at Old Trafford for a right good spanking.

Brown Ale

Wanted

Small white **bust of Old Tom Morris**, made by Willow Art China of Langton. Has small transfer on base front, with arms of St Andrews. Required to replace accidental breakage.

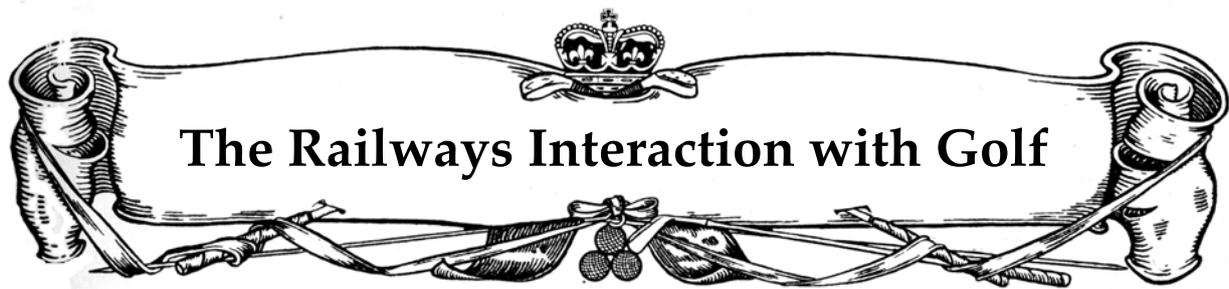
Please phone **Ian Douglas** in 01377 253489

The Editor lacks six copies from his archive of *Through the Green*, which he would like to acquire:

June 1999
September 1999
December 2000
September 2001
December 2001
March 2002

Please ring John Pearson on 01904 628711 if you have spare copies

—*•*—
Copy date for March TTG is the 15th February, 2008



The Railways Interaction with Golf

Ian Nalder

reviews early initiatives of British railway companies in promoting golf tourism

WHEN TODAY it is almost impossible to travel with golf clubs on cross-country trains and commuter trains, it might come as a surprise to see just how at one time the railways were consciously to go out of their way to help golf and golfers.

This era when other railway barons saw golf as a catalyst for their business lasted around 30 years. Yet the longest-lasting influence arose outside that period as a hangover from the Great War. It was the result of one man fighting to save his job when the directors of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS), who had taken over the Caledonian Railway, had lost confidence in the venture that he had master-minded. That man was Donald Matheson. His legacy is the Kings and Queens courses at Gleneagles and the world-famous hotel. He nurtured these when the LMS directors had failed to secure a sale for the complex to Americans.

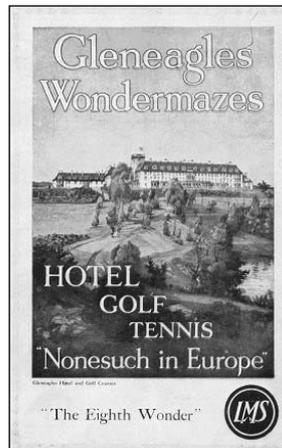
Commercial objectives

Alas the impact of the railways on many clubs is seldom apparent. Yet the stories that emerge are widespread in scope and contain nuggets to surprise and fascinate. Perhaps one should first appreciate what the railways were aiming to do before delving into this largely forgotten historical aspect. For they were in their hey-day. The advent of the motor car, and indeed the aeroplane, had still to dawn. The railways had seen off the canals as important freight carriers and were able to offer the masses the chance to travel – frankly, the prime market where coal was not the dominant consideration. To woo passengers whom they could charge a great deal more, they built hotels in remote spots and then enabled passengers to get there. In Scotland especially, where the magnet of fishing, climbing or walking

was arguably insufficient to attract the well-to-do in the numbers to make their long-distance trains pay, they were also to focus on golf.

This was a brave commitment. After all, golf was a new sport that only really started to amuse the affluent from the very late 1870s. With Queen Victoria helping to promote Scotland as a land both of mystery and unrivalled sporting opportunities, so it was that the affluent from London and the Home Counties would become utterly beguiled by their northern neighbour. In return, the Scots were gracious and friendly, courteous in the extreme, and quickly able to recognise that the few with fortune could continue to live in their magical surroundings and acquire an enhanced life-style. Golf would help.

As the game began to take off and interest house builders, whose customers saw property values on the back of proximity to a course, the railway companies too were alert. More houses meant more passengers for their trains. How could they profit from this was a consideration for the boardroom.



South-West Scotland

The classic scenario comes from the Glasgow and South Western Railway, who owned and operated the line from Glasgow to Ayr. Their line ran right by Prestwick, and the original home of the Open Championship, which can be traced back to 1860, but whose official commencement was in 1872. Indeed one could vault the wall at the back of the station and walk straight into the Club. Custom would have it that on competition days and at weekends a little lad would sit astride the wall and wave a red or green flag according to whether a sliced ball was on the tracks or safe.

Soon Prestwick was to have two more courses and Troon was to boast as many as seven, following

the success of Royal Troon (founded in 1878). From Irvine to Ayr, golf courses sprouted up, the area became a pleasing commuter belt for Glaswegians, and the line thrived. A virtuous circle only ever rivalled, but not surpassed, by the line between Liverpool and Southport, host to such marvellous courses as West Lancashire, Formby, Southport and Ainsdale, Hillside and Royal Birkdale, to name perhaps the principal ones.

If the railways can be said to have been the making of Prestwick, whose inception was in 1851, and coincided nicely with the early days of the railways, it was also to be its undoing as a championship venue. From 1860 until 1872, the Open was only ever held at Prestwick. After that it was staged there a dozen times up to and including the 1925 event. This was the year when the Scots almost to a man wanted the charismatic Macdonald Smith to triumph. He had grown up in Carnoustie before seeking his livelihood in the USA. Stylish in technique and immaculate in dress, he had won their hearts the previous September when trampling on George Duncan at Gleneagles in a 72-hole exhibition match sponsored by the LMS and White Horse Distillers. The golf was little short of phenomenal and the *Glasgow Herald* was to give it liberal coverage.

Recognising that seemingly every golfer in the West of Scotland would be wanting to see their hero in action, the Glasgow and South-Western Railway laid on all the rolling stock they could muster. Between 15,000 and 20,000 enthusiasts converged on Prestwick. If they did not exactly run riot, they were so many that the ticket collectors were overpowered. Many got in free. Some vaulted the wall. Others ran through bunkers in wild abandon, ever-anxious to obtain a vantage point in support of the great man.

Poor Macdonald Smith. After starting the round with a five-stroke lead, he felt hemmed in. He was hustled and jostled. Out in 42, his confidence and rhythm suffered. It proved to be a nightmare. Carding 82 he lost twelve shots to the winner, Jim Barnes's 70. He did not even get the runner up's slot, for he tumbled to fourth place behind Archie Compston and the pipe-smoking Ted Ray. The authorities accepted the inevitable. The Open would never return to Prestwick. Amateur Championships would be offered, but not the Open.

Meanwhile the railway companies had gone out of their way to court golfers. When in 1892, members from Glasgow's Killermont sought a links by the sea, Glasgow Gailes became established as a sister course to which travel from the City would necessitate rail. Five years later, this encouraged the

Duke of Portland to lease land on the seaward side of the tracks, that until then had been a shooting range, to the newly-formed Western Gailes club. As with Glasgow Gailes, the new Club's members were anxious to escape Clydeside's industrial smog.

Before the project could get under way, the Glasgow and South-Western Railway Company was prevailed upon to build a station and to provide cheap day tickets from the metropolis on the premise that the Club had stipulated 80% of its members would either live in Glasgow, or own a business there. Cleverly, the railway company insisted that cheap tickets would only run from 11am. So popular were these to become that a train out of St Enoch Station, Glasgow, became 'The Golfer's Train'. In fact the line itself acquired the tag of 'The Golfers' Line'.

New members of Glasgow Gailes were to use this station too. So, literally, the two clubs shared it even though this was virtually next door to the clubhouse of their rival and newcomer. The site for that happens to be on the old horse-drawn tramway that ran from Irvine to Ayr. Arguably this is the oldest rail system to carry coal commercially, for it opened in 1812, three years before the Battle of Waterloo. This early dependence of Western Gailes upon the railway is clear today: the first two holes are named *Station* and *Railway*. Moreover, the dependence remained total for generations since when members were choosing to arrive by car as opposed to train, the sole access was via the level crossing by the station. With British Rail sensing they could economise by refusing to pay for the keeper to man it on Sundays, the Club was held to ransom. They had no alternative but to pick up the tab. To fund this an honesty box was provided into which the motorist was asked to contribute half a crown. This practice continued even when automatic signalling was introduced whereby the crossing could be controlled. There is now no trace of this station. It closed in 1966 and in due course was pulled down.

This early success of the Glasgow and South-Western in appealing to golfers proved such that in 1896, the directors determined to drive their railway south beyond Ayr to Girvan and so open up Robbie Burns country. They gave this the romantic title of the Maiden and Dunure Light Railway. Conscious that the area was sparsely populated, to encourage passengers in addition to those who would relish a stunning coastline and ancient castles, they proposed to establish a luxury hotel and golf course beyond compare on land at Turnberry belonging to the Marquess of Ailsa. As a willing seller, they elected him to their Board.

The Marquess already had a thirteen-hole course there. This would be upgraded, a second one of nine holes would be created for ladies, and no expense was to be spared. Willie Fernie, Open Champion in 1883 and doyen of a famous Scottish family, was chosen to be architect. What the directors had not fully reckoned with was that three years would elapse before the commissioners were to approve a light railway. This delay would ultimately put them seven years behind the Great Northern Railway, whose golfing complex at Cruden Bay came to fruition in 1899. It would also place them behind the new hotel of the Highland Railway overlooking Dornoch's first hole. This opened in 1904 and followed the creation of the Dornoch Light Railway in 1902. Quite clearly the success of the Golfer's Line was not lost on the competition.

Nevertheless, with the directors still confident that the expanding market for golf was a profitable proposition, the hotel at Turnberry, which finally opened along with the line in May 1906, boasted 131 rooms, so was twice the size of the Highland's at Dornoch. Access was direct from the platform through a glass conservatory, there were hot as well as sea water baths, billiards, and of course, a bridge room. The ever-changing views from the elevated site towards Ailsa Craig were incomparable. Not until Gleneagles opened after the Great War was its

opulence and position to be matched.

Yet this brave venture was doomed to fail. Eleven country stations generated only low levels of traffic and seed potatoes in season were insufficient to bolster the sorry accounts. The light railway from Ayr only lasted until 1913 and although Turnberry could be approached from the south, in 1942 the LMS who had long since taken over the founding company, axed the rump of the line from the south and with it the sleeper service from London.

Post war management in the LMS HQ at Euston must have regarded Turnberry as an albatross. A bus service to the hotel was offered from Kilmarnock. But this was no way to attract the wealthy to rail. The LMS lost interest and British Transport Hotels struggled manfully to promote it as a golfing resort with chefs famous for their Michelin stars. But all to very little avail.

The far North-East

While the Glasgow and South Western Railway was prospering due to golf in the latter years of the nineteenth century, their principal rival in attracting the English holiday business to Scotland was the Great Northern Railway. In 1893 they obtained powers to build a line north of Aberdeen to Boddam along with a hotel and golf course at

GLASGOW AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

THE TWO
Turnberry Golf Courses

HAVE BEEN REMODELLED
UNDER EXPERT ADVISERS.

Length of No. 1 Course, 6,115 yards.
Length of No. 2 Course, 5,115 yards.

TURF UNEQUALLED ANYWHERE!
Convenient Train Service.

GLASGOW, ST. ENOCH STATION,
May, 1906.

DAVID COOPER,
General Manager.

TROON

IDEAL HOLIDAY RESORT

SIX GOLF COURSES SANDY BEACH
BOATING BATHING TENNIS BOWLING AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS

The GOLF COURSES on the
WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND are
most conveniently reached by the

MIDLAND &
GLASGOW & SOUTH WESTERN
RAILWAYS

Early posters promoting golf in Ayrshire

Cruden Bay. They would have preferred to extend the line to Peterhead, three miles further north, but the Highland Railway who already served Peterhead, objected. That failure was in due course to be crucial. It denied them essential day-to-day passenger traffic as well as massive opportunities to convey fish, since that on offer from Boddam never reached expectations. However, in 1897 the fifteen-an-a-half-mile long line opened, and eighteen months later so did the hotel now linked to the station by a tramway. Preceding both was the golf course that they commissioned from Old Tom Morris, which had bedded in nicely to the delight of the hotel guests. Initially the Great Northern had pondered whether to establish their golfing resort at Spey Bay. But that was a leap too far from both London and prosperous Aberdeen.

The great Northern's plans for Cruden Bay were sophisticated. After all this was the first bespoke golfing resort linked to rail. It was to be a model. With 96 bedrooms, the hotel built of the local red granite looked to many like a fortress in the Sahara. It soon acquired the tag of 'The Palace in the Sandhills'. Attractions included tennis, croquet, cricket, cycling and bowls; and the ladies had their own nine-hole course. Recognising that a champagne lifestyle would be expected, eighteen months before the hotel was scheduled to open they laid in stocks of Pommery, Moët & Chandon, and Mumm, so that these could happily mature. Later they would be joined by Ayala and Veuve Clicquot, and then Louis Roederer, which the Great Northern imported direct to save the London wine merchant's mark up.

