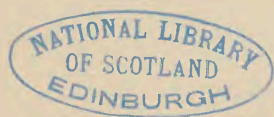




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THE ABERDEEN GOLFERS



THE SABBATH-BREAKERS. FROM THE PICTURE BY J. C. DOLLMAN.  
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**T**HE ABERDEEN GOLFERS:  
RECORDS & REMINISCENCES  
BY CHARLES SMITH

x

"Golf is the Queen of Games, if Cricket is the King, and the golfing gentlemen as fine fellows as ever I saw."

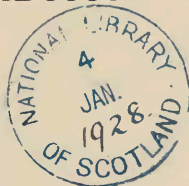
*Charles Kingsley.*

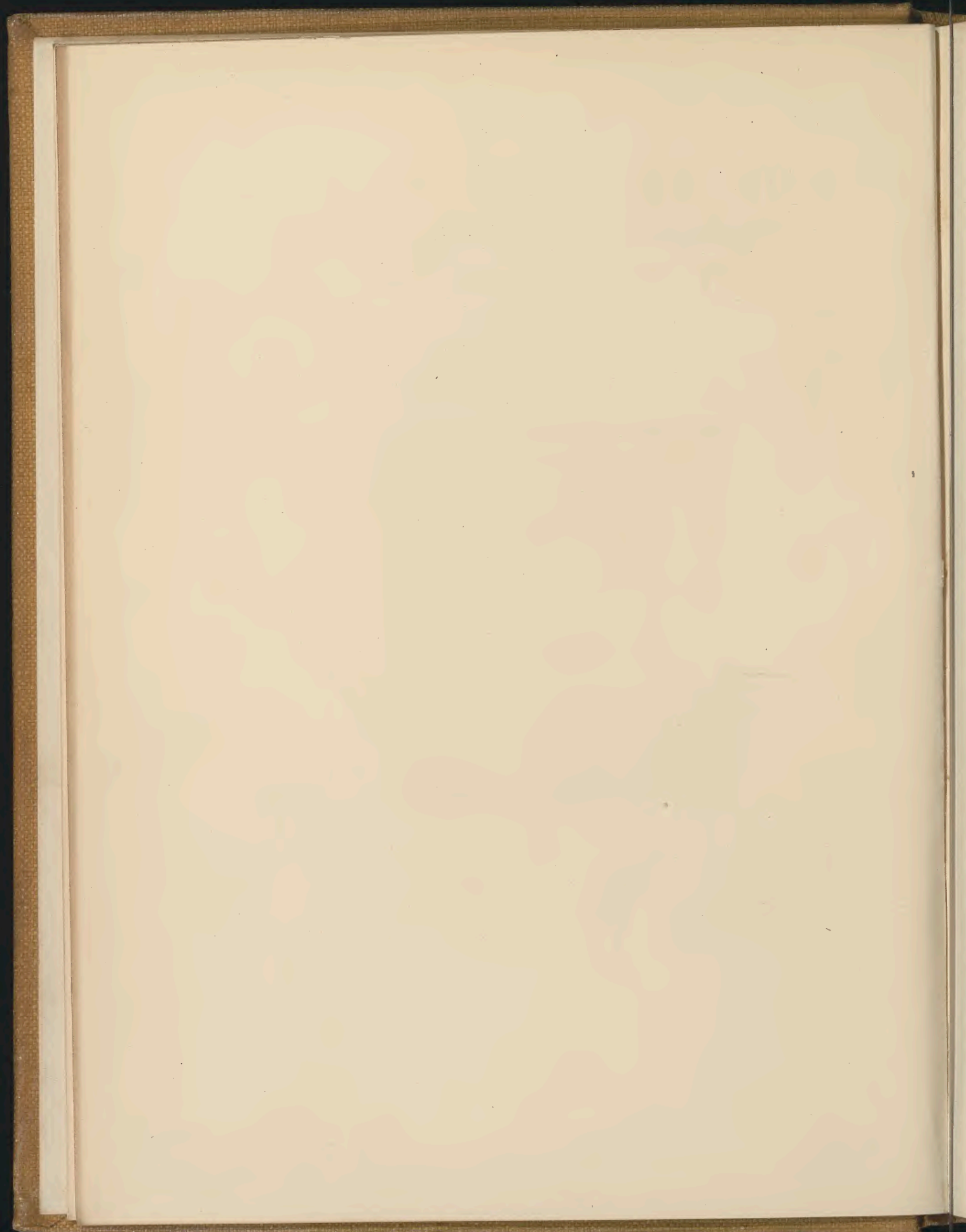


ARMS OF ABERDEEN

LONDON: PUBLISHED PRIVATELY  
FOR THE AUTHOR

MDCCCXCIX







## P R E F A C E

ALTHOUGH the game of Golf has been played on the Aberdeen Links for centuries, no work dealing with the subject has yet been undertaken. I am therefore hopeful that these records and reminiscences of golf in Aberdeen may not only prove of interest to golfers in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, and the North of Scotland generally, but also that they may be accepted as a small contribution to that larger History of Golf which has yet to be written.

I have to acknowledge much kind assistance received in the preparation of the book ; in particular, from Mr G. M. Fraser, Librarian of the Aberdeen Public Library, Dr David Littlejohn, Mr Theodore Crombie, and Mr George Kemp ; from Mr M. M. Duncan, Hon. Secretary, and the Council of the Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, for permission to examine the old Minute Book and records, and to reproduce the photographs of the Club Trophies ; and, last, but by no means least, from my brother, Mr Garden G. Smith, who has assisted me in preparing the book for press.

To all these, and many others, I here tender my most grateful thanks.

CHARLES SMITH.

CASTLEHILL, STRACHAN,  
BANCHORY-TERNAN,  
*February 1909.*

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"O, winter of the kindly North,  
O, college of the scarlet gown,  
And shining sands beside the sea,  
And stretch of links beyond the sands,  
Once more I watch you, and to me  
It is as if I touched their hands!"

ANDREW LANG.



EARLY FLEMISH GOLFERS, FROM A "BOOK OF HOURS." 1500-20.

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY REFERENCES TO GOLF IN ABERDEEN AND THE NORTH

**W**HO was the first Aberdeen golfer, and when did he play his first game on the Aberdeen Links, are questions that must ever remain unanswered. Here, as elsewhere, the first beginnings of golf are lost in "the mists of antiquity"; but if, as some think, the game in embryo came from the Continent, Aberdeen may well have been one of the first places in Scotland where it took root. The ancient motto and grace-name of the town, "Bon Accord," is eloquent of the *entente* that existed between Scotland and France from the close of the Middle Ages up to the Union. The scholars and students of the University (founded in 1494) were constantly passing to and from the seats of learning in the Low Countries and France, while the Aberdeen traders and merchants, and the cadets of the best families in the town and county who were to be found in every Continental army, must have brought back with them many Continental fashions. It would not, therefore, be very extravagant to suppose that it was some early Quentin

## The Aberdeen Golfers

Durward, or Dugald Dalgetty, home from the wars, or some poor scholar who had played *Chole* or *Jeu de Mail* abroad, who first struck a ball on the Aberdeen Links.

However that may be, and whenever or wherever golf was first played in Scotland, it could not be long before the fair and spacious links at Aberdeen attracted the attention of its early votaries. Golf, we know, was popular in Scotland in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and it may be safely assumed that the Act of 1457 which ordained "yt wapin-schawingis be halden . . . and at ye fut ball and ye golf be utterly cryt doune and nocht usit," was not without its application to the good citizens of Bonaccord.<sup>1</sup>

Yet the actual documentary evidences of early golf in Aberdeen are few. The interesting extract which follows is from the "Records of the Burgh of Aberdeen" of 28th December 1625 :—

"28 December 1625.—The quhilk day for obedience to the generall proclamatioun and charge giuen in to all his Majesties lieges; fensibill persones, alsweill to burgh as land within this kingdome, for giweing thair mustures and wapinschawing, this twentie aucht of December instant, the prouest and baillies of this burgh causet conveyn be the tounes commoun drummer, all the inhabitantes of the toun, alsweill frie as unfrie, fensibill persones, at the mercat croce, in thair best armour, and thairfra merchet efter thair magistrates to the Linkes, quhair the rolles of the haill four quarteres of the toun were callet, and notice takin of the armes careit be euerie man; and thaireftir the toun being ranket and put under commandement, the muscateres be thame selffes, the pickmen be thame selffes, and these that careit two handet swordis being ranket about the tounes three ensengzeis, thay merchet

---

<sup>1</sup> Golf is included in a list of "unlawful amusements" in the Aberdeen Register of 1565, and it had penetrated as far north as the Orkneys soon afterwards, for, as we learn from the *Correspondence of Sir Patrick Warr*, John Dickson, servitor to the Master of Orkney, writing from Kirkwall on 23rd November 1585, says: "Ye will remember to bring with you ane dossen of commoun golf ballis to me and David Moncreiff."



## Early References to Golf in Aberdeen and the North

all in ordour and rank in that pairt of the tounes linkes quhair the tounie heirtofore hes euer beine in vse to mak thair mustures, to wit, in the principall pairt of the linkes betwixt the first hole and the Quenis hole, and haveing merchet thair a certaine space, they than returned in order to the towne, and haueing marched diuerse and sundrie tymes in the Castleget round about both the croces, wer then dismissed be command of the magistrates ; and it is to be remembered that there mustered this day \* \* \* \* \* muskateres, and als many with pickes, speares, and crosboltes, and some sixteen with two handet swordis. Quhair of the Councell thinkes meitt that thair shall be giuen up to the Lordis of His Maiestie's Privie Counsell."

The question is whether the "first hole" and the "Quenis hole" on the Links, referred to in the above record, were golf holes. If the reference be to golf, the record is most interesting and valuable, inasmuch as it would be much the earliest proof that exists to show that early Scottish golf was played at *holes*. In the absence of any documentary evidence to the contrary, some authorities have suggested that the early "gouf" played in Scotland, and referred to in ancient statutes, was nothing more than a primitive stick and ball game like shinty, or, at best, that it was played at upright marks in the Dutch fashion ; and it is remarkable that the earliest literary evidence hitherto discovered of golf *at holes* in Scotland, is contained in a poem by James Arbuckle, published in Glasgow in 1721. If, therefore, the "first hole" and the "Quenis hole" were golf holes, Aberdeen would have the credit of establishing the fact that golf was played at holes in Scotland about a hundred years earlier than has hitherto been provable.

It is a tempting supposition, but there is a record of the "Perambulations of the Inner Marches of the Burgh," of date 11th May 1696, given in Mr P. J. Anderson's *Burgh Charters*, pp. 382-383, in which the following passage occurs :—

## The Aberdeen Golfers

"11th May 1696.—And from thence meeting all in the Links went be the heads of the crofts betwixt the first holl of the Links and Garvacks Wynd and fand the same rightly observed except ane march stone which was lifted at Footiseholl ordained to be renewed and fand ane great holl casten in the Links about the eist end of Garvocks Wynd by the cariers of sand ordains the same to be filled up and the makers thereof conveyened and fyned. And from thence divideing equally the on halfe from the eist end of the said Garvocks Wyne keipeing the heads of the crofts nixt the sea towards the blockhouse fand the same ordinarily well observed from incroachments on the Links and the other halfe keepeing Garvacks Wynd westward (which ought to be also four ells in breadth) fand the same ordinarily well observed on both syds."

Here, it will be seen, there is another reference to "the first holl of the Links," and also to another "holl" called "Footiseholl." It is to be noted that the spelling is "holl," and not "hole" as in the earlier record. But, though these were the days of fancy spelling, the whole extract perhaps raises a doubt as to whether these "holes" or "holls" may not have been merely hollows or sand-holes. Yet, on the face of it, it would seem to be a strange thing to *number* the hollows on what Parson Gordon describes in 1661 as "the fair plaine called the Queens Links,"<sup>1</sup> and it would be still stranger to dignify a hollow, or even a sand-hole, with the name of "Queen's." And, again, "the first hole," the "Quenis hole," and the "Footiseholl" are all perfectly natural names for golf holes, and we know that there was a very old golf hole on the land now occupied by the rope-walks and timber at the extreme south end of the Queen's Links, at Futtie (Footdee) in fact. This hole would quite naturally be called "the hole of Futtie," or "Futtiseholl." Further, it is not as if it were not known that golf was being played on the Queen's Links at the period in question. Gordon specifically

<sup>1</sup> *Vide infra.*



DUTCH GOLFERS, FROM A PICTURE BY VAN DER NEER. *About 1660.*





## Early References to Golf in Aberdeen and the North

names "goffe," in the extract which is given below, as one of the exercises at which the citizens recreated themselves on the Queen's Links in his time, *i.e.* midway between the dates of these two records. If, therefore, the golf that was being played was played at holes, it is reasonable to think that the holes must have had numbers or names, and those given in the above records are just the kind of names that have always been given to golf holes. Without, however, taking up any positive position in the matter, one is strongly disposed to think that the balance of probability is much in favour of the supposition that the holes referred to were golf holes. It has at least to be shown, if they were not, that they were something else; and if they were something else, why they were numbered or named in this fashion.

Doubtless the musters of the city forces referred to in the first record took place on the Queen's Links, or, as it was called later, the New Town Links, just as, in later times, this was the parade ground of the Volunteers. How the New Town Links came to be called the Queen's Links has never been explained, and the following extract from Parson Gordon's "Description of Bothe Touns," 1661, shows that, even in his time, it was not known how the "Queen's Links" came by its name. Here is what Gordon says:—

1661.—"Vpon the east syd of the citie and of Futtie ther lyes many fair feilds, fruitfull of corns, quheat, bear, oats, pease, and pot hearbs and roots. Thes are marched by the feilds near the sea syde called the Lynks. The most remarkable amongst thes is the fair plaine called the Queens Links, the reassone of the name unknown. The Lynks extend themselves almost betuixt the two rivers Done and Dee.<sup>1</sup> Heer the inhabitants recreat themselves with severall kynds of exercises, such as foot ball, goffe, bowlling, and archerie. Heer lykewayes they walk

---

<sup>1</sup> The mouth of the Don was at this time much farther south than it is now.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

for ther health. Nixt to thes is the sea shore, plaine and sandie, wher at low water there is bounds for horse races no less then two mylls of lenth." <sup>1</sup>

The reference in this extract to the inhabitants walking here (on the Queen's Links) "for their health," is interesting. This excellent custom continued, and one remembers well what a nuisance some of the modern "walkers for their health" became to the golfer, by refusing to budge an inch, if, as often happened, they inadvertently wandered on the golf-course and in the line of flight of the golfer's ball. One wonders if "the Links is as much mine's yours" plea, and the unreasonable behaviour of the non-golfers, were as much in evidence in these early times as they were twenty-five or thirty years ago.

There were keen golfers in Aberdeen three hundred years ago, as now. Even golf in the churchyard was not unknown, as we learn from the following "item" in the *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, vol. v. p. 89:—

1613.—"Item, the 13th of April, Jhone Allan, cutler, convict, and Jhone Allane, buik binder, convict for setting ane golff ball in the kirk yeard, and striking the same against the kirk, Jhone Allan, cutler, to 40s., and Jhone Allan, buik-binder, to 3 lib., quhilk is in all for boithe, 5 lib."

---

<sup>1</sup> There are many other documentary references to the "Links" at Aberdeen. The earliest is in a charter by Andrew Murray endowing the Altar of St Salvator, 4th June 1505, in which the "Linkis" at "Futy" are mentioned. In a "warnyng of the Wappinschaw," of 4th March 1508, the "Linx" is given as the place of meeting. Under date 1529, in the reign of James V., there is a reference to "the linkis at Futy" (Footdee). In 1543 there is an allusion to Aberdeen's "common lands called the Linx"; while "the Linkis" is the description in a report of the Perambulation of the Marches on 22nd September 1578. In the Great Seal Register, under date 1585, there is a reference to a ford upon the Poyis (Powis) burn, on the Links, which the students of King's College used to cross in order to reach the sands. Under date of 10th June 1603, a part "of the lands of the Hospital of Sanct Petir" are described as bounded on the east by "the commound Linx of the said Burght." In the Crown Charter of Confirmation by King James VI. in favour of the Burgh, of 17th July 1617, "the greenes and fieldes commonly called the linkes" are referred to; and there is a similar reference in the Crown Charter of Confirmation by King Charles I., of 9th September 1638.



## Early References to Golf in Aberdeen and the North

Why these two worthies should so forget themselves as to "tee up" in the churchyard, does not appear. These were the days before the ubiquitous policeman, and there were no electric cars to whisk one down to the Queen's Links for a copper at any hour of the day. Perhaps the bookbinder and the cutler, tired after a day's work, and with the large, open, and unfrequented space of the churchyard near their door, were tempted to indulge in their favourite exercise, without the "fash" of walking down to the Links; or they may not have had the time to spare from their working hours to go so far as the Links, and were enjoying a few practice shots in this unfrequented spot, when they were detected and punished.<sup>1</sup>

Golf—yea, verily, Sunday golf—in these far-away days had penetrated even farther north than Aberdeen—to Cullen and Banff—as appears from the following extract from *Scottish Notes and Queries*, vol. v. p. 15 :—

1637-1641.—"As to the antiquity of golf-playing in the North of Scotland, I may state that the earliest reference to golf in the records of the burgh of Banff is in the year 1637, when Francis Brown, 'ane boy of ane evill lyiff,' was hanged on the Gallows Hill of Banff for, *inter alia*, stealing 'some golff ballis,' two of which he confessed 'he sauld to Thomas Urquhartis servand.' The earliest reference in the records of Cullen is in the year 1641, when 'James and George Duffus and Charles Stevinson were convict in break of the Sabboth, for playing at the golff, efternoone, in time of sermone, and therefor ar ordayned, evrie ane of them, to pey halff a merk, and mak ther repentance the next Sabboth.'"

Even so remote and secluded a spot as Boharm in Banffshire,

---

<sup>1</sup> In his *History of the Glasgow Golf Club*, Dr James Colville cites this incident from the Aberdeen Town Council records as making it "quite patent" that golf in 1613 was a mere stick and ball game. But the fact that two lads played with a golf-ball against the wall of the Church at the date in question does not prove that this was the correct form of the game.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

contributes an item to the history of the game. Under date of 3rd May 1658, the following entry appears in the Kirk-Session Register :—

“James Winchester delaitted to have clume nests upon the Lord’s Day, and James Waldie to have plaid att the Golfe with the herds of Mulben, being present, they are called into the Session, and being both found guiltie, they were rebuked for making so little conscience of the Lord’s Day, and ordained to mak their public repentance three Lord’s Days.”

That golf was a popular game in Aberdeen itself about this period, is clear from the fact that there was an opening for a golf-ball maker. A note in the *Book of Bon Accord*, p. 133, reads as follows :—

1642.—“On the 11th of May, 1642, the Council granted ‘licence and tolerance to John Dickson, to use and exercise his trade of making gowff ballis within this burgh, in respect ther is not such ane tradisman in this burgh, and that he has produceit ane testificate from the toun of Leith of his bygane guid lyf and conversation amongst thame.’ Coun. Reg., vol. lii. p. 727.”

This, of course, was long before the days of the gutta-percha ball, which did not come in till 1848 or thereabouts. Golf-balls at first were made of wood, and subsequently of feathers stuffed hard in a leather case.

The John Dickson from Leith, thus licensed by the Aberdeen Town Council to carry on his trade of golf-ball making in the city, was doubtless a relative of William and Thomas Dickson, golf-ball makers, also of Leith,<sup>1</sup> who some years before came to loggerheads with James Melvill, another golf-ball maker of the period. In 1618, King

<sup>1</sup> The Dicksons of Leith were club and ball makers for generations. An Andrew Dickson acted as fore-caddie in the great match in which the Duke of York (afterwards James II.) and John Paterson, an Edinburgh shoemaker, defeated two English noblemen on Leith Links; and another Dickson, a club-maker of Leith, probably a son of Andrew Dickson, is mentioned in Mathison’s poem “The Goff,” of date 1743.

## Early References to Golf in Aberdeen and the North

James the Sixth granted to Melvill the monopoly, for twenty-one years, of making and selling golf-balls in Scotland, and also the monopoly of importing and selling foreign balls.<sup>1</sup>

In 1629 Melvill, finding that his rights were being infringed by William and Thomas Dickson, and being then quartermaster to the Earl of Morton's regiment, sent a number of "lawless souldiers" to the ball-makers' premises. The military made off with their stock of golf-balls, including a set which the Dicksons had made for the king, and Melvill also threatened to take the lives of the refractory owners if they did not pay him his dues. For which behaviour, says the Register of the Privy Council, Melvill was fined £5, or bound over in a caution of £100 (Scots). The averment of the Dicksons was that the Privy Council "made" but "never ratified" the "gift" of James VI. to Melvill, and this apparently was sustained.

The extracts given above from local records serve to show that golf was fairly established at Aberdeen and in the north-eastern counties of Scotland, at least as early as the first half of the seventeenth century, and was by no means confined to the southern half of the kingdom. Its practice, however, if continuous, was somewhat fitful during the remainder of the century, and, indeed, right on to the close of the next. Although no longer "cryt doune" by the State, the Calvinist ministers looked with a somewhat sour eye on golf and other sports, especially when they interfered with attendance at divine service; and later, at the stormy periods of the Stuart insurrections, sports of all kinds naturally fell into abeyance all over the country. Golf, therefore, languished greatly, until at last it practically ceased to be a game of the masses. Even so late as the seventies of last century there was hardly a working-man golfer in Aberdeen.

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<sup>1</sup> The foreign balls came from the Low Countries and France, probably chiefly from Holland.

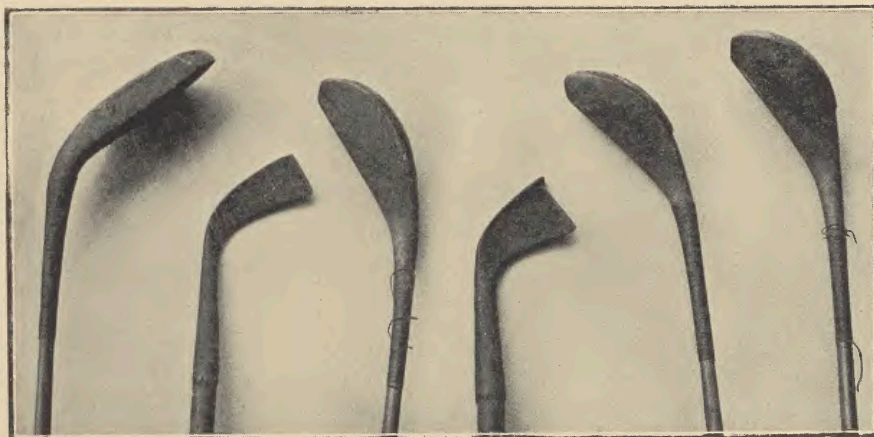


## The Aberdeen Golfers

But the torch of golf, though oftentimes "flickering, faint, and low," was never completely extinguished. The wealthier classes of the community, and the county lairds and gentry, guarded the sacred flame. and it is to their devotion and enthusiasm—preserving and handing on the tradition and practice of the game—that we owe the great renaissance that has taken place in the last thirty years.



JEU DE MAIL,  
The French Progenitor of Golf.



ANCIENT GOLF-CLUBS.

## CHAPTER II

### “THE SOCIETY OF GOLFERS AT ABERDEEN,” AND “THE ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB”

**F**ROM about the middle of the seventeenth century onwards to 1780, there are no records to throw any light upon the subject of golf-playing at Aberdeen. Doubtless the game was almost, if not quite, extinct, for the reasons given in the preceding chapter, and the awakening process which had already begun farther south, in the Lothians and Fife, had not yet begun to operate in the north. But by the year 1780 there are unmistakable proofs that, amongst the upper classes at any rate, the game was again being played, though probably only to a limited extent. Not until 1815, however, is it possible to write the continuous history of the game on the Aberdeen Links. For our knowledge from that date we are indebted to the carefully preserved records of the Aberdeen Golf Club, a society formed nearly a hundred years ago, and one that has, all these years, nurtured and encouraged the royal and

## The Aberdeen Golfers

ancient game on the Aberdeen Links, often standing up for the rights of the citizens to the free use of the Commonly when these rights were assailed by the encroachments allowed on the "fair green" by the Town Council — encroachments which, but for the golf club's action, would have proceeded unchecked. Such, in brief, is the long and honourable record of the Aberdeen Golf Club.

The first golf club formed in the "braif toun" went by the name of "The Society of Golfers at Aberdeen." This was in 1780. The ballot-box of the "Society" has that date engraved on it, and further, the Hon. Secretary of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1816, Mr William Kennedy, under date 6th April, writes in the minute-book that "the Balloting box belonging to the former Golf Club instituted in the year 1780" was that day presented to the Aberdeen Golf Club by Dr Daune, who had been a member of the old Society of Golfers. The year 1783 is sometimes erroneously given as the year of the institution of the "Society of Golfers"; but that date only refers to the Regulations, etc., of the Society, which were drawn up in 1783. The printed copies of these, along with the list of the members and the "Laws of Golf to be observed" by the members, were published at Aberdeen in 1784. No other records or relics are known to exist of this progenitor of the Aberdeen Golf Club. From the Regulations, which we give in full below, it appears that not more than twenty-five members resident in Aberdeen were ever to be admitted, but that there was no limitation to the number of country members or strangers who might "incline to be of the Society." Admission was by ballot. All applications for admission had to lie for three months on the table, one dissent being sufficient to reject any candidate. A very exclusive Society surely, and little wonder it had a short-lived existence. The Club Rules were as follows :—



# “The Society of Golfers at Aberdeen”

## REGULATIONS OF THE SOCIETY OF GOLFERS AT ABERDEEN

### I

THE Number of Members resident in Aberdeen shall never exceed Twenty-Five.

### II

No Limitation of the Number of Country Members, or Strangers, who may incline to be of the Society.

### III

The Mode of Admission shall be by Ballot—all Applications for Admission shall ly Three Months on the Table—one Dissent sufficient to reject any Candidate.

### IV

The Society shall meet quarterly on the second Fridays of February, May, August, and November. The Meeting in May to be the general or anniversary Meeting.

### V

Eleven Members shall be a Quorum at general Meetings: five at ordinary Meetings. Business to proceed at half an Hour after Two; Dinner on the Table at Three; the Bill to be called at half after Five.

### VI

At the general Meetings, there shall be chosen by Plurality of Votes, a Preses, Secretary and three Counsellors to manage the Concerns of the Society for the ensuing Year.

### VII

In Absence of the Preses from any Meeting, the Member present whose name stands highest in the List, shall take the Chair.

### VIII

The general Meetings only shall have power to fix the annual Contributions, and add to or alter these regulations.

### IX

No Motion shall be laid before the general Meetings, unless entered on the Minutes at some previous Meeting of the Society.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

### X

Two-thirds of the Members present at any general Meeting must approve before any Motion can be carried.

### XI

Members resident in town shall pay £2, 2s. sterling at Entry. Country members £1, 1s. sterling.

### XII

Strangers may be introduced to Dinner at the Meetings, but shall be paid for by the Members who introduce them.

Some of the "Laws of Golf to be observed" by the Society are quaint and interesting, and, in some instances, almost Spartan in their severity.

For example: "No stones, bones, or other break clubs shall be removed in a hazard, nor on the fair green." Again: "No person shall be at liberty to vary or better his stance in playing, by breaking the surface of the green, placing or removing stones, sand, or any other substance; *damping* his feet with water excepted." And worst and most heart-breaking of all, "no stones, loose sand, or other impediments shall be removed when putting at the hole." The teeing ground, it was enacted, must not be farther from the hole than two club-lengths, and the tee had to be "on the ground." Below, we give in full the provisions of this early code of golf law.

### LAWS OF GOLF

#### TO BE OBSERVED BY THE

#### SOCIETY OF GOLFERS

#### AT ABERDEEN

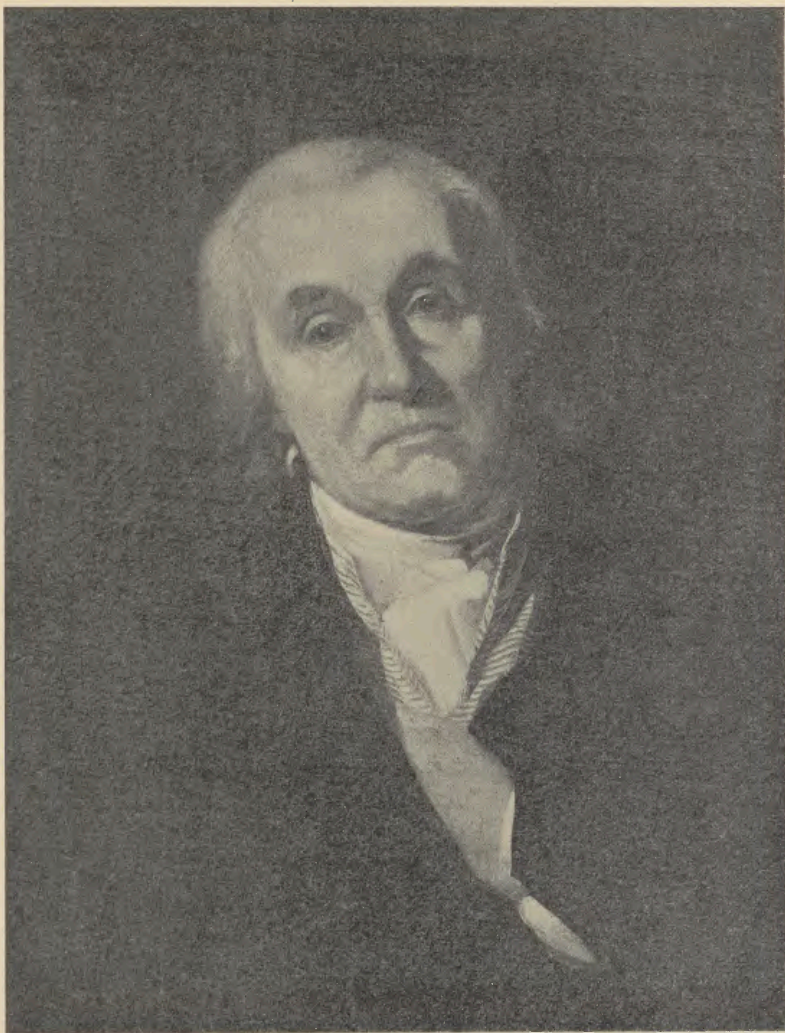
### I

THE Distance from the Hole, in Teeing, shall not exceed two Lengths of a Club, either in Advance or Aside, and the Tee shall be on the Ground.

### II

While a Stroke is playing, none of the Party shall walk about, make any Motion, or attempt to take off the Player's Attention, by speaking or otherwise.

“The Society of Golfers at Aberdeen”



BAILLIE WILLIAM LITTLEJOHN,  
An Original Member of the Society of Golfers at Aberdeen, 1783.  
*See Appendix.*



## The Aberdeen Golfers

### III

The Party gaining a Hole shall have the Privilege of striking off first, as long as the opposite Party do not make good a Hole—the Ball furthest from the Hole shall be always first played.

### IV

If two Balls happen to ly so near to one another as Six Inches, or less, the Ball nearest the Hole shall be taken up, till the other be played.

### V

Untill the Hole be quitted no Ball shall be changed nor handled on any pretence, unless in Compliance with the Fourth Law, or that the ball happen to ly on Ice, or half sunk at least in Water; in which Cases the Player shall have it in his Option either to tee his Ball on the Green, behind the Ice or Water, or play as it lyes; If tee'd, the opposite Party shall reckon one against the Player.

### VI

No Stones, Bones, or other Break-clubs shall be removed in a Hazard, nor on the fair Green.

### VII

If one Ball happen to be struck against another, or if the Player accidentally strike the Opponent's and his own Ball at the same time, both parties must take their Balls as they happen to ly after such Accidents.

### VIII

No person shall be at Liberty to vary or better his Stance in playing, by breaking the Surface of the Green, placing or removing Stones, Sand, or any other Substance; damping his feet with Water excepted.

### IX

In playing on the Green, or out of Sand, loose Ground or long Grass, no means shall be used to beat down the Ground or Grass, or to draw away or make any mark in the Sand or Soil, whereby to improve the Ly of the Ball.

### X

If a Stroke is made, and the Club pass the Ball and strike the Ground, it shall be reckoned against the Player, although the Ball be mist, or the Club happen to be broke.

## “The Society of Golfers at Aberdeen”

### XI

A Ball lost in playing shall in all Cases forfeit the Hole, unless when struck into Water ; *as to which, vide Law V.*

### XII

The Party whose Ball is amissing shall be allowed Five Minutes to search for it, after coming to the Spot where the Ball appeared to drop.

### XIII

If a Dog happens to carry off or damage a Ball in the course of playing, the party to whom it belongs shall be entitled to use another, and lay it as near to the Spot where taken from as can be guessed.

### XIV

If a Stroke is made and the Ball be stopt by any Person not in the Game, it shall be played as it may chance to ly, altho' in a Hazard ; the Parties being obliged to submit to the Accident, whether for or against the Player.

### XV

If a Ball, in playing thro' the Green, be stopt by the Player's Partner or their Club-bearers, it shall be played where it may chance to ly, and the Stroke reckoned as if no such Accident had happened.

### XVI

If a Ball, in playing thro' the Green, be stopt by any of the opposite Party or their Club-bearers, no Stroke shall be reckoned against the player, and he shall also be at liberty to lay the Ball fair.

### XVII

If any of the Players or their Club-bearers, by standing at or near the hole, stop a Ball, whether from a Putter or any other Club, the Hole shall be lost to the Party so stopping ; with this exception only, that after a Ball passes the Hole, and is stopped by any of the opposite Party, the Hole shall not thereby be lost to such party ; But the Player shall have it in his option either to play the Stroke over again, or take the Ball as it may happen to ly.

### XVIII

At holing the Player is to aim honestly for the Hole and not at his Opponent's Ball not lying in the way.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

XIX

The Player shall not be at liberty to draw a Line, or make any Mark as a Direction for holing, nor shall his Partner stand at the Hole, or direct him in aiming.

XX

No Stones, loose Sand, or other Impediments shall be removed when putting at the Hole.

