



## Poetry For Golf Course Superintendents

Selected by Monroe S. Miller

**Editor's Note:** Although my personal taste for poetry runs toward Robert Frost and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the following verses have golf courses as their focus.

The first offering, entitled *The Proof of a Golfer*, was written by a well known popular poet, Edgar A. Guest. For many years, his poetry appeared daily in *The Detroit Free Press*. It was topical material, featuring the holidays, the weather, people and professions. In our library at home, we have a small volume of his poetry about Easter. He was an all-American writer and chose topics familiar to all.

Mr. Guest was also an avid golfer. He was a longtime member of the *Detroit Golf Club* and a regular on the golf course and in the upstairs *Men's Grill*. He also, as this poem makes clear, had an abiding love of the golf course.

The first time I read this poem was some twenty years

ago when it was offered in a matted, ready-to-frame print from the O.M. Scott & Sons company. More recently it appeared in an issue of *A Patch of Green*, official publication of the *Michigan & Borders Cities Golf Course Superintendents Association*. That issue was September/October 1986 and the then president Kevin Dushane granted his permission to reprint.

The second offering for your reading enjoyment comes by way of Jim Latham, like so much material he is kind enough to pass my way. It is a poem that appeared in the December 1992 issue of *Greenkeeper International*. It was written by C. D. R. Snave and is entitled *The Way It Used To Be*. The lines are fun to read because you can almost hear the accent and see the old Brit speaking the lines.

Enjoy.

### THE PROOF OF A GOLFER

By Edgar A. Guest

The proof of the pudding is the eating they say,  
But the proof of a golfer is not  
The number of strokes he takes in a day  
Or the skill he puts into a shot.  
There is more to the game than the score which you make  
Here's a truth which all golfers endorse:  
You don't improve your worth by the shots which you make,  
But the care which you take of the course.

A golfer is more than a ball-driving brute  
He is more than a mug-hunting czar.  
To be known as a golfer, you don't have to shoot,  
The course of your home club in par.  
But you do have to love every blade of the grass,  
Every inch of the fairway and greens.  
If you don't take care of the course as you pass,  
You're not what "A good golfer" means.

Just watch a good golfer some day when you're out,  
And note what he does as he plays,  
He never goes on leaving divots about  
'Till the grass is put back, there he stays.  
Observe him in traps as he stands for his shot,  
Then note when the ball has been played,  
He never unthinkingly turns from the spot,  
'Till he's covered the footprints he made.

You may brag of your scores and may boast of your skill,  
You may think as a golfer you're good;  
But if footprints you make, in traps you don't fill,  
You don't love the game as you should.  
For your attitude unto the sport you enjoy,  
Isn't proven by brilliance of force;  
The proof of a golfer—now get this my boy,  
Is the care that you take of the course.

### THE WAY IT USED TO BE

By C. D. R. Snave

I were her afore seven this mornin'  
Cuttin' the greens at first light  
An' somewhere a sky lark were singin'  
An' nary a member in sight!

In a lifetime of shovin' this mower  
I must 'ave walked ten thousand mile  
But I backlapped the bitch Monday evenin'  
An' this mornin' she's cuttin' in style.

You can't beat a pram-handled Certes  
On dry turf rollin' along  
With the bent flyin' clean to the grass-box  
An' her cylinder hummin' its song.

There's our Dick down there on the fairway  
I dunno what goes on in 'is mind  
Up an' down up an' down on the Ransomes  
Starin' down at 'is 'oss's behind.

An' ol' Joe's changin' 'oles on the seventh  
Then 'e'll be cuttin' the tees  
Ten hours with a Lloyds Pennsylvania  
By dusk 'e'll be down on 'is knees!

Thirty year it bin sin' I started  
'Ol' 'Arry were greenkeeper then  
An' 'e were a right 'oly terror  
Though always right fair with 'is men.

'E started me rakin' the bunkers  
When I were a lad twelve year old  
An' grubbin' up weeds in all weather  
Come December by God it were cold!

(Continued)

Still the Club's paid me regular wages  
An' I'd die in the mine or the mill  
There must be summat about it  
For me to be slavin' 'ere still.

For it's grand in the sun in the summer  
Satisfyin', if you know what I mean  
If you don't mind that toffee nosed tyrant  
As calls hissself chairman o'green.

'E can't tell 'is grass from 'is elbow  
'E can't tell a green from a tee  
But 'e thinks 'e's God of this golf course  
When the only God round 'ere is me.

## FOR SALE

1983 Jacobsen  
Greensking IV  
with spare engine.

Both in  
good condition.

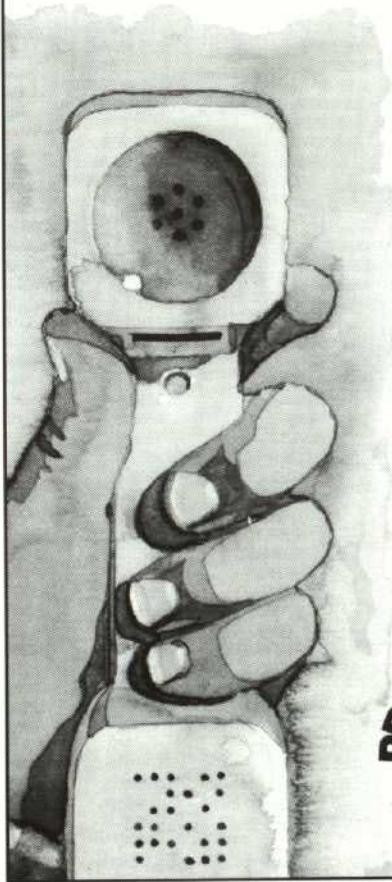
\$2,500

Call Tom Schwab at  
608-325-9576.

# TALK TO TERRA

815-544-5693

When you want the right  
products, advice & service.



You'll find a single source for all major brands of pesticides, adjuvants, fertilizers, micro-nutrients, and turfseed—plus our own high-quality line of Professional Products—all at competitive prices. You'll also find technical support, agronomic advice and information, and the most advanced fertility recommendations available. All it takes is a phone call. With over 300 sales and service locations in 30 states, you'll have what you need, when you need it. Talk to Terra for the name and number of your nearest location.

 **Terra**  
Terra International, Inc.



**Flexstake** is the most practical accessory to appear on the golf course maintenance market in a decade. The above ground portion is made of color-fast poly carbonate which can be **mowed over** with reel mowers.

Our **Flexsign, O.B. Markers** and **Yardage Markers** are designed to allow a golf cart or a tractor to ride over them with no damage.

For a free sample of **Flexstake** or a video of our complete **Flexstake** line, call or write.

# FLEXSTAKE®

Paul Ronyak  
Distributor of Flexstake Products  
W193 N16366 Lea Fond Circle  
Jackson, Wisconsin 53037  
1-414-677-3855