



A Forgotten Life in Canadian Golf

Remembering Fred Rickwood and the
Making of the Napanee Golf Course

Volume One

The Course of Fred Rickwood's
Life: From Ilkley to Orillia

By Donald J. Childs

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Second revised edition

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Donald J. Childs

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Foreword

This book remains a work in progress.

I circulated the first edition among members, friends, and supporters of the Napanee Golf and Country Club.

I did so first and foremost because it is about something we all love: the Napanee golf course.

But I also wanted to invite people who read this book and find the subject interesting to ask themselves whether they might have a piece of information about the Napanee golf course – a fact, an anecdote, a rumour, a photograph of some part of the golf course, an old publication from the club, or even an old scorecard--that they could pass along to me. Information about the golf course that lies in the background of a photograph, for instance, even if it is only a photograph of a trophy presentation or of a group of friends playing golf, or information that emerges from a story about the past, may help to fill out the picture of the history of the designing of the golf course that I sketch below.

The second edition of the first volume of this book is archived at the Orillia Public Library. So I similarly invite anyone from Orillia (where Fred Rickwood was the head professional golfer at the Couchiching Golf Club from 1928 to the early 1930s) who might have information about him to pass it along to me. People able and willing to share memories of him will contribute to the remembering that he deserves.

Feel free to email me:

dchilds@uottawa.ca

More information about either the Napanee golf course or the man who designed it will make for a better third edition.

Donald J. Childs

Acknowledgements

My brother Bob Childs has done wonders with computer technology on my behalf, especially with regard to old photographs. His love of Napanee Golf and Country Club probably exceeds my own, and it certainly inspired me in my work on this book.

Milt Rose's enthusiasm for the history of the golf course, particularly as shown by his willingness to listen to my recitation of facts and figures that emerged as I first worked on this book, was also an encouragement to me.

Napanee Golf and Country Club's Golf Course Superintendent Paul Wilson has generously provided me with helpful information that he has gathered from his work on the course over the years.

I appreciated Rick Gerow's willingness to tell me about the construction of various parts of the golf course in the 1980s and 1990s, even though we were playing golf at the time and he was in the process of winning the Super Senior Golf Championship.

Similarly, Bing Sanford cheerfully and helpfully identified features of the Rickwood course for me when we played a round of golf together. It was always a pleasure to be in his company.

Mike Stockfish read an early draft of the book and offered encouragement and useful advice, for which I thank him.

When I requested information from the Orillia Public Library about an item on Fred Rickwood, the response of Amy Lambertsen, who runs the library's Local History Room, was immediate, helpful, and generous. What a wonderful librarian!

Lisa Lawlis, Archivist at the County of Lennox and Addington Museum and Archives, was thoroughly efficient, encouraging, and supportive through all the many hours of her time that I monopolized. What a wonderful archivist!

Jane Lovell, a member of the Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society, researches and writes about local history. She has a special interest in the Herrington family and Camp Le Nid and generously

corrected errors in and contributed information to the second and third volumes of this book. Jane works tirelessly in promoting the preservation of local history and the dissemination of knowledge about it. I am very appreciative of her contributions to this project.

Margaret McLaren, a golf historian with a main focus on the Rivermead Golf Club, kindly informed me of Fred Rickwood's work at the Belleville Golf Club and supplied newspaper clippings about it. I thank her for this important contribution.

I thank Sandy Gougeon, a granddaughter of Bill Brazier, for kindly correcting several inaccuracies in my account of Brazier's life and for helpfully supplying further information about and photographs of her grandfather.

I also thank Karen Hewson, Executive Director of the Stanley Thompson Society, and Lorne Rubenstein, Canadian golf journalist and golf writer without peer, for encouraging words in support of my research on Fred Rickwood.

Dr. T.J. Childs was extraordinarily helpful in discovering information, documents, and photographs about a large number of the people whose stories are highlighted in this book. His genealogical skills are extraordinary.

Vera Childs donated funds to provide access to important rare photographs that were essential to my telling of the story of the earliest development of golf in Napanee. I thank her for her generous support of this project.

I am grateful to Janet Childs for her patience and forbearance during my work researching and writing this book, and I am especially grateful for her hard work in preparing this book for publication.

Perhaps most important to a book like this, however, is the pioneering work on the collection and interpretation of local archival information about the golf course by Art and Cathy Hunter, and their band of fellow researchers, published as *Golf in Napanee: A History from 1897* (2010). To contribute to what they started is a pleasure and a privilege.

Preface

If you Google the name “Fred Rickwood,” your search will yield little beyond the fact that he participated in a number of Canadian Open and Canadian PGA golf championships in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The search might also reveal an image of his grave marker in Toronto’s Prospect Cemetery.

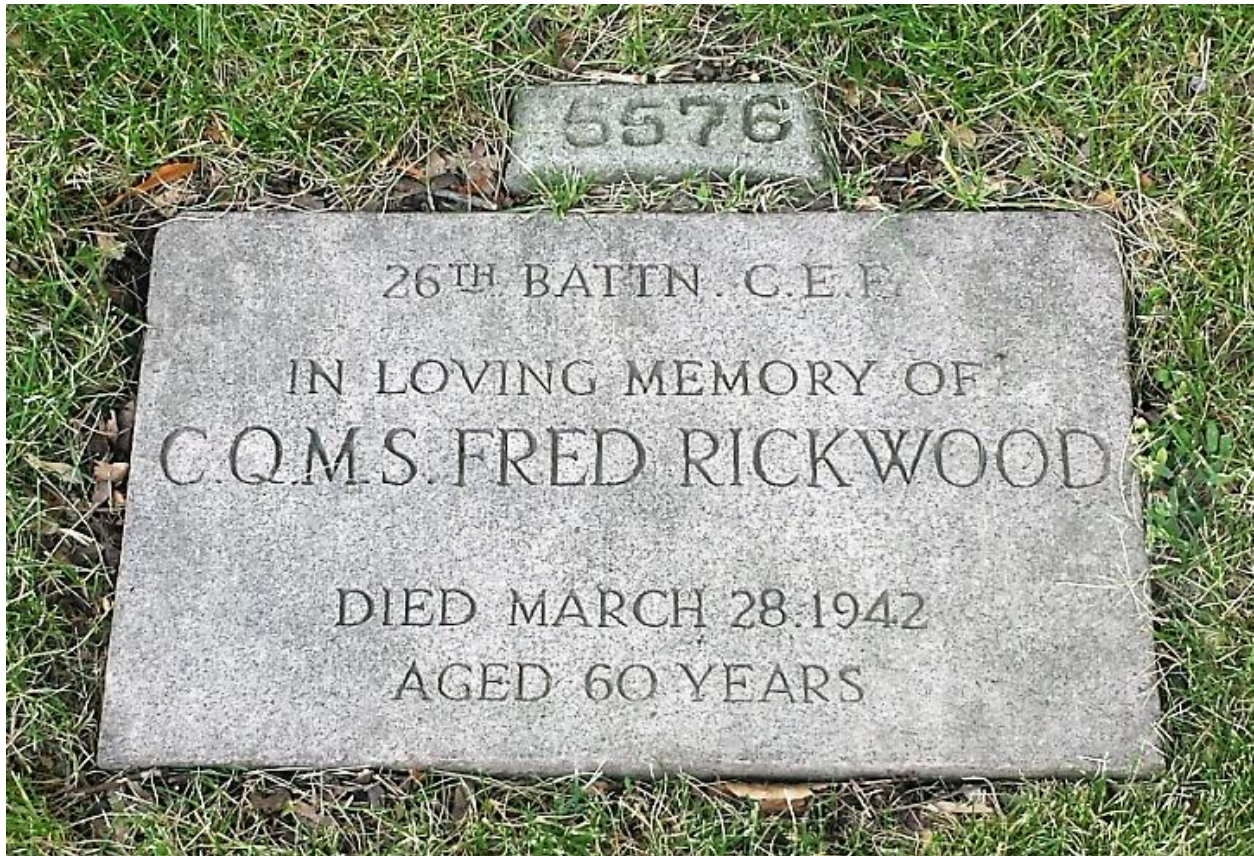


Figure 1 Fred Rickwood grave marker, Prospect Cemetery, St Clair Avenue, Toronto

The gravestone tells us little about Fred Rickwood. Apart from his name, date of death, and age, he is identified only as Company Quarter Master Sergeant Fred Rickwood of the 26th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

So much is missing.

There is not even a date of birth, and so perhaps it is not surprising that the age given is wrong.

Most importantly, there is nothing about his life in Canadian golf, which is a great shame, for golf was the main reason for his Canadian life.

This book is an attempt to honour Fred Rickwood by remembering his life in early Canadian golf, particularly with reference to his design of the Napanee golf course.

The greatest legacies that golf course architects leave golfers are their golf courses – the ones that endure as times change and continue to engage the interest of golfers as each new golfing generation emerges. In Nova Scotia and Ontario, several of Rickwood's golf courses remain in play, hosting many thousands of rounds of golf each year. The oldest of his golf courses is 110 years old; the youngest, a spritely ninety.

Long may Fred Rickwood's legacy golf courses last – especially that of the Napanee Golf and Country Club!

Introduction

In an article celebrating Napanee Golf and Country Club's emergence into a third century since its opening in 1897, *Flagstick* magazine observes that "There is no designer of record for Napanee. Much like the historic courses of the United Kingdom, its nine holes (but ten greens and with eighteen separate tee locations) were crafted gradually – with renovations taken upon by the membership when it has been deemed necessary" (8 June 2007).

To say that there is no designer of record for the Napanee golf course is true enough, as far as it goes. Yet the absence of a designer of record is not a matter of a missing designer, but rather a matter of missing records. Or more accurately yet, it is a matter of not inspecting the existing records closely enough.

For closer inspection of the records reveals that there was indeed an identifiable designer of the Napanee Golf and Country Club's course, that his work dates from what is known as "the Golden Age" of North American golf course design, and that his golf course design mentor was the greatest of all Canadian golf course architects: the legendary Stanley Thompson.

In *Golf in Napanee: A History from 1897* (2010), Art and Cathy Hunter reproduce two 1927 articles from local newspapers that draw attention to a visit to the Napanee Golf and Country Club that summer by a pair of golf professionals, one of whom would exert a fundamental and continuing influence on the playing of golf in Napanee.

The Hunters draw attention to the following item in the *Napanee Beaver* (10 June 1927):

GOLF MATCH

The match played here Wednesday afternoon was a very interesting game and was followed by a large crowd of spectators. Bill Brazier, British Professional of Toronto, was paired with George Faulkner, a young amateur from Belleville Country Club, against Fred Rickwood, British Professional of Toronto, and W. Kerr, Professional at the Cataraqui Golf Club. On the first round Brazier and Faulkner were two up and held the same lead during the second round. Brazier made a score of 76, for the 18 holes, which is good, considering that the greens are not in a fit condition for putting. He plays a very steady game and seldom got in any difficulty. His partner, George Faulkner, got in trouble several times on the first round, but played a 39 in the second round and if he continues, he should soon be heard of in the Canadian Championship matches.

Rickwood had 40 for each round and had three penalties. He played a very sporting game and took chances rather than playing safe, which of course pleased the spectators. He made some great recoveries after getting in difficulties. Kerr could not seem to get going in the first round, and the course did not seem to be to his liking, taking a 47 the first round. However, he improved in the second round and made a 39. Final scores, Brazier 76, Faulkner 84, Rickwood 80, and Kerr 86. After the game Brazier gave a very excellent demonstration of how a ball should be driven with the different kinds of iron and wooden clubs and apparently could make the ball do anything he wished. Both Messrs. Brazier and Rickwood have been very busy giving lessons to the local members, and all are delighted with their work. Brazier's two lectures have been most instructive to golfers. Rickwood, besides being a good instructor, is an expert in laying out courses and building greens, and has during his stay, laid out a new green and practically completed it.

The Management of the Club were very fortunate in securing their services, and it is to be hoped they will return in the near future, as there are many who have not had the chance to obtain lessons from them.

The Hunters also note the following piece a few days later in *The Napanee Express* (14 June 1927):

GOLF WEEK

Last week the Napanee Golf and Country Club staged an interesting and profitable week for its members. Messrs. Bill Brazier and Fred Rickwood, two well-known professional golfers, spent the week at the course, giving lessons to those asking for them, and repairing and selling clubs and advising the members on any golf matters at request. On Monday Mr. Brazier, who is a wonderfully fine golfer and a splendid teacher, gave a lecture on wooden clubs, and on Wednesday evening an exceedingly interesting lecture on iron clubs. On Wednesday afternoon Messrs. Faulkner, of Belleville, and Kerr, of Kingston, played an exhibition game with Messrs. Brazier and Rickwood. Eighteen holes were played, ... Brazier and Faulkner ... winning the match. The golfers who attended the game were treated to a fine exhibition.... Mr. Rickwood, who has had years of experience in laying out golf courses, has prepared a plan for the improvement of the Napanee course, and while here laid out and completed a new number one green. Messrs. Brazier and Rickwood will return here in August to lay out further improvements in the course. Both gentlemen were delighted with the Napanee course, stating that the fairways were the best in Ontario, and with improvement to the greens the course will be one of the very best nine-hole courses in Ontario. A large number of the Napanee enthusiasts received instruction from the professionals, keeping their time fully occupied during their stay.

Who was this Fred Rickwood? Who was this Bill Brazier? And how did they come to be barnstorming the province on a fix-your-swing, fix-your-clubs, fix-your-course mission?

In particular, what can we learn about this “course-whisperer” Fred Rickwood and how he had accumulated “years of experience in laying out golf courses”? What might it have been in his “years of

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experience” that led the management of the Napanee Golf and Country Club to commission him, rather than another golf course architect, to present plans for the improvement of its golf course?

We note that the one newspaper indicates on June 10th that it was “to be hoped they will return in the near future,” whereas just four days later we read in the other newspaper that “they will return here in August to lay out further improvements in the course.”

Their return was to be in the very near future, indeed! And their plans for that return went from vague to certain in just four days. Their June visit must have impressed the golf club. What was it that convinced club management to let course designer Fred Rickwood lay out a new and improved course that August?

These questions are important for lovers of the Napanee Golf and Country Club, for the present routing of the golf course is largely due to his work late in the summer and early in the fall of 1927. Five of his 1927 greens are still used at the Napanee golf course, and on holes where his original greens have been replaced, his fairways and tee boxes are still in use.

So here is our missing designer of record: Fred Rickwood.

A Word on the Organization of the Book as Four Volumes

This book, *A Forgotten Life in Canadian Golf: Remembering Fred Rickwood and the Making of the Napanee Golf Course*, is presented in four volumes.

Volume One, *The Course of Fred Rickwood's Life: From Ilkley to Orillia*, presents the biography of this Canadian golf pioneer.

Volume Two, *Napanee Golfers and their Courses to 1906*, provides biographies of the earliest known golfers in Napanee, discusses the golfing grounds where golf was first played in the area, and discusses the first golf course laid out in 1897 and used down to 1906.

Volume Three, *The 1907 New Course and Four of Its Players*, discusses the first nine-hole golf course laid out for the Napanee Golf Club, presents photographs of the 1907 design, and presents biographies of the four golfers who appear in the photographs in question.

Volume Four, *Blending Penal and Strategic Design at Napanee*, reviews the architectural principles that Rickwood learned from mentors like Stanley Thompson and analyzes in Rickwood's design practices at Napanee his implementation of principles associated with the 1910-37 period of golf course construction that Geoff Shackleford calls *The Golden Age of Golf Design* (Sleeping Bear Press 1999).

Volume One: The Course of Fred Rickwood's Life: From Ilkley to Orillia

Early Life and Golf Apprenticeship

The Amherst Golf Club in Nova Scotia where Fred Rickwood did his first work as a golf professional in 1908 indicates on its website that Fred Rickwood “worked for many years with the famous Harry Vardon in England.”

One presumes that when Fred Rickwood applied to the Amherst Golf Club to serve as its professional golfer, he was armed with a letter of reference (or what an Englishman like him would have called a “testimonial”) from Vardon himself – golf’s first international superstar in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the winner of six British Open championships and one US Open championship. Today, the “Vardon Grip” (that is, the Vardon way of gripping the golf club) is still used by as many as 70% of the world’s golfers and the PGA Tour in the United States awards the Vardon Trophy to the player with the lowest scoring average over the course of a season.



Figure 2 Harry Vardon circa 1890s

We might surmise that Fred Rickwood served his apprenticeship under Harry Vardon at some point while the latter was employed from 1896 to 1902 as the professional golfer for Scarborough Golf Club, Yorkshire, which was located in those days at the Ganton golf course (during this period Vardon won three of his British Open championships), for Rickwood was born and raised in Yorkshire in the 1880s and 1890s and lived less than a mile from where Harry Vardon’s brother Tom was the golf professional at the Ilkley golf course. It was to his brother’s golf course in Rickwood’s home town

of Ilkley that Harry Vardon came to play in 1893 in order to compete in his brother’s golf tournament which had been organized to help popularize the game amongst the local sportsmen. Harry Vardon not only played in the tournament, but won it – his first professional tournament win.

Young Rickwood may have caught his first glimpse of Harry Vardon at this event.

Englishman George Rickwood could not have anticipated that his son Fred would grow up to be a professional golfer. When Fred Rickwood was born on December 28th, 1882, in Ilkley, Yorkshire, there were only about 12 golf courses in all of England, and none of them was in Yorkshire. In the town of

Ilkley, where George and Annie Rickwood were raising their family, there would not be a golf course built until 1890, when Ilkley Golf Club (the third oldest in Yorkshire) was established. Young Fred, their eighth child, was just seven years old then.



Figure 3 19 Tivoli Place, Ilkley, Yorkshire (left side of the house)

Fred's father George was a gardener, proud of the work he did. He was careful to indicate to the census taker that he was "not a *domestic* gardener": that is, he wanted the record to show that he was not a domestic servant, but rather a self-employed gardener.

And he made a good living. On the money he earned, he and his wife Annie successfully raised a family of ten children to adulthood. As the size of the family increased, the Rickwoods moved from Nelson Street in downtown Ilkley to Tivoli Place. It was a move of just 100 yards – Tivoli Place was just as much downtown as Nelson

Street – but more importantly it was a move from a house with two storeys to a house with four storeys. The new house was only a small step up in the real estate market, but the key was that it had more rooms: that is, more bedrooms for children. Although the twelve members of the family never lived in the same house all at the same time (since the oldest ones had moved out by the time the youngest were born), it was clear by the time Fred was born that the family needed more room.

For decades after this move from Nelson Street to Tivoli Place, the Rickwood family lived comfortably in its new home. The house was in a good location, just 200 yards from the railway station, and just 500 yards from the town centre. Shops, schools, and hospitals were within walking distance, and in late-Victorian Britain, which rolled along on railway tracks, most of England, Scotland, and Wales could be reached from the Ilkley railway station. The location of their home at Tivoli Place was so central and convenient that as their children grew up and left to make their way in the world, George and Annie Rickwood never lacked for lodgers to rent a vacant bedroom. From the 1890s through the early 1900s, in fact, there were always one or two lodgers in the house at Tivoli Place.

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Like George Rickwood, the men listed as the heads of the neighbouring households were skilled workers. In particular, several of the neighbours were joiners and carpenters. The joiner was the more sophisticated wood worker who joined wood into doors, stairs, door- and window-frames, and much more ornamental constructions, including cabinets, bookshelves, tables, chairs, and other furniture. Joiners tended not to work on a construction site, but rather to work in a shop, since in those days the machinery required to do their work tended to be heavy and not very portable.

Fred's oldest brother William was apprenticed as a joiner, and was still listed in the census as an apprentice in 1891 when he was 19. He was probably serving his apprenticeship with one of the neighbours who were joiners – perhaps right next door to the Rickwood home where the neighbour was a joiner – a joiner who had taken on his own son as an apprentice.

The presence of joiners not just next door to Fred Rickwood, but also within his own household, no doubt played a role in Fred's apprenticeship to a golf professional. Since golf club making was an essential art of the golf professional at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, and since golf club technology in those days inevitably required the joining of wood shafts to wood or steel club heads, there was a natural migration of joiner skills into the golf club making profession. Indeed, Donald Ross himself (the most important golf course architect in early American golf history) served five years as an apprentice joiner in Dornoch, Scotland, before signing on with Old Tom Morris as an apprentice golf club maker (returning with Old Tom to St. Andrews after Ross observed him working on the links course at Dornoch in the mid-1880s).

Even such knowledge of gardening as Fred Rickwood picked up from his father would have stood him in good stead when approaching a professional golfer about the possibility of serving an apprenticeship with him, for the professional golfer was also his golf club's greenkeeper. Harry Vardon's own father was a professional gardener, for instance, just like George Rickwood, and it was his good reputation as a gardener on the island of Jersey in the English Channel that led the golf professional on Jersey to employ Vardon's father as the greenkeeper there. The Vardon boys Harry and Tom, both of whom would become successful professional golfers, not only served as caddies at the Jersey golf course, but also helped their father to maintain its greens.

It is even possible that Fred Rickwood's father was the greenkeeper at Ilkley Golf Club and that it was through his father that Fred came to work there.

But whether or not there is any truth to such speculation, the fact is that every golf apprentice started as a golf caddy, and every caddy invariably attempted to play the game that he had learned as a caddy (usually having to fashion his own primitive golf club out of branches gathered from a nearby woods – as both of the Vardon boys had done on Jersey). The golf professional would organize a tournament for his golf course's caddies and would select the caddy or caddies with an aptitude for the game as his apprentices.



Figure 4 Tom Vardon circa late 1890s

At Ilkley Golf Club throughout the 1890s, Tom Vardon was the golf professional, and he maintained there a stable of five caddies. The *Wharfedale & Airedale Observer* notes that the Ilkley Golf Club's 1894 statement of accounts shows that "£164 was paid last year to the caddies. There are but five of them. This represents an annual income of £35 each, not a bad income for a boy" (28 Sept 1894, p. 8). A working-class boy like Fred Rickwood would have thought of £35 as a fortune!

Note that in those days, professional golfers were second-class citizens at their own golf clubs. They were paid little, making most of their income from golf instruction and the sale of golf balls and hand-made clubs (there were few golf tournaments, and prize money was available only for the top five or six finishers). Golf professionals were members of the working class and were treated by the gentlemen and lady members of the golf club as tradesmen. The professional golfer was not allowed in the clubhouse, keeping instead to the golf professional's shop where the golf clubs were made and golf equipment was available for sale to club members. No golf professional was ever invited to become a member of the golf club where he was employed before Harry Vardon himself became the first golf professional accorded this honour by his own golf club in 1930.

So of course caddies were also from the working class and were treated with even less respect than professional golfers. Yet they were essential to the game, as no gentleman carried his own clubs. Rather, boys not yet ten years old were recruited to carry clubs for members. Well into the twentieth century, any boy who continued to caddie beyond his sixteenth birthday officially became classified as a professional golfer.

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The original Ilkley golf course was located on Ilkley's Rombalds Moor just one mile from Ilkley Station, and an even shorter distance from the front door of the Rickwood's home, so young Fred Rickwood could easily have caddied there without needing anything but his own two feet to get him to work and back.



Figure 5 George Strath (1849-1919), who caddied for Old Tom Morris at St Andrews and learned from him how to lay out golf courses.

Several months after the first Ilkley golf course was laid out on Rombalds Moor by Scottish professional George Strath in June of 1890, a reporter from the nearby city of Leeds came out to the little town of Ilkley to discover just what the strange Scottish game being introduced into Yorkshire was all about. He arrived at the Ilkley train station and walked right past the Rickwood home in search of the golf course and the golf professional. Arriving at the clubhouse, he encountered a caddie:

Golf, like many other Scottish institutions, seems to have taken firm hold in this country, and the Ilkley Club is only one of many similar bodies which have been formed in the last year or two in England.... Yesterday I visited Ilkley for the purpose of gaining what information I could about the club and the game. On reaching Ilkley I was informed that the links lay just above Wells House, and on getting there, I observed a boy knocking a ball about with a golf club on the tennis lawn of the establishment. He told me that those were the headquarters of the Golf Club, and that the professional was on the links just up the road. Thither I accordingly went, and though I saw no professional, there were unmistakable signs of the links, in the shape of a flagstick stuck into a hole in the centre of a smooth piece of grass, which was strangely in contrast with the surrounding moorland. (Leeds Mercury, 6 December 1890)



Figure 6 Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, 30 January 1892, p. 14.

An artist illustrated the clubhouse a year later, depicting a golfer apparently engaging a caddie for a round of golf. The caddie in the illustration and the caddie in the reporter's story could well have been a young Fred Rickwood. And if a working-class teenaged schoolboy named Fred Rickwood had indeed been earning money caddying at the Ilkley golf course and had impressed the club's professional golfer Tom Vardon with his

aptitude for the game, such a golf-savvy son of a gardener and brother of a joiner could very well have talked his way into an apprenticeship.



Figure 7 Tom Vardon studio photograph circa 1903

Of course Tom Vardon was Harry Vardon's younger brother, and his fame was less than his brother's. But he nonetheless had quite a high standing in the golfing public's awareness. The *Golf Annual* of 1897 referred to Tom and Harry Vardon as "the two brothers who have, during the last five years, taken their places at the forefront of the professional ranks" (vol 10 p. 59). The preeminent golf writer at the beginning of the twentieth century, Bernard Darwin, wrote of Tom Vardon as follows: he was "a very fine, dashing golfer, of a cheerful character, who took the game more lightheartedly than his brother. He was not a pretty player, with his right thumb down the shaft and a perceptible lift – it might be called a jump – in his up-swing. But he was uncommonly good." Harry would become the most accomplished golfer of his generation, but Tom

had his own considerable accomplishments. He held half a dozen course records by 1897 and would shortly thereafter finish second in one of the British Open Championships his brother won. In total, Tom Vardon would play in fifteen British Open championships. He later immigrated to the United States,

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where he regularly played in the US Open, becoming the oldest player to qualify for the 1930 US Open in Minnesota.



Figure 8 Harry Vardon and Tom Vardon (seated) on the England golf team versus Scotland in 1903

At Ilkley Golf Club, Tom Vardon was charged not only with maintaining a golf course and serving the club members as their professional golfer, but also with introducing golf to Ilkley and the surrounding communities. He convinced Harry to come to Ilkley in 1893 to help raise the profile of golf in the town by entering the professional tournament that the Ilkley Golf Club was hosting. As mentioned above, Harry Vardon won that tournament, his first professional victory.

And the Ilkley Golf Club thrived.

One of its early members after it moved in 1898 to the river valley was Dr. Alister Mackenzie who collaborated with Bobby Jones in the construction of Augusta National Golf Club in the early 1930s. He remembered Ilkley Golf Club fondly in his 1933 article “Water Holes Should Tempt, Not Torture” (*Golfing*, January 1934): “There was a club I belonged to more than thirty years ago, Ilkley, in England, where Tom Vardon was the professional. A river ran through the grounds.” So the young Mackenzie no doubt followed Tom Vardon’s construction of the new course with great interest, and may have discussed the work with him. In 1912, having become a famous golf course architect in his own right, he returned to

Ilkley and rebuilt their 15th hole for free, as what he called “a labour of love.” Today, Ilkley Golf Club’s most famous professional alumnus is Colin Montgomerie, who still holds the course record.

Tom Vardon loved to tell stories afterwards of how Yorkshiremen of the 1890s (such as the young working-class boy Fred Rickwood, perhaps) reacted to the new game that the Ilkley Golf Club brought to town: “When I went to Ilkley golf was only just beginning there, and everything connected with it was in a very raw state. But we soon got going well, and by and by we had a most successful club The Yorkshire natives were in a delightful and sometimes inconvenient state of ignorance about the game. The main road from Keighley to Ilkley cut through our links ... and the Yorkshiremen who were on the

road at the time a ball found its way there were a dreadful trouble. They always ... and invariably, out of the goodness of their nature, picked up the ball and handed it to the player" (252-53).

The road was regarded as a "natural" hazard in the 1890s: as it preceded the golf course, it became part of the holes that crossed it, and so shots had to be played from the road, which is visible curving across the bottom left side of the sketch below showing golfers and caddies on the Ilkley course circa 1891.



Figure 9 Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, 30 January 1892, p. 14.

Vardon also noted the enthusiasm of Yorkshire workmen for the gentlemen's game: "There was some talk of starting a workmen's golf club there, and two Yorkshire novices who knew nothing about the game, but were burning with enthusiasm for it, made a match to play each other for what was for them a considerable stake.... Neither had ever played before, but one was a much stronger man physically than the other, and it was agreed that he should on this account concede his opponent a start of four holes in the round of nine I was told that quite a crowd followed the game, and later on I was requested to settle a dispute that occurred at the outset. There was a wall going to the first hole, and the man who was conceding a start of four holes got his ball under this wall and was quite unable to get it out again. Consequently he lost the hole, and thereupon his opponent, now five up, claimed the match, his argument being that as the match was one of nine holes, and he was already five up, he was obviously the victor. It was no use explaining to him that the four holes with which he was presented at

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the start did not count as four of the nine to be played” (*Great Golfers in the Making*, ed. Henry Leach, London: Methuen, 1907, 2nd ed., p. 253).

If Fred Rickwood began to learn the art of club-making from Tom Vardon, he was learning from a master. The hand-made golf clubs from Tom Vardon’s professional golf shop were highly sought-after, not just by club members, but also by members of the public more generally. The following is an example of the kind of advertisements placed in Yorkshire newspapers: “Golf Clubs! Golf Clubs!! The celebrated clubs made by Tom Vardon, the Ilkley Pro, can be obtained at ... W Benson’s, the Sports’ Goods & Saddlery Stores” (20 September 1895, p. 1).

Tom Vardon also mentions that a new course had to be built during his tenure as golf professional at Ilkley and that it almost immediately had to be renovated after the new course was devastated by the great Ilkley flood of July 12th, 1900: “When I was at Ilkley we changed our links, and I shall never forget what happened soon after we had got onto our new course, which was low down and quite close to the river, instead of being on the moors, where the original one was. A great cloud burst quite close to us, and for two hours water poured onto the course as I have never seen it pour before or since. Afterwards there was mud on the course quite eight inches deep, and it cost us £150 to get rid of it. At the same time in Ilkley, the water-mains in Ilkley were burst, houses were torn down, and one man was killed.” (*Great Golfers in the Making* 253)

The *Wharfedale & Airedale Observer* reports that the Ilkley Golf Club had leased an “extensive piece of land adjoining the river” as of March, 1898, so the new course would have been under construction along the River Wharfe from 1898 to 1899. If Fred Rickwood was apprenticed to Tom Vardon at this time, there is no doubt that his first experience of golf course construction would have come during this building of the second golf course at Ilkley.

And it would seem that according to Rickwood family lore, Fred Rickwood indeed had a role in the construction of the Ilkley golf course. When his son Robert and daughter-in-law Ruth visited Ilkley as tourists in 1968, Ruth wrote a letter to the *Ilkley Gazette* explaining that her father-in-law “was a prominent golfer in the Ilkley area and laid out the Ilkley Moor golf course” (cited by Jim Seton, “Across the Years,” *Ilkley Gazette*, 18 January 2018). As young Fred would have been just eight years old when the Moor course was built, however, family lore would seem to have confused the Moor course of 1890

with the River Wharfe course built in the late 1890s, but there can be little doubt that Rickwood told his children that he had been involved in the building of the Ilkley golf course.



Figure 10 The original seventh tee at Ilkley Golf Club, circa 1910.

So if Fred Rickwood entered the game as a caddie at Ilkley Golf Club, as seems likely, and then graduated to an apprenticeship there under Tom Vardon, he would have learned all aspects of the game at this time – from playing it, to making and selling the equipment for it, to building and maintaining the course upon which it was played.

He may even have had occasion to make a golf club or two for early club member Alister Mackenzie, or perhaps even to discuss golf course design with the future great architect!