XXI

When the Hole is distinctly in view of the Player, no Person shall be allowed to stand at it for a Direction.

XXII

If both the Balls happen to be holed by the same Stroke, such Stroke shall reckon in Favour of the Player's Opponent, and be the same as if his Ball had been previously in the Hole.

XXIII

It is understood that Partners may consult with, and give verbal Directions to one another, how to play; but nothing further.

GOLF-HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 9th May 1783.

*The above Laws having been considered by the Society, were approved of and ordered to be strictly observed in future.*

### LIST

#### OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF GOLFERS

AT ABERDEEN

NOVEMBER 14TH, 1783

#### *Town Members.*

- Dr Alexr Bannerman of Kirkhill.
- Alexander Clerk, Merchant.
- Alexander Garrioch, Merchant.
- William Littlejohn, Wright.
- 5 Alexander Carnegie, Town Clerk.
- Kenneth M'Kenzie, Merchant.
- Alexander Dauney, Advocate.



## “The Society of Golfers at Aberdeen”

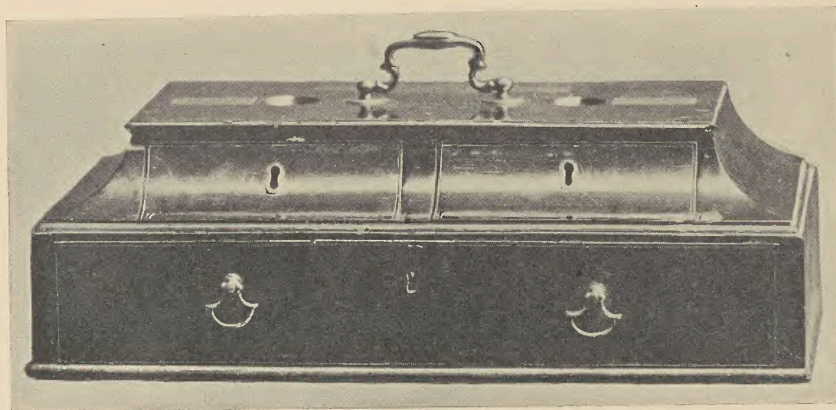
- Arthur Gibbon, Shipbuilder.  
Charles Bannerman, Advocate.  
10 Robert Turner, Esq., Sheriff Substitute.  
Andrew Clerk of the Bank.  
John Forbes, Merchant.  
Thomas Bannerman, Merchant.  
Alexander Milne jun., Merchant.  
15 Captain George Symmer.  
William Simpson, Merchant.  
Alexander Young, Merchant.  
Alexander Duthie, Advocate.  
James Barclay, Merchant.  
20 John Innes, Advocate.  
James Thomson, Advocate.  
William Moir, Merchant.  
William Copland, Writer.  
Dr John Ligertwood, Physician.  
25 Dr William Livingston, Physician.

### *Country Members.*

The Right Hon. Lord Saltoun.  
Sir William Forbes of Craigievar, Bart.  
George Skene of that Ilk.  
Lt. Colonel Alexr Leith of Leith-hall.  
John Menzies of Pitfoddels.  
Duncan Forbes Mitchell of Thainston.  
Hugh Leslie of Powies.  
Alexander Elphinston of Glack.  
Charles M'Kenzie of Kilcoy.  
George Gordon, Younger of Hallhead.  
Captain James Leith, late of the 81st.  
Captain James Horn, Younger of Logie.  
Captain Arthur Forbes.  
Harry Lumsden of Clova.  
Captain Alexander M'Kenzie, late of the 73rd.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

The above list of the members of the original Society contains the names of many well-known Aberdeen families. Amongst the twenty-five town members are such familiar names as Bannerman, Forbes, Gibbon, Littlejohn, Duthie, Ligertwood, Livingston; and amongst the country members, Right Hon. Lord Saltoun, Sir Wm. Forbes of Craigievar, Geo. Skene of Skene, Lieut.-Colonel Alex. Leith of Leith Hall, John Menzies of Pitfodels, H. Lumsden of Clova, Duncan



THE BALLOT-BOX OF THE SOCIETY OF GOLFERS, 1780.

Forbes Mitchell of Thainstone, and Leslie of Powis. There are but fifteen country members mentioned in this 1783-4 publication; thus the Society at this time (adding the twenty-five town members) consisted of just forty members. No records of the further proceedings, or of the play, of the members have survived, and after an existence of several years, the "Society of Golfers" was dissolved. Their ballot-box was presented to the Aberdeen Golf Club in the month of April 1816, as already mentioned. Here endeth the history of the "Society of Golfers at Aberdeen."

## “The Aberdeen Golf Club”

### THE ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB

On the 1st of June 1815 there was held, in Humphrey's Hotel, Aberdeen, a meeting of gentlemen for “the establishment of a Golf Club in Aberdeen, on a solid and permanent footing.” Five “good men and true” composed this historic meeting (it was just a week or two before the battle of Waterloo, fought on Sunday, 18th June 1815), their names being Wm. Black (for himself and Sir Alex. Bannerman, Bart.), Alex. Bannerman, Patrick Pirie, James Hadden jun., and Wm. Kennedy. “The meeting, along with such other gentlemen as may choose to join the association, agree to form themselves into a Club, under the denomination of The Aberdeen Golf Club, and to meet for that purpose upon the first Saturday of July next, in Wood's Tavern.”

The meeting in Wood's Tavern on Saturday, 1st July, duly came off, and the proceedings are recorded in the Club minutes, as follows :—

#### MEETING of MEMBERS of THE ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB in Wood's Tavern, the first day of July, 1815 years.

General Meeting, 1st July 1815.

#### *Present—*

Robert Abercrombie.  
Alex. Bannerman.  
Patrick Bannerman.  
William Black.  
Duncan Davidson.  
James Fraser.  
Alex. Gibbon.  
Arthur Gibbon.  
Alex. Hadden.  
James Hadden, Junior.

William Kennedy.  
William Pirie.  
Patrick Pirie.  
William Read.  
James Sandilands.  
Captain David Scott, R.N.  
William Forbes, Junior.  
George Sangster.  
Alex. Simpson.  
The Revd. William Wilkinson.



## The Aberdeen Golfers

The following Gentlemen had also agreed to become Members :—

Sir Alex. Bannerman, Baronet.  
Charles Bannerman.  
James Blackie.  
William Brown.  
Thomas Burnett.  
William Carnegie.  
Charles Chalmers.  
Alex. Fraser.

Hugh Gordon.  
James Grant.  
Dr George Kerr.  
Henry Lumsden.  
Alex. Pirie.  
Dr Charles Skene.  
George Skene of Skene.

Mr Abercrombie elected Praeses of the Meeting.

Office Bearers  
appointed.

The following Office Bearers were unanimously elected for the insuing year.

William Black, Captain of the Club.  
William Kennedy, Secretary.

Fundamental  
Rules.

The following Fundamental Rules were then unanimously approved of and agreed to namely.

1. That all new members should be chosen by Ballot, and two Black Balls to reject the Candidate.
2. All candidates to be proposed by one member and seconded by another at the Meeting of the Club previous to the balloting.
3. The annual meeting of the Club to be on the first Saturday of April, when the Members are understood to dine together. Quarterly Meetings to be on the first Saturday of July, October, and January yearly.
4. The entry money from the present and future Members to be one Guinea, and the annual Contribution to be five shillings to be paid at the annual General Meeting in April.
5. All members practising Golf to be furnished with Clubs and Balls from the Common Stock belonging to the Club, but they are to pay for the same at prime cost.
6. The funds belonging to the Club are not on any account to be disposed of without the consent of at least Two-thirds of the Members resident in Town,

## “The Aberdeen Golf Club”

except for any necessary purpose regarding the Institution, and that only to the extent of Ten pounds sterling as the same may be ordered by the Captain and a Majority of the Committee of Counsellors for the time.

Committee of counsellors appointed for the ensuing year :—

Counsellors  
for 1815.

Messrs Alex. Bannerman.  
Patrick Pirie.  
James Hadden.  
James Sandilands.

The Meeting remits to the Captain, Secretary and Committee of Counsellors to draw a proper Set of Rules to be observed by the Members in playing at Golf to be submitted to next quarterly Meeting.

Rules to be es-  
tablished for  
playing Golf.

The following Gentlemen were proposed as Candidates for admission, namely :—

James Gibbon, Esquire, Merchant in Aberdeen.  
George Hogarth, Esquire of Woodhill.  
Joseph Hogarth, Esquire, Merchant in Aberdeen.  
Alexander Fullerton, Esquire, Barrack Master,  
John Watson, Esquire, Advocate, Aberdeen.  
Alex. Lyal, Esquire, Comptroller of the Customs.  
John Forbes, Esquire of Blackford.

Candidates  
proposed.

Thereafter the thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to the Praeses of the Meeting and Secretary.

Thus the Club started very auspiciously with a membership of thirty-five. The Captain elected, Mr Wm. Black, was a leading spirit in the formation of the Club, and, as will be seen, made his mark later at Blackheath. Mr Black was a son of the founder of the firm of Wm. Black & Co., Devanha Distillery.

The clubs and balls mentioned in No. 5 of the above rules were obtained from the famous William Gourlay of Musselburgh. The Rules

## The Aberdeen Golfers

of Golf which were to be prepared were duly submitted and approved of at the next quarterly meeting on 7th October 1815, and "ordered to be printed and distributed among the members, for their information." As will be seen, they are much less rigorous than the "Laws of Golf" of 1783.

### REGULATIONS for PLAYING GOLF on the Links of Aberdeen, adopted 7th October 1815.

1. No sand to be taken for teeing within 10 yards of the hole. The Tee must be placed on the ground, not nearer than 4 yards of the hole.
2. The party playing off is not to be followed by another party until a full stroke distant, nor to be played up upon when holing.
3. The opposite party must not at any time interrupt the player by walking about, speaking to or standing in his way, under the penalty of a stroke in the player's favour, or playing the stroke again at his option.
4. The ball farthest from the hole playing for, must be first played.
5. All strokes aimed at the ball must count, whether the ball be hit or not, even if in striking the club should break.
6. A ball cannot be changed between holes without consent of both parties, and if either party play the wrong ball, it shall be optional for the other either to hold the stroke for himself, or take back the ball and play it as he pleases within a yard of the place it was struck from, and play it again.
7. The player shall at all times have it in his power to lift his ball from a hazard, upon losing a stroke; he must, however, retire to any distance he pleases directly behind the hazard; then, fronting the hole to which he is playing, drop the ball over the back of his head, which must then be played however it lies.
8. If a ball lies in water, it may be taken out and dropped behind, as in the preceding Rule, and played with an Iron; no penalty.



## “The Aberdeen Golf Club”

9. Should a ball be lost, it must be reckoned a lost hole, and no longer than 5 minutes to be allowed for finding a ball.

10. In playing out of sand or loose ground, the player shall neither beat down nor draw away the sand or soil from the ball, nor shall the player through the green beat down or alter the ground about the ball before playing, under the penalty of one stroke.

11. All break clubs may be removed within 12 feet of the player, but if his ball should in consequence drop into a hole, it must be played, or lose one. Turf is no break club.

12. If a ball is by any accident stopped or impelled upon the green, it must be played where it lies, but if stopped by either of the parties playing, it is a lost hole to the party stopping.

13. When the balls lie within 6 inches of one another, the ball nearest the hole to be lifted until the other is played. When a party of three is playing, an interposing ball is at all times to be lifted.

14. At holing the player is not to mark the direction to the hole; he is to play honestly for the hole and never play on his adversary's ball not lying in his way; but all loose impediments may be removed on the putting green, which is declared to be 15 yards from the hole all round, and should either ball go into any hole within this distance, it may be taken out and played with an Iron from the back of it. No penalty.

Any disputes during the play shall be determined by the Captain, or one of the Councillors present.

The following Special Rules for Medal Play were drawn up in the following year, when the Gold Medal was provided :—

### SPECIAL RULES for MEDAL PLAY, made 4th May 1816.

1. That any ball lying in the way of another, may be removed if required by the adversary.

2. That the Candidates shall play two and two, to be drawn for by lot.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

3. In case of a lost ball, another may be substituted if in the fair Course, without any penalty, but if driven off the ordinary ground another may be dropped in its place, as near as possible to the place where the ball was lost, and the player to lose one stroke.

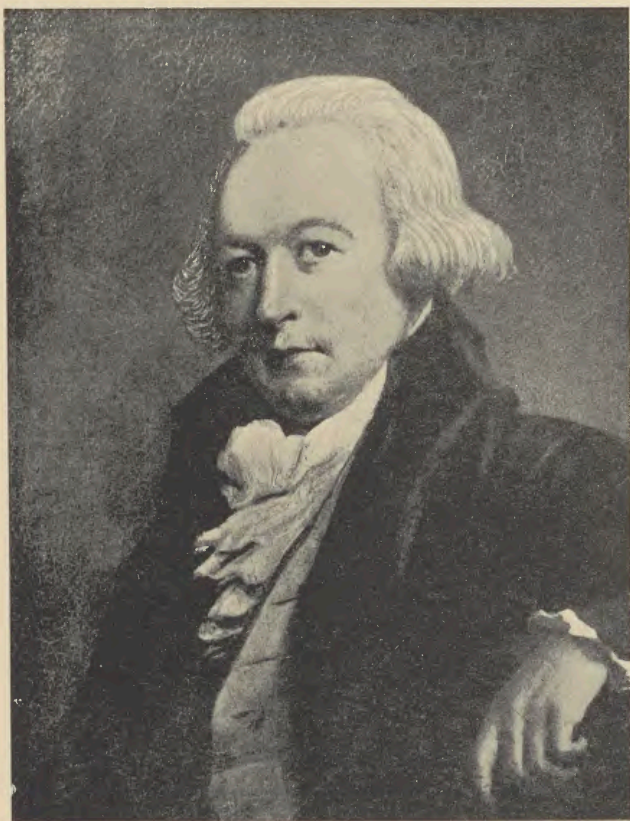
The medal to be delivered to the successful Candidate by the Captain, and he is to wear the same on all public occasions of the Club, under an *amand* of half a crown.

In the year 1827 these rules were altered and made to assimilate with the rules of the Honourable Company of Golfers, and they were again revised in June 1847, in accordance with the St Andrews code of 1842. In 1873 the St Andrews Rules were again followed, "with such changes as were rendered necessary to adapt them to the Aberdeen Links."

Comparing the names of the members who joined the Aberdeen Golf Club in the early years of its foundation with the names of the members of the 1780 Society, one finds that only some half-dozen of the Society joined the new Club of 1815. Many of the old Society must have been dead, or old men, by 1815. Both Clubs were strong in Bannermans. Charles Bannerman and Thomas Bannerman were members of both Clubs, also Arthur Gibbon, Ship-builder, John Forbes, Henry Lumsden of Clova, and George Skene of Skene; *i.e.*, assuming that the identity of name of these six gentlemen proves they were the same individuals as those in the Society of Golfers. In regard to Alex. Daune, LL.D., there can be no doubt he was a member of both Clubs. Dr Daune was a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen, and Professor of Civil Law from 1793 to 1833. He was also a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Volunteers of the day, and he was appointed Sheriff-Substitute in 1806. Dr Daune resided at Craibstone, and he joined the Aberdeen Golf Club on 6th April 1816. He was Captain of the Club in

## “The Aberdeen Golf Club”

1820, and it was from him the Club received the ballot-box of the Society of Golfers on 6th April 1816, the date of his admission



ALEXANDER DAUNE, LL.D.,  
Captain of The Aberdeen Golf Club, 1820.  
An Original Member of the Society of Golfers at Aberdeen, 1780.  
*See Appendix.*

to the Aberdeen Golf Club. The printed copy of the Regulations, etc., of the Society of Golfers, published at Aberdeen in 1784, was found amongst Dr Daune's repositories after his death in 1833, and was presented in October 1833 to the Aberdeen Golf Club by



## The Aberdeen Golfers

Mr John Angus, the Town Clerk of Aberdeen. Many of the early members of the Aberdeen Golf Club bear names long familiar as the forebears of the leading families in the city and county—the Haddens, Piries, Nicols, Burnetts, Hogarths, Crombies, Fishers, Blaikies, Bannermans, Duncans, Duthies, Bests, Thomsons, Abercrombies, Dyces, Jopps, Davidsons, etc. etc. The lawyers and leading merchants in the town, the bankers, naval and military officers stationed in the district, the doctors, and occasionally even the clergy (for the game was seldom indulged in by “the cloth” at this time) were the classes from which the membership of the Aberdeen Golf Club was drawn from 1815 onwards.

Some other familiar Aberdeen names may be added to the above; they are the names of members who joined the Club in the early days, none of them later than July 1820:—Wm. Allardyce, Wine Merchant; Robert Abercrombie, Wm. Black, James Blaikie, Alex. Blackie, Banker, admitted 10th May 1817 (father of the late Professor John Stuart Blackie); Thomas Best, John Cadenhead, Advocate; Alex. Chivas, Advocate; Wm. Copland, Brewer; John Carnegie, Charles Donaldson, Wm. Duguid, Clothier; Major Alex. Dunbar, George Davidson, Merchant; Alex. Dingwall, Archibald Farquharson of Finzean (father of the Right Hon. Dr Robert Farquharson, ex-M.P.), Farquharson *père* was admitted a member of the Club in January 1816; Wm. Farquharson of Monaltrie, Alex. Fraser, Capt. The Hon. Wm. Gordon, Lieut.-General Gordon of Pitlurg, James Nicol, Merchant; Wm. Pirie, Patrick Pirie, Alex. Pirie, Hon. John Ramsay (a promoter of the Aberdeen Races on the Links), Wm. Forbes Robertson of Hazelhead, Alex. Stronach, Advocate; James A. Sandilands, Alex. Simpson, Merchant; Dr Charles Skene, James Scott of Brotherton, John Smith, Advocate; Alex. Thomson, Advocate; Rev. Wm. Wilkinson, Dr Benjamin Williamson.

## “The Aberdeen Golf Club”

The Club has always been particularly strong in lawyers. The Hon. Secretary, with the exception of Mr Arthur Thomson, has always been a member of that honourable profession:—Wm. Kennedy from 1815-19; Charles Chalmers, 1819-29; Alex. Gordon, 1829-30; J. L. Sheriffs, 1830-33; Charles Thomson, from March to December 1833; Wm. Skinner, 1833-42; Arthur Thomson, 1842-63; D. R. Morice, 1863-72; Arthur D. Morice, 1872-88; J. C. Willet, 1888-93; and the present admirable Secretary and excellent golfer Mr M. M. Duncan, appointed in 1893. Much of the success of the Club is due to these eleven gentlemen.

The Club has been very fortunate too in its Captains, from the very beginning. The first, in 1815, was Mr Wm. Black, a very keen golfer and good sportsman. He was, as the minute-book runs, “the principal originator of the Club in 1815,” and on the 19th October 1837 Mr Black, who had by then settled in London and

was on a visit to Aberdeen, was entertained at dinner by the Club in the Aberdeen Hotel. Mr Black did not give up his golf on taking up his residence in London. On the contrary, he immediately joined the Blackheath Club in 1820, and, as at Aberdeen, he speedily became the moving spirit in the Club. He was a frequent winner of the Blackheath medals for about ten years, and his name constantly appears in



WILLIAM KENNEDY,  
Author of “Kennedy’s Annals,”  
Hon. Secretary of the Aberdeen Golf Club, 1815-19.  
*From a contemporary drawing. See Appendix.*



## The Aberdeen Golfers

the minutes as the hero of matches in which he played other members with his putter alone, and as making other unusual bets which he usually won.<sup>1</sup> Mr Black was elected Captain of the Blackheath Club in 1828, and in that year, as we read in the Club minutes of 26th April 1828, "Mr Innes moved that the Captain, Medal Holder, and Secretary be the Committee to revise the laws of the Club, to which the name of Mr Innes was added by acclamation." These laws, which included the "Rules of Golf," were passed on the 28th of June of the same year, and the latter form the first Blackheath code that has survived. The code has a strong family likeness to the Aberdeen code of 1783, many of the rules being identical in wording, and it is quite unlike any of the early Fifeshire or Lothian codes, which are all clearly modelled on one common ancestor, probably the first code of the Honourable Company, which is no longer extant. The conclusion seems irresistible that it was Mr Black's authority and influence that led to the adoption of the main fabric of the code under which he had first played at Aberdeen. It is, however, worthy of remark, that although Mr Black had been the first Captain of the resuscitated Aberdeen Golf Club in 1815, and had been to some extent responsible for the code of rules drawn up in that year to supersede the code of 1783, it was not the 1815 Aberdeen code that he was able to impress upon the Blackheath Club, but the earlier, simpler, and more drastic code of 1783. The inference seems to be that Mr Black was a strong

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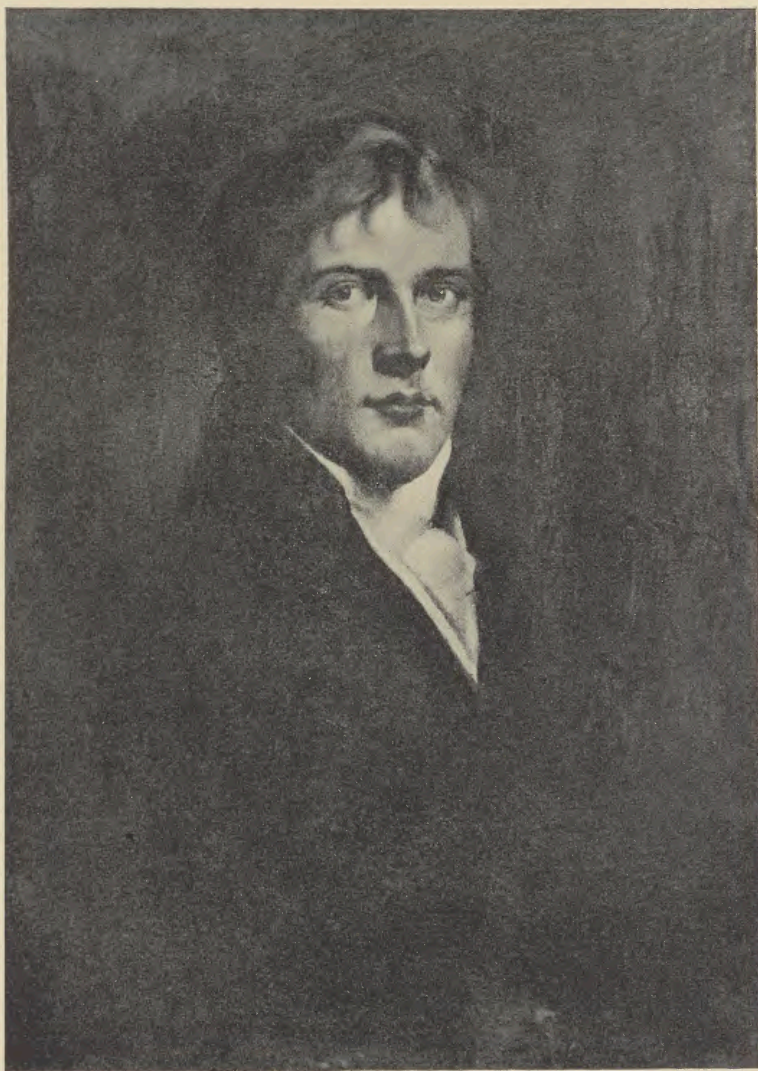
<sup>1</sup> *Minutes of the Blackheath Golf Club.*

3rd June 1820.—Mr Finlayson lays a gallon with Mr Black, giving Mr B. half one stroke on each hole. Mr B. to play with his irons and the use of the wooden putter when he chooses.

15th August 1824.—Mr Black sen. challenges Mr Masson for a gallon. Mr Black to play with his putter alone, and Mr Masson with all his clubs. (Accepted.) Lost by Mr Masson.

30th October 1824.—Mr Black agrees to give Mr Fennell one and a half strokes in each hole. (Accepted.) Lost by Mr Fennell.—*Chronicles of Blackheath Golfers*, by W. E. Hughes.





WILLIAM BLACK,  
First Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club, 1815,  
Captain of the Blackheath Golf Club, 1828.



## “The Aberdeen Golf Club”

conservative in golfing politics, and had found by experience that attempts to elaborate the code in the direction of discrimination of offences and penalties, only led to more disputes and the never-ending extension of the rules, and were calculated to destroy the essential spirit and character of the game. *O si sic omnes!*

Among other early Captains of the Aberdeen Club was Lord Kennedy of Dunottar, who held office in 1817, and again in 1829. In 1820 the Captain was Dr Daune, above referred to, who was probably the “doyen” of the old Society of Golfers, of which he was an original member. David Chalmers of Westburn (of the old-established firm of printers), Alex. Hadden, and Alex. Bannerman—all three were Captains in the early years of the Club, and what more representative names of old Aberdeen families could one quote? Then, in 1830, Charles Chalmers of Monkshill was appointed to this the highest office of the Club. Well indeed had he served the Club. He joined it on its formation in 1815, and was its Honorary Secretary for the ten years 1819–29. It was during his regime as Secretary that the scarlet coat and the gilt buttons were adopted as the Club’s uniform. Mr Chalmers, it is interesting to note, voted for a Lincoln or other light green colour as against the scarlet that was eventually chosen. At his death in November 1877, he was, by many years, the oldest member of the Aberdeen Golf Club. Coming along the ages (for it does seem a very “long long ago” since those good ancestors of ours were in their prime), John Angus, the pawky and genial Town Clerk that one remembers in the early “seventies,” was Captain in 1849. A gentleman of the good old school, courteous and honourable, the worthy Town Clerk enjoyed many a Club dinner during his long connection with the Aberdeen Golf Club. He joined it early in its history, and he it was who, along with another “foozler,” D. R. Morice to wit, was fined a magnum of claret at a Club dinner (June



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1839) for proposing and seconding a toast that had already been given! He was a keen golfer in his younger days. The writer remembers him well as a venerable old gentleman and a regular attender of the "diet" of worship in the old East Church (the East Parish Church of St Nicholas) in the early "seventies." "Robbie" Shand, Advocate, a well-known *bon-vivant*, was Captain in 1852; Hugh Hogarth, Merchant, in 1853; and Lieut.-Colonel Fred. Fraser of Castle Fraser, who was Captain for several years in the early "sixties," at a time when the game of golf was languishing greatly in Aberdeen; these are all names of families connected with the town or district for generations. The late Colonel Jopp, who joined the Club in 1837, was Captain in 1875, and was, at the time of his death, the oldest member of the Club. Then from 1864 to 1866 Mr Wm. Dingwall Fordyce, M.P., was Captain; from 1866 to 1867, Sheriff Comrie Thomson; from 1867 to 1869, Robt. Duthie; 1869 to 1870, Cornelius Thompson; and from 1870 to 1872, P. H. Chalmers. Stirring times indeed in the history of local golf were those eight years from 1864 to 1872, during the Captaincy of the five keen golfers and energetic men just mentioned. To the late Sheriff Comrie Thomson (alas! with the exception of Mr Robert Duthie, the others are also all dead) must be given very much of the credit for the "waking up" that speedily followed on his admission as a member of the Aberdeen Golf Club, and for the building of the Club-house on the links in 1866-7.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CLUB'S EARLY HISTORY



HAVING thus got their Rules established, and a very satisfactory list of members, the Aberdeen Golf Club next set about providing the members with something to compete for. Thus the Gold Medal was got in 1816. It was the only medal or trophy the Club possessed until 1846, when the Johnston Cup was presented. The course played, as will be seen later, was one of seven holes only. Next, a local habitation of some kind seemed a most desirable thing, in which the members could keep their clubs, etc., so on 6th January 1816 a Committee was directed to look out a "proper spot of ground," near the Links, on which a "house in the cottage style" might be



DAVID MORICE JOHNSTON,  
Donor of the Johnston Cup, 1846.

*From a silhouette in the possession of Col. W. Johnston, C.B.*

## The Aberdeen Golfers

erected, the said building to consist of a "small parlour for dressing in, and closet for keeping the clubs, jackets, etc., with a small room and closet for housekeeper." Nothing came of this modest proposal, however, and it was not until 1866 (fifty years after) that the nice little club-house at the foot of the Broadhill (now, alas! deserted by its old occupants) was erected. They were a "canny" set of men those old-time golfers, and it seemed to them the more prudent course to wait a little, until their funds had accumulated sufficiently to enable them to build a club-house; so they contented themselves with a small back room at Alexander Munro's shop in King Street, paying a small annual rent for the same. Munro was a golf-club maker, and he also undertook, for a small sum, to look after the golf-course. As green-keeper he was not a success, and in 1842 this job was taken from him, and Alex. Catto, a gardener, "reigned in his stead." Munro died in 1847, when Ludovic G. Sandison, also a golf-club maker, succeeded him in his shop and as custodian of the members' clubs, etc. His shop in King Street, near where Princes Street debouches on King Street, the older generation of Aberdeen golfers will remember well.

### THE CLUB UNIFORM

After the Gold Medal, and the small room at Munro's shop for keeping their clubs, etc., a matter of attire—the golfing coat—was the next concern of the Aberdeen Golf Club. The story of the scarlet coat with the bright gilt buttons with the Scotch thistle on them (the attire so familiar to the frequenters of the Links in the "seventies," and for decades before) is an interesting one. At a Council meeting held on 26th January 1827 it is recorded:—

"It having for long been a desideratum in the Club that a uniform coat should be used by the members when at the game, it was resolved



## The Club's Early History

that a light-coloured green should be adopted, and that a uniform button be fixed upon. The Council therefore examined and fixed on a cloth at the shop of Messrs Milne, Foulerton & Co., and also gave instructions as to a uniform button. How soon the buttons and a pattern coat can be seen, intimation is to be sent to each member, so that they may all have their coats by the day of the annual meeting (31st March), after which, it is expected that no members shall appear at the game but in the established uniform of the Club."

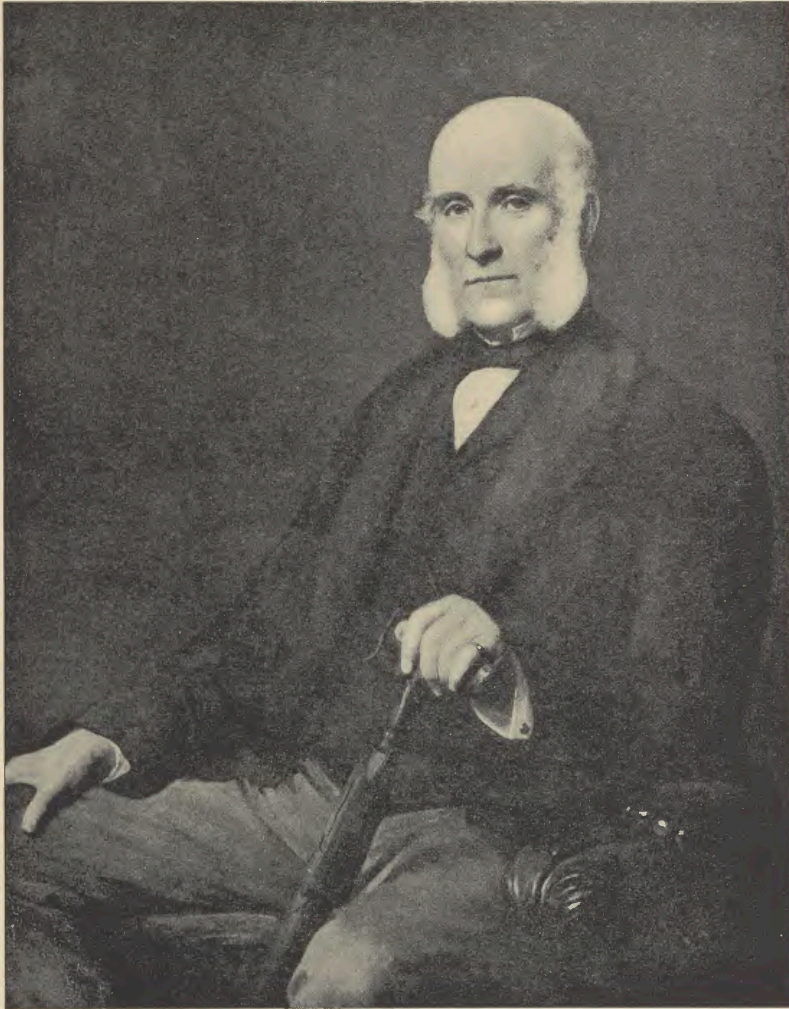
Next, a special general meeting of the Club was held in Melvin's Hotel, on 1st March, for "the purpose of taking the sense of the members at large upon the colour of the uniform coat proposed to be adopted, in regard to which there seemed to be a diversity of opinion. Whereupon Mr John Lumsden Sheriff's moved that the Club should fix on a Lincoln or other light-coloured green." This motion was seconded by the Secretary (Charles Chalmers). A counter-motion was made by Mr A. Jopp, and seconded by Mr James Hadden, that the colour should be scarlet. Both motions having been put, the motion that the colour should be *green* was carried by a majority. A uniform button, made for the Club, was also exhibited at this meeting, and resolved to be adopted. "The shade of green cloth" (for the coat) was likewise fixed on, and a "Committee of Taste" "to determine the cut of the coat, description of neck," etc., was appointed. It was arranged that a "pattern coat" should be made at once, and "left at the warehouse of Milne, Foulerton & Co., in order that the members might provide themselves with uniforms prior to the Annual Meeting to be held on 31st instant." Thus a green coat was selected, and was probably worn at the competition for the Gold Medal on 31st March; for it is recorded of this competition: "The play of the major part of the combatants [fourteen in all] was highly respectable, and gave earnest of the Club being shortly able to challenge any other Club in Europe. The

## The Aberdeen Golfers

whole scene excited much interest." Surely the brand new green coat donned by the members on this occasion for the first time, explains this high-falutin of the worthy Secretary. "The wearin' o' the green," however, did not prove popular, and at a general meeting of the Club held on 21st March 1828, the Secretary reported that "the majority of the members had decided on the colour of the coat being scarlet"; and "it was resolved," the minute goes on to say, "that the members should exhibit their persons to the fashioners for the Club, Messrs Milne, Foulerton & Co., in order that uniformity might be secured in this important affair." So anxious were the members to don their scarlet coats, that although "uniform gilt buttons with the words Aberdeen Golf Club and a Scotch thistle raised thereon" were resolved on at this meeting, it was also resolved that "*in the meantime*, they should use a covered button, until "the metal buttons could be obtained." It was a becoming and picturesque attire this scarlet coat with the gilt buttons, and it was always worn by the members of the Aberdeen Golf Club when playing golf from this time right on through the "seventies" and "eighties." It is a pity the custom is now largely dying out. That our forefathers were very insistent on the wearing of the scarlet, the preceding extracts abundantly prove. Here are two more bearing on this "important affair." At a meeting of the Club in the Secretary's office on 29th June 1837, "the chairman, Mr Shepherd, was instructed to wait upon Mr Gerrard of Midstrath to inform him of his election that day, and direct that he should forthwith provide himself with the necessary uniform." Again, at the annual meeting of the Club in the Music Hall Buildings on 20th October 1865 (the day the Gold Medal was played for), Mr John Blaikie Y<sup>ost</sup> protested against Mr Robert Spottiswood not wearing the uniform of the Club when playing for the medal. "It was resolved in future to enforce this Regulation." At a general meeting of the Club on 24th February 1844, a "Committee



## The Club's Early History



NEWELL BURNETT OF KYLLACHIE,  
Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club, 1838-40.

