

THE BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY



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1987

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Through the green

.....is the official journal of the BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY and is published quarterly in June, September, December and March. There is promise that 'High Tech' Desktop publishing is on the way for the next issue, with the introduction of a WORDPROCESSOR, named after some fruit or other and likely to reduce it's operator to a lemon!!

Through these pages we aim to entertain, encourage and increase the collectors knowledge and understanding of the rich history of the game of golf. Members are encouraged to make new friends and develop old friendships. Why not 'phone up the member nearest to you and invite him over for a round of golf? Contributions are welcomed, as are comments or criticisms and unless libellous will end up within the pages of this, Y O U R journal.



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At a recent luncheon held at my golf club, Seaford, which is celebrating it's centenary year, a colleague suggested that there was, gathered within the dining room on any given day, sufficient talent and wisdom to run for parliament. 'What's more', my colleague opined, they would do a b..... sight better job! This set me thinking of the collective talent and experience within the B.G.C.S. We've cornered the absolute cream! - Doctors, Surgeons, Brokers, Bankers and Men of Letters. A plethora of writing talent, (names like Adams, Baird, Colville, Garcia, Goodban, Hamilton, Hobbs, Hawtree, Johnston, MacDonald, Nolan and Viney spring easily to mind.) and unsung golfing talent that could in all probability challenge the current Walker Cup squad, (and give them a very close game indeed!). Run for Parliament? - why the B.G.C.S. is ready to run the world!

To you all this Christmastime I wish the following: A cure for your socket, a furnished country cottage with a gate leading on to your favourite golf course, A new Porsche or Bentley, A fine Havana cigar, a rare brandy, a perfect drive every time - and of course good health and happiness in whatever you do throughout the whole of 1988. Peace on earth and good will to all men.

David W.



HILTON'S ROCK by John Garcia



In 1987 few golfers, I have found, have heard of Harold Hilton. There is nothing reprehensible about this, of course, for it is only the passage of time that has erased his memory. He was, however, probably the best British amateur golfer, having won two Open Championships, four Amateur ones, and one American Amateur Championship. He was certainly one of the best-known, for he was the first editor of *Golf Monthly*, and later after Garden Smith died he became the editor of *Golf Illustrated*.

I am near the end of a post-retirement task of writing his biography, which has taken up the better part of a year. One of the most amusing bits of it came about during some work I was doing on his winning the United States National Amateur Championship. That all happened rather a long time ago in September 1911, at the Apawamis Club in the State of New York, but this was too late for there to be anything about it in my first source of information about Hilton, which was his autobiography "My Golfing Reminiscences" published in 1907. I suppose he may have thought then, at the age of 38 and having won nothing for 5 years, that his golfing career was at an end. If he did think this, he couldn't have been more wrong.

Very soon after starting my researches into the American episode, I discovered that there was an unresolved mystery about it. To come to the point rather rapidly, after winning the important 36 hole qualifying competition, Hilton had only one game of any difficulty in the matchplay stage of the meeting, which was limited to 32 players. This was against Jerome D Travers, a former US champion whom he beat by 3 and 2 over 36 holes. In the final he had to play another young American Fred Herreshoff. Herreshoff was 4 down at lunch, and 6 down with 13 to play, but he staged a come-back and the match was all-square after 36 holes. After an indifferent drive up the right edge of the 37th fairway, Hilton sliced or pushed his second shot to the first green, which was a gun-platform affair near the top of a gentle hill. The hole was then 377 yards long.

Here is where the unresolved mystery occurred. Hilton's ball was headed for a lot of trouble, for to the right of the green is a slope on which there are a lot of trees and in amongst them many boulders in a rocky area which is just short of an out-of-bounds fence. Yet despite this unpromising territory, in some way the ball made its way on to the green. Because of the terrain, neither of the two players could see this but the huge gallery let them know. Herreshoff, who had thought the title was his while Hilton's ball was in the air, topped his second shot, and his final score of 5 lost him the match to Hilton's rather shaky 4. But what exactly had happened to Hilton's ball? According to one writer, all the press and the golfing journals said that Hilton's second shot struck a rock, and "caromed" on to the green.

One of the best accounts is in Herbert Varren Wind's book "The Story of American Golf" (1948 and a revised edition in 1956). Here he said, I think not entirely without malice, that American golf fans came to believe in the rock story "undoubtedly because it made Hilton's victory seem less deserved." Wind was not an eye-witness. Indeed he cannot have been born much before 1911. So his account is agnostic on the question whether Hilton's ball hit a rock. Rather foolishly, perhaps, I thought I would try to find out. After quite a bit of research, I arrived at this position :-

1) The New York Times's account, a well written and lengthy one covering every day of the event in some detail, certainly said that the ball hit a rock and caromed on to the green.

2) HB (Harry Brownlaw) Martin's "Fifty Years of American Golf" (1936) was the first I read which vehemently denied that there was any rock involved. According to Martin, who ~~was~~ an eye-witness, the ball fell "two feet short of the projecting rocks; then, following the contour of the ground, it rolled gently down the slope to the green and came to rest ten feet from the cup."

3) I had managed to buy a copy of William H Conroy's "Fifty Years of Apawamis" (1940) which was the official history of the club, and which had a whole chapter of eight pages devoted to the 1911 American Amateur Championship. Conroy was also an eye-witness. In this account, Conroy says "His ball did not, as so many have believed, carom off a rock in the woods and come to rest on the green. What happened was, the ball landed on the mound and took a left angle (sic) bound of about fifteen feet, coming to rest twenty feet from the hole."

4) Jerome D Travers, writing with Grantland Rice, in "The Winning Shot" (1915) gives an account which supports the rock story, but which describes the terrain rather eccentrically. The green, it says, is "bordered on the right by a towering rock, almost a cliff" and Hilton's ball "by some strange freak.... struck a projection from the side of the rock and caromed off upon the green for a sure four in place of an almost sure six...." which would have resulted had the ball bounced any other way. Travers does not say whether he was an eye-witness, but although he played at Apawamis in the championship the description of the terrain is slightly at variance with photographs, which show a grassy slope between the green and trees within which are many stones and boulders. The cliff-like formation to which Travers refers is at the summit of this slope, some ten or more yards from the right edge of the green. To say that this cliff-like formation "borders" the green gives a rather wrong impression of proximity. It is close to the green but there is plenty of room for a shot to land to the right of the green without hitting it.