The clientele was as carefully chosen as the champagne. They included Sir William Burrell, the Glasgow ship owner, whose museum at Pollok in his honour is justly renowned; the Colman family, famous for their Norwich mustard; the Crawfords, who were synonymous with biscuits; the Gilbeys, household names for gin and wine; the McEwans, Scotland's leading brewers and forerunners of Scottish and Newcastle; and the Wills tobacco family from Bristol. Little wonder then, that up to 100 schoolboys would be volunteering to caddy in the hope of currying favour as well as much needed pocket money.

The happy atmosphere that prevailed was matched by the gorgeous quality of the golfing scene the hotel overlooked. The Great Northern promoted Cruden Bay avidly. Even the LMS was to join in for they understood that they could prosper from the long trunk journey from Euston to Aberdeen. With a certain poetic licence they included Cruden Bay in their book *Golf at its Best on the LMS*, even

though they had no involvement in the last leg of the journey beyond Aberdeen.

Yet despite the confidence of those Scottish entrepreneurs in the home of golf, red ink dogged the resort's balance sheet. The hotel manager resigned within two years and her successor was dismissed after sixteen months. In fact neither the hotel nor the line ever paid their way. Cheap tickets at the weekend scarcely worked either. The railway company was vilified for encouraging desecration of the Sabbath while the local newspaper tongue in cheek defended the Great Northern for 'beguiling a lot idle fellows out to Cruden Bay where they will be just as well employed ... as loafing about church doors and annoying worshippers'.

No matter what, the exercise had failure written all over it. Those in the firing line wished they had never been involved. In 1932 the line closed to passenger traffic. A Rolls Royce was provided to take the wealthy from Aberdeen Station to the hotel. But the world had moved on. In preference to the chill and wind of the north east coast, better-off families headed for the warmth of the Continent. In World War II the hotel was used as a hospital. In 1945 it was shut down as refurbishment was considered too costly. Nevertheless, hardy Aberdonians never shed a tear. They have continued to enjoy Cruden Bay's wonderful turf and visiting Americans have been enticed to regard it as an essential stopover on a golfing trip to Scotland.

With golfers seen as such an important market, the Highland Railway felt they had no need to embark on such an extravagant scheme as the Great Northern. They took advantage of the 1896 Railways Act. This was to permit local lines to be built to less exacting standards than the norm. The Duke of Sutherland played his part. He was to accept the chairmanship of the Dornoch Light Railway, then persuade the Highland to build it. This was to connect Dornoch, with its majestic golf course, to the main line at the Mound as it wound its way toward Golspie, Brora and the North.

The Highland was not hard to persuade. They envisaged a luxury hotel, with billiards room and hairdressing salon, adjacent to the golf course and a short walk from the station. This opened in 1904, two years after the Dornoch Light Railway. With 65 bedrooms this reflected more realistic expectations than the 'Palace in the Sandhills'. Its success was to continue right up to the time the branch was axed by Beeching in the mid-1960s. Under a change of ownership the hotel has continued. But its glory days are over, for it is now frequented by coach passengers on a one-night stand for whom golf is an irrelevance.

Gleneagles – A world-class resort

It is perhaps a quirk of fate that the fourth Scottish railway company to embark on a golfing enterprise succeeded where the others found failure. This was the Caledonian Railway. The architect for this was Donald Matheson, General Manager when the idea struck him in 1910 as he was on holiday at Strathearn. The Caledonian's influence was strong in Glasgow, Edinburgh and the Highlands but this was not linked to golf, which was particularly flourishing along the coast. Sensing that the valley between Stirling and Perth offered the potential for beautiful golfing country, but being an engineer rather than an hotelier, he obtained the backing of the Board to a scheme that would be operated in conjunction with partners. Firstly, however, he needed to establish a golf course. To do this he chose James Braid. Wisdom indeed.

Ambitious throughout, ancillaries to a hotel necessitated an electric power station, a laundry, central heating plant, a garage, gate lodges, and a clubhouse. The capital commitment was vast. Then along came the Great War. By 1918 the hotel was still a shell as work had ceased during its duration. However, the golf course was playable and play began there the next May. When interest was expressed from the USA about buying the course and this shell of a hotel, the directors breathed a sigh of relief. Alas, the offer lapsed. So Matheson, as General Manager, was charged with the development along with fulfilling his normal railway duties. Literally, his job was on the line.

That he succeeded was due to the co-operation he forged with the North British Rubber Company and the *Glasgow Herald*, to sponsor golf tournaments, and of course, the ensuing publicity that this major newspaper embarked upon. Perhaps the master public relations coup was to preface the 1921 *Glasgow Herald* Tournament with an international match between Britain and the USA. This was the first of



Magnificent Gleneagles poster from between the wars

its kind and the inspiration for the Ryder Cup that started six years later. Suffice to say that all were enchanted with Gleneagles and the British were triumphant by 9 – 3 with three matches halved.

Active promotion continued. Hence the challenge match between George Duncan and Macdonald Smith for which the LMS, who, under the 1924 Grouping now owned the Caledonian, gave special travelling facilities. Most of the 3000 onlookers, who were absorbed by the brilliance of the spectacle, had travelled there by train. Recognising they had a magnet in Gleneagles, the LMS never gave up. With the Queens course opening in 1925 to complement the Kings, the 36-hole Silver Tassie tournament that was played over both courses saw rich socialites with a talent for the game descend on Gleneagles, right up to 1939. After the War when the hotel was recovering from having been a convalescent hospital, money was tight and affluent golfers were too few to ensure that those heady days would continue. With aspiring Scots opting to stay at nearby B&Bs, the Silver Tassie was reduced to just another local event.

Rather different marketing was now to focus on the really rich, regardless of their golfing prowess. And so it has remained, with the hotel a byword for luxury in a superb environment. For generations it has been particularly popular with Americans, but it is doubtful if more than a handful of customers now arrive by rail, even though the station remains. However its extraordinary success is self-evident.

When British Transport Hotels owned 40 hotels that were the legacy of railway entrepreneurs, Gleneagles alone accounted for more than 50% of its profits. Today it is the sole hotel in the mighty Diageo empire, renowned world-wide for its quality whiskies, wine and spirits. They maintain it quite wonderfully, fully conscious of the inheritance they have acquired. Within Scotland, indeed Britain, it is unique. Donald Matheson is long forgotten. But by rights he ought to be remembered with gratitude. Perhaps some memorial to him before the Ryder Cup is staged there in 2015 would be a fitting tribute.

We thank Ian Nalder for this account of the railways and golf; a sequel will be published in a future issue of TTG. Members are recommended to read Ian's excellent Scotland's Golf in Days of Steam (2000) and Golf and the Railway Connection (2003), both published by the Scottish Cultural Press. The latter is still in print.

1907, Massy's Greatest Year

This year is the 100 th anniversary of the first victory in the Open Championship by someone from abroad, the Frenchman, Arnaud Massy.

*His triumphant year is recalled by
Jean Bernard Kazmierczak*

AT THE TURN OF THE LAST CENTURY, Sir Everard Hambro regularly spent his winter holidays in Biarritz. Soon he realised that a young left-handed caddie had exceptional skills in the game of golf. This young man, just over twenty years old, was Arnaud Massy. Sir Everard suggested he go to North Berwick where he could improve his golf. So, in 1898 Arnaud travelled for the first time to East Lothian where he was welcomed at the Station by Davie Grant (Senior). The period in North Berwick coincided with the complete restructuring of Arnaud's swing – this time right-handed.

Massy was an awkward character, described by Darwin as subject to mood swings during his tournament career, and later as an irascible and authoritarian employer. Nevertheless, in North Berwick, he built a strong friendship with Ben Sayers and Davie Grant's son, Arthur. He was able to persuade them to visit his beloved Basque region in the South West of France. Arthur even spent a few years in Biarritz as a pro, before moving to Le Touquet.

Wintering in the South of France

In February 1907, the three friends were in Biarritz, joined by Jean Gassiat – another great Basque player. A foursome match was organised: France against Scotland. Massy and Gassiat won the match on the last green. Nobody knew at that time that it was only a *mise en bouche* (a taste of things to come). The next week, a far more important event took place

in Cannes. The Grand Duke Michel Michailovitch – founder and president of the Cannes (Mandelieu) Golf Club – invited ten of the greatest players¹ for a series of matches. It was one of the finest set of players ever to come to the French Riviera up to that time: James Braid, JH Taylor, Harry Vardon and his brother Tom, Sandy Herd, Jack White, Rowland Jones, Ted Ray, Ben Sayers and – Arnaud Massy, the only French player. The tournament carried £150 in prize money and the same amount in expenses.



*Arnaud Massy
1877 - 1958*

Massy won the stroke play event, as well as the fourball competition, paired with Rowland Jones. To commemorate this success, the Grand Duke offered Massy a gold medal, which was engraved with his coat of arms.

In June, The Open was to be played in Hoylake. Before it started, James Braid, Champion in 1905 and 1906 was favourite. For the first time, with 193 entrants, two qualifying rounds were organised. Massy took a solid lead on the first day with 73+74 = 147 – five strokes better than the next player Sandy Herd (71+81). The second day was very windy and rainy; Taylor had the leading score of 154 (76+78).

June the 20th was the official first day of The

¹ Pierre Deschamps, in the foreword of Massy's book *Le Golf* refers to only eight players. Henry Leach in the *American Golfer* makes the same error. The above list of competitors is as in Peter Lewis' *The Dawn of Professional Golf* and also in the contemporary French magazine *La Vie au Grand Air* (March 1907) which gives a small pen portrait of each player.

Open. The weather was even worse. JH described it as 'heart-breaking and nerve-racking'. Massy loved such weather and again took the lead of the first day in $76+81 = 157$, one stroke ahead of Taylor ($79+79$) and Tom Ball ($80+78$). Vardon was five strokes behind and Braid scored 167.

Massy and Taylor fought for the lead during the third round, Arnaud's 78 leaving him one stroke behind, after JH's 76. Braid recovered strongly with a 75 while Vardon had the best score of the day with 74. Everything was still possible.

In the final round Massy played steadily. Taylor pulled his tee-shot out of bounds at the Third and never recovered. Eventually, Arnaud won with a total of 314, two strokes ahead of runner-up Taylor, to become the first European and to the present day, the only Frenchman, to win the Open Championship. On being presented with the Claret Jug, he learnt that his wife Janet had just given birth to a baby girl whom they eventually christened Margot Hoylake Massy. On his return to North Berwick he was met at the Station by a large crowd and the Town Band, who led him home to the tune of *See the Conquering Hero Comes*.



Arnaud receives the claret jug at Royal Liverpool

Another national title

A few days later, Massy returned to France to play in the second holding of the French Open. The Committee of the Golf Club de Paris and its president, Pierre Deschamps, welcomed him on arrival at the *Gare du Nord* and gave him a souvenir gold medal engraved *Arnaud Massy Champion du Monde* and on the reverse *Hoylake, 1907*. 'World Champion': this was the usual way to refer to the Open Champion on the Continent, and it was the style he was to use on the title page of his book *Le Golf*, when it was first published in French, in 1911.

Such European success called for revenge. The British professionals travelled *en nombre* to La Boulie. Even Braid, who was easily seasick and reluctant to play abroad, crossed the Channel to Paris. It was not a bad decision. At the end of the first day, he and Massy were tied for the lead with 149. In the third round, Massy shot a good 74 while Braid had 76 and Vardon a rather ordinary 79. 75s from Massy and Braid in the final round were sufficient for Massy to win his own national title by two strokes from Braid, one ahead of runner up Gassiat.



Stake match against James Braid at Royal Cinque Ports



... and against Taylor at Seacroft



Arnaud Massy drives during the 1907 Open



Gold medals presented to Arnaud Massy by the French Golf Federation, and the national government

Other 1907 events

After these last two victories a challenge match of Massy against Braid was sought for a stake of £100 – big money in those days and higher than the winning purse in the Open Championship. After some difficulties in finding a venue, the match was set up at Deal, on the 19th of December – one week before Christmas. While the stake did not exactly match the expected £100, it was nevertheless ‘a substantial purse, privately subscribed’. There is a postcard featuring this match. On its back, we can read that it was published by Boots the Chemist – a possible sponsor of the event.

In the morning, Braid played well and was 3 up at the Sixteenth before losing the two last holes. After lunch, Massy squared the match at the first hole, took the lead at the Third. He was never overtaken by Braid and won at the Seventeenth by 2 and 1. The *Liverpool Daily Courier* reported that ‘the Frenchman has gained the triple crown victory’, referring to The Open, the French Open and the Deal match.

This short account is of course incomplete. According to Peter Lewis, Massy played seven other, less important matches in Great Britain in 1907. For example, he met Taylor in an exhibition match of 36 holes at Seacroft for appearance fees of £15 each. This time, JH dominated his opponent over the first eighteen but after lunch, Massy recovered to square the match at the Seventh. Then the Basque fatally refreshed himself with a bottle of red wine. The records do not tell us what kind of wine it was but let us assume it was not good Bordeaux claret. Taylor won by 3 and 2.

It is interesting to note that the two 1907 medals presented by the Golf Club de Paris, which Massy cherished so much, were fastened together. He wore them as fob medals on his watch chain until his death in April 1950. In fact, there were not two, but three medals. The third is a small gold medal given to him by the French Government much later. Unfortunately, we do not know why he received it, although it was sufficiently important to him personally to be linked to the two others.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Royal Cinque Ports and Seacroft GCs for their very kind and significant help in research for this account. Also, Gillian Kirkwood, who provided a number of images..