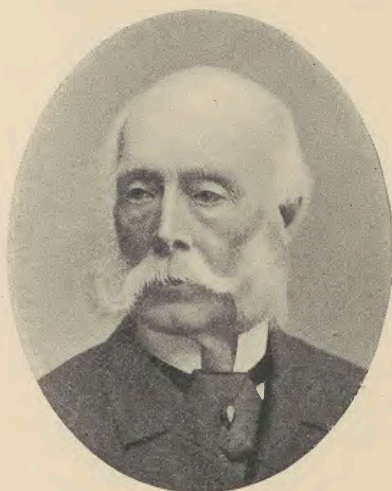
was appointed to consider the style of a uniform dress coat for the Club," but it does not appear to have come to anything.

The scarlet coat about whose cut and colour these early Aberdeen



## The Aberdeen Golfers

golfers made so much ado was, of course, the tail coat which was *de rigueur* in all the early golf clubs. Judging by the old portraits,



KEITH JOPP,  
Captain, 1883-84.

the golfing coat was not a dress coat, that being reserved for social functions, but merely a cut-away coat with tails. The tail coat ceased to be worn at Aberdeen about the early "sixties," although a few specimens still survived, and were worn at play, down to the early "eighties." The last member of the Aberdeen Golf Club to wear one, and he wore it regularly, was Mr Keith Jopp. The original golfing head-gear worn with the scarlet tail coat was a tall "lum" hat, but this disappeared at an even earlier date, and

was superseded by a black velvet cap. Since about 1865 the scarlet jacket, without tails, was worn ; but of late years, at Aberdeen as elsewhere, the golfer's uniform red coat has been almost entirely discarded, and is rarely to be seen except on public commons where its use is compulsory.



THE CLUB BUTTONS.

## The Club's Early History

### SOCIAL AND OTHER MATTERS

The membership of the Aberdeen Golf Club slowly but surely increased, though at times, between 1815 and 1866, there was very little play on the Links, and interest in the game seems almost to have evaporated. Even in 1825 the minute-book runs: "The game has been shamefully neglected by the members for several years." There was again a slack time in the "thirties" and later "fifties," also in the early "sixties." It was sometimes the case that only two or three members put in an appearance at the annual competition for the Gold Medal, and sometimes too the Secretary appeared *solus* at a meeting which he had convened, and of which due notice had been sent to the members. But the good ship weathered all the storms. In 1827 the entry money was raised from £1, 1s. to £2, 2s.; the annual subscription remaining at 5s., a mere "flea-bite in the ocean," as the late Sir George Balfour, M.P., once remarked in the House of Commons in a different connection. But, small as this "flea-bite in the ocean" was, it developed into quite a respectable nest-egg (if the reader will pardon the mixed metaphors!) in fifty years. The beginning of a new order of things was the renting of two "clean and commodious rooms"—a club-room and a sleeping apartment at 13 Constitution Street, for three months, from 16th April to 16th July 1866. These rooms, it is recorded, had "sufficient light to enable members to perform their toilet and ablutions with comfort." Further, John Allan<sup>1</sup> of Prestwick, a well-known professional, was engaged for three months as caretaker of the club-room and of the greens on the Links, and also to give lessons in golf-playing to the members. This doubtless improved the play of many members, and ere long new members began to come in.

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<sup>1</sup> This was Johnnie Allan, then apprenticed to Old Tom Morris at Prestwick. Allan subsequently went to Westward Ho! He died at Prestwick in 1897 at the age of 49.



## The Aberdeen Golfers



W. DINGWALL FORDYCE, M.P.,  
Captain, 1864-66.

the building. There can be no doubt that the building of the Club-house in 1866 was a great factor in bringing about the marked revival of the game that ensued then and also in 1872, when the Bonaccord Golf Club was founded, and the working classes began to take an interest in the game again after ages of neglect. The late Wm. Dingwall Fordyce, M.P., of Brucklay, an excellent golfer, was Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club for two years,

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It was also decided, in the month of May, to build a Club-house on the Links, the funds of the Club, so long carefully managed by a succession of excellent Secretaries ever since the foundation in 1815, having accumulated to quite a large amount. The building proceeded rapidly, and by the spring of 1867 was finished, and the members held their annual dinner in it for the first time on 6th May. Mr Alexander Ellis, of Ellis & Wilson, was the architect of



CAPTAIN (now COL.) A. D. FORDYCE,  
Captain, 1873-74.



## The Club's Early History

1864-66. He and his brother, Captain Alex. Dingwall Fordyce, also a member of the Club, and probably its strongest player at this period, did a great deal towards waking up the dormant enthusiasm of many. The late Sheriff Comrie Thomson was another energetic spirit, helping to make things "hum" at this time. Other keen golfers were Wm. Jopp, Alexander Rose, Robert Duthie, Robert Spottiswood, Alex. Murray, and J. D. Fordyce.

But although the members had been without a Club-house until 1867, the annual dinners had not been neglected. The usual meeting-place was one or other of the best hotels in the town—the New Inn, Wood's Tavern, Dempster's Hotel, the Public Rooms, the Aberdeen Hotel, Melvin's Hotel, the Royal Hotel, the County Rooms, Affleck's, are among the houses they forgathered in in those olden times.<sup>1</sup> Usually the dinner came off on the evening of the day the Gold Medal was competed for, when the winner was presented with the medal by the Captain; and it was a rule that he must wear it "at all public occasions of the Club" (such as the Club dinner), a fine of 2s. 6d. being imposed for failing to observe this rule.

Many were the merry evenings our forebears enjoyed at those annual Club dinners. Matches were arranged to come off before next meeting, and usually a small bet was made, in the shape of a "magnum" of claret, and p.p., that is "play or pay," the rule being that, should one or more of the players in a match fail to turn up, he must pay a

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<sup>1</sup> The New Inn, otherwise known as Humphrey's Hotel, occupied the site of the North of Scotland and Town and County Bank, Ltd., at the corner of King Street and Castle Street. Wood's Tavern was probably the Thistle Tavern, Pirie's Court, 50 Castle Street, the proprietor being named Wood. Dempster's Hotel, afterwards the Royal Hotel, was at 161 Union Street. The Public Rooms were on the site of the front part of the Music Hall Buildings. The Aberdeen Hotel stood beside Union Bridge, opposite Trinity Hall. Melvin's Hotel was the same building, viz. 138 Union Street, either before or after. Some of the coaches in the old days started from this hotel. "Affleck's" was in Burnett's Close, 5 Exchequer Row, quite a fashionable neighbourhood at the period.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

"magnum" for the match thus declared off. The loser in a match, of course, had to pay a magnum. These magnums were duly discussed at the next annual Club dinner. There were other bets, besides those on match play, sometimes made at these convivial dinners; *e.g.*

"B. Fisher bets he will walk round the 'golfing links' and drop a

ball into each hole in less time than

James Simpson will play the balls into the holes—two rounds." Again,

Paterson "names" Wm. Black, and challenges Wm. Jopp to beat him in

walking three times round the Race Course (Jopp won the match, 1843).

Again, "Archibald Simpson bets that he will walk from Union Place to the

Cross and back again in less time than anyone present [at a Club ordinary

dinner, 1843]. Wm. Jopp accepts."

Mr Jopp won. "Mr Gerrard bets

that within two years of this date

[10th August 1837] he will win the

Club medal. Mr Alex. Pirie bets Mr Gerrard will not." "Mr John

Blaikie bets that Mr Wm. Black never saw a dead hare, nor ate any part of the same, weighing 13 lbs. (say thirteen pounds), and

Mr Wm. Black bets the reverse—the bet, half a crown and a dinner to a dozen." Wm. Black (July 1843) challenges Wm. Jopp to run

twice round the Race Course on Monday, 24th July 1843. The

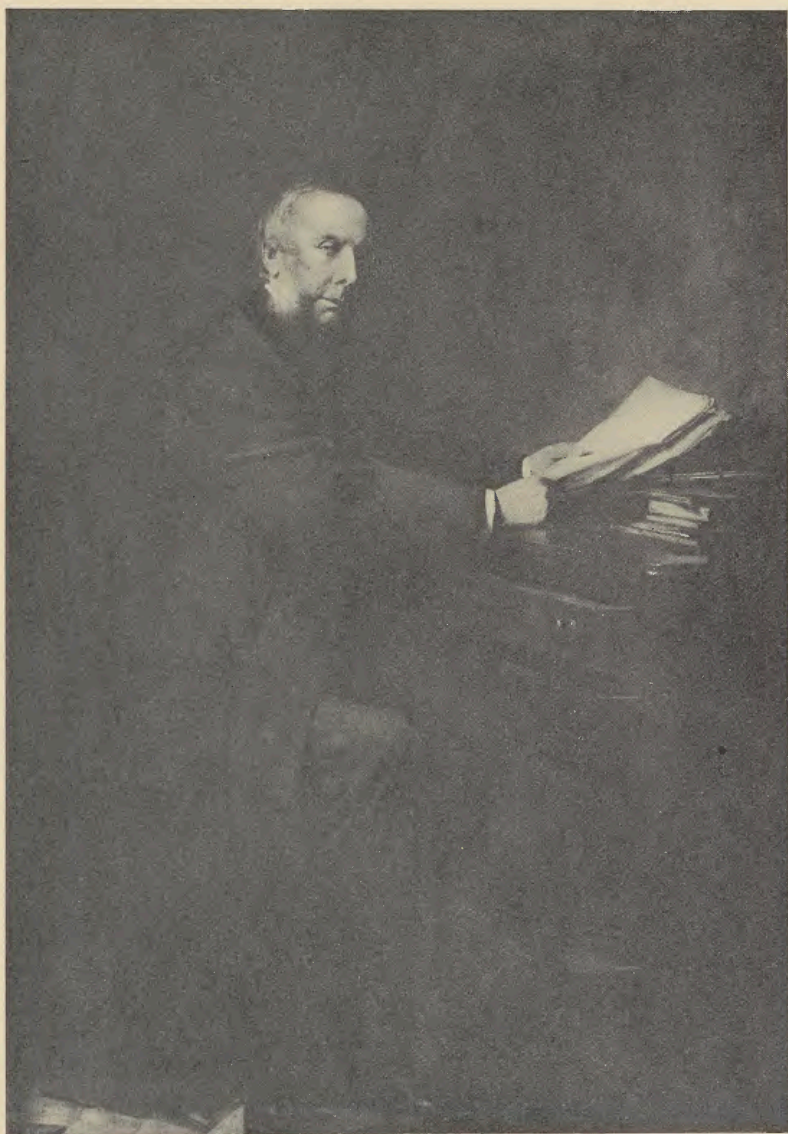
gallant colonel appears to have been a first-rate walker and runner in his younger days. Match, 4th June 1839, Alex. Gordon *v.*

Wm. Black. "Mr Gordon restricts himself to the use of one hand and his putter, allowing Mr Black the free use of both hands, and



LIEUT.-COLONEL JOPP,  
Captain, 1875-76.





JOHN ANGUS,  
Town Clerk of Aberdeen,  
Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club, 1849-50.  
*From the Portrait in the Town Hall, by Sir George Reid, R.S.A.*





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a choice of tools." Such are a few samples of the little "flutters" indulged in.

They spent many a jolly evening those ancestors of ours, in the days when still "George the Third was King," and in the early Victorian era they were not a whit behind. Like all strong and healthy men, they greatly enjoyed a good dinner. Of one such, in early Victorian times, it is recorded, "the annual dinner was served up in a style characteristic of the improvement in the Gastronomic Art," and that "the members enjoyed themselves most agreeably and harmoniously." Messrs Angus and Morice, at one of these dinners, 4th June 1839, were fined a magnum each for proposing and seconding a toast that had already been given, "thereby reflecting on the sobriety of the party." Of another meeting it is naively recorded that "the Company, after spending a most convivial afternoon, found most of themselves ranged around their Captain at a late hour, and the long tongue of twelve o'clock was only heard as the first hint that the new day was the beginning of a new week." Of a dinner in 1832 it is recorded, "the chairman did his duty so effectually that those present recollect nothing that happened—not even that the following matches were made and seconded," etc. It was, as is well known, an age of hard drinking amongst the upper classes. Dean Ramsay has many anecdotes in his *Scottish Life and Character* that amply prove this ; so that one need not be surprised to read of a Club dinner of nearly eighty years ago, that a "gallant Captain carried the members into and through the action in style," and that "little need be said of the victory, except that six dozen and ten dead men (none of them members) were found upon the field next morning." As there were just twenty-four members present at this dinner, the flowing bowl must have circled rather freely !

Besides the annual Club dinners, there were what were termed

## The Aberdeen Golfers

"Club ordinary" dinners. These date from 1833. At a general meeting of the Club held on 23rd March 1833, it was arranged that playing members should "meet and dine together on the last Saturday of every month, and that those dinners (which should be for their encouragement) be kept as moderate as possible." It was also arranged "to discuss all bets on matches previously lost, whether laid at the annual dinner or not." These "Club ordinary" dinners, though not held every month, were held several times in a year, as a rule, and undoubtedly helped to keep the game of golf alive in Aberdeen.

Here is an echo of the terrible cholera visitation in the "thirties." At the annual general meeting of the Club, on 15th April 1837, "the meeting, having regard for the health and welfare of the Club in these days of epidemics, concurs in the legitimacy of convening a special Committee for the purpose of deciding on the particular description and quality of drink to be consumed on the occasion of the annual dinner on 1st proxo., and accordingly fixed Wednesday, 26th inst., at 5 o'clock, for the diet of compearance within the Aberdeen Hotel, then and there to give judgment as effeirs." The facetious Secretary, Wm. Skinner, Advocate, is "talking shop" here, and he is referring to the custom then prevailing, of a small Committee holding a preliminary examination, tasting and selecting the wines to be consumed at their next Club dinner—a congenial task, no doubt.

### ENCROACHMENTS ON THE LINKS

The golfers of those old days had their troubles as bad as, and even worse than, their successors of later years, in the "encroachments" made, or threatened to be made, on the links, and more especially on their beloved golf-course, to all of which they made a sturdy resistance. As early as October 1815, "repairs to the Race Course"



## The Club's Early History

necessitated some cutting up of the turf on the Golf Course, and the Golf Club lost no time in having it arranged with the Race promoters, that any injury done to the Golf Course must be immediately repaired when the races were over. The Club also at this time, October 1815, sent a letter to the Provost and Magistrates, requesting them to "prevent all carts and loaded carriages from passing on the links, which have of late been very much cut up, and the field destroyed by some recent operations." Then, in the spring of 1828, certain "sand carts at the back of the Broad Hill" (carting away the sand) troubled the Golf Club, and steps were taken to stop this encroachment. In 1833 there was the proposal, as the races had fallen away and the Race Course was now useless, on the part of the Town Council, to make a "gravel road" of the Race Course, for the use of the public, also to erect a public wash-house on the Links, where also they proposed having a public bleaching-green. In 1843 the herring-fishers appeared on the Golf Course, spreading out and drying their nets on the same; in 1853 two of the holes on the Queen's Links were threatened by the encroachment of certain cricket players; in 1856 came the proposal to construct the Aberdeen, Peterhead, and Fraserburgh Railway running through the Links; and in 1865 the rope-walks and the timber-logs nuisance, destroying the hole at the south end of the Queen's Links. Then the herring-fishers reappeared with their nets about this time, and in 1868 the iron chair episode occurred on the Broad Hill, in which a Town's Baillie,<sup>1</sup> aided and abetted by the "sand baillie," took a prominent and contentious part; in 1871 the sewage irrigation proposal for the Old Town Links cropped up, as also a scheme for a gasworks to be erected near the Golf Club's house on the Queen's Links. Against all these menaces to the

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<sup>1</sup> "Baillie" was always spelt in Aberdeen with two l's, and is so to this day (*cf.* French *bailli*); another evidence of the close intercourse that there was between La Belle France and the city of Bonaccord in the old days.

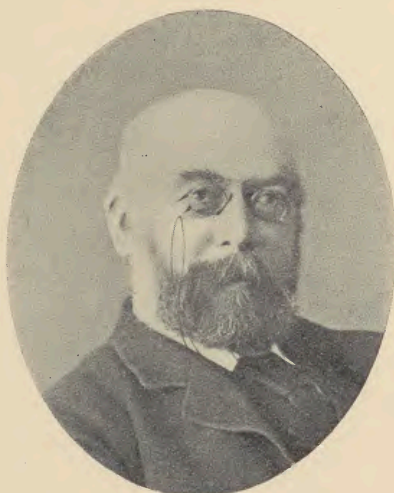
## The Aberdeen Golfers

amenities of the Links the Aberdeen Golf Club protested, and on several occasions voted considerable sums of money from its funds to defray any expenses that might be incurred in defending their rights as citizens to the free use of the Links. But for their opposition, it is quite possible the whole of the Links, from Dee to Don, might have been ere the present day utterly useless for purposes of recreation. As it is, let anyone pay a visit to the Queen's Links and compare its present shocking condition with the beautiful "fair green" of the "seventies." Imagine the links of St Andrews being tampered with as the Aberdeen Links have been for years—lopping off holes here and there, a tramway line running through part of the Queen's Links, setting down iron chairs right in the line of one of the golf-holes, allowing a big horse and cattle show to be held on part of the course from time to time, a nauseous smelling gasworks and a still worse chemical works at one end of the Links, and at the other end a horse-slaughtering establishment and tannery. No wonder that, after much patience and long-suffering, the Aberdeen Golf Club removed to the more salubrious and peaceful clime of Balgownie. Meanwhile, the other golf clubs of the City (and their total membership must be 600, or perhaps nearer 1000 at the present time, and ever increasing) have got to enjoy themselves as best they may on the Old Town Links, backwards and forwards and round and round, in the vicinity of Napier's tannery.

The rest of this early chapter in the Club's history may be briefly told. The foundation stone of the Golf Club-house was laid on 21st September 1866, by Sheriff Comrie Thomson, the Captain of the Club, and by the spring of 1867 the building was finished. Thus, at last, the members found themselves in possession of what they had so long desired, a comfortable house on the Links. George Ogilvie, a turner in the employ of Duthie Bros., Footdee, was appointed

## The Club's Early History

caretaker and greenkeeper. At the first Club dinner held in the new building, on 6th May 1867, Mr A. Davidson of Dess undertook, "on behalf of the Copper Company, to present the Club with a copper punch-kettle." As the months rolled on without any appearance of this desirable article, Mr Davidson was reminded of his promise. "Non mi ricordo" was his plea, until, at one of the dinners, when the "promised kettle" was, as usual, a topic of conversation, Mr Newell Burnett facetiously remarked, that unless the article was forthcoming soon, "Mr Davidson must go to pot as regards this Club." At last, on 3rd October 1871, the long-expected kettle arrived from Mr Davidson — "a handsome silver kettle and stand"; Mr P. H. Chalmers, Captain of the Club at this time, also presenting the "handsome and appropriate oak chair" with high back, that used to stand facing the big window of the Club-house, looking out on the Links.



P. H. CHALMERS,  
Captain, 1870-73.

There was, from 1867 onwards to 1872, a steady increase of new members, and anyone surveying the Links of an afternoon from the Broad Hill must have been struck with the number of scarlet-coated golfers all over the course, from the "Battery" hole right over to the "Valley" hole in the Old Town Links. It was indeed a lively scene, and very different from the old sleepy days when only a mere handful of players existed. In the spring of 1868, Bob Ferguson and "Fiery," the well-known caddie from Musselburgh, were engaged by the Club for five weeks, coaching the new members, and in 1869 additional



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accommodation, in the shape of a new wing to the Club-house, had to be provided for the large number of new members and players. In this year also the entry money was raised from £2, 2s. to £3, 3s., and the annual subscription from 5s. to 10s. The 14-hole course was now always the one used—the course over which Young Tom Morris and Davie Strath played in 1872, and which is described in detail farther on. In 1871, Old Willie Park, who had been previously employed by the Club in 1852, laying out a new course, again came north, to superintend the laying out of new putting-greens on the Aberdeen Links.

## CHAPTER IV

### "THE RENAISSANCE"



THE records of the Aberdeen Golf Club from its foundation in 1815 on to 1872, dealt with in the preceding chapter, show that the game of golf had all these years been a game of the upper classes in Aberdeen, and that, even amongst these, there were times when the game seemed more dead than alive. Also it is clear that, immediately on the building of the Club-house on the Links there followed a large inflow of new members, many of them playing members, so that by the year 1872, when these reminiscences begin, the game was in full swing on the Links as it had never been before. But the working classes had yet to be won over, and it is entirely to the credit of the Aberdeen Golf Club that the popularising, in Aberdeen, of the "breezy old Scottish game of golf," as the late Professor John S. Blackie happily described it, took place. This the Club did by getting up tournaments, presenting valuable prizes, and bringing the finest players of the day to the Aberdeen Links, thereby encouraging all classes to try the game and to learn how it should be played. To follow a match between such famous exponents as Young Tom Morris and Davie Strath, then in their prime, must have proved a powerful incentive to many to practise the game; and long after these two golfing heroes were dead and gone, one has often heard from the lips of those who witnessed their play on the Aberdeen Links, how

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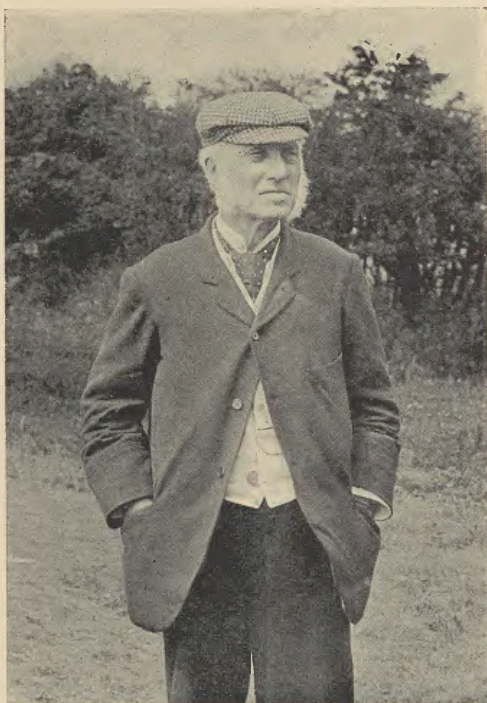
astonished and delighted they were at the wonderful skill displayed by these two experts. Other fine players seen on the Links were, Old Willie Park, Old Tom Morris, Tom Kydd, Jamie Anderson, and Bob Ferguson, all of whom were imported on various occasions, in the "seventies" and "eighties" of last century, to the fine old course on the Links, at the expense of the Aberdeen Golf Club, and with the object, successfully attained too, of creating and fostering a love of the game amongst all classes.

The early months of 1872 may quite accurately be described as witnessing the Renaissance of Golf in Aberdeen amongst the working classes. It was announced in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 17th April 1872, that "the Aberdeen Golf Club, in order to foster and encourage a love of the game of golf amongst the community, have offered several prizes for competition by players not connected with the Club, and restricted to those who have commenced since January 1870." For years before 1872 the number of golfers to be seen on the Links at any time was a mere handful. The only golf club was the Aberdeen Golf Club, and occasionally a working man was to be seen on a summer's evening or Saturday afternoon enjoying a game; but so few were the specimens of this class at the time, that only eight competitors came forward to compete for the prizes. The round at this period consisted of 14 holes only. Two rounds (28 holes) had to be played by the eight competitors, and the first prize, "four splendid clubs and four balls," as the local Press described them, was gained by William Shirras, score 78—86 = 164; the second prize, three clubs and three balls, by James Miller, 88—90 = 178; and the third prize by William Duncan, two clubs and two balls, 94—87 = 181. These scores were very creditable, the winning score of William Shirras (78), in the first round, being quite up to the score in which the Gold Medal of the Aberdeen Golf Club was usually gained at that time. The prizes were presented to the winners by Mr P. H.



## “The Renaissance”

Chalmers, Advocate, Captain of the Aberdeen Club, who expressed the hope that the competition might help to popularise the game of golf in Aberdeen, and also that the players would endeavour to protect the putting-greens from damage by outsiders. Less than two months after this event, namely on 7th June 1872, the Bonaccord Golf Club was started, with Mr John Doleman as Captain, and Mr William Rennie as Secretary. At the meeting held for the purpose of forming a club, only twelve persons attended. The entrance fee was fixed at 2s. 6d., and the annual subscription also at 2s. 6d., payable in advance—Scottish caution! At the present time (1908), the membership of the Bonaccord Club is about 160; so that, not to mention the hundreds of members belonging to other clubs (Victoria, Northern, Caledonian, etc.) afterwards



JOHN DOLEMAN,  
First Captain of the Bonaccord Golf Club.

formed, the laudable efforts of the Aberdeen Golf Club to popularise the game have been abundantly crowned with success. The Bonaccord Golf Club was thus the first of the working and middle class clubs formed in Aberdeen, and it was from such small beginnings it arose. John Doleman, its first Captain, was an excellent player, and a brother of William Doleman, one of the finest players in Scotland. A third

## The Aberdeen Golfers

brother, Alexander, was also a skilful player ; indeed, skill in the game seems to have been hereditary in this family, as in the case of

the Morrises, Parks, etc. The Dolemans were natives of Musselburgh, and it is interesting to note that they are all still alive and golfing.

Another excellent local golfer of these early days was Mr Anthony Shirreffs, a young man at that time, who learned his golf on the Aberdeen Links. He joined the Bonaccord Club in November 1875, when the club was housed in a small room near the foot of Constitution Street. Shirreffs was quite a match for any member of his own club or of the Aberdeen Club, and frequently went the round of 18 holes in 85 or under.

But to return to the Aberdeen Club and its fostering of the game. On 17th October 1872 the Club held a great "Tournament," as it was called, offering valuable money and other prizes to any professional or amateur who cared to compete. Thus it came to pass that the famous



YOUNG TOM MORRIS,  
Wearing the Championship Belt.



## “The Renaissance”

“Young Tom” Morris, and the almost equally famous Davie Strath, appeared on the Aberdeen Links on that date, and gave such an exhibition of the game as had never been seen there before. As in the spring, when the local tournament was held, the course consisted of only 14 holes, four of them in the Queen’s or New Town Links, and the rest on the Broad Hill and King’s or Old Town Links, including the famous and dreaded “Bunker” hole and the “Long” hole (523 yards). “Young Tom” and Strath were pitted against each other, and in the result “Young Tom” won. Here are the scores :—

	T. MORRIS (Junior).		D. STRATH.	
	<i>1st Round.</i>	<i>2nd Round.</i>	<i>1st Round.</i>	<i>2nd Round.</i>
Gasworks Hole	5	4	5	5
Battery „	4	3	4	3
Castle Dangerous Hole	3	4	4	5
Table „	5	5	5	5
Hill „	5	4	5	5
Road „	4	5	5	4
Burn „	4	3	2	5
Bunker „	4	4	4	4
Valley „	4	4	5	4
Cowhillock „	4	4	4	4
Target „	4	4	3	3
Well „	4	4	4	4
Long „	6	6	7	8
Home „	4	4	3	4
	<hr/> 60	<hr/> 58	<hr/> 60	<hr/> 63

These scores easily beat all previous records ; the 6 of “Young Tom” for the 13th or “Long” hole each time, his 4 at the “Hill” hole in the second round, and Strath’s 2 at the “Burn” hole in the first round being quite phenomenal. Other scores were :—Willie Park (“Old Willie”), 63—67 ; Tom Morris sen. (“Old Tom”), 66—65 ; and Wm. Doleman,



## The Aberdeen Golfers

63—69, who tied with Tom Kydd, 66—66. £15 was "Young Tom's" reward, Strath getting £10, Park £5. Liberal as the prize money was for those days (£30), there were but thirteen entries ; but it must be remembered that professionals were few at this time, and so also were amateurs.

In the open amateur competition, two famous players carried off the first and second prizes ; Robert T. Thomson, Edinburgh, with the splendid score of 62 (one round only), receiving plate of the value of £10, and Alex. Ross, also of Edinburgh, with a score of 66, plate of the value of £5. J. G. Collier, a Carnoustie player, with a score of 68, was third prizeman, and gained a set of clubs. There were thirty-two competitors in this open amateur event ; and here again, though the number appears very insignificant in these modern days, it was considered highly satisfactory at the time, and included some of the best amateurs of the period. Charles Anderson of Fettykil, Fifeshire, who died only a few months ago, was a competitor, going round in 71, as also did Captain A. D. Fordyce, a member of the Aberdeen Club, and George Gilroy of Carnoustie. Mr Charles Anderson and Captain Fordyce were both medal winners of the Royal and Ancient Club of St Andrews. Another well-known competitor was John Doleman, Captain of the recently formed Bonaccord Club, who went round in 72.

The venerable Secretary of the Aberdeen Golf Club, Mr David R. Morice, Advocate, who had for nine years given his services gratuitously to the Club, resigned his office at this time, owing to failing health, and his son Mr Arthur D. Morice was appointed to the post. He too proved a most excellent Secretary and a keen golfer. For the long period of sixteen years—up to 1888—he acted as Honorary Secretary, when, as in the case of his father, ill-health necessitated his resignation. He died in 1894.

Such, then, was the great "Tournament" of October 1872 on the

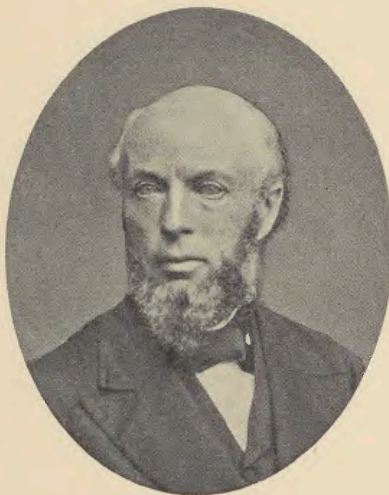
## “The Renaissance”

Aberdeen Links, and additional *éclat* was given to the occasion by the late Prince Leopold, who became Patron of the Aberdeen Golf Club at this time. The members were highly gratified at this mark of Royal favour, and also at the interest the “Tournament” had created amongst the citizens, as evidenced by the large numbers of spectators attracted to the Links to see the two greatest exponents of the game, Young Tom Morris and Davie Strath.

Thirty-five years and more have



ARTHUR D. MORICE,  
Hon. Secretary, 1872-88.



D. R. MORICE,  
Hon. Sec. Aberdeen Golf Club, 1863-72.

come and gone since these two famous golfers first met on the Aberdeen Links, and most of the pioneers and local players of that time have joined the “great majority.” P. H. Chalmers, Sheriff Dove Wilson, Sheriff Comrie Thomson (the little and big Sheriffs, as they were called), Cornelius Thompson, W. D. Fordyce, M.P., of Brucklay ; Colonel Jopp, Hugh Hogarth, Charles and Alexander Rose, and many another well-known enthusiast, whose

## The Aberdeen Golfers

figures were so familiar to frequenters of the golf-course, are all gone. A few, a very few, remain still with us, hale and hearty, and able—some of them—to show that, even yet, their natural strength is not abated and that their right hand has not lost its cunning ; but the great results from the good seed sown by those generous pioneers in 1872 will ever remain in evidence of the truth of the saying, “Good deeds never die.”



