



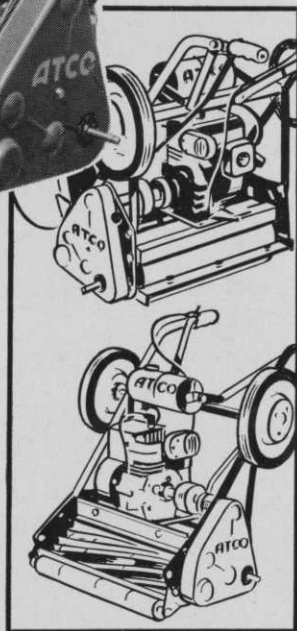
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HON. EDITOR: F. W. HAWTREE



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SEPTEMBER

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 **FISONS**

TEE SHOTS



by the Editor

Stoke Poges Golf Club last month asked Eton Rural District Council for permission to put up a 123 ft. long, 30 ft. high fence to protect a new house. Councillor Gasson thought it would be wrong to subsidise the inaccuracies of Stoke Poges golfers. The Chairman, Hugh Hughes, went one better. The fence would be a slight on the skill of golfers. "As one who is inherently a slicer, I object to having my slice cut off."

* * * *

Workshop Golf Club is selling the turf from three greens and one and a half fairways, surplus to requirements after their recent extensions. Club members have put in bids for some of it, but Club Secretary Mr Harold Alker says that whoever wants part of a green for his lawn will have to get it from whoever buys the lot.

* * * *

Arnold Palmer is giving away a million paper table napkins to hotels and guest houses in Margate. There is an Arnold Palmer Putting Course on the seafront.

* * * *

The Joint Links Committee has decided that a bunker in the middle of the 8th fairway and another in the 14th of the Eden course are either redundant or unfair to women golfers. Either way, they are to be filled in.

* * * *

A new ball harvester from Japan is said to be able to pick up 10,000 golf balls an hour, which is nearly three every second. The machine is a hybrid—somewhere between a lawn mower and a carpet sweeper and is hand operated. Phew!



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AN OLD MEMBER LOOKS BACK

by S. C. DENNIS

At the moment I am in hospital with dermatitis contracted it seems over the years using the chemical products of my trade.

I therefore have time to reminisce over the past 50 years in greenkeeping. Things have certainly changed, since January 1919 when I started.

I was 14 and had just left school. My father died young leaving my mother to support two children. My grandparents brought us up under very trying conditions so I had to get out and earn the biggest shilling. That meant taking the first job going. Three months and two jobs later I went into greenkeeping, in those days as much a deadend job as the others.

Our main tasks were brush and roll, cutting with none of the present-day machinery—Shanks and Green's mowers with solid brass bearings clanking over the turf. It was hard work to cut four greens a day. And it was a hard day too. Weekdays 7.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Saturdays 7.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Sunday mornings two hours. Our fairways were cut by horse and machine, about one fairway a day. Sometimes the horses were working up to 8 o'clock on a Saturday evening.

The main dressing for the greens was compost, which to this day is by far the best. For worming we used copper sulphate which did not kill; we had to work like hell to brush them up before they had a chance to return to the soil. The great break-through came between 1924 and 1930, tractors, fertilisers, mowers for worming. Many other things including gang mowers, almost forgot, up-to-date hand machines, running on ball bearings, what a relief after the graft of the years before! Even this was twice as hard as things are today.

Most machines where I worked were sent to the local ironmongers for repair. They were often returned no better than

they left. They seemed to have been sharpened with a file.

Round about this time Ransomes were starting their repair service, which was to become the best thing ever from the greenkeepers point of view.

We were about to have a properly repaired machine, something we could work with; this was the start of, to my mind, the greatest advance in greenkeeping up to then.

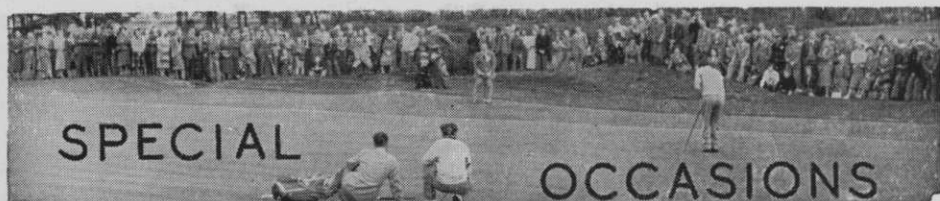
The first tractor was the Metro on the old Ford chassis, Pattissons converted it; the drive was fixed, large rear wheels, with a big cog on the inner rim; these driven by nobles races from the driving shaft. If the engine stopped so did the tractors. It was immovable. We had many ways of starting jacking up with the jack wheel, or releasing the brake from the ratchet a little so that the clutch was released as well—both made starting much easier. Brake and clutch were all in one, two gears forward and reverse only.

