

## CHAPTER V

### BUNKERS

The Evolution of Bunkers—The Function of Bunkers—How to Construct—Artificial Hills—When to Bunker a Course.

#### The Evolution of Bunkers

In the early days of Golf, both Golf Architecture and greenkeeping were unknown sciences, and the game was played on the links by the sea without any special preparation of any sort or kind. There were no greens, tees, bunkers or fairways, as they are known to-day.

The bunkers that existed originated, as a general rule, from a fault in the turf, possibly started by rabbits, which allowed the wind to blow out the sand and so form holes or pits of various depth and size.

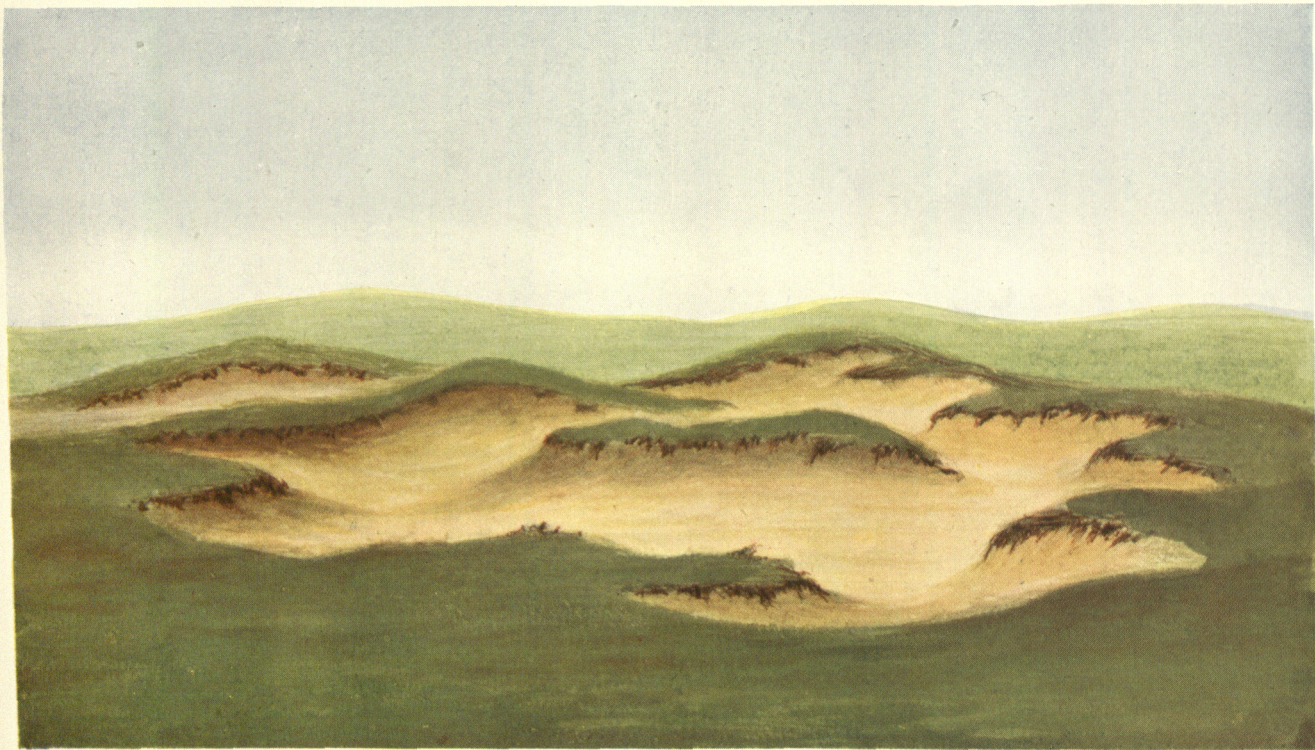
To be bunkered in the old days was considered as a "rub of the green," and not necessarily punishment for a bad shot. As the game developed, bunkers which were considered to be in inconvenient positions were filled up and others made, which bring us to the very ugliest period when cross rampart bunkers and circular or half-moon pots were all the rage.

They never appealed to me, however, and as far back as 1903 I was doing my little best to persuade those interested to copy nature rather than to construct bunkers on symmetrical and what later became conventional lines.

This period of vulgarity has passed, but, unfortunately, unless we are careful, the present style, which is the best attempt to copy nature so far, will become standardised and conventional, as some Architects, to save trouble or from lack of imagination, produce the same type time after time.

#### The Function of Bunkers

They should be sufficiently wide and deep to catch and retain the type of shot they are designed to stop. Constructed in such a way as to give a player a reasonable chance to regain the fairway in one shot. Their height and



A GROUP OF ARTIFICIAL HAZARDS DIVIDING FAIRWAYS DESIGNED BY T. SIMPSON

depth should be governed by their width, so as to guard against impossible lies, if too narrow and deep, or, worse still, from players playing out long shots, as they sometimes can, if they are very wide and shallow, or guarded by insignificant mounds.

In all cases they should be made to look as natural as possible. This can only be done by taking every advantage of the lie of the land, and by avoiding symmetrical and artificial designs.

### **How to Construct**

I realise the impossibility of an unlimited variation in size and shape, and also the difficulty in giving any real instruction on this point. It must be left very largely to the imagination of the Architect, and the Foreman in charge of the work, who can get a huge variation by exploiting to the utmost the size, shape and depth of the bunkers themselves, the mound work, the use of rushes and tufts of coarse grasses, and by reveting the faces in some places and throwing up sand in others.

There are, however, a few good rules that are worth keeping in mind.

The face should be steep, broken and irregular, with tongues of turf encroaching on the sand, whilst the backs should be long, irregular, and so sweeping and gentle that they lose themselves in the surrounding ground.

When it is impossible to dig bunkers in the ordinary way owing to defective drainage, the difficulty can be overcome by making a mound with a scooped-out face for the sand or a series of mounds with sanded valleys.

### **Artificial Hills**

Hummocks or dune-like grassy mounds and grassy hollows, of variable size and shape, height and depth, make a pleasing change and very good hazards, especially when it is difficult to make ordinary sand bunkers owing to drainage difficulties, or in cases where the cost of sand makes its use almost prohibitive. They are also very useful for making the approach shot more interesting when the ground is dead level or nearly so, and more character is required for the hole.

### **When to Bunker a Course**

It is generally accepted nowadays that the bunkers should be made at the same time as the course. Those

around the greens, anyhow, cannot be made at any other time, because in fact they are part and parcel of them.

The bunkers through the green can be put in at any time without loss; and in cases where finance is difficult, it is perhaps as well to defer their construction so that the whole of the funds available can be used for the more important work of constructing the greens and fairways.