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Auction News



Sotheby's auction of the Jeff Ellis Collection

The star-studded Ellis collection of clubs, familiar to so many of us through Jeff's *The Clubmakers Art*, went on sale in Sotheby's New York auction rooms in September. The catalogue itself ran to 344 pages, packed with glossy photographs, full descriptions of the lots and much background detail on the individuals, families and organisations that were responsible for their manufacture.

With so many fine items not having a recent auction history, it was difficult to discern a pattern, but many of the rarest and most collectable of the lots seemed to sell at or around estimate.

The **RT Jones** phenomenon continues, and autograph sets of irons fetched record prices: a **twelve-club set** from c.1930 by Stewarts making \$10,625 (est \$2500 – 3500), while a **nine-club set** by Spalding of c.1933 made \$12,750 (\$2500 – 3500). All actuals included a hefty buyer's premium of 25%.

Though a 17th century heavy iron failed to meet its reserve of \$125,000, a number of other early clubs sold: a **square-toed iron** from a similar period made \$151,000 (\$125 – 175,000), and a **heavy iron formerly owned by the Duke of Atholl**, \$31,000 (\$25 – 35,000).

Star items in the whole sale were probably the **putter attributed to Andrew Dickson** (who in Letha dwelled), making \$181,000 (\$200 – 300,000), and a **scraper from an unknown 18th century maker** at \$91,000 (\$100 – 150,000). A **Jackson baffing spoon** made \$18,750 (\$15 – 20,000), a **McEwan presentation putter with carved head** \$31,000 (\$30 – 40,000) and a similar one from **Philp**, \$37,500 (\$30 – 40,000).

The (thought-to-be) **unique Palmer fork-shaft wood and iron** each made \$49,000 (\$30 – 40,000) while the **Bromley and Birkley silver trophy club** with attached silver balls made \$43,000 compared with an estimate of \$15 – 20,000.

In all the sale realised over \$2 million, including buyer's premium.

Bonham's sale at Chester on the 25th of January

We commented previously this year on the growing quality of the Bonhams January sale, which is assuming a mid-winter prominence in our programme similar to the golden mid-eighties, when it was of true international importance. Although the BGCS AGM has moved on to Royal Liverpool later in the Spring, we now have the Trade Fair and dinner at a local hotel (with the fair occasionally

displacing to Vicars Cross GC).

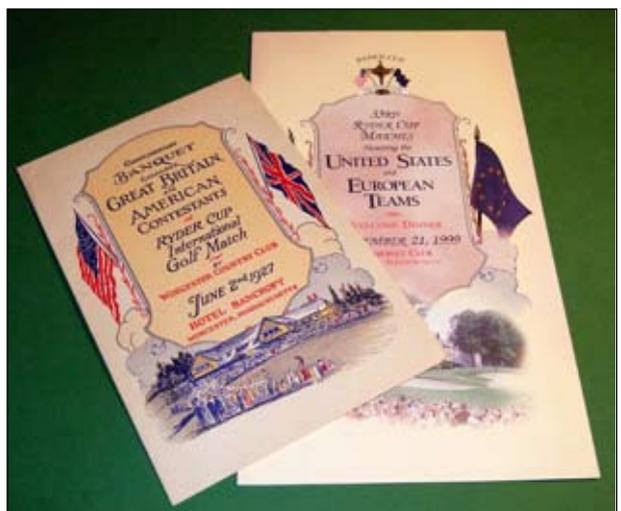
Star item in January's sale is a **putter made by Robert Forgan for Sam Ryder**, which bears his initials, comes with an impeccable provenance, and is estimated at £20 – 30,000.

Bonhams also have a collection of historic **dinner menus**, notably that for the **inaugural Ryder Cup match at Worcester, Massachusetts**, on the 2nd of June, 1927 (est £4000). Ben Crenshaw, the American Captain arranged for the design of the **1999 menu** to be based on this original, and this too is on offer with an estimate of a more-affordable £300.

Continuing with the Ryder Cup theme, Bonhams also offer the **1927 American team captain's bag from Walter Hagen**, still bearing his name and national flag (est £4000).



Walter's flying kit includes the bag featured in the sale



Menus from Ryder Cup Dinners of 1927 and 1999



Legends of the Ladies Links

by
Liz Pook

GLADYS RAVENSCROFT (later Mrs Temple Dobell) holds a distinguished place in the history of British ladies amateur golf, for along with Scotland's Dorothy Campbell Hurd and England's Pamela Barton, all three crossed the Atlantic and returned with the coveted American title.

As with our first heroine, Gladys also lived on the Wirral Peninsula in Cheshire. However that is where the similarity ended, for one could not possibly have met two more totally different personalities. Indeed Gladys was larger than life itself, both in her actual physical appearance and character. Generous of spirit she loved people and was in turn adored by all her family, her hundreds of friends and especially all those at club level she played with, whatever their handicap – be it with considerable awe! She was a *tour de force* playing in her last county final at the grand age of 61, at George Duncan's Mere in 1949, against Mrs Joan Cowper who now herself at almost 90, remembers Gladys as 'a lovely warm lady and always so much fun'.

In potted histories it always records that Gladys was born in Rock Ferry, on the 3rd of May 1888. But now on good authority we learn from her grandson that he believes she was born across the Mersey in Faulkner Square, Liverpool (L8 7NU), now the site

of some public gardens and near the Cathedral) the third of four children. Then, maybe when slightly older, to the family home *The Firs*, in the once grand leafy surroundings of Egerton Park, Rock Ferry.



Gladys Ravenscroft

1888 - 1960

The caddie's entrance

Within *Golf at Hoylake* by Messrs Behrend and Graham, Betty Lloyd, (who knew her well) informs us that:

from an early age Gladys had been a permit-holder of the Royal Liverpool, a title then given to the female relatives of members. This allowed them the facility to play golf, but little more. Gladys would be taken to the Club by her father and would change her shoes in the car, and then proceed to the 1st tee via the caddies' entrance. On quiet days, the Secretary would invite Mr Ravenscroft to bring his daughter into his office for a cup of tea. She would then leave the building – via the caddies' entrance.

Family holiday golf was played over the nine-hole Maelog Lake Hotel links, situated between the actual lake, the main road and sand dunes towards the sea at Rhosneigr, on the south west coast of the Isle of Anglesey. The Ravenscrofts began these idyllic times in 1899/1900, when Gladys was twelve. They would arrive by train via Rock Ferry. Changing first at Chester, they would then

leave upon The Holyhead Line with its 34 railway station stops, before being met by pony and trap, and taken to their home *Trwst-y-Dom* (the noise of the waves) in Harrison Drive, overlooking the Front Beach and the Snowdonia Mountains. Then in 1914 The Anglesey Golf Club evolved as a collaborative project between two businessmen namely Charles Palethorpe (of sausage making fame) and no less than Gladys' father James Ravenscroft, who had prospered with his wine and spirits business, particularly whisky distilling and blending of the *Raven* brand. The two gentlemen along with some local dignitaries arranged to rent an area of common land overlooking Cymran Sands and Bay and employed the famous Harold Hilton to create the links.

Give up hockey young lady!

Gladys was an excellent all-round games competitor and played hockey to senior county level. However when she became a member of Bromborough Golf Club the Professional, Fred Robson, wisely suggested in order to improve, she give up hockey and concentrate on golf with its wider appeal and greater possibilities. This she did and joined Formby Ladies in 1906, no doubt to gain experience playing alongside their crack player Miss Beryl Brown (later Mrs Humphrey Newton). Indeed later she named her favourite course as Formby Ladies having achieved a hole in one at the sixth.

In 1908 she became a Committee Member at Bromborough playing off ten handicap, and improving so rapidly that the Cheshire County selectors considered her good enough for their team. The following year she entered the Ladies Championship at nearby Birkdale. Gladys, tall and strong was talked of in glowing terms, by no less than Mabel E Stringer and Eleanor E Helme, the prominent writers of the day and competitors themselves. For Gladys had caused quite a stir by defeating ex-champions: 'the soundest of Irish players Miss Walker Leigh, then at the zenith of her golfing powers; and Miss Lily Moore of Midlands fame.' She only went out in the fifth round. Even Cecil Leitch later remarked that 'she was quickly recognised as a most powerful player and a dangerous opponent for anyone in the near future'.

Then in 1910 at Westward Ho! Gladys led the qualifiers in the most atrocious weather, 'when no one could catch her'. Rightly so the following year she was rewarded with a place on the England team in the Home International matches prior

to the Ladies Championships. The 'flapper' had arrived and throughout her long and illustrious career, Gladys always entered championships from Bromborough Golf Club, although associated with many other clubs.

The 1911 Championships were held over the majestic Portrush links and according to Miss Helme:

So far as the week's work went The Match was billed for 12.35, Miss Cecil Leitch (Carlisle and Silloth) v Miss Gladys Ravenscroft (Bromborough.) Excitement ran furiously high. The most frivolous of us was sobered at the thought that before the day was out one of these two potential champions must die. Even Miss Ravenscroft herself owned that she could not sleep the night before! The match went on and on and finally at the 22nd, Miss Leitch topped her shot and Miss Ravenscroft had won. The first of a long series of battles between these two was over, and everybody cheered themselves hoarse and Miss Ravenscroft was hustled on to the nearest jaunting car (pony and trap) but in spite of the reckless speed the next round came too soon and reaction was inevitable after such a morning struggle.

Writing later in her own book *Golf* (1924) Miss Leitch commented that 'at the 19th and 20th I squandered my chances by bad putting and lost the 22nd by general raggedness!' Alas, Gladys in the afternoon was beaten on the last green by a Mrs Bourne, who was nearly in tears at doing such a wicked deed, but as ever Gladys was gracious and all smiles in defeat.

2000 watch victory at Turnberry

The following year 1912, Gladys established herself among the elite, when she won the Ladies Championship at Turnberry in grand style. Coming third in the pre qualifying round she was in fine form, beating all her opponents with considerable ease up until the semi finals, when again she met Miss Leitch. Cecil that is, as all five Leitch girls were present, a championship record and all under the eagle eye of their mother and aunt. The course was long even by today's standards at 6120 yards with only two short holes measuring a challenging 160 and 165 yards. It was a severe test for the 118 competitors and a shame that the Ravenscroft v Leitch semi final clash was not the actual final. For according to Miss Helme: 'It was a grand encounter involving the two best players in the field and Miss Ravenscroft produced two perfect specimens to win the 18th.' *Golf Illustrated* reported the afternoon's

final, when Gladys played Devon's Miss Stella Temple (Westward Ho!) as follows:

Speculations as to the final were varied, one section saying that the morning's strain would have exhausted Miss Ravenscroft's game and that she would fall a victim to Miss Temple, who was in the happy position of having all to gain and nothing to lose, the others saying that Miss Temple would be annihilated before many holes were played. Both were wrong. Miss Temple played a sound plucky game. Miss Ravenscroft showed some of her best form, though there were patches of indifferent play, but it was not until the 16th green that she could claim victory.

Whilst the quality of the golf did not match up to many previous finals, Gladys ran out the worthy winner by 3 and 2, having had much her own way against a far less powerful but 'charming' Miss Temple.¹

Once again we return to *Golf at Hoylake* and the chapter by Betty Lloyd who informs us that after becoming Ladies Champion, Gladys received many telegrams of congratulations. Notable among them was one from her father: 'Good old Gladys, delighted, David is dining with me to celebrate. Hope you will feel fit after the exertion, and mother no worse for excitement. Proud Father.'

1 Stella Temple enlisted during the Great War and was awarded an OBE for her brave deeds in France. Unfortunately, while across in England to receive her decoration in 1919, she became a victim of the Spanish flu pandemic and died within a few days.

Sir William Lever, later to become Lord Leverhulme, then gave a lavish dinner party which had an extensive menu in her honour at Thornton Manor. Gladys was then elected as the first Honorary Life Member of Bromborough GC in 1912 and Sir William commissioned the portrait in oils by Frank Copnall that hangs in the clubhouse today.

Praise from the Open Champion

The much-revered Open Champion George Duncan within his *Golf for Women* (1912) wrote praising the champion by saying:

Her golf is always marked by vigour. She drives a very long way. Her swing is fairly upright and at the top there is a slight pause, during which she leans forward to the left, with the result that at the instant of impact, the face of the club is turned slightly over on to the ball. Thus she introduces overspin, which makes her particularly good against the wind. Miss Ravenscroft hits her iron beautifully, frequently bringing the push shot into play and giving her caddie plenty to do in the matter of replacing divots!

Duncan suggested she was best at the mashie shot which she hit tremendous distances. Unfortunately he indicated that she was not a born putter! However full of courage she possessed in his opinion 'a splendid temperament for the game'.

Later that same year, however, Miss Leitch was to gain revenge when she trounced Gladys 6 and 5 in the 36 hole final of the French Open at Le Touquet.



Bunkered at the Ninth in her final against Stella Temple. Turnberry, 1912

Famous win across the Atlantic

The following year 1913 Gladys was to reach the peak of her golf career. For along with other British ladies, including her fellow Cheshire close life long friend Miss Muriel Dodd (Moreton), the Irish Champion Miss Mabel Harrison and Miss Spence also from Moreton, they crossed the Atlantic. First of all they played in the Ottawa and Montreal areas in various events and then they finally competed in the Canadian Ladies, which Muriel Dodd duly won in grand style.