It was this last way of starting these tractors that caused many accidents. One to my knowledge proved fatal in 1932. The late Ted Dunn's son had not long taken over Worcester Park Course; he had started the engine and as the tractor moved forward it knocked him down and the back wheels with long spikes passed over him.

I first joined the B.G.G.A. in 1926. The late Mr Catchpole of Ransomes came to Sonning where I was an assistant. His first words were "Do you belong to the B.G.G.A.?" I said "No". "Very well, then you do now, I will pay your first sub."

About 1930 the Research Station had just started and what was the Acid Theory was being advocated. Tom Mason was much in favour of this treatment. I, on the other hand, was not

(contd. on p. 6)



- | | | | |
|---------|--|---|--|
| AUGUST | 11th
12th
13th | } | B.G.G.A. Annual Tournament—Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club. |
| SEPT. | 11th
17th
16th
17th
18th
24th
24th
25th
25th | } | Southern Section Autumn Tournament—Crews Hill G.C.
Northern Section Autumn Tournament—Huddersfield G.C.
N.A.G. Exhibition—Motspur Park.
Welsh Section Autumn Meeting—Carmarthen Golf Club.
Midland Section Autumn Tournament—Sutton Coldfield G.C.
Southern Section visit to ATCO.
North East Section Autumn Tournament—Morpeth G.C. |
| OCTOBER | 9th
15th
16th
16th | | Midland Section v. Secretaries Match—Sutton Coldfield G.C.
Southern Section Greenkeepers v. Secretaries.
North-West Section Autumn Tournament—Bolton G.C.
Northern Section v. Sheffield Section Match—Halifax G.C. |

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(contd. from p. 4)

so much in favour; we had our little heated fors and againsts, but we always parted the best of friends. In 1929 I had just taken over Sonning at the age of 24 which in those days was very unusual. Unlike today, you were never considered for a head job with less than five years' experience. Tom Mason was Head Greenkeeper at Hendon for as long as I can remember; he was a few years older than me, but I tried to keep up with him. We often sat and compared our experiences but compost was always the basis of good turf. Greenkeepers before the last war had plenty of time to experiment. We just saw that things were done. I, myself, had a staff of eight, each man saw that the tools he used were looked after and put away clean. A large amount of unemployment kept staff with one club for years, unless they took over a course elsewhere. I myself trained three such men.

Our Annual Tournaments were great fun and often a hundred or more would attend. So many piling into a train carriage with their assortment of clubs and baggage was a sight to be seen.

After the first morning's practice and the afternoon annual meeting we would hold the auction in the evening; there always seemed to be a lot of money around for this event then; not so today; it's a long time since this auction has taken place.

The weather in our play as well as our work has played some funny tricks. I recall to mind our visit to the Research Station in 1930 in a practice round at Hawkworth near Bingley. I was playing with the late Ted Berry, his handicap was plus 1, a great golfer, the rain fell in bucketfuls half way round the course. We were both soaked to the skin. Getting to the 18th green his ball lay in a deep bunker guarding the green, in at least 2½ ft of water. His remark was, "Stan, I can't get any wetter; here goes, straight in to get this ball".

The competition proper followed the next day with seniors marking for juniors, either in the morning or afternoon, changing over next day. I once played with Ted Dunn—he off 7, me off

4. We finished in 75, he 75 on the first day and I led the field by two shots.

Next day I was going well until the 11th a hole about 260 yards with a stone wall running close to the green. Here I met trouble; going for the green I put nine balls out of bounds. I took the last ball out of the bag, put it on the green, and holed the putt for an 11. Out of bounds was fortunately distance only there.

During the war I was discharged from the Army, in April 1941. I did not go back to Sonning at once but to Calcot, on the other side of Reading. It had been run by one of my former assistants who was still in the Army. I recall a long list of old friends—Ted Dunn, Arthur Tydeman, Fred Ney, Alf Honby, Charlie Saunders, Bill Smithers, Dave Ness, Mac Maclean, Charlie Fry, Tom Bridges and the Mason brothers to name just a few. After the war the Association had to be reorganised. There was very little money in the kitty but Sir Emsley Carr of the *News of the World* gave us 100 guineas to put us on our feet. Our founder, the late F. G. Hawtree, worked hard in every way to help all members of the B.G.G.A., and the greenkeepers of the twenties and thirties have done much to help the young ones into their positions today. Now they have opportunity to make real progress in wages and conditions and knowledge.

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BOTANICAL NAMES FOR PLANTS

by R. HAWTHORN

Botanical names! *Lolium perenne*! *Anthoxanthum odoratum*! *Lotus corniculatus*! Probably these have caused more worries to groundsmen, especially in examinations, than any other section of the syllabus, and yet if groundsmen and candidates thought a little differently about these names, there might not be the same terrific problem. I suppose most people approach these things parrot-like: they learn by heart that the botanical name for a daisy is "*Bellis perennis*" and the name itself means nothing to them. It is forgotten that these botanical names were derived to make easier the identification and classification of plants.