I was inclined to believe Martin and Conroy, but a letter I'd written to the Golf Collector's Society in America was published in their journal, and at once I was receiving a goodly quantity of photostats of contemporary American golf journals' accounts of the 1911 championship. One member, Kent Korber, had just purchased a heap of photographs of the event. Also I'd written to the president of the Apawamis Club, who kindly passed my letter to a member who was actively interested in the club's history one Peter Thomson who was also, by a rather striking coincidence, a member of my own club at Vest Hill. On a visit from New York to see his father, Peter kindly dropped in to see me, bringing two marvellous photographs one of which was used in Conroy's history of Apawamis, captioned "The last putt". Another member of the Apawamis Club, Allison Choate, to whom I had written, also gave me immense help. Both Thomson and Choate were strongly pro-rock story, and I should explain that the first hole on the card of the course, is named "Hilton's Rock" so there are naturally few if any members of the Apawamis Club who do not believe the rock story.

One of Thomson's careful pieces of research was based on one of the photographs he gave me, which had been captioned "The last putt" in Conroy's book. He considered, rightly I think, that the position of Hilton's ball in this photograph could only have been reached if it had been deflected by a rock, as it was directly in front of the flag, which was many yards away from the right hand edge of the green. However,

pondering upon this and the other photograph, I realised that they were not taken during play on the 37th hole, as Hilton was playing from the centre of the fairway, and Herreshoff plainly in the rough miles to the left, which all accounts of the match gave as their positions on the 19th hole.

One Robert Kuntz, a founder member of the American Golf Collectors' Society, and a member of the USGA's museum committee, had sent me some really useful photocopies of articles mostly from 1911 issues of American golfing journals. One of these included a photograph captioned "...the winning putt...", which eventually both Thomson and Choate agreed was what it was. This did not, however gratifying it was, in any way contribute to the solution of my original question about whether Hilton's ball hit a rock or not.

In the end, I had to admit that there was no absolutely convincing evidence one way or the other. Nevertheless, I believe that the simple rock story is probably wrong. For one thing, I can't help thinking that for two respectable American eye-witnesses to deny that the ball bounced off a rock is something which can only be explained by their having told the truth. Their writing about it will have won them absolutely no popularity contests in the United States. But also, I can't believe that the sight of a ball landing on a stone and bouncing off it would look at all similar to one landing on turf and bouncing and rolling off that. The balls used in 1911 was in every respect similar to the ones we use now, and I would bet that most of us know how different these two bounces would look.

Then again, it all depends on what you mean by "rock", a thought which was suggested to me by Allison Choate rather than Dr CEM Joad. Choate's view is that the name on the card "Hilton's Rock" refers to the whole complex rocky area to the right of the first green, and of course nobody denies that in this sense Hilton's ball hit it. Unfortunately, however, the real issue is whether the ball struck a stone or boulder in this area, and it naturally does not assist us to call the whole area "Hilton's Rock".

But it was Martin's claim that convinced me. "I was in a position to see the flight of the ball all the way" he wrote, and his account of the ball landing short of the rocks on the right of the green, and rolling gently down on to it is one which he says Hilton had confirmed by others who responded to a request which Hilton made in an article in an American golfing journal (there were three or four in 1911) for eye-witnesses to come forward.

JOHN L.B.GARCIA

MIDDLE - AGE GOLF

My love of golf stretched over many years
I practiced hard and played the game with zest
I read the masters, Vardon, Taylor, Braid,
Jones, Cotton, Hagen, Herd and all the rest.
The stance, the grip, the way to fade the ball,
The etiquette, the rules, I thought I knew it all,
But as the shortening years passed by, I found
In spite of all that I was losing ground.
And then one day a friend took me aside
There's more to it than bolstering up your pride
Just look around, The swallows on the wing,
The smell of fresh cut grass, the hawthorn in the Spring.
Consider pal, you are not yet in heaven
What matters if you take a six or seven
And when you need a par to raise a thrill
Remember you're with friends, They all go through the mill.

FRED BATSON

A MESSAGE OF
CHRISTMAS JOY
FROM YOUR
COMMITTEE



THE BOOK THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE PUBLISHED.

by MICHAEL HOBBS

When our editor asked me to contribute a few words on this topic, my thoughts quickly turned to that vast Armada of golf instruction books, to one of which I must plead guilty myself. How many there have been which owe nothing to new thinking about playing the game and everything to the glitter of a great championship recently won. Yet which to choose? There have been several good ones since J Douglas Edgar with the rest..... well choose your own epithet.

And then there are, oh dear me yes, the biographies, perhaps less multitudinous but again far, far too many. The thoughts of an inside story or two, nostalgia and dramatic moments re-lived are more alluring yet most hurriedly ghosted these days after a few (very few) sessions of chat with a tape recorder. We may have been thrilled by the deeds of Tony Jacklin, for example, but surely not by any of the books which resulted over the years. This is not a modern disease. Harry Vardon's MY GOLFING LIFE is quite highly valued by collectors but surely merely because of the name and its scarcity. I doubt that those who have it pick up the book for an hour or so's browse after the first reading. But Vardon had one of the most fascinating stories to tell. If the book is dull stuff, it certainly isn't because his career lacked interest, but his ghost writer didn't much care and neither did his publishers.

And what about.....

At this point my thoughts were interrupted by the arrival of a parcel. It proved to be a review copy of HISTORIC GOLF COURSES OF THE BRITISH ISLES. For a moment or so I was confused by the first word. Were these about to be the pronouncements of Nicklaus, Faldo, Lyle, Ballesteros or whoever? No. it was a sort of a Darwin book and, I soon felt, the worst golf book ever published.