The ladies then travelled down to Wilmington Country Club, Delaware, for the United States Women's National Championships, where Gladys first of all won the qualifying round with a gross 88. This was no mean feat as the course was heavy and soggy due to recent rains and very high winds militated against low scoring. Mind you the course measured a lengthy 6034 yards with four short holes each measuring 155, 173, 176 and 179 – hardly easy holes. The longest measured an extremely demanding 567 yards, with another at 520 yards. Personally I marvel at the feats they performed all with hickory and it would be most interesting to see how our modern day titans would have scored using the same equipment. Although the field contained an international entry, with no less than ten players from foreign lands, the American press suggested that the British players were head and shoulders above their own, which naturally included the two Curtis sisters.

In round one Gladys beat Lottie Dod's friend



*Portrait by Frank Copnall
courtesy, Bromborough GC*

Francis Griscom (Merion) by 6 and 5, then a Miss Rosenthal 2 and 1, and then a gutsy Miss Osgood from Brookline 3 and 2. In the semis she beat a totally out of form Muriel Dodd by no less than 8 and 7. It must have been a difficult match for these two firm friends but Gladys was in relentless form. And so to the final against Miss Marion Hollins (Westbrook) who was another long hitter. However apart from round one her games were long including a visit to the Twentieth. It is fair to say reading the reports of the final that because of inclement weather the scoring was somewhat indifferent, but with an



Gladys driving from the Fifth in the final at Turnberry, watched by Stella Temple (wearing gloves)



Gladys and Marion Hollins, before the Final of the American Championship, 1912



Gladys Ravenscroft – American Ladies Champion, 1912

excellent two at the short seventh Miss Ravenscroft stamped her considerable mark upon the final. Whilst the match was exciting, with never more than two holes separating the players, our heroine did seem to have the upper hand.

An enjoyable feature of the week was on the preceding Saturday a match was played between the ladies of Great Britain and Canada against America. GB and Canada narrowly won by four matches to three.

Later in 1916 writing within her own excellent and informative book *Golf for Women* by 'a Woman Golfer' Mabel S Hoskins suggested that Gladys:

has a touch of the professional male in the way she hits the ball and she might be likened to the Ted Ray of the irons. She is a woman of the Amazon mould, a perfect picture in robust health. When she took an iron in her hand, the spectator indubitably felt that something had to go. She held her body rigid, her eye on the ball religiously and went into the turf in just the same manner as do the male professionals.

Golf Illustrated, covering the championship, congratulated Miss Ravenscroft, suggesting that:

Miss Hollins is a name unfamiliar to us over here, but the player who takes Miss Ravenscroft to the last green is one whose game we shall watch with interest in the future.²

Welcome home

On arriving home both Gladys and Muriel Dodd returned as national heroines and the *Birkenhead and Cheshire Advertiser* and *Wallasey Guardian* carried reams of coverage including:

The English and America flags were flying from the clubhouse and were printed on the scoring cards, which were used for the clock golf, ladder golf, and the nine hole putting competition.

Everywhere there were flowers, bunting and bedecked buildings all looking as if royalty were arriving.

The trophies which the victorious ladies had brought home with them were on view, and presented a very imposing array. The cup, which Miss Ravenscroft holds for one year, was presented, together with a handsome medal and it was a great

² This was Marion Hollins' first appearance in the American Ladies' Championship. She was to win the title in 1921, and went on to become the first Captain of the American Curtis Cup team in 1932.

concession that she was able to bring the trophy home. Several other cups and medals were also on display. Although Miss Dodd is not a member of the Bromborough club, she was invited to the 'At Home' as a guest of honour, and her trophies were shown. A very interesting collection of American press cuttings had been arranged in an album and presented to Miss Ravenscroft by a friend, and it was exhibited in the cosy study of the Club. There were some very cute ideas of American journalism included and many humorous cartoons, one of Miss Ravenscroft's mascot, a huge black cat.

Miss Ravenscroft received the heartiest congratulations of all, was in mole, with a saxe-blue golf jersey and a blue hat banded with white moiré. Miss Dodd also wore golfing attire in shades of Japanese blue and her Oriental sailor hat was softened by a black velvet underlining.

By 1914, according to the *Ladies Golf Union Year Book* Gladys was Bromborough's Honorary Secretary – how on earth did she find the time!

The Championships of 1914 were played at Hunstanton, when Gladys once more reached the final. The vast gallery was treated to a gem of a match when Gladys and Cecil Leitch once more did battle. Alas! our Cheshire champion bravely went down 2 and 1, over the now 36 hole final. This was the last Ladies Championship to be held until after the First World War.

Another khaki ceremony

However, romance was in the air for Gladys. For some time she had had an admirer in a family friend and after a lightning engagement of a few weeks Gladys married Lieutenant Alfred Temple Dobell on the 12th of August at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, before he left for the horrors of The Somme. Cecil Leitch, who was a guest, remembers the occasion as 'a grey miserable day'. *The Gentlewoman* reported:

the simple solemn service ended with the now so familiar hymn for absent friends sung kneeling, whilst the rain fell in noisy torrents, the lightning flashed and the thunder crashed outside – all so typical of the world's happenings today. Then by the time the usual proceedings in the vestry were over the storm had passed, and amid the waving of hands of the assembled friends outside on the steps the happy couple drove away. On account of the War no reception was held.

During the war years Mrs Temple Dobell was busy with domestic duties living in the London area and bringing up their two children.. Thankfully, Alfred returned from France and over the next few years he and Gladys were to have a further two children.



Gladys's wedding got headlines in the golfing press

Post-war golf

By 1919 Gladys was persuaded to return to compete in some serious competition and the *Daily Mail* covered her return to the golfing scene:

One of the welcome incidents of the English Championship was the welcome reappearance of Mrs Temple Dobell. When she married she was half inclined to give up golf altogether, and indeed she has played very little of late. She now has two bonny children and home claims most of her time, but she resolved to take part in the event. During the war her clubs have been at the disposal of convalescent soldiers playing her native Bromborough course and they must have been worse for wear. Indeed as she played her tee shot at the second hole the head came off her driver. ... The draw is such that there is a possibility of Mrs Dobell and Miss Leitch meeting in the final

This was indeed what happened and with very little practice, and Miss Leitch in the ascendancy, Gladys was trounced 10 and 8.

However Mrs Dobell continued to compete in many competitions and over the years played for England in 1911/12/13/14/20/21/24 and 30. She also helped her beloved Cheshire to win five

England County Finals victories in 1910/11/12 and 1928 and 1932. On the county front Mrs Dobell won no less than eight county titles and was runner up four times. She won the Veteran Ladies in 1939.

Inter club golf

In the last ten years or so of her life, Gladys was an enthusiastic and most popular club golfer. Betty Lloyd recalls that:

during this time I frequently met her playing in inter-club matches. She presented an imposing sight standing on the tee and made a daunting opponent! When it was her turn to drive, she would stand on the tee and give the ground a firm blow with the sole of her driver. This was an indication to her caddie, as to where she would like him to tee up the ball. She still struck the ball with enormous authority, with her two-handed grip and the right hand curiously underneath the shaft of the club. Her putting too was unusual. With her 'old friend' of a steel-bladed, hickory-shafted putter, she attacked the hole in a way rarely seen. The ball would hit the back of the hole, jump in the air and finally drop! During these years she became a great source of advice and help for the young golfer. She regarded her golf as total fun and a great adventure, but was at the same time a great competitor. Wherever she was, there would be laughter in abundance, and her favourite motto was 'It counts not how you win or lose but how you play the game', and I count myself lucky to have benefited from her wisdom.

Throughout her life Mrs Dobell was a member of many clubs on the Wirral and they all make claim to her fame. However to her eternal credit she only accepted Life Honorary Membership at Rhosneigr, Heswall and her home club Bromborough, at all of which she insisted on paying normal subscriptions. She was Lady Captain of Heswall in 1926. After the Second World War she joined Wirral Ladies because wartime anti-aircraft gun emplacements prevented re-opening of the Bromborough course until the late 1940s. Gladys played in inter club golf for Wirral Ladies and served on their Club Council.

It must be recorded that even today Mrs Dobell is fondly remembered at The Angelsey Golf Club by Mrs Rhona Crilly, who as a young new member in 1952/3 watched her with considerable awe. For Mrs Dobell had been Lady Captain way back in 1925 and in 1933 was made an Honorary Member of the Committee. She was President in 1938 and again in 1952 and over the years gave wise council to tricky questions! Indeed Mrs Dobell represented the Ladies at the LGU AGM in London in 1939 – a wise choice. And within minute books it states that Mrs Dobell played on their team in a match against

Pwllheli, in 1934 when the members were paid 7/6 towards expenses. (Whether the amount was for the whole team or for individuals is not clear!) Mrs Crilly recalls her as larger than life, great fun and always gave so much to the life of the Club. And lastly Mrs Dobell is remembered with considerable affection by local Mr Joe Graham (who until his death earlier this year) recalled: 'I only saw her playing after her halcyon days but by Jove, could she move that ball!'

In addition, Mrs Dobell was Cheshire County Captain in 1920 and 1921 and spent various spells on the County Committee. She was also President of the Cheshire Ladies Association and an active member of the Cheshire Veterans; between 1937 and 1957 she gained the Veteran's Championship title five times. She also served on the LGU Executive Council for England as the Cheshire representative in 1929, 1936 and 1947 to 1949.

There is no doubt that Gladys inherited her sporting ability from her father, who had captained Cheshire at cricket and was Captain of Formby GC in 1928. Her favourite shot was and mashie, but whether it was a mid mashie, a mashie iron or a mashie, maybe we will never know. Then within Miss Helme's *The Best of Golf*, we learn from Gladys that her worst shot:

was the result of a lunge forward with the body, instead of waiting for the club-head to come through and that furthermore it had been particularly fatal with the short putts, the missing of which has been my chief claim to notoriety!

In turn the eldest of the Dobell's four children, later to become Barbara (Bah) Nottingham, also played a full part in the County Association, and she too was elected County Captain in 1972 and an Honorary member of Bromborough in 1987, 75 years after her mother.

A glimpse into the mind of this truly amateur champion may be gauged by a conversation Mrs Dobell had with Betty Lloyd in 1951. Suspecting that having won the Cheshire title, Betty would be contemplating widening her horizons, Mrs Dobell rang to make an appointment, for she wished to speak to Betty on a matter of high urgency:

Betty you mustn't do such a thing, because of something that happened to me. For when I was a girl, all I wanted to do was win the British and the American and I was lucky and managed to do both. But do you know I became the unhappiest lady golfer in the world, because all the people that I thought were my friends suddenly all they wished to do was to take my scalp off and I was very lonely.

In 1958, when LGU tees were allowed at Royal Liverpool, the permit holders met to choose the first Captain of the soon-to-be Hilbre Ladies GC. Mrs Dobell accepted their invitation to the post – one of the final crowns to her distinguished career.

A cruel blow

In August 1959, whilst backing out her husband's car from the garage, without a warning, Mrs Dobell suffered a massive stroke and crashed the car. She was paralysed down one side, but over the following weeks courageously taught herself to write using her other hand. Sadly, on February 6th the following year she died. A fitting tribute appeared within the March issue of *Fairway and Hazard* indicating that her death was a grievous loss to British golf. It was written by her close Cheshire friend Miss Doris Chambers and 1923 British Champion herself:

I have been for many years a friend of Gladys Dobell and for that privilege, I, like many others, will always be grateful. As a golfer she had much to give, a wonderful personality, brim full of sportsmanship and fun. A much loved and popular golfer in the North and the South, she had hosts of friends in the United States and Canada. She was a natural golfer, though perhaps not entirely orthodox and from the time when she entered for her first British Championship at Birkdale in 1909, until this year I can safely say that she lost little of her prowess and her last handicap was in the region of twelve.

As an opponent she was lion-hearted and generous. She always liked to see her adversary play well and would encourage them to do so. Though she was as good a golfer as any in Cheshire she flatly refused to take the place in the team in latter years, to give a chance to younger golfers to gain experience. Had she not retired, her record in the County team must have been a record, from 1910, if not earlier, until 1949, in which year she was a finalist in the Championship. In her wonderful home her husband and family were devoted to her and there was always a warm welcome there for her many friends, who will indeed mourn her passing.

However I would like to let two of her grandchildren extend their own final tributes. Firstly Anthony Nottingham, from the Isle of Man:

She was my icon. What happened to Gran was terrible; she was devastated. She was fearless, gracious in defeat and an ever-present figure. A woman not to be trifled with! I recall watching her at Hoylake, when I would have been about nine. Sportsmanship was indeed her motto, because if beaten Gran would always go out and support the person, who had just beaten her.

And from Anthony's sister, Elizabeth Wilsey in Wiltshire:

I have fond memories of this larger than life lady, who would baby sit for us as we lived next door. Our holidays in Anglesey were wonderful – picnics and collecting blackberries along the hedgerows then making bramble jelly. She was a wonderful prawn and we would walk miles along Cymran Sands.

Granny was a life long member of the Church of England and believed passionately in showing kindness to all in a practical way.

Here was indeed a very special and greatly loved lady.