There is a photograph taken between 1898 and 1900 of Tom Vardon and the greenkeeping staff that he had assembled to tend to the newly built Ilkley golf course located along the River Wharfe. In the photograph below, Vardon stands to the right of a group of four members of the greenkeeping staff. According to the *Leeds Mercury*, by the summer of 1899, “The ground staff now comprised two permanent men, two boys and a horse” (31 July 1899). We can see the horse in question, but we see four men beside Vardon, rather than two men and two boys.



Figure 11 Tom Vardon stands to the right of his Ilkley Golf Club greenkeeping crew.

But there is another person in the photograph, a boy standing at the top of the clubhouse steps.



Figure 12 A boy, perhaps Fred Rickwood, stands on the Ilkley clubhouse steps while Tom Vardon is photographed with the ground staff.

This young person may well have been Vardon's apprentice, perhaps seventeen-year-old, fair-haired, five-foot, seven-inch Fred Rickwood.

With Vardon out on the golf course having his photograph taken, his apprentice would have stayed at the pro shop. Note that the new clubhouse had a separate room built for the golf professional's shop, whereas the Rombalds Moor clubhouse did not.

Tom Vardon was popular as Ilkley Golf Club's golf professional, but in 1900 he decided to leave the club for a more lucrative contract at Royal St. George's Golf Club in the south of England:

Very much to the regret of the Ilkley Golf Club members, it has become an open secret that Tom Vardon, who has been "guide, philosopher, and friend" to Ilkley golfists for some nine years, is about to sever his connection and take up a more lucrative position as professional to St. George's, Sandwich, Kent, and a course second to none in England. To Ilkley golfers, by whom Tom has been held in the highest esteem, this intelligence has occasioned very wide regret, and in other circles, wherein he has made friends, his removal, which will take place about October 10th, will create a void difficult to fill. (Leeds Mercury, 22 September 1900, p. 21)

His departure for Sandwich was a little bit later than anticipated, but the delay allowed the Ilkley golf Club to plan an event to express its appreciation of his service to the club:

Presentation to Tom Vardon

On Saturday afternoon a large number of members of the Ilkley Golf Club assembled in the club house to attend a presentation to Tom Vardon, the professional of the club, who is about to remove to Sandwich. Over £50 had been raised for the testimonial, which took the form of a silver tea and coffee service and tray, and a cheque for £26. On the tray was inscribed, "Tom Vardon, with best wishes from the members of the Ilkley Golf Club." He also received a diamond pin and stud and a silver pencil case from the lady members. The President of the club (Mr. B. Hirst), in making the presentation, spoke of the many qualifications of Tom Vardon as a golf professional. As a teacher his success had been evident from the time he joined the club, now nine years ago. His honest, cheery nature, his anticipation of the wants of others, and his unfailing courtesy under all circumstances made him popular with the members, visitors, and all with whom he was brought in contact. There was of course no option for him but to accept the offer made to him to become professional to the St. George's Club, which ranked as possibly the most prominent of all English clubs. They all regretted the termination of Vardon's association with Ilkley, and asked him to accept those tokens of their esteem, and the best wishes for his future welfare. (Applause.) Mr. A. W. Godby, one of the secretaries, also expressed the high appreciation in which Vardon was held, and said that there had never been a disagreement between Vardon and the committee that had left an unpleasant feeling behind. The Sandwich Club was to be congratulated on obtaining the services of so good a professional.... Tom Vardon suitably acknowledged the gifts, and expressed his own appreciation of the many kindnesses he had received while at Ilkley. He greatly regretted leaving Ilkley, but, as the president had said, he had no option under the circumstances. He commended his successor to the members, and said

Early Life and Golf Apprenticeship

he hoped to have some opportunity in future of playing a game on the Ilkley links. (Applause.)
(Leeds Mercury, 29 October 1900, p. 10)

The value of the gifts he received was significant – worth more than ten times the cash prize that his brother had been awarded when he won his first tournament at Ilkley in 1893.

When Tom Vardon left Ilkley, Fred Rickwood would have been able to move from his apprenticeship under the one Vardon brother at Ilkley to a continuing apprenticeship under the other Vardon brother at Ganton, all without having to leave Yorkshire. His family background would have been particularly interesting to Harry Vardon, for not only was Vardon's father a professional gardener like Rickwood's father, but Vardon himself had actually turned to gardening as a profession for five years, playing golf only on holidays at that time, before he became a golf apprentice late in his teens.

On the other hand, even before Tom Vardon left Yorkshire, Harry Vardon might have poached apprentice Rickwood from his younger brother Tom, for he was known to have poached other promising apprentices from other professional golfers.

Harry Vardon's Apprentices

Harry Vardon had three apprentices serving under him at Ganton by 1900.



Figure 13 Percy Barrett circa 1905 with his notorious 22-inch putter. He finished 3rd that year in the US Open.

One of them was Percy Barrett. Barrett was learning the life of a professional golfer from Vardon at work, rest and play, for he not only worked in Vardon's professional golf shop at the Ganton golf course, but also boarded with Vardon and his wife Jesse.

Barrett immigrated to Canada in 1903 and became the professional golfer that year at Lambton Golf and Country Club where he also built the original nine-hole golf course. He finished third in the 1905 US Open, he won the 1907 Canadian Open, and he won many professional golf tournaments in Ontario in later years. The talk throughout Barrett's career was that he had the potential in terms of his exceptional abilities for much greater golf success than he

achieved but lacked the temperament required to close out tournaments with victories. One of the Canadian professionals who had also competed in the 1905 U.S. Open, Charles Murray, of Montreal, returned from the tournament and explained that Barrett not only "did well," but that he had pretty much thrown the title away with putting yips: "In fact, Barrett lost his chance on two greens where three extra strokes cost him first place" (*Montreal Gazette*, 28 September 1905, p. 2).

When Barrett died prematurely in 1927, he was remembered in the *Montreal Gazette* as Harry Vardon's first apprentice ("pupil"): news of "the late noted golfer" was "conveyed in a cable to Harry Vardon, who recommended Mr. Barrett to the Lambton Golf and Country Club in 1903 as his first pupil" (*Montreal Gazette* 25 January 1927). Vardon subsequently told *Canadian Golfer* that of the dozens of apprentices that he had had over many years, there had never been one better than Barrett.

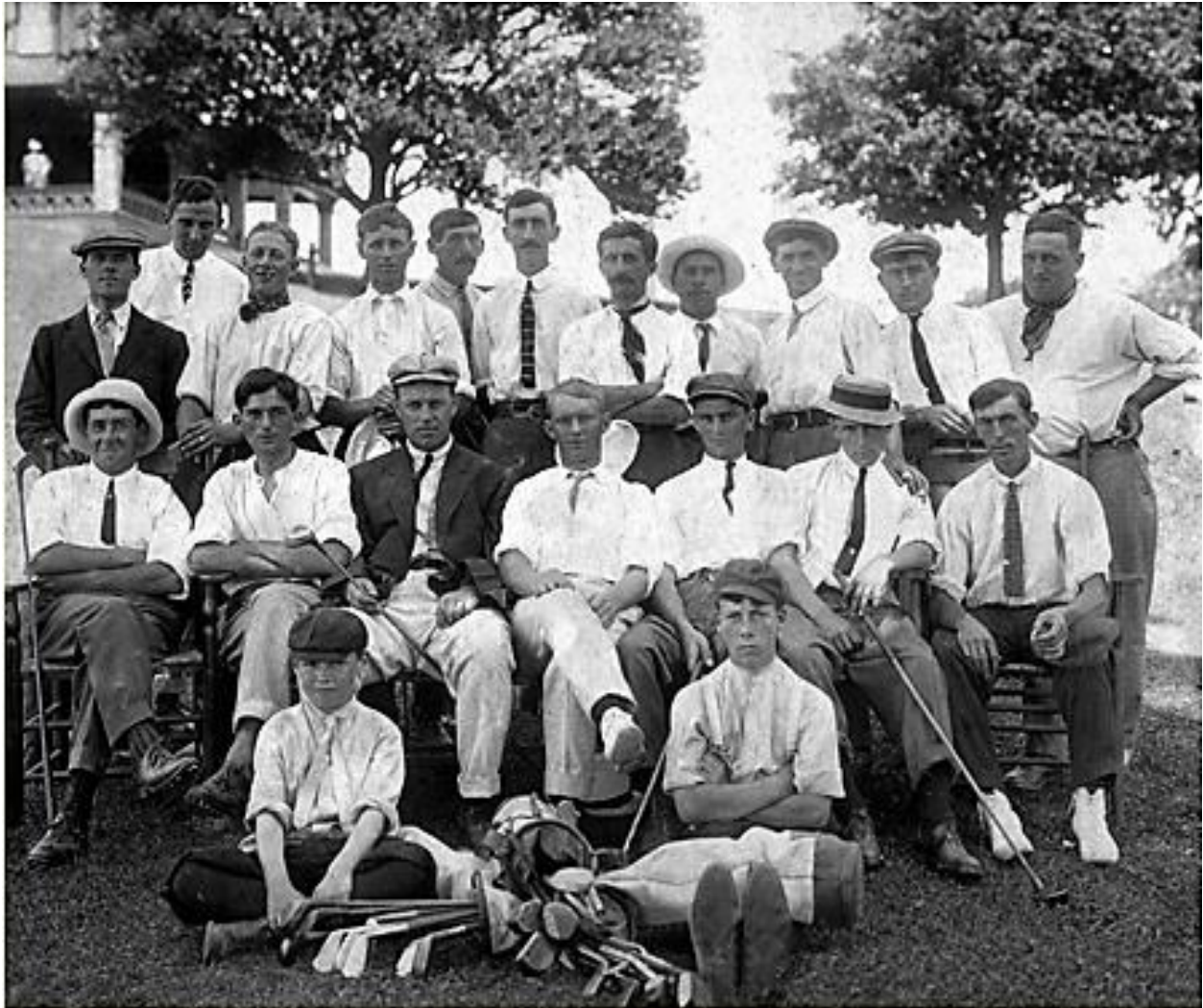


Figure 14 1911 Canadian Open Players at Ottawa Golf Club who founded the CPGA afterwards. Rickwood is seated in the centre of the photograph, three men to his left and three men to his right..

Rickwood and Barrett seem to have been good friends. Many years later, in 1923, Rickwood played an exhibition match in Barrie, Ontario, with Barrett as his partner against two other professionals.

This exhibition match was officially undertaken as an act of charity in support of the Victorian Order of Nurses, but the newspaper accounts make it clear that the match was also intended to promote the game of golf in Barrie: "Such an exhibition of golf as played by four 'pros' should help to boom the game in Barrie. It was with this object that these professionals came without charge to Barrie and also for the purpose of helping such a worthy cause as the Victorian Order of Nurses" (*Barrie Examiner* 23 August 1923 p. 1). And when we learn that the golf professional at Barrie was Jack Roberts, a young man who, just the year before, was the assistant professional at the Summit Golf and Country Club to Fred

Rickwood who was then the head pro at Summit, we can see that it was Rickwood who, in support of his own former apprentice, called upon Percy Barrett to partner with him in an eighteen-hole match against the other two golfers: the one, his friend (and soon-to-be business partner) William Brazier, and the other, Andrew Kay, that year's winner of the Ontario Open championship.

In connection with this evidence of a longstanding bond of friendship between Rickwood and Barrett, we should also note that Rickwood married a woman whose name was Edith Florence Barrett. She may well have been a cousin of Percy Barrett's whom Rickwood met through his association with Percy Barrett. I also note that Percy Barrett married a woman named May Owen – Owen being also the maiden name of Rickwood's mother, Annie. The families may have had connections back in Yorkshire. No evidence of relatedness amongst these families has emerged in my research so far, but I mention these possibilities nonetheless.

Incidentally, Percy Barrett was known to the Napanee Golf Club even before its future designer Fred Rickwood was, for it was Barrett's golf apprentice Harry Robinson that Napanee Golf Club hired in 1923 to serve as its professional golfer. Robinson, born in 1900, boarded with Barrett and his family in 1921 – just as Barrett had boarded with Harry Vardon twenty years before. The *Napanee Beaver* reported that the "Napanee Golf Club has secured the services of Mr. H. Robinson as Professional for the coming season. Mr. Robinson, who is a pupil of the well-known Professional, Percy Barrett, late of Lambton and Weston Clubs, won the tournament for Professionals' Assistants in 1922 and comes well recommended. He will be ready to give lessons to members of the Club commencing Monday next, May 7th. Mr. Robinson will alternate between the Napanee and Picton Clubs during the coming season, spending half a month at each Club" (4 May 1923).

It was actually the Assistants tournament of 1921 (not 1922) that Robinson won (and he won by eight strokes, with the *Canadian Golfer* observing that "H Robinson of Weston rather romped away with the rest of the field" [August 1921, vol vii no 4, p. 244]), but it is nonetheless clear here that in the 1920s the professional genealogy of golf apprentices was seen as important. Barrett's having served an apprenticeship under Harry Vardon was always noted in the newspapers and magazines, and even in out-of-the-golfing-mainstream Napanee Robinson's apprenticeship under Barrett was noted.

I wonder if Napanee Golf Club knew that not just Percy Barrett but also Harry Vardon was in Robinson's "family tree" of professional progenitors – as his grandfather, so to say.

Harry Vardon's Apprentices

Also an apprentice for Harry Vardon when Barrett and Rickwood were apparently serving together in the Vardon club-making shop at Ganton around 1900 was George Sargent.



Figure 15 George Sargent circa 1909

Sargent had been the professional Golfer at Ottawa Golf Club a few years before the Canadian Open was hosted there in 1911, but had moved on to a golf club in New Jersey by 1911, where Sargent designed the golf course himself. Sargent won the 1909 US Open nine years after his mentor Vardon did and afterwards was commissioned to write an article about his development as a golfer. In it, he refers to the experience of having been Vardon's apprentice at Ganton between 1899 and 1900: "Like nearly all prominent professionals, I commenced my career as a caddie lad.... I continued as a caddie until nearly twelve years old, when I commenced my apprenticeship to Tom McWatt, who was ... professional to the Epsom Golf Club. As a club maker, I had nearly six years under McWatt and got fairly well drilled in the art of club making and was also playing a fairly good game; in fact, at 16 years of age, I could hold my own with a scratch man.... It was while I was with McWatt I first saw Harry

Vardon. He and Jimmy Braid were playing an exhibition match over Epsom; Harry Vardon had won his first championship that year [1896]. They were looking round the club maker's shop as professionals usually do, and McWatt showed them a head I had made, and told them I had been only three years at the trade. They were both very much interested and asked me a number of questions as to my playing, Vardon saying, 'Well, laddie, you may be a champion yourself some day' After nearly six years with McWatt, I went under Harry Vardon at Ganton, which was about the time he was at his best [Vardon won the British Open again in 1899 and 1900]. He would challenge three of us out of the shop, then we were like the cow's tail – all behind" ("How I Won the Open Championship," *American Golfer*, vol 2, no 2 [July Supplement 1909], pp. 89-90).



Figure 16 George Sargent's US Open win in 1909 celebrated in cartoon, *American Golfer* (2 August 1909), p. 163

Rickwood was probably the third of the three apprentices running out the shop door all in a “cow’s tail” to join the head professional Harry Vardon in those impromptu golf matches in 1900. And quite a foursome it was: golf’s first superstar Harry Vardon, 18-year-old US Open champion-to-be George Sargent, 18-year-old Canadian Open champion-to-be Percy Barrett, and 18-year-old Napanee golf course designer-to-be Fred Rickwood!

When Harry Vardon returned to his apprentices from his first exhibition tour of North America in 1900, he recommended to them that they go to North America: the game was about to “boom” there.

Barrett, Sargent, and Rickwood all followed his advice, and the game did indeed boom in Canada – thanks in part to contributions from all of them.

Little Fred's Little "Z"

The 1901 Census of England and Wales (taken on the night of March 31st) indicates that 18-year-old Fred Rickwood was living back home in Ilkley that day. In addition to providing the usual information about his age, his sex, his reading and writing ability, and so on, it records that he was employed and that he was a worker rather than an employer.

Interestingly, his occupation was recorded as "z."

The letter "z" was used by census takers in England and Wales to indicate a job that they did not know how to categorize. The government provided its census takers with a list of jobs and professions that were to be recorded in terms of a list of codes made up of letters and numbers that the census taker was supposed to enter on the census form. Recall that when George Rickwood learned that his profession would be recorded by the code for "gardener," he insisted that it be noted he was "not a *domestic* gardener."

"Z" was the letter to be recorded for all jobs that flummoxed the census taker.

Census takers and immigration officers in the early 1900s in Britain, Canada, and the United States did not know quite what to make of professional golfers. Presumably very few census takers were familiar with the game.

Having won three British Open championships by 1900, the great Harry Vardon nonetheless was judged by the 1901 census taker in Ganton to be a golf club maker. His much less great brother Tom, however, beaten by his brother Harry in each of these competitions, was nonetheless, according to the Ilkley census taker, a "professional golfer."

Other professional golfers and apprentices were recorded as "golf instructors," or simply as "instructors." Rickwood himself, for instance, had graduated from "z" by the time of the 1911 Canadian census and found himself recorded as an "instructor" and as a "keeper of a park." When William T. Brazier immigrated to Canada in 1912 as a 20-year-old, the Maritime immigration officer recorded that he was a "golf caddy," although he was well beyond his caddy years.

Having won the US Open in 1909, George Sargent instructed the 1910 US census taker to put down that his occupation was “Golf Champion”!

Ironically, Sargent’s replacement at the Ottawa Golf Club, Karl Keffer, a “Golf Champion” himself, having won the Canadian Open in 1911 (the same year Sargent won the US Open), was living in an apartment within the clubhouse as the Ottawa Golf Club’s professional golfer when the 1911 Canadian census was taken: his employment was recorded as “Servant.”

First Soldiering

In the middle of 1901, several months after the England and Wales census was taken, 18-year-old Fred Rickwood decided to join the British Army in order to fight in the second of Britain's wars against the Boers in South Africa.

The war, originally called the Boer War, but now called the Second Anglo-Boer War, lasted from 1899 to 1902.

It began as something of a grand crusade to subdue the rebellious Boer population in South Africa to the will of the British Empire. The war was supposed to have been quickly won. Yet from the beginning, the most powerful country on earth, which controlled much of the world via its globe-circling empire (on which, it was said, the sun never set), was regularly thwarted and stymied by the guerrilla warfare tactics of the vastly outnumbered and outgunned Boers.

To prevent the guerilla fighters from being supplied, the British destroyed crops, on the one hand, and depopulated rebellious regions of both their white and their black inhabitants, housing them instead in a system of concentration camps, which were poorly administered and tended to cause disease, and thereby thousands of deaths.

By 1901, not surprisingly, given the failures of the army and the brutality of its tactics, the first flush of enthusiastic enlistment in Britain was well in the past. In fact, the war had become a national embarrassment.

Undeterred by negative coverage of the war in the newspapers, however, and undaunted by a death toll already higher than the death toll Britain had suffered in the Crimean War fifty years before, patriotic young Fred Rickwood enlisted in a Yorkshire battalion (the 35th) of the volunteers known as the Imperial Yeomanry, a cavalry unit.

When the first contingent of Imperial Yeoman Volunteers was formed in 1899, the middle-class gentlemen volunteers for this unit brought their own horses with them, as was officially required. Yet by the time the third contingent, which Rickwood joined, was raised in the middle of 1901, the by now primarily working-class volunteers who made up the vast majority of recruits could not have been

expected to do so. Still, whether or not Fred Rickwood had his own horse or had any experience with horses before the war, he came to know all about them by war's end.

Unlike the poorly trained contingent of Imperial Yeomanry sent to South Africa early in 1901 (units that participated in – and were in some respects blamed for – significant defeats, entailing large numbers of casualties), Fred Rickwood's contingent was much better trained. Rickwood and his fellow volunteers were housed in barracks in Yorkshire for several months and given a level of military training similar to that bestowed upon the members of the regular professional army. He and his fellow recruits of 1901 were to be proper soldiers.



Figure 17 Cavalry troopers of the properly trained third contingent of volunteers known as the Imperial Yeomanry.

After rigorous training, Rickwood's battalion was sent to South Africa, horses and all, in the late spring of 1902.

Mere days before Rickwood's battalion reached Pretoria after many weeks at sea, however, a peace treaty between Britain and the Boers was signed in June of 1902. Members of the various units of the Imperial Yeomanry sent to South Africa in June of 1902 who got off the troop transport ship in Pretoria

as late as the hour that the treaty was signed received a South Africa Service medal. But those who were travelling to South Africa when the treaty was signed – even those whose ships had anchored in Pretoria harbour but who had not yet disembarked – did not receive a South Africa Service medal.

Success in life, as in a golf swing, depends on timing: Fred Rickwood did not get off the boat in time to get a medal. Yet neither did he become a casualty of that brutal war, as did so many in the battalions of the Imperial Yeomanry deployed earlier in the war. Success is relative.



Although the Boer war was over before Rickwood arrived, his volunteer battalion remained in South Africa for the better part of a year.

The units of the Imperial Yeomanry like his that remained in South Africa after the treaty was signed were charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the terms of the peace treaty were properly observed. In effect, they served as a police force.

We can see from the photograph to the left

Figure 18 A mounted trooper of the Imperial Yeomanry on service in South Africa.

that the fully armed and outfitted Imperial Yeoman, mounted on his horse, could certainly cut a rather imposing figure.

Finally, however, in the spring of 1903, Trooper Rickwood was sent home.

First Canadian Golf: Toronto

What Fred Rickwood did after his return to England from South Africa is not clear.

According to the information they provided the census taker in 1911, Fred Rickwood and his wife Edith Rickwood both immigrated to Canada in 1908. On a simple reading of the census information, one could be forgiven for thinking that they arrived in Canada in 1908 as a married couple, but in fact they immigrated to Canada separately as single people, and they did so in different years.



Figure 19 The clubhouse of the Toronto Golf Club, early 1900s, where Edith Barrett lived and worked when she arrived in Canada.

As a single woman, Edith Florence Barrett arrived in Halifax in March of 1908, describing herself as a “Domestic” on her way to Toronto.

In Toronto, she ended up living at the Toronto Golf Club, presumably employed as part of the support staff.

The Toronto Golf Club had been established in

1876, preceded as a golf club in Canada only by the (Royal) Montreal Golf Club (1873) and the (Royal) Quebec Golf Club (1875). Note, however, that the Toronto Golf Club’s golf course has changed locations several times over the years.

When Edith Barrett lived at the Toronto Golf Club, its golf course was located in East Toronto, precisely where we find a young man named Fred Rickwood living at this time.

When Fred Rickwood arrived in Halifax in March of 1911, returning from his stay at his parents' home in Yorkshire during the 1910-11 winter, he gave the immigration officer information about his original arrival in Canada different from the information provided to the census-taker two months later. He indicated that he had first come to Canada eight years before (which would have been in 1903), and that he had lived in Toronto at that time.

His death certificate provides different information yet again. It indicates that, according to his wife of thirty years, he had been in Canada only since about 1905.

It is possible that Rickwood first came to Canada in 1903, perhaps with Percy Barrett, who established himself in Toronto as the builder of the first Lambton golf course and as the Lambton Golf Club's first professional golfer. Perhaps Rickwood helped him to build the golf course. Barrett returned to Yorkshire during the 1903-04 winter, and played golf at Ganton (although Vardon had been replaced there by Ted Ray more than a year before), so even if Rickwood had not travelled to Canada and back with Barrett, it is possible that Rickwood met him when Barrett came back to Yorkshire.

But I have found no records yet of Fred Rickwood's having arrived in Canada in 1903.

Yet there is indeed a Canadian immigration record that shows that a twenty-two-year-old Fred Rickwood, who states that he was born in Yorkshire, arrived in Nova Scotia on 7 April 1905. The age indicated for this immigrant is Fred Rickwood's age in 1905, and a 1905 arrival date is consistent with the information on Fred Rickwood's death certificate.

This would seem to be our man.

Ottawa golf historian Margaret McLaren informs me that Rickwood sailed on the Bavarian, one of the fastest ships of the Allan Line (email to author, 16 June 2022). Departing from Liverpool on March 30th with 1504 passengers, the Bavarian encountered very little ice on its crossing and nearly beat its own record for one of the fastest crossings of the Atlantic:

The Bavarian, which arrived [in Halifax] last evening, had a fine trip, and came very near repeating her record of six days and twenty-three hours. She covered the total of 2,515 miles ... in seven days.... [T]his morning her second- and third-class passengers were landed. The passengers are a fine lot – young, clean-looking, and bright – the majority of them coming from the British Isles. (Evening Mail [Halifax], 8 April 1905, p. 16)



Figure 20 S.S. Bavarian, circa 1905.

Rickwood may have travelled on the S.S. Bavarian even before immigrating to Canada, for the ship was used during the Boer War, from 1899 to 1902 transporting artillery, troops, sick and wounded soldiers, and so on. The ship was wrecked in the fall of 1905 when it hit Wye Rock at Grosse Ile in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Upon his arrival in Halifax, Rickwood told Canadian immigration authorities that his job was that of “Platelayer.”

A platelayer was an employee of a railway company who inspected and maintained railway track (rails, sleepers, fishplates, bolts, etc.). The platelayer inspected rails and components for wear and tear and maintained parts by greasing them. When sections of track required complete replacement, larger teams of platelayers worked together on such jobs.

Upon his return from South Africa, rather than briefly visiting Canada in 1903, it seems likely that Rickwood was employed for a year or two by one of Britain’s many railway companies. Before that, he may even have returned to his apprenticeship with Harry Vardon.

In any event, when Rickwood arrived in Nova Scotia in 1905, he said he was on his way to Toronto. Presumably his train journey to Toronto across eastern Ontario would have given him his first view of the Napanee golf course. The golf course was virtually treeless in the area where the five-hole course then operated, and all five holes were right beside the train tracks, so if anyone was playing golf on the day his train rolled by, Rickwood could have easily seen them. He would not have seen any flags flying in the golf holes, however, for, as we shall see (in the second volume of this book), the holes were then marked only by short poles, about three feet in height, with a bit of rope or cloth bound to the tip.

Whether or not he could see the golf course in 1905, what he certainly could not have seen was what lay in his future: an enduring connection to Napanee’s track-side golf course.

Rickwood had told immigration officials that he was on his way to Toronto. In fact, he travelled beyond Toronto to Waterloo, Ontario. Just weeks after his arrival in Canada, we find that he has found work in a rural community called West Montrose, about ten miles north of Kitchener-Waterloo. According to the *Chronicle-Telegraph* (Waterloo, Ontario), “Mr Fred Rickwood, formerly a soldier in the British army in South Africa, has engaged with Byron Letson for the current year” (18 May 1905, p. 1). Letson (1871-1950) was a farmer who lived on the farm he owned in West Montrose his whole life.

Rickwood, however, was not to stay long in West Montrose. The newspaper indicates that Rickwood still had Toronto on his mind: “Mr Fred Rickwood, of West Montrose, spent some days in the Queen City last week and reports a good time” (14 September 1905, p. 1). He must have moved to Toronto by at least 1906, for we find a report in the Waterloo *Chronicle-Telegraph* that he had returned to the area for Christmas at the end of 1906: “Mr. Fred Ric[k]wood of Yorkshire, paid a Christmas visit to West Montrose” (3 January 1907, p. 1). He had lived in west Montrose for perhaps a year, yet he seems to have made significant friendships.

In regard to Rickwood’s visit to Toronto late in the summer of 1905, I note an interesting conjunction of golf figures in Mississauga at precisely this point.

In 1905, the shareholders of the newly formed Mississauga Golf Club bought 208 acres of land on the former Mississauga Indian Reserve that had been in private hands for fifty years. The next year, “George Cumming and Percy Barrett, professionals at the Toronto and Lambton golf clubs, surveyed and laid out a nine-hole course” (Paul Dilse, *Heritage Impact Statement on the Pump House at the Mississauga Golf and Country Club*, for the Mississauga Golf and Country Club and the City of Mississauga [11 Octo012], p. 5). So here we have Rickwood’s fellow Vardon apprentice from the early days in Yorkshire working with the most important professional golfer in Canada. Shortly afterwards, Rickwood moved from West Montrose to Cumming’s neighbourhood, right next to the Toronto Golf Club.

It is possible that Rickwood gave up farm labour for work on this new golf course project in Mississauga.

Cumming and Barrett worked closely together in 1905-06 not just as architects, but also as players. In December of 1905, we read in *The Daily Morning Journal and Courier* (New Haven, Connecticut) that George Cumming, of the Toronto club, the Canadian leader in professional golf, and Percy Barrett of

Lambton, who ran third in the United States national this year, have challenged [Willie] Anderson, the American champion, and Alexander Smith, former American champion, to a series of games.... It would practically decide the international championship" (7 December 1905, p. 1). In January of 1906, Cumming and Barrett were scheduled to travel together by train from New York City to Mexico City for a series of big international golf tournaments there, but Cumming missed the train and withdrew from the tournaments. But they travelled together in the summer: they were the Toronto representatives at the U.S. Open in Chicago in 1906. If Rickwood had come to Toronto to meet up with Barrett in 1905 or 1906, he would almost inevitably have also met Cumming.

In Toronto over the next few years, we find evidence of Fred Rickwood recorded in *The Toronto City Directory 1907* (by Might Directories): "Rickwood, Frederick, lab b 1569 Queen e." The abbreviations in the directory indicate that the person at the address in question was a labourer boarding in a home on Queen Street, East.

But what of the name "Frederick"?

It is important to acknowledge that Fred Rickwood's parents did not officially name him "Frederick." He was christened as Fred, and his name almost invariably appears in official records in Britain and Canada as Fred.

Note, however, that in the 1921 Canadian census, he appears as Frederick. On the day of the taking of the census, however, he and his family seem not to have been at home at the Summit Golf and Country Club where they then lived. The information in the census about this family is garbled. The mixture of accurate and inaccurate information about them seems to have been offered to the census taker by the other employees in residence at the golf club who worked under Rickwood. They gave out Fred's name as Frederick, and they also misnamed his wife and one of his children! But they got other names right.

My explanation of this misnaming is that people tend to assume that a person called "Fred" is probably officially named "Frederick." There are very few "Freds" in the world who are not also "Fredericks." I suggest that we see that assumption at play in the minds of the employees talking about him to the 1921 census taker, and I suspect that we see that assumption at play in the mind of the boarding home owner in Rickwood's East Toronto neighbourhood who gave out his boarder's name as "Frederick" for the *Toronto City Directory*. Either the owner of the home assumed that "Fred" was short for "Frederick,"

or the person recording names for the Directory did. The clerk who recorded his marriage to Edith Barrett in 1909 did something similar, adding an underlined “K” to the name “Fred”: “Fred.K” And his own daughter-in-law told the *Ilkley Gazette* in 1968 that his name was “Frederick Rickwood” (cited by Jim Seton, “Across the Years,” *Ilkley Gazette*, 18 January 2018)

The listing in the 1908 *Directory* is more interesting than the 1907 listing: “Rickwood, Frederick gdnr 61 Swanwick Ave.”

It is intriguing to see that “Frederick” Rickwood is now a gardener. Recall that Fred Rickwood’s father was a gardener, and that Harry Vardon’s father was called a “gardener” even though he was what we would call the “greenkeeper” for the golf course on Jersey where he worked.

Even the great Canadian golf architect Stanley Thompson was originally described as a “gardener.” When *Canadian Golfer* published an article on the formation of the new firm Thompson, Cumming & Thompson in 1920, we read that “Stanley Thompson’s specialty will be landscape gardening, he having taken courses in this interesting profession” (February 1920, vol v no 10, p. 614). Thompson also described himself as a “landscape engineer,” indicating that one of his specialties was “course beautifying.”