Hold on a moment! I am not about to argue that Darwin was a hack and Harry Rountree an untalented illustrator. It's the publishers, Duckworth's at The Old Piano Factory in N.W.1, who stirred me to wrath. It is true that for a modest £14.95 you will have Bernardo's lines, sometimes wavily printed. Otherwise a photocopy of the original would be preferable. Rountree is gone and his watercolours were much of the appeal of GOLF COURSES OF THE BRITISH ISLES. Undoubtedly Duckworth's would have found it impossible to track down all the originals but could have managed something acceptable from the reproductions in the original book. Instead, it seems that the publishers decided to 'modernise' the look of the book with different illustrations. What a contemptible hash they have made of it. What we have are a handful of golfing scenes and courses from early this century, a few stock shots of the Great Triumvirate and others and half a dozen or so modern golf course pictures. Ironically, the reproduction standards of these are very poor - inexcusable.

A glance at the photo credits reveals part of the reason. Basically, Duckworth's have gone to only two sources, The B.B.C. Hulton Picture Library and Allsport. In my mind's eye I can see the matter being handled with a couple of vague 'phone calls.

So much for the main text and illustrations. Naturally, there is also an introduction which, the blurb tells us, 'is amusing and scholarly' and comes jointly from Barry Took and Peter Alliss. I have known Peter for many years. He can certainly be amusing and equally would never make claim to be a scholar on golf matters. That part, I thought, must be Barry Took. Though I know him only as a comedy script writer and T.V. 'personality', neither is a disqualification to erudition in the field of our golfing past.

What we are in fact served with is some taped comments from Peter Alliss on various changes in the golfing scene, where his experience goes back only as far as the Second World War, and nothing about Darwin's books. Took, it turns out, read the book for the first time just a few months before taking up his pen (his first experience of Darwin, perhaps?). He gives us a few notes on Darwin as both golfer and journalist and a few quotes from the book. No, it doesn't seem that he is our ultimate golf scholar either. However, within these limitations he does an acceptable chatty job. He has read the book and also some biographical notes on Bernard Darwin. As I hope will be clear, my quarrel is with the publishers who have turned a silk purse into a sow's ear.

The word had come to them that collections of Darwin writing have done quite nicely in the bookshops. Apparently holding the copyright, it was a chance to cash in. There's no harm in that but there is in the lack of effort. This even extends to the final area of a publishers responsibility, the dust jacket. In drear pea green, it features a dank picture of Moor Park on the front with a snap by Elinor Took on the back, of Barry, Peter and a Powercaddy!

ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF THE BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY

Elsewhere in this issue we have enclosed an entry form for membership of the B.G.C.S. Of course, it is the wish of your committee to welcome any bona fide collector into our society providing that the correct procedures for election are strictly adhered to. In the same way as members are elected to a Golf Club, so is it a prime requisite that any candidate submitted for election should be known personally to the proposer and not merely a chance acquaintance. The proposer is required to enclose a letter of introduction/recommendation with the candidates application form.



LETTER FROM AMERICA.

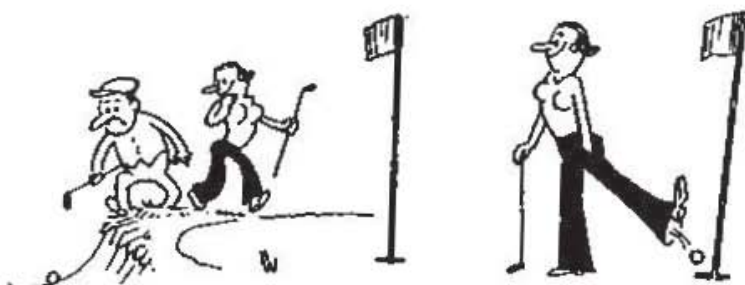
We were pleased to learn that your noble Editor has made good recovery from the discomfort he suffered in hospital. But then, left-handers always do.....The highlight of the year was our 17th Annual Meeting held early in October. We were blessed with visits from our British Cousins, Peter & Peggy Crabtree, Archie &

Sheila Baird, Bob & Sandra Gowland, your esteemed Captain, Ray Gossage, your honourable Treasurer, Tony Hawkins and Sarah Baddiel. They asked for and were given "thirty seven seconds" at the banquet to offer the assembled troops a song. It proved to be discordant but enthusiastic; a rendition of a song - obviously quickly composed - extolling the victory of your Ryder Cup Team's victory. We listened politely and applauded somewhat timorously. The meeting was a great success. Golf was played at Somerset Hills Golf Club, one of America's premier Clubs, and if we are less than exact in our reporting, we do know that both the Baird's and the Crabtree's participated. The weather, that particular day, might be described as 'British', so they felt at home! Friday, we all met at 'Golf House', headquarters of the U.S.G.A. and all in attendance were treated to talks and panel discussions on subjects dear to our hobby. The banquet, as mentioned, was disgraced with a chauvinistic display of national pride on winning the Ryder Cup. Thank goodness that they had not yet learned of England's triumph in the Dunhill Cup also. Saturday was devoted to a "trade fair", although it is your correspondent's observation that perhaps more buying and selling goes on than trading. More than 200 members attended and despite 'the troubles' we have been suffering, we feel the G.C.S. is alive and well. We, personally, had the great pleasure of entertaining Tony, Peter and Peggy and Sarah and we will assume that your other visiting members were entertained. It is such a pleasure to have you visit us. Bill Birch was over earlier on a wonderful tour that took him to golf at Pebble Beach, jazz listening in New Orleans (he is himself an accomplished bass player) and a visit to the U.S.G.A. Museum and Library. We should mention that Bob Gowland participated in the program arranged by Janet Seagle for our meeting and although he speaks English, most of us understood him! His talk and comments regarding how to act at auctions was well received. It was most instructive to us, the colonists.....