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Heswall Golf Club
The Women Golfers' Museum

Since this article was written, Miss Betty Lloyd has died. Besides being a former ELGA Chairman, Cheshire Champion, President and Captain she wrote the much-acclaimed A Centenary Portrait of the Wirral Ladies Golf Club (1993)

Irish Musings

by John Hanna



Open Champions at Greenore GC

The relationship between the growth of railways and the development of golf has been well recorded, but it is not often it was the building of a harbour which led to the establishment of a golf course. At a time when Ireland was wholly governed by the British Government in London the Admiralty was in need of another naval depot in Ireland. One already existed at Cobh, near Cork, on the south coast, and it was thought necessary to have another on the east coast with closer proximity to the English mainland and between Belfast and Dublin. Greenore in County Louth was selected and plans for a twenty acre dock were drawn up to accommodate all sizes of vessels. This naval development did not take place but later the LNWR wished to extend its operations across the Irish Sea. It already had steamer services operating between Holyhead and Kingstown, and between Fleetwood and Belfast. In conjunction with railway companies in Ireland it was agreed in 1863 to proceed with the building of a railway and a harbour. (Fig. 1)

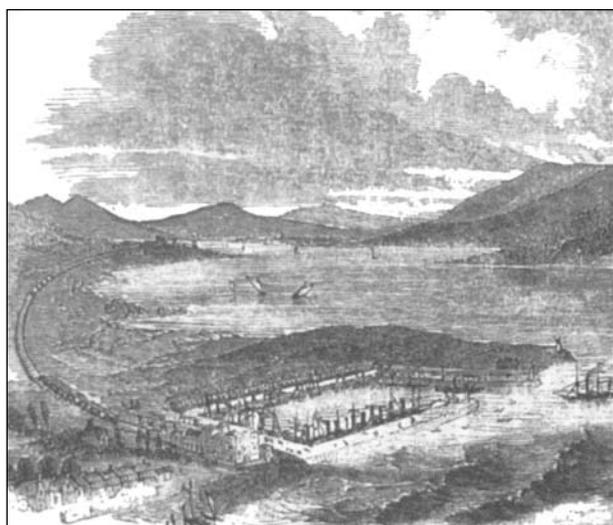


Fig. 1. The harbour at Greenore

Enter George Baillie

Although Carlingford Lough provided natural deep water and good shelter the building of the docks was a major engineering project. It was not until April 1873 that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Earl Spencer, KG, opened the port and railway for public traffic. In true Irish style a Mr Edward Tipping of the Dundalk, Newry and Greenore Railway recorded that 200 dozen bottles of champagne were drunk on that auspicious day. George L Baillie, who was a native of Musselburgh in Scotland, had been involved in the building of many of the new courses in Ulster already in play at this time eg Royal Belfast and County Down Golf Club. It appears he may have been on a retainer from some of the railway companies to become involved in the setting up of clubs. After travelling on the line he saw the possibility of a golf course and sent out a circular convening a meeting in the Railway Hotel in September 1896 for the purpose of forming the Greenore Golf Club. He is documented as being the acting secretary of the new Club. The notice

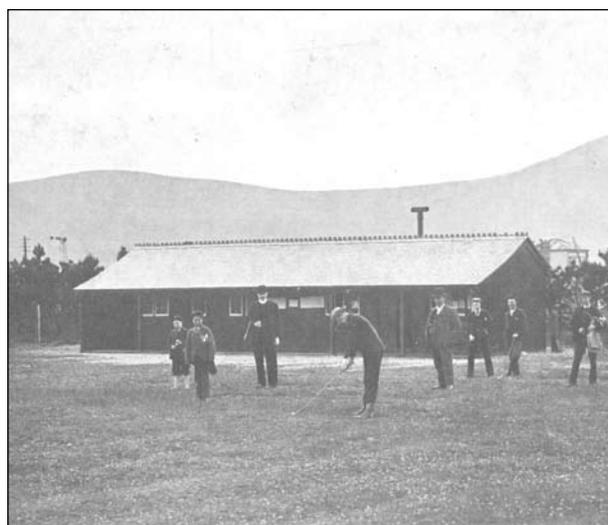


Fig. 2. The first pavilion on the Greenore links

pointed out that the DNGR had already laid out a twelve-hole course which they hoped to extend to eighteen holes in 1897. A pavilion was already under construction. (Fig. 2) The railway was offering return first class travel from Dundalk and Newry for one shilling. This was clearly a case where the Railway Company built the course in advance and offered it to the Greenore Golf Club. It also laid down the terms and conditions when the Club could use the course and clubhouse! Such was the influence of the railway that even when the first score cards were printed the well known golfing term 'bogey' was spelt 'bogie' ie. a pivoted undercarriage as in a locomotive. I wonder if the spelling of this term was unique to Greenore Golf Club? The first clubhouse was built in 1896 and replaced in 1900 by a new one costing £75 with the complete cost being paid by the railway. (Fig. 3)

It is interesting to note that the original Secretary was Mr J Nicholson, and the Treasurer was Mr Thos Chambers, Traffic Superintendent and Resident Engineer respectively for the Railway. For the first 30 years of its existence Rule 2 of the Club's constitution specified that these offices should be filled by employees of the DNGR. Mr Baillie stated that he had placed Magee, the professional at Portrush, as professional to the links at Greenore. (This was Harris J Magee, and he served at the Club for differing periods up to 1906.) In May 1897 a committee recommended that a red coat with nugget on the collar and light green facings and buttons marked GGC with nugget on the centre should be the official club uniform. No evidence exists as to whether members were ever supplied with these. The Railway Company was keen to increase tourist traffic from the mainland for the hotel and The bungalows. The LNWR presented a



Fig. 3. The 1900 clubhouse

LNWR Challenge Cup in 1900 for open competition and there were 24 entrants, including seven from English Clubs. (Fig. 4)

A Grand Professional Tournament

The course and the hotel were advertised as being just 24 hours from Euston Station, and in order to promote Greenore as a holiday destination two of the railway employees had the idea of organising a professional golf tournament in May 1902. It is not clear what the incentive was but they certainly were able to attract a top class field that included the Great Triumvirate, James Braid, Harry Vardon and JH Taylor. Braid was to win Open Championship five times, Taylor also five times and Vardon a record six times. Two other future Open Champions were in the field, Alex 'Sandy' Herd winner in 1902 and Jack White, winner in 1904. The total field was twenty players but late withdrawals were received from J Haskins, R Tingey and JH Oke, and from Taylor who had hurt his hand. Spectators travelled to Greenore from all over England on the passenger steamers to stay in the hotel. The conditions were 36 holes stroke play with the top eight to play off by holes. Nine Irish professionals were included in the field.

After 36 holes the result of the stroke play was as follows:

HVardon,Ganton.....	71+70=141
JasBraid,Romford.....	73+73=146
JKinnell,Norwich.....	78+73=151
TWilliamson,Nottingham.....	76+76=152
AHerd,Huddersfield.....	75+77=152
JWhite,Sunningdale.....	78+78=156
HHamill,Portrush.....	79+79=158
AHScott,Elie.....	78+80=158
JHOkeMid-Surrey.....	76+83=159
GCoburn,Portmarnock.....	82+78=160
HMcNeill,Portrush.....	78+82=160
JPulford,Hoylake.....	84+82=166
DBrowne,Cork.....	81+86=167
JJMcKenna,Malahide.....	86+84=170
HJMagee,Greenore.....	89+82=171
GLarkin,Bray.....	86+86=172
JamesMcKenna,Carrickmines.....	86+93=179

Vardon received a special prize of £5 as a result of his round of 70, which was also a new record for the green. Coburn and McNeill shared a similar prize confined to Irish professionals for their rounds of 78. The draw for the second day's golf was unseeded and had Braid drawn against Kinnell, Vardon against

Hamill, Williamson against Scott, and Herd against White. Braid's match in the morning was followed by a large gathering which was amply rewarded by witnessing a great match that only finished on the last green Braid winning one up after Kinnell missed a putt for a half. Vardon, Scott and Herd had not much trouble with their opponents, Vardon beating Hamill by 5 and 4, Scott beating Williamson by 4 and 3, and Herd beating White by 2 and 1. In the afternoon as expected the match between Braid and Vardon drew the largest crowd. Vardon opened up by winning the second hole but Braid won it back right away at the next. Vardon carried the fourth green with his drive and holed for a two to once again go one up. All the succeeding holes up to the Ninth were halved. At the Ninth Vardon went two up at the turn. Braid was not finished yet and won the next three holes to go one up. When Vardon over-clubbed and went through the green at the Sixteenth Braid won by three up and two to play. Herd had an easier match with Scott winning by 4 and 3.

In the 36 hole final Braid won the first hole, the Second was halved, but Herd had a three at the next hole to win it and square the match. When he drove the Fourth to win it he was one up. The next three holes were halved in perfect golf, but at the Eighth Herd carried his brassie shot to the green to win it

with a four. He now stood two up, which maintained to the turn. In playing to the Tenth Herd's second caught the burn which guards the green and he lost the hole. The next three were halved in scores of 4, 3, 4. At the fourteenth hole Braid played a brilliant drive to finish on the edge of the green and his three beat the five of Herd. They were all square again. Herd was not going to give up and holed his iron approach shot to the Fifteenth. After holing a magnificent putt on the Sixteenth he went two up. The champion was not deterred and pulling himself together, he won the seventeenth hole in four and then holed a great putt on the final hole to square the match after the first round.

Expectation was high when the second round began at 3 o'clock with many spectators keen to see the final stages of the tournament. Braid took the first hole with a three but Herd won the Second. The third and fourth holes were halved, but Braid won the fifth and sixth holes to go two up. The Seventh was halved and Braid took the Eighth to be 2 up at the turn. Braid further extended his lead on the tenth green and the next two holes were halved. He played a magnificent shot with his cleek to increase his lead at the Thirteenth. Halved holes at the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth meant that the Open Champion won the final by 4 and 3. (Fig. 5)

There were special prizes of £10 and £5 for the



Fig. 4. The professionals pose outside the Greenore clubhouse in 1902, Braid and Vardon to the fore.

Irish professionals who played an additional 36 holes. The scores were as follows:

Hamill, Portrush	78 and 76 = 154	£10
Coburn, Portmarnock	78 and 79 = 157	£5
McNeill	82 and 80 = 162	
McKenna JJ	83 and 80 = 163	
Brown	82 and 83 = 165	
McKenna	81 and 85 = 166	
Turnbull	89 and 79 = 168	
Larkin	85 and 86 = 171	
Magee	89 and 88 = 177	

The prize-giving which took place in the Greenore Hotel also shows the importance of the railway. Lord Stalbridge, Chairman of the London and North-Western Railway presided and also present were: Sir Thomas Brooks, Messrs F Baynes and WE Dorrington, Directors; Mr Fred Harrison, General Manager; Mr R Turnbull, locomotive engineer; Mr HG Burgess, Irish Manager; and other officials of the company besides a large number of members of the Club and hotel visitors. The prizes were presented by Mrs Calthorp, after some very happy observations by Lord Stalbridge. It was not reported whether the professional golfers travelled on a ship direct to Greenore.



Fig. 5. Braid bunkered

Golf without the railway

Sadly the railway ceased to run to Greenore on the 31st of December 1951. The hotel and the golf course were sold to the Great Northern (Ireland) Railway as caretakers for the Irish Government. Business had boomed at the hotel during the Second World War but it also closed in 1951. No golf was played on the course from 1951 to 1954 but the Railway Company were bound by law to maintain the lands including the golf course. The good news is that in 1955 Greenore Golf Club was successful bidders in an auction buying the course and the clubhouse for £2,000 less £100 commission. The Railway Company owed the new owners £3,060 compensation so the Club made a net gain of £960, not to mention being the owners of a great golf links. How's that for a good deal? This course is definitely worth a visit if you are travelling along the east coast of Ireland.

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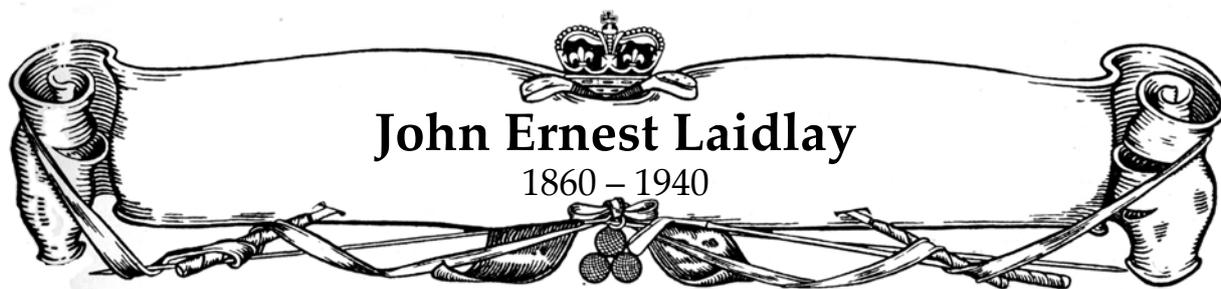
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Clontarf Golf Club - September TTG

Just a note to let you know about the most recent development taking place at this Club. The members could scoop 100,000 euros each if they vote to accept an offer from a property developer of 60 million euros. The deal could also involve a move to the Portmarnock Links and Hotel, which could enrich the Clontarf's coffers by a further 20 million euros. What would the Very Reverend JL Morrow think of this? Watch this space for further news!





Following his recent TTG article on Loretto School, **Lionel Freedman** has examined the life and career of the most distinguished of Lorettonian golfers, discovering a golfer and man of great stature.