So we can see that when golf in Canada was in its infancy in the early 1900s, there were not yet recognized names for various golf industry workers, and so a golf course employee might well have indicated to census takers or the compilers of city directories that he was a “gardener,” even if he was actually helping to build and maintain golf courses.

Such is my suspicion regarding “Frederick” Rickwood, the “gardener”: he was actually Fred Rickwood, the greenkeeper and construction man.

From this point of view, an interesting thing about both “Frederick” Rickwood’s 1907 address (1569 Queen Street, East) and his 1908 address (61 Swanwick Avenue) is that Rickwood was never living more than about one mile from the clubhouse of the Toronto Golf Club (where Edith Barrett lived as of 1908). I suspect that he was actually working at the Toronto Golf Club, perhaps as a member of the greenkeeping staff, and perhaps also helping the club’s professional golfer build golf courses in Toronto and in other communities across southern and eastern Ontario.

First Canadian Golf: Toronto

The head professional golfer at the Toronto Golf Club was George Cumming, known ever since as the “doyen” of Canadian golf professionals, for he trained as apprentices a majority of the first generation of golf professionals who would subsequently fan out across golf courses from coast to coast in Canada during the first third of the twentieth century, becoming the primary agents in the establishment of golf as a game in Canada.

This process of establishing golf as a Canadian sport was gathering momentum during the three years that Rickwood was in Toronto, and Cumming was the prime mover in this process. Not only did Cumming win the Canadian Open in 1905, but three of his apprentices who had graduated to become head professionals at the clubs that became Royal Quebec, Royal Montreal, and Royal Ottawa (Albert Murray, Charles Murray, and Karl Keffer, respectively) won six of the next nine championships (the Murray brothers and Keffer each won the championship twice).

In recognition of his role as progenitor of at least thirty golf professionals from his pro shop at the Toronto Golf Club between 1900 and 1950, another name given to Cumming was “Daddy of them all” (*Canadian Golfer*, October 1919, vol 5 no 6, p. 341).

When he won the Toronto and District Professional Championship in 1919 by five strokes, vanquishing very accomplished former apprentices while doing so, *Canadian Golfer* wrote: “George Cumming’s victory was a particularly popular one. He has done much for golf in Canada, having trained Karl Keffer, C.R. Murray, A.H. Murray, Nicol Thompson, W.M. Freeman, Frank Freeman, and the majority of the younger pros in Canada. He and his pupils have won the Open Championship of Canada no fewer than seven times and been runner-up on six occasions – certainly a most unique record” (October 1919, vol 5 no 6, pp. 341-42).

Living about half a mile from “Frederick” Rickwood, and about the same distance from the Toronto Golf Club golf course, were two of these apprentices of George Cumming: Frank and William Freeman. Rickwood developed a close relationship with them.

When Fred Rickwood returned from Europe in 1919 after World War I, William Freeman would give him a few months of work in his golf shop at Lambton while Rickwood sought his own position at a golf club in Toronto for 1920.

It was not just Rickwood and Willie Freeman who were good friends, however, for all of Cumming's apprentices in the 1900 to 1914 period were very close. Karl Keffer, for instance, married one of the Freeman brother's sisters, Evelyn. The best man at Keffer's wedding was another of Cumming's apprentices, William ("Billy") Bell. And Keffer himself was the best man at the wedding of Fred Rickwood and Edith Barrett.

Many of Cumming's apprentices – all of them Rickwood's friends – posed with their mentor at the 1912 Canadian Open, as seen below.

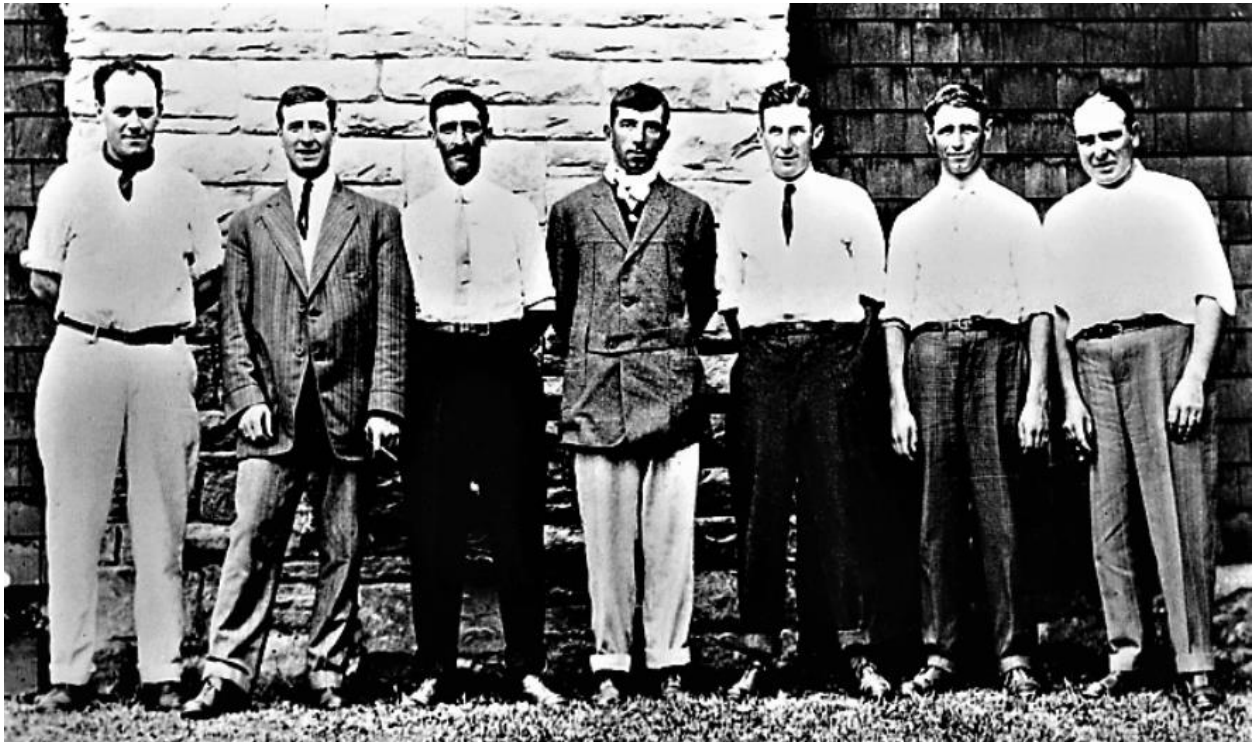


Figure 21 From left: Charles Murray, William "Billy" Bell, Frank Freeman, Karl Keffer, Albert Murray, Willie Freeman, all former apprentices of George Cumming, on right, at 1912 Canadian Open

By at least 1908, however, Rickwood was working not so much as a "gardener" at the Toronto Golf Club, but rather as another of the many apprentices under the supervision of George Cumming. We read in the *Quebec Chronicle* in 1909 that "Rickwood is a pupil of the celebrated Toronto professional, J. [sic] Cumming, and holds strong recommendations from him" (15 May 1909, p. 6).

The word "pupil" was used in those days to indicate that an assistant professional was an "apprentice" of a head professional.

First Canadian Golf: Toronto

The fact that Rickwood had become one of Cumming's apprentices suggests how Rickwood came to be offered a position at Amherst Golf Club when the golf enthusiasts in that town decided to found a golf club and then build a golf course in 1908.

As the head professional at the Toronto Golf Club, George Cumming was regarded as the most important golf professional in Canada. From across Canada, he was approached by all sorts of established golf clubs, and by all sorts of groups and individuals looking to found golf clubs, for advice about golf course location and construction and for recommendations regarding golf professionals available for hire. So, Cumming would have had his finger on the pulse of virtually all golfing activity in Canada in 1908 and might well have been the one who recommended Rickwood to the people in Amherst.

Cumming was just as much a golf course architect as a head professional at Toronto Golf Club. He went about Ontario all the while he was head pro at the Toronto Golf Club (from 1900 to 1950) building dozens of golf courses, and he often took one or another of his apprentices along with him to teach them this aspect of the golf professional's craft. "Gardener" and "Labourer" "Frederick" Rickwood may have gathered his first North American golf course construction experience in this way, for Cumming was quite active in laying out golf courses during the period that Rickwood was his "pupil."

And so Cumming would have been able to recommend to Amherst Golf Club just what the people there needed: a golf professional who could build them a golf course, build them the equipment needed to play the game, and teach them how to swing a golf club.

Cumming, for instance, must have been instrumental in recommending his 18-year-old former assistant professional Albert Murray to Quebec Golf Club in 1905 to build a new nine-hole golf course for this long-established golf club. The following year, Quebec Golf Club hired Murray as its first professional golfer. When Murray later left for Outremont Golf Club in Montreal at the end of the 1908 season, he continued to advise Quebec Golf Club during its attempt to replace him.

The replacement golf professional would be Fred Rickwood, who left Amherst Golf Club in 1909 to become the second ever golf professional at Quebec Golf Club. This was probably a case of one Cumming associate helping another.



Figure 22 From left to right, Karl Keffer, Albert Murray, and Fred Rickwood. The three men are probably at a Canadian Open before World War I. A photograph from the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame, provided by Ian Murray.

But this is to get ahead of our story, for Rickwood's service as the professional golfer at the Quebec Golf Club was bracketed by two stints as the professional golfer for the Amherst Golf Club. In 1908-09, he built Amherst's first golf course. And a few years later he returned from Quebec to build Amherst a second golf course!

Amherst

In Amherst in 1908, three of the women leaders of the wealthier members of Amherst society – Mrs. McDougal, Mrs. Hickman, and Mrs. Hodgeson – decided that it would be a good thing for Amherst to have a golf club. Golf was said to provide good physical and mental exercise for the professional classes. So these three women canvassed their wealthy friends for the funds needed to start a golf club and build a golf course. Their industry matched their ambition, and so within a few weeks Amherst had its first golf club.

Next came the matter of a golf course: where to build it, and who to build it?

There were only about two dozen professional golfers in all of Canada in 1908 and somehow these good ladies got hold of one: Fred Rickwood.

And so after the ladies had established their golf club and installed Mrs. McDougal as its vice-president, and after the new golf club had leased a farm in West Amherst from a man named Baker as the location for the golf course, Fred Rickwood took charge: he directed the team that “measured the fields, pegged off the tees and greens, and made play possible” (C. Pipes, “The Early History of Amherst Golf Club” [1939], p. 3, cited in Michael J. Hudson, “An Examination into the Development of Golf Courses in Nova Scotia [MA Thesis, Dalhousie 1998]). F.N. Robertson observes that in the first year of play, Fred Rickwood “taught the local members to play the ancient game” (cited in Hudson, p. 40).



Figure 23 A roller for greens and tees from Fred Rickwood's time that Amherst Golf and Country Club displays on its grounds

Conditions, however, were not conducive even to learning the rudiments of the game, let alone playing it at a high level: “Conditions at this first Amherst course were crude and caddies were a necessity, their role more as ball scouters than bag carriers. As one member recalled, ‘every shot [was] a dash into the wild unknown’” (Hudson, p 5, citing Pipes). Furthermore, “In the absence of adequate drainage, the course was extremely wet, making play, at best, difficult. The course itself was kept

playable by a flock of cows and sheep who were permitted to roam freely, with the greens protected from damaging hooves by wire” (Hudson, pp. 39-40).

Because of the wet conditions, within a few years the Amherst Golf Club was looking for a new site for its golf course.

The fact that the drainage was so poor, moreover, was not the only problem: it turned out the Baker farm land was not going to be available for golf for very much longer.

So a new golf course was needed. Rickwood’s architectural eye was employed again, therefore, but this time he was not just pegging out where fairways and greens should go, but also scouting out the very site itself for the new golf course.

This golf course had to be “found” (that is, the land had to be relatively ready for play without the need to clear it and sculpt it), for Amherst Golf Club did not have the funds that the golf clubs in bigger towns and cities had – funds that would enable an architect to apply artifice to the landscape by means of a land-moving army of men and horses in the effort to build the kind of well-manicured fairways and greens that wealthy club members would expect.

As Michael J. Hudson points out, the Amherst “members were unable to finance the building of greens and fairways,” so “Club officials decided to raise money to build a new course by the sale of \$50 bonds. Bonds were quickly sold by canvassing wealthy members of the local community who believed that socially a golf course was an important part of any town” (“An Examination into the Development of Golf Courses in Nova Scotia,” p. 41). Pipes notes that the local doctor paid \$100 for two bonds, regarding (one might even say prescribing) golf as necessary for the health of the community: “I don’t know anything about the game, but it will be good for the town to have a golf course; it will take business and professional men out of doors for their exercise, and I will join later” (p. 12).

Availing itself of the advice of Fred Rickwood, who was living in Amherst in the spring of 1911 when that year’s Canadian census was taken (although he was then still officially employed as the professional golfer at the Quebec Golf Club), the Amherst Golf Club chose as the location of its new nine-hole golf course the Embree Farm in East Amherst, where it is still located today.



Figure 24 An early 1900s photograph of Embree's Pond, around which Fred Rickwood built the second golf course of the Amherst Golf Club in 1911-12.

The land of this 72-acre farm did not have the drainage problems of the Baker farm. Situated amidst the historic Tantramar Marshes, it comprised pastures largely cleared of trees already, a creek winding across the property, and a deep ravine created over the ages by this creek.

The land also enclosed an irregularly shaped body of water known as Embree's Pond (see the early twentieth-century photograph to the left). Golf holes were routed around and across creek, ravine, and pond. Today, golf holes still cross Embree's Pond – one of them, the 15th hole (called "Cat Tails") plays across the very end of this pond at a length of 155 yards (see the photograph of this golf hole below).

Rickwood's nine-hole design was judged of sufficiently high calibre for Amherst Golf Club to have been awarded the Maritime Provincial Championship, which was held on its golf course in 1921. In a sign of the success of this competition, the Club was

awarded the Maritime Ladies Championship the very next year.

Interestingly, the 1921 Maritime Provincial Championship men's amateur winner was Gerald Meilke – who seems to have been a horse for a Rickwood course, so to speak, for he had won the 1920 championship at St John, New Brunswick, on the Riverside golf course, another Fred Rickwood project (as we shall see shortly).

The Amherst course that Rickwood designed was of about average length for an early twentieth-century nine-hole course: 2,640 yards. Unusually, however, Rickwood presented golfers with two sequences in which a par three hole was followed immediately by another par three hole (a sequencing that Old Tom Morris had used at Tain Golf Club in Scotland in the 1890s and that Karl Keffer would use at Jekyll Island in 1923). Also quite remarkable was a 370-yard par five hole that became quite famous, as we can see in the following review of the golf course published by the *Canadian Golfer* before the 1921 Maritime Provincial Championship:

The Amherst course where the Championship is being held is a very interesting one. No. 1 has a length of 205 yards and is a very nice one shot hole over a very deep ravine to a well trapped green. Number 2 (370 yards) is a par five and the approach is extremely difficult, and it is not very often even the best players will stay on the green with their second shot as the green is on a plateau and is entirely surrounded by trees. This hole has been pronounced by Mr. McLuckie, a former amateur champion of Canada, as one of the very best in Canada. Number 3 (215 yards) is a very fine one shot hole and must be all carry as the green is well trapped with a ditch running across the front of it. Number 4 (165 yards) is another nice one shot hole, with a roiling green, and not as easy as it would appear. Number 5 (390 yards) is another two shot hole with traps all round the green, which slopes away toward the back. Number 6 (190 yards) has a fine elm tree almost directly between tee and centre of the green, which slopes to the left. Number 7 (120 yards) is probably one of the best mashie pitches in the country, being over a deep ravine, and only a very high ball will properly hold the green. Number 8 (535 yards) is the longest hole, and is not very difficult apart from the length. A new green has been constructed on this hole, and will be ready for the Championship. Number 9 (450 yards) is a dog-leg, and will be quite a difficult par 5, as newly constructed, the green sloping off sharply toward the rear into a sand trap. (Canadian Golfer [July 1921], vol vii no 3, pp. 182-83]

So two of Rickwood's nine holes from 1911 were regarded in 1921 as worthy of consideration as among the best of their kind in the whole country!

That is a much higher rate of success in building golf holes judged to be the "best in the country" than most architects achieve by means of a single eighteen-hole golf course – let alone a 2,600-yard course of just nine holes!

The *Canadian Golfer* reviewer reported that "Visiting golfers have pronounced the Amherst course one of the sportiest in the province, being over rolling ground and presenting many natural hazards" (p. 183). Interestingly, in the 1930s, as we shall see (in volume three of this book), golfers from the Cataraqui Golf and Country Club would say the same sorts of things about Rickwood's newly opened

Amherst

course at the Napanee Golf and Country Club when declaring it one of the sportiest golf courses in Eastern Ontario.

It is also interesting to note that in reports about the Maritime Provincial Championship Rickwood's greens at Amherst garnered particular scrutiny – precisely in terms of features that we associate with his greens at the Napanee Golf and Country Club. The amateur and professional golfers who played Amherst in 1921 had difficulty with the elevation of the sides of the plateau greens above the adjoining fairway and rough. After the conclusion of the Championship, we learn that “although everything was in good shape, possibly the greens were too fast. Two or three of the greens with side elevation were extremely hard to negotiate and many good players found it hard to qualify [for the sixteen match-play places available for the finals] by not being able to negotiate these greens” (*Canadian Golfer* [August 1921] vol vii no 4, p. 268).

Recall that it was Rickwood's green-making ability that was particularly celebrated in the newspapers when he came to Napanee in 1927 to remodel the golf course. It seems that by then he had been a builder of sporty golf courses with tricky greens for almost two decades.

Rickwood's Amherst course continued to be celebrated well after the best amateur and professional male and female golfers had left town in the early 1920s.

Just as *Canadian Golfer* had opined in 1921 that “visiting golfers ... are in for no end of a good time” (*Canadian Golfer* [July 1921] vol vii no 3, p. 183), so in 1924 the *Morning Chronicle* of Halifax advised visiting golfers that they should not leave the province without playing the course: “Amherst has inviting links just outside the town and, certainly from the golfer's standpoint, a trip through Nova Scotia would not be complete until the Amherst course is visited” (cited in *Canadian Golfer* [June 1924], vol 10 no 2, p. 160).

Similarly, *Canadian Golfer* implied in a 1926 article that the architect's use of the natural features of the land at Amherst Golf Club and his routing of the holes around the clubhouse were exemplary: “Amherst, near the New Brunswick boundary, has an excellent and inviting nine-hole course of about 2,640 yards abounding in hazards. A deep ravine with almost precipitous sides forms a natural hazard of evil reputation for the unwary at several of the holes, and there is also a brook with apparently magnetic influence on golf balls. The handsome and commodious Club House is so well situated with regard to the

course that play on most of the holes can be watched from the verandahs" ([March 1926] vol 11 no 11, p. 912).



Figure 25 A view from the bridge of the 7th hole at Amherst golf course of the ravine that this 120-yard par-3 hole crossed. On the horizon is the clubhouse. Rickwood ensured that from its verandahs, play was visible on almost every hole.

Eventually, however, the Amherst golf club decided to expand its golf course to eighteen holes, and so in the mid-1960s it commissioned Stanley Thompson protégé Clinton E. Robinson (more familiarly known as “Robbie” Robinson) to develop an eighteen-hole championship golf course. The reason for modifying the nine-hole golf course was not necessarily dissatisfaction with its design, however, but rather, according to Hudson, the over-crowding on the nine-hole course caused by the increasing popularity of the game of golf in Nova Scotia during the 1960s (p. 91).

The extent to which Rickwood’s original 1911 design was incorporated within Robinson’s expansion of the golf course is not clear. The Amherst Golf and Country Club website simply says: “beginning in 1967 and continuing over a three year period the course was expanded to 18 holes. Robbie Robinson re-designed the nine-hole course to an 18-hole championship layout.” That Robinson “expanded” and “re-designed” Rickwood’s nine-hole course implies that he incorporated most, if not all, of the original golf course within his own design.

As we can see from the image below, Robinson's 1967 blueprint of his plans lends credence to this hypothesis.

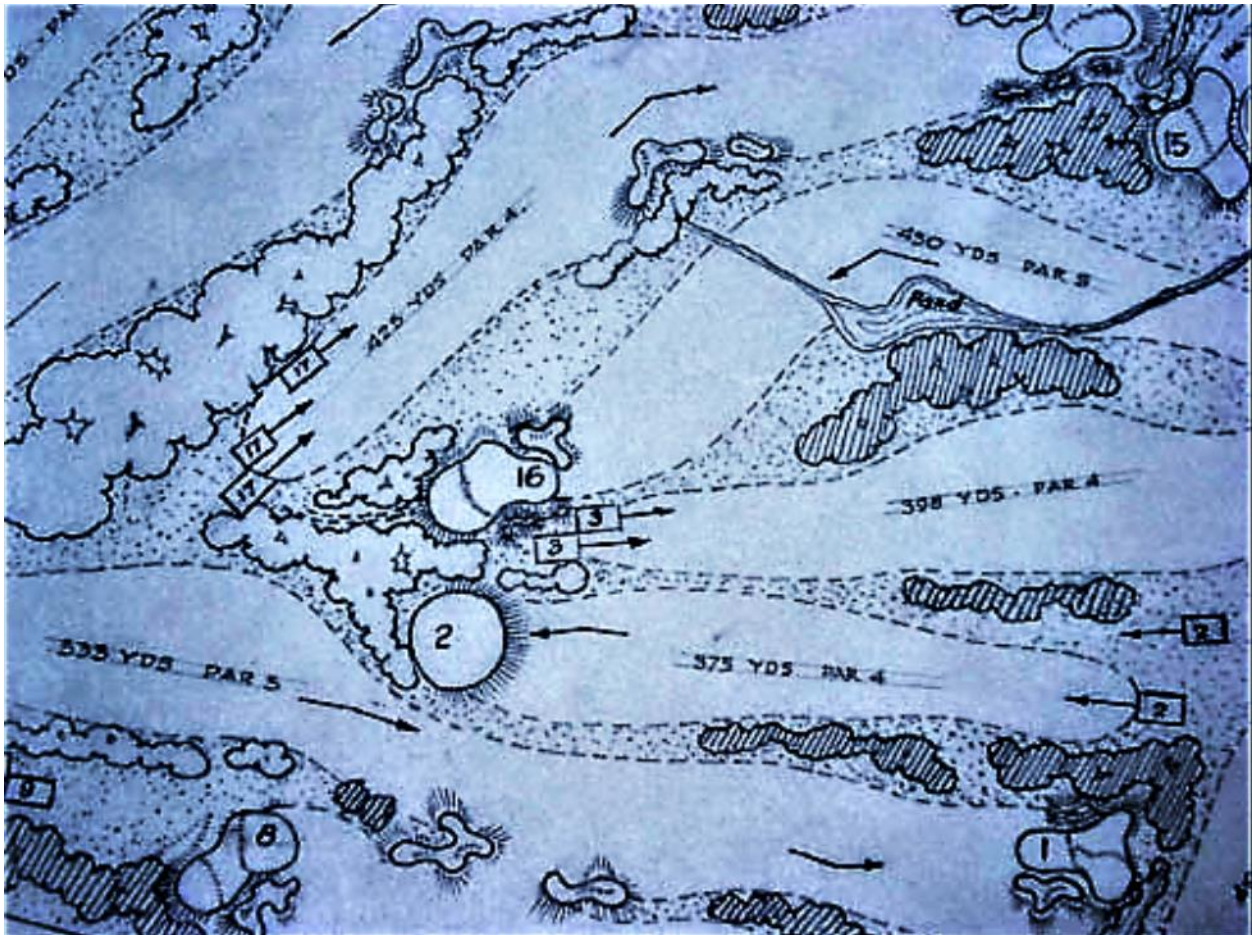


Figure 26 Detail from C.E. Robinson's blueprint for the Amherst Golf and Country Club's 18-hole championship course (RCGA copy).

In considerable detail, Robinson depicts on this blueprint both "Existing Planting" and "Proposed Planting" in relation to greens and fairways that his new eighteen-hole golf course will comprise. What he labels "Proposed Planting" is symbolized by wavy, cloud-shaped black lines that are shaded-in and also contain close bar-like lines drawn through them. The "Existing Planting" on the golf course land is symbolized by the same wavy, cloud-shaped lines with no shading-in and with no lines at all drawn within them.

In the detail from the blueprint that I reproduce above, we can see that the "Existing Planting" of the several golf holes depicted here already defines the edges of a number of fairways, such as the one for

17, and a number of the green surrounds, such as the one for green 2 and the one for green 16. This fact presumably indicates that the fairways and greens in question were originally laid out by Rickwood more than half a century before and that Robinson decided to incorporate these pre-existing fairways and greens (with their mature trees already framing them) into his new 18-hole championship layout more or less as he inherited them.

The photograph below presents an image of Embree's Pond today and clearly shows its continued importance in the routing of the eighteen-hole championship course of Robinson – and Rickwood.



Figure 27 Embree's Pond today at Amherst Golf Club, showing the 155-yard 15th hole ("Cat Tails") crossing the end of the pond.

So Robinson's re-design of Rickwood's nine-hole course at Amherst would seem to have been like his later re-design of Stanley Thompson's 1922 nine-hole course at the Briars Golf Club in Jackson's Point, Ontario. Here, in 1972, Robinson seamlessly integrated the original nine holes of Thompson into his own new nine holes to make up the new eighteen-hole course. In each case, he seems to have appreciated the original architect's achievements.

In 1967, in other words, Robinson implicitly accords to the Rickwood course at Amherst the same sort of architectural respect he would later accord to the Thompson course at Jackson's Point.

Amherst

Note that Robinson had apprenticed with Thompson in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and so it is possible that he also met Rickwood then, too, for the latter also worked with Thompson in those days, as we shall soon see.

Maritimes Open

Fred Rickwood had played competitive golf while resident at Amherst.

In 1911, he represented the Amherst Golf Club at the Canadian Open Championship held at the Ottawa Golf Club in Aylmer, Quebec (*Montreal Star*, 8 July 1911, p. 26). And he also represented Amherst in the open championship of the Maritimes Golf Association, which held its annual meeting of men and women amateurs and professionals in Truro, Nova Scotia, that year.

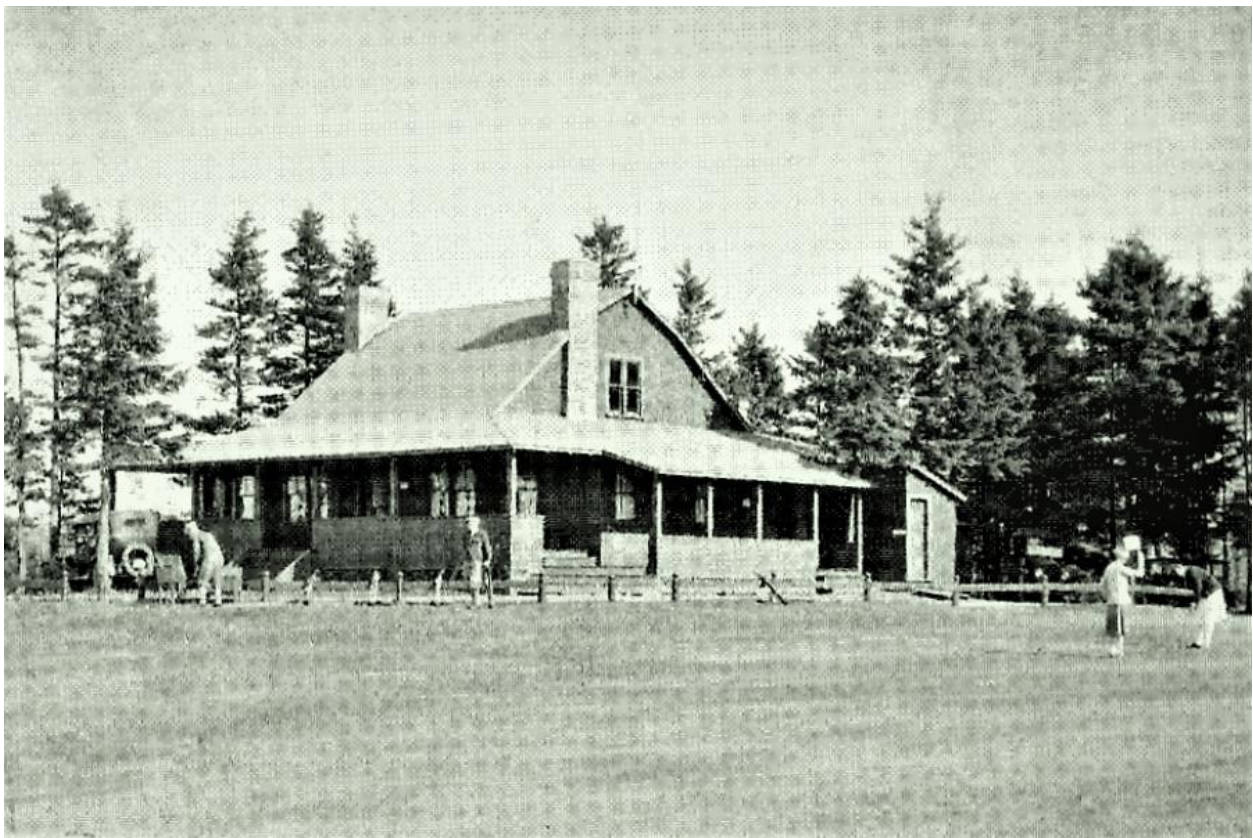


Figure 28 Truro Golf Club circa World War I. Photograph from Truro Golf Club website.

Truro Golf Club had been founded in 1903 and maintained a sporty nine-hole course. It was not unusual in those days to play an 18-hole championship tournament on a nine-hole course.

The club had recently hired as its golf professional twenty-one-year-old Harry Hampton of the Montrose Mercantile Golf Club, Scotland, neighbour of Royal Montrose Golf Club. As a precocious nineteen-year-

old in 1908, Hampton had won the championship of Montrose, although his putting was said to have been hampered all his life by poor vision in one eye.

Hampton was playing on his home course, and so might have been favored in the professional competition, but he was pushed hard by Rickwood. A New York newspaper recalled the event twelve years later:

Hampton First in Nova Scotia

Harry Hampton, who won the 1923 Michigan open championship, is recognized today as one of the best players on the continent. It is not generally known that as a young man he came out from Scotland to the Maritime provinces and held the professional position twelve years ago at Truro, N.S., and Sydney, N.S. While there he won the open championship of the Maritimes, defeating by one stroke Fred Rickwood. (Times Union [Brooklyn, N.Y.], 22 December 1923, p. 12)

As the above article indicates, after his brief stint at Truro, Hampton moved to the United States.



Figure 29 Harry Hampton, circa 1921.

In America, as the game of golf boomed, he fashioned a very successful career as both a club pro and a tournament player, winning seven professional tournaments, including several state opens in addition to the one in Michigan.

He also had a couple of brushes with golf immortality. In 1921, he finished tied third in the PGA championship and was there after reported in the Scottish newspaper the *Dundee Courier* to have been regarded as the sixth best professional golfer in the United States. Hampton also led the U.S. Open after the first round in 1925, eventually finishing seventh, one place ahead of Bobby Jones.

As the *Times Union* observed, since Hampton's one-stroke victory over Rickwood in 1911, "He has gone very, very far in golf" (p. 12).

Quebec

Between his 1908 and 1911 exercises in Amherst golf course construction, Rickwood became the professional golfer at the Quebec Golf Club. When Albert Murray left Quebec in 1908 for Outremont Golf Club in Montreal, the Quebec board of directors, meeting on November 21st, 1908, authorized the hiring of a new professional. Murray, remaining a friendly adviser to the Club, expressed doubt that the club would be able to find a good professional who would be satisfied with the salary offered by the club: about \$25 per month for a 7-month contract. But Rickwood leapt at the offer – ready, willing, and able to take up the professional's duties at the beginning of the golf season in 1909.