## CHAPTER V

### DESCRIPTION OF THE OLD FOURTEEN-HOLE COURSE



BRIEF description of the golf-course as played on in 1872, may be of interest to many. There were only 14 holes, and their names were suggested by Mr Charles Rose when Captain of the Club in 1873. Starting near the "Table" hole, at a point close beside the tram-line that now leads to the Bathing Station (it was a mere footpath then), the "Gasworks" hole (357 yards), just outside the Gasworks and just beyond where Cotton Street debouches on the Links, was reached. With the indifferent clubs and balls of those days, and the numerous bad lies to be encountered here, and indeed all over the course, two drives and an approach were generally required to reach the green, and, in modern parlance, 5 was quite a good "Bogey" figure for the hole. The putting-greens of 1872 were very different affairs from the beautifully smooth and well-kept greens of later years ; moreover, they were placed in difficult positions, and they were usually exceedingly small—just a few yards cut and rolled round the hole ; the cutting, and especially the rolling, being often very badly done. Putting, never an easy part of the game, was often a very uncertain thing over those bumpy, ill-kept greens. Proceeding still in a southerly direction, the second hole, the "Battery" hole (208 yards), near the Battery and the timber logs, was reached. Here a good drive would about reach the green, and a 3, or 4 at most, was the proper score. Turning

## The Aberdeen Golfers

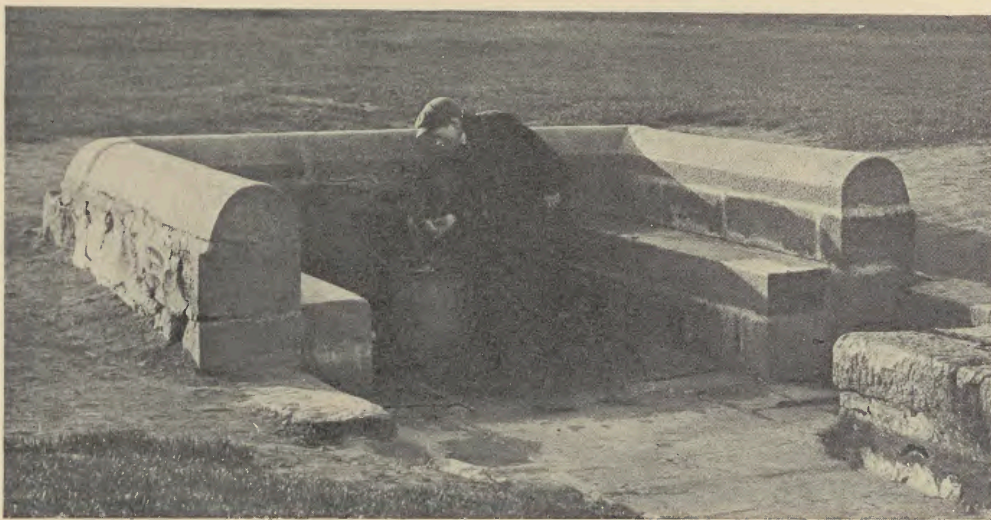
back, and coming north towards the Broad Hill, "Castle Dangerous" (233 yards), situated on an elevated piece of ground opposite the end of Cotton Street, had to be negotiated. A good drive and a deft run-up or loft with cleek or iron, landed the ball on the green, and the hole was a good 4. Next came the "Table" hole (372 yards), on a tableland near the tee for the first hole. Two good drives were usually required for this hole—rather a ticklish one, from the situation of the hole on top of the "Table"; the least excess of strength sending the ball over the green and off the "Table," and very often 6 strokes or more were required here ere the ball was holed. These four holes were all on the Queen's Links; excellent holes they were, and it was a thousand pities that, in later days, they had to be abandoned. Though there were no whins nor bunkers, the Queen's Links was abundantly supplied with other natural hazards in the shape of hillocks, and hollows with plenty of long grass ever ready to trap the ball through the green, and testing the golfer's skill in recovery and approaching to the utmost.

And now came the *pièce de résistance*—the Broad Hill, up which the player had next to proceed to the fifth or "Hill" hole (297 yards). Driving off from near the "Table" putting-green, a good swipe would carry the road, and, provided a good lie was obtained, and no big hillock obstructed the flight of the ball, a long spoon (these clubs were then all in vogue through the green) would carry the ball well up the hill and over the iron seat set down right in the line to the hole. But woe betide a bad pull or slice here, for it probably meant the disappearance, sometimes the total loss, of the ball down the side of the hill, and into some of the whin bushes or bunkers that abounded there! The player was lucky who managed this hole in 5, for it was an exceedingly trying hole from its lofty situation, fully exposed to the winds, and there generally was a good breeze on the hill, even on a quiet day. The sixth hole—the "Road" hole—was situated



## Description of the Old 14-Hole Course

straight on at the foot of the hill, just over the road lying along the north end of the hill in the Old Town Links. The length of this hole would be about 230 yards. The tee shot from the vicinity of the "Hill" hole was delightful, a sporting one, the white gutta soaring away right north past the flagstaff that here surmounted the hill, and disappearing over the brow—a blind shot, but the lies here—



THE "GIBBERIE" WELL.

abouts were generally very fair, and the putting-green generally reached with the second stroke, a light iron approach usually, over the road. The hole was a good one in 4. The putting-green of this "Road" hole was one of the smoothest and best on the Links. Next came the "Burn" hole (164 yards), situated just over the burn, and near the well, where one remembers of a Saturday long ago, "gibberie" (gingerbread cakes) used to be sold to "Young Aberdeen" as it flocked to the Old Town Links to play cricket. The "Gibberie" Well, we used to call it, for there was good drinking-water in it then,



## The Aberdeen Golfers

and the old woman with her baskets of "gibberie" cakes and "Parliament" cakes, also provided her customers with a drink of the pure water from a glass jug. The baskets containing the "gibberie," etc., were always carefully lined with clean white linen cloths. How those little things impress themselves on the mind, often when matters of much greater importance are completely forgotten—pleasant memories of the happy days of long ago. Though a shortish hole, the "Burn" was an excellent test of skill. So near the burn was the green usually situated, that it was only a high lofted shot from the tee that would remain near the hole, and a ball trapped in the burn was generally quite unplayable, often indeed lost in the mud that used to be so troublesome here. Many a "guttery," thus lost to its rightful owner at this spot, was afterwards recovered from its slimy hiding-place by the enterprising caddie, and sold again at a figure that varied according to the condition of the ball and the wealth of the customer—not forgetting the caddie's skill in driving a bargain. But there was always a ready sale for those "lost and found" balls, for a good ball cost 1s. new at this time, and people had not yet succumbed to the great golf craze of later years, when 2s. is the cost of a first-class new rubber-core—freely asked, freely paid. Indeed, most of the golfers on the Aberdeen Links in the early days, excepting of course the "gentry" of the Aberdeen Golf Club, were quite content to use a sixpenny "remade" ball, and any bargain in the shape of a "lost and found" ball was eagerly bought from a caddie.

And now came the most difficult and most dreaded hole on the Links, the famous "Bunker" hole. It was about 250 yards in length, and as the bunker was close to the green and very wide, it was quite impossible to carry on to the green from the tee. The "Bunker" was of great size, and could only be negotiated by a high "loft" with the iron. Any mistake made here as to distance was fatal; the ball was trapped, and

## Description of the Old 14-Hole Course

so badly might it lie that half a dozen strokes might be required ere it could be extricated and landed safe on the green. Many a good score was ruined at the "Bunker" as then played, and when, a few years later, the hole was altered and shortened,—by playing from the "Target" hole,—every one felt that the change was a judicious one, for the old "Bunker" was something too awful! Difficult and dangerous as it was, Young Tom Morris, in his match with Davie Strath in September 1873, holed it in 3 in his first round—a feat never performed before, and probably never repeated. The player who managed the hole in 5 might congratulate himself on his success. Proceeding still north, the last hole out, the ninth or "Valley" hole, was reached—276 yards. This was a delightful hole, played over and through a regular sea of hillocks and whin bushes, meting out just punishment to the topper, puller, and slicer. A good drive down the middle of the valley usually secured a good lie for the second stroke—an iron pitch or run to the green, well played in 4. The course here just reached to where the "Plain" begins, stretching away to the mouth of the Don; and as it was quite a common occurrence at high tides to find, at this point, the whole plain a sheet of water all the way to the mouth of the river, the course went no farther north than the "Valley" hole. Then commenced the return journey south and home. The "Cowhillock," as the first hole homewards was named, was a fairly longish hole, the proper score for it being 4. A year or two later, when the "Short" or "Rose" hole was formed, the "Cowhillock" hole was considerably longer and more difficult; and indeed, from 1876 onwards, when the full round of 18 holes was made, it became the longest hole on the course. The next hole, the "Target," also a 4 hole, was placed about due east from the "Cowhillock," and took its name from its proximity to some of the targets used by the Volunteers for rifle shooting. The "Well," another 4, came next, with a nicely situated

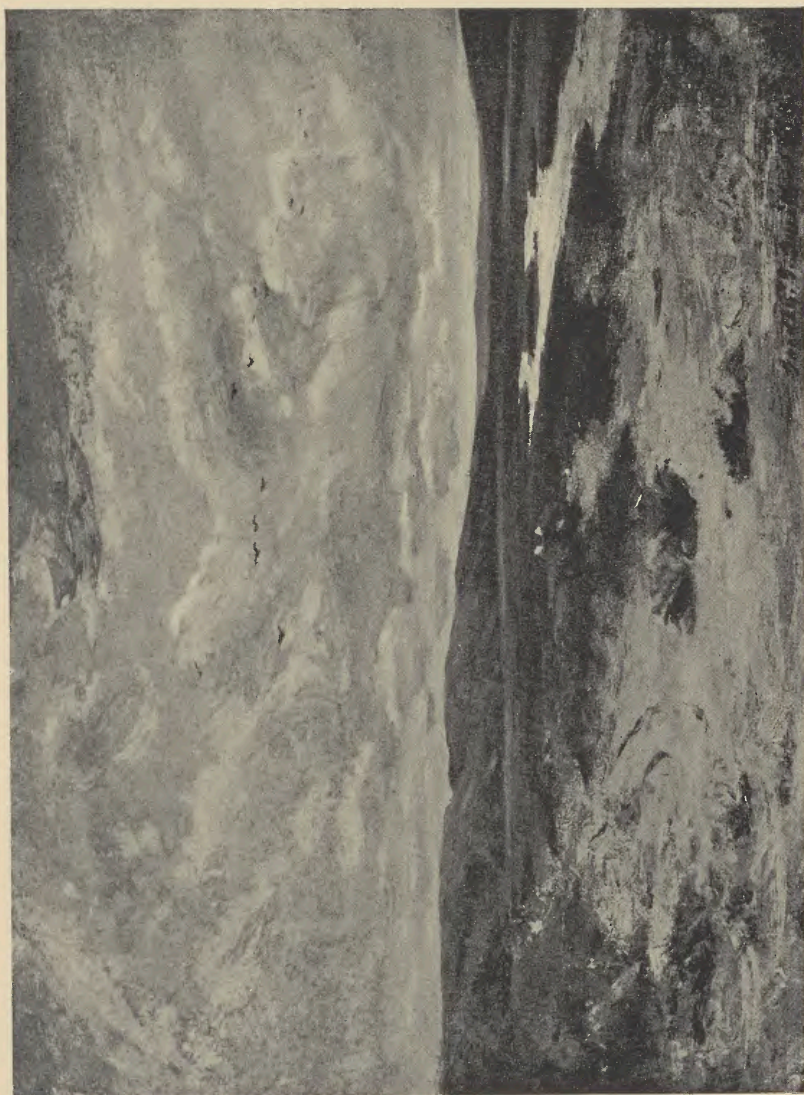


## The Aberdeen Golfers

green over the burn and near the "Gibberie" Well before alluded to. Then came the "Long" hole (523 yards), played right over the Broad Hill from the well, past the flagstaff on top of the hill, and right on to the platform overlooking the Queen's Links. Three full drives were required to reach this green, and any deviation to right or left landed the ball in almost certain trouble—7 strokes was quite the usual number required at this hole, even by a professional player; for it was no easy matter getting the second shot over the top of the hill near the flagstaff, and then there was still some 200 yards to go ere the platform green was reached, and no end of hazards all around. Young Tom Morris took this hole twice in 6 strokes in 1872 in his match with Davie Strath, the latter requiring 7 and 8. In 1873 Morris required 7 strokes in each of his rounds at this same hole, and Strath again 8 and 7. Truly it was a "long" and a difficult hole. Only one hole now remained to finish the round, the "Home" hole, played from the top of the hill, 218 yards—Bogey 4. A fine finish it was—a tearing swipe away into space some 200 yards, landing the ball gently on the plain beneath, a run-up with cleek or iron to the green situated near the starting-point and the path—now the tram-line—that led to the Beach, a gentle putt or two, and, *voilà tout*, the round was completed!

It was a splendid course this of 1872, the only objections that might be urged against it being the excessively difficult "Bunker" hole, and the danger to life and limb at the "Long" hole, where the home-going and out-going players, met on the Broad Hill, and there were often narrow escapes from full swipes from the tee near the Hill hole putting-green landing right in the midst of a company ascending the hill from the Old Town Links. A forecaddie was here quite a necessity if one wished to escape the risk of a charge of manslaughter. The "par" score for the round was about 63, but 70 to 75 was quite as good as the crack amateurs of the time





THE OLD TOWN LINKS, LOOKING SOUTH.  
*From a Picture by Garden G. Smith.*



## Earlier Golf-Courses on the Aberdeen Links

could generally achieve. The 58 of Young Tom Morris, made in October 1892, was never again equalled.

### EARLIER GOLF-COURSES ON THE ABERDEEN LINKS

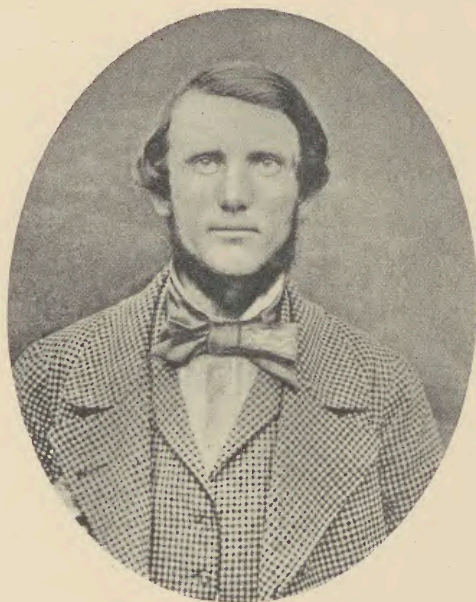
The course of fourteen holes described above, though known to the golfers of the late "seventies" as "the old 14-hole course," had been in use for only some half-dozen years before 1872. It is impossible to say what was the nature of the course over which the Aberdeen golfers played in 1780, when the "Society of Golfers" was formed; and, indeed, right on to 1865 there are no data on which one could venture more than a surmise. Even the number of holes over which the original Society played is unknown, and the most that can be said with any certainty is that from 1815, when the Aberdeen Golf Club was founded, down to about 1852, there were only seven holes, and that these were situated in the New Town or Queen's Links, and on the Broad Hill, the course going no farther than a little over the road that skirts the northern slope of the hill.<sup>1</sup> In stroke competitions, two rounds were played—14 holes in all—but where the holes were situated at any given time during this period cannot be accurately determined. As the members of the Aberdeen Golf Club originally kept their clubs at Munro's shop in King Street, close to Princes Street, and as Constitution Street was made, although not named, prior to 1773, that thoroughfare would be the golfers' nearest way to the Queen's Links. The first teeing-ground would therefore be not far from the end of Constitution Street, but in what direction the golfers played can only be conjectured. It seems reasonable to suppose, however, that the Queen's Links would first be played, and the Broad Hill kept, as a *pièce de résistance*, to the end of the round.

<sup>1</sup> Five, six, or seven were the commonest numbers of holes on the old courses. Leith had five holes, Blackheath five until 1844, when the number was increased to seven, and Perth, Bruntfield Links, and Glasgow had six each. North Berwick had six, and ultimately seven.



## The Aberdeen Golfers

The absence of precise information as to the disposition of the holes is doubtless due to the uneasy tenure which the Aberdeen golfers have always had of the Links. Golf has never been the paramount game at Aberdeen, as it was at Leith, St Andrews, and Musselburgh; and the Links, besides being the arena for other games and



WILLIE PARK, SEN.

recreations, were constantly being requisitioned for wapin-shaws, military parades and reviews, horse-races, cattle shows, and similar public requirements. Moreover, at various periods, the fishermen were permitted to spread their nets over large areas, while, about 1865, the ground where one hole was situated, at the extreme south end of the Queen's Links, was calmly annexed for the storage of wood and for the establishment of a rope-walk! One would like to know the inner history of this transaction. Under such circum-

stances, it is easy to see that frequent changes in the course must have been necessary, while the occasional breaks in the continuity of the game's history were doubtless due, in part at least, to these discouraging factors.

But whatever were the precise locations of the putting-greens, there is no doubt that the holes of this dark, 7-hole age of Aberdeen golf were much longer than their successors of the "seventies" and "eighties." The Gold Medal, played for over them from 1816 onwards, was, during many decades, rarely gained under 84, the usual winning score being

## Earlier Golf-Courses on the Aberdeen Links

somewhere about 90 or 95, or an average of over 6 strokes per hole for the two rounds.<sup>1</sup>

Not until November 1852 is there any mention in the minute-book of the Aberdeen Golf Club of a "new Course." In the minutes of 13th November 1852, it is recorded that "William Park, a Musselburgh *cadie*"—the famous "Auld Willie Park" of later days—"had been here for a few days lately, and had made out a new Course for golf play on the links, including some new and 'hazardous' holes recently brought into use, making 12 holes" (*vide* p. 123).

After "Old Willie" Park's visit of 1852, there is no further record of a new course until October 1856, when Willie Dunn, the well-known Blackheath professional, came north to lay out a "new Course" on the Aberdeen Links; but it is not known what that course was, or of how many holes it consisted. There was very little play on the Links at this time, and on to the year 1866. But on 27th April 1866 there is no longer any doubt as to the Golf Course. The Silver Medal (later known as the "Midsummer" Medal) was first competed for on that date, and the course consisted of 14 holes, 7 of these holes being on the Old Town Links (two rounds, or 28 holes in all, being played for this medal). Next year, 1867, the course seems to have been somewhat altered, as is evident from the Gold Medal being gained with a score of 104; but, from the spring of 1868 onward to 1873 (when the 15-hole course was inaugurated) the course consisted of 14 holes. "Old Willie" Park was on the Aberdeen Links again in the spring of 1871, seeing to the improvement of the putting-greens, but there was no alteration made in the number of holes, which remained at 14.

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<sup>1</sup> Holes in the old days of the feather ball were much longer than they became in the days of the "guttery." The old five holes at Leith, for instance, previous to 1821, measured on an average 477 yards each, which would be a very long hole even now with the rubber-cored balls.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

It is interesting to note that the word "cadie" occurs only once in the minute-book, and that is as above—referring to Old Willie Park: "club-bearer" is the name used in the "Laws of Golf" of the "Society of Golfers," and also in the "Rules to be observed" of the Aberdeen Golf Club, 1815. An entry in the minute-book of the Club in the year 1849 (no month is given) runs thus: "Paid Allan Robertson, St Andrews, for a new turf-cutting machine for making golf holes 4s. 6d., carriage 1s. 8d.= 6s. 2d." This, of course, is none other than the famous professional and club-maker, in whose shop "Old Tom" Morris worked. This entry is interesting as possibly giving the approximate date of the introduction of the hole-cutter.

There are some interesting entries in the minute-book referring to the old 7-hole golf-course and a party named (nicknamed surely) Gurkie. "16th October 1838, Paid Gurkie for providing boys and cards on medal day, 3s. 6d." Again, on 6th May 1842, on account of "the dilapidated state of the Links, it was resolved to appoint Gurkie, or some other qualified person, to preserve the holes and greens";<sup>1</sup> Munro, the King Street golf-club maker, who also had the care of the golf-course, having greatly neglected his duty.

Another frequent entry is a payment to "flag boys on medal days." These were not, as might be supposed, fore-caddies, but boys carrying flags who pointed out where the holes were, there being then no flags in the holes.

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<sup>1</sup> "Gurkie" means a short person, stunted in growth. The real name of this early caddie-master and greenkeeper is not known.

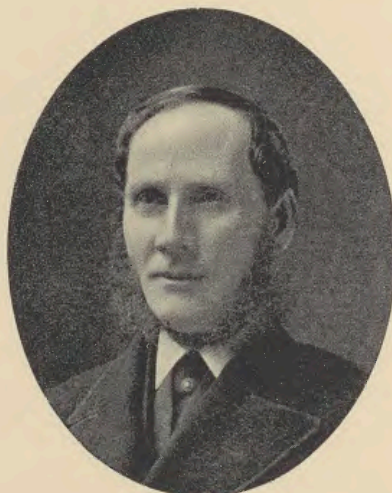


## CHAPTER VI

1873-75—NEW TROPHIES, THE 15-HOLE COURSE, ETC.



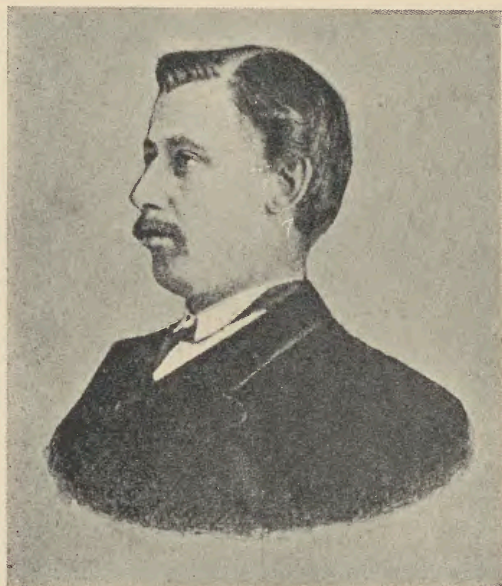
IN the month of January 1873, Prince Leopold presented the handsome Silver Cup to the Club, and Mrs Fordyce of Brucklay the beautiful Gold Cross. These two valuable prizes have been eagerly competed for ever since at the annual prize meetings of the Aberdeen Golf Club; the Gold Cross being played for under handicap, and the Leopold Cup always from scratch. A new hole, the "Short" or "Rose" hole, was now added to the course, making a round of 15 holes. The new hole, 123 yards, was played due west, after the "Valley" or ninth hole. It was named the "Rose" hole after Mr Charles Rose of Hazelhead, Captain of the Club at this time, and a keen and enthusiastic as well as an excellent player of the old school. This hole had an excellent putting-green, circular, and banked up all round to keep out the floods from the "Plain." On several occasions it was holed in one stroke. It was what is



CHARLES ROSE OF HAZELHEAD,  
Captain, 1872-73.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

now called a "blind" hole, the putting-green and flag being quite invisible from the tee. Yet another prize was presented to the Club this year, a silver cup, a fine specimen of Indian workmanship, the donor being Mr William Best of Bombay. It was exhibited at the



DAVIE STRATH,  
At the age of 24.

Art Exhibition held in Aberdeen at this time. The handsome trophy was competed for on the Links about the end of August, four rounds — 60 holes — being played, and carried off by Mr Wm. Dingwall Fordyce, M.P., whose rounds were 81, 83, 78, 84 = 326, or an average of  $81\frac{1}{2}$  for each round of 15 holes—rather high scoring, but the rain and the long grass made low scores difficult.

A match with the Royal Perth Golfing Society took place at the autumn meeting (24th to 26th September)—nine men a side, two rounds being played—and the Perth men proved the victors by 10 holes. Amongst the players for Aberdeen were, Captain A. D. Fordyce, Mr Cornelius Thompson, and Mr Charles Anderson, the famous Fifeshire amateur, who gained the Gold Medal and the Leopold Cup at this meeting. He went round in 70, 77 for the Gold Medal—quite a record at the time. Dr Moir of St Andrews, an uncle of the present Hon. Secretary, Mr M. M. Duncan, gained the Gold Cross (handicap) with 82, 77. The meeting finished up with a fine exhibition of the game, in

## New Trophies, the 15-Hole Course, etc.

a match (by holes) between Young Tom Morris and his great rival Davie Strath, for £15. As in 1872, Young Tom again proved the winner, going round in 64, 66, to Strath's 68, 67, and winning by 4 up and 2 to play.

Here are the interesting scores, Tom's 3 at the "Bunker" hole in the first round being a record :—

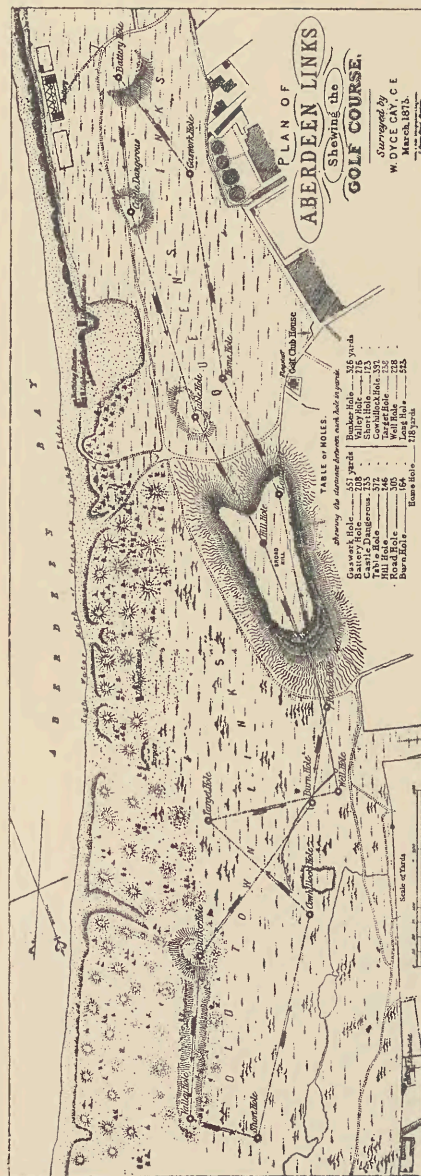
	T. MORRIS (Junior).		D. STRATH.	
	<i>1st Round.</i>	<i>2nd Round</i>	<i>1st Round.</i>	<i>2nd Round.</i>
Gasworks Hole	4	5	4	4
Battery „	3	4	4	5
Castle Dangerous Hole	4	4	4	3
Table „	5	5	5	6
Hill „	5	5	5	4
Road „	3	4	4	4
Burn „	3	3	3	3
Bunker „	3	5	5	4
Valley „	4	4	5	6
Short „	3	3	4	4
Cowhillock „	7	6	5	4
Target „	5	4	5	4
Well „	4	3	3	5
Long „	7	7	8	7
Home „	4	4	4	4
	<hr/> 64	<hr/> 66	<hr/> 68	<hr/> 67

But for the 7 required at the "Cowhillock" hole in the first round, owing to getting into "grief," Tom's 64 was a wonderful performance. Strath's 4 at the difficult "Hill" hole in the second round, and his 4 at the long "Cowhillock," were also notable feats.

The Silver Medal presented in September 1870 by Messrs Robert Duthie and Charles Rose, members of the Club, was gained finally, in May of this year (1873), by Captain A. D. Fordyce, he having held it for



## The Aberdeen Golfers



a whole year against all comers and thus fulfilled the conditions made by the donors—that the winner must accept one challenge per annum from any member of the Club, and should he succeed in defeating all such challengers for a whole year, the medal should become his own.

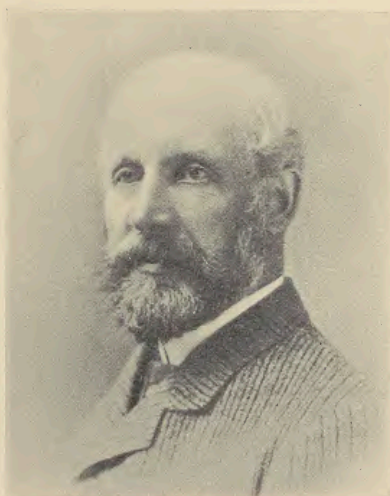
Another important event of 1873 was the appointment of Alexander Brown of Musselburgh, who had acted for some months in the spring as coach to the Club, as resident professional to the Aberdeen Golf Club. He was also appointed greenkeeper and keeper of the Club-house, in succession to George Ogilvie, who received notice to remove by the end of December 1873.

The membership of the Aberdeen Golf Club during the two years 1872 to 1873 greatly increased, so that it became necessary to have the Club-house enlarged. Accordingly, in the following year (1874), Messrs Ellis and Wilson, the architects of the building, were employed to make the necessary additions.

## New Trophies, the 15-Hole Course, etc.

Captain Fordyce, in the beginning of this year, presented a "monthly" medal (scratch) for competition, the medal to become the property of the member winning it for twelve consecutive months—a large order! It was a very handsome and valuable silver medal, and it has been a great means of improving the play of the members. Played for on 4th January 1874 for the first time, it was gained by Mr Cornelius Thompson with a score of 82 for the round of 15 holes, Mr P. H. Chalmers coming in second with 83. Again, in March and April, Mr Thompson, who was then quite one of the best of the local players, came out first. His scores were 81, 82, in March, and the same in April, two rounds being played each time, instead of only one, as was afterwards the rule. Mr David Littlejohn, still to the fore, and a keen and capable player, came in second, with rounds of 89, 81, in March, and 82, 83, in April. Another well-known name in the golfing world appeared at the spring meeting in May of this year, Mr W. G. Bloxsom of Edinburgh, who, as we shall see, one year later performed the feat of playing 12 rounds and then walking 10 miles in 19½ hours. He gained the Johnston Cup with two excellent rounds of 76, 76.

Play continued gradually to improve, and at the autumn meeting in September Mr Cornelius Thompson gained both the scratch prizes—the Leopold Cup and the Gold Medal, with scores respectively of 84, 78, and 84, 79, and this in spite of very windy weather.

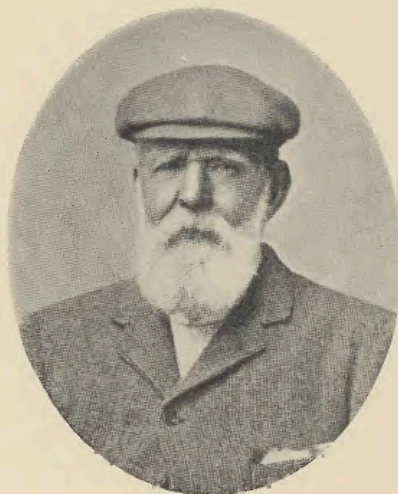


DAVID LITTLEJOHN, LL.D.,  
Captain, 1876-77 and 1897-98.



## The Aberdeen Golfers

Again the citizens had an opportunity, thanks to the generosity of the Aberdeen Golf Club, of witnessing, on 23rd September, a fine exposition of the game in a foursome match between the Morrisises (father and son—"Old Tom" and "Young Tom") and Davie Strath and Tom Kydd of St Andrews, the latter couple winning by 3 up and



OLD TOM MORRIS.  
*Photo by Rodger.*

2 to play. The scores were 68, 74 for Strath and Kydd, and 70, 74 for the Morrisises. The winners received £20. This was the eighth time Strath and Kydd had defeated the Morrisises—indeed, so well did they play together that they had never yet been defeated when playing as partners in a match. Though Kydd was Open Champion in 1873, he was never so famous a golfer as Strath or Young Tom Morris, but he was a very fine all-round player and a very long driver. He was a tall, spare man, and this no doubt helped him in the very long shots

from the tee for which he was famous. The "Long" hole again proved a very difficult one even for these players, as they required 8 strokes each time for it, as also did the Morrisises. How different nowadays, when a Vardon or a Braid usually holes out, with ease, even longer holes in 5, and sometimes in 4. But in 1874 the golfer's clubs and balls were but poor affairs compared with the vastly improved implements of to-day, and the lies through the green, and on the putting-green itself, much more difficult and uncertain.

In 1875, Aberdeen golfers were proud to learn that one of their best players, Captain A. D. Fordyce, had gained the Silver Cross at the spring



## New Trophies, the 15-Hole Course, etc.

meeting of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St Andrews, with a score of 92. Mr Leslie Balfour (now the well-known Leslie Balfour Melville) required 98, and Mr Charles Anderson of Fettykil, Fife, 102. There were only fifty-nine competitors. Here again, how changed are things to-day, when, over the same course, the winning score is usually somewhere about 77, and the number of competitors so vastly increased.

There was no big match this year on the Aberdeen Links, but there were several interesting contests amongst the local players and players from the South. At Montrose, on 14th May, the Royal Albert Club defeated the Aberdeen Club by 5 holes, eight players aside. Then, in October, the Bonaccord Club suffered defeat at the hands of the Aberdeen Club by 28 holes, nine players aside. Not one of the Bonaccord men on this occasion gained his match, but this seemed only to stir up the Bonaccord to greater exertions, and when next a match came off with the Aberdeen Club, the tables were turned. Mr A. Shirreffs of the Bonaccord, a scratch player, gained the monthly medal of his club with 76, this spring—an excellent score. Other good scores were the 75 of Mr Cornelius Thompson for the Leopold Cup on 13th October, and the 76 of Captain Fordyce for the same trophy. Sheriff Dove Wilson, Captain of the Aberdeen Club at this time, presented, on demitting office in October, a silver medal for monthly competition under handicap. This trophy, which was first gained by himself, with a score of  $87-7=80$ , in November, proved most beneficial in the way of inducing the indifferent players to practise more assiduously so as to improve their play. The name of the winner was inscribed each month on a silver slip or label attached to the medal, and the prize was finally gained by Mr George Turriff, assistant to the Professor of Mathematics at the University, at the autumn meeting of 1878. Mr Turriff's rounds were 88, 92, less handicap of 10=170.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

As this round was played over the eighteen-hole course, Mr Turriff's score represents very creditable play. The local professional, Andrew Annand, went the round (15 holes) in 65 strokes in October of this year (1875)—only one stroke more than the 64 of Young Tom Morris in 1873. Annand was easily the best and prettiest player on the Aberdeen Links at this time, and it is surprising that such a fine style as he had could have been developed in spite of the few opportunities he enjoyed of seeing the best players. All the more credit to himself for the beautiful, easy, graceful swing he acquired. His run-up shots with his cleek were often wonderful in the accurate judgment of distance displayed.

A rare feat of endurance and of golf-playing at express speed was performed on the Aberdeen Links in July 1875, by Mr W. G. Bloxsom, a well-known East Lothian golfer, and a member of the Aberdeen Golf Club. The following account of the exploit is taken from *The Field* of 17th July 1875 :—

“ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB,

“17th July 1875.

### “EXTRAORDINARY FEAT.

“At the annual dinner of this club, held during last autumn meeting, a member resident in Edinburgh backed himself to play 12 rounds of the links, and afterwards walk ten miles, all within 24 hours, the result to be reported at the next autumn dinner.

“The course, as measured by straight lines laid down from hole to hole, extends to 2 miles and 469 yards, but as played must considerably exceed that distance. Twelve rounds are probably not less than 32 miles.

“The player fixed on Tuesday last week to perform this feat, and began his labours at six o'clock that morning. With the exception of three short intervals for breakfast, dinner, and tea, he played on till half-past nine o'clock at night, by which time he had finished all the twelve rounds. Though playing at great speed, he made fair average scores, ranging from 76 to 90 strokes, most of them under 85. The ball was always fairly holed out.



## New Trophies, the 15-Hole Course, etc.

"At half-past ten p.m. he started to walk five miles out on the North Deeside Road, and back to Aberdeen, which he accomplished at 1.30 a.m. on Wednesday, after walking eleven miles.

"The first five were done in an hour and a quarter, and the whole match was thus accomplished with four and a half hours to spare."

