

# Story of American Golf Told in Architecture

By **CARL H. ANDERSON**

**A**MERICAN golf architecture reflects every detail of change and progress in American golf.

It has been said that the Lord was the architect of St. Andrews and certainly in that classic old course the elements of nature and golf are beautifully blended. In the United States it seldom is possible to get a piece of property that nature designed as a site for what originally was a game on a Scotch seaside pasture.

Hence the story of American golf has been told, and is being told in its courses.

First, there is told the story of the population trends. The earlier American clubs generally were laid out convenient for a rich or very well-to-do class.

Then, of course, there is the story of development in the standard of play. Our earlier courses were laid out primarily for duffers and the fact that, in some cases, they were also excellent tests for the better golfers of those early days is a tribute to the genius of the pioneer architects. Now the general idea has changed; the better courses are designed to be "championship" with alternative routes making the play pleasant for the players who pay the bills.

The chronicle of progress in club and ball design and construction is told by the courses. With all the concern and controversy about the longer ball and the great improvement in clubs, many of the short holes designed and built in the '20s still manage to defy the par-busters so it does seem possible that the answer to the long ball lies in approach shot trapping and greens contouring.

## **Maintenance Influences Design**

Course maintenance methods tell their story in the changes of design. The necessity of mechanized maintenance, the realization of relationship between poor drainage and turf disease, the fitting of landscaping into design, newer grass strains to stand up well under local conditions; all have had considerable effect on course architecture.

Fairway watering has had not only a great effect on architecture but even on the type of swing. On the old, unwatered fair-

ways the good players had swings for long roll on hard ground. Now, with watered fairways the carry must be very long.

And reference to modern watering of course brings in the story of engineering in association with golf architecture. It is better engineering, especially in the handling of earth, that has made possible a lot of excellent modern American golf architecture without prohibitive building costs.

Then there is the story of development in agronomy that is closely connected with progress in golf architecture. I recall getting samples of grasses for Florida course use from the Green Section that I tested years ago and was acutely reminded of the relationship between the type of turf and design for the required shot.

But all the foregoing are the cold, technical parts of the story of American golf as told in its courses. The personalized story of telling the growth of an art is not as obvious.

The fascination the game has for its players also is reflected in the design of its courses. When I started 55 years ago as a caddie getting a dime a round and 40 cents for a day's work at the Brockton (Mass.) CC I began even then to see players thrill in the triumph of an architectural problem happily solved by skill—or luck. And the mistakes were punished enough by architecture, in some cases, to make the game an exciting challenge.

As captain of the Winthrop (Mass.) high school basketball team, I went into intercollegiate golf competition and in Boston, in 1908 had the good fortune to beat Francis Ouimet and Bill Flynn (later to be one of the famed golf architectural and construction firm of Toomey and Flynn.) Then I began to appreciate that the architecture of the course was my unseen opponent, teacher and benefactor.

## **Old Pros and Course Design**

The old professionals charmed me and instructed me with their talk of golf architecture and how to play the shot the architecture demanded.

I turned professional as the result of learning to play those shots. To learn what

was back of the shot-making problems I took a course in surveying and mapping at Columbia university summer school, and worked my way across the Atlantic on a cattleboat to study St. Andrews and other great Scotch and English courses.

In competition with those marvelous masters of yesteryear, Alex Smith, John Black, Tom Kerrigan, Hagen, Barnes, Armour and the rest of them; in working with old masters who were not only fine players but excellent clubmakers, such as Jack and Hugh Gordon, Bill Entwistle, J. H. T. Brown, Jim Murphy, Frank Thayer, James Huish, Claude Cameron, my brother Ernest (an early sec. of the PGA), Arthur Reid (Wilf's brother), and the rest of them, I further learned the delight and the mystery of golf architecture.

Then as a golf salesman for Wright and Ditson and for Wilson I got more insight into the manner in which architecture influences club design—and the contrary, too, in the case of the ball.

Then those pioneers of golf architecture in America, Alex Findlay, Tom Bendelow and Donald Ross, with whom I had the joy of studying and working, expanded and deepened my love for the art whose beauty and excitement captivates millions.

But, possibly more than all the other influences that taught me the story of golf architecture were the happy and instructive hours teaching and playing rounds with members of clubs I served as pro. Part of the delight of golf is in getting a youngster such as Jess Sweetser, whose dad brought him around for lessons, teaching him all you can and being richly rewarded by having him learn more, then thinking about how he will have to pass his examinations under the testing conditions of golf architecture.

### **Grainger to be Made USGA President, Jan. 28**

**I**SAAC B. GRAINGER of New York, will take office as the USGA's 33d president when the association holds its 60th annual meeting, Sat., Jan. 23, at the Vanderbilt hotel, New York City. Grainger was named by the USGA Nominating committee, headed by James D. Standish, Jr., to be elevated from the USGA vice-presidency. Nominating committee selections are tantamount to election.

Grainger has been a member of the USGA Executive committee since 1945, was Sec. from 1946 through 1949 and a Vp since

1950. He is Chairman of the Rules of Golf committee and was formerly Chairman of the Amateur Status and Conduct committee. He was Pres., Metropolitan Golf Association (N. Y.) from 1943 through 1945.

Grainger, who was born in Wilmington, N. C., and was graduated from Princeton University in 1917, has been a resident of the Metropolitan New York area since 1934 and is Executive Vp of the Chemical Bank and Trust Co., New York. He is a member of the Montclair (N. J.) GC; the Links Golf Club, Roslyn, N. Y.; the National Golf Links of America, Southampton, N. Y.; the Pine Valley, GC, Clementon, N. J.; the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland; and The Links Club, New York, N. Y.

As Chairman of the Rules of Golf Committee, he participated in the conferences with representatives of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland, in England and Scotland in 1951 which developed the first uniform code of rules.

Grainger will succeed Totton P. Heffelfinger, Minneapolis, Minn. Heffelfinger has been a USGA official since 1942 and served as president during the last two years.

Other changes in the USGA administration:

John D. Ames, Chicago, Ill., will be a Vp to succeed Grainger. Ames is now Secretary.

Richard S. Tufts, Pinehurst, N. C., has been re-nominated to be a Vp.

Charles B. Grace, Philadelphia, has been nominated to be sec. to succeed Ames.

Charles L. Peirson, Boston, Mass., has been re-nominated to be treasurer.

Thomas H. Choate, New York, N. Y., Gordon E. Kummer, Milwaukee, Wis., and F. Warren Munro, Portland, Ore., have been nominated to the Executive committee to succeed Heffelfinger, Lewis A. Lapham, New York, N. Y., and Corydon Wagner, Tacoma, Wash. Heffelfinger is retiring after the customary two years as president and Lapham and Wagner have asked to be relieved because of the pressures of business.

Nominated for the 1955 Nominating Committee: George W. Blosson, Jr., Chicago, Ill., Chairman; C. W. Benedict, White Plains, N. Y.; Robert W. Goldwater, Phoenix, Ariz.; Richmond Gray, Richmond, Va.; and Hal A. Hite, Detroit, Mich.

In addition to Standish, the present Nominating committee comprises: Jerome P. Bowes, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; W. Hamilton Gardner, Buffalo, N. Y.; Gerald H. Phipps, Denver, Colo.; and William McWane, Birmingham, Ala.