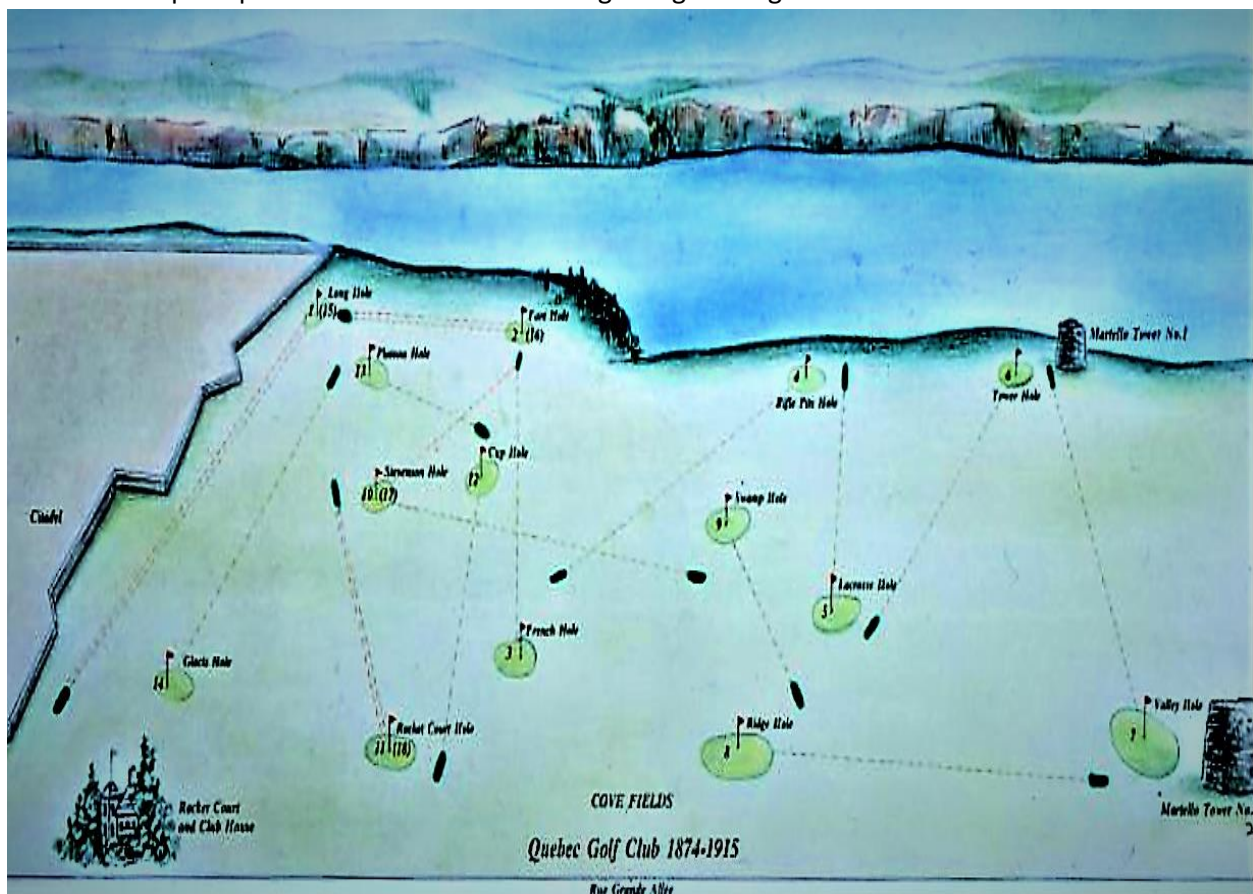


Figure 30 Quebec Golf Club on Cove Fields of the Plains of Abraham as laid out by Albert Murray, where Rickwood was professional golfer 1909-11.

The golf course of the Quebec Golf Club, depicted above, was on the Cove Fields at the extreme east boundary of the Plains of Abraham. The walls of the Citadel marked the boundary of the golf course on the east, and the line between Martello Tower 1 and Martello Tower 2 marked the boundary of the course on the west. Construction of new city buildings constantly encroached on the golf course,

however, swallowing up Martello Tower 2 and the greens nearest to it, so new routing of the holes was needed fairly often – as in 1905, when 18-year-old Albert Murray was called in to do the job. The Quebec Golf Club ultimately re-located to a new site in 1915 when its Cove Fields golf course became the site of the factory that produced the notorious Ross rifle for Canada's World War I soldiers.

Fred Rickwood arrived at the Quebec Golf Club with the reputation of being a powerful hitter. Perhaps this information had been provided by Harry Vardon in a letter of reference. Perhaps Murray had spoken to the people at Quebec about Rickwood. Cumming had sent "strong recommendations" of his former apprentice (*Quebec Chronicle*, 15 May 1909, p. 6).

Whatever the case, impressed by Rickwood's golfing prowess, in September of 1909, the Quebec Golf Club awarded him \$20 (almost a month's salary) to enable his participation in the Canadian Open Championship, which was held at the Toronto Golf Club. Rickwood finished tied for twentieth behind champion Karl Keffer.

Pleased by his performance, the Quebec Golf Club awarded him \$10 more so that he could immediately play in another professional tournament at Caledonia Springs, which the golf professionals gathered there said was the first professional tournament held in Canada other than the Canadian Open:

All the professional golf players in Canada and also Geo. Sargent, the famous American outdoor professional champion, are gathered here at present, playing a professional tournament on the beautiful new links at the Caledonia Springs hotel. The tournament is being held under the auspices of the Caledonia Springs Hotel Company, Ltd., and prizes aggregating \$225 are offered as follows:

1st prize, \$100; 2nd prize, \$50; 3rd prize, \$30; 4th prize, \$20; 5th prize, \$15; 6th prize, \$10.

The match is a 72-hole one, and is taking two days to finish. It is being played in rounds of 18 holes, morning and afternoon. The players go round in pairs....

This is the first match of the kind ever held in Canada, and has proved a decided success and the players state it will no doubt be the forerunner of many more such in various parts of the country.

The fact of Sargent being present added greatly to the interest taken in the game and the number who witnessed it was large.... (Ottawa Journal, 7 September 1909, p. 6).

Karl Keffer, who had won the Canadian Open championship that summer (the first of his two victories in the championship), also won the Caledonia Springs tournament. Keffer and Rickwood appear seated beside each other in the photograph below.



Figure 31 Fred Rickwood (front left) and Karl Keffer (front right) sit before fellow professional golfers on the steps of the Caledonia Springs hotel and spa, 7 September 1909, 11 weeks before Rickwood's marriage, where Keffer would serve as best man. In the back row (left to right) are Peter Hendrie, Dave Black, Albert Murray, and James Black. Sitting behind Rickwood is Charles Murray. (From the photograph albums of Charles Murray, Canadian Golf Hall of Fame).

The Quebec Golf Club had sent Rickwood to Toronto to play golf in 1909, but if you remember who was working as a “Domestic” at the Toronto Golf Club at that time, you can guess what happened: he came back not with a trophy, but with a wife (although everyone knows, of course, that the terms “trophy” and “wife” are not mutually exclusive!).

Did he meet Edith Barrett for the first time during his stay at the Toronto Golf Club for the playing of the Canadian Open there at the end of the summer in 1909? Or was that year’s competition at the Toronto

Quebec

Golf Club merely a welcome opportunity for him to renew acquaintance with a young woman he had met there shortly after she had arrived in his East Toronto neighbourhood in the spring of 1908?

Whatever the case may be, Fred Rickwood returned to Toronto at the end of the 1909 golf season to marry Edith Barrett at Saint Monica's, an Anglican Church in a small wooden building at the corner of Gerrard Street and Ashdale Avenue (quite near the golf club) on November 26th, 1909. Karl Keffer, who had won the Canadian Open championship that summer (the first of his two victories in the championship), was the best man, and I imagine that most of the rest of Cumming's golf apprentices, as well as Cumming himself, were also at the wedding. Canada's small professional golf community of a few dozen men was a very tight-knit community in 1909 (in large part because Cumming and his students comprised at least 30% of that community at this time!).

Saint Monica's was not much of a church. I doubt that photographs of the building itself were sent back home to parents in England. But it got the job done, and the Rickwoods returned to Quebec as a married couple.

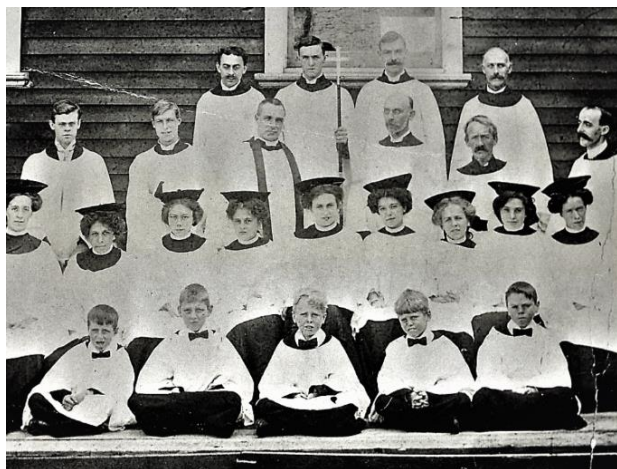


Figure 32 Only photographs of Saint Monica's Anglican Church, Norway, Toronto, 1908. The wooden house acquired in 1907 was turned into a church. The one choir is on the porch; the other, in the back yard overgrown with weeds.

Fred and Edith Rickwood took up residence in Quebec City, where the Quebec Golf Club members regarded Fred as an elegant player.

Yet he was also appreciated as a consummate golf professional who knew how to be attentive to the needs of the club's members, whether that be in terms of instruction, club making, tournament organization and support, or teaching.

The golf writer in the *Quebec Chronicle*, for instance, urged parents to sign their boys up for instruction from the new golf professional:

The junior membership seems to be very popular, and quite a large number of candidates are forthcoming. It would be well for parents of these boys to arrange with the club professional, F. Rickwood, for lessons, as a proper beginning means so very much for the young golfer.

Rickwood is a pupil of the celebrated Toronto professional J. [sic] Cumming, and holds strong recommendations from him. He has already played round the course a few times since his arrival the other day and his poorest score has been 40. Comment is unnecessary as regards the strength of his game therefore. (15 May 1909, p. 6)

And it was noted that from Rickwood's instruction of the adult club members, "the general improvement in play has been noticeable" (*Quebec Chronicle*, 27 November 1909, p. 6).

On Rickwood's return from competitions in Toronto and Caledonia Springs at the end of the summer of 1909, the club management sent him an official letter of warm thanks (on September 13th, 1909) for donating to the Quebec Golf Club a number of golf clubs that he had made so that the club could award these prized objects to the winners of certain intramural competitions, one of which was specifically organized for junior members. We recall that in those days, the professional golfer manufactured and repaired golf clubs for the club members, and even marketed his club manufacturing and repairing skills more broadly, earning a considerable portion of his income in that way, so Rickwood was indeed generous in donating a number of his hand-made golf clubs to the Quebec Golf Club.

And Rickwood was also the greenkeeper at the golf club: "Under the direction of the new professional, F. Rickwood, the links have been kept in satisfactory order all the season through" (*Quebec Chronicle*, 27 November 1909, p. 6).

But the 1909 golf season was not yet over for the members of the Quebec Golf Club. In mid-October, Rickwood led sixteen members of the Quebec Golf Club to the St Francis Golf Club of Lennoxville for a match-play competition. The Quebec players were thoroughly outclassed by the members of the St Francis Club, losing by a score of fourteen matches to two.

So it fell to Rickwood to restore a bit of honour to the Quebec Golf Club: "An exhibition match was also played between Mr. Bonner, of St Francis, a former runner up for the scholastic championship of the United States and twice champion of the Knollwood Country Club, of White Plains, N.Y., and Rickwood,

professional of the Quebec Golf Club. Rickwood won 5 up, 4 to play” (*Montreal Gazette*, 13 October 1909, p. 9).

Griffith Bonner, the son of a Director of the Pennsylvania Cement Company, was known since his student days at Princeton University as a “society man, golfer, and football player” (*New York Times*, 26 December 1912, p. 1). He played golf in various New England tournaments in the early 1900s, competing in 1906, for instance, against such luminaries of the world of amateur golf in the United States as Walter J. Travis (amateur champion of Britain and the United States), Jerome D. Travers, and H.W. Tillinghast (Travis and Tillinghast would go on to become golf course architects of historical significance). Marrying quite young, however, in fact while still a student at Princeton in 1907, Bonner determined to settle down to a proper career at McKinnon, Holmes & Company, makers of structural steel at its factory in Lennoxville. So his sports were put on the back burner.

Shortly after his defeat by Rickwood in the golf match at St Francis Golf Club, however, Bonner decided he needed to resume his connection with sports, so he abandoned his work in Lennoxville, divorced his wife, and sought a job as a sports reporter, finally securing a position in Northampton, Massachusetts, with the *Hampshire Gazette*. He thereafter became known as “the millionaire reporter” who made a career out of writing about sports. He soon moved to Poughkeepsie, New York, where he continued to work as a reporter and also became an enthusiastic suffragette supporter.

Mind you, his support for women’s suffrage had something of an ulterior motive.

The *New York Times* takes up his story at this point in an article about the march of the suffragette army on Albany, the state capital of New York, over the Christmas period of 1912: “The suffragette army under Gen. Jones spent a busy Christmas and the most enjoyable day since they began the long hike to Albany. They did not march.... Also there came to the knowledge of the pilgrims that for the last two days Cupid has been a marcher in the ranks.... Miss Gladys Coursen of Vassar is an ardent suffragette, and when the pilgrims reached Poughkeepsie she was detailed by the local organization to accompany the marchers to Albany. Mr. Bonner, who is Secretary of the Men’s League for Equal Suffrage of Poughkeepsie, immediately developed a great interest in the hike, and since the army left that city he has marched whenever business or social engagements have allowed. It was during the hours spent marching beside Miss Coursen that he gained courage to ask the all-important question. He admitted that he had done so this morning. He was jubilant. Miss Coursen, he admitted, had accepted him

conditionally. Pilgrim Coursen was not willing to acknowledge the engagement, though she blushing admitted the proposal” (26 December 1912, p. 1).



Figure 33 The Suffragette army marches on Albany, New York, in December of 1912. Which woman is Coursen and which man is Bonner is not known.

A version of the story in a later edition of the *New York Times* that day quotes Bonner’s explanation of the mysterious engagement “condition” to which the earlier story had referred: “We are engaged – that is, I believe we are; but there is a slight string to it. Miss Coursen has put me on three months’ probation. She wants to be sure I will devote my entire time to her, as is natural.”

Bonner went on to develop a long and distinguished career in sports journalism.

And perhaps he never forgot the apparent start of it all with the re-stimulation of his competitive juices in that golf (mis-) match with Fred Rickwood, for we find him staying in touch with Canadian golf: he

Quebec

submitted an article about California golf to *Canadian Golfer* magazine many years later in the 1930s when Bonner's sports beat had moved to the west coast.

Playing exhibition matches on behalf of the Quebec Golf Club, representing the Club in the 1909 Canadian Open, donating hand-made clubs as prizes for intramural competitions, giving lessons to the growing Club membership, organizing intra-club competitions, Rickwood offered professional services that were greatly appreciated by his employer. So of course the Quebec Golf Club's management renewed his contract for the 1910 season.

The Club also sent him back to Toronto for the Canadian Open Championship of 1910 at the Lambton Golf and Country Club. Rickwood was paired for the first two rounds of this tournament with Canada's most famous golfer, the many-times Canadian Amateur Champion and the 1904 Olympic gold medalist George Lyon. While playing with Rickwood, Lyon established a new course record at Lambton and found himself in second place after 36 holes, one stroke behind the leader (and eventual winner) Daniel Kenny, a professional golfer from Buffalo, New York. Rickwood seems to have been somewhat intimidated by the older golfer, already a living legend amongst Canadian golfers, although perhaps not as well known to the Lambton gallery as some of the professionals: "Mr. Lyon's game attracted little or no interest. What gallery followed the players was in attendance on Kenny, of Buffalo, or Barrett, of Lambton. Rickwood, the Quebec professional, who was paired off with the veteran amateur, was lost in admiration for his partner's game. Rickwood himself was playing very indifferent golf and the result as a rule is to affect the play of the other man. While Rickwood was playing loosely, Mr. Lyon was playing wonderful golf, perfect approaches and accurate putting following long, straight drives" (*Montreal Gazette*, 8 July 1910, p. 11).

Still, the chance to play with Lyon proved to be a long-term success for Rickwood, even though he had been off his game, for the two became friends, Lyon readily agreeing a decade later to play as Rickwood's partner in an exhibition match against George Cumming and William Thompson (Stanley Thompson's brother) to celebrate the opening of the Stanley Thompson-designed Summit Golf and Country Club in Toronto where Rickwood had just been appointed as the club's first head professional.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1910, however, Rickwood could be excused if his mind occasionally wandered while playing golf, for Edith was pregnant with the couple's first child. Daughter Florence Annie was born that fall, and so at the end of the 1910 golf season, the Rickwoods decided to return to

England for a visit, presumably to show off their new baby girl to her grandparents. They sailed for Liverpool on the Corsican on November 18th. During their visit to England, they resided for a good portion of the time at the home of Fred's parents in Ilkley, Yorkshire.



Figure 34 Kijiji add said "Shaft is 33" long. Left-handed driver (heavy metal), with 'Youds Patent,' which is registered in 1909, stamped into metal. Faded but legible is 'F. Rickwood Amherst.'"

Edith and daughter Florence actually stayed with the Rickwoods for a few months longer than Fred, who returned to Canada in March of 1911 to be on hand for the start of the golf season. Although it seems that that Rickwood was still affiliated officially with the Quebec Golf Club at this time, the 1911 Canadian census (taken the night of June 1st) indicates that he was living in Amherst, where all three Rickwoods boarded with a family named Teed.

Uncertainty about the future of the Quebec Golf Club (it became known that the Club would eventually have to leave its present location, but it was not known where a new golf course would be built) presumably led to Rickwood's return to Amherst.

In Amherst, Rickwood continued to make golf clubs, stamping them with his name and the word "Amherst." (See the photograph of the hickory-shafted driving club marked in this way that was recently advertised on Kijiji in 2018.)

But this was only one of his jobs.

Rickwood tells the census taker that his profession is "golf professional," but he also indicates that he has "employment other than his chief occupation," and the census taker – restricted in filling out this part of the census to indicating this secondary employment by means of a numerical code indexed to a finite list of recognized jobs – records that Fred Rickwood is also a "keeper of a private park," which is presumably as close as the census taker could get to recording that he was also a greenkeeper.

Rickwood indicated that his place of employment was the “links,” where he worked 48 hours per week. He earned \$600 in 1910, so we can see that the monthly salary that the Quebec Golf Club paid him accounted for less than a third of his annual income. Lessons, golf club sales and repair, the selling of golf accessories, and perhaps even payments due for golf course design and construction at Amherst Golf Club accounted for the rest.



Figure 35 Fred Rickwood golf clubs owned by the author.

The putter, mid-iron, and mashie seen in the photograph to the left were probably assembled by Fred Rickwood while he was in Amherst or Quebec, for “The Victor Special” clubheads, forged in Scotland, were imported and sold by the Victor Sporting Goods Company of Springfield, Massachusetts, via their 1906 catalogue. Onto the clubheads, Rickwood stamped his own name, as well as the letters “HMJ” – probably the initials of the club member for whom Rickwood made the clubs.

From Amherst, Rickwood again travelled to the Canadian Open

Championship in Ottawa, where he finished tied for 19th. While in Ottawa in 1911, he joined with about

20 other professional golfers (there were only about two dozen in all of Canada at the time) to found the Canadian Professional Golfers Association (now called the Canadian PGA).



Figure 36 Participants in the first meeting of the Canadian Professional Golfers Association in Ottawa in July of 1911. Fred Rickwood is the man standing in the second row, leaning forward slightly with his arms resting on the back of the chair in front of him.

Rickwood missed the annual meetings held during World War I because he was serving overseas in the Canadian army, but he immediately rejoined the CPGA as soon as the war was over.



Figure 37 Enlarged and enhanced detail from the photo above.

Note the account in the *Ottawa Journal* of the first meeting to which he returned in 1920: "The seventh annual meeting of the Canadian Professional Golfers' Association was held in the Chateau Laurier last night. The meeting was rather a stormy one and several important matters connected with the profession were warmly discussed" (27 August 1920). Despite that "warm" experience, or perhaps because of it, Rickwood agreed to serve on the executive committee of the CPGA shortly afterwards for two years in a row (1923-1925).

Saint John

For the 1912 season, however, Fred Rickwood decided to accept the professional position at the Saint John Golf Club in New Brunswick, where he served for two busy years – busy both personally and professionally.

On the one hand, during this period, the Rickwoods had their second child, George, who would many years later initially follow his father into the game, apprenticing under his father as a golf professional in Orillia in the 1930s. On the other hand, like the Quebec Golf Club, the Saint John Golf Club supported its professional golfer's competition in tournaments.

Rickwood once again finished second in the Maritime open golf championship, this time on his home course in St. John: "The professional match was won by Conway, of Halifax, who defeatd Rickwood, the local man, 36 holes medal play. A noon Conway was three strokes ahead. Rickwood came up on him later, but Conway won the last hole, the totals being: Conway, 76; Rickwood, 78. Rickwood's drives were better than his opponent's, but the latter scored with his putting" (*Evening Mail* [Halifax], 7 September 1912, p. 9).

Alas, one drives for show; one putts for dough!

The St. John Golf Club also sent Rickwood west to biggest Canadian golf tournament in 1912 and 1913, the national Open championships held at the Rosedale Golf Club, in Toronto, and the Royal Montreal Golf Club, respectively. In 1913, Rickwood was the maritime provinces' only representative at the Canadian open, where he finished 17th, his best ever finish in this championship.

Fred Rickwood thereby became a curious and rather significant figure in Canadian golf history, for by 1913 he had represented three different provinces in the Canadian Open Championships: Quebec in 1909 and 1910, Nova Scotia in 1911, and New Brunswick in 1913.

As George S. Lyon noted in *Spalding's Official Golf Guide* of 1914, since it had been hard to get professional golfers from beyond Ontario and Montreal to travel to Ontario to play in the national championship, participation by professional golfers from locations farther afield was much appreciated: "There were some forty-odd entries and they came from all over Canada. All the best professionals in

this country were present. For the first time in this event, the West was represented. Winnipeg having two professionals entered. St. John, N. B., was represented by Rickwood and Quebec City by Quesnel” (*Spalding’s Official Golf Guide 1914*, ed. Thomas Bandello [New York: American Sports Publishing Co., 1914], p. 215).

Yet as busy as the birth of a new child and travel to the Canadian Open made Fred Rickwood during his first year in New Brunswick, the rest of his time there was made even busier by the fact that Saint John Golf Club members decided in 1913, after Rickwood’s first year at the club, to move to a new golf course.

Such a move would entail building the new golf course in question, a job which of course in those days inevitably fell to the golf professional. One wonders, in fact, whether one of the reasons that Rickwood was hired by the Saint John Golf Club in 1912 was to contribute his own design and construction experience to the new golf course that club officers were already dreaming of.

The members chose a site for the new golf course in the area of Saint John called Riverside, which became the name of the new golf club and its new course.



Figure 38 Carting away stumps and roots at Riverside golf course in 1914

Nancy Glennie writes that three club members “borrowed \$7000 and purchased ‘250 acres of unkept land’ It took two years of cutting, shovelling and real pioneer spirit to complete the nine holes” (Nancy A Glennie, “East Riverside-Kinghurst: An Historical Sketch,” (Saint John, N.B.: Lingley Printing Co., 1984, p. 15). This was a completely different kind of golf course construction project from the ones undertaken by Rickwood for Amherst Golf Club.

Recall that in the case of the Amherst golf courses, since there was not enough money to clear land and move earth, Rickwood’s job as golf course designer had been to find a golf-course-friendly landscape on

available farmland that had already been cleared and had pre-existing grass, and then to find an appropriate routing of golf holes within it. At Riverside, however, the routing of holes would require clearing bush and pulling stumps and plowing earth – all before the planting of grass could even be contemplated.



Figure 39 Plowing land at Riverside in 1914. Could that be Rickwood in the background, dressed in white, directing construction work as he did at Amherst?

Although Rickwood was the newly-incorporated Riverside Golf Club's first professional golfer, as he simultaneously became the Saint John Golf Club's last professional golfer, it is not clear whether or not he ever got to play the golf course that he almost certainly helped to design and build, for world events severely complicated both his golf life and his personal life: World War I broke out in August of 1914.

It turns out that the new Riverside golf course was seeded only at the end of 1914, and it opened for play no earlier than May of 1915. In the meantime, Rickwood had enlisted in the Canadian Army in November of 1914. He resided in Saint John awaiting assignment to England, and he had regular leaves that might have allowed an opportunity to resume golf in the spring of 1915 (furthermore, on one occasion he overstayed his leave from the army by two days – perhaps to play golf?). But by June of 1915, he was on his way to Europe in a troop ship. And before the end of the 1915 golf season in New Brunswick, he was in the trenches of Belgium and France.

His Riverside golf course was well-received, however, and one imagines that whether or not he got to play the course himself, news would have reached him in Europe of how much the new course pleased all who played it, for many golf lovers who joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force made sure that they received copies of *Canadian Golfer* in Europe throughout the war.

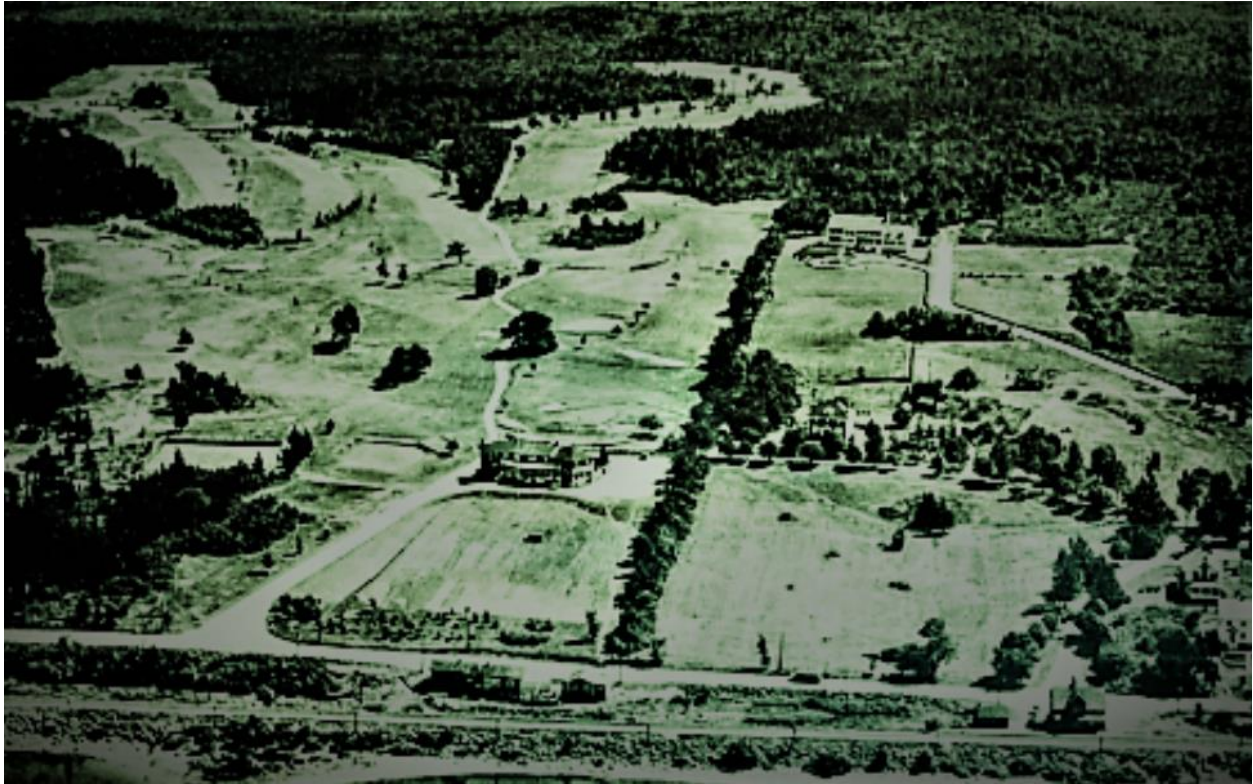


Figure 40 Aerial photograph of the nine-hole course at Riverside Golf and Country Club taken just after World War I

A reviewer in *Canadian Golfer* allows us to understand the kind of work that Rickwood did: “artificial remedies against careless golf are not required to any extent, owing to the skill on the part of those responsible in taking advantage of the various side-slopes and other penalties nature here has provided, which experience has resulted in a fairway, interesting and sporting enough to satisfy the most critical. The hazards, confronting us from some of the tees, are rough enough to break one’s heart, and in a blink, should you not carry Much credit is due to Mr. Andrew Jack, chairman of the green committee, together with his co-laborers in the cause, for the skill and patience they have shown in the work of elaborating out of most difficult surface conditions a home for the present local lovers of the game, and those to come after. A round of Riverside demonstrates that it is a thoroughly interesting course throughout, calling for well-placed shots. The views to be obtained from many points of vantage are fairly ravishing.... We finish an interesting round of 9 holes at the club house green, which is a difficult pitch to hold” (February 1919, vol vi no 10, p. 531).

An article in *Canadian Golfer* in June of 1920 suggests that “The links were laid out by Mr. Andrew Jack and Mr. H.N. Stetson” (vol vi no 2, p. 115). There is no mention of any co-labours by the latter in the 1919 review. In any event, I would suggest that the main “co-laborer” with the Riverside chairman of the

green committee, Andrew Jack, was the Riverside professional golfer: Fred Rickwood. It hardly seems likely that Jack would have laid out the golf course without consulting Rickwood. At the very least, if Rickwood was not responsible for the Riverside design itself, he would have been responsible for turning a design on paper into an actual landscape – as he would do for Stanley Thompson in the 1920s.

Rickwood could not have disputed the attribution of the layout to Andrew Jack – both for practical and for theoretical reasons. On the one hand, when Jack was celebrated in 1919 for having laid out the new Riverside golf course, Rickwood was no longer in Saint John. He had not yet even returned from France. On the other hand, before World War I, the golf professional's construction of a golf course was seen to be part of his job, and so the green committee that had hired him was seen as ultimately responsible for the golf course that it had directed its golf professional to build.

Things soon changed greatly in this regard. The Riverside Golf and Country Club brought Donald Ross himself to the golf course in the 1920s to plan its expansion to eighteen holes. So of course the golf course became famous as a Donald Ross design. Later, Clinton E. Robinson renovated the Ross design. And no one ever forgot Robinson's contribution to the layout.

After World War I, golf architecture became a distinct profession and golf clubs began to discover that there was real marketing and branding value in advertising that their golf course had been designed and built by a particular architect and his company.

So when Fred Rickwood built the golf course of the Summit Golf and Country Club in Toronto on behalf of Stanley Thompson in the early 1920s, the chairman of the green committee at Summit did not claim that he himself had laid out the golf course. He gave credit where credit was due. And so did the reviewers, as we shall see shortly.

The golf course of the Summit Golf and Country Club was recognized by all as designed by Stanley Thompson and built by his chosen superintendent of construction: Fred Rickwood.

But before this new era of golf course construction could begin for either Rickwood or Thompson, there was a war to be fought in Europe – and that war would not be without consequences for the new era of golf course construction.

Second Soldiering

When Rickwood arrived in Saint John in 1912, he enjoyed just one year of stability as the golf professional. On the one hand, by the end of 1913, plans were afoot to dissolve the St John Golf Club and replace it with the Riverside Golf Club, which would move on to a new golf course as soon as possible. On the other hand, war broke out in Europe on August 4th, 1914.

