

England's Wartime Upkeep Problems

J GAULT, greenkeeper of the Westgate-on-the-Sea GC, tells of some of the problems English greenkeepers are having in war-time. Mr. Gault writes in *Parks, Golf Courses and Sports Grounds of London*:

Owing to a decided scarcity of golf at seaside resorts these days, there may be a tendency to allow nature its full sway, for the time being at any rate. Such treatment if pursued, will soon lead to a rapid deterioration of fine turf on putting greens, etc.

Grass does not grow to any appreciable extent during hot dry weather; especially is this the case after the grass has seeded. For the moment natural function of growth appears to cease unless, of course, the plant foods in the soil are released by the action of rain or of ordinary watering.

There is a difference between the action of rain and artificial watering. A great deal depends on the source of the water supply, in other words, on the amount of calcium, etc., present.

When we consider that water is used for a variety of purposes on fine turf throughout the year, the importance of the analysis of water may become more clear, and I might mention that many scientifically inclined people have attempted to balance the calcium in the water by the use of other chemicals and have come to grief in the process.

There can be no question but that some soils do need calcium in some form; the trouble in most instances is not caused nearly so much by the quality of the water applied as by the quantity. Soil nutriment are to a great extent soluble and are thus easily washed beyond the roots of the grass and then the unfortunate turf is expected to carry on and keep healthy on the poor thin clay which is left adhering to the roots.

What sensible gardener would wash away all the good soil from around the roots of his plants? Very few, I imagine, and yet this sort of thing is continually happening on the sports grounds today.

There are many excellent types of sprinklers on the market today and there should be a number of these on every golf course where water is laid on, or is procurable by pumping. Staffs have been cut down to such an extent that hand watering is no longer a practical propo-

sition; one man can easily attend to quite a number of sprinklers and see that the turf is evenly watered, and small parts missed by the circular spray can be attended to by hand.

I have always been an advocate of close mowing when such is practicable, but here venture to remark that after nearly three months continual drought, such as has been the case here, the shaving of turf should be cut right out of the program. Unfortunately many greenkeepers are faced with the problem of keeping the greens in condition not so much for play now as for the resumption of play after the war.

When mowers are raised many weeds are allowed to seed close to the ground, and if the soil is kept damp a beautiful crop of clovers, dandelions, etc., will be the reward for carelessness now.

For really objectionable weeds there is little to choose between the clovers and dandelions; both make putting a nightmare and both are extremely difficult to eliminate when they become established in the turf.

With the shortage of petrol these days many fairways are allowed to harbour a formidable array of seeding weeds and if the greenkeeper is not very much on the alert many of these objectionable growths will soon form a permanent part of the foliage.

How many people fully realize the folly of keeping their greens short of fertilizer? If they don't do so now they will appreciate the situation by about this time next year; a close dense surface is the best safeguard against weeds and extremes in weather condition, so the best policy is to apply a certain amount of fertilizer when possible, and at the same time, to make sure that it is not being washed away with overdoses of water!

Nature has a reason for every phase of weather conditions, and nature certainly never meant turf to be kept green and damp throughout the year. Mildew, fungi and sour soil are the reward of interfering with nature's plans, so let us give up trying to be clever and help nature all we can. Cut out all the unnecessary work and carry out only the essentials.

While fairways are left uncut, large weeds should be dealt with by means of a scythe or sickle; never allow weeds to

seed—the time is always well spent in keeping down objectionable growths.

I have heard of some unfortunate results of sheep on the golf course and am forced to the conclusion that those in charge must be neglecting ordinary tidying-up. Boys can do it, so why have filthy courses and spongy turf, dirty bunkers and burned out putting greens. Better to have sheep on the golf course than to have the turf ploughed over for food production. Many mistakes were made in the last war, and lots of poor soil was put under the plough; let us hope it will not occur again this time.

TAM LIGHTS THE WAY

"DEBT Free—Mortgage Free—No Assessments" is the new slogan of the Tam O'Shanter Country Club, Chicago. George S. May, Tam O'Shanter's presi-



Burning Tam O'Shanter's mortgage are (r. to l.): Mrs. George S. May, W. A. Weismann, club sec'y, George S. May, and L. B. Icely, president of Wilson Sporting.

dent, and Mrs. May burned the club's mortgage at a celebration on Nov. 21, attended by more than 400 members and guests.

The Tam O'Shanter clubhouse was destroyed by fire in April, 1936. Since that time, Tam has been built into a modern country club and has become the scene of the annual All-American Open and All-American Amateur tournaments.

A total of \$167,000 in war bonds was purchased by 506 members and their guests in order to attend Tam O'Shanter's annual New Year's celebration. Admission

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by war bonds with the party "on the club" was the novel idea of the management and the patriotic response of club members was immediate and beyond all expectations.

WHAT'S NEW

Crawford, MacGregor, Canby Company, Dayton, Ohio, manufacturers of Tourney golf clubs and other golf equipment (that is, when we are not at war) mailed pros and friends a clever greeting card this



holiday season. The card tied MacGregor and the equipment they ordinarily make with their war effort, with Uncle Sam, with Santa Claus, with the New Year, and with defeat of the Adolfo-Benito-Hirohito triumvirate.

The MacGregor card significantly showed golf helping to defeat the Axis, as it actually is doing in many ways through other war machines and war effort. Also, golf equipment that remains available for resale and for play is helping by doing its share of the job of keeping America physically fit. The company is 100% on war production in its large Dayton manufacturing plant, but, according to Clarence H. Rickey, president, a good stock of golf clubs remain available to pros for the current season. He states, however, that pros should anticipate their needs as early as possible because shortages may occur before the playing season's entire requirements have been met.

Also, Mr. Rickey asked us to mention