JOHN LAIDLAY was born on the 5th of November, 1860, at Seacliff, two miles east of North Berwick, shortly after Willie Park had won the first Open Championship at Prestwick, an event in which he was to distinguish himself many years later. He came from a wealthy land-owning family and seems to have had no need to earn a living. It is no exaggeration to describe Laidlay as a Victorian and Edwardian Golfing Superstar; his achievements speak for themselves. Bernard Darwin once wrote:

... strive as I will, I cannot convince myself that young golfers of today stare with quite such reverential eyes at Mr Tolley and Mr Wethered as I did when, as a small boy I first beheld Mr Mure Ferguson and Mr Horace Hutchinson or at a later date, Mr John Ball and Mr Laidlay.

One of Hutchinson's books contains a story of Sir Alexander Kinloch, who once exclaimed at a general meeting of the Royal and Ancient:

What's the good of all this talk about first class players? There are only three first class amateurs, John Ball, Johnny Laidlay and Horace Hutchinson.

Perhaps an even bigger compliment to Laidlay is his inclusion in Willie Park Junior's book *The Game of Golf*, the first book on golf to be written by a professional golfer. Several aspects of Laidlay's game: his grip, and positions for driving, approaching, shoulder shots, and putting were illustrated by pictures and diagrams.

Formative golfing years

The story really begins at Loretto School where Johnny went from 1872 – 1878. The close proximity of the school to the Musselburgh Links played a large part in the making of this colossus of the game.

An article written by Laidlay for *Golf Illustrated*, entitled *The Story of a Loretto Fag* is perhaps the best insight into how his involvement in the game of golf came about::

I am not at all certain that my first impressions of golf were favourable; nor were they likely to induce me to take kindly to the game. The circumstances under which I first formed these impressions were as a fag at Loretto School in 1872, when I was occasionally called on by a prefect – about twice a fortnight – to carry his clubs for him. This took place normally in the long afternoon play hour, during the early part of the autumn and the latter part of the spring terms, and occasionally on a half holiday. The last-named usually left a nasty taste of golf in my mouth, which was sometimes made exceedingly strong at the end of the round by the said prefect telling me to hurry in and make toast for his tea. This meant hunting about the schoolhouse for a good fire, and generally involved a very hurried tea for oneself, and, of course, no toast.

However, notwithstanding these little drawbacks, it was not very long before I suddenly found myself devoted to the game, and ready to seize every short interval for play in the forenoon to rush out to the links and have a few shots. I had got leave to buy a driver, which was the first step towards making up a set of clubs. The Headmaster allowed no boy to use a cleek or iron until he could go round the course in a certain number of strokes; I think that number was 50. I remember this much, that the second or third term at school found me in the position to play with, and be owner of, a cleek and a brassy. It may interest those who persist in purchasing all the latest improved putters to know that this cleek head (for it has had several shafts) has been my putter with very occasional intervals, ever since I left school, and has been played with in nearly all my matches, for better or for worse, and is still a good old friend, but getting very light, and as someone remarked to me lately, 'would soon do for me to shave with'. This club, along with the driver was purchased from Old Willie Park, who had then a small shop attached to his dwelling

house, close by the links at Musselburgh.

I think it was in the year of 1874 that I was finally set agoing. Amongst the other exciting events played at Musselburgh was the Open Championship, and it was won by Mungo Park. It was a great disappointment to me 'Old Willie' did not win, and I watched him play his second and third rounds, till all hope was gone. It was a red-letter day for me; I had got special leave, along with a number of other boys, to see the afternoon rounds. I saw all the great players of the day – Old Tom, Jamie Anderson, Tom Kidd, Davie Strath, and last, but by no means least, young Tom Morris.

I watched all their various styles and play with great interest, but what I remember best, and what impressed me most, was, when walking beside young Tom Morris, going to *Linkfield* hole and to Mrs Forman's I heard him declare that he had driven onto the road at both these holes on purpose, in order that his ball might run farther than it would have done on the damp grass. This made a great impression on my mind, and at once decided he must be a grand golfer when he could try to do on purpose what all the other players were in mortal terror of doing. He did both these holes in four each and quite justified the line he had taken. I think after this I loved the game more than any other, though for several years I was very fond of cricket, and, of course, did not play any golf during the summer terms. I think I learnt a great deal from watching good players, and always took the chance of doing so when it was possible. The late Robert Clark's play I had a great admiration for, his putting especially, and as he was then about his best, and constantly playing in the Honourable Company's matches, I often had a glimpse of him and probably learnt a good deal from his approach shots and from the great pains he took before playing these shots to examine the ground and make certain that he was playing the right way.

I had now attained sufficient power as a golfer to attempt a great feat, which in those days we aspired to, namely, that of driving a ball over the grandstand on the Musselburgh racecourse. It was not really much of a shot, but there was a spice of danger about it, which added to the charm and made it a feat more or less necessary to perform before one could talk in comfort to the older boys in school on the subject of golf. Of course, it was strictly against school rules, and there was a risk of breaking the stand windows; also, with a shade of very bad luck it was conceivable that one might hit the Headmaster, who might be passing on the other side; either of which events would have caused serious results.

It was not long after this Open Championship – I think probably in 1875 – that I had learnt to play a very good game of golf for a boy. The late Dr Almond, the then Headmaster of Loretto, evidently thought there was something of merit in my golf, for he took me into his morning foursomes occasionally, and I remember he kindly presented me with my first iron, which delighted

me immensely. The playing in these matches I looked on as a great honour. The Head was not a great player himself and shortly after this gave up the game entirely. I shall never regret having learnt my golf on the fine old course at Musselburgh as it was in those days, for it was a splendid course. I learnt to play the low iron shot up to the hole with a little heel and run, when it pitched, which stroke was so much in favour there in those days, and I certainly think it suited that course admirably, and is very useful sometimes on many others besides Musselburgh. I always thought, and still think, that anyone who had learnt to play well on Musselburgh could give a good account of himself on any other golf course in the world.

It was 1876 when I may say I developed really good, steady golf. I was then sixteen years of age, and in the autumn of that year I completed a really rather wonderful round and holed it out in 36 strokes. The score of 36 was, of course, good, but the curious feature of it was that every hole was done in 4; there were no threes or fives. I had now got keen enough to devote considerable time to golf during the holidays, and used to go in and play on North Berwick links pretty often, sometimes doing three or four rounds in a day.

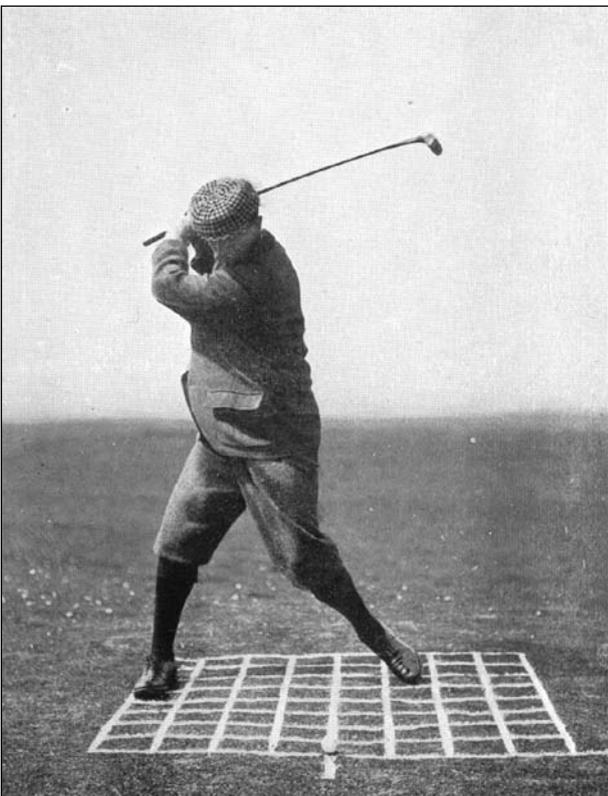
I found short holes, which I made in the park at home, were excellent practice for driving, and by marking off different tees at proper lengths, suited to driver, cleek and iron, I was able to practise full shots at the hole, and used to drive perhaps a dozen balls, one after the other, and see how many I could put on the small putting green round the hole from the tee shot. At that time I also practised putting a great deal on the lawn at home and found it a great help. The ground I had in the best possible order otherwise it would have been worse than useless and I usually had the tins for the holes just a little under regulation size. This I think, was a help, as it made the holes on the links look nice and large. I think it was in 1878 that I joined the old Luffness club, and won the medal that year – the first time I played for it. That was my first medal competition, and I was very keen to win.

In 1879 and part of 1880 I lived in the south in Wiltshire, for about a year, not far from Salisbury and only eight miles from Stonehenge. Across these wide stretches of downs I used sometimes to walk and with a club in my hand, drive a ball for miles, teeing, of course, for every stroke. It had all helped to keep one's hand in. Notwithstanding all the practice and trouble I took about driving from the tee, it has always been my difficulty, and the part of the game which has interested me less than any other department. In those days I did not much mind how a ball lay, as generally I could make something of the shot. But could I now recall the many important matches I have lost from bad tee shots I'm afraid my partners in foursomes now would feel very anxious till my tee shot was played.

For three years after I came north from Wiltshire, I was in an office and had little time for golf. The



Laidlay at address, as illustrated in Beldam's Great Golfers. Note the open stance and overlapping grip



A bent left elbow, but full shoulder turn for his three-quarter swing with a driver, gripped well down the shaft

public holidays and the long summer evenings, with ten days holiday in the year besides, was all. I joined the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers in 1883, and won their medal the first time I entered for it – in the spring of that year. After this, I began serious golf, and practised very carefully. I played a lot against Bob Ferguson, and had many capital matches.

He was then at his best, and as fine a player one could wish to see, and possibly he gave on more confidence in the result of his next stroke before it was played than any other golfer I had known. His stance was so firm and his general appearance most powerful. I think I learnt a lot from him; his cleek play was extremely long and accurate, and well worth watching.

About this time I began to play a great many practice matches with the late Willie Campbell, and his putting was a treat. If one watched carefully one found he was hardly ever short in his long puts and the importance of passing the hole each time was made very evident by the number of very long puts he got down. There was no fluke, no mere fancy of a day, for it was nearly always taking place.

Now it was that I made a great change in my style of play. I had been off my game for some time, and was at my wits end to know how to get back my form; my driving was quite hopeless. Consequently I took a very short grip of my clubs. I am not sure that this was a very good move on my part, as I must have lost distance by doing so. However, It worked a miracle, and I was back to my game and playing well in a day. I stuck to this short grip for years. It must have been a great change to me, for up till then I had always held my club by the very end of the handle. This alteration to such a short hold of my clubs must have been accountable for my making a change in my stance (which I have heard a good deal about since), and is known by description of 'playing off the left leg'. I also took to the gripping of one finger of the hand over one finger of the other. This I believed to be a good thing to do, and I think it helped me in my putting especially. The reason which started the idea in my mind was that my hands being more opposite each other were more likely to work together and swing the club like a pendulum, and less likely to operate against one another. I believe it is quite a common grip nowadays.

I now considered I had learnt the game of golf, and in 1885 made my first appearance in open competitions. The Amateur Championship had not yet been inaugurated. A tournament had been arranged to take place at Carnoustie in September. Some leading players entered, Mr John Ball, Jr, Mr AM Ross, and a good few others. It lasted for three days, I think, for time favoured me and it fell to my lot to be the winner. I then went on to St Andrews the same week, and having just got into the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, was enabled to compete for the King William IV medal, which I was fortunate enough to win. A week after this a tournament took place at North Berwick, where,

after some pretty stiff matches, I managed to pull off the final against Mr Horace Hutchinson. This, I think, completed my golfing education; at all events, I am afraid my game did not improve afterwards. That same spring I had won the Honourable Company's medal. Strangely, I won their autumn medal once more in 1905.

A good many years have passed since those happy days in 1885, when, as I have already said, I considered myself educated in golf. A fair share of wins have fallen to my lot during these twenty odd years, and I hope with health and good luck I may still pick up an odd medal or two yet.

The 'Vardon' grip

The above account mentions the circumstances around 1874 when Laidlay rebuilt his swing, gripping his clubs well down the shaft in what we now refer to as the overlapping, or 'Vardon' grip. At South Herts Golf Club they have a cast of Harry Vardon's (huge) hands, displaying the similar overlapping grip he so popularised, which is still associated with his name. No such sculpture commemorates the originator of the grip, John Laidlay, although letters between him and John Parker, golfing correspondent of the *Yorkshire Observer*, published shortly before Laidlay's death, confirms the sequence of events.

Laidlay the player

The following is an extract from the profile written by HSC Everard, the celebrated golfer and writer. It originally appeared in the 27th of February 1891 issue of *Golf – A Weekly Record of Ye Royal and Ancient Game*.

... it may not be invidious to say that Mr Laidlay has excelled them all; where many have done well he has done better still; and he stands on a pinnacle of fame, not indeed entirely unchallenged by the rest of the amateur world, but still, on an eminence sufficiently commanding to ensure a tolerable immunity from attack by all save a privileged few. On almost every green he has played on there stands recorded some monumental performance with which his name is associated. He began operations at the mature age of 16, and from that time to this every sort of success, short of winning the Open Championship has fallen to his share; and in these competitions also he has frequently been but a very short distance removed from the absolute pride of place.