On the book front, we must compliment David Stirk on the publication of his 'GOLF: THE HISTORY OF AN OBSESSION' and note the publication of 'BULLET HOLE', a detective/mystery story by a Keith Miles, obviously a British writer. In this country, we will not bore you with a recitation of all the books, but we think there are several which are out of the ordinary. MINIATURE GOLF (Abbeville Press) is, as the title indicates, devoted to the peculiar madness that seized America during our Great Depression and features a most unique cover made of artificial grass. VERMONT GOLF COURSES (New England Press) and ADIRONDACK GOLF COURSES (Adirondack Golf) are books devoted to regional golf courses. GOLF IS A FINE LETTER WORD (By the author) is one of those books on golf humour which is occasionally funny and our favourite this time is FROM TEE TO GREEN: A BOOK OF UNCOMMON PRAYERS FOR GOLFERS (Twenty Third Publications). For the few of you who may be religiously oriented - golf is not a religion you know! - and it is serious, quite unlike this correspondent. We have produced the usual number of books calculated to reduce your handicap to that of scratch and should you be at all interested in that you might care to write to one or other of the dealers in golf books here in the U.S.A. whom we are sure will oblige you.

It has been a good year. Certain of us had the privilege of visiting your golden shores and were received warmly. For that - we thank you. Our continued hope is that when you come this way, you will jot down a few names of members of the G.C.S. here in the U.S.A. - in the area you will be visiting - and you can be assured that you will receive a warm welcome. Our hobby is fascinating - but perhaps more fascinating - certainly more enjoyable, is the bond of friendship that we have formed in devoting ourselves to the wonderful, wacky world of golf collecting.

.....BY MARTINI



China Tees: London, 3rd November

A golfer making a confident back-swing is a highly unexpected motif to find on eighteenth-century Chinese export porcelain. It appears on a punch bowl from the Hervouët Collection, Part II of which will be sold on 3rd November. The Hervouët's confined their collection to export wares, which looked to Europe for inspiration and frequently adapted designs from European prints. The golfer medallion is after a drawing by David Allan, which formed part of the letterhead of the Honourable Company of Golfers of Edinburgh, a society in existence before 1767. The punch bowl may have been made for a member of the club connected with the East India Company, or even for the Honourable Company itself. Given the enthusiasm of the Scots for golf, and the Scottish connection with the China trade, the motif is quite appropriate. Chinese export porcelain flowed into Scotland in the eighteenth century, with the proportion of armorial services made for Scottish families rising from six per cent before 1730 to thirty-two per cent between 1775 and 1800. However, export wares with golfing subjects are extremely rare, and collectors of Chinese art will no doubt be competing for the punch bowl with enthusiasts of the game.



A detail from a punch bowl with a golfing motif, Qianlong, c.1790, diameter 29.8 cm. £8,000-12,000, from the Hervouët Collection, London, 3rd November.



The bowl from which the above detail is taken.

Perhaps the most refreshing news to reach the editorial desk was for us to learn that this wonderful and most rare piece of porcelain had been bought by our B.C.C.S. member Manfred Schottan who, displaying considerable courage in bidding for a piece which he so much wanted for himself, beat off the almost inevitable American challenge from Mort Olman to eventually have the hammer fall at the sum of £22,300 (incl. VAT & Premium).

PHILLIPS SPORTING SALE, OCTOBER 21st 1987

LONDON SALESROOMS

This scribe, ever vigilant over the manner & conduct of the various auction houses, admits to a soft spot when it comes to Phillips of Chester, who nearly always seem to get things right. It is only proper then for me to criticise their first cousins, Phillips of London, for the shambolic state of their salesroom on viewing days and the quite abysmally poor cataloguing. Such was the lack of space in this rabbit warren of a place that very many lots were piled one upon the other. To make matters worse several lots were incorrectly numbered and several more were without numbers at all! Tempers became frayed and the inaptly titled 'sporting' sale became very unsporting indeed. If this company are to win friends and influence people they really must get this particular act together - fast!

"What pure market is there than an auction?" informed buyers, collectors, experts and the highest bidder with so much for this evening, if not as it applies to sportsmen for art, books and other regalia. It was found out that some sports houses do their business under the banner of another kind, with large numbers and loose details.

There is an auction house is quite what it seems. These are "bids off the shoulder" a rather crude of attending prices, called out by the auctioneer at the start of a sale. The imaginary bids are made after they have their competition. If they stick does not these out enough, there is another in front of them from achieving too cheap a price. It is a secret reserve price agreed on beforehand with the seller. A picture that fails to reach it will be "bought in" by the house.

But news of buying can prick the inflated expectations induced by the house and make all prices sag. So the phantom nature of the winning bidder is sometimes concealed. At a sale in London in 1977, Sotheby's claimed a record £115,000 (£137,000 at current rates) for a Courtenay's table. But no one had bid that record price. The underbidder was persuaded

to do so after the sale, but later withdrew. In a New York sale of May 1991, Chairman David Barbour, reported that out of eight Impressionist paintings had been sold whereas in their own one had been. His book, which recently featured, contributed the disappointing results to the little mind of the modern art collector.

Public competition, especially between Sotheby's and Christie's, is apparently a necessary for their respective practices. Rarely do they help their houses and being in competition Douglas McGee of the New York Times in a survey of auction house practices.

The auctioneers claim that reserve prices must be kept secret in lot rings of buyers colluding not to bid against one another. They defend bids off the shoulder as being the theoretical offers of bidders who have sold their own work before hand.

The deceptive practices they were aware of, but were chiefly to let the auction house manipulate the market and squeeze higher prices from customers. No wonder art collectors have become fickle. Beware to catch by the auctioneer's bait.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Auction Calendar

Phillips - CHESTER	- January 22nd
Sotheby's - BILLINGHURST	- March 11th (provisional)
Sotheby's CHESTER	- July 11th
Phillips - CHESTER	- July 12th

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION - PHILLIPS CHESTER SALE JAN. 22

Rowton Hall Hotel have both single and double room available for our members at the cost of £35.00 s and £65.00 double per night Bed & Breakfast. This reduced price has been negotiated by Mrs Paddiel; those wishing to avail themselves of this service requested to contact her direct on 01 - 452 - 724

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CONCLUDING THIS FASCINATING ARTICLE BY ALESTAIR J. MacDONALD

The next event was ushered in around 1600, probably very shortly after the Union of Crowns in 1603. This was the arrival of the renowned featherie which was destined to hold centre stage for the next 200 years. The two events, featherie and James VI of Scotland becoming James I of England, brought together in a single decade, two episodes of singular sociological importance to the game of golf.