With regard to the circumstances under which the feat was undertaken, Mr Bloxsom narrates that it was immediately after his big day's work at Musselburgh, when he and Bob Ferguson played sixteen rounds of the nine-hole course there (or 144 holes). This was done to beat a record by Mr Dennison, of the Honourable Company, who, for a wager, had lately done fifteen rounds in one day. Mr Bloxsom says that, in order to beat this record handsomely, he and Bob Ferguson started to do a seventeenth round, but "Fiery," who was carrying for Bob Ferguson, after the balls were teed up, threw down his clubs and said he was "d——d if he wad cairry anither yaird"; so they stopped.



W. GIBSON BLOXSOM.

Immediately after this, Mr Bloxsom went to Aberdeen to attend the autumn meeting, and certain of the members expressed doubts, at the Club dinner, as to the possibility of any man doing what Mr Bloxsom said he had done at Musselburgh; whereupon he made a bet that he would repeat the performance at Aberdeen by playing ten rounds of the 15 holes, which would be 150 holes, or 6 holes more than he played at Musselburgh. The bet, however, was not taken until Mr Bloxsom




## The Aberdeen Golfers

raised his offer to twelve rounds and to walk ten extra miles within the twenty-four hours, and the bet was accordingly booked and decided on these conditions.

Mr Bloxsom's golfing status is attested by the fact that, in 1874, he won the Johnston Cup of the Aberdeen Club with two scores of 76 for the 15-hole round, which represented good scratch play at that period. Had Mr Bloxsom's undertaking been to do a certain number of rounds in a certain average score, there is, therefore, no doubt that he could have greatly improved on the scores he actually made. But as he was playing against time, his scores, which averaged from 76 to 90, were quite remarkable, especially as there was a great deal of long grass on the course.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NEW COURSE OF EIGHTEEN HOLES

HE January of 1876 witnessed the inauguration of the full round of 18 holes, instead of the 15-hole course that had been in vogue since 1873. The new holes were the "Boathouse," 252 yards, the "Target," 267 yards, and the splitting up of the old "Long" hole into two holes—the "Flagstaff" or "Basin" hole, 318 yards, and the "Platform" or "High" hole, 206 yards. This 18-hole course was a distinct improvement on its predecessor; it did away with the dangerous meeting of out-going and in-coming players at the "Road" and "Long" holes, and it also quite altered the course for the "Road" and "Bunker" holes. The "Platform" hole too, played on the top of the hill, was a very testing one. The only objection was the very precipitous descent one had to make down the steep eastern side of the Broad Hill in playing the "Boathouse" hole. There was no sort of path, and a series of leaps had to be made—no joke to the obese or elderly. It was a fine tee shot, however, off the very highest part of the Broad Hill, right away towards the "Boathouse" (the Lifeboat-house it was); and against a north-easterly gale off the sea, when sometimes one could hardly stand on the hill, it was a sight worth seeing, how the ball, caught in the blast and soaring to a great height, fell on the plain below, perhaps 100 yards nearer the player than it would have been but for the hurricane.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

"The ball, ambitious, climbs the lofty skies,  
But soon, ah! soon, descends upon the field;  
The adverse winds the lab'ring orb repelled.  
Thus when a fowl, whom wandering sportsmen scare,  
Leaves the sown land, and mounts the fields of air,  
Short is his flight; the fiery Furies wound,  
And bring him tumbling headlong to the ground."



THE BROAD HILL FROM NEAR THE BOATHOUSE HOLE.

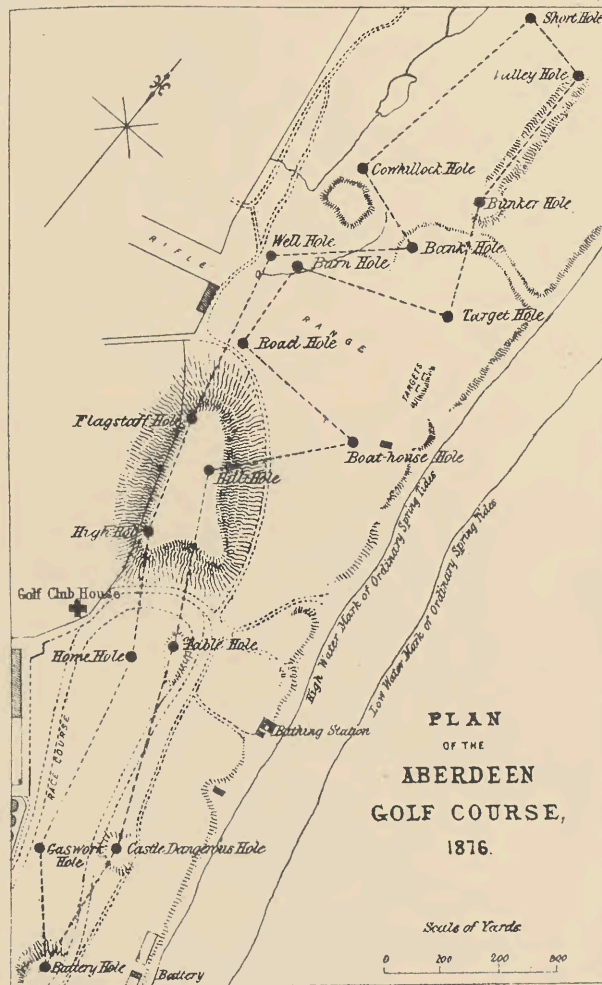
It was tremendous sometimes, the wind on the Broad Hill, and it often required a very good drive to clear even the road at the foot of the hill. On a quiet day, again, the tee stroke here was a grand one. The hole was sometimes done in 2. It should not have required more than 4.

The "Road" hole, 263 yards, came next, played—from the "Boathouse"—west to the old green at the foot of the Broad Hill in the Old Town Links. A very good hole it was, with plenty of hazards and a most excellent putting-green; but, as compared with the old "Road" hole played over the brow of the hill, past the flagstaff, and down out of sight, not so sporting or exciting. The "Burn" hole was unaltered. The "Target" hole of the old course, that used to be played from the "Cowhillock," was now played after the "Burn" hole on the outward



## The New Course of Eighteen Holes

journey, and was an easy 4. The "Bunker" hole, 210 yards, was next played, from the "Target" hole instead of from the "Burn" hole; thereby it was considerably shortened and made easier. An easy cleek shot from the tee, followed up by an iron loft over the big bunker on to the green, was the safest way, and 4 was the proper score for the hole. Occasionally attempts were made, with a following wind, to carry the bunker from the tee, but rarely were they successful; for it meant a clear carry of over 200 yards, and the old "gutties" did not fly like the rubber-cored balls. It was a very fine hole, this "Bunker" hole, in its altered form, and the putting-green was also excellent. Another alteration on the old 15-hole course was made by this 18-hole course, in playing from the "Cowhillock" east to the "Bank" hole, 173 yards, instead of to the "Target" hole as



## The Aberdeen Golfers

formerly. This "Bank" hole, though just a full drive, was situated in such a cramped position on the top of a bank, surrounded by whins and sand, and with such a miserably inadequate putting-green, that 4 strokes were usually required for it. The "Well" hole, situated over the burn near the "Gibberie" well, was of the drive and pitch order, and an easy 4. The "Flagstaff" or "Basin" hole, in the hollow just over the north brow of the Broad Hill, was a fair 5; and the next one, the "Platform" or "High," good in 4. This very difficult hole has been done in one stroke, by great luck of course, and several times it has been holed in 2, after a fine tee shot along the ridge on to the fine, long, but rather narrow putting-green. In summer time, when the greens became very keen, this green was one of the most difficult on the Links to remain on from the tee. The record for these 18 holes commenced with an 81, made in January 1876 by Annand, the professional; then on 4th February Mr Cornelius Thompson did an 80. These fine scores were, however, considerably reduced later on; the 72 of Robbie Mearns, another of the Aberdeen professionals, and for many years caddie to the late Mr Hugh Hogarth, remains the record for the classical 18 holes of the Aberdeen Links. It was made on 23rd April 1885, and the details are given in Chapter IX.

There was some friction this year (1876) between the Golf Club and the Town Council, over the enclosing of the Queen's Links for the Highland and Agricultural Society's Show. The complaint was as to the excessive time usually required by the Show people ere the enclosure was removed and the Links made available again for golf. In the end, matters were amicably arranged. There was often in these days, too, trouble on the Links with pedestrians enjoying a stroll, who did not seem to have much sympathy with the golfing citizen, especially if, being a member of the Aberdeen Golf Club, he donned a scarlet coat with brass buttons. Here is a sample of what often occurred :—*Scene—*

## The New Course of Eighteen Holes

the Links ; *Dramatis personæ*—a scarlet-coated golfer preparing for his tee shot, and a working man strolling about, or seated in the direct line of flight of the golfer's ball. Golfer gives out the warning cry "Fore !" No notice taken. Again, and louder, "Fore !" Still no notice taken, and no attempt made to move a little to one side. Then the golfer, usually quite civilly, requests the obstructionist to move a little, in case of danger from the ball. "The links is *as* much mine's yours" (with the emphasis on the "as") is the reply. Then we let fly ! Many were the hairbreadth escapes and the unpleasant bandying of words with those obstreperous citizens of Bonaccord in the "seventies." There was also some correspondence in the local Press at this time, charging the golfers with monopolising the Links and endangering the lives of the citizens, and especially of children. "Where are the children to play?" asked one writer. But the bad feeling gradually died away as the game spread among the masses.

The Bonaccord Golf Club this year (1876) distinguished itself by severely defeating the Aberdeen Club in a match (eleven men a side) in the month of October. The match was specially memorable for the wonderful round of Wm. Doleman for the Bonaccord Club. His score was 78 for the 18 holes—quite a record at the time. The 3 for the sixteenth or "Flagstaff" hole was phenomenal, and the 7 holes beginning at the sixth or "Boathouse" hole on to the twelfth or "Short" hole, represent absolutely perfect golf. Here is the round :—

4, 5, 5, 4, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 5, 5, 5, 3, 6, 4=78.

The 6 at the seventeenth "High" or "Platform" hole is explained by the exceptionally difficult situation of this hole and the narrowness of the putting-green, it being almost impossible, if there was any wind, to keep one's ball on the green from the tee. Mr Doleman (who was a brother of Mr John Doleman, the first Captain of the Bonaccord Club) beat



## The Aberdeen Golfers

his opponent, Mr G. G. Wilkie of the Aberdeen Club, by 12 holes. The Bonaccord Club gained by 37 holes. Thus was the defeat of the last autumn's match (October 1875) wiped out and avenged! Mr Cornelius Thompson gained the Johnston Cup at the spring meeting (May 1876) with 94, 85, and the Leopold Cup and Gold Medal at the autumn meeting in September, with scores of 89, 90 for the former and 86, 97 for the latter. The rain and wind at this autumn meeting were very trying, and account for the high scoring.

## CHAPTER VIII

### 1877-80—PROGRESS OF THE GAME—AMATEUR TOURNAMENT

**T**HE early part of 1877 again witnessed some correspondence about the Links in the local Press. The City Fathers seemed possessed at this time with a desire to "level" the Queen's Links, probably with a view to making them more suitable for the drying of the fishermen's herring-nets ; but it was little wonder that when—as often happened—not only the Queen's Links but much of the Old Town Links also were completely covered with these abominably smelling obstructions, rendering cricket or golf an impossibility, the golfers and cricketers complained loudly, and in the end the nuisance was, if not altogether stopped, still a good deal mitigated. These encroachments on the Links were an old old story. More than thirty years before this the herring-fishers, by permission of the Magistrates, used to spread their nets out to dry on the Links and on the Golf Course, and the Aberdeen Golf Club complained to the Town Council, at the same time threatening to take legal proceedings if the nuisance were not stopped. The establishment of the herring-fishing industry in Aberdeen at this time (1843) turned out a failure ; and so, for a good number of years—until it was successfully revived in the "sixties"—there was no herring-fishing, and therefore no herring-nets to trouble the golfers on the Aberdeen Links. In 1868, after the reappearance of these obnoxious nets on the Links and Golf Course, the Aberdeen Golf Club went to the expense

## The Aberdeen Golfers

of getting the highest expert legal advice, and it was to the effect that not only was the spreading of nets on the Golf Course illegal and actionable, but also that equally illegal and actionable was the laying down of the timber at the south end of the Queen's Links (where one of the golf-holes used for many years to be), and the setting down of iron chairs on the Broadhill, right in the way of golfers playing their game over the hill. There is an interesting entry in the Club's minute-book, under the date 23rd June 1844, in reference to the herring-nets encroachment of 1843-44, as follows :—"Paid Alex. Mellis, Town Sergeant, for warning the herring-fishers off the Links with their nets, £1, 1s." Another grievance in 1877 was that certain picturesque hillocks that used to adorn the Queen's Links were removed, by order of the Council ; and when the mischief seemed likely to spread along and round to the Old Town Links, a good friend to the golfers suddenly turned up in Mr George Reid, the well-known artist, now Sir George Reid, R.S.A. The Broad Hill was a favourite walk with the artist, who had a studio then in King Street, near the North Church ; and observing what was going on, he wrote a letter to the *Free Press* (15th March 1877) in which he poured sarcasm and ridicule on the barbarous treatment of the Links by the Links and Parks Committee. The letter had its effect, for the "levelling of the links" was there and then stopped ; but for Sir George's timely letter, there is no knowing how far the mischief might have gone. Sir George Reid's two brothers, the late Mr Archibald Reid and Mr Sam Reid, also distinguished artists, and the big dog "Rab," often accompanied him in his morning or afternoon stroll on the Broad Hill. Little wonder the spot had attractions for them. The views all around—seawards towards Donmouth and inland to "the old University town," or nearer, amidst the yellow gorse and sandy bunkers, and the lights and shadows on the Old Town Links, with occasionally a picturesque and human element thrown into the scene in the shape of a



## Progress of the Game—Amateur Tournament

scarlet-coated golfer or two, here and there, on the green turf, enjoying the healthiest of all games,—time and again, these scenes must have arrested the artistic eye, as they have in the case of hundreds and thousands of Aberdeen citizens.

Truly, winter or summer, this panoramic view from the Broad Hill, whether towards Donmouth, or to where the crowned tower of King's College and the venerable twin spires of the Cathedral "look out on the cold, north sea," is of surpassing attraction; and it is the one that the sons of Bonaccord, scattered far and wide over the world, hold in clearest and fondest remembrance. It must have been this view that inspired William Watson, the poet, in the following lines, written in Aberdeen in 1906, when the degree of LL.D. was conferred on him by the University :—

"O city of the pallid brow austere,  
Grey, wintry-featured, sea-throned Aberdeen,  
The stranger thou hast honoured shall not cease,  
In whatsoever ways he rest or roam,  
To wish thee noble fortune, fame serene,  
Thee and thy towers of learning and of peace,  
That brood benignant on the northern foam."

But, *revenons à nos moutons*.

Andrew Annand, in spite of the long grass that always proved so troublesome in the summer months in the hollows all over the course, played two splendid rounds of 78, 77, in August of this year, and these he did with only three clubs—a driver, a cleek, and an iron. Annand's play was always beautiful in its ease and grace, and he could play wonderful shots with the most indifferent of clubs and balls.

The Aberdeen Club again suffered defeat at the hands of the Royal Perth Golfing Society (eleven men aside) in a match on Aberdeen Links at the autumn meeting, 11th October 1877. Two rounds were

## The Aberdeen Golfers

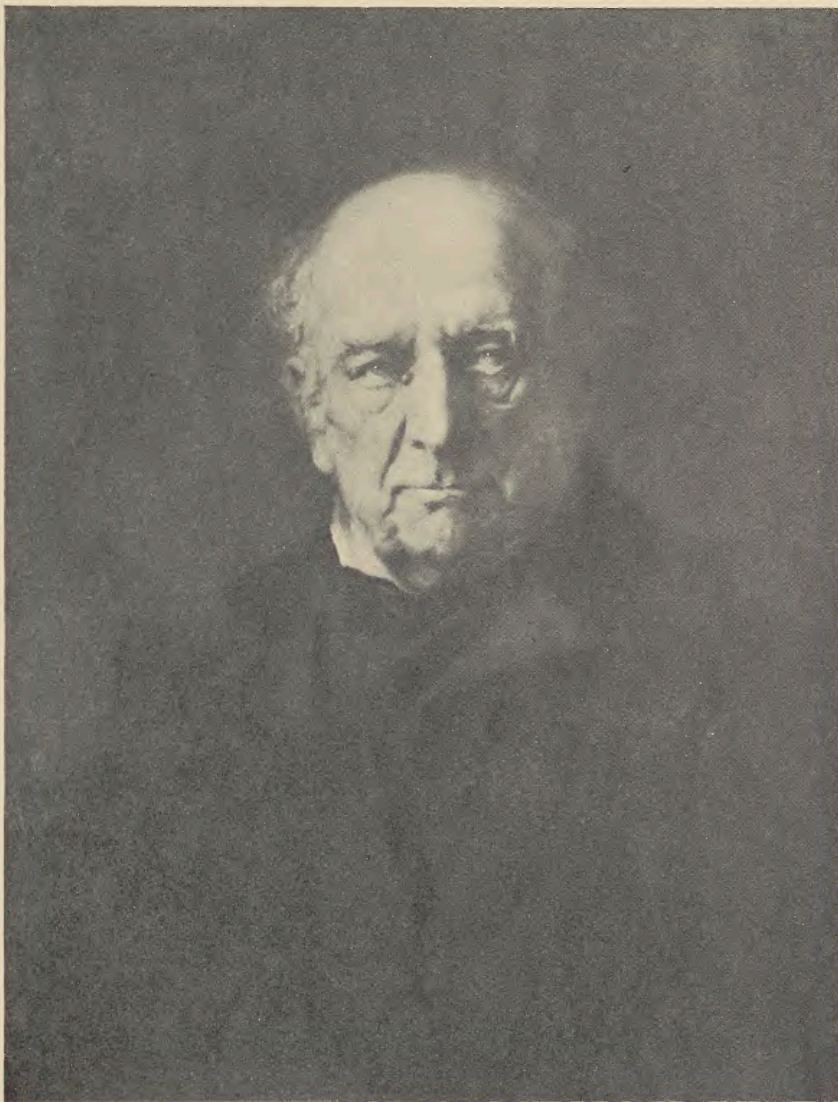
played, the Royal Perth winning by 63 holes. Mr Charles Anderson of Fettykil, playing for Perth, went round in 84, 87, first-rate play, and defeated his opponent, Mr Charles Smith of the Aberdeen Club, by 8 holes in each round. This was the fourth match between the two clubs, and also the fourth victory for the Perth men, who were too strong for the Aberdeen players of the time.

The venerable Charles Chalmers of Monkshill, the last survivor of the original members of the Aberdeen Golf Club (1815)—for ten years its Secretary, and in 1830 its Captain—died in November of this year.

The "Boathouse" hole was shifted about 150 yards to the south, in the autumn of this year (playing from the tee on the top of the Broad Hill back towards the "Sand-baillie's" sanctum, instead of playing straight out towards the Boathouse as formerly). The new "Boathouse" hole thus created was rather an unsatisfactory one; the putting-green was indifferent, the lies in the vicinity very uncertain, and the retracing one's steps by turning south, as was done here, is never a very satisfactory way of making progress. Still, the new "Road" hole proved a most excellent one, requiring two full shots, the second one played round the corner of the Broad Hill on to the beautiful putting-green close to the road.

The Aberdeen University Golf Club, founded this year by Messrs Charles and Garden G. Smith, brothers, and students at King's College, held its first general meeting in December, the monthly handicap medal being gained by Mr J. M. Ferguson. Lord Rosebery, when Lord Rector of the University in 1878, became Patron of the Club, and presented a handsome cup for competition; but golf has never yet "caught on" with the Aberdeen University students, as it well might have been expected to do with such a fine course at their disposal and so near at hand. The late Rev. Professor George Pirie





CHARLES CHALMERS OF MONKSHILL,  
Hon. Secretary, 1819-29; Captain, 1830-31.  
*From the Portrait by Sir George Reid, R.S.A.*





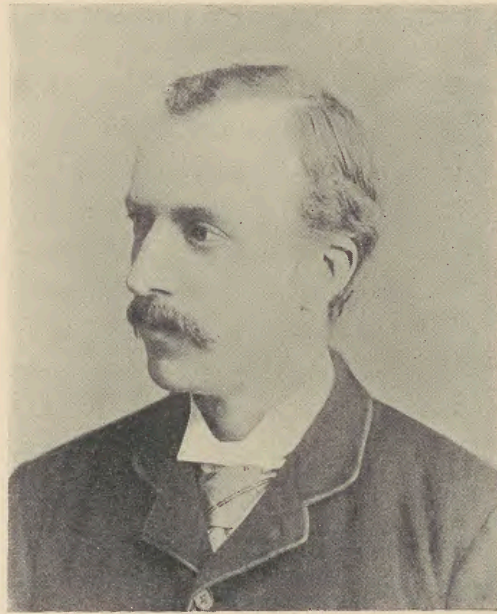
## Progress of the Game—Amateur Tournament

was a keen golfer, and learned the game when at Cambridge. Earlier still, the late Rev. Professor Wm. Milligan, D.D., often enjoyed a game on the Links. He too learned the game in the South—in the Kingdom of Fife to wit. Professor Harrower and the late Professor Minto are other names that occur to one as players amongst the professorial body. Several of the students too have turned out excellent golfers.

At the spring meeting in April 1878, the outstanding event was the visit of Bob Ferguson, the celebrated Musselburgh and North Berwick professional, to the Aberdeen Links, where he played, on 10th April, a match with Tom Kydd of St Andrews, for £5. Two rounds were played (36 holes), and Kydd gained the match by one hole. Scores—Kydd, 81, 83 ; Ferguson, 81, 85. On the following morning, Saturday, 11th April, beginning at 9.45 a.m., to allow the professionals time to catch the train for the South, a three-ball match came off between Ferguson, Kydd, and Annand, the local professional. One round only was played, and again Kydd won. Scores—Kydd, 82 ; Ferguson, 84 ; Annand, 86. This was Annand's first match against such heavy artillery, and had it not been for nervousness in approaching and putting, his score would have been considerably less. Bob Ferguson's play was greatly admired—his driving so beautifully straight, far and sure, and his approaching and putting (he used the wooden putter chiefly on the green) always good and reliable. He was a strongly built man of about middle height, with a very fine "address" when playing from the tee and indeed in all his strokes. Though not yet Champion, he was rapidly coming to the front, and from 1880 to 1882, three years in succession, he was Open Champion. Tom Kydd again, though often playing a fine game—he was Open Champion in 1873—was not so sure and steady as Ferguson, nor was his style so attractive.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

Yet another match engaged Annand's attention this year, when he played a home-and-home match with Bob Dow, the professional to the Royal Albert Club of Montrose. On 11th July, at Montrose (28 holes were played—10 of the ordinary course, and then the 18-hole North Course), Dow was 6 holes up. On the following week (17th July),



CHARLES SMITH.

at Aberdeen, Annand fully managed to hold his own on his own links, and was 1 up on the day's play, so that on the whole match Dow proved victorious by 5 holes. He received £4, Annand £1. Bob Dow, who is still alive, was even then quite a veteran, and a very good all-round player he was. He had a capital and easy swing, drove a nice low ball, and his run-up cleek and iron shots to the putting-greens were pretty and effective. Dow was also a very straight driver, as was

to be expected from his long experience of such a narrow course as the North Course of Montrose was, with no end of big whin bushes ready to trap the puller or the slicer, rendering straight driving a necessity.

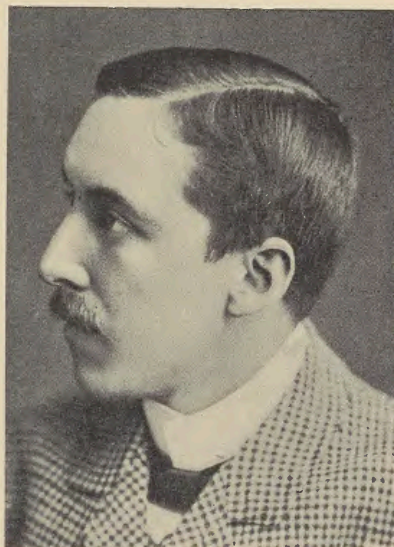
A new player made his appearance in the ranks of the Aberdeen Golf Club about this time—Mr Charles Smith, then a student at King's College, and a very enthusiastic and successful player. He practically carried off all the big events of the year 1878; and in the



## Progress of the Game—Amateur Tournament

following two years he and his younger brother, Mr Garden G. Smith (now well known in the golfing world as the editor of *Golf Illustrated*), proved irresistible golfers. The scores with which their victories were gained were quite exceptionally good, notably the 83 and 84 of Mr C. Smith for the Gold Medal and Leopold Cup, and the same figures of Mr G. G. Smith for the Johnston Cup, and the 81 for the Gold Medal. Truly, youth will be served! In a home-and-home match with the brothers Wm. and Robert Cobb, two of the best Montrose players, the two Aberdeen brothers gained a notable victory by 4 holes—3 up at Montrose and 1 up at Aberdeen.

There was no great tournament or match on the Aberdeen Links in 1879, but the game showed sure and steady progress, and continued to gain many fresh adherents, especially among the younger generation of Aberdonians.



GARDEN G. SMITH.

The Aberdeen Golf Club again defeated the Bonaccord Club on the 15th November by 27 holes (twelve men a side). Another golf club was formed in Aberdeen this year (1879)—the Victoria Golf Club. The game had now fairly come to stay, and was spreading all over the community. The night-shift men employed on the *Free Press* and *Journal* newspapers were also, many of them, keen golfers, enjoying their daily afternoon round after their forenoon sleep. Russell, Addie, Thomson, Duncan, Maitland, are some of the names one remembers in this connection.

The principal event of 1880 was the Amateur Tournament on the Links on 29th April, in which four valuable prizes were offered by the

## The Aberdeen Golfers

Aberdeen Golf Club. There were 44 entries, and the winners were:—  
(1) Wm. Doleman, Silver Cup, valued at £10. Mr Doleman, as in 1876, went round in 78, and was an easy first. (2) Lord Carnegie, a silver flask, valued at £5 ; score 85. Lord Carnegie, son of the



JAMIE ANDERSON,  
Open Champion, 1877, 1878, 1879.

Earl of Southesk, was a well-known Montrose and St Andrews player with a very pretty style. (3) Mr Thomas Gilroy, a Monifieth and Carnoustie golfer, a silver cigar-case, valued at £4, 4s. ; score 88. (4) Mr Charles Smith, of the Aberdeen Club, a silver quagh, valued at £2, 2s. ; score 95. The Tournament was played first by matches, the four survivors then playing a round by stroke play to decide the order of merit. Two consolation prizes were also offered, open to those who had been knocked out in the preliminary stages, and were gained by Captain A. D. Fordyce of the Aberdeen Club,

with the excellent score of 81, and by Mr Alex. Anderson of the Bonaccord Club, score 83. The Tournament proved a most enjoyable and exciting event, and created much interest amongst golfers in the North. It finished up with a fine match between Jamie Anderson of St Andrews and Bob Ferguson of Musselburgh, in which Anderson



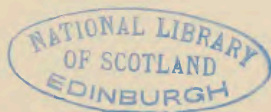
## Progress of the Game—Amateur Tournament

proved the winner by 1 hole. He went round in 75 to Ferguson's 77, and his score at this time established a new record for the Aberdeen Links. Jamie Anderson was the finest short-game player of the day; his approaching with the iron to the hole was usually so deadly that the putt required thereafter was a matter of a couple of feet, or less, and he seldom made any mistakes. He was not a long driver by any means, but steady, and he had been Open Champion for three years in succession—1877, 1878, 1879. The scores are interesting :—

	J. ANDERSON.	R. FERGUSON.
Gasworks Hole	4	5
Battery „	3	5
Castle Dangerous Hole	4	4
Table „	4	4
Hill „	6	5
Boathouse „	4	3
Road „	4	5
Burn „	4	5
Target „	3	4
Bunker „	5	4
Valley „	5	5
Short „	4	3
Cowhillock „	5	5
Bank „	5	4
Well „	4	3
Flagstaff „	5	6
High „	3	4
Home „	3	3
	<hr/> 75	<hr/> 77

The winner received £4, the loser £1.

A foursome was also played between the two brothers Jamie and David Anderson on the one side, and Bob Ferguson and Ned Cos-





## The Aberdeen Golfers

grove (a Musselburgh professional) on the other. Ferguson and Cosgrove won by 1 hole. The play was very close, the scores being, Ferguson and Cosgrove 79, 78; J. and D. Anderson 80, 80. The



BOB FERGUSON,  
Open Champion, 1880, 1881, 1882.

winner received £14, and the losers £6. Altogether, some £50 was expended by the Aberdeen Club in prizes for this Tournament; it was very handsome to expend such a large sum in their single and whole-hearted desire to spread a love for this most healthful game amongst all classes of the community. The Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club at this time was the late Mr George Leslie Jamieson, of the Crown Granite Works, one of the most enthusiastic golfers to be found anywhere.

Though quite a recent convert to the game, so assiduously did he practise that he was soon able to go round in 90 strokes, and sometimes under that. He wielded a heavy club, and hit a very long ball. It was Mr Jamieson who holed the twelfth or "Short" hole (the "Rose" hole) in 1 stroke, on 11th July 1883. The flag was not in the hole at the

## Progress of the Game—Amateur Tournament

time, by some mischance, and this may have helped the ball to get in. Five years before this, on 14th March 1878, this same "fluke" was achieved at this same "Short" hole, when Mr Charles Smith of the Aberdeen Club, playing with Mr James Watson, a student at King's College and a member of the recently formed University Golf Club, holed in 1, a heavy iron shot from the tee. The flag on this occasion was in its place in the hole, but invisible from the tee. Nowadays, holes in 1 are of almost daily occurrence in the golfing world, so vast is the increase in the number of players; and technique too has certainly not deteriorated. But twenty-five or thirty years ago, to do a hole in 1 was a rare event.

The Bonaccord Club were again defeated by the Aberdeen Club (thirteen men a side) on 17th April this year (1880), Aberdeen winning by 17 holes. At the autumn meeting of the Aberdeen Club in October, Mr Cornelius Thompson once more gained the Leopold Cup with the fine score of 82, the record score for this trophy at the time. Cornelius, as on this occasion, often came away with a great game, driving straight, far, and sure, approaching in deadly fashion, and holing his putts with never a falter: a very hard man to beat in such mood. Fortunately for other aspirants, he sometimes had a day off.



GEORGE LESLIE JAMIESON,  
Captain, 1879-80.

## CHAPTER IX

### 1881-88—THE GAME FLOURISHING



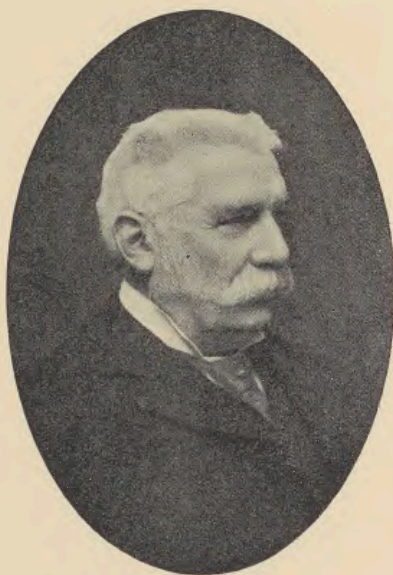
WO matches came off in 1881 between those "auld enemies" the Bonaccord and Aberdeen Clubs, and in both the Aberdeen Club proved victorious—on 23rd May (twelve a side) winning by 14 holes, and again in October (twenty-one a side) winning by 41 holes. But the next year, in March 1882 (twenty-two a side), the Bonaccord prevailed, winning by 6 holes. A highly successful ball in celebration of H.R.H. Prince Leopold's marriage (the Patron of the Aberdeen Club) was given by the members in the Music Hall Buildings on 27th April this year (1882). A fine match between Tom Kydd of St Andrews and Ned Cosgrove of Musselburgh came off on the following day, 28th April, in which splendid play was exhibited by both men; Kydd gaining by 1 hole, and equalling, in his first round, the record made by Jamie Anderson two years before. Scores—Kydd, 75, 78; Cosgrove, 76, 76. Kydd received £5, Cosgrove £3. Captain Brooke presented a handsome silver inkstand, in the shape of a golf-ball, for monthly competition under handicap, at this time; and it was first played for on 27th July 1882, when Mr Cornelius Thompson, with 85, and Mr Thomas Adam, with 94-9, tied for it. The trophy was finally gained in October by Mr James Moir, Rector of the Grammar School, with three rounds, 95, 98, 105, -18 of a handicap, =280. The Bonaccord and Aberdeen Golf Clubs had another tussle in November (twenty a side), Aberdeen winning by 5 holes.



## 1881-88—The Game Flourishing

At the spring meeting of the Aberdeen Golf Club on 12th April 1883, a match took place (two rounds of the course) between Jamie Anderson of St Andrews and Bob Ferguson of Musselburgh, Ferguson winning by 7 holes. Scores for first round—Ferguson 77, Anderson 85. The play, on the whole, was rather poor, Anderson's especially. These two professionals had held the open championship between them for six years consecutively — Anderson in 1877, 1878, 1879, and Ferguson in 1880, 1881, 1882.

A match with the Royal Perth Golfing Society on 13th April on Aberdeen Links (ten a side) resulted in a win for Perth by 13 holes. Two rounds were played—one before lunch, in which Aberdeen gained 10 holes of an advantage, and the other round after lunch, when Perth won by 23 holes on the round, or 13 up on the day's play. The big defeat of the local men in the second round was attributed by some to a heavy shower of rain that fell during the lunch interval rendering the putting-greens difficult to putt on ; others, again, were inclined to ascribe the disaster to the lunch—too generous indulgence in the pleasures of the table ! Whatever the explanation of the sudden *débâcle*, the Royal Perth Golfing Society was a hard nut to crack ; very capable indeed, they were, those players from the North Inch of the Fair City, with thoroughly good styles, though in this respect the Aberdeen men were decidedly improving every year. In July Mr W. G. Bloxsom's cup was first played for, and gained by Mr John Cook of



THOMAS ADAM,  
Captain, 1881-82.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

the Union Bank, then Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club. The conditions upon which this cup was held were rather arduous, seeing that it was allowable for any member to challenge the winner, who was bound to accept the challenge, and to play off two challenges in a fortnight if need be. A bone of contention indeed! and one might well exclaim, "Uneasy lies the head that gains the Bloxsom Cup!" In



DOUGLASS DUNCAN,  
Captain, 1884-85.