Mr Laidlay's experience of links has been tolerably varied, but it is probably with North Berwick and Musselburgh that his name is most intimately associated. To those familiar with the former green it is a matter of common knowledge that the quarter game is the all-important factor in

successful play, and it is probably to his habitual practice there that his unrivalled excellence as an approacher is due. The mashie in his hands is a deadly club, he uses it with a confidence bred of unflinching success, but it is also true that he uses every sort of iron and cleek to perfection, graduated from the tremendous power of driving with them, which he exhibits, down to the shortest and most artistic 'pitch'. Contrary to the practice of many fine players, he plays all these shots entirely from the left foot, assimilating his method to that of his driving and also of his putting. In this latter department he has evolved a style all his own; he invariably uses a putting cleek, with which he puts somewhat in the style of a batsman playing forward to a pitched-up ball at cricket; his right hand grasps not the shaft of the club, has firm hold of the closed fingers of the left hand; by this device the wrists in his opinion move more in complete harmony with one another. He does not putt with a flexible wrist, rather the contrary, but the net result of his *modus operandi* is that his putts run wonderfully true. He is perhaps seen at his best at some twelve to eighteen yards from the hole, when he plays them dead straight up to it, then after getting the chance of going in, they lie stone dead some six or eight inches the other side. His excellent putting often pulls him through when he is a little off in his long game, which sometimes happens to him as to others; but when he is driving his best, and following it up, as he always does, with his admirable approaches, he is all but invincible. When in form he rarely plays a round without some characteristic holes, such for instance as a very long drive, a very long cleek shot to within ten feet of the hole, and the putt holed out, securing in three what other people are fairly content to do in five. In all great contests he is equal to the occasion, so far as determination to win is concerned, if that be possible, and the finish of his match with Mr John Ball, Jr, at St Andrews in the Amateur Championship of 1888, will long live in the recollection of those who witnessed it as a fine exhibition of pluck and brilliant play. Not less noteworthy was the final between the same two at Hoylake, in 1890, when, though fortune was against Mr Laidlay on this occasion, he played a dreadfully up-hill game with consummate nerve and only succumbed to play which was altogether exceptional, even for Mr Ball. It will be gathered from the foregoing remarks that Mr Laidlay's capabilities are no wit behind those of the finest professionals of the day.

Golfing achievements

The number of Laidlay's achievements are truly amazing and would require another full article to do them justice. His memberships included the following clubs: Luffness; Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers; Royal and Ancient; North Berwick; Tantallon; North Berwick New Club; Elie; Alnmouth; Dunbar; Prestwick; Lundin Links;

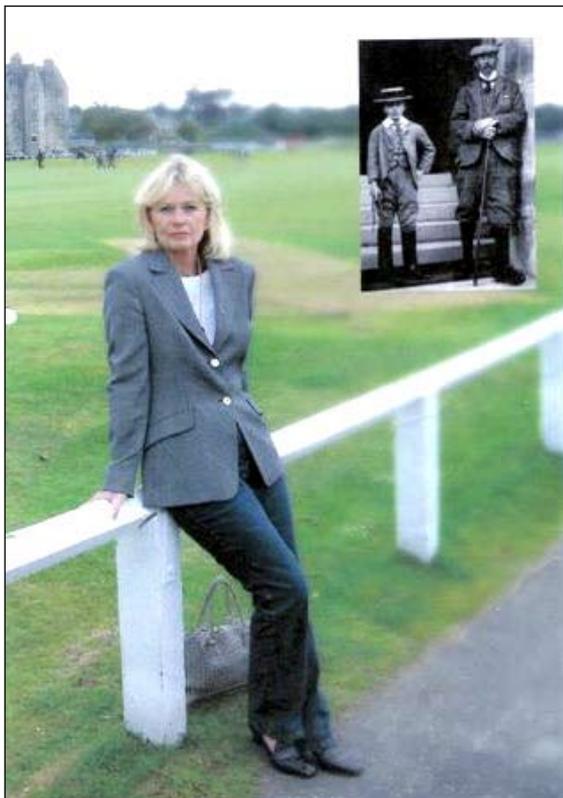


One of several cases displaying Laidlay's medals in the British Golf Museum, St Andrews.

Lundin Ladies; Fettes/Loretto Golfing Society; Royal Liverpool and Sunningdale.

He was captain of the following: Prestwick (1894); Lundin and Lundin Ladies (1894–1896); Elie (1897); Honourable Company (1904/5); North Berwick (1906); Tantallon (1906–1908) and North Berwick New (1913–1915). He was also member of the first Rules Committee at the R&A.

His playing ability was of the highest order; winning around 140 medals of which 122 can be seen at the British Golf Museum in St Andrews. Of all his medals, 31 were Honourable Company, won both at Musselburgh and at Muirfield, seventeen



Mrs Sya Simpson, grand-daughter of John Laidlay. (inset an image of Laidlay with his son (her father)).

at the R&A, and 43 between Tantallon and North Berwick. A further seven came from forays at Royal Liverpool. He also won two at Prestwick and one at Dunbar. He had an amazing hat trick in winning the first scratch medal competitions he contested after joining the respective clubs at Luffness, The Honourable Company and the R&A. In 1887 he won eleven scratch medals at North Berwick, Prestwick, R&A and Hoylake.

The Amateur and Open Championships

Johnny Laidlay had an outstanding record in the early days of the Amateur Championship:

- 1888 lost to John Ball in final at Prestwick
- 1889 beat Leslie Balfour-Melville 2/1 in final at St Andrews
- 1890 lost to John Ball 4/3 in final at Hoylake
- 1891 beat Harold Hilton in final at St Andrews
- 1892 lost to Harold Hilton 5/4 in semi-final at St George's
- 1893 lost to Peter Anderson by one hole in final at St Andrews
- 1894 lost to John Ball 3/2 in semi-final at Hoylake
- 1904 lost to Edward Blackwell in semi-final at St George's

He then could claim a total record of two golds, three silvers and one bronze medal in the Amateur.

His Open record is also of some note, having played thirteen times between 1885 and 1901. It included six top tens, four times leading amateur and second to Willie Auchterlonie two shots behind in 1893 at Prestwick. He finished twice in fourth place behind Willie Park Jr – at Prestwick in 1887 and at Musselburgh in 1889 in the last Open to be held there. In 1901, in what looks to have been his last Open at Muirfield, he finished seventh where the Great Triumvirate of James Braid, Harry Vardon and JH Taylor finished in the first three places. In the 1880s and early 1890s, in the amateur field, Johnny Laidlay could have been considered part of a triumvirate with John Ball and Harold Hilton (with apologies to Horace Hutchinson, Leslie Balfour-Melville and a little later, the great Freddie Tait).

Other achievements

Other than golf, Laidlay was a very fine cricketer who was described as the best Scottish slow bowler of his day. In 1878 at the Grange Cricket Ground

in Edinburgh, he played for the Gentlemen of Scotland against the Yorkshire County XI. In the match on the 23rd of May of that year, in what was supposed to be a three day match, Scotland were beaten in two days by an innings and 68 runs, but Johnny distinguished himself by taking 5 wickets for 55 runs. The original contest was followed by a one-day match on the 25th of May, which Scotland won by three wickets. Laidlay further distinguished himself with 6 wickets for 18 runs – a remarkable total of 11 wickets for 73.

An extract from an interview with *The Golfer* magazine, printed in the *Haddington Courier* on the 24th of August 1894 gives an insight to some of Johnny's other achievements:

A glance round the billiard room shows that Mr Laidlay has other reminiscences of links besides prizes; a well-executed portrait in an oak frame of Tom Morris occupies a central position on one of the walls while over the mantle shelf are portraits of Messrs Horace Hutchinson and de Zoete. There is also evidence of Mr Laidlay's skill as a photographer; a St Andrews golfing scene, evidently taken in a good light is framed and in several handsomely got-up volumes, are some hundreds of views that would do credit to a professional photographer. There is, for instance, a very fine instantaneous view of the Nile, with two boats shooting the rapids, together with other Egyptian scenes.¹ Nearer home, among English views are some fine glimpses of the Norfolk Broads; but possibly one of the prettiest examples in the very large collection is an exquisite photograph of some alarmed seagulls wheeling near their nests on the steep face of the Bass Rock. Another pursuit Mr Laidlay has taken up, and successfully too, is that of wood-carving, and several examples of his dexterity with carving-chisel lie on a side table.

Laidlay moved to Sunningdale after the Great War, where he built a house call *Auld Hame* and played golf with Jack White, the professional and winner of the Open in 1904, who had once been his caddy at various East Lothian courses.

John E Laidlay was undoubtedly a great man who seemed to excel in everything he did and without doubt must have had a very supportive and understanding wife.

¹ The reference to the Nile and other Egyptian scenes may give credence to the suggestion that Laidlay had a hand in designing the first golf course in Egypt at The Gezira Club.

Acknowledgements

Mrs Sya Simpson. While researching this article I had the fortune to meet the great man's grand-daughter, who lives in Edinburgh. Mrs Simpson was kind enough to invite me to her home where I saw a number of family photographs and also wood carvings done by her grandfather. On the following day, Mrs Simpson and her husband kindly drove myself and my stepson, Robert Brown, to St Andrews in order to photograph the Laidlay medals held in the British Golf Museum.

David Kirkwood very kindly lent me a number of reference books from his extensive collection which very much helped me with my research.

Robert Brown, my stepson, deserves many thanks for his help with photographs.

Beth Freedman acted as my efficient and uncomplaining typist.

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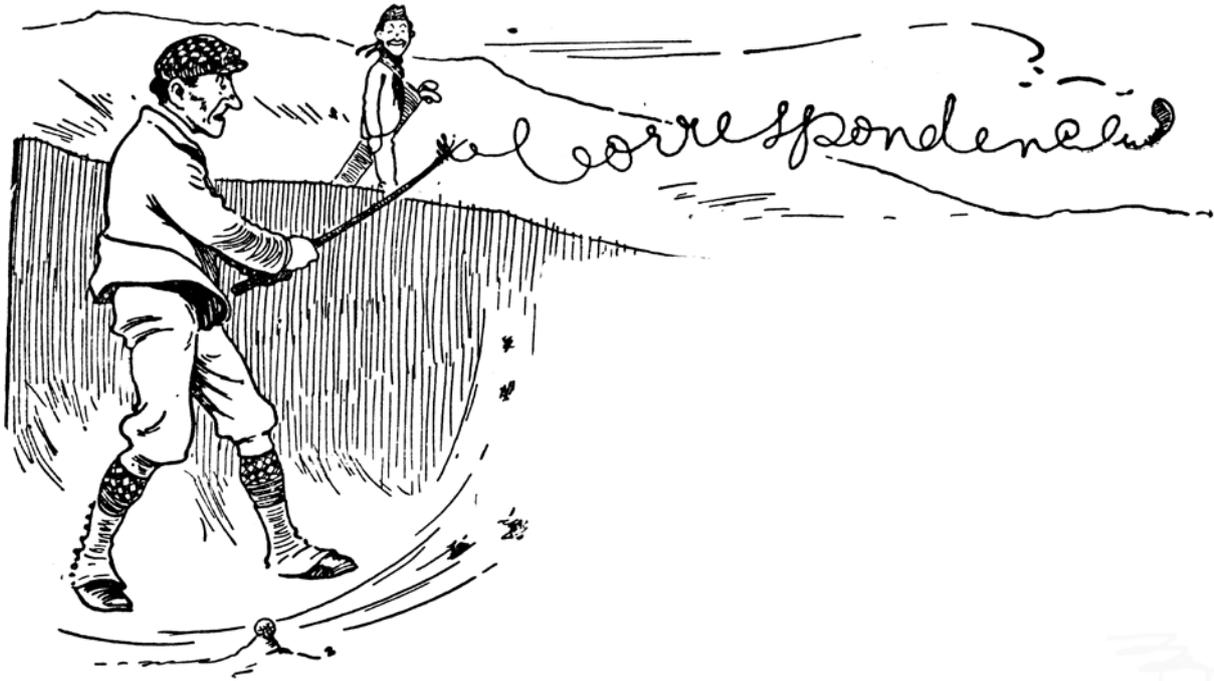
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Corrections

The Editor enjoyed a hard personal match in the Scotland v England encounter at Craighielaw in August. So he displayed bad manners as well as incompetence in mis-spelling (twice) the name of his doughty opponent **Steven Doyle** (not Stephen Boyle) in the match report in September *TTG*. Sorry Steven.

Also, perhaps distracted by awkward dates, he entirely failed to report in either the June or September issues of *TTG* the excellent win of **Bill Druce** in the Scottish Hickory Championship, which took place at the end of May. Bill played magnificently in very windy conditions to come home with a gross 78 off 10 handicap, one shot ahead of **John Sherwood**, 75 (5) 69 and **John Still** 77 (8) 69. **Lionel Freedman** came fourth with 87 (17) 70. Grovelling apologies to all concerned.



Braid Open

Does any member/collector have any details of the **1910 Open Championship**, played at St Andrews and won by James Braid? I understand the first round was washed out and replayed the next day. An acquaintance of mine (in the USA) is compiling a book detailing round by round scores of all entrants in major championships and is unable to find details of the scores for the first two rounds in this particular Open. Any information would be very much appreciated.

Roy Hobbis

royhobbis@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 0121 444 2156

Croham Hurst Golf Club

I am researching the history of Croham Hurst GC for our centenary in 1911 and would be extremely grateful for any assistance.