First the featherie ball itself. Really a re-emergence of the Roman pegasus ball, and now fashioned out of bulls or horses hide formed into a pouch and stuffed with boiled goose feathers. By 1618 its production had become big business, big enough to cause the awarding of a monopoly by King James to one James Melville, a middleman, who for a consideration (paid, of course to the King) cornered the U.K. market for the next 20 odd years. His brief - "to furnishe the kingdome with better golf ballis". But who was using them in such apparently significant numbers? Not the rank and file; not the recalcitrant and impetuous archers (a featherie was a very expensive commodity). Perhaps those Scots at the top and those on the way up, the smaller end of local demand. There was however a market, a virgin one, in England.

James, having decided to take up residence in England, imported with him to London, much to the disgust of the natives, an entourage of many hundreds including courtiers, officials and noblemen, many if not all well versed in the art of golf. Like the colonial Englishman of later times whose first instinctive task was to mark and roll out a cricket pitch, the court of James VI / I, with commendable single-mindedness, requisitioned a tract of land called Blackheath. Golf, in two senses had arrived, but several centuries were to pass before the man-in-the- (English) - street became, or was allowed to become, hooked. Two prime factors, social and economic and perhaps in fairness, environmental, militated against his participation and involvement.

The featherie at this time, and throughout its long life, was prohibitively expensive, and as a result, for the next 250 years or so, golf in England remained the exclusive domain of the wealthy and those who could afford to buy privacy. Golf in Scotland, however, continued to be played free of charge, on common land and by people of the same description - once you owned a ball, a wooden one, and a play-club you were established with no further operating costs. A game of the people, all of the people, in a country of little class distinction. The featherie ball in England, paradoxically, was one of the main inhibitors to the development of golf in that country. The ball was expensive and a thinned rut - iron shot spelled disaster to a wet featherie. A report from Blackheath during the early featherie period tells of having to put down a new ball at every hole because of the wet conditions causing the balls to split asunder, and that using only the wooden play-club. (Iron clubs were not generally introduced until the late 1700's).

Towards the middle of the 1800's the making of featheries was a booming business. The Rolls-Royces and Purveys of golf had arrived - Gourlays, Robertsons, Allans and Stewarts. Skilled craftsmen who could turn out no more than 4 or 5 balls each per day. Their products were highly destructible and they cost four to five shillings each, about the same price as a wooden club. Not a lot by today's standards, but consider the idea of taking up golf when a skilled tradesman in the mid - 19th Century was earning little more than twenty shillings a week and a good white-collar job was worth under two pounds a week. Little wonder that the sociological effect of the dominant featherie on English golf was, if nothing else, restrictive.

Then the breakthrough, the arrival of the solid ball in 1848. Introduced as the gutta or gutta-percha, from the Malaysian GETAH, and later, from about 1870, in composite form called the gutty (Composition: gutta percha, rubber, ground and metal filings). For the sake of simplicity in this article called in the generic sense, 'the gutty'.

The accident, if it can be so called, must be credited to the ingenuity and enterprise of a Scotsman, Dr R.A. Patterson. He discovered that the shavings and shards of 'getah' used as packing material for a piece of oriental statuary could be fashioned into a golf ball when heated, and that it became stone hard when cooled. The expensive and highly destructible featherie disappeared almost overnight (though, as always, the traditional held on) and a new dawn arrived.

The gutty, one shilling for a new ball and eightpence for 'remades', a ball which, if a bit dented or cut after a round could be steeped or given a hot bath at night, and with a hand roll before it cooled, was as good as new next morning. Still black, but fully recovered.

THE BALLCONTINUED.....

'as good as new' is perhaps a misleading description, for it was soon realised, and remarkably so, that the used and hacked ball flew better than the smooth surfaced original, or remade ball. How momentous discoveries are made reminiscent of penicillin and steaming kettles. A very revealing comment from a Blackheath golfer in the very early days - "a most curious thing - here is a golf ball of gutta - percha; Maitland and I have played with it all day in the rain, and it flies better at the end of the day than it did at the beginning". A ball with a few hacks flew better than one with an unblemished surface. From then onwards the progression of the gutty was first, hand - hammered, (chisel end of hammer) scored, moulded, (in metal cups) meshed or latticed and brambled (reverse dimpling) so bringing us to the end of the century when the era of the rubber - cored ball arrived.

In England, with the arrival of the gutty, the barrier of high cost was eliminated - a 'remade' for three pence. The opportunity was now present for participation by the masses, a socio - economic class of golfer hitherto unheard of. In Scotland, the game progressed rapidly, benefiting enormously from the historical fact of the game having started on public land and only gradually moving towards the private enclosed course (St Andrews Old course is still a public course). In England, where there was an almost feudal relationship between master and man, the game did not really blossom out for several years. To play golf in England required membership of a club, only about £2.00. per annum, but first, acceptance, (one may imagine the size of THAT hurdle) and then what represented more than a weeks wages and, as we all know, the annual subscription is only the start. However, in the 1890's the game in England 'went public'. In fact it exploded! A mere couple of golf clubs in existence when the gutty was introduced; fifty years later when it finally retired to give way to the rubber-cored Haskell, (America's first contribution to golf) there were almost a thousand. Still dominated by those able to pay for privacy, the public course had, nevertheless, arrived and on the horizon - artisans. A game at last for both Kings and cobblers.

There were at that time factors other than the gutty propelling the game into the realms of popularity. Leisure time was increasing; a greater spread of wealth to the less affluent, and perhaps less discernable, a growing awareness of the benefits of fresh country air. But whatever the prime external motivator, within the game, the gutty ball must be given the supreme accolade, together with due credit to Dr. Patterson and a Malaysian tree gum.

