

# Reminiscings 53 Years Ago

Looking back to those years one wonders if things could really have been like that. Take the machinery of those days, a chain driven mower that had to be pushed and pulled over the greens by two men, no ball bearings, just brass bushes for the cylinder to run in. Hard going! You couldn't hope to mow eighteen greens a day. Fairways were mown with larger but similar machines, drawn by a horse.

The course was lucky to be mown full over in one week and grass grew up to one's ears. Greens were full of weeds of every description, weeding was a hands and knees job with daisy diggers when we had the time. A good job players didn't grumble so much. No water for the greens. A gloriously easy time for the staff in hot weather. Greens turned brown and mowing stopped.

We wormed the greens twice a year in February and November, a dirty job having to cart water from the nearest ditch, stream or stand pipe, mixing up various potent liquids, applying with watering can and sweeping up worms of all colours. The situation became as bad again the following year or even within a few weeks if the weather suited them as far as breeding was concerned.

Every greenkeeper was supposed to have his own wonderful fertiliser mixture. There was no one to guide him but if he grew grass he was a wonder. Then if he had time, out on the course with a scythe, trying to cope with the rough and making a few perks from lost golf balls.

Sometimes there were sheep on the course fouling the greens, perhaps up to 200 sleeping at night on one green leaving it covered with droppings which all had to be cleaned off. We accepted this as part of our job (wages thirty bob or less for Head Greenkeeper) and we were moderately happy.

We had our own little golf on Sundays, with our little old bag with Brassy or Baffy, Mid Iron, Mashie, Nibblich and putter and what wonders we did with them, more than we can do with clubs today. The guttie ball was just passing on and "Challengers", "Whynots", etc. were just coming in. What a difference they made!!

I could go on reminiscing but I'm afraid the young Head Greenkeepers of today would get weary if I said any more to prove how fortunate they are to be doing their apprenticeship or being in charge today with the modern machinery, artificial watering, selective weed killing, advice on diseases, the best chemical manures and removal of worms. So I had better stop. But think about it lads.

C.R.C.

Nice to hear from Clarie Cooke again.—Editor.

## well-seasoned.

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