Rickwood later told Ralph Reville, the editor of *Canadian Golfer* magazine, that “he was at the St John, N.B., Club at the time and the next morning after war was declared, enlisted and went overseas where he served with distinction, winning several medals” (March 1922, vol vii no 9, pp. 764-65). The information here is misleading with regard to the timeline of events in 1914 and 1915, for it seems likely that Rickwood had enlisted in a famous local militia regiment, the 62nd Regiment, “Saint John Fusiliers,” even before the war broke out.



Figure 41 62nd Regiment, “Saint John Fusiliers,” in 1914. Rickwood’s attestation papers indicate he had joined this militia before enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Second Soldiering

Units of this militia regiment were activated in Saint John as early as August 6th, 1914, just two days after the declaration of war in Europe, which would more or less accord with the suggestion that Rickwood enlisted “the next morning after war was declared.”

In fact, it was not until 5 November 1914 that Fred Rickwood enlisted in Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force.

He was the first Canadian professional golfer to do so. He enlisted a full month before Fred Locke of the Brantford Golf Club did, although *Canadian Golfer* mistakenly published an article identifying Fred Locke as the first Canadian professional golfer to enlist. Still, *Canadian Golfer* had not forgotten Rickwood: “Fred Rickwood, the popular professional of the St John Golf Club, N.B., is among the golfers doing his bit at the front” (May 1916, vol II no 1, p. 52).

Moreover, Rickwood’s name was invoked to rally other professional golfers to the cause of enlisting in the Canadian army. In November of 1916, Karl Keffer, the head professional at Royal Ottawa Golf Club, and best man at Fred Rickwood’s marriage to Edith Barrett, wrote as follows in *Canadian Golfer* in an “open letter to the professional golfers of the Dominion”: “Perhaps you have been thinking of enlisting for active service. I have already done so I feel sure that all of our clubs will think a great deal more of us, and will extend us every consideration, and will be glad to put up with less efficient service in the workshops at the hands of our assistants, if we try to do our share until the country is assured of more prosperous times. Can you see your way clear to make the break ...? Golf professionals are always in training and a squad of golfers could hold their own with anyone.... Frank Locke and Fred Rickwood are already there. Let us join them” (vol II no 1, p. 5). Keffer signed the letter: “Open Champion of Canada.”



When Rickwood enlisted in the fall of 1914, he indicated that he had previously served in South Africa and that he had previously enlisted in the 62nd Battalion, “Saint John Fusiliers.” Perhaps on the basis of this previous experience, he was enrolled in

Figure 42 Part of the 26th Battalion CEF parades in Saint John, New Brunswick

“C” Company of the 26th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry at the rank of Company Quarter Master Sergeant (CQMS).

The doctor who assessed his physical fitness recorded various pieces of information about him. He was recorded as five feet, seven inches tall, with brown eyes, a light complexion and light hair, and with a fully-expanded girth of thirty-nine inches (and a five-inch range of expansion). His “physical development” was officially designated “good,” and he was further described as a person of “good” habits.

Rickwood’s profession was recorded as that of “golf instructor” (although he is not officially recognized by the army as a “golf professional,” to be recorded as a “golf instructor” is still a big step up from “z”!).



Figure 43 A boisterous public send-off attended the embarkation of the 26th Battalion at the Saint John harbour.

As CQMS, Rickwood was the non-commissioned officer (NCO) in his company in charge of supplies. Also, as CQMS, he served as the deputy to the Company Sergeant Major and so was the second most senior NCO in his company.

Enthusiasm for the war was extremely high in Canada.

Conscription was still a far distant prospect as more than

enough volunteers filled the ranks of the growing Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force.

Similarly, the public as a whole was equally enthusiastic about the war effort. Women’s group in cities and small towns organized events to knit clothing for soldiers and organized social gatherings at which soldiers could dance and converse with young women of the same age. So of course the people of Saint John turned out in extraordinarily large numbers to send off the 26th Battalion as it boarded the troop carrier at the Saint John harbour.



Figure 44 Troops crowd onto the deck of the S.S. Caledonia during the long public good-bye before sailing on 15 June 1915.

Parade after parade of marching soldiers, accompanied by relentless applause and cheers, boarded the S.S. Caledonia over the course of two days before the ship slowly left the harbour on June 15th, 1915.

So since he did not leave Saint John until June of 1915,

perhaps there had indeed been time for Fred Rickwood to play a round of golf on the Riverside Golf and Country Club's new golf course. Note that before the 26th Battalion left the city, Rickwood had been punished for overstaying a leave of absence by two days. I like to think that he was playing golf, but no explanation of the matter is contained in Rickwood's service records.



Figure 45 The S.S. Caledonia is towed out of Saint John Harbour on 15 June 1915. The crossing of the Atlantic Ocean took nine days.

Having sailed for England on June 15th, 1915, Rickwood arrived there nine days later. Like most members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force sent to Britain at that time, he spent the first three

months there in training.

Sometime after his departure for England, Edith Rickwood must have reached the conclusion that the war was going to be a long one. Initially, soldiers and members of the public alike anticipated a quick and decisive victory. Many thought the war would be over by Christmas of 1914 and made haste to enlist lest they should miss “the adventure,” as they called it. Even wounded soldiers just returned to Canada in 1915 and 1916 assured newspaper reporters that it was just a matter of a few more months before the Axis forces were defeated. But Edith Rickwood seems to have known better: she decided that she and the couple’s children Florence (aged 5) and George (aged 3) would also sail for England in 1915.

The family took up residence in Ilkley, Yorkshire, where Edith Rickwood’s in-laws still lived. Her own address during the war was 37 East Parade, where she was about a half-mile (or a ten-minute) walk from the home of her mother-in-law, Annie, who was now a widow, her husband George having died on June 10th, 1915, just days before her son Fred sailed for England.



Figure 46 37 East Parade, Ilkley, Yorkshire, where Edith Rickwood and her children lived during World War I

No doubt Fred Rickwood returned to Ilkley to be with his family when he was granted leaves. Yet immediately upon completion of his training in England, he was sent to France, disembarking at Boulogne on September 15th, 1915.

He would serve in the trenches of France and Belgium for the next eight months.

Appointed CQMS virtually at the moment of his enlistment, Rickwood served at that rank for the next 14 months. But after four months of trench warfare, he requested on January 15th, 1916, that he be returned to the ranks as a private.

There is no indication in his service record of his reason for doing this. A request by a soldier himself that he be allowed to return to the ranks as a private is quite distinct from a demotion imposed on a soldier. Often, the soldier’s request was motivated by a desire to facilitate his transfer to another unit where there was no

Second Soldiering

available position at his previous rank. As a private, he would be eligible for transfer to certain positions; as a CQMS, however, he would not.

Rickwood continued to serve in the trenches as a private until April of 1916. Then, due to the cold, muddy, water-logged nature of the trenches, where feet remained wet for days at a time without relief, Fred Rickwood contracted arthritis in his right foot.

The medical report indicated that “there is considerable thickening of the bone forming the right great metatarso-phalangeal joint. Most marked on the dorsal surface. There is pain on pressure over the joint. There is about 20% loss of flexion and extension.” The report says that he “first noticed trouble in toe while in trenches in March, 1916.” It was concluded that the condition was caused by “active service conditions.” The consequences for his soldiering were serious: “Cannot walk with pack one mile. Can walk about two miles. Has stiffness and pain on walking.”

The report concluded with an ominous note about the future: “Cannot continue in former occupation which necessitates walking.”

These must have been dark days for Fred Rickwood, serving in France during a war which showed no signs of ending, asking for a demotion (which would mean a cut in the allowance sent to his wife), and being told by doctors that the “active service conditions” he had endured in the trenches meant that he would not be able to resume his former occupation as a professional golfer.

But then things took a turn for the better.

Incapacitated from trench duty by the arthritis in his foot, Rickwood “After one month obtained a place as groom.” The army groom cared for an officer’s horse and so would accompany the officer for whose horse he cared wherever that officer ventured, whether behind the lines or at the front. All the while before and after the officer dismounted, the horse was placed in the groom’s care wherever they might be.

In areas where a mustard gas attack was possible, for instance, the groom would wear a gas mask and would fit a special gas mask on the horse, as well



Figure 47 An American soldier tends to an officer's horse after putting a gas mask on it.

The job of the groom during World War I was essential, as horses still played a key role in moving people and equipment during a war that otherwise has the reputation of being the first modern mechanized war. Horses used in South Africa during the Boer War had suffered extraordinary casualties because of ignorance in the management of these animals by many of the British soldiers. Ignorance of the fact that horses cannot vomit, for instance, meant that many horses died of sea-sickness on the long voyage to South Africa. So great care and attention was paid to the selection and training of grooms in World War I.

As Andrew Scott McEwan observes,

Horses required regular feeding, watering, grooming, and adequate protection from the elements.... The limited absorption of nutrients in a horse's digestive tract means it is biologically attuned to eating almost constantly. Thus, troopers and drivers needed to feed their animals five times a day. British Army field rations included ten pounds

oats, twelve pounds hay, eight pounds straw, and a selection of bran, linseed, or carrots – each of which had to be properly prepared and free of any pollutants. In addition to maintaining a proper feeding schedule, these soldiers also had to learn important elements of equine behaviour. A Blue Cross Fund handbook advised drivers to “always guard against a horse stealing his neighbour’s food.” They were to immediately report any horse which would not take to his feed, which could indicate a number of dental or digestive problems. Drivers and troopers also needed to let their animals drink as much water as they desired, though it was imperative that “the watering of horses should be conducted in absolute silence,” as “some nervous horses are easily ‘put off’ drinking by noises such as men shouting.” Regular cumulative exercise was also essential to keeping the animals in peak physical condition. The horrendous animal casualties suffered in South Africa demonstrated the dangers of thrusting unconditioned and weak horses immediately into field service, and such conditioning was a key way of forestalling unnecessary casualties from exhaustion and debility. It was equally essential for troopers and drivers to groom their horses several times a day, namely picking dirt and mud out of the hooves and brushing down the entire animal. Ungroomed and dirty horses were susceptible to a variety of preventable diseases Similarly, troopers and drivers needed to learn the proper means of fitting harness and saddlery on horses. The proper placement of the saddle and blanket, the proper tightness of the girth, the proper pressure to exert on the bit, and indeed the proper maintenance of all of this gear, were central to maximizing the animal’s working capacity. (“Maintaining the Mobility of the Corps’: Horses, Mules, and the Canadian Army Veterinary Corps in the Great War” [Ph.D. thesis, Department of History, University of Calgary, 2016], pp. 146-47).

Rickwood got this appointment as groom in May of 1916. As McEwan notes, not just anyone could do the job: “Unless a soldier worked as a farmer or stable hand before the war, none of these skills would have necessarily been intuitive” (p. 147). One wonders how Rickwood qualified for this position.

Was it on the basis of his previous experience in the cavalry of the Imperial Yeomanry? Perhaps Rickwood was also able to the military his experience with horses in his work as a golf course constructor. Before (and after) World War I, the building of golf courses required the golf professional to direct work by teams of horses pulling Fresno scrapers, “Railroad” plows, and spike-tooth harrows. (There will be much more on this aspect of golf course construction and Rickwood’s familiarity with it in volume three of this book.)

Throughout 1916, Rickwood continued to be assigned as groom to higher and higher levels of Headquarters Staff. He started with the Headquarters Sub-Staff of the 5th Brigade of Canadian Infantry, then moved to the Headquarters Sub-Staff of the 2nd Canadian Division, and from there moved to the Headquarters Sub-Staff of the 4th Canadian Brigade of Infantry, and then from there moved again to a five-month stint with the Headquarters of the Canadian Corps as a whole.

Whether in these transfers from one headquarters to another Rickwood was merely accompanying an officer who was himself promoted to higher and higher levels of responsibility, or whether he was being poached to be the groom for officers at higher and higher levels of command, he would seem to have been good at what he did.

Yet however good he was as a groom, he was not always good absolutely as a soldier: his World War I personnel records record several transgressions for which he was disciplined. At the end of June, 1917, for instance, he received punishment for “being in an *estaminet* during prohibited hours when on active service.” The French word *estaminet* is in many ways a synonym for *café*, but it is a word used mostly in northern France and Belgium (where most of the World War I European battlefields were located), and during the war the mere mention of the word could apparently warm a soldier’s heart.



Figure 48 An undated photograph of soldiers in an *estaminet* in Mericourt, France, during World War I.

John Brophy and Eric Partridge explain why soldiers found these places so appealing: “On the Western Front an *estaminet* was not a pub. Neither was it a *café* or a restaurant. It had some of the qualities of

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all three. It was never large and was found only in villages and very minor towns. It had low ceilings, an open iron stove; it was warm and fuggy; it had wooden benches and tables. It sold wine, cognac and thin beer, as well as coffee, soup, eggs and chips and omelettes. The proprietress (a proprietor was unthinkable) had a daughter or two, or nieces, or younger sisters who served at table and made no objection to tobacco smoke and ribald choruses in English and pidgin French. No doubt some estaminets overcharged, but in general they provided for the soldier off duty behind the line many a happy hour.... Their main attraction was the absence of officers. Here men could release their bodies from readiness to sudden salute. There was food and drink, safety from shelling and ... they could loosen their tongues. One of the best ways to let off steam was to sing, so the estaminets were perfect for creating and spreading soldier's versions of popular songs. To the tune of Auld Lang Syne they'd sing 'We're here because we're here, because we're here, because we're here'. To the tune of My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose, they'd sing: 'I have no pain, dear mother, now, but oh! I am so dry. / Connect me to a brewery and leave me there to die.' But hierarchy returned at eight o'clock sharp when military police arrived to flush out the revellers" (*Dictionary of Tommie's Songs and Slang 1914-18* [1930, reprinted London: Pen & Sword Books, 2008]).

Even earlier, after a leave in England in October of 1915, Rickwood forfeited two days' pay and was officially admonished for overstaying this leave by two days. He had been two days late on return from leave in New Brunswick, too, we recall.

One wonders what he was up to while overstaying these leaves. Perhaps one likes to assume that he was stealing those extra two days to stay a little bit longer with his family in Ilkley. But it is also distinctly possible that he was stealing a few days to play golf.

Canadian Golfer informed readers after the war that "Fred Rickwood, who was formerly professional at Quebec and St John, N.B., is back from serving four years overseas Whilst overseas he had the opportunity of playing several of the well-known Old Country courses" (January 1920, vol v no 9, p. 582).

It turns out that many of the other high-calibre Canadian golfers – both professional and amateur – who enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force and served overseas were also determined to play the great British courses during their leaves in Britain.



Figure 49 Sapper Karl Keffer, Canadian Engineers Reserve Battalion, in France.

Karl Keffer, for instance, wrote to the editor of *Canadian Golfer* late in the war to say that he had played many golf courses when on leave: “My first golf in Britain was at St Andrews, Scotland, that being the first place I made for when I got my leave.... My next golf was at Crowborough, Sussex The course there is a long and very difficult one to play. The fairways narrow and there is gorse and heather in abundance for the player who does not keep straight.... We had a team which played ... the links of the Royal Ashdown Forest Club Our camp was then moved to Seaford and I found golf within a few minutes’ walk.... I played a number of matches for my unit there, also one at Bexhill” (October 1918, vol vi no 6, p. 311). For many of these high-calibre golfers, the object was not simply to play golf for fun or to represent one’s unit in a competition; a good number of the Canadian professional and amateur who went overseas were also golf course designers who were keen to inspect the great courses of the Old Country for ideas that could be adapted to Canadian purposes.

Amateur golfer Stanley Thompson had done the same during his service in the Canadian army during World War I, playing as many of Britain’s great courses as he could in the company of his equally



Figure 50 Gunner Stanley Thompson, Canadian Corps' 4th Brigade

talented golfing brother Frank (who would join him in Stanley Thompson & Company in the early 1920s). The Canadian soldier golfers who played the great British golf courses – professional and amateur alike – were especially impressed by the superiority of the British greens. With regard to the courses that he had played, for instance, Keffer affirmed that “the outstanding feature of them all is the putting greens. They are well-nigh perfect in that regard and are far and away ahead of our greens in Canada” (p. 311). Not surprisingly, Keffer, Rickwood, and Thompson would all subsequently make their greens a primary focus of their post-war golf course construction projects.

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With four years of memories that ranged from playing Britain's verdant golf courses while on leave to standing in France's muddy, rat- and lice-infested trenches awaiting the call to go over the parapet into a corpse-riddled no-man's land, Fred Rickwood sailed for Canada with his dependents, wife Edith, and children Florence (aged 9) and George (aged 7), on June 11th, 1919. Five weeks later, on July 18th, 1919, he was officially discharged from the Canadian Army at Halifax.

Fred Rickwood had spent four years and 171 days in the Canadian Army, forty-five months of which he had spent in France. But now his war was finally over, and so was his soldiering.

Had the war changed him?

Well, his only period of hospitalization occurred for a week at the end of July and beginning of August, 1917, because of Herpes Zoster (probably chicken pox). But there were changes to his body during the war. He now had a tattoo on his right forearm: it read, "Good Luck." And he had a one-inch longitudinal scar on the left ramus of his jaw. Both could have been picked up in that estaminet where, according to the army record, he was quite literally in the wrong place at the wrong time. There is also a suggestive dental record detailing repairs to bridges on his lower teeth. One wonders if he had the "Bad Luck" to have received a punch on the jaw in that estaminet where he was not supposed to be.

More importantly, Fred Rickwood was officially discharged as an invalid still suffering from arthritis in his right foot. The examining doctor suggested that he would not be able to return to his profession as golf professional for a full year after discharge from the army. That was better news than he had received when first diagnosed in 1916. Ultimately, the medical board that had to approve this decision disagreed and indicated that the period of disability would be six months. So that was even better news.

Still, because of this condition caused by the war, he seems to have found his subsequent golf tournament play compromised. Walking six miles each day was required in an eighteen-hole golf tournament. Most golf tournaments in the 1920s (such as the Canadian Open) played the first two rounds on the first day, requiring players to walk thirty-six holes, or twelve miles, on the first day. Furthermore, the golf swing of a right-handed player exerts great pressure on the great toe of the right foot, precisely the toe that had lost 20% of its flexion and extension and that caused pain when pressure was placed on the joint. Certainly Rickwood never placed as high in the Canadian Open after the war as he did before the war.

In one of Rickwood's first tournaments after returning from the war, the Toronto and District Championship of 1920, *Canadian Golfer* made a note of the handicap under which the veteran golfer now played: "Freddie Rickwood, of the new Summit Club, made a good showing in spite of his seven years' absence from professional tournaments. He enlisted in 1914, while at the St. John, N.B., club, and this is his first season at the North End Club. He is also handicapped by a bad foot, as a result of his service overseas" (vol6 no 3 [July 1920], p. 237).

Just before the Canadian Professional Golf Association Championship of 1920, the golf writer for the *Montreal Gazette* reported on the practice rounds being played at the Rivermead Club across the river from Ottawa, and he passed along similar information about the way Rickwood's war experience had affected his golf prospects:

Every man revealed good golf today and in turn each had some little difficulty, sometimes finding the unpleasant rough, occasionally trickling into the nasty sand and, it must be confessed, missing an odd putt. A casual review of the day's play, watching a green here and there, revealed many missed putts, and missed putts play the very devil with many a good man's otherwise excellent score. "The greens are a bit heavy," remarked more than one pro, but excuses or explanations do not win championships. However, it must be said that today's play was rather of a limbering up character and no one was extending himself with a view of record-breaking performances.... All of them were cheery about it, invariably answering "fine" to the oft repeated question: "Well, how's It going?" Davie Black was as happy as ever despite a long journey from the Shaughnessy Heights Club at Vancouver, and promised to do his best over his old course.... Several of the professionals are appearing for the first time in a Canadian championship and one of them is, as he expressed it, "taking a holiday after eight years rest." This was Fred Rickwood, of the Summit Club, Toronto. Rickwood is tremendously popular with his fellow professionals because of his inexhaustible fund of good humor. Rickwood has quite a career as a soldier as well as a golfer. He played a part in the South African venture and being at St. John when the recent fracas started in Europe took the first opportunity to take a hand in the affair. He had a strenuous time with the 26th Battalion and scraped a too-close acquaintance with some enemy metal at St. Eloi, being quite severely crocked. Today he was compelled to lay off in the afternoon because his foot bothered him, but he asserted that he would be all right for the serious matter of the programme. (26 August 1920, p. 9)

In the context of this question about the long-term impact on his golf game of the damage to his foot done by the conditions in the trenches, we should note a report on a famous golf exhibition match that he played in 1921, two years after his discharge from the army. As noted above, he played as the partner of George S. Lyon, many-time Amateur Champion of Canada and 1904 Olympic gold medallist in golf, in a match against George Cumming, accomplished professional at the Toronto Golf Club, and Stanley Thompson's brother William J. Thompson, head professional golfer at the Mississauga Golf Club.

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The match ended in a draw because of Rickwood's clutch twelve-foot putt on the 18th hole to tie the final hole and thereby the match, a performance that the reporter thought commendable because of the handicap under which Rickwood was labouring: "The features of the game were the brilliant playing of Lyon, especially in his wonderful recovery at number five green, and his consistent driving at all holes. George Cumming played his usual steady game. W.J. Thompson found the course much to his liking and brought into play his niblick with good effect, holing out his approach at number fourteen, after a bad start, in five. Fred Rickwood, although under a certain disadvantage owing to foot trouble, played a fine game, getting wonderful drives and by holing out a 12-foot putt on the 18th green was able to halve the match" (*Canadian Golfer*, July 1921, vol vii no 3, pp. 264-65).

Two years after he had returned from the war, Rickwood was still troubled by a bad foot – belying the debate amongst the army's doctors as to whether he should be labelled as disabled for a whole year or for just six months.

Not recorded in Rickwood's official war record is information that one of his caddies revealed in a letter to the editor of the *Daily Packet & Times* of Orillia more than fifty years after Rickwood's death. In 1995, the newspaper published a long letter by Earle Milne about his experiences in the late 1920s and early 1930s working for Rickwood as one of the boys in the stable of caddies that Rickwood maintained at the Couchiching Golf Club in Orillia: "The pro was Fred Rickwood – a man from Britain He had served in the 'First' world war and was gassed with mustard which boiled out in blisters on his hands and other areas during hot weather. He taped his entire hands during the worst periods and soothed the pain with Scotch whisky" (28 July 1995, p. 20).

Rickwood was never recorded as hospitalized due to a mustard gas attack during the war. Mind you, not everyone who encountered small amounts of mustard gas required hospitalization. Contact with mustard gas could have come through small traces in the air not necessarily close to the attack or through contact with mud and water onto which the gas had settled a day or two after an attack. The effects on the human body of exposure to mustard gas might be relatively mild in the first instance but could emerge over the longer term in a variety of after-effects, especially in connection with respiratory or auto-immune diseases.

I note that although Rickwood seems to have died as a consequence of a heart attack in 1942, his autopsy report also noted two other morbid conditions: chronic bronchitis and psoriasis. Both of these

chronic conditions have been associated with the long-term after-effects of exposure to mustard gas – whether in World War I or in the Iran-Iraq war of the late 1980s.

So caddie Milne's recollections may well be correct, and if so allow them to see another crippling effect of the war on Rickwood's golf career. A chronic affliction of psoriasis on the hands, emerging especially in hot summer weather, so severe as to require the taping up of both hands, is bound to have made the holding and swinging of a club a difficult matter for a golfer, to say nothing of its compromising the vaunted "touch" that is a distinction of the professional golfer's short game and putting.

In 1919, Rickwood did not play in the Canadian Open or the championship of the Canadian Professional Golf Association. But his absence from these 1919 tournaments was not necessarily due to problems with his foot or his hands. Rather, played within a week of each other at the end of July, these tournaments were held virtually as Rickwood got off the ship in Halifax and was discharged from the army back into civilian life in the Maritimes. Regardless of the question as to whether his foot and his hands were in a state that would have allowed him to play golf, he had no time even to travel to these events in Ontario, and he certainly did not have his golf game ready for tournament play at any point in 1919, let alone when he arrived in Halifax in mid-July of that year.

But continuing his golf career always seems to have been Rickwood's intention.

For instance, when he was posted to the Canadian Army base in Ripon, Yorkshire, at the end of April, 1919, in preparation for demobilization, he gave his Canadian address as the "Golf Club" in Saint John, even though he had not set foot in the place since 1914 or 1915. And when he was officially discharged from the army at Halifax on July 18th, 1919, he indicated that he intended to reside in Saint John, New Brunswick. So it seems that he understood himself to have remained the head professional golfer at the Riverside Golf Club for the duration of the war.

Other professional golfers retained their positions with their golf clubs while they were overseas. Karl Keffer, for instance, remained the head professional golfer at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club while he was in the army, with his wife and his assistants running the golf shop there while he was away. His letter to *Canadian Golfer* exhorting other professional golfers to enlist in the CEF clearly anticipated that golf clubs would support such patriotism by holding their positions for their head pros until they returned.

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Yet Rickwood was in fact never to return to Saint John as the professional golfer of the Riverside Golf and Country Club.

Digby

Had he given the army the Saint John “Golf Club” as his address simply as an administrative convenience (perhaps lacking an alternative address in Canada to give the army for its record keeping)? Or was it a surprise to him to learn when he arrived back in Canada that he was no longer the professional golfer at Riverside Golf and Country Club?

Whether or not he had ever really expected to return to this club, Rickwood was not back in Canada more than a few days before he had an appointment as a professional golfer again, despite his official “invalid” status.

His new position was not in New Brunswick, however, but at a relatively new golf club in Nova Scotia, instead.



Figure 51 Members gather on the first tee of the Digby Golf Course, Nova Scotia, sometime in the early 1920s, to judge by the automobiles.

As *Canadian Golfer* reported, Rickwood was hired by the Digby Golf Club for the remainder of the 1919 golf season (May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 55).

The Digby golf course had been built in 1915 and had established itself as a summer tourist destination.

Advertisements in the local newspapers even invited passengers on steamers that docked for just four

hours in the Digby harbour to come to the course for a spontaneous round of golf.

An item in *Canadian Golfer* published in September of 1919 gives a good sense of the extended golf market in which Rickwood worked at this little club:

Digby, Nova Scotia, is having a big tournament this week. Among the experts competing are Mr. W.M. Reekie and F.L. Dyer, of Upper Montclair, N.Y. Mr. Reekie was the former well known Lambton player and winner of the Lakewood, N.J., Tournament this year.

Dr. Read, Hon. Secretary of the Digby Club, N.S., writes:

The Season here has been a very great success and we have had more golfers than ever, and the links have been in good shape and well filled at all times during the good days.

The outlook is very encouraging for next year, as we have a new hotel in the "Pines" run by the C.P.R. and Lour Lodge is having one of its best years under the able management of A. Brown, the proprietor.

Sgt.-Major Rickwood, who has been fighting in France for four years, has been our pro. And we have been very fortunate in having him, for he is a scratch man or better and a natural teacher. The "Myrtle House" Cup, and the Lour Lodge Cup, were played for at different times, and Mr. Frank Witherbee, of Boston, won them both. (vol 5 no 5 [September 1919], p. 322)

The Digby golf course was described in the 1916 *American Annual Golf Guide* as 2,260 yards long. It did not have a professional golfer at that time. By 1919, however, the club was interested in improving its golf course in order to meet the standards of the American tourists who frequented Digby's resorts during the summer months. It would have to be longer than 2, 260 yards and more challenging in terms of its hazards to maintain the interest of accomplished golfers.

Presumably Rickwood was hired not just to serve as the club's golf professional but also to re-model the course. The Secretary of the Digby Golf Club wrote a letter to the editor of the *Canadian Golfer* at the beginning of the 1920 golf season about the improvements that had been made during Rickwood's tenure there: "You may be interested to know that the Digby Golf Club opens its course for the 1920 season with a good many improvements to the greens and fairways" (June 1920, vol vi no 2, p. 166).

We can see that Fred Rickwood had been very busy at the Digby Golf Club in the summer and fall of 1919, and that in the eyes of the club directors his remodelling work had been quite successful.

Returning to Ontario Golf

Rickwood had not returned to Canada in time to play in the Canadian Open of 1919, but at the playing of the next Canadian Open in 1920, Rickwood was indeed a competitor once more. Yet he represented not the Digby Golf Club, but one of Toronto's newest and most attractive golf clubs: the Summit Golf and Country Club. He was appointed its professional golfer at the beginning of the 1920 golf season.

But perhaps more importantly, he was the supervisor of the construction of its golf course.

Rickwood had decided that his golfing future was to be based in the world of Ontario golf. We know this because he came to Toronto in the fall of 1919 without a job. In this act of faith that he would be able to get a job as a professional golfer somewhere in Ontario, he had the editor of *Canadian Golfer* on his side. What other professional golfers had to announce in the pages of *Canadian Golfer* by means of a paid advertisement, Fred Rickwood was able to have broadcast to the Canadian golf world for free by the editor: "Fred Rickwood, who was formerly professional at Quebec and St John, N.B., is back from serving four years overseas and this winter is assisting W.M. Freeman in his Lambton Shop. Rickwood is looking for an appointment the coming season" (January 1920, vol 5 no 9, p. 582).

Recall that living near the Toronto Golf Club in 1908 we found gardener "Frederick" Rickwood and George Cumming's golf apprentices Frank and Willie Freeman. It seems that Fred Rickwood prevailed upon an old apprentice friend to give him a base of operation for the fall of 1919 and winter of 1920 while he hunted for a job in Toronto.

Willie Freeman may have owed Rickwood a favour. It turns out that Rickwood was replaced at the Riverside Golf and Country Club at the beginning of the 1916 golf season by one of Freeman's apprentices: "'Jack' Pritchard, assistant to W. Freeman at Lambton, has been appointed the professional at the [Riverside] Golf Club, St. John. He will make an excellent man for the position" (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 2 no 2 [June 1916], p. 119). Rickwood may well have recommended to the Riverside club that Freeman's apprentice could be relied upon as a suitable successor.

Whatever the case, Rickwood re-entered the world of Willie Freeman at a terrible time in the Freeman household, for the Freeman's son had just died. As the *Canadian Golfer* explained: "The many friends throughout Canada and the United states of Willie Freeman, the Lambton Golf Professional, will

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sincerely sympathise with him and Mrs. Freeman in the loss of their only boy Frank Lawrence, who, after an illness of some days from spinal meningitis, passed away on Thursday, September 18th. It was the intention of the fond father to enter his son, who was only seven years old, in the caddies' tournament at Lambton last month, and he had a special set of clubs made for the dear little chap, who gave every promise of attaining to unwonted skill on the links" (November 1919, vol v no 7, pp. 444-45). Out of respect for Freeman, the Toronto professional golfers delayed their City and District championship by a week so that Freeman could mourn his son's death. (George Cumming subsequently won the championship, with Freeman finishing fifth.)

Perhaps Rickwood was also doing Freeman a favour by working in his shop at that time, for Freeman was out of his shop for extended periods during the winter of 1919-20. Freeman was running a winter golfing school with his old mentor George Cumming. We read in an article on "The Vogue of the Winter Golf School" in the *Canadian Golfer* that "George Cumming, of the Toronto Golf Club, and W.M. Freeman, of Lambton, have a particularly fine school in the Princess Theatre, Toronto. They have the whole of the upper flat of the theatre and are literally kept busy day and night attending to the tuition of scores of members" (January 1920, vol v no 9, p. 544). Presumably Fred Rickwood was also helping out Willie Freeman at this golf school.

This would seem to have been the occasion of Rickwood's renewing of his acquaintance with George Cumming.