The Club nestles in former farmland just to the south of Croydon in Surrey. The landlords are the Whitgift Foundation and we have maintained a good relationship with them since we were formed. We own the clubhouse and road entrance,

The Club is unusual in that the son gave birth to the mother. An original nine-hole course was constructed and opened in 1912 but the main eighteen-holer was not opened until a year later. The original course was abandoned around 1924.

Both courses were designed by FG Hawtree and the famous Scottish golf professional, James

Braid. In the 1950s our playing professional was Harry Weetman who, at the time, was a prominent member of the Ryder Cup team.

Like many another club, we have lost or destroyed much of our history so I would welcome any information no matter what source.

My contact details are: (address), Heather Cottage, 15, Hilltop Walk, Woldingham, Surrey, CR3 7LJ; scoopdove@dove15.plus.com Tel. 01883 653498.

Michael Dove

Michael Scott

The reminiscences of CS Lipscomb in the latest issue of *TTG* were of great interest to me as I have been very slowly accumulating biographical data on Michael Scott.

Members will have noted (*TTG* p 12 Sept 2007) that in Australia we have one of the 200 Cups that he won: the first Australian Open Golf Championship Trophy 1904, which is of priceless historical value to us. I am most grateful to Commander Lipscomb for sharing his father's story with us. It has given me a deeper insight of Michael Scott who was a very private person. This is precious information that has not previously been available.

In the period that Scott was in Australia 1900

-1911 he was undoubtedly the best amateur player in Australia according to Dan Soutar, a Scot who was both an outstanding amateur and later a professional in that era. Scott brought with him at 22 years of age the latest golfing skills from England and made his mark in Victoria where he lived, playing as a member of Drouin and Royal Melbourne Golf Clubs.

Historians rely heavily on networking for information and I have had valuable help from David Stirk and David Wybar in England, and Tony Turpin in Jersey.

I would welcome from members, any information or pictures about the Hon. Michael Scott (1878 -1959) that are not in the histories of the golf clubs of which he was a member.

Don Dunne

Royal Malta GC

Thank you so much for forwarding details of the short article about the early days of Royal Malta GC that appeared in *Through the Green* some years ago, which will be useful in our researches for our

centenary history. We have copies of the articles that appeared in volumes II and IV of *The Golfing Annual* but we are actively seeking to purchase either or both of the original volumes. These record our foundation by Sir Henry Torrens, then Governor of Malta. The entry lists the then Duke of Edinburgh as one of the founders of the club. The Duke, Prince Albert, was the fourth child and second son of Queen Victoria, hence our Royal Patronage. Also, since Sir Henry Torrens was the direct representative of The Queen in Malta, it may be said that we enjoyed 'double' Royal Patronage.

Thanks also for the copy of your booklet, *Writing a Golf Club History*, which I've just finished reading. What an eye opener! Definitely required reading – I feel as if I had been peeping through a keyhole whereas now I am looking through a bay window.

We would very much appreciate any reminiscences or information about Royal Malta, which your members may have.

Alex Mangion

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Mystery Photograph



Do BGCS members recognise anyone from this group of golfing ladies from the 1890s? The image was rescued from the attic of a large house in the Isle of Wight. Contact Tony Gazzard on 01983 407725 if you have any suggestions.



Book Reviews

Writing a Golf Club History

– *Some Experiences*

edited by

John Pearson and Barry Leithhead

Writing a Golf Club History – Some Experiences is a joint publication of The British Golf Collectors' Society and The Golf Collectors Society of Australia. Edited by John Pearson and Barry Leithhead of the respective Societies, this booklet must become a *vade mecum* for everybody who is embarking on the task of writing their club's history.

Much of it is based on John's excellent notes that he produced some years ago following his writing of York GC's story. This has long been a treasured part of my library and covers what John considers the three core tasks, research, writing, and design, and has been updated with his experiences of producing the history of Silloth on Solway GC since then. Then there are the thoughts of Jeannie Walker who wrote the history of Manly GC, and Professor Colin Tatz, who wrote the histories of Royal Sydney GC and Monash GC. Between the three of them, they provide a comprehensive guide not only to the practical aspects of the task, how and where to undertake the research, the preparation for printing etc, but the other intangible but vitally important considerations; what kind of history do you want to write, the importance of context – is it strictly for the members? Is it strictly for the records? Is it strictly for the bookshelf? There is an excellent checklist by Barry Leithhead which, apart from its usefulness, gives a very clear indication of just how much is involved when approaching a club history.

John has added a chapter on the centenary celebrations at York. Clearly, each club will have its own ideas of how they wish to celebrate, but there is practical advice on some topics which it is well to be reminded/warned of, particularly relating to financial planning, and some very apposite points based on his own experience and hindsight.

Club Histories come in all shapes and sizes, and in quality, good, bad and indifferent. I have no

doubts that if this booklet had been available to all those who have already produced them, a goodly number would be much more readable now. It covers the subject thoroughly and, best of all, it is based on hard experience. What could be better? Well done all concerned.

It is intended that copies will be sent to those clubs approaching their centenaries with the compliments of the Society. Bravo! I do believe this action reflects the best traditions of the Society, and can only be for the general good of Golf.

Copies are also available to BGCS members, free of charge, from the Secretary, Tony Thorpe, and I would recommend that you get your copy now. Apart from being an interesting read, you just never know when the Club President is going to sidle up to you at the bar one day, and suggest that, with your interest in the history of golf, you would be the ideal person to write the forthcoming history. After a quick scout through these invaluable pages, if you are to be lumbered, at least you will know what you are letting yourself in for, and will start off from a mutually agreed position. You have been warned.

Alan Jackson

America's Linksland

A Century of Long Island Golf

by

William Quirin

With photography by LC Lambrecht

This volume is a fascinating account of the development of golf on Long Island with both interesting historical photographs and course diagrams as well as dramatic modern colour views of the more famous present day links.

Such gems as Garden City, Bethpage, Shinnecock Hills, Inwood, National Golf Links of America and Nassau Country Club are described in detail, with the stories of the golf battles that have taken place over the years.

I found very interesting the stories of the demise

of other courses during the depression as well as the movement of venues due to major road works and real estate deals, clubs amalgamating and taking over adjacent courses. The wheeling and dealing that must have taken place during the 20s and 30s all become apparent.

Major events such as the US Amateur and Open are all covered in detail, as well Ladies' National Championships and the Metropolitan Golf Association Amateur and Open competitions, complete with interesting contemporary photographs. The Long Island Walker Cups of 1922, 1924 and 1977 are also featured. In fact all that has happened in Long Island golf is in this book!

Originally published in 2002 at a price of \$55, this is a beautifully produced and researched book, 280 pages in all and a credit to the author and the original publisher, Sleeping Bear Press, (now part of the Wiley organisation). I only wish I could play all those courses described.

Ian McK Douglas

St Andrews: the Evolution of the Old Course

by

Scott Macpherson

The Old Course has not lacked attention from the writers and publishers over the centuries. Seldom however do these authors go back to original sources and seek fresh vantage points, but here we have a new scholarly account of this ancient patch of linksland. The core story is how the layout of one very old course has never been free from challenges by its users and their changing equipment. No other course in the world has hosted so many major events over such a long period, leaving written a wealth of reports and scrutiny from the time of the medals of the R&A in the 1700s through to the Opens and Amateurs and the annual Dunhill gatherings of our times. Interestingly, since the Old Course belongs to the people of St Andrews, it also seems to belong to the whole world. All seem entitled to comment, and are welcome to write books about it. The uniqueness of St Andrews is multi-faceted and shared.

Macpherson comes to study the Links from his viewpoint as a golf architect. Plans, distances and contours are his forte and at the back of this nicely printed, well-written book there are scholarly fold-out charts, and this broad format design has an unusually robust inner and outer cover. He goes back to earliest times and chronicles the shifting names of the holes and bunkers, and the original and most lasting challenge to play was too many

players, and the greens were enlarged and two pins placed. The featherie gave way to the gutta and then came the Haskell, then steel shafts and later the titanium revolution and the 'dimple wars'. At all points the traditionalists concluded that 'this cannae gae on' but it did.

The book records in minute detail the results of the reluctant search for more difficulty and distance, and when the tees were moved, subtle effects on the lines of play resulted. Other allowable protective strategies and devices were to steepen and revet the bunker faces and shun benign pin positions. Macpherson has meticulously, even amusingly, mapped the increasingly challenging pins on each green for the Opens through the 1900s. Extreme ideas have arisen, including Henry Cotton's semi-serious proposal of tilted tees, and the radical solution of terminating the championship lay-out, thus drawing a line, with relief, under the records so far, before the ever-expected but never-arriving nemesis. The Loop could be broken and new length got by borrowing from the adjacent linksland of the New Course. In the meantime, in shielding the Course from the attack by new technology, some counter-punches are mysteriously thought to be illegal or insulting to an old lady. It is considered below the belt to give new contouring to the high number of flat greens and it is held to be sacrilege to add substantial new bunkers in serious places.

Macpherson weaves into the story much detail on the scoring hole by hole over centuries not only by the celebrated winners but he adds intriguingly an analysis of the efforts of the top ten in the petillon behind which gives a different story. He has many quotes from those who have studied the course, deeply and otherwise, and he tastefully spares us the tedious ghosted words of Snead and Furgol's caustic incomprehension.

The story is not over. The humiliation and likely demise of the Old Course has been long awaited, but the course has struck back with pride. In the R&A clubhouse hangs Earl Haig's own chart of the trench positions before the Battle of Verdun in 1916. Beyond the Big Room is today's battle between greatest course in the world and the needs of the golf industry to innovate year by year. The author has drawn up the entrenched positions at present in the long-running Battle of the Links and the reader will find he is in no doubt what needs to be done. His views are shared in a gracious *Introduction* by Peter Thomson to a book which will now be the standard reference work.

Published by the Hazard Press, New Zealand, the book may be ordered in the UK through Waterstones, though copies may need to be sent

from the St Andrews branch (inter-branch delivery is free). Alternatively, it can be mail-ordered using the order form contained in this magazine, or online from www.tmgolfdesign.com. Cost is £45 inc p&p, (£52 with flexible payment options outside UK).

Review by *David Hamilton*

One Hundred Years in Norton

The Centenary History of Lees Hall Golf Club

by

Eric Powell

Eric Powell has been associated with Lees Hall GC Sheffield, for all his life. First as son of the Professional, then as junior member, star player, Captain, President and now historian – he has contributed hugely to the Club, and it has an important place in his life. So he has a unique view of the Club – its principals, characters, players, developments, playing triumphs and all associated human interactions and foibles. He has had access to a full set of minutes, an interesting set of Club memorabilia and good records from the local and golfing press. Where there have been gaps in understanding of why something has or has not happened, he has been able to talk to those involved, or their surviving friends and family.

What emerges is an intimate portrait of a successful and thriving club, and the members that have influenced its development over the years. The account is very good over the first 30 years, as the Club struggled to establish itself, and then survive the cash-strapped inter-war years. A friendly Council helped it through the last War after which it slowly rebuilt membership and assets to the end of the century. More than most club histories, the Lees Hall story gives prominence to these post-War years. What could easily have been boring and pedestrian, is actually interesting and absorbing as we get the inside story of what made the Club tick. The account is leavened throughout by reference to prominent members and their motivations, and to some of the ordinary members who did battle with them. It provides useful educational reading to anyone involved today on club administration.

Course development is also well-covered: early local initiatives were followed by designs from Sandy Herd (based at nearby Huddersfield) and Tom Williamson, whose last layout is largely unchanged today. There is even a chapter on the Sheffield and District Union of Golf Clubs, bigger and more powerful than some of the smaller English counties, and fleetingly, itself a candidate

as an independent county union following local government reorganisation in the 1970s. And it includes, within some colour illustrations of Club memorabilia, a rare sight of an instructional booklet written by Eric's father, which does not appear in Donovan and Jerris.

This is a comprehensive account, filling 254 pages of A4, within illustrated card covers, containing many photographs in both black and white and colour. Available from the Secretary, Lees Hall GC, Hemsworth Rd, Norton, Sheffield, S8 8LL, tel no 0114 255 4402 at the modest price of £15 plus p&p.

Review by *John Pearson*

History of the Old Shirburnians GS

by

Charles Eglinton

Like so many golf societies, the Old Shirburnians produced a Members Handbook regularly from the early 50s. These included the usual results of meetings/matches and a list of members. However, in the 1989 edition they included a full history of the Society. This took up fifteen pages which together with the 28 pages of past results of the Society constituted a comfortable majority of the booklet's 64 pages.

The above analysis is important to establish whether or not it can be classified a club history – something that often exercises the minds of those of us who collect this category of golf book. The Old Malvernians, who published their admirable history in 1992, were always thought to have published the first Old Boys golf society history, but I believe they now have to wave the Shirburnians through. I think the revised batting order – one has always been an all-rounder – must now read: Sherborne - 1989, Malvern – 1992, Rugby – 1994, Edinburgh Academicals – 2001, and Cranleigh and Winchester – 2005. I am also aware of just one non-Halford Hewitt school producing a history – The Old Lawrentian GS – 2005. There may well be others, so do please let me know.

I am grateful to BGCS member Edward Playfair for sending me three Old Shirburnian publications – the handbook from 1979 and the histories from 1989 and 2004. If any member is interested in acquiring the 2004 history he/she should contact the author, the Society's Hon Archivist, Charles Eglinton on 020 8946 3863 (tel) or at charles.eglington@blueyonder.co.uk It is available at £10 post free, with foreign postage as a small excess.

Philip Truett