



Captain David L. Rees

## Club Labor for Finishing Touches

By CAPTAIN DAVID L. REES

President Metropolitan Association of Greenkeepers

THERE must be very few courses where there is no piece of work that is, strictly speaking, extraneous to both golf course construction and golf course maintenance and where such pieces of work are numerous, they will be found to be no small item of expenditure. My present courses, for example—those of the Progress Country Club, New York, which I have constructed—have presented me with an unusual number of such “odd jobs” as I refer to, notably the excavation of pond beds, the damming of three streams for a water supply, and the installation of a centrifugal pump for water distribution. Among my men I found one who had had fair experience in concrete work and another who had spent several years at carpentry, and together they built a pump-house. It is of concrete, with green shingle roofing. The men achieved a pleasingly artistic touch by utilizing for the pump-house a door and a window salvaged from a building demolished to make room for the first fairway.

The concrete work was continued in the building of retaining walls for a chain of small lakes. The photograph shows a sample of this work, a retaining wall with a central spillway which extends to a stream. The last of the lakes was formerly a wide ravine with a fast stream running through, so here a retaining wall of concrete 30 inches thick was built with a spillway into the old natural stream bed.

### *Rustic Bridges*

The streams feeding the lakes called for bridges at several points throughout the course, and here again my own men proved equal to the task. We decided the rustic type of bridge would best fit in with the landscape, and for those we utilized timber felled at the commencement of construction. Of this, by the way, there was abundance of one kind or another for in all 10,700 trees were removed from the heavily wooded sections of this property. Where humanly possible I strained every effort to conserve the silver and the grey birches, because of their unusual beauty, but I was reluctantly compelled to uproot several of those trees and the limbs provided me with material for all the bridges. The foundations

of the bridges are trunks of thirty year old trees, the “roll” was achieved over hickory logs, the floors of the bridges are of split branches of three or four inches diameter, and the railings are of the gray or silver birch. From the accompanying photograph the method of construction is plain, while half a dozen of the remaining birch trees can be seen around the bridge.

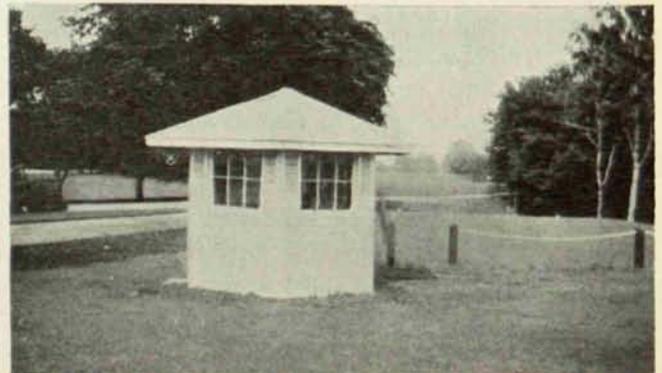
### *Using Stones from Fairways*

On the main course here it was a necessity to provide four shelters and these again were made by the utilization of my own labor. The shelters are the usual open ones, providing against pretty well any wind that blows. The floors are of cobblestones secured from the hand-picking of the fairways before seeding. The four corner posts are rough-hewn tree trunks, the two intersecting walls are of sheathing, while finished boarding was used for the seating space. The shelters are roofed with the same green shingles as those used on the pump house.

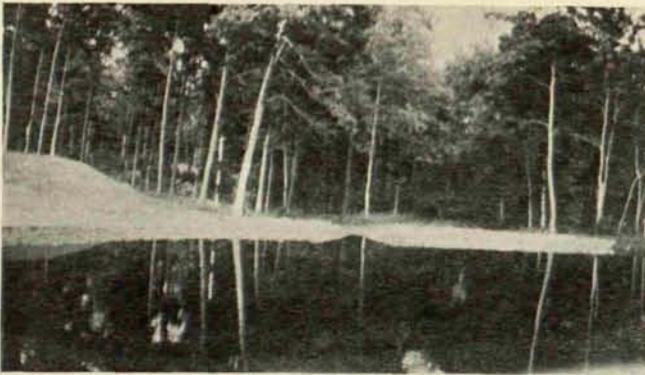
### *Silver Birch Fences*

The fence around the first tee on the ladies' course absorbed all that remained of our silver birch timber. This fence borders three sides of the tee which is fifteen yards square, and for the upright posts we used the stout limbs, while for the rustic “pattern” of the fence the use of the thin limbs of birch resulted in a thing of thoroughly utilitarian value and real beauty. Situated as it is beside one of the charming flower gardens maintained by the club, this tee has become since the erection of the rustic fence, one of the beauty spots of the course.

The first tee of the main course had to be content with a prosaic fence of four-by-four posts supporting steel chain. These posts were trimmed, driven, and



Starter's office at Progress, built by club labor



*Concrete retaining wall with central spillway*



*An excellent example of the beauty of a small rustic bridge*

painted by one of the club laborers. In the accompanying photograph of this tee can be seen the starter office, also built by club labor. It is of clapboards, painted in light green with white trimmings, and is shingled in green.