Whether or not he had worked for Cumming at the Toronto Golf Club between 1905 and 1908, as I suspect, Rickwood had met him at virtually all of the golf tournaments that he had played in before the war. Furthermore, they were both founding members of the Canadian Professional Golf Association in 1911 and they appear together in the 1911 photograph of the golfers who played in that year's Canadian Open (recall figure 14 above). At the first meeting of the PGA of Canada, when the founding members discussed the professional golfer's many responsibilities, Rickwood undoubtedly joined with Ontario's Cumming and Quebec's Charles and Albert Murray in speaking about the duties of the golf professional as golf course builder, given his own design and construction work in the Maritimes at Amherst, Saint John, and Digby.

Cumming's awareness that Rickwood had come to Toronto and that he was seeking a job at a golf club as its golf professional was almost certainly instrumental in Rickwood's next appointment: as the head professional golfer of the Summit Golf and Country Club in Toronto.

The Summit Club and Stanley Thompson

The Summit Club's course was under construction as of the spring of 1920, scheduled to become Toronto's ninth golf course. Cumming had designed the course and begun to lay it out six years before in 1914, but had been forced to abandon the project with the outbreak of war as the Summit Club shareholders put the construction project into a state of suspended animation for the duration of the war. The fate of the golf course would depend on how their financial situations changed as a result of the war.

After World War I ended on November 11th, 1918, the *Canadian Golfer* magazine reported throughout the rest of 1918 and throughout 1919 on the dicey situation at the Summit Golf and Country Club: "Letters have been sent out this month to the shareholders of the Summit Golf and Country Club, Toronto, in reference to the action to be taken in the coming year in regard to the retention and developing of this property. The Summit Club was incorporated a year or so before the war broke out The location is ideal and several thousands of dollars were expended in laying out an 18-hole course, which experts say will be unequalled in the Toronto district. Then came the war, and all operations at Summit were discontinued. If vigorously taken hold of the coming season, it is generally thought that the property can be saved for the shareholders" (December 1918, vol iv no 8, p. 452).

It turns out that the Summit shareholders did indeed want to take vigorous action to protect their investment.

And they were not slow to do so, as we learn in the very next issue of the magazine, which returned to this topic: "A very fine 18-hole course of over 6,000 yards was laid out and much work done on the greens, including the installation of a watering system. And then came the war, and Summit prospects took a nasty tumble. Two or three weeks ago, an enthusiastic meeting of the old stockholders was held and the club has now been revived The Hon. Mr. Craig, a retired Supreme Court Judge ..., was elected president It is confidently expected that the new club will be in full 'swing' before the present season is far advanced...." (March 1919, vol iv no 11, p. 581).

The company of golf architects chosen to complete the golf course was a company formed the previous winter, Thompson, Cumming & Thompson, comprising, in order, Nicol Thompson, George Cumming, and Stanley Thompson.



Figure 52 Stanley Thompson in the 1920s.

Both Nicol Thompson and George Cumming were in the middle of their own golf course construction projects when this new company was formed, and so these initially individual projects were made part of the new enterprise. It was presumably the new company's old connection to the Summit Golf and Country Club shareholders via the original course designer George Cumming that brought the 1920 Summit contract to Thompson, Cumming, & Thompson. Ironically, however, during the construction of the Summit Club's golf course, both George Cumming and Nicol Thompson dropped out of the company, and Stanley Thompson took it over.

So if it had been George Cumming who brought Fred Rickwood into the company, it would be Stanley Thompson who inherited him.

Born in Ontario in 1893, Stanley Thompson came from a golf-mad family in which five brothers excelled at the game: himself, Nicol, Frank, Matthew, and William. Stanley began his golf life as a young boy caddying at the Toronto Golf Club. Enrolled as an undergraduate student at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, taking courses in landscape gardening, Stanley abandoned his studies to enlist in the Canadian Army, serving overseas as a gunner in the Canadian Field Artillery from 1915 until the end of the war (recall figure 43 above). As we know, however, Stanley

Thompson was never far from the game of golf even though far from home. As Ian Andrew observes, "Stanley used every leave to play a series of links courses

The Summit Club and Stanley Thompson

throughout the British Isles and the heathlands courses around London with his brother Frank” (“The Architectural Evolution of Stanley Thompson,” May 2007, on “ianandrewsgolfdesignblog”). Back in Canada in 1919, he immediately resumed his play in amateur championships in Ontario and also took up golf course construction as a career.

Ian Andrew summarizes the volatile flux in the organization of his construction company in those early years after the war: “Upon his return he promptly joined his brother Nicol Thompson, the head professional at Hamilton Golf & Country Club, and George Cumming, the head professional at Toronto Golf Club, in their golf design business. Their company was named Thompson, Cumming and Thompson.... After a very short period both Nicol and George found they needed to make a decision between their jobs as golf professionals and club makers and their business as architects. Both retreated to the stability of their clubs, leaving Stanley with an incredible amount of work. He first reorganized the company as *Lewis & Thompson*, following an arrangement with an American construction firm, in 1921, but that was quickly dissolved. He then formed Stanley Thompson and Company the following year.”

At this time, the *Canadian Golfer* interviewed Stanley Thompson to discuss his new company, in particular, and the state of the game of golf in Canada, generally. The reporter found the company offices “magnetic with enthusiasm over golf courses that have been built or are now in course of construction. One comes away with the impression that every city, town and village in the country has come under the strange spell of the game and is taking it up eagerly – and most of them have” (*Canadian Golfer*, January 1922, vol vii no 9, p. 612).

Thompson explained to the reporter that he was the one who had organized Thompson, Cumming & Thompson upon his return from the war, and that “the business had met with success from the very start but, not having the time to devote to it, his two partners ... were compelled to withdraw” (612). An excellent amateur golfer himself, who competed regularly in major competitions in Canada and the United States (in a number of which Fred Rickwood also participated), Stanley Thompson explained that his brother Frank Thompson, reigning Amateur Champion of Canada, was the company’s Secretary - Treasurer.

But Thompson emphasized that it was not just golf that the company’s directors had in common, but also service in the Canadian Army during World War I. Thompson made the point that he, Frank, and the

company's chief engineer, Ken Welton, had "served their country in France in a highly creditable way" – through "good and faithful service," compiling "a most commendable war record."

Thompson made it pretty clear that their army experience had affected them all deeply. In fact, among the consequences of the war for them was that they preferred to hire war veterans to work for their company: "The past season [1921] the Company employed on the various courses they had under construction some 500 men, mostly returned soldiers, and found that these men when managed by those used to handling them in France gave of the best that was in them, the results obtained being most gratifying" (613).

The reporter was clearly won over by this fact: his article concluded with the suggestion that Stanley Thompson and his company of returned soldiers "are the kind of young Canadians who merit success" (613).

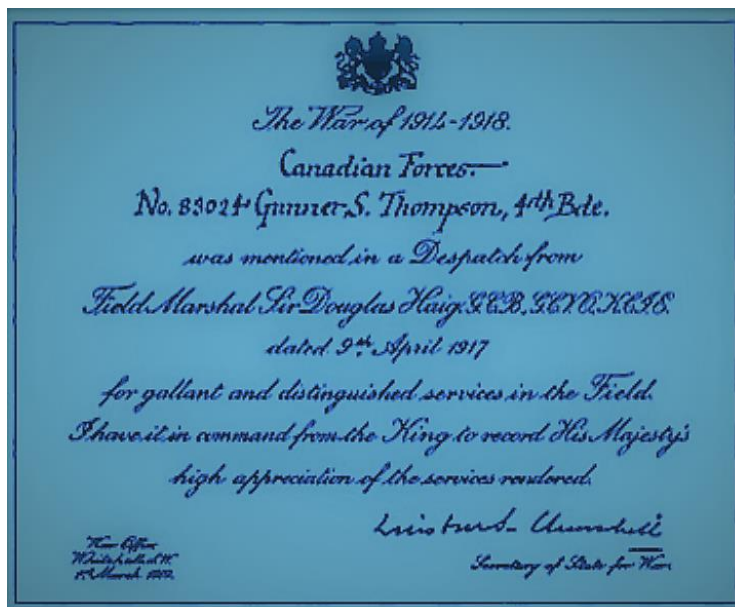


Figure 53 Gunner Stanley Thompson mentioned in a despatch from Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig for "gallant and distinguished services in the Field" at Vimy Ridge, 9 April 1917

So we can see that Stanley Thompson would have found the fact that Fred Rickwood had served in France as a Company Quarter Master Sergeant an important item on his résumé.

I find a 1922 item about Fred Rickwood in the *Canadian Golfer* quite interesting from this point of view: "Rickwood ... has the very great honour to his credit of being the first golf professional in Canada to enlist for the Great War. He was at the St John, N.B., Club at the time and the next morning after war

was declared, enlisted and went overseas where he served with distinction, winning several medals" (March 1922, vol vii no 9, pp. 764-65).

Finally, *Canadian Golfer* corrects the mistake of having celebrated Fred Locke, rather than Rickwood, as the first Canadian professional golfer to enlist. But the correction seems to have been suggested by

Rickwood himself, who was actually being interviewed in this article about a new machine (called the Dynamometer) that could automatically calculate the distance that a ball struck by a driver into a net would actually have travelled. In such a context, the information about Rickwood's war service seems to come out of the blue. If, during their conversation about the Dynamometer, Rickwood did not actually ask the editor of *Canadian Golfer* to correct the now seven-year-old mistake about who was the first Canadian professional golfer to enlist, then at the very least he certainly made it hard for the editor not to do so.

Rickwood was justifiably proud of his claim to fame on this front amongst Canadian professional golfers, and he was right to set the record straight. Yet we might also suspect from Rickwood's eagerness to publicize this information in *Canadian Golfer* that he would not have been shy at all about discussing his war experiences with fellow veteran Stanley Thompson who, as we know, highly valued war service in general and was attentive particularly to commendations for notable service, such as the medals that Rickwood mentions. Recall also that Rickwood was known at Digby as Sergeant-Major Rickwood, a practice slightly inflating his Company Quarter Master Sergeant rank at the beginning of the war, and a practice ignoring his request to return to the ranks and serve out the last three years of the war as a private. Thompson wanted construction men who had commanded men in France, so a professional golfer called Sergeant Master Rickwood who had golf course construction experience and experience in the handling of horses would have immediately drawn his attention.

One presumes that conversations between Rickwood and Thompson about golf course construction while out together on the grounds of the Summit golf course must also have included talk about the Great War and about how lessons learned about directing men in France could be applied to directing veterans in golf course construction.

When Fred Rickwood was interviewed by *Canadian Golfer* at the end of the 1920s about the construction of a golf course in Guelph that he was then directing, he explained by reference to his previous work at the Summit Club why he was so confident that the new Guelph course would soon be ready to host championship tournaments: "One year after I finished the Summit course in Toronto the big match [the Canadian PGA championship] was pulled off there" (June 1929, vol 15 no 2, p. 134). The PGA Championship of 1923 was held at the Summit Golf and Country Club, with Percy Barrett winning the title, so we can see that in addition to serving as the golf professional at the Summit Club from 1920 to 1924, Fred Rickwood was also the one in charge of the construction groundwork on the golf course

from 1920 to 1923. Fred Rickwood may or may not have been one of the 500 veterans working directly for Stanley Thompson in 1921 (we do not know whether Stanley Thompson & Company paid a part of Rickwood's salary at the Summit Golf and Country Club), but he was certainly one of the directors of golf course construction associated with Thompson who was "used to handling them in France," and he was in charge of his fair share of Thompson's veterans at the Summit Club.

So for all three companies – Thompson, Cumming & Thompson, Lewis & Thompson, and Stanley Thompson & Company – Fred Rickwood was the one physically creating in the landscape of the Summit Club golf course the artistic vision contained in these firms' architectural blueprints.

Stanley Thompson had so many contracts for building and renovating and landscaping golf courses in the early 1920s that he could not be in all places at once, nor could he be in any particular place for very long. Thompson, Cumming & Thompson needed help in managing the company's many projects, so it regularly advertised for experts in Golf and Country Club construction and maintenance: "WANTED! Construction Superintendents, Greenkeepers and Foremen, One Expert Tennis Court Builder. References required" (*Canadian Golfer*, March 1921, vol vi no 11, p. 788). Then, as Stanley Thompson set out on his own, we read the following: "WANTED: Eight Competent Golf Course Construction Superintendents" (*Canadian Golfer*, February 1922, vol vii no 19, p. 707). The success of his company overall was dependent on the success of an individual superintendent of construction dedicated to a particular golf course project. So the results that Fred Rickwood was achieving at the Summit Golf and Country Club were an important contribution to the "most gratifying results" that Thompson noted for his company in his 1921 interview with *Canadian Golfer*.

A particularly interesting Thompson, Cumming & Thompson advertisement appeared in 1920: "Wanted – Greenkeeper for Country Club in American Border City. Ten years' experience necessary, five years in Canada or Northern States. Familiar with handling men. Salary – pay man not the job. Good yearly position. Free house" (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 50). The company presumably sought a greenkeeper to be installed at the course that Nicol Thompson was building in Niagara Falls, New York, due to be completed just as the new Thompson, Cumming & Thompson company was formed. Either the company *was allowed* by the club whose course it had just built to find the person to oversee its greenkeeping operations as the course was about to open for play, or the golf club *asked* Thompson, Cumming & Thompson to do this. This aspect of the company's contract with the Niagara golf club may

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shed light on how Fred Rickwood got his position as head golf professional at the Summit Golf and Country Club: perhaps Thompson, Cumming & Thompson installed him there.

In *A Century of Greenkeeping*, Gordon Witteveen says that such indeed was Thompson's practice in the early 1920s: "In many cases, Thompson trained and graduated the men who helped him build new golf courses. Often, the best man was left behind as the superintendent to take care of the course that the master had created. Such appointments were mutually beneficial since Thompson was guaranteed that his creation would be well maintained and the new greenkeeper benefited from having a renowned architect as his sponsor" (Ann Arbor Press: Michigan, 2001, p. 29).

Further confirmation that Thompson indeed preferred to place his own men in charge of the courses that he built is found in the discussions between Thompson and Robert Trent Jones, Senior, about the possibility of their forming a partnership in 1930:

*On June 30, 1930, [Jones] wired Thompson's general manager John Inwood – whom everyone called "Major" in honor of his service in the First World War – with a request for Thompson's general guidelines for "submitting proposals to Clubs for making a lay-out and looking after the supervision of the construction" for a new golf course. Inwood reacted promptly, sending Jones a three-page letter spelling out the services normally provided by the architect ("preparing the lay-out"; "staking the location of tees and greens"; "preparing a plan showing greens, tees, fairways, and bunkers"; "supplying a plan of the water system, showing the size of the pipe and the location of the outlets"; and "preparing specifications for the construction of the course in detail") and the range of fees that could be charged for them. Inwood explained that the company's fees were "flexible" and "vary with the prosperity of the Club," and that "we have to size up the situation before we give any figures".... When accepting a job on the basis of the total complete costs for building a course, including all construction and its labor and material, the upper range of what Thompson was receiving ran between \$88,000 and \$111,000 (the latter representing about \$1.5 million in 2012 dollars). For plans and specifications only, the charge could be as high as \$4,500 for a prosperous club or client and as low as \$1,500 for a course in a small town. For supervision of the construction, the average charge would be \$5,000. Ideally, the Thompson firm also preferred to supply a club with three or four of its own men to act as general superintendents (at \$350 a month) and foremen (at \$235 a month), their salaries to be paid by the club and with Thompson "receiving our commission on their salaries as well as on labor and materials." In this way, Stanley Thompson & Company, Ltd., made much more money from every job but even more importantly had control of the quality of the course that was being built. (James R. Hansen, *A Difficult Par: Robert Trent Jones Sr and the Making of Modern Golf* [Toronto: Penguin Random House, 2014], pp. 31-32)*

We can see from a review of the wide variety of work that was under way at the Summit Golf and Country Club in 1920 why Stanley Thompson would have been very interested in picking the particular

person who would be on the ground at the golf course acting as the interface between the Summit Golf and Country Club and Stanley Thompson & Company.

Construction was underway on many fronts simultaneously. In May of 1920, we find that “The club house of Summit, which will be completed early this summer, is a particularly attractive building ... and will present a very dignified appearance indeed, when the half circle driveway, banked with blue spruce and evergreens and huge flower beds, planned by Mt Stanley Thompson, who has the landscape scheme in charge, is completed” (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 29). We can see that Thompson was very serious in advertising that he was not just a golf course designer but also a landscape engineer. Recall that when *Canadian Golfer* published an article on the formation of the new firm Thompson, Cumming & Thompson, we read that “Stanley Thompson’s specialty will be landscape gardening, he having taken courses in this interesting profession” (February 1920, vol v no 10, p. 614). So when Nicol Thompson invited Cumming and brother Stanley to help him complete the Niagara Falls Golf and Country Club after three years of work there on his own, we read that “Much landscape gardening will also be undertaken” – evidence that Stanley Thompson is now on the scene (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 86). When Mississauga Golf and Country Club was implementing “the plans of Donald Ross” for its bunkers and greens in 1920, we find not only that in doing this work the club was being advised by Thompson, Cumming & Thompson, but also that “the grounds about the club house are being beautified by the landscape architects, Thompson, Cumming and Thompson”: “They will plant a row of maple trees along the road and Austrian pines and blue spruce along the brow of the hill” (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, pp. 88-89).

Landscaping a country club was for Stanley Thompson an essential element in building its golf course. Nicol Thompson and George Cumming clearly bought into this idea as we can see from an advertisement that Thompson, Cumming & Thompson placed in May of 1920, just months after the formation of the company: “Wanted – Men familiar with landscape construction for work on new golf courses. Fast promotion to foremen for right men” (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 92).

This advertisement appeared at precisely the time when Fred Rickwood began his appointment at the Summit Golf and Country Club. It is possible that, rather than having been asked by Cumming to work for Thompson, Cumming & Thompson, Rickwood had approached the company on his own initiative in response to advertisements like this and the consequent spreading of the word throughout the tight -

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knit Canadian golfing community about the kind of men that the new golf course construction company was looking for.

In any event, we can see from advertisements like this how any experience as a gardener that Rickwood might have acquired in the past would have been particularly interesting to Stanley Thompson. Presumably Rickwood was overseeing the landscaping work on the front gardens at the Summit Golf and Country Club when Thompson was not on the grounds. In fact, there is a hint to this effect in the Summit Golf and Country Club's report to its members about various activities in 1921, for when "much appreciation was expressed as to the services of the Club's professional, Fred Rickwood," among the things he seems to be credited with is the "beginning made on beautifying the land convenient to the Club house" (*Canadian Golfer*, March 1922, vol vii no 11, p. 748).

Plans for improving the lands around the Summit clubhouse seem to have been taken in hand fairly quickly, for we read in the next issue of *Canadian Golfer* about "extensive improvements of the grounds around the club house, a space being provided as a putting green" (*Canadian Golfer*, April 1922, vol vii no 11, p. 869). Whether or not designed by Thompson, this putting green was presumably left to Rickwood to build. See the "before" and "after" photographs below that show what Fred Rickwood accomplished on behalf of Thompson in "beautifying the land convenient to the Club house."



Figure 54 Left: the clubhouse of the Summit Golf and Country Club circa 1921; right: the same clubhouse in the 1930s, now landscaped. Notice the Rickwood-built practice green and bunker in the front right foreground of the above photograph on the right.

The Summit Golf and Country Club's 1922 report on its 1921 activities gives more evidence of the variety of the work that Fred Rickwood was required to supervise directly when Stanley Thompson was not able to be on the grounds: "Many new members have been admitted during the year, improvements on the

course carried out, shelters erected, the Club-house equipment completed, a new building containing sleeping quarters for gentlemen erected, waterworks and pumping system thoroughly overhauled, and a beginning made on beautifying the land convenient to the clubhouse" (*Canadian Golfer*, March 1922, vol vii no 11, pp. 747-48).

The Summit Golf and Country Club was clearly a busy construction site in the spring and summer of 1920 as work on the course, the clubhouse, and the gardens was being undertaken all at once. And while this construction was going on, golf was being played!



Figure 55 Hand-made wooden "cleek" with 21 degrees of loft and a 42-inch shaft made by Fred Rickwood while head pro at the Summit Golf and Country Club, Toronto, in the early 1920s.

So in addition to all the other work that he supervised throughout 1920, Fred Rickwood was also very much involved in catering to the golfing needs of the club's membership: giving lessons, organizing first-ever tournament play at the golf club, selling equipment out of his shop, making and repairing golf clubs, and so on.

As he had hoped to do, club president Craig announced in 1920 that the golf course was ready to open: "the fairways and eighteen greens have been completed; water service laid on to all greens" (March 1920, vol v no 11, p. 698). Golf was played that year only on temporary greens and tees, however, for Rickwood was still building the proper ones. It is in June of 1921 that we read "The opening of new greens and tees at the Summit Golf and Country Club, Toronto, took place on Saturday, 11th inst., much to the delight of a large number of members. These are the permanent greens and tees laid out at great cost and carefully nursed by the Club's professional (Fred Rickwood) all through the winter and

spring. At one bound the quality of the golf has been radically changed, from what it was on the temporary greens and tees, to greater distances, and the sporting nature of the course much increased" (*Canadian Golfer*, June 1921, vol vii no 2, p. 130).

The Summit Club and Stanley Thompson

The official opening of the Summit Golf and Country Club was the occasion of a well-publicized exhibition match between Toronto's top golfers – one amateur, and three professionals: "Although the permanent course of the Summit Golf and Country Club, Toronto, has been played over for the past few weeks, it was not officially opened until Saturday, July 9th, when a four-ball foursome was the big event, taken part in by the following: Mr. Geo. S. Lyon (1921 amateur champion, Toronto City and District) and Fred Rickwood (professional of the Summit Club) against George Cumming (professional, Toronto Golf Club, and professional champion, Toronto City and District) and Mr. W.J. Thompson (Mississauga Golf Club), one of the trio of well-known golfing brothers. There was a large crowd of members and visitors, who formed quite a gallery for the four experts, and all thoroughly enjoyed a very keenly contested match" (*Canadian Golfer*, July 1921, vol vii no 3, p. 264). As mentioned above, the match ended in a draw when Rickwood made a twelve-foot par putt on the eighteenth hole to tie the score that Cumming and Thompson had already made on that hole.

The first reviews of the new Summit course came in even before this official opening: "The Summit Golf Club, Toronto, which opened the past season promises to be one of the finest courses in the country.... Particular attention has been paid to green construction. The well-known firm of Thompson, Cumming & Thompson having had charge of the work. The Summit Club course in a very few years will rank for championship honours" (December 1920, vol vi no 8, p. 582).



Figure 56 Fred Rickwood at the 1922 Canadian Open at Mount Bruno Country Club, Quebec.

A 1922 review of the new course singled out Rickwood for praise: "We played over the course with a great deal of pleasure. Many of the holes have much natural character and call for real golf. Rickwood, the Club's excellent professional, tells us he thinks that the sixth hole is the best on the course, while seven and eight are probably the most scenically beautiful. The greens certainly reflect the greatest credit on the committee in charge: also on the careful care and attention so loyally given them by Rickwood. Indeed, one can hardly imagine that these greens have been in existence for so short a time; they hold their own right well with many first-class clubs of much longer experience" (W.H. Webling, "Golf's Little Journeys," *Canadian Golfer*, vol viii no 5 [September 1922], p. 422).

Canadian Golfer reported in 1923 that "Summit today has one of the most interesting courses in the Toronto District, with especially fine greens and fairways." The magazine summarized Justice Craig's 1923 report to club members: "The Summit

course has been improved, and ... should be one of the most popular of Toronto's many courses... Votes of thanks to Secretary F.C. Doran and the professional, Fred Rickwood, were passed" (February 1923, vol viii no 10, p. 804).

More than the members of the Summit Club appreciated Rickwood; the golf cognoscenti in Toronto recognized him as a special creature: "The course of the Summit Golf and Country Club is in exceptionally fine condition, and will furnish a surprise to members when they yield to the lure of the game this week-end. The greens and the fairways have responded to the care of Fred Rickwood, professional of the club, who happens to be the only professional in Toronto charged with the supervision of a course" (*Globe* [Toronto], 20 April 1923, p. 13). And as such, he did amazing work: "The greens and the fairways," we read, "if such be possible, will be an improvement over last season" (*Globe* [Toronto], 20 April 1923, p. 11).

The comments about Rickwood in the Toronto newspapers were always positive. In October of 1924, J.H. Evans, in his column "O'er Fairway and Hazard" in the Toronto *Globe*, reporting on the prospects for fall golf at Toronto's golf courses, compliments him again: "At the Summit Club, Fred Rickwood, its faithful pro, informed members permanent greens would be in use until November, and perhaps as late as Nov. 15, which should satisfy the keenest golfer among them" (*Globe* [Toronto], 20 October 1924, p. 11).

A few weeks later, however, the "faithful pro" resigned. He would be at a different Toronto golf club in 1925.

Working with Stanley Thompson

So we should note here the universal praise of the greens built by Stanley Thompson & Company, and the singling out of Rickwood for particular praise in this regard as the man who actually built them and brought them along. For it is precisely for his experience in the construction of greens that Napanee Golf and Country Club sought out Rickwood. Reviews like the ones quoted above were bound to impress the Napanee club's board of directors. It is not surprising that the new first green that Rickwood built for Napanee Golf and Country Club during "Golf Week" in June of 1927 sealed the re-design deal with the club and led to the contract for his return in August to re-make the rest of the golf course.

And we should also note that when Napanee Golf and Country Club brought Fred Rickwood to town to develop plans for improvements to the golf course, they were consulting a disciple of Stanley Thompson—a disciple who has hitherto been unknown to golf history, but whose connection to Thompson would have been well-known to the club directors in Napanee. The importance of the information above about Rickwood's training in golf-course construction under the guidance of Stanley Thompson for our understanding of Rickwood's standing in the 1920s as a golf course architect must not be underestimated.

Geoffrey Cornish, a well-known disciple of Stanley Thompson in the 1930s and 1940s, and subsequently a celebrated golf course designer himself, says that "course architecture is learned not in a classroom but in the field, and going to work for an established architect remains the primary path to knowledge" (*Sports Illustrated* article cited on "Stanley Thompson Society" website). Rickwood's path to knowledge of golf architecture was exactly like that of the most famous of Thompson's disciples, Geoffrey Cornish, C.E. "Robbie" Robertson, Howard Watson, Robert Moote, Ken Welton, Norman Woods, and of course Robert Trent Jones, Senior: working with Stanley Thompson in the field. Yet although Rickwood trained under Thompson just as every one of Thompson's other disciples did, his work on golf courses has been not just unappreciated, but also virtually unknown.

What's more, it seems that in the relationship between Rickwood and Thompson in the early 1920s, there will have been not just a mentoring of Rickwood by Thompson, but also just maybe an element of mentoring of Thompson by Rickwood.

Thompson was so busy with literally dozens of golf course construction projects that he inherited from Thompson, Cumming & Thompson in 1921 that he needed help on many fronts. With Nicol Thompson and George Cumming about to retreat from their joint architectural and landscaping company into their pro shops at Hamilton Golf and Country Club and the Toronto Golf Club, respectively, Stanley Thompson told the editor of *Canadian Golfer* that he was going to Britain in December of 1920 to seek help: “Mr Stanley Thompson, of the firm Thompson, Cumming & Thompson, is sailing next month for Great Britain and whilst his trip is largely a business one he hopes to play some of the famous courses and incidentally secure valuable data in connection with the latest British ideas of bunkering and trapping. It is also on the cards that a well-known Old Country golf architect may return with him and join his firm which has a tremendously busy season ahead of it in 1921 in connection with golf construction work” (*Canadian Golfer*, November 1920, vol vi no 7, p. 540).

Thompson might have gone to England to try to talk Harry Colt into joining his firm, for Thompson’s interest in golf course architecture had been stimulated first in 1912 when he watched Colt build the Toronto Golf Club, where Thompson was a member, and then again in 1914 when he watched Colt build the Hamilton Golf and Country Club, where Thompson’s brother Nicol was the professional golfer (these were the only two golf courses that Colt ever built in Canada).

But Thompson came back to Canada on his own (there would be no Old Country architect to be his partner), and he was about to be busier than ever as a builder of golf courses.

Ian Andrew suggests that the great differences in the styles of golf greens designed by Stanley Thompson in the 1920s as he started his solo career as a golf course architect can probably be explained by his willingness to learn from the input he got from the various superintendents and foremen he employed on the almost overwhelming number of golf course projects he had on the go then: “With so much early work, Thompson likely learned a lot as he went, and many of the early architectural differences in greens and bunkers could have been the influence of construction foremen as he tried to manage the large workload” (“The Architectural Evolution of Stanley Thompson”). It is possible then, and perhaps even likely, that not only did Rickwood learn from Thompson at the Summit Golf and Country Club, but also that Thompson himself learned a thing or two from Rickwood, who had already built and designed golf courses in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and may also have worked on Tom Vardon’s Ilkley course even before that.

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Regardless of who learned what from whom at the Summit Golf and Country Club, however, it is clear that Fred Rickwood was one of the first superintendents of golf course construction that Stanley Thompson trusted to make his architectural vision for a golf course become a reality.

Eventually, what Rickwood learned first-hand from Thompson in the early 1920s allowed him to bring aspects of Stanley Thompson's vision for golf course design to smaller club's in Ontario's golfing hinterland at that time – clubs that could not afford to hire Stanley Thompson & Company, despite the company's "flexible" rates for small clubs, but could indeed afford to hire independent individual contractor Fred Rickwood.

Bentgrass Guru

Fred Rickwood was not simply the Summit Club's first head pro; while at the club, he also became one of Canada's first gurus of bentgrass.

According to Lorne Rubenstein, Rickwood not only "knew everything about the club"; he also "knew plenty about the club's seed and fertilizer requirements" (email to the author, 3 October 2020). In fact, according to his daughter Florence, "nicknamed Birdie," Rickwood "was instrumental in developing creeping bentgrass, a strain that then become popular for courses" (Rubenstein).

Creeping bentgrass had arrived in Canada from the United States while Rickwood was at Summit. A few years later (in 1929), the Golf Editor at the *Toronto Globe*, J.H. Evans, reported to the *National Greenkeeper* about this momentous event:

It is of interest to note that creeping bent grass for use on the golf course was brought into Canada seven years ago by the late Dr. Piper, of Washington, D.C., who provided Mr. Sanson with a sod for a nursery at the Toronto Golf Club. The club has sufficient now to meet any condition which might arise. The Weston Club secured another sod from the same source with the same result, while other clubs have commenced the culture of creeping bent with local assistance" (J.H. Evans, "Among Canadian Greenkeepers," National Greenkeeper [19 May 1929], p. 20).

It seems that Summit was one of these "other clubs," and that Rickwood was the "local assistance" that "commenced the culture of creeping bent" for it.

In his *Globe* column "O'er Fairway and Hazard," Evans reported in the spring of 1924 that Rickwood, representing the Summit Club, had attended a meeting organized in Toronto for "Chairman of Green Committees and course attendants" by "Dr. O.E. Clark, Seed Commissioner of the Federal Government" (3 May 1924, p. 13). The meeting learned of Dr. Piper's visit the year before and was told of the success of the Toronto Golf Club in establishing a viable nursery of creeping bent grass from the sods Piper had provided. Clark informed the meeting that available commercial seed could not produce the same results for golf greens, since the creeping bent seed was always mixed with much larger proportions of undesirable "ordinary Red Top," so he advised Rickwood and the other attendees that "To avoid the large annual expenditure for seed and the loss of time in the development of a fresh green or a repaired green, each club should maintain a nursery of the bent variety" (p. 13).

And he offered quite practical advice about how to go about establishing a creeping bent grass green:

work the grass into the putting green by 'dibbling' as a farmer transplants his new onions. From the plant the grass will spread naturally across the green.... [T]he grass stocks that creep along and root at the joints of the creeping and velvet bent grasses might be gathered as a farmer would pull his peas, cut up, and then scatter very thickly over the surface of a new green. The material ... should be covered with good soil and the green so planted would develop into firm turf within five months.... {t]op dress them once, and possibly twice, a year with good compost. (p. 13)

Clark also made an offer to the meeting's attendees, inviting them to "a course at the Ontario Agricultural College next winter which would be open to green-keepers": "It was announced that the course would cost the clubs only the expenses of their employees while taking the lectures and following the experiments" (p. 13).