So much has happened in the world of golf this century that its adolescent years must appear to many to be insignificant by comparison. A solid gutta - percha ball - what's so clever about that? The immense change in the game brought about by its introduction may well be dismissed as unimportant by today's players, but its significance was certainly not lost on those actually there, able to witness its arrival.

In that year of 1848, William Graham, a member of the Innerleven Golf Club in Fife and clearly something of a prophet, penned this verse:

Of a' the changes that of late
Have shaken Europe's social state,
Let wondering politicians prate,
And 'bout them mak a wark a'!
A subject mair congenial here
and dearer to a golfers ear
I sing the change brought round this year
By balls of gutta - percha!

And, uniquely, a legend in its time.

.....ALISTAIR J MacDONALD...

TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND TO ONE WINNER COMES FROM RANKS OF B.G.C.S. MEMBERSHIP

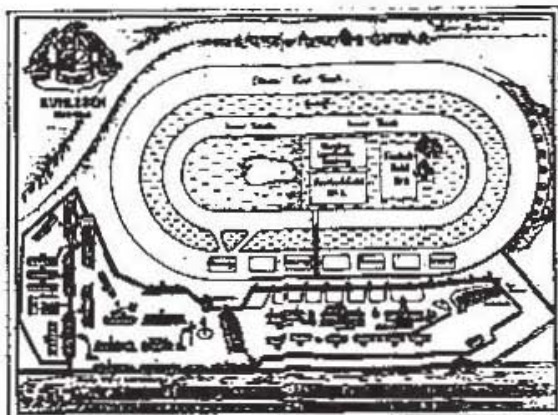
From a field of 25,000, our member John Sherwood, together with partner Richard Davies, have won the National Austin - Rover Foursomes 1987. Starting with competition at local club level they were early qualifiers for the South Eastern regional final in July. Here some 50 pairs took part and from a rocky start our hero's played level par golf over the final thirteen holes to win with a score of 38 points. In qualifying for the final they beat a pair from Rye G.C. by virtue of a better inward nine. To the final at Sotogrande went 14 pairs for a four day trip which took in a Tony Jacklin clinic and hosting. The rain in Spain, not always 'mainly on the plain', was a thoroughly wet and miserable affair for the two days of the finals and a score of 30 on the penultimate day was sufficient to give them a two point lead over second placed Yorkshire. Came the final and a pairing direct with the Yorkshire team. After nine holes they had scored 12 to the Yorkshire total of 14 and with just nine holes to play the event became a virtual 'matchplay' situation, as the other twelve pairings fell by the wayside. A grand rally gave them the lead again after 14 holes and they came to the final hole with a two point lead. The opposition scrambled a 5 at the 434 yard hole, leaving our nervous champions two putts from 15 feet for victory. The putt fell, a win by the single margin of one point was theirs.....our congratulations to them both.

GOLF BEHIND BARBED WIRE

contributed by Stuart R Mackenzie.

'Golf was played at the far end of the race track. Owing to the field being largely occupied by football and cricket players, the golfers had to keep within limited bounds, although those who had sallied forth at eight in the morning had the field to themselves for over an hour. Moreover, the grounds was reserved for a couple of days, now and again, for championship competitions. The golf club had about 200 members, many of whom were professional players, whilst a large number received their first lessons in the game in captivity and diligently snacked their golfballs against a net. The moving spirit behind the club was the Secretary; Mr C.S. BUTCHART, who had laid out many golf links for German magnates in pre-war days and held office of our civilian police force. In a competition arranged in September 1915 by Mr Lumery (Royal Golf Club of Belgium) and extending over three days, the tie between Mr Murray and Mr Holt resulted in a victory for the former by 41 strokes against 43 strokes over twelve holes.

Extract from Israel Cohens book: THE RUHLZEEN PRISON CAMP.



PLAN OF THE RUHLZEEN PRISON CAMP

1917

Ruhlzeen Golf Club

Member's Card

Name W. O. Gionings

Jan 7/8

Attest
H. S. S. S. S.

A 1917 PRISON CAMP MEMBERSHIP CARD.

A REQUEST FOR HELP

B.G.C.S. member Michael Hobbs is currently researching a history of THE RYDER CUP. He would be most interested to hear from anyone who has personal recollections, cuttings, programmes, photographs - or anything that comes to mind. Material is most scarce for the first three matches played in the U.S.A, but all other years may well be of interest and use.

Contact: MICHAEL HOBBS
The Beeches
18 East Cover
WORCESTER WR2 6BE
Tel: 0905 - 422162

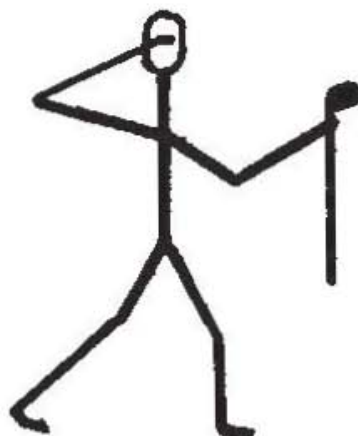
DESIGN COMPETITION

Corporate identity - the 'buzz - word' of the decade. And the BGCS is seeking YOUR help in designing a logo, suitable for our letter-heading, necktie or, heaven forbid, blazer badge.....Simplicity and identification with our cause are the keynotes.....too much fussiness can be a horror to a printer or designer....So please, each and everyone of you, put on your thinking caps and let us have your ideas. It is not essential for designs to be 'art ready' as we can utilise the skills of a professional to work on the finish of your design. Send your entry to : B.G.C.S., LDOO Camp.



'The player who three-putted the eighteenth'

IN PRAISE OF COURSES by A Searcher



'The Golfer who has grown weary of one set of strokes has only to leave his home green and pay a visit to some other course, and he will find new difficulties to be encountered and have to devise fresh methods of overcoming them....'

(JOHN L. LOW, CONCERNING GOLF 1903.)

