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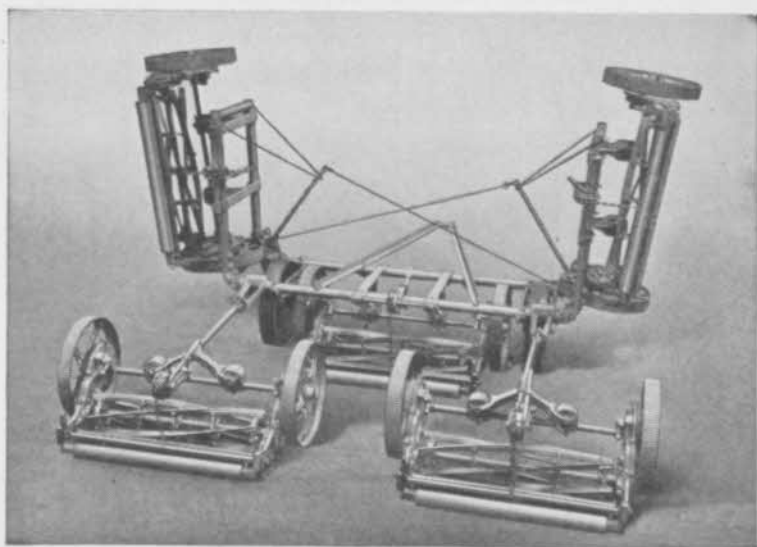
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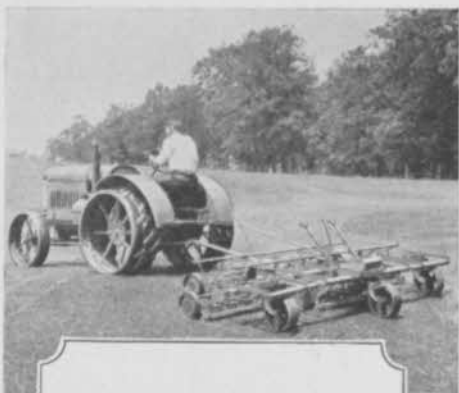
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Golfdom

THE BUSINESS JOURNAL OF GOLF

MAY, 1928

Business Tourist Probes Into Golf Business

By CHARLES WILLIAMSON

I AM a stranger to you and to all except one or two managing officials throughout the golf world, but I have a few things to say which I think will be of interest to your company, the greenkeepers at large and greens-chairmen everywhere.

Having a definite business, which would not interest you or your readers, but one requiring that I call on all the golf clubs, it is sufficient to state that I have practically completed an automobile trip of some 28,000 miles consuming one year and four months time during which I have visited all the metropolitan areas and talked with more than two thousand greenkeepers, superintendents or managers of golf club properties and parks.

First, I wish to compliment you, if I may, on the fact that GOLFDOM seems to reach the hands of every greenkeeper, and park superintendent and is appreciated to the extent that they inquired whether or not I was connected with your organization. Having satisfactorily assured them that I was not, they proceeded to extol the value of your magazine and the ideas they obtain from the articles written by practi-

cal and experienced golf club officials and employes. I should like to go into the details of the many conversations I had with these superintendents, greenkeepers and managers to tell you of their problems but since each seems to have its own peculiarity or diversion of contingency, I am afraid my letter would be too greatly extended to be of interest and I am not sure but that you would prefer to have each individual explain his own particular conditions and difficulties that you might offer a solution or plan whereby he could work his way out to more satisfaction for all concerned.

Tribute to Big City Men

In the metropolitan districts I found in the main among greenkeepers very intelli-

We never heard of Charles Williamson, who sent us this letter bearing a southern post-mark, nor can we "tag" his connection with the golf business. He apparently has done some extensive observing and "speaks out in meeting."

He does some able-bodied hammer throwing that does GOLFDOM good in tipping us off to enlist the vigorous co-operation of our readers in getting more advertising. Since he deftly hooks into us for sleeping on the job and we have to accept the impeachment, the smaller town golf club officials and employees he criticizes also might as well try to get some urge toward betterment from his comments.

gent and practical students of turf life. These men seemed to have made a study of greenkeeping, the fundamentals of plant life, the uses of fertilizers, fungus destroyers and the like and having in mind the point of perfection where green maintenance will be reduced to a science from the angle of producing a perfect turf at a minimum expense and maintaining both park and golf

course to the satisfaction of those men for whom these grounds were intended.

It was with great surprise that I learned even in the Metropolitan Districts that most of these greenkeepers and park superintendents were not banded together in an association where they might exchange ideas on the best methods to attain their ends and while some mentioned a greenkeepers association, very few had made any connections whereby the knowledge of one could be obtained by another without a personal interview. For this reason they complimented your paper on your attempt to assist them after knowing that I was not at all interested in any magazine and was not acquainted with your ideas and ideals.

Asks Small-Town Spur

In the rural districts a decided difference was so perceptible that this fact really prompted my writing in hope that you could devise a plan which would benefit the small town clubs and the municipal parks. The information I wish to give now on so-called greenkeepers and superintendents applies also to the house managers of not only golf clubs and parks but private estates because as a rule I found all the employees of each institution to possess about the same caliber of efficiency or shall I say it is possible to place each group of employees in a particular category or class: where we found an intelligent, educated house manager, we found the same type of green superintendent, park superintendent or general overseer and when I found a mediocre or semi-efficient park superintendent or green chairman, I found the same caliber individual in the management of the property.

Not knowing whether it is a part of your system or plan to employ men to investigate the actual conditions prevailing in parks and golf courses throughout the country I may not be able to throw any light on these conditions beyond the fact of your general knowledge but this second point of my epistle is to explain some of the conditions I found with the hope that you may through your magazine become dearer to the hearts of those men who lack information and are hungry to obtain practical rather than scientific or experimental data which will make their work more pleasant while solving their difficulties.

Want Buying Guides

House managers, chefs and housekeepers were seeking information on a thousand

different subjects: places to buy reputable goods, such as refrigerators, dishes, table doilies, floor surfacing machines, vermin exterminators, drinking cups, liquid soaps, etc., while the grounds employees seemed to be shrouded in ignorance concerning those things of common knowledge to the grounds men in the Metropolitan areas.

Ouch! Is This So?

It is my understanding that there are over four thousand golf clubs and some three thousand municipal parks in the United States and with very few exceptions these grounds, outside of the Metropolitan areas, are being cared for by men whose knowledge of turf life, plant life and green maintenance is comparable to that of the average fifteen year old boy if asked questions on the same subject. Farmer boys who know how to hitch a horse or plant corn or run a tractor were greenkeepers or park superintendents or overseers of golf grounds and city parks.

The only knowledge they had of their work was the meager experience they had gained in the past year or two, and, while they are anxious to learn they are not in a position to obtain this knowledge because they do not know where to get it.

Green chairmen seemed unable to help these greenkeepers and so many small towns have golf clubs or golf courses which are in reality nothing more nor less than cow pastures slightly improved by several cuttings. In these towns the members boast of having a golf course but in no place was I brave enough to tell them what their golf course looked like as compared with real Metropolitan golf courses. It would seem then that the education should start with the president of the club or the green chairman that they may know what you really meant when mentioning a golf course and there should be some way of bringing their employees, house managers, greenkeepers and park superintendents for an inspection trip to city parks, city golf clubs and expensive institutions that these men might return home to manage or remodel or improve their own institutions so they might legitimately be classified as golf courses, city parks or private estates.

In hundreds of cases I found men attempting to mow golf courses and parks with horse-or mule-power, antiquated hay mowers, or small gang hand mowers. It is hard to believe, but in twelve or fifteen