September, Bonaccord playing Aberdeen (nineteen a side) lost by 19 holes.

In April 1884 a match came off at Aberdeen between the Fraserburgh and the Aberdeen Clubs (fifteen a side), the latter winning by 15 holes. Captain Brooke, for Aberdeen, had the splendid score of 80. This was the first match with Fraserburgh. On 24th and 25th May (fifteen aside) the Bonaccord Club, after so many defeats, succeeded in gaining their match with the Aberdeen Club by 17 holes. This was their third

victory over the Aberdeen Club, the first one being on October 1876 by 37 holes, the second, March 1882, by 6 holes. At the autumn meeting on 30th September the Charles Chalmers Memorial Cup, recently presented to the Aberdeen Golf Club by the family, in memory of their father (died November 1877), was competed for and gained by Captain A. D. Fordyce with a score of 85. Captain Fordyce also gained the Fordyce Gold Cross at this meeting. The Chalmers Cup is a large and handsome silver trophy, the base being a Scotch thistle, and a representation of the Aberdeen Links on the bowl. On 19th March 1885, the first match between the Victoria Golf



## 1881-88—The Game Flourishing

Club (formed in 1879) and the Aberdeen Club (twenty-five men a side) came off, the latter winning by 27 holes; Mr G. G. Wilkie of the Town and County Bank, one of the veteran players, playing for the Aberdeen Club, going round in 80 strokes, truly wonderful play for one of the old school, and Mr G. L. Jamieson in 85, also for the Aberdeen Club. There could not have been many short putts missed in that round by either player. Then, on 23rd April, Robbie Mearns did the wonderful "record" round of 72, as follows:—

Gasworks Hole	4	Bunker Hole	3
Battery „	5	Valley „	5
Castle Dangerous Hole	5	Short „	3
Table „	4	Cowhillock „	4
Hill „	4	Bank „	3
Boathouse „	5	Well „	3
Road „	3	Flagstaff „	6
Burn „	3	High „	5
Target „	4	Home „	3
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	37		35 = 72

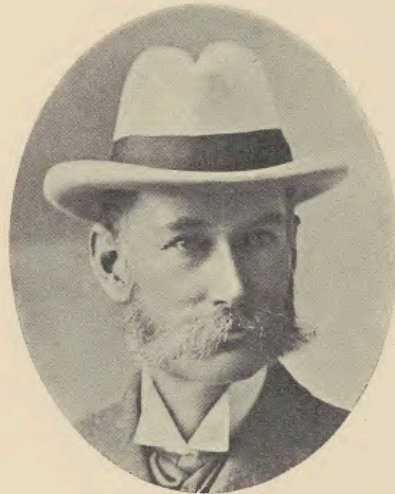
Though Mearns had not the easy, graceful style of Annand, the other Links professional, he sometimes came away with a brilliant game, driving a long ball and getting in some marvellous short game work, as on this occasion. This round of 72 for the Links Course of 18 holes of the "seventies" and "eighties" was never again equalled. The 31 strokes for the 9 holes beginning with the "Road" and on to the "Well" is especially fine.

At the spring meeting on 30th April a match was played (two rounds) between "Old" Tom Morris of St Andrews and Tom Dunn of North Berwick, Dunn winning by 7 holes. Scores—Dunn, 79, 83; Morris, 86, 85. The winner received £3, and the loser £2. A foursome also came off next day, on 1st May, between Dunn and Morris against



## The Aberdeen Golfers

Annand and Mearns, the former winning by 4 holes. The weather was miserable, rain pouring all the time, but a big crowd followed the play, the game of golf being by this time appreciated and largely indulged in by all classes in Aberdeen. Annand and Mearns, although 3 up at the



TOM DUNN.

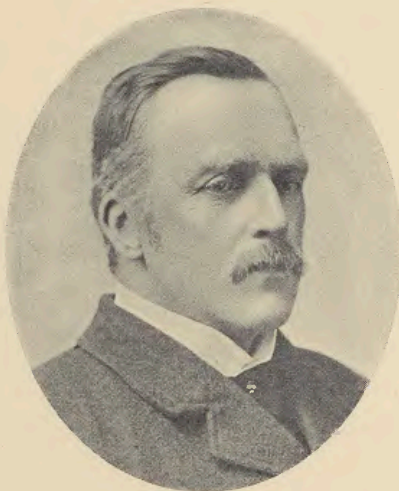
end of the first round, fell off afterwards, and lost the match by 4 holes. The winners received £4, the losers £2. Tom Dunn, who made his first appearance on the Aberdeen Links on this occasion, was a very pretty player, good in every department of the game, and an excellent teacher and club-maker. The ex-Premier, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, was a pupil, and a very apt one, of Dunn's, and indeed the swing of the pupil closely resembles that of his late master. Tom Dunn was a son of the

famous Old Willie Dunn of Musselburgh and Blackheath. He died of consumption in 1902, at the age of 52.

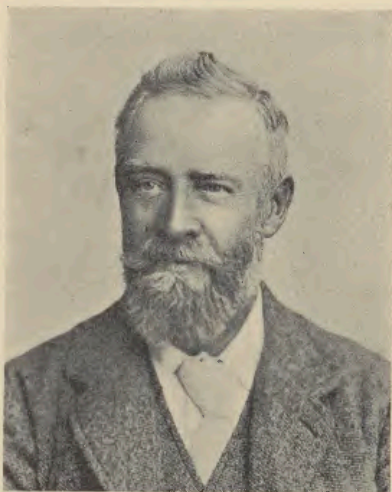
At the autumn meeting in October a match took place between the Victoria and Aberdeen Golf Clubs (twenty-seven a side), the latter winning by 22 holes ; but in the spring of next year (May 1886) the Victoria proved victorious by 10 holes (thirty men a side). This match was played in foursomes, and the success of the Victoria in defeating the Aberdeen Club was very gratifying to the younger club. In September of this year Captain Brooke, on demitting office as Captain for the year, presented a monthly handicap silver cup for competition amongst members of the Aberdeen Golf Club. This was the second time Captain Brooke had proved his great interest in the game by presenting prizes,

## 1881-88—The Game Flourishing

he having been the donor of the silver inkstand in the shape of a golf-ball four years before, in 1882. It was at this time also (September 1886) that the unsatisfactory state of the Links came up; and at the autumn meeting of the Aberdeen Golf Club, Captain Brooke moved that, considering the way the Links was being cut up by cricket and football players, a private course at Balgownie should be procured for golfing purposes. No definite resolution, however, was come to at the



CAPT. H. V. BROOKE,  
Captain, 1885-86.



A. P. HOGARTH,  
Captain, 1886-87.

time, but ere long—less than two years — the place that had so long known the Golfers of the Aberdeen Club knew them no more; for the game, thanks to years of municipal misrule, had become impossible. And so it came about that, with very little ado, and very little shouting, the members one fine day “folded their tents like the Arabs, and as silently stole away” to the peaceful seclusion of Balgownie Links.

The year 1887 saw several matches between the Bonaccord, Victoria, and Aberdeen Clubs, in all of which the last-mentioned club proved victorious. Mr J. M. Ferguson, of the



## The Aberdeen Golfers

Aberdeen Golf Club, had a fine round of 81, gaining the Gold Medal at the autumn meeting in September; whilst another member, Mr F. Macrae, did even better with a round of 80, with which score he gained both monthly medals. These two rounds of 80 and 81 were made in spite of a high wind.

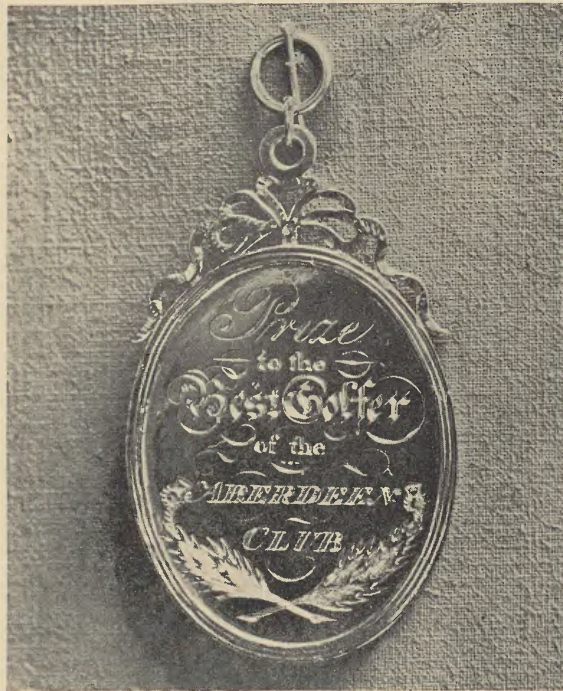
Such, then, is a brief account of the principal golf doings on the Aberdeen Links from the year of the "renaissance" (1872) on to the end of 1887, a period of nearly sixteen years. On 31st March 1888 the new course on the Murcar Links at Balgownie was opened, and before the end of that year the Aberdeen Golf Club had completely severed its connection with the fine stretch of links that lies between Dee and Don. The present course of 18 holes used by the Bonaccord, Victoria, and the other clubs that have sprung up in recent years is confined to the Old Town Links, and with its outer and inner circle, "here we are again" arrangement, and a good deal of zig-zagging about, is but a makeshift—and a poor one—for the old familiar round over the Queen's Links and Broad Hill, and round the Old Town Links, finishing off with the Broad Hill again, and that grand finale to the round, the tee shot from the high southern top to the "Home" hole on the Queen's Links, whence—

"Swift as a thought the ball obedient flies;  
Soars high in air, and seems to cleave the skies;  
Then on the level plain its fury spends."



## CHAPTER X

### THE CLUB TROPHIES



THE GOLD MEDAL.

**T**HE Gold Medal, the blue ribbon of the Club, was provided in 1816, and was, up to 1846, the only prize that the Members had for competition. It was instituted on 7th October 1815, and first played for on 4th May 1816, the winner being Mr John Bryce. For many years it was played for in the spring or summer, but since 1873 it has been the chief prize at the autumn meeting of the Club. Needless to say, it is a scratch prize. On more than one occasion in the earlier

## The Aberdeen Golfers

years—so little play was there on the Links and so little enthusiasm—there were no competitors for it. In 1817 Lord Kennedy of Dunottar was the winner ; but it was not played for again until 1823, when Mr Charles Chalmers of Monkshill gained it, and then there were only two competitors—himself and Mr Alex. Sim of the Bank of Scotland. There were two more blank years in 1824 and 1825, but thereafter the Medal was played for annually, with hardly a break, down to 1866, since when it has been played for continuously. The most frequent winners are Alexander Mitchell, who won it three times, in 1826, 1828, and 1829 ; Alexander Sim, also a triple winner, in 1831, 1836, and 1838 ; William Jopp (the late Colonel Jopp), in 1839, 1841, and 1843 ; Basil Fisher, who won it six times, in 1844, 1846, 1850, 1851, 1852, and 1853 ; Arthur Thomson, who equalled Mr Fisher's record of six wins in 1848, 1849, 1854, 1856, 1857, and 1858. In later years the play for the Medal was more closely contested and the honour of winning it was more distributed. The winning scores are not recorded till 1873, in which year the redoubtable Fifeshire amateur, Mr Charles Anderson of Fettykil, carried off the Medal with the scores of 70 and 77 for two rounds of 15 holes—fine scoring for those days. Other notable winning scores for the Gold Medal were the 83 of Mr Charles Smith in 1878 (18 holes) and the 81 of Mr Garden G. Smith in 1879—a score which was not equalled on the old Links till 1887, when Mr J. M. Ferguson won with the same figure. Appended are the names of the winners :—

### WINNERS OF THE GOLD MEDAL

Instituted 7th October 1815

*The Winner receives a small Gold Replica*

4th May,	1816.	John Bryce.
10th May,	1817.	The Lord Kennedy.
11th Sept.,	1823.	Charles Chalmers.

## The Club Trophies

22nd July,	1826.	Alexander Mitchell, Town and County Bank.
31st March,	1827.	Alexander Irvine.
29th March,	1828.	Alexander Mitchell.
28th March,	1829.	Alexander Mitchell.
27th March,	1830.	George Glennie Anderson.
26th March,	1831.	Alexander Sim.
23rd March,	1832.	Charles Thomson.
30th March,	1833.	George Glennie Anderson.
26th March,	1836.	Alexander Sim.
21st April,	1838.	Alexander Sim.
4th June,	1839.	William Jopp.
22nd May,	1841.	William Jopp.
19th May,	1842.	William Skinner.
15th July,	1843.	William Jopp.
28th June,	1844.	Basil Fisher.
30th May,	1846.	Basil Fisher.
12th June,	1847.	Captain Charles Skene.
29th June,	1848.	Arthur Thomson.
29th June,	1849.	Arthur Thomson.
13th April,	1850.	Basil Fisher.
7th June,	1851.	Basil Fisher.
26th June,	1852.	Basil Fisher.
14th May,	1853.	Basil Fisher.
1st July,	1854.	Arthur Thomson.
25th Oct.,	1856.	Arthur Thomson.
16th Oct.,	1857.	Arthur Thomson.
28th Oct.,	1858.	Arthur Thomson.
9th Aug.,	1861.	Robert Duthie.
9th Nov.,	1863.	Lieut.-Col. F. Mackenzie-Fraser.
19th Dec.,	1864.	William Dingwall Fordyce.
25th April,	1866.	William Dingwall Fordyce.
6th May,	1867.	Alexander Rose.
18th April,	1868.	Charles Rose.
24th April,	1869.	David Littlejohn.



## The Aberdeen Golfers

27th April, 1870.	George G. Wilkie.		
1st May, 1871.	Patrick H. Chalmers.		
27th April, 1872.	David Littlejohn.	<i>Scores.</i>	
25th Sept., 1873.	Chas. Anderson . . . .	70, 77 =	147
23rd Sept., 1874.	Cornelius Thompson . . .	84, 79 =	163
14th Oct., 1875.	Capt. A. D. Fordyce . . .	80, 87 =	167

(*New Round = 18 Holes*)

29th Sept., 1876.	Cornelius Thompson . . .	86, 97 =	183
11th Oct., 1877.	W. Brand . . . .	95, 89 =	184
4th Oct., 1878.	Charles Smith . . . .	83, 89 =	172
1st Oct., 1879.	Garden G. Smith . . . .	103, 81 =	184

(*One Round*)

15th Oct., 1880.	Garden G. Smith . . . .	86
7th Oct., 1881.	Capt. H. C. Best, R.N. . . .	86
15th Oct., 1882.	Capt. A. D. Fordyce . . . .	95
10th Oct., 1883.	N. M. Wyllie . . . .	87
1st Oct., 1884.	John H. Craigie . . . .	83
1st Oct., 1885.	Wm. Stewart . . . .	92
5th Oct., 1886.	John Clarke . . . .	91
28th Sept., 1887.	J. M. Ferguson . . . .	81

Since the Club migrated to Balgownie Links, the following have been the winners of the Gold Medal :—

		<i>Scores.</i>
12th Oct., 1888.	J. M. Ferguson . . . .	88
11th Oct., 1889.	R. B. N. Findlater . . . .	81
17th Oct., 1890.	W. C. H. Jopp . . . .	90
24th Sept., 1891.	John Clarke . . . .	87
30th Sept., 1892.	John Clarke . . . .	82
22nd Sept., 1893.	R. A. Nicolson . . . .	83

## The Club Trophies

		<i>Scores.</i>
12th Oct., 1894.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	76
5th Oct., 1895.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	80
10th Oct., 1896.	J. M. Duncan . . . . .	83
9th Oct., 1897.	J. M'Culloch . . . . .	82
8th Oct., 1898.	J. M. Duncan . . . . .	77
14th Oct., 1899.	J. M'Culloch . . . . .	79
13th Oct., 1900.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	82
12th Oct., 1901.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	84
11th Oct., 1902.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	74
10th Oct., 1903.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	80
8th Oct., 1904.	H. de M. Alexander . . . . .	83
16th Sept., 1905.	G. L. Pirie . . . . .	83
15th Sept., 1906.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	80
14th Sept., 1907.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	79
16th Sept., 1908.	J. H. Irvin . . . . .	74

## The Aberdeen Golfers

### THE JOHNSTON CUP



THE JOHNSTON CUP.

The Johnston Cup is the second oldest trophy belonging to the Club, having been presented by Mr David Morice Johnston on 30th May 1846. A silver medal, to be worn by the winner of the Cup on all public occasions of the Club, was ordered to be provided by the Club at their meeting on 30th May 1846, the same day as the Cup was presented. At first the Johnston Cup was played for at the autumn



## The Club Trophies

meeting, but since 1873 it has been one of the scratch prizes at the spring meeting. The following is a list of the winners of this valuable and much coveted trophy :—

### WINNERS OF THE JOHNSTON CUP

Presented by D. M. JOHNSTON, Esq., 30th May 1846

*The Winner receives a small Gold Medal*

21st Nov., 1846.	Captain Charles Skene, 79th Regiment.
30th Sept., 1847.	Arthur Thomson.
28th Oct., 1848.	Charles Skene.
10th Nov., 1849.	Basil Fisher.
28th Oct., 1850.	Basil Fisher.
1st Nov., 1851.	Basil Fisher.
13th Nov., 1852.	Arthur Thomson.
19th Nov., 1853.	Arthur Thomson.
19th Dec., 1864.	Alex. Dingwall Fordyce.
20th Oct., 1865.	James Dingwall Fordyce.
25th April, 1866.	Robert Duthie.
26th Sept., 1868.	Patrick H. Chalmers.
23rd Sept., 1869.	Cornelius Thompson.
29th Sept., 1870.	Cornelius Thompson.
3rd Oct., 1871.	James Dingwall Fordyce.
18th Oct., 1872.	Alex. D. Fordyce.

#### (Old Round 15 Holes)

		<i>Scores.</i>
25th April, 1873.	George G. Wilkie.	
4th May, 1874.	W. G. Bloxsom . . .	76, 76 = 152
26th April, 1875.	C. Thompson . . .	86, 78 = 164

#### (New Round, 18 Holes)

3rd May, 1876.	C. Thompson . . .	94, 85 = 179
16th April, 1877.	C. Thompson . . .	105, 110 = 215

## The Aberdeen Golfers

		<i>Scores.</i>
9th April, 1878.	C. Thompson . . . . .	87, 85 = 172
30th April, 1879.	Garden G. Smith . . . . .	84, 83 = 167

### (One Round)

5th May, 1880.	Charles Smith . . . . .	92
4th May, 1881.	J. H. Craigie . . . . .	90
27th April, 1882.	W. G. Bloxsom . . . . .	86
11th April, 1883.	W. G. Bloxsom . . . . .	90
9th April, 1884.	Napier M. Wyllie . . . . .	88
28th April, 1885.	John H. Craigie . . . . .	89
27th April, 1886.	John Clarke . . . . .	83
12th April, 1887.	W. Stewart . . . . .	80

### (Balgownie Links)

18th April, 1888.	John Clarke . . . . .	86
17th April, 1889.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	79
17th April, 1890.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	85
16th April, 1891.	James Milne . . . . .	85
13th April, 1892.	Captain H. V. Brooke . . . . .	88
13th April, 1893.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	78
3rd May, 1894.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	83
27th April, 1895.*	J. B. Craigie . . . . .	85
25th April, 1896.	W. F. Orr . . . . .	80
17th April, 1897.	J. M'Culloch . . . . .	89
16th April, 1898.	Jas. Williams . . . . .	86
22nd April, 1899.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	85
21st April, 1900.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	86
20th April, 1901.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	84
26th April, 1902.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	82
25th April, 1903.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	80
23rd April, 1904.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	82

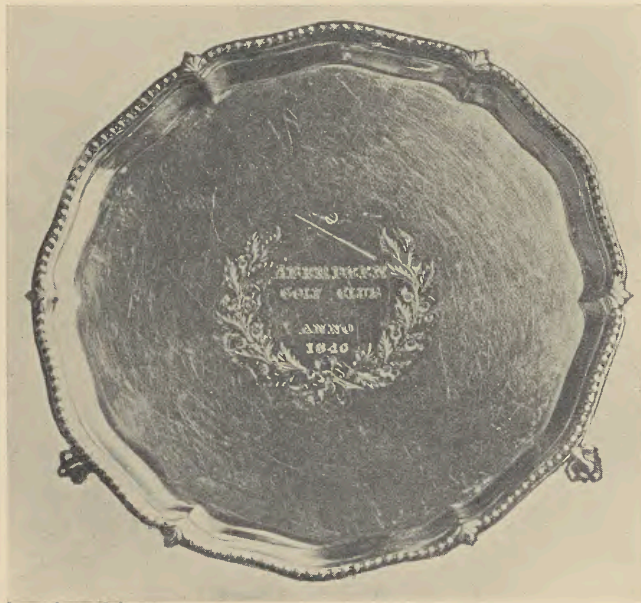
\* On and after this date the Johnston Cup was played for on the same day as the Leopold Cup, as a second scratch prize.



SILVER MEDAL OF JOHNSTON CUP.

## The Club Trophies

	<i>Scores.</i>
15th April, 1905. P. Smith . . . . .	87
21st April, 1906. W. D. Davidson . . . . .	90
27th April, 1907. A. F. Lumsden . . . . .	88
25th April, 1908. Capt. W. F. Lumsden . . . . .	84



SILVER OF JOHNSTON CUP.



## The Aberdeen Golfers

### THE LEOPOLD CUP



THE LEOPOLD CUP.

In 1872 the late Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, K.G., became Patron of the Club, and in the following year His Royal Highness presented the Aberdeen Golf Club with the handsome and costly trophy that bears his name. It was first gained by Mr Charles Anderson of Fettykil, at the autumn meeting of 1873. The Cup now forms the first scratch prize at the spring meeting of the Club. Until 1883 it was played for at the autumn meeting.

## The Club Trophies

### WINNERS OF THE LEOPOLD CUP

Presented by H.R.H. the late PRINCE LEOPOLD, Duke of Albany, K.G.,  
in September 1873.

*The Winner receives a small Gold Medal*

#### (Old Round, 15 Holes)

		<i>Scores</i>
26th Sept., 1873.	Charles Anderson . . .	76, 77 = 153
22nd Sept., 1874.	Cornelius Thompson . . .	84, 78 = 162
13th Oct., 1875.	Captain A. D. Fordyce . . .	83, 76 = 159

#### (New Round, 18 Holes)

28th Sept., 1876.	C. Thompson . . .	89, 90 = 179
10th Oct., 1877.	C. Anderson . . .	84, 87 = 171
3rd Oct., 1878.	Charles Smith . . .	89, 84 = 173
30th Sept., 1879.	Garden G. Smith . . .	92, 91 = 183

#### (One Round)

14th Oct., 1880.	Cornelius Thompson . . . . .	82
6th Oct., 1881.	John H. Craigie . . . . .	86
17th Oct., 1882.	Captain A. D. Fordyce . . . . .	86
9th Oct., 1883.	John H. Craigie . . . . .	86
1884.	Not played for owing to the death of Prince Leopold.	
29th April, 1885.	John H. Craigie . . . . .	87
28th April, 1886.	Thomas Adam . . . . .	96
13th April, 1887.	Fred. M'Crae . . . . .	83

#### (Balgownie Links)

19th April, 1888.	Rev. C. C. Macdonald . . . . .	90
18th April, 1889.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	76
18th April, 1890.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	83
17th April, 1891.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	80
14th April, 1892.	Captain H. V. Brooke . . . . .	88

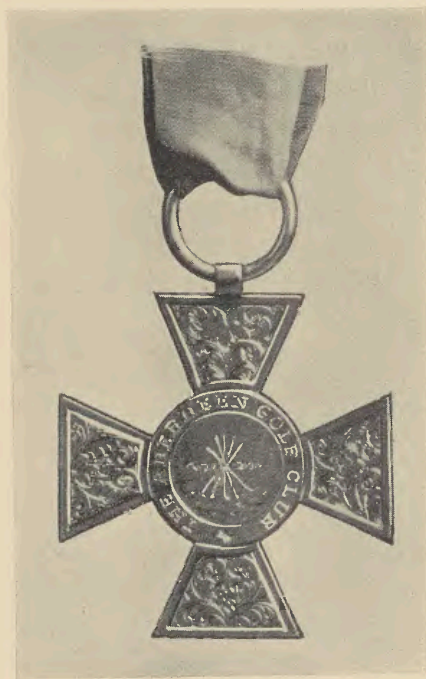
## The Aberdeen Golfers

		<i>Scores.</i>
4th April, 1893.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	77
4th May, 1894.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	91
27th April, 1895.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	81
25th April, 1896.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	79
17th April, 1897.	W. F. Orr . . . . .	88
16th April, 1898.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	86
22nd April, 1899.	T. Todd . . . . .	85
21st April, 1900.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	83
20th April, 1901.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	83
26th April, 1902.	H. de M. Alexander . . . . .	82
25th April, 1903.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	75
23rd April, 1904.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	80
15th April, 1905.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	86
21st April, 1906.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	86
27th April, 1907.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	87
25th April, 1908.	H. B. Lumsden . . . . .	83



## The Club Trophies

### THE SILVER CROSS



THE OLD SILVER CROSS.

The original Silver Cross was provided by the Club in 1852, in order to induce the members to practise at certain "hazardous holes," including one "beyond the whins on the Old Town Links," on a new course which had recently been laid out by Willie Park of Musselburgh. As the part of the Links on which these holes were situated was frequently flooded in winter by high tides from the Don, it was decided that the Silver Cross should be played for in summer. "It was also ordained," so runs the minute-book, "that there should be a beef-steak and a tumbler of Punch after the competition"—a kindly provision,

## The Aberdeen Golfers

doubtless designed to restore the weary souls and bodies of the competitors after their strenuous work amongst the whins and bunkers of these "hazardous holes." Neither the Silver Cross nor the beefsteak and punch, however, proved enough to tempt the members to face the terrors of this unknown country, and the competition was only held twice, viz. in 1853 and 1854. In 1855 no members turned out to compete for the Cross except only the Honorary Secretary, Arthur Thomson, who adjourned the competition *sine die*.

The Silver Cross does not appear to have been played for again until 1868, and about the year 1872 it mysteriously disappeared, so that a new Cross was provided under the circumstances detailed in the following extracts from the Club minutes :—

### *General Meeting of the Club, 4th May 1874*

"The Captain produced the new Silver Cross made by Messrs Mackay & Cunningham, Edinburgh, in room of the old one, which unaccountably disappeared some time before, and gave it into the custody of the Secretary, to be handed by him to the winner when the ties were played off."

### *Meeting of the Council, 7th April 1879*

"The Secretary reported that the old Silver Cross, which had been missing since about the year 1872, had been found by Mrs Simpson [the stewardess] in one of the drawers of the writing case in the Club House, and it was resolved that it should be given as a permanent prize to the winner of the Silver Cross at the Spring Meeting."

### *Half-Yearly Meeting, 30th April 1879*

"On the motion of the Captain, the meeting approved of the resolution of the Council that the old Silver Cross should be presented as a permanent prize to the winner of the Silver Cross."

## The Club Trophies

*Report of Council to General Meeting, 30th September 1879*

“The old Silver Cross, which had been missing since 1871, having been found in the Club House, the Council recommended that it should be presented to the winner of the Silver Cross played for at the Spring Meeting. This recommendation was approved of by the Club, and the Medal was gained by Mr Garden G. Smith, with the score of 167.”

In October 1908, Mr Garden G. Smith, who had won the old Silver Cross outright at the spring meeting of 1879, in the circumstances stated in the above minutes, restored the trophy to the Club. The old Silver Cross of 1852 has thus once more taken its place on the list of Club prizes, and it will be played for as the handicap prize at the spring meetings.

### WINNERS OF THE SILVER CROSS

Instituted 30th November 1852

*The Winner receives a small Replica in Gold*

1853.	Arthur Thomson.	
1854.	Arthur Thomson.	
		<i>Scores.</i>
1868.	Robert Duthie . . . . .	161
1869.	T. Adam.	
1870.	R. S. F. Spottiswood . . . . .	164
1871.	C. Thompson . . . . .	158
1872.	A. Rose . . . . .	158
1873.	Captain A. D. Fordyce . . . . .	161

*(New Cross played for under Handicap)*

1874.	C. Thompson . . . . .	80, 83 = 163 - 0 = 163
1875.	A. M. M'Donald . . . . .	84, 87 = 171 - 14 = 157
1876.	A. D. Morice . . . . .	114, 99 = 213 - 36 = 177



## The Aberdeen Golfers

(*New Round, 18 holes*)

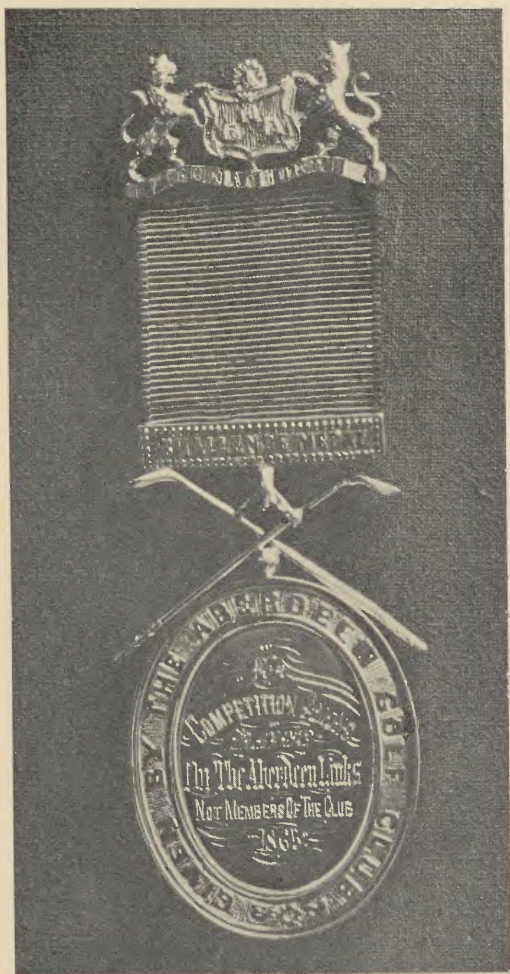
		<i>Scores.</i>
1877.	C. Smith . . . . .	117, 106 = 223 - 18 = 205
1878.	C. Thompson . . . . .	87, 85 = 172 - 0 = 172
* 1879.	Garden G. Smith . . . . .	84, 83 = 167 - 0 = 167
1880.	L. M'Kinnon . . . . .	93 - 14 = 79
1881.	J. H. Craigie . . . . .	90 - 9 = 81
1882.	A. J. W. Storie . . . . .	91 - 7 = 84
1883.	W. Leslie . . . . .	95 - 7 = 88
1884.	N. M. Wyllie . . . . .	88 - 0 = 88
1885.	Keith Jopp . . . . .	101 - 15 = 86
1886.	John Clarke . . . . .	83 - 0 = 83
1887.	W. Stewart . . . . .	80 - 0 = 80
1888.	W. R. Reid . . . . .	95 - 15 = 80
1889.	G. G. Wilkie . . . . .	80 - 4 = 76
1890.	J. A. Adamson . . . . .	92 - 9 = 83
1891.	James Milne . . . . .	85 - 0 = 85
1892.	F. C. Diack . . . . .	91 - 6 = 85
1893.	C. Angus . . . . .	87 - 16 = 71
1894.	C. Angus . . . . .	88 - 6 = 82
1895.	L. S. Anderson . . . . .	81 + 3 = 84
1896.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	79 - 0 = 79
1897.	Major Craigie . . . . .	99 - 14 = 85
1898.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	86 - 6 = 80
1899.	R. G. M'Kerron . . . . .	95 - 14 = 81
1900.	W. O. Duncan . . . . .	91 - 10 = 81
1901.	A. L. Miller . . . . .	88 - 8 = 80
1902.	George Rose . . . . .	85 - 4 = 81
1903.	A. L. N. Maclean . . . . .	93 - 18 = 75
1904.	G. T. Crombie . . . . .	83 - 10 = 73
1905.	H. H. Bower . . . . .	101 - 20 = 81
1906.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	86 - 0 = 86
1907.	A. F. Lumsden . . . . .	88 - 2 = 86
1908.	M. J. Wright . . . . .	98 - 20 = 78

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\* Also won outright the old Silver Cross of the Club, as detailed above.

## The Club Trophies

### THE STRANGERS' MEDAL



THE STRANGERS' OR MIDSUMMER MEDAL.

The Strangers', or, as it was afterwards called, the Midsummer Medal, dates from October 1865. It is of silver, and was provided by the Club "in order to induce strangers to visit the Links." At the time

## The Aberdeen Golfers

of its institution there were no other golf clubs in Aberdeen, the Bonaccord Club not being founded till 1872. The early conditions attached to it were that it should be "open to all comers except professionals," and it was to become the property of any player winning it three times in succession. The Medal, however, apparently failed of its object, or at any rate no "stranger" ever won it, and after a year or two it was played for as a Club medal. It was first played for on 27th April 1866, when Mr Robert Duthie was the winner with the score of 158 for the two rounds of 14 holes, this being the first occasion that the 14-hole course was played in a medal competition.

The following is a record of the play and regulations for this medal down to 1881:—

### STRANGERS' MEDAL

27th April 1866.—Robert Duthie, 158.

13th April 1867.—James Dingwall Fordyce of Culsh. (No score given.)

26th September 1868.—At the general meeting held on this date it was resolved that the Silver Challenge Medal be not played for on the same day as the Cup, but on a day to be fixed by the Captain and Council. There is no record of it being played for that year.

11th May 1869.—Alexander Rose, 147.

7th June 1870.—C. Rose, 72.

3rd October 1871.—It seems this year to have been played for as a second prize at the autumn meeting, contrary to the resolution above referred to. The minute-books state it was won by George Wilkie with the score of 158.

In 1872 Mr William Dingwall Fordyce of Brucklay was second at the autumn meeting, and claimed the Silver Medal, but the Council held that, in terms of the resolution of 26th September 1868, that the Silver Challenge Medal should not be played for on the same day as the Cup, the Silver Medal should not be given as the second prize.