My interest in collecting golf courses was a little like Topsy, it just grew. Helped by a reluctance to join a club in my early years in golf, Edinburgh and the surrounding area provided a feast of golf courses on which to obtain an understanding of the game.

Thus I sampled the delights of the links at North Berwick, the parkland courses at Dalmahoy, the moorland of Torphin Hill and the pine and heather courses of Gleneagles. What a wealth of different types of courses we have in our land. The cliff top, downland and woodland varieties would follow later.

Subsequently I have enjoyed such individual pleasures as - using the periscope at Elie, - oscillating the pole at Hunstanton, - avoiding greenside electric fences at Aberdovey, - treading carefully at Westward Ho! (there are separate local rules for dealing with animal droppings!) - ringing bells all over the place, - and trying never to forget to 'smell the flowers along the way'.

Then there are the golfing companions sometimes encountered along the way of chance rounds. The schoolboy at Thorpe Hall, driving longer and putting better - I comforted myself with the thought that he wasn't old enough to know how difficult the game could be. The local at St. Andrews, taking eleven at the short eleventh, leaving me to take three putts and feeling that I'd been let off lightly! The vicar at Broadway, - couldn't beat him, but then God is always on their side!

Such experiences can contribute to many a golfing conversation, and certainly provide memorable down payments to a golfer's own nostalgia bank.

My interest in courses has also led to a greater appreciation of the work of golf course architects and an understanding of the differences between, say, penal and strategic design. There is the experience of the great holes in golf, as Longhurst put it, 'the way they prey on the mind' before you go out to play them, and how they remain in the memory afterwards. There's also the pleasure, almost unique in the game of golf, of 'treading where the great have trod'. Certainly, when watching a tournament on television, this viewer has a greater awareness of a player's problems when he has played the course himself.

Then, at the end of each round, there awaits the welcoming clubhouse, each with its own atmosphere and style of architecture. (when will someone write a book on clubhouses of the golfing world?) From within one can learn of the history and development of the club, through members recollections, pictures, memorabilia, records and suggestion books.

continued Tee 12, over.....

Praise of Courses, continued.....

In this way I became a book collector, but I was a collector of golf courses first. It supprises me that no G.C.S. member (or B.G.C.S. member for that) has previously advised an interest in golf course collecting. Joe Murdoch has made passing references to members seeking to play the best 100 courses in the United States, but I feel that this is too restrictive. My wish is greater than that, especially as there are some golfing gems in this country which might not qualify as part of anyone's '100 best'. Courses such as Royal Dornoch, Macrihanish, Berwick on Tweed, Southerness and St Enedoc almost require pilgrimages to play them (at least from Dorset). You'll gather I'm a 'links man' and I can assure you that each journey was a memorable experience.

Having praised courses and expressed my enjoyment in playing them, I therefore ask the B.G.C.S. to include this interest in the next edition of our Directory. Who knows, new members could result from this action! They might become aware of ancillary collecting interests. Scorecards, handbooks, bag tags, garments, histories and pictures come to mind. In my case, whatever the result of a round, the experience and memory of the course matter most to me.

My search for overseas courses has led to the promotion and organisation of two team tours to the U.S.A. The success of these ventures was in no small measure due to the fine hospitality offered by American G.C.S. members, without whose aid we certainly wouldn't have been able to play at certain private clubs over there. Lasting friendships were made from these encounters and we have been able to return some of the kindness shown to us.

In particular I remember the late Claud Corrigan who, after playing a round at my club at Broadstone, described it as 'one of the most natural courses I have ever played'. I appreciated this tribute, and should you wish to test it, please telephone me for a round - but dont all ring at once!

In conclusion, I make no claims as to the number of courses I have played - that doesn't matter. What is more important are these words, also culled from 'Concerning Golf' - 'NO GOLFER HAS EVER BEEN FORCED TO SAY TO HIMSELF WITH TEARS, "THERE ARE NO MORE LINKS TO CONQUER.....The search continues.

PETER G. BOWN.

The Editor,
13 Great College St
BRIGHTON
BN2 1HJ
East Sussex.



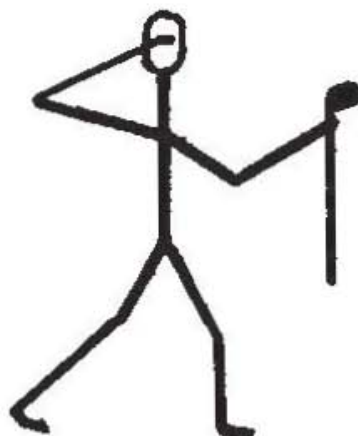
Letters-to the editor

A Forum for your views, news and opinions...

From: GRAHAM GLEW....For some time I have thought that for hickory club collectors, a directory of professionals from the hickory era, with the names of their clubs and dates of service, would be of tremendous help in dating clubs. I have started to collect this information for myself, but it is a slow job. Would any member be able to assist, by giving me dates of 'hickory era' pro's at their own club, and if possible those of other clubs locally? I have found club secretaries very helpful in offering information, but it is a time consuming and costly exercise for me alone. I will accept the information, catalogue it in alphabet order and, depending on the success of the operation, have copies printed, either for membership consumption or even for national publication. Having started I am confident, with members help, that it could be very successful. Thanks for the much-needed Journal - you are doing a grand job.

From: JIM NOLAN....Thanks very much for the photo - Sam Sneed will want a copy.
And let me add my voice to the many plaudits you are receiving for the B.G.C.S. Journal No:2. I enjoyed it thoroughly - and I find the 'spirit' of it uncannily similar to the best of Murdoch, and I don't think there can be higher praise, for that was the spirit that brought us together as friends and comrades in our collecting - a spirit sadly lost, I opine, beyond the seas.
I'm off Thursday (Air India, God help me!) but hope to see you at Far Hills.....

IN PRAISE OF COURSES by A Searcher



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continued Tee 12, over.....