Did Rickwood attend the course?

Clark visited each Toronto golf course to "obtain an idea of the character of the soil and of the construction of the courses of local clubs," so he would have had another opportunity to encourage Rickwood to do so (p. 13). Rickwood resigned his position at the Summit Club in the fall of 1924, and he did not begin his next job, as superintendent at the Thornhill Golf and Country Club, until the spring of 1925, so he would have been free to attend the course in Guelph.

Whatever the case may be, however, one can be confident that Rickwood applied the knowledge he acquired at the meeting in the spring of 1924 to the job with which he was charged at Thornhill: the establishment of creeping bent grass greens.

Although creeping bent grass had arrived in Canada from the United States in 1923, it had come to the United States from Europe many years before, as John Stier explains in "A Short History of Creeping Bentgrass":

In the United Kingdom some of the grasses used for golf were bentgrasses though they were usually found in mixtures with fine fescues and sometimes ryegrass. A little over 100 years ago South German (Mixed) Bentgrass was introduced to the U.S for turf. Seed from pastures was harvested from what was then known as Austro-Hungary and later from other parts of Europe (Warnke, 2003). The seed, containing a mixture of creeping, colonial, velvet, and redtop bentgrasses was planted on U.S. golf courses and home lawns. Selections from some of the nicer-appearing patches were collected and maintained by the United States Golf Association Green

Section at the Arlington Turf Gardens during the early 1900s (Dutch, 1985) Since none of the creeping bentgrasses produced a consistently reliable seed source, cuttings of stolons (clones) were used to propagate the most desirable of the selections. These clones contained the exact same DNA as the "parents," including both desirable and undesirable characteristics. Continued propagation of the creeping bentgrasses resulted in what we now refer to as the "C-series" of "vegetative bentgrasses." Stolons were harvested from the turf using a type of vertical mower, then collecting the stolons. Superintendents who wished to establish the vegetative varieties would purchase the stolons immediately after harvest, then spread them on the ground, either covering them with sand or soil (stolonizing) or pocking them into the ground (sprigging). These practices are still used today The vegetative bents became widely used on golf courses during the early half of the 20th century. The most popular variety was "Toronto," sometimes called "C 15." (The Grass Roots [January/February, 2006], pp. 4-5)

To stolonize or to sprig: that was the question. Yet whatever Rickwood's own practice in this regard, as a person "instrumental" in the development of Toronto (C 15) creeping bentgrass, he bequeathed to subsequent generations of golf course superintendents a substantial turfgrass legacy.

On the one hand, Toronto (C 15) became the thoroughbred of turf grasses. It was used everywhere in North America, being especially prominent in the greens of golf courses in the Midwestern United States. It was also by far the best grass for greens in the Pacific North-West, as Oregon State University explains:

For many years ... vegetative strains were the best sources for bentgrass greens. Toronto (C 15), selected at Toronto Golf Club in Long Branch, Ontario, Canada, and Old Orchard (C 52), selected at Old Orchard Grass Nursery in Madison, WI, were vegetative strains widely used in the [Pacific North-West].... Under our conditions Toronto was an outstanding putting green grass while Old Orchard had a very poor track record. ("Creeping Bentgrass," Oregon State University <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/beaverturf/creeping-bentgrass>).

Toronto (C 15) was also widely used in Canada. In 1977, for instance, Jack Nicklaus used it for the greens at Glen Abbey.

On the other hand, just days before the PGA's Western Open was scheduled to begin at Butler National Golf Club in Illinois in 1980, the club's Toronto (C 15) greens, despite having been pampered in every possible way in preparation for this prestigious golf competition, suddenly began to look drought stressed and took on a blueish-purple colour. The greens soon turned to a brown mush. It turns out that the Butler National greens were only the most dramatic case of a mysterious disease that had by the late 1970s begun to beset this particular turf on many golf courses in the Chicago area. Not understood,

the disease was at first simply called “C 15 Decline.” Only in 1984 was a bacterium discovered to be the causal agent of the decline of this strain of creeping bentgrass, a discovery that produced a new name for the disease: “bacterial wilt of turfgrass.”



Figure 57 Bacterial wilt established in Toronto (C 15) creeping bentgrass. Berkeley University of California, plantdiseases.org/bacterial-wilt-grass-2.

Bacterial wilt of the Toronto (C 15) bentgrass could only be controlled by the bactericide known as oxytetracycline. But this expensive chemical could suppress the disease only for four to six weeks, and only if it were used in extremely high quantities. Not many golf courses could afford the time, energy, and money required to defend its Toronto (C 15) grass from this disease. And so today, many “years after the ‘Toronto’ C-15 bacterial wilt scare at Butler National,” “the vegetative cultivars of creeping bentgrass such as Toronto, and the diseases that affect them, are largely a thing of the past” (Paul R. Giordano and Joseph M. Vargas, Jr, “Yes, Virginia, there is a new bacterial disease,” *Golf Course Industry Magazine* [March 2013]).

Although the strain of grass that Rickwood was apparently “instrumental” in developing in the early 1920s may not have lasted, the quest he undertook to develop new strains of grasses suited to golf course agronomics not only continues unabated; it is today one of the most important focuses of the golf industry as the latter strives to promote environmentally responsible stewardship of golf course land.

A grass withereth, but the game of golf shall stand forever.

Rickwood's Apprentices

Like George Cumming, “Daddy of them all” as far as early twentieth-century Canadian golf professionals are concerned, Fred Rickwood brought along a number of apprentices or “assistant professionals” (the preferred term in Canada) while working at the Summit Golf and Country Club.

Rickwood was no doubt often out of the pro shop at the Summit Club supervising work on the golf course. Furthermore, we know from newspaper reports of Rickwood's tournament results in the early 1920s (that give the Summit Golf and Country Club as his affiliation) that he was occasionally away from the golf club for tournament play and exhibition matches. So it is no surprise to learn that like other professional golfers at the big Toronto and Montreal golf clubs, Rickwood had assistant professionals working under him at the Summit Club.

Perhaps his first apprentice was Alex Hunter. At the beginning of the 1921 season, we read in *Canadian Golfer* that “Digby, that very popular Nova Scotia summer resort, has a professional this season, A. Hunter, formerly assistant to Fred Ric[k]wood” (vol 7 no 2 [June 1921], p. 110). The good impression that Rickwood had made at Digby in the summer of 1919 seems to have allowed him to place his apprentice there two summers later. Hunter was said to have been “a graduate of Troon,” the great links course on the Firth of Clyde on the west coast of Scotland, where so many British Open contests have been staged (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 8 no 12 [April 1923], p. 933). In 1922, Hunter returned to Ontario, becoming “the pro at Barrie, Orillia and Midland, dividing his time between the three towns” (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 8 no 12 [April 1923], p. 933). He thus preceded his mentor at Couchiching Golf and Country Club in Orillia, where Rickwood would become head pro in 1928. In 1923, Hunter became the professional golfer at Owen Sound.

Another apprentice, Harry Shepherd, was with Rickwood at the Summit Golf and Country Club almost from the beginning, perhaps replacing Alex Hunter there. But in the golf boom of the 1920s that led to more and more golf clubs being formed and golf courses being built, assistant professionals quickly found their own positions as head professionals. Goderich, Ontario, welcomed a new nine-hole golf course in 1921, called the Maitland Golf Club, which appointed Harry Shepherd as its first golf professional at the end of the 1921 season. *Canadian Golfer* announced the appointment in a couple of its issues: “The new club at Goderich, Ontario, has secured the services of Harry Shepherd, the clever

assistant last year of Fred Rickwood of Summit, Toronto” (March 1922, vol vii no 11, p. 764). Fred Rickwood would have been instrumental in securing this appointment for his apprentice, and he no doubt also played an important role in the benefit organized at the Summit Club to raise funds as a parting gift for Shepherd: “A substantial amount was raised for F. Rickwood’s assistant, H. Shepherd, in appreciation of his service and in view of his early departure from the club” (*Canadian Golfer*, November 1921, vol vii no 7, p. 504).

Another of Rickwood’s apprentices was Jack Roberts, but he, too, soon found himself a professional appointment. In 1923, Rickwood helped Roberts to secure a position as head professional golfer at the Barrie Golf Club and, as we know, Rickwood brought three fellow professional golfers with him to Barrie Golf Club that summer to play an exhibition match not just to help the Victorian Order of Nurses (the organization benefiting from the proceeds of the match), but also to “boom the game” in the Barrie area. He was perhaps trying thereby to help consolidate Roberts’ job at the Barrie club.

The exhibition match that Rickwood arranged was eagerly anticipated:

TOP NOTCH GOLF HERE NEXT WEEK

Four Prominent “Pros” to Play Exhibition Match on Barrie Links

Four of the most prominent professional golfers in Canada will be seen in action here next Wednesday, Aug. 22, at 2 pm, when a four-ball match will be played on the links of the Barrie Golf Club, with proceeds in aid of the Barrie branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses. The golfers who will play are Percy Barrett and Fred Rickwood, who will be matched against Andrew Kay and Wm Brazier. Percy Barrett, Uplands Golf and Country Club, is professional champion of Canada for 1923. He is one of Harry Vardon’s own pupils Fred Rickwood is professional at the Summit Golf and Country Club, Toronto.... He is a leading professional. Andrew Kay, Lambton Golf and Country Club, Toronto, is the open champion for Ontario for 1923.... Wm Brazier, Bayview Golf and Country Club, Toronto, is a prominent professional in Ontario with considerable experience.... Large numbers of visitors are expected from Toronto, Collingwood, Midland, Orillia, and other points.

The four pros certainly seem to have succeeded in promoting the game, for “a large ‘gallery’ of devotees of the game followed the match with keen interest, eager not only to see the play of the professionals but also how they made the strokes” (*Barrie Examiner* 23 August 1923, p. 1)

Incidentally, I note a curious suggestion that Rickwood may have had some as yet unexplained role at the Barrie Golf Club before the hiring of his assistant Roberts as the professional golfer there, for a long -

time member of the club told the *Barrie Examiner* many years later in 1957 that the golf club's first professional golfer was a man named Rickwood: "changes in the last few years have made the Barrie Country Club very unlike the club that started about 45 years ago. Filling in the 'in-between,' Charles Kearsey related that the first pro was a Bill Rickwood" (10 April 1957, p.4). The curious thing is that there is no such professional golfer as "Bill" Rickwood known in the history of Ontario golf. There was just one Rickwood in those days: Fred. This reference to a "Bill" Rickwood may be a misremembering of Fred Rickwood's name, and the assertion that he was the club's first professional golfer may be a misremembering of his role at Barrie.

For the first professional golfer that Barrie Golf Club hired was not Fred Rickwood's apprentice Jack Roberts, but his apprentice Alex Hunter. Recall that Hunter had in 1922 worked at the golf clubs in Barrie, Midland, and Orillia, splitting his time amongst the three of them. The directors of the Barrie golf club seem to have had some sort of relationship with Rickwood, whereby he supplied the club in two consecutive years with the services of his assistant professionals.

It is possible that Fred Rickwood actually had a nominal role as a golf professional at the Barrie Golf Club during the 1922 and 1923 golf seasons, perhaps allowing his name to be associated with the golf club, even though the actual work of the professional golfer at the club would be undertaken by his assistant professional. Jack Roberts, for instance, was perhaps "loaned" to the club by Rickwood. I note that at the end of the 1923 golf season, the *Barrie Examiner* reports that "Jack Roberts, professional at the Barrie Golf Club during the past season, left this week for his home in Toronto. Mr. Roberts is assistant to Fred Rickwood, professional at Summit Golf Club, Toronto" (25 October 1923, p. 13). It seems that Jack Roberts never stopped being Fred Rickwood's assistant professional all the while he was in Barrie and so returned to Rickwood's pro shop at the end of the 1923 season.

It may be that the exhibition match that Fred Rickwood organized in the summer of 1923 was all part of the arrangement by which he promoted golf at the Barrie Golf Club and the Club accepted Rickwood's apprentices as his surrogates.

The old-timer's (mis)remembering of Rickwood's name (even in a slightly mangled form) in 1957, thirty-five years after Rickwood's first apprentice served at the Barrie Golf Club, suggests that Rickwood was long remembered by Club members as having had an important role in the Club's early development, even if just what that particular role had been had come to be forgotten.

Rickwood had a third apprentice at the Summit Golf and Country Club: Gordon Maxwell. Rickwood encouraged him to enter the Canadian Open in 1924. Each finished far back in the field at the Mount Bruno Golf Club, Maxwell finishing four strokes behind Rickwood. Later that year, Rickwood and his assistant Maxwell were invited to play in the George Cumming Invitational Tournament at the Toronto Golf Club, held “for the benefit of George Cumming the popular Toronto Golfer” (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 10 no 6 [October 1924], p. 524). Maxwell was eventually hired by the Midland Golf and Country Club, where he served in the 1930s until the start of World War II. He served in that war and then in 1946 resumed his duties as head professional at Midland.

Rickwood’s next apprentice, so far as I have been able to determine, was his own son, George. But his apprenticeship with his father was well after the latter’s years at the Summit Golf and Country Club.

George Rickwood had been born in 1912, when his father was the golf professional at the Saint John Golf Club, New Brunswick. After spending World War I at the home of his Rickwood grandparents in Yorkshire, England, George Rickwood returned to Canada with the other members of his family in the summer of 1919, spending that summer in Nova Scotia and then moving to Toronto that fall. When he finally entered the public school system in Jefferson, Ontario, the next year, he proved to be a successful student, and when he entered high school in Orillia (where Fred Rickwood had his final position as a professional golfer), he proved also to be a good athlete. Upon graduation from high-school, he continued to live with his family in Orillia and seems to have assisted his father in the pro shop at Couchiching Golf Club, for when 23 years old, he was registered on the 1935 Voters List as a “Golf Professional.”

George may have been his father’s last apprentice.

But there is also a chance that Rickwood’s youngest son Robert was actually his last apprentice.

We read in *Canadian Golfer* at the end of 1939 that “Bob Rickwood, 17 yr-old son of Fred Rickwood, former club pro, won the annual caddie tournament of the Couchiching Golf club, Orillia, Ont.” (vol 25 no 7 [November 1939], p. 15. Rickwood still lived in Orillia in 1939, but he was no longer the club pro, for he seems to have retired from working as a golf professional by this point. Still, since apprentices started their work as caddies even before their teen years, it is quite possible that son Bob had begun an apprenticeship at Couchiching under father Fred a few years before the latter’s retirement.

Rickwood's Apprentices

But it seems more likely that Rickwood's son worked for the professional golfer who succeeded his father at the Couchiching Golf and Country Club in the spring of 1934: Archie Bloor. Bloor was a former apprentice of Rickwood's friend Willie Freeman. He and Rickwood had played in a number of the same tournaments since 1923, when Bloor was just seventeen years old, and no doubt knew each other. Retiring after six years as Couchiching's head pro, Rickwood spent the rest of his life in Orillia, and so did Bloor, who died doing what he loved: "Archibald (Archie) Bloor, 53, died on the eighth tee of the golf course he served for 16 years as club professional the Couchiching Golf and Country Club" (*Windsor Star*, 16 June 1959, p. 2).

Fred Rickwood's Golf Game

When Rickwood returned to competitive golf in the early 1920s, he was initially considered a strong competitor who had a good chance of winning one of the two major Canadian titles. For instance, when W.M. Tackaberry looked forward to the tournaments of 1922, he observed: "The Canadian professional championship will likely be held just previous to the Canadian open. Davie Black, of Vancouver, thrice champion, is coming East to defend his title. George Cumming, the Freeman boys, Alex. Murry and Fred. Rickwood, of Summit, will give the wonderful Dave quite an argument" (*Daily Times* [Victoria], 3 May 1922, p. 8).

Alas, Rickwood's tournament performances after World War I never matched such expectations.

To judge by the newspaper account of Rickwood's play in the 1923 exhibition match at Barrie, his golf game was perhaps not what it was when he arrived at the Quebec Golf Club back in 1909 with a reputation as a long driver. In the Barrie exhibition match, it was Andrew Kay (the reigning Ontario Open golf champion) who impressed the crowd with a number of 300-yard drives. Rickwood was celebrated as an excellent ball-striker: "The feature of the match was the wonderful driving of Kay, some of his strokes being a good 300 yards. Rickwood played his usual steady game and was strong on approaches. Barrett was very steady and showed fine form and Brazier played a consistent game" (*Barrie Examiner* 23 August 1923, p. 1).

Similarly, we recall that in 1927 it was Rickwood's recovery game that impressed the crowd of spectators who followed the "Golf Week" exhibition match in Napanee: "Rickwood had 40 for each round and had three penalties. He played a very sporting game and took chances rather than playing safe, which of course pleased the spectators. He made some great recoveries after getting in difficulties." Spectators seem to have had the "Phil Mickelson" experience, wondering, "What will Fred do next?"

Perhaps the arthritis in Rickwood's right foot had deprived him of his long-driving ability. Perhaps his hands were taped to cope with a bout of blisters brought on by August's hot weather. Or perhaps he was just getting old (he was now in his forties).

There is evidence, however, that Rickwood could still bomb his drives on occasion. An item in *Canadian Golfer* reported that he became the Canadian long drive record holder – of a sort – in March of 1922: “Recently at the Indoor Golf School at the Royal Connaught, Hamilton, Fred Rickwood, professional of the Summit Golf Club, Toronto, registered a record drive on the dynamometer, the invention of Mr. C.H. Hutton of the Dominion Power and Transmission Company. He ‘notched’ 315 yards, which is 4 yards further than any player, professional or amateur, has yet been able to register” (vol vii no 9, p. 762).

Hutton had essentially invented a version of today's golf simulators:

My invention is ... an apparatus whereby driving strokes may be practised indoors under conditions very closely corresponding to those actually existing on the ordinary golf course, provision being made for ascertaining the direction and distance of flight of a driven golf ball. My invention consists generally of an open ended canvas tunnel into the front of which the golf ball is driven, a target sheet suspended at the rear end of the tunnel, sheet tension means for maintaining the sheet stretched, and indicating means cooperating with said target sheet for measuring the probable flight of a driven golf ball impinging against the sheet. (United States Patent Office, No 1, 443, 412, 30 January 1923, application filed 4 February 1922).

His invention seems to have functioned like the carnival device that measured how far a sledge-hammer blow could send a given weight up a vertical scale. Upon impact of the ball against the sheet, a device registered the amount of impact force perceived by the sheet, that force being recorded according to a scale permitting the user to interpret the distance that the ball would have traveled had it not been interrupted in its path by the sheet.

The direction that the ball flew was determined by observing the point of impact of the ball onto the sheet relative to a series of lines printed on the sheet, such that the user might gauge the direction the ball would have followed.

One week after the Barrie exhibition match, at the Invitational tournament for the Mackenzie Cup at the Kirkfield Golf Club, Rickwood took fourth place, one of his best tournament results (his friend William Brazier tied for second, but Rickwood finished well ahead of his apprentice Jack Roberts, his old mentor George Cumming, and his old friends Willie and Frank Freeman). Rickwood had also finished fourth at the 1921 Toronto City and District professional championship (friends George Cumming and Percy Barrett finished first and second, respectively), a finish that earned him a share of the prize money.



Figure 58 J.A. Willoughby's private nine-hole course in Georgetown, Ontario (now North Halton Golf). The course was laid out by George Cumming circa 1914 (there is speculation Stanley Thompson may have had a hand in the design, too). One teed-off from the top of the hill across the lake and played to the green below where the golfers are putting.

There were other invitational tournaments in which he played, including the 1922 J.A. Willoughby tournament contested on Willoughby's private golf course.

And there were regular appearances in the Canadian Open and the championship of the Canadian Professional Golfers Association,

although he never mounted a serious challenge in these tournaments.

Still, whatever his prospects for finishing in a money-earning position (generally, only the first five or six positions earned money), Fred Rickwood showed up. He was determined to support the development of the professional game in Canada. As we know, he was one of the founding members of the Canadian Professional Golfers Association in Ottawa in 1911. As soon as he returned from Europe at the end of the war, he re-joined the Canadian PGA. In fact, quite coincidentally, he and Bill Brazier re-joined at the very same time: "The following ... well-known pros have become members since last season: ... W. Brazier, Stratford ... Fred Rickwood, Summit Golf Club" (*Canadian Golfer*, July 1920, vol vi no 3, p. 240). Her served on the Executive Committee of the CPGA for 1923-24 and he was one of those unanimously re-elected to the Executive Committee for 1924-25.

Yet for all the ways that committee work, head pro responsibilities, family responsibilities, health problems like arthritis and psoriasis, and the simple passing of the years can take their toll on a person's golf swing, it seems that the elegant Rickwood swing so much admired by the members of the Quebec Golf Club in 1909 endured well into the 1930s, for he played in the Ontario Open in 1931 when approaching 50 years of age.

Fred Rickwood's Golf Game

His caddy Earle Milne said of Rickwood when he was the golf professional at the Couchiching Golf Club in Orillia in the early 1930s that "he was a great golfer, his swing as smooth as silk" (*Daily Packet & Times*, 28 July 1995, p. 20).

The Thornhill Golf Club and More Work with Thompson

At the end of 1924, after five celebrated years as head professional at the Summit Golf and Country Club, Fred Rickwood resigned his position there in favour of a position at the nearby Thornhill Golf Club.

With his young girl and boy having enjoyed five years in the same school, the first stability they had known in this regard, this move from one golf club to another just a few miles down Yonge Street was ideal. Not only would the kids go to the same school, but the family would stay in the same home in the village of Jefferson, and Rickwood would still be able to walk to work.

The Thornhill Golf Club's course, where Rickwood was appointed "Superintendent of the course" at the beginning of 1925, was built by Stanley Thompson & Company in 1922. It was developed from the Hawthorn Mineral Springs and Residence Resort.



Figure 59 The Hawthorn Springs Residence depicted here became the clubhouse of the Thornhill Golf Club when the latter purchased the Hawthorn Mineral Springs and Residence Resort in 1922. The old clubhouse was demolished in 1963.

The Thornhill Golf Club and More Work with Thompson

Thornhill had been famous since the 1880s for its mineral springs, on the west side of the Don River, and since the 1890s the Hawthorn Mineral Springs and Residence Resort had bottled its health-giving mineral water on site (for delivery to any location in Toronto), offered a hotel for guests in its thoroughly renovated residence, and developed grounds for walks. (By 1916, painter J.E.H. Macdonald – a co-founder of the “The Group of Seven” in 1920 – had taken over one of the resort’s old bottling sheds as a studio for teaching some of his students.)



Figure 60 The Hawthorn Mineral Springs and Residence Resort comprised 30 acres of farmland and mineral springs, one of which is shown above. The grounds were open for Sunday walks to non-residents.

In moving to the Thornhill Golf club, Rickwood seems to have moved from one Stanley Thompson mandated appointment to another, for big plans for course improvements were afoot at the Thornhill Golf Club, and they again involved Thompson.

By 1924, the Thornhill Golf Club decided that its golf course – not yet three years old – needed to be renovated. In the fall of that year, the Thornhill greens committee set aside \$20,000 (a large expenditure, given that it was an amount equivalent to more than 40% of its annual intake of \$48,000 in those days) for course improvements: “It is the intention the coming year to feature course improvements, the greens being given special attention” (*Canadian Golfer* February 1925 vol x no 10, p. 771).

If you need new greens, at your country club, “who ya gonna call”? Fred Rickwood! (Sing this to the tune of the Ray Parker, Jr., song, “Ghostbusters.”)

We know that Napanee Golf and Country Club called him for this purpose in 1927. It seems that Stanley Thompson may have done so, too, in 1925. At the Thornhill Golf Club, however, Rickwood would not be the head professional golfer, but rather the superintendent of the golf course.

The work undertaken by Rickwood at Thornhill Golf Club was substantial. The Thornhill Golf Club Green Committee reported in 1925 on the work planned for the course: “It has been decided to reconstruct three or four greens each season as conditions warrant During the past year there have been a number of improvements to the property; water has been laid to nearly all the greens and tees, five steel bridges have been constructed, and over 200 trees planted about the course. Ten new tees were built during the year, three new greens built and planted with creeping bent, and another is ready for seeding in the Spring” (*Canadian Golfer* January 1926, vol 11 no 9, p. 798).

The club president’s report for 1926 outlines similar work done in that year: “considerable work was done on the course. The new seventh hole was completed during the year, the second and third greens were tiled, number one fairway was tiled and a number of the tees were either rebuilt or improved” (*Canadian Golfer* January 1927, p. 703).

The full extent of the work to be done is indicated in an article by J. H. Evans in the *Toronto Globe*:

Acting upon the annual report, which stressed the necessity of work upon the grounds and changes to the course in 1925, the Green Committee of the Thornhill Golf and Country Club has prepared a plan to give the club a course which will meet the requirements of its large membership. Under the direction of T. U. Farley, and superintended by Fred Rickwood, former professional of the Summit Club, the work has commenced and will be brought to a completion toward the close of the season....

While substantial changes will be made to the first three holes of the course and alterations made elsewhere to give length to the holes, the plan of Mr. Farley and members of the committee emphasizes work upon the greens. In the opinion of the committee, the greens need reconstruction and drainage. Their condition last season, which caused criticism from members, is said to have been partially due to lack of drainage.

The first change is taking away the bank to the right of the first hole to speed up play and raising the level of the creek bed, which forms part of the first fairway. There is a change being considered to the second hole by placing the second green in the third fairway, and as a result the third hole will become a pitch across the creek. A bank will be taken away from the fifth green; the sixth green is to be lowered, drained, and bunkered; the seventh and eighth greens are to be bunkered, while the last green of the first half of the course will be carried back to the southwest corner of the property, thus lengthening the hole 75 yards. An alteration to the twelfth hole will increase its length 50 yards, the fifteenth hole will be lengthened also, and its green, which was rebuilt last year, will be subject to further alterations. One hundred and fifty yards will be added to the sixteenth hole by carrying the tee back. Its green will be bunkered.

In addition to these changes the committee plans an improvement in its water system. It intends to carry water to each tee. (21 April 1925, p. 9)

With regard to work on the Thornhill golf course after its initial construction by Stanley Thompson & Company in 1922, the Stanley Thompson Society website merely refers to a subsequent “three-hole renovation.” It is clear, however, that the renovation involved much more than three holes, and it is just as clear that Thompson brought in his trusted man from the Summit Golf and Country Club to supervise this renovation work.

We can see that what the Napanee newspapers wrote about Rickwood in 1927 is absolutely true: he “is an expert in laying out courses and building greens”; he “has had years of experience in laying out golf courses.”

What the newspapers did not say, however, is much more interesting: that Rickwood’s most formative experiences in these respects came from working for Stanley Thompson for seven years in the 1920s. To use Witteveen’s phrase: “Thompson trained and graduated” Rickwood.

Interestingly, although *Canadian Golfer* referred to Rickwood as Thornhill’s “superintendent of the course,” he also represented Thornhill Golf Club as a professional golfer. While Rickwood renovated the

course, the head pro was Arthur J. Hurlbert. Yet both Hurlbert and Rickwood represented Thornhill Golf Club at the Canadian PGA championship in 1925.

This fact is not surprising when we recall that the roles of golf professional, course designer, and greenkeeper were not distinct at the beginning of the twentieth century. It turns out that golf clubs would regularly hire a professional golfer for a double role as professional golfer and construction superintendent well into the 1920s, as in the case of Montreal's Elm Ridge Golf and Country Club which in 1925 sought to hire the same man "as professional and as superintendent of the laying out of the new course at Dorval, Montreal" – the same year that Rickwood moved from Summit to Thornhill (*Canadian Golfer*, March 1925, vol 10 no 11 p. 880).

It turns out that Rickwood was one of these jack-of-all-trades golf professionals at both the Thornhill Golf Club and the Summit Golf and Country Club – and he became so under the mentorship and sponsorship of Stanley Thompson.

Simultaneously Golf Professional and Architect

Yet even while head professional at the Summit Golf and Country Club and while superintendent of the golf course at the Thornhill Golf Club, Rickwood stepped out on his own as a golf course architect.

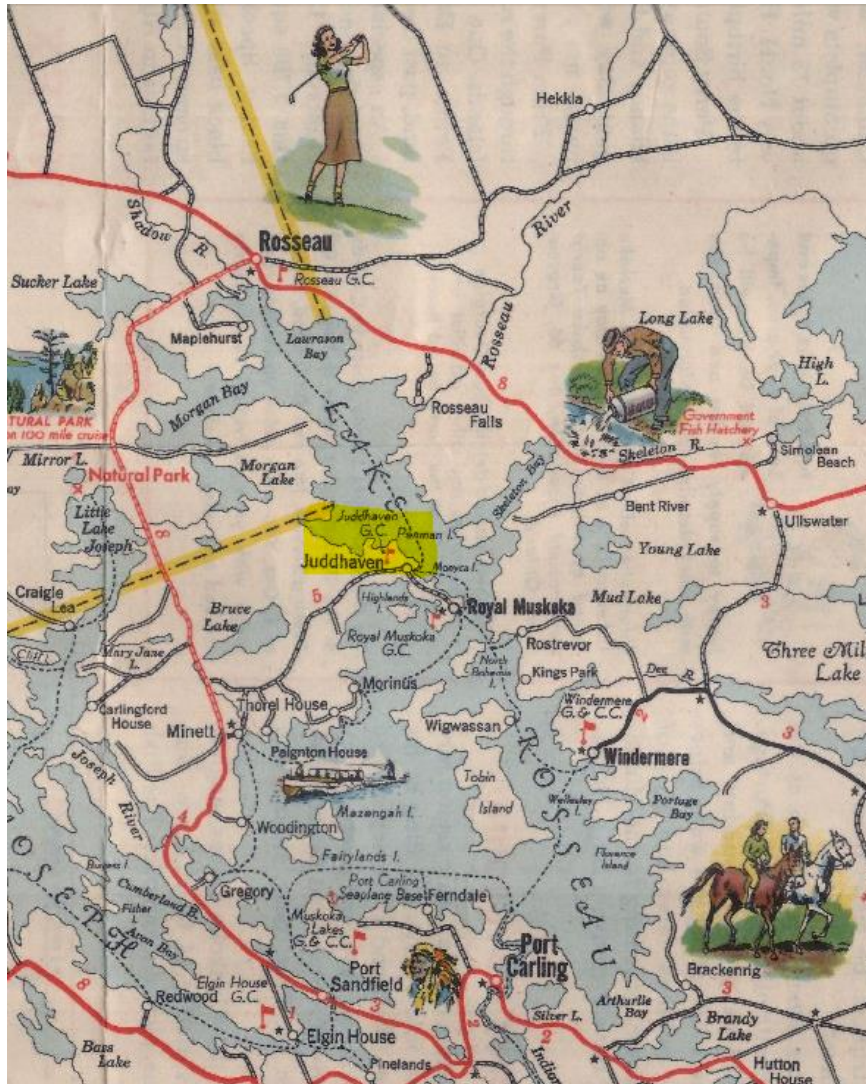


Figure 61 This 1949 "Imperial Esso Dealer" road map shows Rickwood's Juddhaven Golf Course location, which I have highlighted in yellow. Five other Muskoka golf courses are also marked on the map. The Juddhaven course no longer exists.

In the spring of 1925, for instance, we read in the *Canadian Golfer* that "Fred Rickwood, former professional at the Summit club, and now at the Thornhill club, as Superintendent of its course, returned last week from the Muskoka Lakes, where he laid out a course at Juddhaven. The course is for guests of the Ernscliffe Hotel. The course will be 2,700 yards in length and should be ready for play on July 1. Rickwood states that there is little rock upon the island. One feature of the course is that the tees for three holes were laid out on the same mound" (May 1925, vol 11 no. 1).