26th June 1873.—Cornelius Thompson. (No score given.)

8th July 1874.—Cornelius Thompson. (No score given.)

16th July 1875.—Captain Alexander Dingwall Fordyce, 150.



## The Club Trophies

21st July 1876.—Cornelius Thompson, 94 and 100 = 194.

28th June 1877.—Cornelius Thompson, 90 and 93 = 183.

17th July 1878.—Charles Smith, 87 and 89 = 176.

6th August 1879.—Charles Smith, 87 and 85 = 172.

14th July 1880.—Cornelius Thompson and Garden G. Smith tied with 89.

Garden G. Smith won the tie on the next day, his score being 85 to 93.

10th August 1881.—D. R. Irvine, 89.

The Medal does not appear to have been played for after this date, and at the spring meeting of 1904, the Council suggested to the Club that, as the Medal had originally been presented for competition among players on the Aberdeen Links, not members of the Club, the Medal should be offered to the Committee of the Aberdeen Links Championship as a Challenge Medal, to be held for one year by the player returning the lowest scratch score in the two preliminary rounds of the Championship. The Club approved. The Links Championship was started in 1904. It consists of two qualifying rounds, medal play, the sixteen best returns playing off by match play for Championship. This silver medal is therefore given for the best scratch score in the qualifying rounds.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

## THE GOLD CROSS



THE FORDYCE GOLD CROSS.

This handsome trophy was presented by Mrs Dingwall Fordyce of Brucklay in 1873, and is played for annually at the autumn meeting as a handicap prize. It was first played for at the autumn meeting of 1873, when the winner was Dr Moir of St Andrews.

## The Club Trophies

### WINNERS OF THE GOLD CROSS

*The Winner receives a small Gold Replica*

*Scores.*

1873.	Dr J. W. Moir . . .	82, 77 = 159 - 0 = 159
1874.	G. Anderson . . .	90, 89 = 179 - 22 = 157
1875.	W. G. Roy . . .	80, 87 = 167 - 10 = 157

*(New Round, 18 Holes)*

1876.	Keith Jopp . . .	99, 106 = 205 - 24 = 181
1877.	W. Brand . . .	95, 89 = 184 - 0 = 184
	G. Turriff . . .	107, 95 = 202 - 18 = 184
1878.	C. Smith . . .	83, 89 = 172 - 0 = 172
1879.	J. R. Whyte . . .	98, 99 = 197 - 16 = 181
1880.	L. M'Kinnon, Yost . . .	90 - 8 = 82
1881.	Captain Brooke . . .	90 - 8 = 82
1882.	D. Littlejohn . . .	96 - 6 = 90
1883.	N. M. Wyllie . . .	89 - 6 = 83
1884.	Colonel A. D. Fordyce . . .	85 - 0 = 85
1885.	C. C. Macdonald . . .	91 - 3 = 88
1886.	W. Stewart . . .	84 - 0 = 84
1887.	C. C. Macdonald . . .	90 - 3 = 87
1888.	Rev. H. Rankin . . .	95 - 18 = 77
1889.	W. G. Jamieson . . .	88 - 4 = 84
	Jas. Macdonald . . .	90 - 6 = 84
	B. S. M'Lellan . . .	90 - 6 = 84
1890.	J. M. Ferguson . . .	83 - 0 = 83
1891.	B. S. M'Lellan . . .	87 - 4 = 83
1892.	J. B. Craigie . . .	83 - 4 = 79
1893.	J. M. Ferguson . . .	79 - 0 = 79
1894.	L. S. Anderson . . .	76 + 3 = 79
1895.	J. M. Ferguson . . .	80 - 0 = 80
1896.	J. M. Duncan . . .	83 - 0 = 83
1897.	A. Martineau . . .	88 - 8 = 80
1898.	M. H. Mackie . . .	85 - 9 = 76



## The Aberdeen Golfers

		<i>Scores.</i>
1899.	A. W. Mitchell . . . . .	83 - 5 = 78
1900.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	82 - 0 = 82
1901.	W. Merrylees . . . . .	92 - 10 = 82
1902.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	74 - 0 = 74
1903.	G. L. Pirie . . . . .	81 - 8 = 73
1904.	H. de M. Alexander . . . . .	83 - 0 = 83
1905.	G. L. Pirie . . . . .	83 - 4 = 79
1906.	Rev. J. A. M'Clymont . . . . .	95 - 20 = 75
1907.	John Clarke . . . . .	87 - 9 = 78
1908.	J. H. Irvin . . . . .	74 - 3 = 71

## The Club Trophies

### THE CHARLES CHALMERS CUP



THE CHARLES CHALMERS CUP.

This fine trophy was presented in September 1884 by the family of the late Charles Chalmers, Esq., of Monkshill, an original member of the Aberdeen Golf Club, who died in November 1877. Mr Chalmers won the Club's Gold Medal in 1823, and was Hon. Secretary from 1819 to 1829, and Captain of the Club in 1830. This Cup has always been played for at the autumn meeting as a scratch prize.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

### WINNERS OF THE CHARLES CHALMERS CUP

*The Winner receives a small Gold Medal*

		<i>Scores.</i>
30th Sept., 1884.	Captain A. D. Fordyce . . . . .	85
30th Sept., 1885.	J. H. Craigie . . . . .	90
27th Sept., 1886.	W. Stewart . . . . .	84
27th Sept., 1887.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	90

*(Balgownie Links)*

11th Oct., 1888.	C. F. Hayne . . . . .	83
10th Oct., 1889.	J. H. Craigie . . . . .	84
16th Oct., 1890.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	83
23rd Sept., 1891.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	85
27th Sept., 1892.	J. B. Craigie . . . . .	83
21st Sept., 1893.	J. M. Ferguson . . . . .	79
* 12th Oct., 1894.	C. Angus . . . . .	85
5th Oct., 1895.	L. Stuart Anderson . . . . .	82
10th Oct., 1896.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	91
9th Oct., 1897.	J. M. Duncan . . . . .	85
8th Oct., 1898.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	81
14th Oct., 1899.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	80
13th Oct., 1900.	James Williams . . . . .	88
12th Oct., 1901.	J. G. Paull . . . . .	92
11th Oct., 1902.	H. de M. Alexander . . . . .	82
10th Oct., 1903.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	80
8th Oct., 1904.	Captain Chalmers . . . . .	86
16th Sept., 1905.	W. D. Davidson . . . . .	84
15th Sept., 1906.	Peter Smith . . . . .	82
14th Sept., 1907.	M. M. Duncan . . . . .	85
19th Sept., 1908.	J. H. Cochrane . . . . .	76

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\* On and after this date the Charles Chalmers Cup was played for on the same day as the Gold Medal, as a second scratch prize.

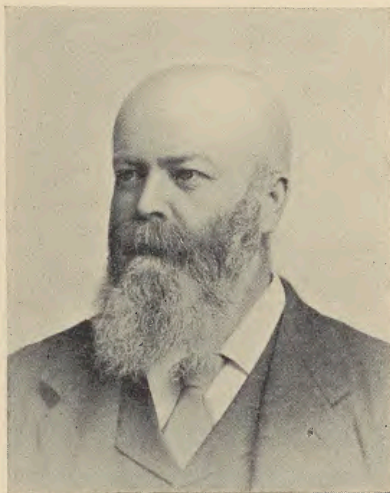


## CHAPTER XI

### REMINISCENCES OF THE GOLFERS ON ABERDEEN LINKS



ASTING one's eye backward on the old Links at Aberdeen as they were in the seventies of last century, the old familiar figures, with their familiar styles of play, troop once more on the well-remembered scene. Though it is thirty years ago and more, it seems but yesterday that we spoke with them and played with them, and it is hard to believe that the scene has changed, and the actors, most of them, passed away. At the period of which we write, and for some time before, one of the most outstanding figures on the golf-links, and undoubtedly one of the most formidable local players in the Aberdeen Golf Club, was Mr Cornelius Thompson. "Corny," as he was familiarly called, was a tall, heavily built, powerful-looking man in the prime of life; but he suffered under the disadvantage of having learned his golf after his youth was past, so that his style of play, particularly the full-swing part of it, never attained, as it never can



CORNELIUS THOMPSON,  
Captain, 1869-70.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

attain under similar circumstances, the ease, and grace, and effectiveness so often to be found in the play of those who have begun early in life. Yet, in spite of this great handicap, Mr Thompson often accomplished excellent rounds and brought off brilliant strokes. Being a fine shot and billiard-player, his correct eye stood him in good stead in his putting, which was usually deadly, and always performed with a putting-cleek. His tee shots, too, were very cleanly struck, and also "far and sure." In his "address" he adopted a rather wide stance, bending down a good deal, thus failing to utilise his height.

The writer remembers one particularly fine stroke of "Corny's," made over thirty years ago, in a foursome in which Davie Strath and Annand (the local professional) were also players. It was somewhere in the autumn of 1875, or early in 1876, and it occurred in playing from the "Well" hole on the Old Town Links up over the Broad Hill, on the homeward journey. Annand, who partnered Cornelius, had driven his tee shot just over the road (that skirts the northern base of the Broad Hill), on to the hill a yard or two. The ball was not lying by any means favourably, but without a moment's hesitation, Mr Thompson with his "long spoon," then the correct club "through the green," struck the ball so accurately that it went skimming away right up the hill, disappearing over the top of the hill without once touching the ground, and landing safe in the hollow or "basin" over the brow. It was a beautiful stroke, and it was executed so readily and easily that it seemed all the more admirable. Time and again Mr Thompson carried off the Monthly Medal (scratch), thus becoming "cock of the green" for the month; and in his day he had gained all the chief prizes of the Club—some of them repeatedly. If the day was hot, Mr Thompson always walked between his shots with his cap in his hand; and the commanding figure in the scarlet coat, with the great domed head shining in the sun,



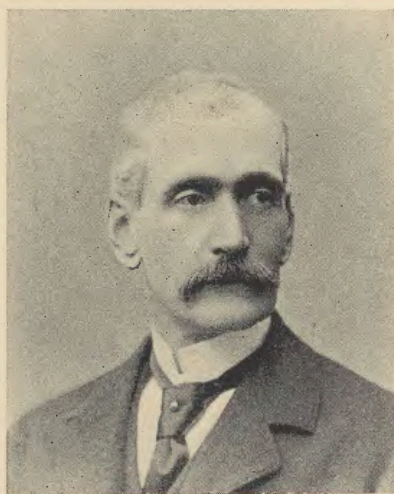
## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

was a familiar presence on the Links. In later years Mr Thompson resided in London, and he was Captain of the St George's Golf Club, Sandwich, in 1891-92.

Mr W. C. Good, another well-known player of those days, was a man of small stature. If "Corny" Thompson might have been termed the Goliath of the Aberdeen Golf Club, Mr Good might have been



WILLIAM LESLIE  
Captain, 1887-88.



JOHN DAVIDSON,  
Captain, 1888-89.

dubbed, as aptly, the little David. A match between these two was indeed a study in contrasts—the heavy-weight against the light-weight. And the light-weight often put up a good fight, driving a long ball from the tee, and putting all his back into the blow, jumping off his feet at the end of it. Mr Good always used a very high tee, a bad habit which put him at a serious disadvantage through the green. He was a cheery and amiable little man, and was Captain of the Club in 1878.

Mr Joseph Ogilvie and Mr W. Addie, a pressman, were two of the shortest drivers on the Links: in fact, to tell the naked truth, two

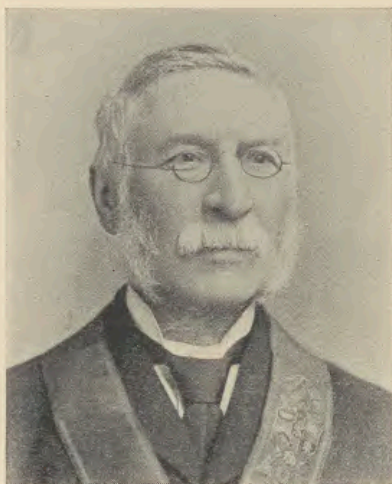


## The Aberdeen Golfers

of the most confirmed toppers and foozlers to be found anywhere. Both, however, as often happens, were enthusiastic golfers ; but alas ! in each case, the swing was execrable, being rather a body push than a swing. Mr Ogilvie occasionally got in a good approach or laid a long putt dead, when he would excitedly exclaim, " I wouldna tak' it back." Mr Addie, too, had his moments of inspiration, on or near

the putting-green, when doubtless he would have readily homologated Joseph's sentiments. *Arcades ambo !*

Of all the golfers on the Aberdeen Links of thirty years ago that memory recalls, Mr William Dunn, an East-end shoemaker, stands out as an instance of a player who kept his temper, however bad might be his play, to an extent that can hardly ever have been equalled anywhere, or at any time, in the history of the game. " Weelum," as he was called, was small of stature and sported a pair of straggling whiskers. He was

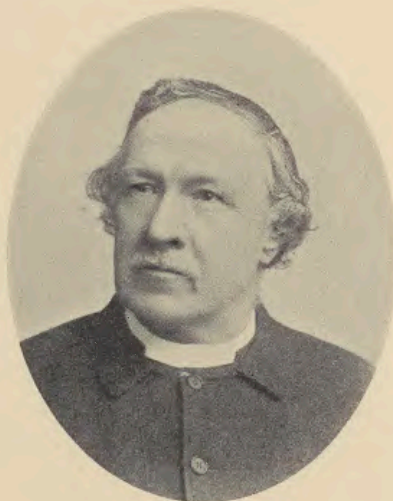


LORD PROVOST JAMES MATTHEWS,  
Captain, 1889-90.

a member of the Bonaccord Golf Club, and a great enthusiast. He nearly always topped his tee shot, and as it was a peculiarly bad top—in fact a "tip-top"—20 or 30 yards would be the usual length of his drive. Sometimes, however, he did manage things a little better, the result being a "beauty" of from 50 to 60 yards, all along the ground. He had no swing, just a push, and his usual remark after a particularly bad shot was, "It's as good's a better." Quite right, Weelum ; you did your best, and if such cheery optimism as you displayed were more common, what a lot of worry and unhappiness would be

## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

saved! He got his fresh air and exercise just the same, and why should he fret because his ball did not travel so far as other people's? It was really amusing to see his tee shots off the Broad Hill, whether towards the "Home" hole, or from the east side towards the "Boathouse" hole. Here, at any rate, he and other top-pers scored, for the ball, obedient to the law of gravitation, was bound to roll to the foot of the hill, however badly it was topped, unless, indeed, it was trapped by a whin bush or bunker *en route*! But Dunn could putt and approach as well as many of us, if he could not, for the life of him, drive. So the good man had his consolations; and after all, so long as he played the game (and no one could have been a better sportsman than "Weelum"), he extracted as much enjoyment from it as any man need wish to in this vale of tears.



REV. DR C. C. MACDONALD,  
Captain, 1890-92.

Among other players whose styles and eccentricities one remembers well after all these years was Mr A. M'Bey of the Bonaccord Club, an old man-o'-war's man, with his clubs and balls of his own manufacture, and his droning talk about his patent solution for keeping barnacles off ships' bottoms. "Old Mac" loved a game "in the coool (cool) of the evening," as he used to say. He was a fairish player, and always "jerked" his strokes, even the tee ones—tee bottoms this time, not ships'!

Gordon Durward, a noted draughts-player, also a member of the Bonaccord Golf Club, was a left-handed player—about the only one

## The Aberdeen Golfers

then on the Links—and he also made his own clubs. In addressing the ball, instead of the usual waggle, he drew his club right back as though about to strike ; but no—down came the club sure enough, but ere it reached the ball he brought it to a dead halt just behind the ball. Then he repeated the manœuvre, but this time in earnest—the club was not checked, and he drove a very fair ball. It was a most unusual style, reminding one of the “sighting shot” sometimes allowed the marksmen at the targets in shooting competitions. Durward was a good short-game player and putter, using as a rule the wooden-headed putter on the green.

Another very unusual swing was that of Mr David Littlejohn of the Aberdeen Golf Club, a player happily still to the fore, and able yet to play a very good game. The peculiarity in his style was that in driving from the tee or through the green he did not employ the usual drawing back and over the right shoulder method, but swung his club outward in a sort of loop. And yet, although the swing was so very unorthodox, he was, and still is, a very fair all-round golfer, and a very enthusiastic one. He was Captain of the Club as far back as 1876, the year in which the new 18-hole course was inaugurated, and he was Captain again in 1897.

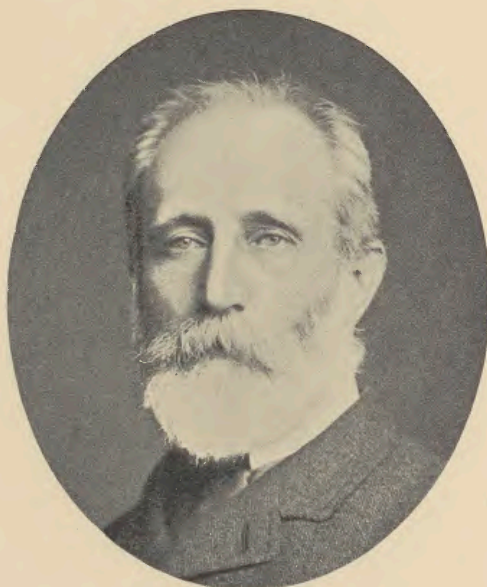
Colonel, or, as he then was, Captain Alexander Dingwall Fordyce, of the 49th Regiment, was one of the few scratch players of those days, and a very fine player he was. He learned most of his golf in the South, beginning to play, along with his brother, the late William Dingwall Fordyce, M.P., at Blackheath about 1850, and he was a well-known player on St Andrews Links and a member of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, as also the winner of the Silver Cross at their spring meeting in 1875, beating such players as Mr Leslie Balfour (now Mr Leslie Balfour Melville) and the redoubtable Mr Charles Anderson of Fettykil. Captain Fordyce was a pretty player to watch. He had not a full



## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

swing, but it was an effective one, and he drove a rather low ball as a rule, and well on the line. His short game and putting were also very good. He always wore gloves when golfing. The gallant Captain, like his brothers the late Wm. Dingwall Fordyce, M.P., and Mr J. D. Fordyce of Culsh, was a very keen golfer, and it was during his régime as Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1873-74 that the Morisses and Strath and Kydd played their match over the 15-hole course on Aberdeen Links. Captain Fordyce also presented the very handsome silver "monthly" medal (scratch) to the Aberdeen Golf Club, the winner of which trophy was entitled to call himself "cock of the green" for the month.

Sheriff Dove Wilson, like Captain Fordyce, learned his golf in the South, his mentor being no less than the "great and good" Old Tom Morris of St Andrews. The Sheriff had evidently taken to heart Old Tom's favourite maxim of "slow back," for he had a particularly slow, easy swing, and was a very steady, consistent all-round player. One never saw the "little Sheriff" pressing for a long shot; he was too wide awake to risk such things. An excellent partner in a foursome he was, and such a genial, gentlemanly man. He was Captain of the Club in 1874-75, and he presented a valuable silver monthly handicap medal for the encouragement of backward



SHERIFF DOVE WILSON,  
Captain, 1874-75.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

players. Like all true golfers, he remained a golfer to the end of his long and useful life.

The famous Charles Anderson of Fettykil, Fifeshire, although he did not often play on the Aberdeen Links, was a member of the Aber-



CHARLES ANDERSON OF FETTYKIL.

deen Golf Club ; he joined in 1873, and was far and away the finest player the Club possessed. When he did put in an appearance at a spring or autumn meeting, it was a case of Anderson first, the rest nowhere! No Northern player could stand up to such a mighty swiper and splendid approacher and putter as he was in his prime. A muscular, sturdily built man, of good average height, he was a famous swimmer and diver as well as a golfer. Golf he had played from his youth. He had the real St Andrews full swing. What a grand

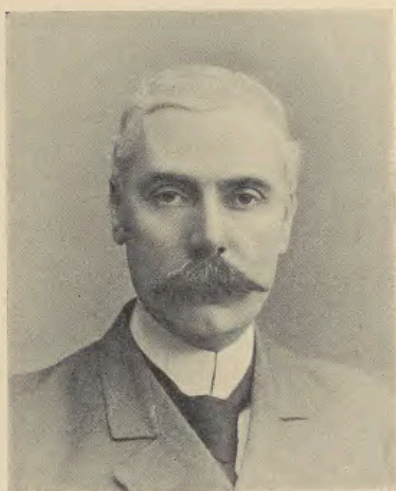
swing it was, and what a grand tee shot he drove! Then, his "light iron" work in approaching the green was so accurate, and his putting so deadly. Many considered his putting his strongest point. Truly he was a great golfer, and it was little wonder that no Aberdeen player could stand up to him—a sound drubbing was all he need expect in a match with this great Fifeshire player. Mr Anderson was certainly one of the finest amateur golfers of the country in his younger days.



## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

Mr John Doleman, the first Captain of the Bonaccord Golf Club, in 1872, was as pretty a player as one could wish to see. A tailor's cutter by profession (he was in the employ of Messrs Johnston & Laird, an old-established firm of clothiers in Union Street, near Union Bridge), he was a well-built man of rather short stature. He had a most attractive, compact swing, and drove an excellent ball. He was, in fact, a masterly player in all departments of the game, which he, like most of the scratch players on the Aberdeen Links at this time, learned in his youth in the South. Mr Doleman had little time for golfing when in Aberdeen, and often in order to keep himself in form had to get in a round about 6 a.m. on a spring or summer morning. By his influence and example he was the means of leading not a few to try their hand at the game, and he has carried his missionary spirit into England, at Nottingham, where he has been settled for many years, and where he founded the flourishing Nottingham Golf Club. Mr Doleman's brother, Mr William Doleman, long resident in Glasgow, was one of the best golfers of the day. Another brother, A. H. Doleman, who has also done much to spread the game in England, completed a triumvirate of golfing brothers it would be hard to match anywhere.

A quaint character to be constantly seen on the Links in the late seventies was "Jock o' the Bean." What his real name was never transpired, nor the origin of the sobriquet by which he was universally known. He was a tall, heavily built man, and report said he had been



A. J. W. STORIE,  
Captain, 1892-94.



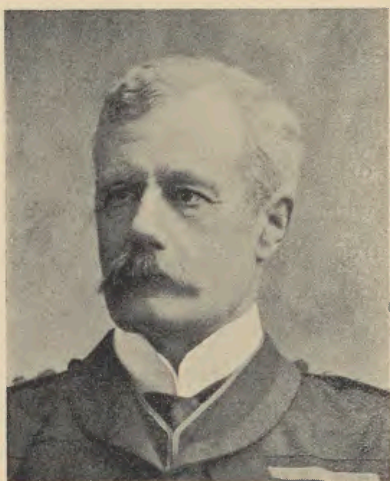
## The Aberdeen Golfers

a prize-fighter in his younger days. He certainly looked like it, and a terrible cast in one eye gave a most sinister expression to his swarthy face. He was the owner of an old clo' shop at the top of Littlejohn Street, near the pend leading to the Gallowgate. In spite of his forbidding aspect, "Jock o' the Bean" was an amiable enough character and a great sportsman. He was, however, a very poor player.

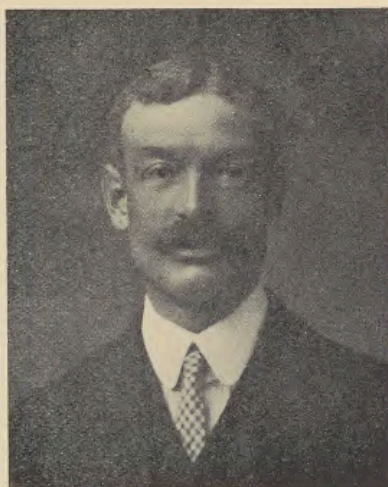
Mr Ludovic G. Sandison, King Street, was the local golf-club maker thirty or forty years ago. He also made fishing-rods. As Mr Sandison had little practical knowledge of golf, his clubs left a good deal to be desired in the matter of balance, suppleness of shaft, etc. Indeed, many players preferred getting their clubs—especially the wooden ones—from the South, from such experts as Forgan, Tom Morris, Jamie Anderson, etc., while some of the working-class golfers made and repaired their own clubs. As to the iron-headed clubs—cleeks, irons, niblicks, etc.—the heads were imported from Fifeshire and other places in the South, only the shafts being made and fitted on by Sandison. The golf-balls—gutties, of course, and all hand hammered—all came from the South; Thornton, Morris, Patrick, Anderson, and Forgan being the favourite makers, and their balls could also be had at Playfair's or Garden's shops in Union Street (both gun-makers and fishing-rod and tackle dealers). Sandison did not make golf-balls. Robbie Mearns, then a caddie on the Links, was the principal maker of re-mades; but they were unsatisfactory things, and got knocked out of shape in a very short time. But if Sandison was not a highly skilled maker of golf-clubs, he had other good qualities. An enthusiastic Tonic Sol-faist, he loved to expatiate on the virtues of that system as he toiled in his shop at his bench, with his club-making and repairing, and glue-pot and sand-paper, regaling himself occasionally with a pinch of snuff. He was a great admirer of Haydn, and thought his *Creation* quite unequalled by anything else in musical art. He

## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

was for many years precentor in Greyfriars Church, and also instructor in vocal music to the boys of Gordon's Hospital. From 1847 on to 1866—when the Aberdeen Golf Club built their house on the Links—Sandison provided a room for the reception of the members' clubs, etc., and acted as caretaker, as his predecessor, Alexander Munro, had done before him in the same premises for nearly thirty years, beginning



MAJOR-GENERAL J. E. BOYES,  
Captain, 1895-96.



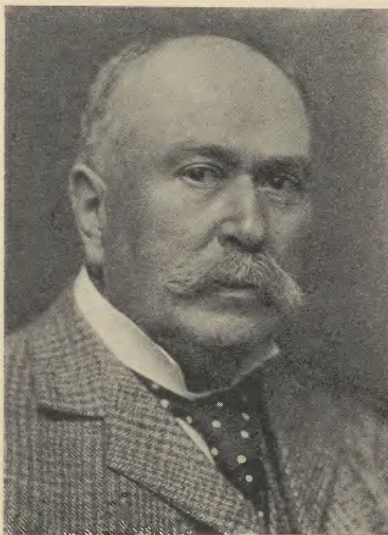
H. G. FELLOWES-GORDON OF  
KNOCKESPOCK,  
Captain, 1896-97.

in 1818. For some time, too, both Sandison and his predecessor Munro had to look after the golf-course and putting-greens, but this arrangement did not prove satisfactory — *ne sutor ultra crepidam* — and others had to be appointed to this department. For the use of the club-room in King Street the Aberdeen Golf Club paid a small annual rent.

Mention of Sandison suggests one of his best customers, the late Mr John F. White, LL.D. Mr White, who was one of the most cultured and kindly of Aberdonians, and did a great deal for art and



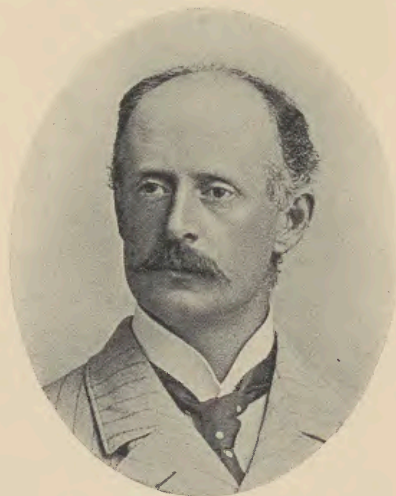
## The Aberdeen Golfers



THOMAS COCHRANE,  
Captain, 1899-1900.

club's neck. Mr White's lifelong friend, Sir George Reid, R.S.A., thus narrates an experience he had with him. "On one occasion I played with him over the Aberdeen Links. On the way down he called at Sandison's shop for half a dozen clubs that had been undergoing repair. I think he broke the whole lot in one round. I remember he carried them all back to Sandison's shop and threw them down on the counter with the remark, "There, Mr Sandison, there's some

artists in the North, was also a golfer ; but the great enthusiasm and ability which he brought to bear on all that he essayed, failed him at golf. He was afflicted with an apparently incurable defect of swing, which was as painful to himself as to the beholder. And that was not the worst of it. In the process of swinging he contrived to twist the head of the club in such fashion that, when it descended, the ball was struck with the top surface of the head near the toe, just above the maker's name. The almost invariable result was to break the



W. J. CHAMBERS-HUNTER  
OF TILLERY,  
Captain, 1900-01.



## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

work for you!" Sandison put on his glasses, took up the broken clubs, looked them over one by one, and laid them down without a word. White remarked, "You don't seem glad to get work?" "Weel, Maister White," said Sandison, "I'm aye thankfu' for wark, but I dinna like to see clubs *fair connached* in that way."

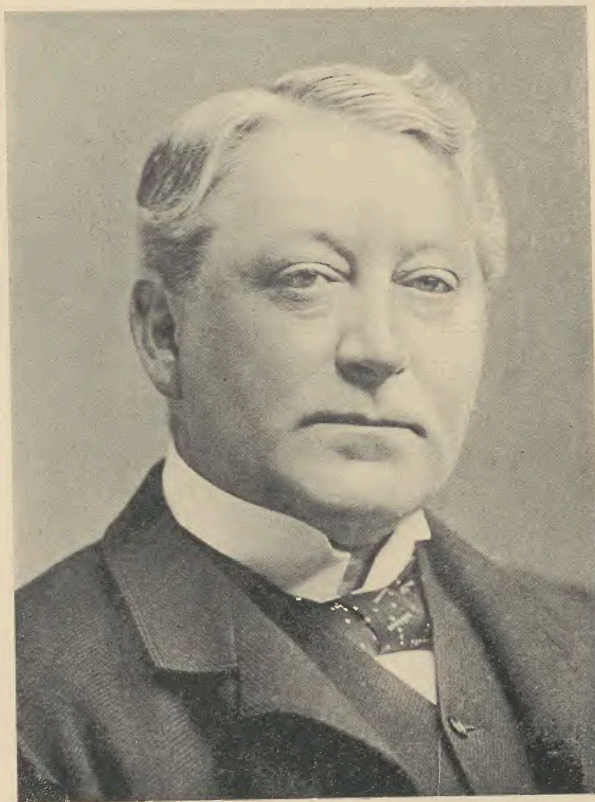
Sandison's clubs, by the way, were rather apt to break their necks on the slightest provocation, and when they were brought back to him by their aggrieved purchasers, his invariable excuse was that it must have been due to very "hharrrd hhitting."

Mr J. F. White was the victim of a story which has appeared in many spurious forms for the last thirty years. One day on the Aberdeen Links he had been foozling and breaking clubs even worse than usual, and at last in despair he exclaimed to his caddie, "I believe I'm the worst player on the Links!" "Na," said the caddie, in a most serious tone, "there's anither ane that's waur." Cold comfort, perhaps; yet the caddie clearly felt that it would be cruel to deny his wretched master the consoling knowledge that he had not touched the very lowest deeps of incompetence. But the case of that "ither ane" must have been desperate indeed!

Though never much of a player, the late Sheriff Comrie Thomson, Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1866-67, proved such an acquisition to the Club that a brief account of his services may be given here in bringing these recollections to a close. Here is his record:—He was admitted a member in February 1866, and on 3rd April he was appointed Convener of the Special Committee that engaged John Allan, the Prestwick professional, for three months as coach to the Club, also as greenkeeper, and caretaker of the two "clean and commodious" rooms at 13 Constitution Street. This Committee it was that also recommended the building of the Club-house on the Links; the names of the other members being—Wm. D. Fordyce, M.P.; Robert

## The Aberdeen Golfers

Duthie, Footdee ; and Alex. Murray, Advocate. It also sent a set of resolutions to the Town Council *re* the "encroachments" threatened, or already permitted, on the Links and Golf Course, and voted £50



SHERIFF COMRIE THOMSON,  
Captain, 1866-67.

from the funds of the Club towards meeting any expenses that might be incurred in contesting their rights, as citizens, to the free use of the Links. In September, Sheriff Thomson was elected Captain of the Golf Club, and the same month he laid the foundation stone of the new Club-house on the Aberdeen Links, and by the spring of 1867

## Reminiscences of the Golfers on Aberdeen Links

it was finished and in use. The old, shabby, pokey "club-room" in King Street, at the back of the golf-club maker's shop, that had done duty for fifty years as a club-house, was now a thing of the past, and the handsome and convenient Club-house on the Links proved a great attraction. Many new members joined in 1867-68 and onwards—many of them, too, eager to learn the game. Sheriff Thomson was indeed the William Black of this renaissance era—a most energetic, able, masterful man. In later years he resumed practice at the Edinburgh Bar, and attained great fame by his skilful defence of Monson in the famous Hamborough murder trial, when the jury returned a verdict of "not proven."



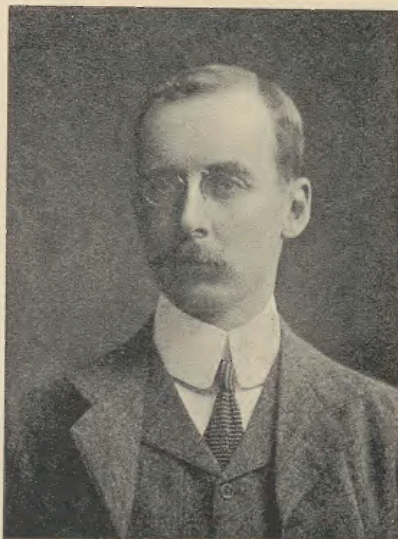
## CHAPTER XII

### GRANTING OF THE "ROYAL" TITLE—THE BONACCORD AND VICTORIA GOLF CLUBS—OLD AND MODERN GOLF

**T**HE history of the Aberdeen Golf Club, since it migrated to Balgownie Links in 1888, has been one of uninterrupted prosperity and progress. The beautiful course has been greatly improved since it was first opened, and under the experienced care of Archie Simpson, the Club's popular professional, is now a worthy successor to the old Links across the Don. The membership of the Club is steadily increasing,

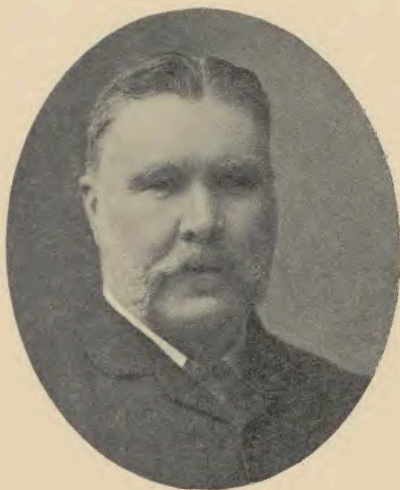
and the general average of play is much higher than it was in the old days, while the ancient trophies are played for with unfailing regularity and undiminished enthusiasm.