REGIONAL NEWS



SCOTTISH HICKORY GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP
ROYAL HURNESS GOLF CLUB
Friday JUNE 3rd 1988. - Details
and entry forms from:

JOHN RIGG
46 FOUNTAIN PLACE
LOANHEAD
EDINBURGH EH 20 9DU
Tel: 031 - 440 - 1385

B.G.C.S. 'OPEN' MEETING - ST ANNES OLD LINKS GOLF CLUB, Wednesday July 13th 1988. (entries for golf restricted to 40 players - 1st come first reserved!) grand formal DINNER in the evening at CLIFTON ARMS HOTEL. Open to members, spouses and guests BUT places must be reserved and paid for prior to the event(s). Contact BILL BIRCH, 6 SQUARE ROAD, WALDEN, TUDMORDEN W. YORKS OL14 7SU. Tel: 070 - 681 - 6229

Our PREMIER event, early reservations are vital.

DO IT NOW!!!

INFORMAL DINNER - BARNABY'S CHESTER
Thursday JANUARY 21st 1988

An 'open' evening for members and friends to meet and eat on the evening prior to the PHILLIPS CHESTER AUCTION. Reservations not essential but a note to Sarah Baddiel 43 Kendal Rd. London NW 10. Tel: 01 - 452 - 7243 would be welcomed.

BREADSALL PRIORY HOTEL GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
MORLEY - Near DERBY

A weekend of golf at this lovely, historic country house (A.A. 3 stars). We have reserved 9 twin - bedded rooms exclusively for B.G.C.S. members at the inclusive tariff of £57.00 per person. Arrive on Friday OCTOBER 14th 1988 for dinner, GOLF (two rounds if you wish) on Saturday. Dinner & talking around an open log fire, GOLF (one round) on Sunday. Bar talk prior to depart. A handsome course of 6384 yards, it promises to be a weekend to remember! Details from editor.

SEND YOUR 1988
SUBSCRIPTION to
TONY HAWKINS.
DO IT NOW!

B.G.C.S. CHRISTMAS GATHERING - ROYAL MID
SURREY GOLF CLUB - Friday DECEMBER 18th 1987

Come to the B.G.C.S. Christmas Party and meet
your friends, committee and Captain.

DETAILS AND ADVICE FROM ELSEWHERE THIS ISSUE

BOOKSHELF

This being the centenary year of Buxton & High Peak Golf Club I had expected to see details of a book in celebration of the event, but it was not until Peter Bown sent a copy to me just a month ago that I was aware of it's publication. Better late than never and just in case you haven't seen it, I can report that THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED YEARS is a nicely produced club history of some 68 pages, professionally printed with a soft glossy cover. Like most club histories it does, I suppose, have greater appeal to locals but I found the story of interest and always enjoy reading the scandal and gossip of a former era. The price remains a secret to me but I imagine a note to the secretary will bring you a copy. LANGLEY PARK GOLF CLUB 1910 - 1985, which I featured in the last issue of T.T.G. has been sent to me by it's author, member, Alistair MacDonald. Even better that the advance release suggested I can thoroughly recommend it. Copies may be obtained from Alistair at 99 Elwill Way, Langley Park, Beckenham Kent for £8.50 including postage. John Goodban will be remembered by collectors as the Editor of THE ROYAL NORTH DEVON, A CENTENARY ANTHOLOGY 1864 - 1964 which was a very well written collection, now commanding quite a healthy premium on the secondhand market. John has had a long and very distinguished career in golf, both as a high ranking official and as a fine player and now, as a tribute to his beloved home club at Saunton, he has written the history of this famous and delicious links course in the West Country. Entitled THE HISTORY OF SAUNTON GOLF CLUB 1897 - 1987, The First 90 Years; it is a true credit to it's author and quite beautifully produced (Our member Laurence Viney acting as Production Advisor.) If you haven't experienced the delights of Saunton take a word and picture trip with John Goodban. Hardbound with 80 pages, it can be obtained from the club secretary for £12.88 incl. post. When I first began on the long slippery slope of collecting golf books I confess to a desire to own everything that had ever been printed and often sought quantity rather than quality (which explains why I failed to respond to an offer of THE GOFF for £300!). Quickly enough I obtained thirty or so books by George Houghton, all of them readable enough but not memorable in the way that Darwin, Longhurst or Ward-Thomas's writings are. Nevertheless I'm delighted to read that George is still 'at it', at the ripe age of 82. Like most of his other books, GOLF AND THE STRANGLEHOLD is enlivened with his own cartoon illustrations, ably depicting his long association with golfers rich, famous and, through his pen, thoroughly entertaining. At £7.95 it can be obtained from Grant Books Ltd. Taking the cream of today's golfing journalists, Peter Alliss utilises their collective talents very effectively in GOLF - A WAY OF LIFE, An Illustrated History of Golf, published by Stanley Paul at £14.95. I've long been an admirer of such writers as Michael Williams (Daily Telegraph), John Hopkins (Sunday Times), and David Davies (The Guardian) and the clever idea of giving each journalist a section to complete gets my vote. Keith Mackie covers 'The Early Years', John Campbell 'Between The Wars', Hopkins, 'the Post War Years', with Williams picking the ace card 'Years of Fame & Fortune'. 'The modern game, from 1975 on', is Davies' task and without exception they all do a fantastic job. Alliss as Editor should be well pleased with this book and I urge you to get a copy in time for Christmas. FOLLOWING THE FAIRWAYS is my last offering of 1987 and I confess to mixed feelings about this book which, at £12.99 in soft cover is hardly the bargain of the year. It is an updated and revised issue of the previously published FOLLOWING THE FAIRWAYS of 1986. As golf course guides go it does it's job well enough but I nearly always find that any prices quoted are out of date even before the year is out. Coupled with the fact that advertising plays a large part of the total I cannot identify with it's high cover price. On the credit side there are a goodly number of colour illustrations of pictures, paintings and memorabilia supplied by various London art & book dealers. The photographs are, on the whole, excellent though some of the half tones are 'thin and washy'. Golf course/Hotel/Restaurant/Pub/Theatre guides come and go and I don't doubt they are a useful vessel for advertising revenue - this one might just make it, but I have my doubts!