These botanical names are usually derived from Latin, and have been used for hundreds of years. Why was Latin used in the first place? This language was understood by educated people throughout the world in the Middle Ages—when the first attempts were made to identify plants—and although fewer people study and know Latin today, it is still used by scientists as an international language.

When plants were collected and used for various purposes, it was necessary to be able to tell them apart. Early, primitive people knew that some plants had leaves or fruits that could be eaten, and some provided poisons which could be used on arrows; others could be used as dressings on wounds or as medicines. Do you ever remember as a child when you were stung by a nettle and you went looking for a dock leaf? You put this on the nettle sting, and almost miraculously the pain of the sting seemed to lessen.

It was the collection of plants for medicinal uses that formed the basis of botany in most parts of the world until the sixteenth century. Today there are more than 2,000 species found wild in the British Isles, but the story of the gradual building up of botanical knowledge begins in the far off days of the

primitive people gathering medicinal herbs and it was only in the middle of the sixteenth century, during the Renaissance, that the crude lore of the medicine man began to give way to the knowledge of the scientists.

Beginnings of British Botany

William Turner, a Northumbrian who was a student of medicine in 1520 at Cambridge, mentioned some 300 native species of plants, which he described from his own observation and experience. Slightly later, Mathias de l'Obel, a Flemish doctor who settled in England in 1568, managed to identify another 80 plants which were unknown to Turner.

In 1629, an expedition left London and headed into the wilds of Kent.

This, although the people concerned may not have realised it, was a landmark in British field botany, because they set out with the intention of looking for plants as plants, and not as herbs for medicinal use. In all these early stages of the identification of plants, there would be a mass of description of leaf shapes, colour or flower characteristics. They would be known by a long, descriptive sentence, which to say the least, would be unwieldy.

John Ray

John Ray now enters the scene, and he seems to have been a remarkable man. A blacksmith's son, he was born in Essex in 1627, and through the interest of the vicar of Braintree, who must have sensed something special about Ray, he went up to Catherine Hall, Cambridge. He eventually became a Fellow and then a tutor. He also published a catalogue of plants found in Cambridgeshire, but this was something more than a list of plants found in a limited area in Britain, for Ray tried to sort out the chaos of cross-references, long and obscure descriptions, and he

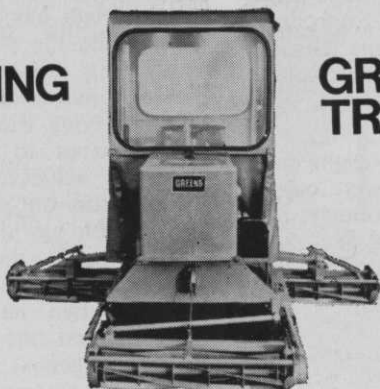
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(contd. from p. 8)

went a long way towards doing just that.

He produced a manageable mixture of names on which he and his successors were able to build a sound knowledge of our plant life. He went on to produce other books, one of which was the first and long-awaited complete description of British flora, which about this time listed about 1,000 species.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, plenty of botanists were carrying on Ray's work in this country, but nothing out of the ordinary had happened. Indeed, in the year 1734 one professor of botany at Cambridge did not deliver a single lecture—because there were no students there to hear him! British botany certainly seemed to be at low ebb.

Linnaeus

In Sweden, however, something new had happened. Carl von Linne, known to the world by his Latin name Linnaeus, was building his system of classification that was soon to take the botanical world by storm. He hit upon a very simple and very useful method of plant identification. He pointed out that the number of stamens in a flower is always the same in the same kind of plant—any flower in the Iris family, for example, always has three, any flower in the Amaryllis family has six, and so on. This classification system was most effective, but Linnaeus himself realised that it was not a natural one. Plants with the same number of stamens were not necessarily closely related. For instance, the mint, with its opposite leaves, square stems, strong smell and four stamens is obviously related to the sages which share these characteristics—and different only in the number of the stamens, sages only having two. A more natural system would have been one that classified plants by their ancestry and how they developed. This, indeed, is the now generally accepted system that has been evolved by the people who give plants their names.

In spite of the simpler method of

naming plants introduced by Linnaeus, it is possible that the system would not have had such appeal if it had not also introduced the "bi-nomial" method of naming the plant, instead of the cumbersome polynomial method in use before. The bi-nomial method simply means that the plant has only two parts to its name, while the polynomial name had three, four or more parts to it. Linnaeus undertook the task of naming and classifying the whole living world from beetroot to butterflies. What is more, he achieved his objective; he brought order out of chaos, and indexed the vegetable world on a basis so sound and acceptable, that to this day most of his names are still in use.

Of the two names given to each plant, the first one is the generic name (group of genus). This, if you like, corresponds to our surname, the family name, but calling it a family name *can* cause some confusion, especially when natural orders get involved. The second name, the specific name (species) is only given to one plant of the same genus—liken this, if you like, to a person's

(contd. on p. 12)

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