But the change to Balgownie marked the beginning of a new epoch in the Club's history, which the present chronicler prefers to leave untouched for some historian of the future. There is, however, one event of comparatively recent happening, so closely related to the older history of the Aberdeen Golf Club as to warrant its inclusion in these records. Although, as narrated in



W. D. DAVIDSON,  
Captain, 1901-02.

## Granting of the "Royal" Title



GEORGE DAVIDSON,  
Captain, 1902-03.

mission to use the "Royal" title from King William IV., who, however, did not at first accede to the Club's request to become its Patron. In the case of the Aberdeen Golf Club, the "Royal" title was never applied for till 1903, thirty-one years after Prince Leopold became its Patron. In that year the Club, through Colonel James Davidson of Balnagask, A.Q.M.G. (Ireland), made application for liberty to use the word "Royal" in the title of the Club. The following is a copy of a letter received

Chapter IV., the Club received the Royal Patronage of the late Prince Leopold in 1872, the "Royal" title had never been conferred. The Royal Patronage does not in itself carry with it the right for any club or society to assume the "Royal" designation, which is an entirely separate distinction and must be separately granted. Conversely, the "Royal" title may be granted without the Royal Patronage; and this happened in the case of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club itself, which received per-



COLONEL J. DAVIDSON OF BALNAGASK,  
Captain, 1903-04.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

by Colonel Davidson from Lord Balfour of Burleigh, conveying His Majesty the King's gracious permission to use the "Royal" title :—

"SCOTTISH OFFICE, WHITEHALL, S.W.,

"10th August 1903.

"SIR,—I have had the honour to lay before the King the application of the Aberdeen Golf Club, made through you, to use the word Royal in the title of the Club.

"I have it in command to inform you that His Majesty was pleased to receive the Petition in the most gracious manner, and to signify His Majesty's pleasure that the Club shall hereafter be known as the 'Royal Aberdeen Golf Club.'—I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant,

"BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH.

"Colonel J. Davidson, A.Q.M.G.,

"The Royal Hospital, Dublin."

### THE BONACCORD AND VICTORIA GOLF CLUBS

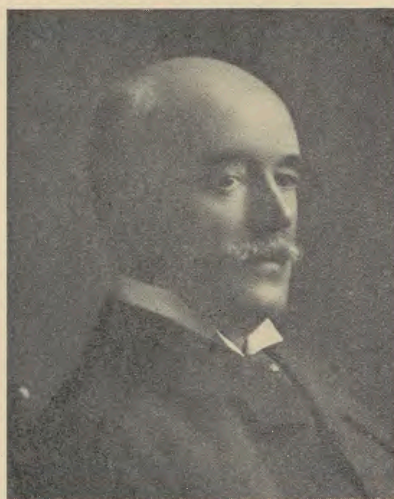
The Bonaccord Golf Club comes next to the Royal Aberdeen in point of seniority. It was formed on 7th June 1872 (the "renaissance" year), Mr John Doleman being a leading spirit at the time, and it has gone on from strength to strength ever since. Like the other golf clubs that have sprung up and waxed great exceedingly, the Bonaccord has plenty of capable golfers in its ranks, and can hold its own with the best of them. J. A. Donaldson, the well-known professional, was a member of this Club in his amateur days, as was his father, the late Tom Donaldson, for many years a keen and enthusiastic player. J. A. Donaldson holds the record for the Links Course with the wonderful score of 66, made in 1902. This record was made, be it observed, on the modern course—not by any means



## The Bonaccord and Victoria Golf Clubs

the same as the old and classical round of 18 holes of the "seventies" and "eighties" of last century. The 72 of Robbie Mearns, made in April 1885, stands as the record for that course. The present course is being continually altered, so that the Bogey score is also very variable. The present membership of the Bonaccord is about 160, and the present Links champion, Mr Fraser, is a Bonaccord Club man. *Floreat!*

The Victoria Golf Club, formed in 1879, seven years after the Bonaccord, comes next to it in point of seniority. It also has plenty of excellent players, and its membership is even larger than the Bonaccord, numbering as it does about 300. Many are the matches the Victoria has engaged in, and many a good victory has it gained to justify its name. Two of its members—Mr L. B. Robb and Mr W. Hendry—hold the record of the Club with a score of 71, made some years ago. George



R. D. LESLIE,  
Captain, 1904-06.

Duncan, the well-known professional to the Hanger Hill Club, near London, was at one time a caddie on the Aberdeen Links. Here he learned his golf, and he was very often employed as a caddie by the players of the Victoria Club. The Links champion of last year (1907), Mr Prentice, was also a member of the Victoria Golf Club, and anything but a "prentice" hand at the grand old game! The other city clubs, such as the Caledonian, Northern, etc., it is pleasant to record, are all large and flourishing; but as they are of comparatively recent origin, their history does not come within the purview of this work. *Floreant!*

## The Aberdeen Golfers

As this work deals principally with golfing matters in the rapidly receding past (how time flies ! thirty years ago and more—it all seems but yesterday !), there has been little reference in these pages to the wondrous players and the wondrous spread of the game in recent years, or to the equally wondrous improvements in clubs and balls that have



JAMES WILLIAMS,  
Captain, 1906-07.

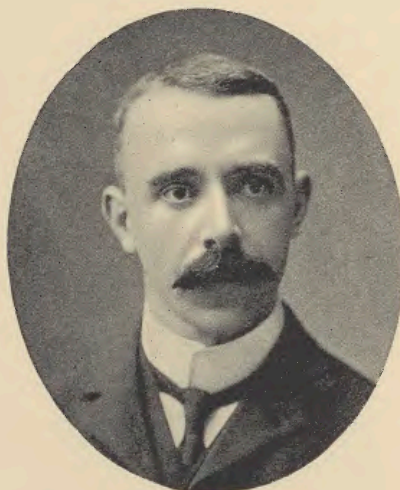
almost revolutionised the pastime. That the skill of the modern "crack" is one whit inferior to that of the great men of old, it is impossible to believe ; rather it would appear to be ever increasing, and so is the fierceness of competition ; and not only so—for one fine player of thirty-five or forty years ago there are now perhaps fifty or a hundred. Allowing that the implements of the game are greatly improved and that now there are clubs for every conceivable stroke, that the rubber-cored ball flies considerably farther than the old guttie, and

that putting-greens are larger and much better kept — all of which tend to make the game easier than it was in the days of Young Tom Morris and Davie Strath and their predecessors—it must be taken into consideration, *per contra*, that the distance from hole to hole is now considerably greater, and if in some cases whins have disappeared, their place has been taken by the construction of pot bunkers and such-like delectable arrangements. And yet scores are ever being improved and better records achieved. Eighty-five or thereabouts was usually good enough for the best player of the day on St Andrews Links thirty-five years ago ; now, no professional, and no amateur even, would have



## Old and Modern Golf

much chance of a medal there unless his score was something like 75, *i.e.* 10 strokes less—and it can hardly be said that St Andrews Links is easier now than it was then. Driving from the tee and through the green has improved greatly in distance attained, owing to the rubber-cored ball and the improved clubs. Set a James Braid or a Harry Vardon down at the teeing-ground beside the old “Well” hole on the Old Town Links to-day, and ask them to tackle the old “Long” hole (523 yards), away up over the Broad Hill, the hole that even Young Tom Morris and Davie Strath never did under 6, and generally required 7 or 8 strokes to negotiate, and it is certain that our modern champions would often be very near, if indeed they did not actually reach, the green in 2, and hole out in 4 or 5 with little difficulty. Or, to take another example, the “Bunker” hole, played as it was from 1876 onwards for many years, after the ninth or “Target” hole. The length of this “Bunker” hole was only 210 yards, yet it was rare indeed in the old days to drive on to the green from the tee, even with the help of a following wind. Nowadays, Braid, or indeed any capable player, could carry on to the green from the tee with ease; indeed, a long driver like Braid could accomplish it with his cleek, so greatly have the improved clubs and balls helped the player in covering distance. The round of 18 holes as played from 1876 and onwards, and for which the 72 of Robbie Mearns, a local professional, made in April 1885, is the record, would now be possible in something like 60 strokes,



J. G. PAULL,  
Captain, 1907-08.

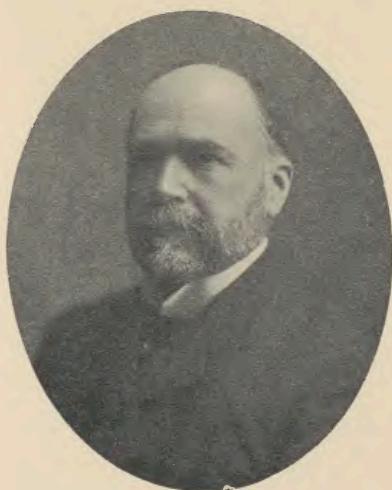


## The Aberdeen Golfers

as follows ; presupposing, of course, modern putting-greens and good lies through the green:—

Gasworks Hole	4	Bunker Hole	3
Battery „	3	Valley „	3
Castle Dangerous Hole	3	Short „	3
Table „	4	Cowhillock „	4
Hill „	4	Bank „	3
Boathouse „	3	Well „	3
Road „	4	Flagstaff „	4
Burn „	3	High „	3
Target „	3	Home „	3
	<hr/> 31		<hr/> 29 = 60

Thus not a single 5 would be required for perfect or par play ; and the longest hole (the “ Cowhillock ”) being only 392 yards in length, there would be no holes requiring two full drives except against a strong wind. Thirteen of the holes, being only the matter of a full tee shot, or in some cases less than a full tee shot as now made, would be quite possible “ threes ” and sometimes “ twos ” !

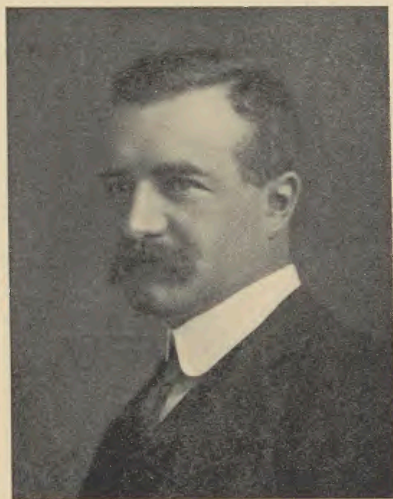


HARVEY HALL,  
Captain, 1908-09.

Regarding the amazing spread of the game, not only in Aberdeen but all over the world, these things are known to all men and need not be dwelt on here.

Locally, the Bonaccord Club, the Victoria, the Northern, the Caledonian, the Balnagask (“ over the water to Torry ”)—these five city clubs alone must total about 1000 players. What would the pioneers

## Old and Modern Golf



M. M. DUNCAN,  
Hon. Secretary since 1893.

“Do I sleep? do I dream?  
Do I wander in doubt?  
Are things what they seem,  
Or is visions about?”

It is, indeed, a wondrous transformation.

And so the round is finished, and the clubs laid aside. The compiling and writing of these records and reminiscences of Golf in Aberdeen has been indeed an interesting and a pleasant task, calling up many memories of the “old familiar faces,” and of “the

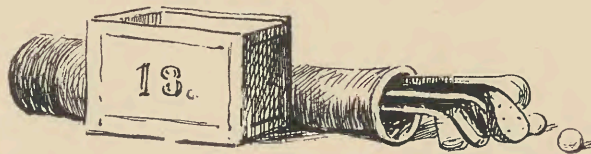
of the game in 1872, or earlier, think, could they revisit these “glimpses of the moon” and see how their efforts to popularise the game have been so abundantly blessed? “Prodigious!” they might well exclaim; and as they extended their survey to the “twal’ mile roun’” area and beyond—to Bieldside, Banchory-Ternan, Torphins, Aboyne, Tarland, Ballater, Balmoral, Braemar, Stonehaven, etc., their mental state might aptly be described in the lines of Bret Harte :



ARCHIE SIMPSON,  
Professional to the Royal Aberdeen Golf Club.

## The Aberdeen Golfers

days that are no more." The old order changes, giving place to the new, and so the world goes on ; but whatever the changes may be, one may be permitted to express the hope that all future generations of golfers will uphold their right, as citizens of Aberdeen, to the free use of the splendid Links as sturdily as their forefathers in the olden days, and that the civic authorities will be more zealous than some of their predecessors have been to guard the interests and promote the welfare of the great Scottish pastime on its immemorial and inalienable playground.





## APPENDIX

### CAPTAINS OF THE ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB, 1815-1908

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1815. William Black.               | 1842. William Skinner.                               |
| 1816. John Forbes of Blackford.    | 1843. Alexander Fraser, City Chamberlain.            |
| 1817. The Lord Kennedy.            | 1844. Basil Fisher.                                  |
| 1818.                              | 1845.  |
| 1819. Dr Charles Skene.            | 1846. James Hadden.                                  |
| 1820. Dr Daunev.                   | 1847. James Simpson.                                 |
| 1821. James A. Sandilands.         | 1848. Alexander Sim.                                 |
| 1822. James Grant.                 | 1849. John Angus.                                    |
| 1823. David Chalmers of Westburn.  | 1850. John Blaikie of Craigiebuckler.                |
| 1824. George Sangster.             | 1851. Alexander Davidson of Desswood.                |
| 1825. Alexander Lyall.             | 1852. Robert Shand.                                  |
| 1826. Alexander Bannerman.         | 1853. Hugh Hogarth.                                  |
| 1827. Alexander Hadden.            | 1854. William Allardyce.                             |
| 1828. Arthur Mitchell.             | 1855. Alexander Stronach of Drumallan.               |
| 1829. The Lord Kennedy.            | 1856. Alexander Stronach of Drumallan.               |
| 1830. Charles Chalmers.            | 1857. John Blaikie of Craigiebuckler.                |
| 1831. Captain John Leith, R.N.     | 1858. John Blaikie of Craigiebuckler.                |
| 1832. James Russell of Aden.       | 1859.  |
| 1833. Captain John Leith, R.N.     | 1860.  |
| 1834.                              | 1861. Lieut.-Col. Mackenzie Fraser of Castle Fraser. |
| 1835.                              | 1862.  |
| 1836. Alexander Gordon.            |  |
| 1837. David Chalmers of Westburn.  |  |
| 1838. Newell Burnett of Kyllachie. |  |
| 1839. Newell Burnett of Kyllachie. |  |
| 1840. Lewis Crombie of Kirkhill.   |  |
| 1841. Alexander Gordon.            |  |

## The Aberdeen Golfers

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| <p>1863. Lieut.-Col. Mackenzie Fraser of<br/>Castle Fraser.</p> <p>1864. William Dingwall Fordyce of<br/>Brucklay, M.P.</p> <p>1865. William Dingwall Fordyce of<br/>Brucklay, M.P.</p> <p>1866. Sheriff John Comrie Thomson.</p> <p>1867. Robert Duthie.</p> <p>1868. Robert Duthie.</p> <p>1869. Cornelius Thompson.</p> <p>1870. Patrick H. Chalmers.</p> <p>1871. Patrick H. Chalmers.</p> <p>1872. Charles Rose of Hazelhead.</p> <p>1873. Captain A. D. Fordyce.</p> <p>1874. Sheriff John Dove Wilson.</p> <p>1875. William Jopp.</p> <p>1876. David Littlejohn.</p> <p>1877. Captain H. C. Best, R.N.</p> <p>1878. William Clements Good.</p> <p>1879. George Leslie Jamieson.</p> <p>1880. George Anderson.</p> <p>1881. Thomas Adam, Junior.</p> <p>1882. John Cook.</p> <p>1883. Keith Jopp.</p> <p>1884. Douglass Duncan.</p> <p>1885. Captain H. V. Brooke.</p> | <p>1886. A. P. Hogarth.</p> <p>1887. William Leslie.</p> <p>1888. John Davidson.</p> <p>1889. James Matthews.</p> <p>1890. Rev. C. C. Macdonald.</p> <p>1891. Rev. C. C. Macdonald.</p> <p>1892. A. J. W. Storie.</p> <p>1893. A. J. W. Storie.</p> <p>1894. Sheriff Duncan Robertson.</p> <p>1895. Colonel J. E. Boyes.</p> <p>1896. H. G. Fellowes - Gordon of<br/>Knockespoek.</p> <p>1897. David Littlejohn.</p> <p>1898. J. M. Ferguson.</p> <p>1899. Thomas Cochrane.</p> <p>1900. W. J. Chambers Hunter of<br/>Tillery.</p> <p>1901. W. D. Davidson.</p> <p>1902. George Davidson.</p> <p>1903. Colonel James Davidson of<br/>Balnagask.</p> <p>1904. R. D. Leslie.</p> <p>1905. R. D. Leslie.</p> <p>1906. James Williams.</p> <p>1907. J. G. Paull.</p> <p>1908. Harvey Hall.</p> |
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### SECRETARIES OF THE ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB

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| <p>1815-1819. William Kennedy.</p> <p>1819-1829. Charles Chalmers.</p> <p>1829-1830. Alexander Gordon.</p> <p>1830-1833. John Lumsden Sheriffs.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">1833. Charles Thomson.</p> <p>1833-1842. William Skinner.</p> | <p>1842-1863. Arthur Thomson.</p> <p>1863-1872. David R. Morice.</p> <p>1872-1888. Arthur D. Morice.</p> <p>1888-1893. J. C. Willet.</p> <p>1893- M. M. Duncan.</p> |
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## Appendix

### NOTES REGARDING SOME FORMER MEMBERS AND OFFICIALS OF THE SOCIETY OF GOLFERS AT ABERDEEN AND THE ABERDEEN GOLF CLUB

WILLIAM LITTLEJOHN.—Born 1731. Son of Patrick Littlejohn, merchant in Old Meldrum. Became a builder in Aberdeen, and was a well-known Baillie from 1792 to 1794, and from 1795 to 1797. Littlejohn Street, in those days fashionable, was named after him. Mr Littlejohn was one of the town members of the original Society of Golfers at Aberdeen in 1783, and is at present represented in the membership of the Royal Aberdeen Golf Club by three great-grandsons and one great-great-grandson. He died on 13th June 1806.

ALEXANDER DAUNEY, LL.D.—Alexander Daune, one of the town members of the old Society in 1783, and Captain of the resuscitated Club in 1820, played many parts in his day. A son of the manse (his father was minister of Banchory-Ternan), the subject of this notice was born in 1749, and was an alumnus of King's College 1762-66. Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen in 1776, he held the office of President of that body in the years 1796, 1797, 1808, and 1809. But meantime he had, in 1793, been appointed Collegiate Professor of Civil Law in King's College, and laureated LL.D., succeeding to the full Professorship in 1795. Nor did his legal advancement stop there, for in 1806 he was appointed Sheriff-Substitute of Aberdeenshire, and filled that position until 1829. Besides being a local lawyer of distinction, and a golfer, Sheriff Daune was a patriot, who, in the spirit of the old Scottish statutes, put national defence before golf and football; and so we find him in a leading position in the Volunteer force which was raised in the end of the eighteenth century, and ultimately Lieutenant-Colonel commanding one of the local regiments. Sheriff Daune's death took place in 1833.

DAVID MORICE JOHNSTON.—Born 1804. A Solicitor in London. Presented the Johnston Cup to the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1846. He was a first cousin of Mr D. R. Morice, and uncle of Colonel W. Johnston, C.B., of Newton Dee. He died in 1863.



## The Aberdeen Golfers

### CAPTAINS OF THE GOLF CLUB

LORD KENNEDY OF DUNOTTAR.—Born 4th June 1794. Eldest son of the twelfth Earl of Cassilis (who was also the first Marquis of Ailsa) and father of the thirteenth Earl of Cassilis (second Marquis of Ailsa). Married, 14th May 1814, Eleanor, daughter and heiress of Alexander Allardyce of Dunottar. He resided more or less at Dunottar, hence his connection with Aberdeen. Lord Kennedy was Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1817, and again in 1829. He was a noted expert in almost every department of sport and athletics, but unfortunately he was severely bitten with the gambling and betting tendencies of his time, and lost not only his own but his wife's fortune. He died on 12th August 1832, predeceasing his father.

NEWELL BURNETT OF KYLLACHIE.—The son and partner of Thomas Burnett, Advocate in Aberdeen, he joined the Society of Advocates in 1824, and was President in 1865 and 1866. He was joint County Clerk, Road Clerk, and Clerk of Lieutenancy with his father, and, after his father's death, sole Clerk. He was also Keeper of the Register of Sasines for Aberdeen and Kincardine until it was removed to Edinburgh. In the later years of his life the late Mr John Reid, Advocate, was his partner, the firm being Burnett and Reid. Mr Newell Burnett was Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1838 and 1839. He died in 1878.

ALEXANDER FRASER.—Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in 1823, and was its President in 1861 and 1862. Was appointed City Chamberlain on 26th September 1832, and Depute Town Clerk on 7th January 1856. Mr Fraser was Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club 1843-44. He died 4th December 1865.

JOHN ANGUS.—Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in 1822, and was President of the Society in 1857 and 1858. Appointed Depute Town Clerk on 30th December 1833, and Town Clerk on 15th June 1840. Mr Angus was Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club 1849-50. He died 6th May 1875.

ROBERT SHAND.—“Robbie” Shand, as he was always called, was Captain of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1852, and was well known in Aberdeen for his

## Appendix

social gifts and qualities, being one of those whose leaning was to the lightsome side of life. He became an Advocate in Aberdeen in 1827, and was partner in the well-known firm of Jopp and Shand. He left his fortune to his sisters, one of whom, Miss Margaret Shand, long survived him, and lived to a great age, a charming example of the Scottish lady of the old school.

### SECRETARIES OF THE GOLF CLUB

WILLIAM KENNEDY.—Born 1759 or 1760. Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates 29th November 1783. A great antiquarian, and well known as the author of *Kennedy's Annals*, the second volume of which (p. 171) contains a short account of the starting of the Club in 1780 and its resuscitation in 1815. Mr Kennedy was President of the Society of Advocates 1820 and 1821, and he was the first Honorary Secretary of the Aberdeen Golf Club, holding office from 1815 to 1819. He had the misfortune to suffer from lameness, and we reproduce on page 31, by kind permission of Colonel Johnston, C.B., of Newton Dee, a contemporary caricature of him, from which it will be seen that the artist has not spared him his deformed foot. Mr Kennedy died on the 19th November 1836, aged 77.

CHARLES CHALMERS OF MONKSHILL.—Born 1790. Youngest son of James Chalmers (the second) of the *Aberdeen Journal*. Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates 21st November 1812. Succeeded to Monkshill in 1828. He was one of the promoters of the Aberdeen Town and County Bank, and was for twenty years a Director. Mr Chalmers was at first in business on his own account, but his firms afterwards were, successively, Chalmers and Farquhar, C. and J. H. Chalmers, and C. and P. H. Chalmers. He was President of the Society of Advocates 1840 and 1841, and Honorary Secretary of the Golf Club from 1819 to 1829, and Captain in 1830. Mr Chalmers died 28th November 1877, aged 87.

ALEXANDER GORDON.—Son of Charles Gordon, Advocate in Aberdeen (1783–1835). Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates 19th November 1814. For upwards of thirty years previous to his death was Commissary Clerk of Aberdeenshire, an office which his father held before him. He

## The Aberdeen Golfers

was President of the Society of Advocates 1846 and 1847. Mr Gordon was Honorary Secretary of the Golf Club in 1829-30. He died 28th April 1855.

JOHN LUMSDEN SHERIFFS.—Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates 13th November 1818. He was Honorary Secretary of the Golf Club from 1830 to 1833. He died 11th May 1852.

CHARLES THOMSON.—Held office as Honorary Secretary of the Golf Club for one year, in 1833. He was admitted a member of the Society of Advocates on 11th June 1832, but seems to have left Aberdeen soon afterwards, and he ceased to contribute to the funds of the Society, and to be a member, in the early "seventies."

WILLIAM SKINNER.—Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in 1829. He was the great-grandson of the Rev. John Skinner of Linshart, author of *Tullochgorum*, and nephew of Bishop William Skinner of Aberdeen. In the later years of his life his firm was Skinner and Wilsone. Mr Skinner was Honorary Secretary of the Golf Club from 1833 to 1842. He died 19th November 1861.

ARTHUR THOMSON.—Born 1800. For twenty-seven years previous to his death, which occurred on 13th September 1863, he was agent of the Bank of Scotland in Aberdeen. Mr Thomson was an enthusiastic supporter of the Volunteer movement at its inception in 1859, and one of the most regular of the playing members of the Golf Club, of which he was Honorary Secretary from 1842 to 1863.

DAVID ROBERT MORICE.—Born at Aberdeen 12th October 1816. Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen 1837. In 1866 appointed Legal Assessor to the town of Aberdeen, an office which had been held by his father and grandfather, but was abolished on Mr D. R. Morice's death. Published *A Handbook of British Maritime Law*, London, 1857, and *Conveyancing Made Easy*, Aberdeen, 1857. From 1859 until his death he resided at Old Aberdeen, and was a magistrate, and for some time provost, of that burgh, which had its own magistrates and town council until it was merged in the municipality of Aberdeen by Act of Parliament in 1891.



## Appendix

He was for a number of years also in the Town Council of Bervie. Mr Morice was Honorary Secretary of the Aberdeen Golf Club from 1863 to 1872. He died on 27th March 1876.

ARTHUR DAVID MORICE.—Born at Aberdeen 23rd October 1843. M.A., Aberdeen, 1863. Son of David R. Morice. Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1868. Admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen 1870, and conducted the legal business established by his great-grandfather, and carried on by his grandfather and father. He succeeded his father as Honorary Secretary of the Aberdeen Golf Club in 1872, and held the office till 1888, when he retired owing to ill-health. Mr Morice died in 1894.

*The photographs of the Club Trophies and many of the portraits are by  
Messrs Morgan, Aberdeen.*

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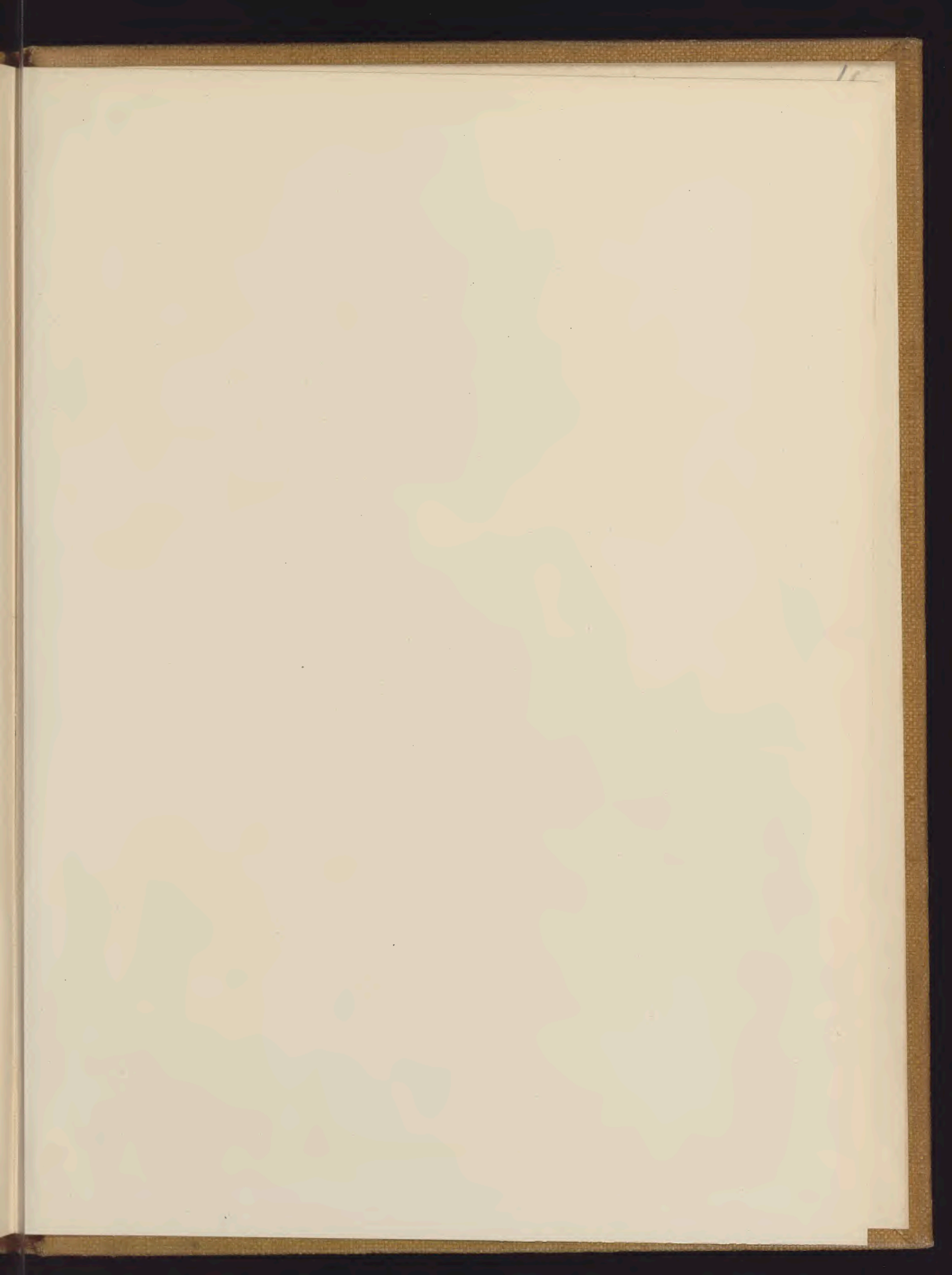


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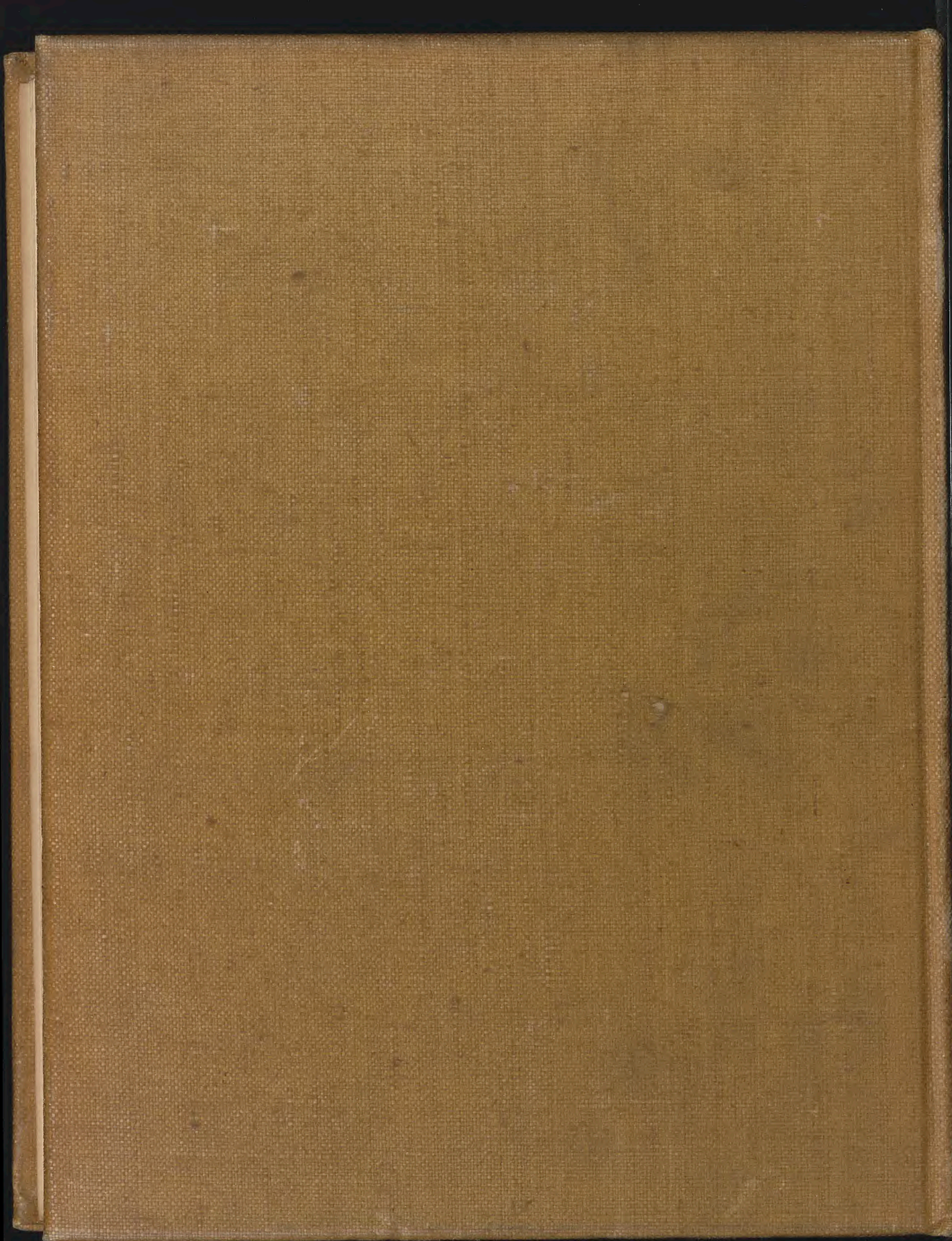


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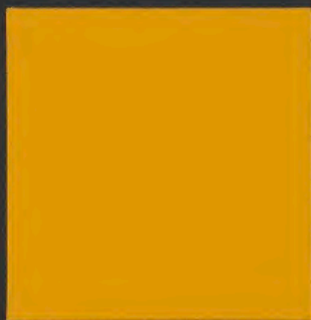






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