A previous owner of this property had indulged in

dows, altered the location of the door, built in counters and club-racks, and planed the floor, we boasted of an unusually attractive shop for Bobby Cruickshank, our famous little professional. The photograph shows the one-time brooding house as it now is, with some fine



*Artistic concrete pump house*



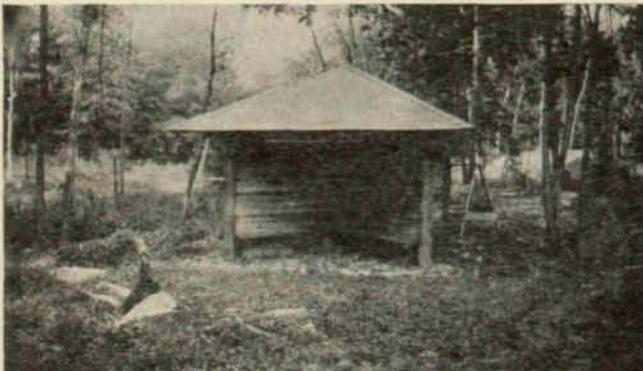
*Chicken house transformed into golf shop at Progress*

chicken raising and we found ourselves possessed of an exceptionally well-built brooding house, 100 feet by 30 feet, of clapboards with a roof of mottled slate. Since it stood squarely in the middle of what was to be our first fairway we had a house-moving contractor place it by the first tee, and after our men had enlarged the win-

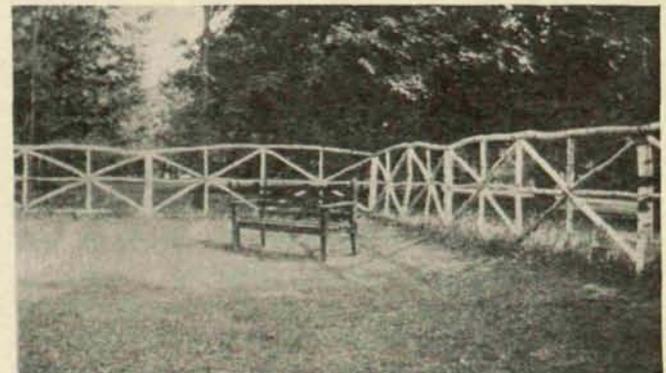
specimens of fir trees in front of it, which trees were removed from fairways, etc., and transplanted here by club labor.

The latest carpentry job undertaken by my men is the fashioning of twenty-seven tee benches, of which the photograph shows a sample. The benches are of very

*(Continued on page 34)*



*Shelter house with cobble stone floor*



*Silver birch rustic fence on ladies' course at Progress*

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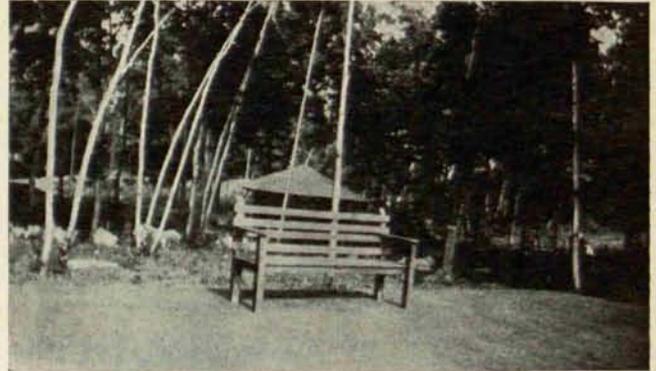
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## Club Labor

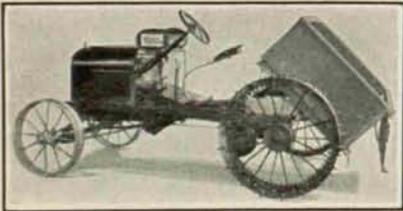
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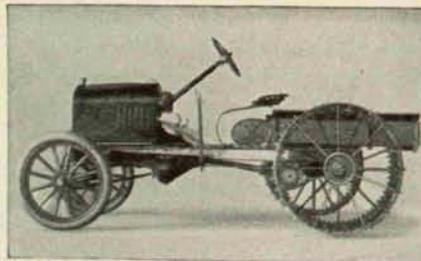
*One of the twenty-seven tee benches at Progress, built by club labor*

sturdy type, and are made of oak grown on this property.

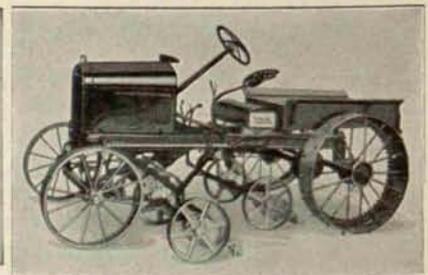
While this exploitation of casual labor may not in all cases be commendable, I have assuredly found it of infinite time and money saving value, but perhaps its greatest recommendation to me is that it has made my men share to the fullest with me my pride in my job—they feel they have all had a perfectly obvious and indispensable share in the creating of one of the most picturesque courses in Westchester County.



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