This reference to the golf course in the spring of 1925 makes it clear that the course was laid out by the end of 1924 and had come through the winter in good order, making play possible by the summer of 1925. The Muskoka Lakes was a booming tourist area in Ontario at this time, and so hotels and lodges

were building golf courses. Stanley Thompson and George Cumming were among the first to build golf courses for resorts in the Muskoka Lakes. Fred Rickwood would not be the last.



Figure 62 Ernscliffe Hotel, circa 1920s, with 20 or so guests on the front lawn near the docks.

The Ernscliffe Hotel, or Lodge, was built in 1890 on Lake Rosseau by Alfred Judd. His pioneering parents, Francis and Ann, had bought property on the west side of the lake in 1875 and built a home there from which they operated the local post office and around which a little community grew up, calling itself Juddhaven. The original Judd homestead remains in good repair and was inhabited by a member of the Judd family down to 2015, when the property was put up for sale. Sadly, the grand old hotel burned to the ground in 1968.

The Muskoka Navigation Company highly recommended the Ernscliffe Hotel as a summer playground.



Figure 63 View from the front lawn of the Ernscliffe Hotel, a seasonal facility marketed as a healthful summer playground.

The company's guide book celebrated the remote location of the lodge, carefully detailing its amenities, and advising potential guests to make their reservations early:

The steamer skirts the shore for a considerable distance until Juddhaven, nestling in a deep bay, is reached. Few prettier spots can be found than Juddhaven, which is only at a distance of four miles from the village of Rosseau, at the head of the lake and within half a mile of the "Royal Muskoka."

The hostelry at this point is known as the Ernscliffe, and is a pretentious hotel, or, more strictly speaking, boarding-house, with ample accommodation for seventy-five guests, the house having been enlarged this year to more than double its former capacity. The situation is a capital one, as the house is on an elevation of land overlooking the bay as well as Lake Rosseau, and affording pleasing vistas of the surroundings. Good boating, bathing and fishing are to be had here and Mr Alfred Judd, the proprietor, is indefatigable in his endeavours to provide amusement and pleasure to all his guests. A good tennis lawn is one of the attractions.

The interior arrangements of the house are well designed, and the rooms are large and airy. Wide verandahs and shady balconies are also a comfortable acquisition.... Last season, this resort was one of the most popular on the Muskoka lakes, and those desiring accommodation this year should apply early to secure rooms.... One of the great attractions of Juddhaven is its exclusiveness, and those desiring a quiet, restful

and enjoyable summer outing cannot do better than make this resort their objective point. The house is surrounded with health-giving pine wood which makes the ozone in this locality one of great efficacy to sufferers of hay-fever and incipient pulmonary affections. (Highlands of Ontario: Muskoka Lakes [Muskoka Navigation Company Guide Book, 1902], pp. 19-20)

Alfred Judd became increasingly ambitious for his lodge, expanding the building in several stages. It grew from an initial capacity for thirty guests in the 1890s, to a capacity for seventy-five guests in the early 1900s, and finally to a capacity for more than 125 guests by the time that Fred Rickwood arrived on site.

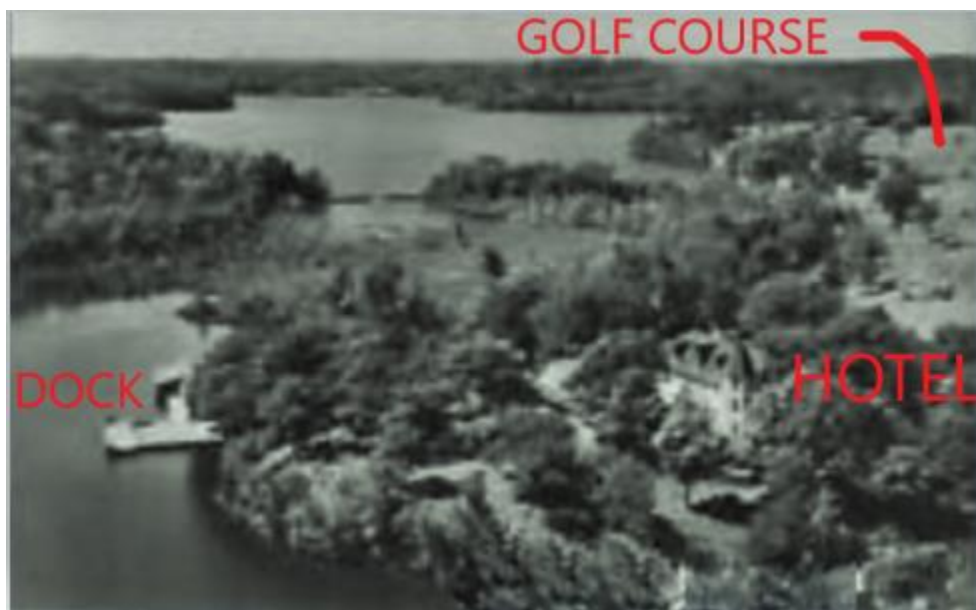


Figure 64 Aerial photograph circa 1930s of Ernscliffe Hotel with Fred Rickwood's 9-hole golf course partially visible in the background.

To keep pace with the other big Muskoka resorts, Judd added tennis courts to the hotel's swimming, boating and fishing facilities. As the popularity of golf began to boom in southern Ontario, some of the big Muskoka resorts added golf courses

to their grounds just before World War I. After the war, Judd decided he had to have a golf course of his own. The magnificent lake was right in front of the hotel. His golf course would be right behind it.

Few images of the golf course remain. We see in the photograph below, however, an image of the first tee, as four golfers begin their round. The style of the cars visible in the background, as well as the fact that the golfers no longer wear plus-fours and stockings (which went out of fashion by 1930), suggests that the photograph was taken in the 1930s – perhaps ten years after Rickwood built the course.

Simultaneously Golf Professional and Architect

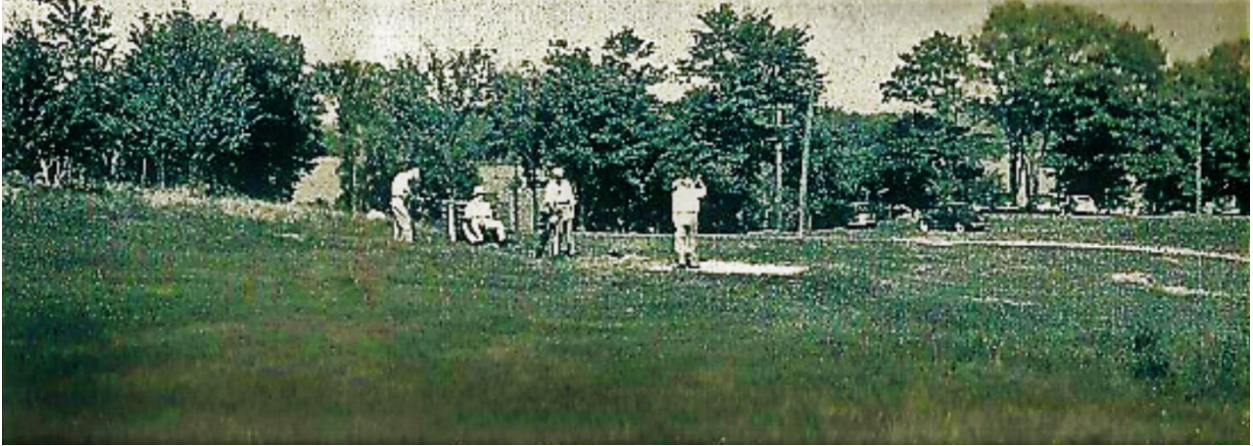


Figure 65 Golfers start a round on the 1st tee at Fred Rickwood's Juddhaven golf course circa 1930. Lake Rosseau is visible in the background through the bordering trees.

What may be the same four golfers appear in another photograph of the golf course.



Figure 66 The two photographs on this page are from brochures advertising the attractions of the Ernescliffe Hotel in the 1930s.

The photographs above are contained in brochures published by the Ernescliffe Hotel to advertise its attractiveness as a holiday destination in the competitive Muskoka Lakes district.

Recall that Rickwood had drawn the attention of the editor of *Canadian Golfer* to the fact that he had managed to route the nine holes of the golf course in such a way as to bring golfers to tee boxes on top of the same mound three times. The mound is evident on the left side of the photograph below.



Figure 67 Aerial photograph of Fred Rickwood's Juddhaven golf course from a 1940s Ernescliffe Hotel advertising brochure. The mound with three tees is indicated.

The Ernescliffe Hotel eventually lost the competition amongst the Muskoka resorts for summer tourist dollars. According to the descendants of Alfred Judd, a contributing factor to the decline of the hotel's fortunes was their ancestor's religious opposition to alcohol – leading to his determined refusal to serve liquor at the hotel, even after the end of the prohibition laws (see Patti Vipond, "A Bit of Paradise on Juddhaven Road," *Bracebridge Examiner*, 16 September 2015). Judd was ultimately forced to sell the hotel, the buyer being the Roman Catholic Church, which developed the property as a retreat for its priests.

The attitude of the new proprietors toward alcohol and golf is not known.

As mentioned above, the old hotel building burned down in 1968. No longer belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, the property is privately owned these days, "with its golf course now a magnificent meadow" (Vipond).



Figure 68 A contemporary Google satellite image shows the area near Juddhaven where the Ernscliffe Hotel and its golf course were located. The sites of the old docks, the old hotel, and the old golf course remain visible. The treeless snow-covered meadow clearly retains the shape of the old course. The mound that had three tee-boxes projects into the meadow.

Rickwood's simultaneous work as golf professional at the prestigious Summit Golf and Country Club and as an independent golf course designer was not unusual in those days. Other top professional golfers did the same thing.

For instance, George Cumming, while head professional at the Toronto Golf Club from 1900 to 1950, also designed dozens of courses during this period, from the Summit Golf and Country Club and courses in the Muskoka Lakes, all before 1914, to the Chaudière Golf Club (now Chateau Cartier Golf Club) in Ottawa in 1922 and the Renfrew Golf Club in 1928. Nicol Thompson designed and built golf courses in both Canada and the United States while he was the long-term head professional at the Hamilton Golf and Country Club. Similarly, Karl Keffer, head professional at Royal Ottawa Golf Club from 1911 to 1942, also designed golf courses in Canada and the United States during this period, such as the first nine holes of the Arnprior Golf Club in 1924 and the Glenlea golf course (now Champlain) in Ottawa in 1929, as well as nine holes at Jekyll Island, Georgia, between 1913 and 1923. Charles Murray, long-time head professional at Royal Montreal Golf Club, laid out a number of golf courses in the Montreal area and also laid out the original nine holes of the Cataraqui Golf Club in Kingston in 1917. James ("Jimmie") Newman, Charles Murray's apprentice, was over a ten-year period the professional golfer in succession at Caledonia Springs, Cornwall, Perth, and Stratford, but still managed to lay out the first nine holes of the Mississippi Golf Club in 1915.

A Unique and Clever Partnership with Billy Brazier

Sometime early in 1927, Rickwood had a conversation with Ralph Reville, editor of the *Canadian Golfer* magazine. He told him of an idea he had for bringing professional golf expertise and professional architectural expertise to small golfing communities and their small golf clubs. He made it clear, however, that he had no intention of poaching business from golf clubs that had resident professional golfers.



Figure 69 William T. ("Bill") Brazier squeezes close to Fred Rickwood, perhaps so they both appear below the most famous Canadian golfer, George S. Lyon, in this detail from a photograph of the competitors at the 1922 Canadian Open at the Mount Bruno Country Club, Quebec.

Reville liked Rickwood's idea.

In fact, he was so excited by it that he jumped the gun on a series of advertisements that Rickwood had paid to run in *Canadian Golfer* in the summer and fall of 1927 and instead spread the news himself by writing an item about the plan and publishing it in an earlier issue: "A quite unique, and the *Canadian Golfer* considers a very clever, partnership has been established this season by W.T. Brazier and Fred Rickwood, both well-known golfers, who are offering their joint services in connection with golf tuition and golf course construction to clubs in Ontario, who can't afford a professional throughout the season. Both Brazier and Rickwood are professionals of great experience, and a week spent with them on any course will be of incalculable benefit alike from a membership and course standpoint" (April 1927, vol 12 no 12, pp. 966-67).

Let us take a moment, then, in this narrative of Fred Rickwood's development as a golf course architect, to consider what his fellow professional golfer, golf-school instructor, and personal friend Bill Brazier brought to their partnership in 1927. The partnership would be brief, but their different roles within it were clear from the start: they would

A Unique and Clever Partnership with Billy Brazier

both build and repair golf clubs, but Brazier would specialize in “golf tuition” and Rickwood would specialize in “golf course construction.”

Billy Brazier

William Thomas Brazier was born in Brighton, Sussex, England, on 9 August 1891, and so was about ten years younger than Rickwood. He immigrated to Canada in 1912, giving his profession as “golf caddie” at the New Brunswick port of entry (he had worked as a caddie and golf apprentice in his teenage years). He moved immediately to Ontario, where he resided in London, initially working as a glass cutter.



Figure 70 William Thomas Brazier in 1914.

As for Rickwood, however, so for Brazier: the outbreak of World War I in 1914 changed everything.

In January of 1915, he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, got married the next month, and then was shipped back to England on the troop carrier called the SS Scandinavian. He was about five feet, ten inches tall, and 145 pounds, with a fair complexion, black hair, and hazel eyes. He had two tattoos on his left arm and one on his right. He had a small scar on his back and a scar on his nose.

He came back to Canada after the war, however, with another scar: a large one on the left side of his chest, for he was wounded by shrapnel at Ypres in June of 1916.

The shrapnel did not penetrate his thorax, but an operation was necessary to remove it. After the successful operation, complications from influenza led doctors to investigate what turned out to be a chronic problem for Brazier: frequent nasal obstruction and trouble breathing. He suffered from a

severely deviated septum and widespread nasal obstruction from grossly dislocated cartilage. It turns out that the scar on the nose and the underlying damage had been caused years before the war by Brazier's being hit squarely in the face by the full force of a golf ball!

A second operation repaired the damage to his nose.

After being confined to Temporary Base Duty for several months as he recovered from his operations, Brazier served out the rest of the war without further incident, discharged at the rank of private on his return to St John, New Brunswick, in March of 1919.



Figure 71 Brazier at the 1922 *Canadian Open* at Mount Bruno Country Club, Quebec.

Upon his return to London, Ontario, Brazier took up the position as golf professional at the Stratford Golf Club. Here we find the only reference ever made to his work as a golf course designer: "Under the superintendence of the professional of the club, William Brazier, the Stratford Country Club started last autumn on many improvements to its pretty course on the banks of the Avon. The 4th, 5th and 9th holes are being radically changed, allowing for the excellent length of 3,000 yards instead of 2,500 yards. Brazier the past season made a 67, which is a course record" (*Canadian Golfer*, January 1921, vol vi no 9, p. 651). The editor of *Canadian Golfer* magazine, Ralph Reville, actually went down to Stratford to report on Brazier's impact on the course: "The Editor of the *Canadian Golfer* was a recent visitor to Stratford and was surprised at the wonderful improvement to the course there – thanks largely to the efforts of the President, Mr. F.A. Copus, and the professional, W.T. Brazier. It is one of the most self-contained and best kept up 9-hole courses in Ontario. Improvements contemplated between now and next season will still further improve the golfing possibilities of these prettily situated links" (June 1921, vol vii no 2, p. 128).

It is not clear that Brazier actually enjoyed superintending golf course construction. Before this autumn work had even begun, Brazier had placed an advertisement in *Canadian Golfer* seeking a position elsewhere: "WANTED for season of 1921, position as professional: first-class coach, club maker and player. Apply W.T. Brazier, Stratford Country Club" (September 1920, vol vi no 5, p. 414). Brazier does not mention course construction as one of his skills. Yet despite Brazier's desire to move on, he decided not to do so: Ralph Reville later told readers that Brazier had "had one or two good offers to sign up with other clubs for 1921, but decided to remain at Stratford" (January 1921, vol vi no 9, pp. 651-52).

Brazier was noted more for teaching golf than for anything else. Not surprisingly, given his love of teaching or “coaching,” Brazier was among the first involved in what *Canadian Golfer* called “The Vogue of Indoor Golf”: “At the big Eaton Department Store on Yonge Street is W. Brazier, of Stratford, who goes this spring to Owen Sound Golf and Country Club, which is looked upon as one of the best 9-hole course clubs in Ontario. He has two courts and other appurtenances for teaching the game, which he knows well how to do” (February 1922, vol vii no 10, pp. 674-75).

Like Rickwood, Brazier became a favourite of the editor of *Canadian Golfer*. In the same issue as the above item about Brazier’s winter golf school, Reville returned to the topic of Brazier as professional golfer: “Another professional change for the season of 1922 has been announced, William Brazier, for the past 2 or 3 years at Stratford, Ontario, having been given a contract with the Owen Sound Golf and Country Club, one of the coming clubs of Ontario, only recently started, but with a good membership already of some 250. A very good man, indeed, is Brazier, who learned his game in the Old Country, and is alike a good player, an excellent coach, and a competent supervisor of a golf course – the three chief desiderata from a professional standpoint” (February 1922, vol vii no 10, p. 710).

Brazier became the first professional of the Owen Sound Golf and Country Club. Mind you, the course had not yet been built when Brazier became its professional. The layout was planned by Stanley Thompson’s brother Nicol Thompson late in 1920. The next spring, the Thompson, Cummings & Thompson Company was on site busy at its construction work that would last throughout 1921. When Brazier arrived, he kept the 150 members of the new golf club active on a temporary course beside the construction site while the course proper was taking shape. As Paul White points out in *Owen Sound: The Port City* (2000): “The Owen Sound Golf and Country Club received acclaim far and wide for its design and the quality of the course. In the 1950s Nick Weslock, one of the top golfers of that era, claimed that this course was ‘second only to Sudbury’s Idlewyld as the best nine-hole course’ in the province of Ontario” (137).

Like Rickwood, Brazier followed the Stanley Thompson construction trail. In 1923, he became the professional golfer at the Bayview Golf Club, which was being expanded from its original 9-hole configuration to an 18-hole layout. The architect commissioned for this work was none other than Stanley Thompson. (This golf course, which had been located at the junction of Lawrence Avenue and Bayview Avenue, no longer exists, having been swallowed up years ago by Toronto development.) At Owen Sound and Bayview – where Thompson, Cumming & Thompson and Stanley Thompson &

Company, respectively, were working on the golf course while Brazier was present as each club's professional golfer – one wonders whether Brazier perhaps had a role similar to Rickwood's role at the Summit Golf and Country Club and the Thornhill Golf Club. Was he appointed professional golfer in part to superintend the finishing touches to the Thompson golf course during the first year of play?



Figure 72 Bill Brazier, Sault Ste Marie Golf Club, 1925. Photo supplied by Sandt Gougeon.

Brazier would go on to become the professional at the Sault Ste. Marie Golf Club in 1924. *Canadian Golfer* reported that "Billy" Brazier had been chosen by Sault Ste. Marie "from 30 applicants," observing that "He is a very fine player indeed and a splendid instructor" (March 1925, vol 10 no 11, pp. 879-82).

In 1925, he scored one of the longest holes-in-one on record on the course's 305-yard third hole.

He was no longer at Sault Ste Marie after the 1926 season, and at the beginning of the 1927 golf season, as we know, he was touring the province with Rickwood, showing up in Napanee for "Golf Week" in June.

But in the very month that he was scheduled to return to Napanee and help Rickwood with the re-making of the Napanee golf course

(August), we find that Brazier is now the professional golfer at "Southampton Golf Club" – at least according to the mention of Brazier's affiliation in the *Montreal Gazette's* report on the 1927 Canadian Open (3 August 1927, p. 14).

The Montreal newspaper's designation of Brazier's affiliation as "Southampton" was probably a reference to the golf course at Southampton, Ontario: it was built in 1925 by Stanley Thompson on land

he had selected in the spring of 1924 (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 10 no 1 [May 1924], pp. 110-11). He laid out eleven greens, but only nine holes were opened for play in May of 1925 when what was usually called the Saugeen Golf Club was officially launched.

Note, however, that in the local newspapers, this golf club was known by a wide variety of names: it was called by some the Southampton-Port Elgin Golf Club; others called it the Port Elgin-Southampton Golf Club; still others called it the Saugeen Golf and Country Club.

And as late as 1928 it was called “the Southampton Golf Club” (*Daily sun Times* [Owen Sound], 15 August 1928, p. 2).

Brazier seems likely to have received this appointment in the wake of the visit to the club by Rickwood and Brazier in July: “Bill Brazier and Fred Rickwood, two well-known professional golfers, are touring Ontario. They are now at the Saugeen Club, Hanover, where they are giving exhibitions, including trick shots” (*Toronto Daily Star*, 23 July 1927, p. 12). And we know who hit the trick shots.

So Brazier may not have been able to return to Napanee with Rickwood at the end of August in 1927 if, as seems likely, the new appointment at Southampton that had come to him that summer required him to be in attendance there.

Even so, it would probably have been no great cause for concern, for in his unique and clever partnership with Fred Rickwood, Brazier was indeed the specialist in instruction and ball-striking exhibitions, not golf course construction.

Of course the Napanee newspapers acknowledge that Rickwood was also a capable instructor, and Rickwood’s caddy Earle Milne confirms this information, observing that his old boss “could analyze your troubles at once and was a great help to many golfers,” but it is nonetheless clear that there was a division of labour between Brazier and Rickwood during their partnership: Brazier was a teaching specialist, as Reville was fond of pointing out, and Rickwood was the specialist in laying out golf courses and constructing greens (*Daily Packet & Times*, 28 July 1995, p. 20).

Like Rickwood, Brazier liked to compete with fellow professional golfers and entered many professional competitions in both Canada and the United States. Early in his career, it seemed to some that he was

likely to become a high achiever in Canadian golf. In 1920, for instance, he played well in the CPGA championship, leading a reporter discussing the Championship's results to observe that this young Stratford golfer "was showing decided class this season, both through the tee and through the green. He looks like one of the coming pros of Canada."

In the end, however, he did not fulfill these signs of early promise.

Like Rickwood, I would suggest, he is important for having showed up in the tournaments that established golf as a competitive sport in Canada. He played in virtually every Canadian Open between 1919 and 1928, he played regularly in the Canadian PGA Championship, and he also played in many invitational tournaments and exhibition matches. He never threatened to win a Canadian Open, mind you, although he was close to the lead after the first round of the Open in August of 1927 (his golf game had obviously not been hurt by his experiences during "Golf Week" at Napanee six weeks before!). His results in the Canadian Open ranged from twenty-first to forty-sixth. In the Kirkfield Invitational Tournament in 1923, known as the Mackenzie Cup, he finished tied for second. In the 1928 Toronto Golf Club Invitational, he finished fourteenth.



Figure 73 Bill Brazier, circa 1930.

After stints as the professional golfer at Baden, Ontario, in 1928 and at Frenchmen's Bay, a summer resort course near Toronto, in 1929, Brazier left for Manitoba, and *Canadian Golfer* bid him a fond farewell from Ontario: "'Bill' Brazier, who came to Canada some years ago from Brighton, England, and who has been professional at several important Ontario clubs, leaves for Winnipeg shortly, where he has been appointed professional at Norwood, Winnipeg's oldest golfing club. Brazier, who served with distinction for five years in the Great War, is a fine player and a most capable instructor. On two occasions he was third in the Canadian Professional Championship and has several tournaments to his credit the past few years. He will be a distinct addition to the ranks of Winnipeg professionals" (vol 15 no 10 [Feb 1930], p. 747).

Recall that Rickwood and Brazier had mentioned in their 1927 advertisement that they were willing to travel to the West to teach, sell and repair golf clubs,

and advise on golf course design. It may have been correspondence resulting from these advertisements that gave Brazier his initial contact with the Norwood Golf Club.



Figure 74 *Winnipeg Tribune*, 24 May 1930, p. 20.

In Manitoba, Brazier would become the head pro at, successively, the Norwood Golf Club, the St. Boniface Golf Club, and the Transcona Golf Club, and he would continue to play competitive golf, whether in local Winnipeg tournaments, provincial tournaments, or the qualifying rounds for the 1930 US Open in Minnesota (where Tom Vardon, we recall, would become the oldest qualifier).

In 1931, Brazier placed second in the Manitoba Open, after winning a nine-hole playoff to break the tie between second-place finishers.

The next year, he finished fourth in the Saskatchewan Open.

And Brazier would continue to develop his reputation as an excellent golf instructor and as an excellent trick-shot artist. In his advertisements in the Winnipeg newspapers, he proclaimed himself (in capital letters) "CANADA'S LEADING GOLF INSTRUCTOR." His exhibitions of how to hit various golf shots continued to impress people: "W. Brazier, Norwood pro, paid a visit to Morden Thursday afternoon, and played a friendly round of golf with members of the Morden Club. After the game, the Winnipeggers were entertained at supper in the clubhouse, whence they returned with their hosts to the

fairways to watch Bill Brazier's interesting repertoire of trick shots" (*Winnipeg Tribune*, 23 August 1930, p. 18). The next year, at the opening of the St. Boniface Golf Club, "Bill Brazier, Norwood's professional, gave a thrilling exhibition of trick shots showing a marvellous control in play" (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 17 no 6 [October 1931], p. 432).

Of course, anyone back in Napanee who read these Winnipeg accounts of Bill Brazier's virtuosity in manufacturing golf shots as required would not have been surprised: Napanee golf enthusiasts had marvelled at similar demonstrations during their "Golf Week" several years before.



Figure 75 Bill Brazier, Sault Ste Marie Golf Club, 1926. Photo supplied by Sandy Gougeon.

Brazier's moves from job to job across Ontario over seven successive years – from Stratford to Owen Sound, to Bayview, to Sault Ste. Marie, to Southampton, to Baden, and to Frenchman's Bay – remind us of the precarious life of the club pro in those days.

Golf professional had contracts with Canadian golf clubs for just seven months of the year in the early days of golf. Brazier, mind you, seems to have negotiated better terms than many, as at Sault Ste Marie: "Brazier obtained a fine contract from the club. It includes his expenses to the qualifying round of the American open golf championship, the Canadian open and professional golf championships, and the Provincial open golf championship in June" (*Toronto Daily Star*, 21 April 1925, p. 9).

In the winter, the best of the professionals (George Cumming, Karl Keffer, James Newman, the Freeman brothers, the Murray brothers, and so on) moved south to Florida, Georgia, Texas, Arizona, California, and other southern states, as well as to various Caribbean islands, to serve as professional golfers at resort courses during the winter. More modest professionals such as William Brazier and Fred Rickwood, however, were left to their own devices during the winter months in Canada. Brazier was among the first to establish indoor golf schools during the long Canadian winter – his invitation to Rickwood to join him at his golf school during the winter of 1926-27 leading to their experimental collaboration on a golf tour through small-town Ontario throughout 1927.

Without a winter job in the sunny south, however, the life of a Canadian golf professional could be a hard one. Winter golf schools were an uncertain venture. Brazier ran his regular golf school in Toronto at the beginning of 1930, and in Winnipeg he also tried to earn a living in the winter by means of a golf school. As part of this effort, he introduced Winnipeg golfers to a stunning innovation – an early version of a golf simulator designed to mimic a real game:

New Golf Machine Registers Shots

Tests of a new machine on which it is claimed an entire round of golf can be played were carried out by a group of local professionals at Bill Brazier's golf school in the Enderton building this week.

In 18 drives, Joe Land averaged 258 yards, Bill Brazier 257, Charlie Reith 213 and Art Baker 161. Playing a number 2 iron, Brazier averaged 186 yards with six balls, Reith 160, Baker 148 and Land 130.

The machine, which is known as "Golfo," registers the distance on all shots, lost ball, hazard, water, and sand trap, depending on where the ball hits. (Winnipeg Tribune, 6 December 1930, p. 20)

But after two years, Brazier gave up on winter teaching ventures in Winnipeg and returned to Toronto for the winter, going back to Manitoba only in April to take up a position at the new St. Boniface Golf Club, where he had wowed them with his trick shots the previous fall.

It was by no means certain in the early days of Canadian golf that a golf professional would return to the same golf club from one year to the next – or even that the pro would have a job each summer. Without summer jobs in 1927, Brazier and Rickwood had had to be very creative just to get by during that summer. Recall that Brazier took a job at Southampton before the summer was over, and Rickwood may have lined up his job in Orillia for 1928 during their 1927 tour.

Brazier endured the seasonal slings and arrows of the professional golf life in Manitoba only until the end of the 1932 season. In 1933, he returned to the Baden Golf Club in Ontario, and entered the Canadian Open as its representative.

And then, as the 1930s ended, another war broke out, and so, on 16 July 1940, forty-nine-year-old William Thomas Brazier enlisted in the Canadian Army once more. Five years later, on 13 July 1945, he was discharged. Like many soldiers of his age, he served at Prisoner-of-War camps, leading to postings in many parts of Canada.

In 1941, he wrote to the *Toronto Daily Star* proposing a "golf clubs for soldiers" campaign. As Fred Jackson, the newspaper's Sports Editor, explained:

In case you tuned in a trifle late the big idea is that we have undertaken to collect used, but useable, golf clubs from all who care to give and in turn hand them over to the men in uniform,

former golfers and chaps who would like to learn the game. It all started a week or so ago when we received a letter appealing for a few clubs for soldiers in a camp where Bill Brazier, former pro, was located.

Well, we published the letter, and things commenced to hum. What started as a small appeal for a small group has developed into a big-scale movement. (15 May 1941, p. 20)

All sorts of people contributed golf clubs to this cause – from single clubs to complete sets and boxes of dozens of random clubs. Contributors included hundreds of ordinary citizens, as well as celebrities, hockey stars, and professional golfers, including Rickwood's old apprentice, Jack Roberts (now at the Oshawa Golf Club).

We learn that "Major Harrison and Bill Brazier have already called at [the army camp at] Mississauga ... and by now their men should have the clubs and we hope are whaling at divots as best they can" (*Toronto Daily Star*, 15 May 1941, p. 20). They then distribute golf clubs to dozens of other camps.

After his service in two World Wars, Brazier was determined to support veterans. As early as 1929, he had shown his determination to remember the cost of World War I, playing in November of that year in a "Poppy Day" charity event: a "professional-amateur foursome competition" at the Islington Club in Toronto to raise money for World War I veterans.



The photograph to the left shows Brazier in his World War II uniform. At the bottom of the photograph is written "U.S.O. Detroit 1945."

How was Brazier involved with the USO – that is, the United Service Organization (USO), founded in 1941 as a non-profit charitable corporation to provide entertainment, social facilities, and related programmes to members of the U.S. armed forces and their families?

Was he providing some sort of service for veterans? Was golf related to his involvement with the USO?

The idea is perhaps not as far-fetched as it might at first seem, at least insofar as Bob Hope's USO shows are concerned.

Figure 76 Bill Brazier, 1945.

During World War II, Hope and all sorts of first-rate actors, singers, comedians, orchestras, and so on, served in this organization from 1941 to 1945. But Hope was the most famous USO performer. And he carried a golf club as a prop during the shows for which he acted as Master of Ceremonies.

Hope had been introduced to the game of golf when he performed as a comedian in Winnipeg in the 1930s. Since Brazier was the pre-eminent player and instructor among the four golf professionals employed in in Winnipeg at the time, it is certainly possible – if not quite likely – that he was called upon to teach Hope the fundamentals of the game. Hope became addicted to golf, not only carrying a club during his USO performances, but also sponsoring a long-running tournament on the American PGA tour.

Golf remained Hope's passion right up to his death in 2003 at 100 years of age.

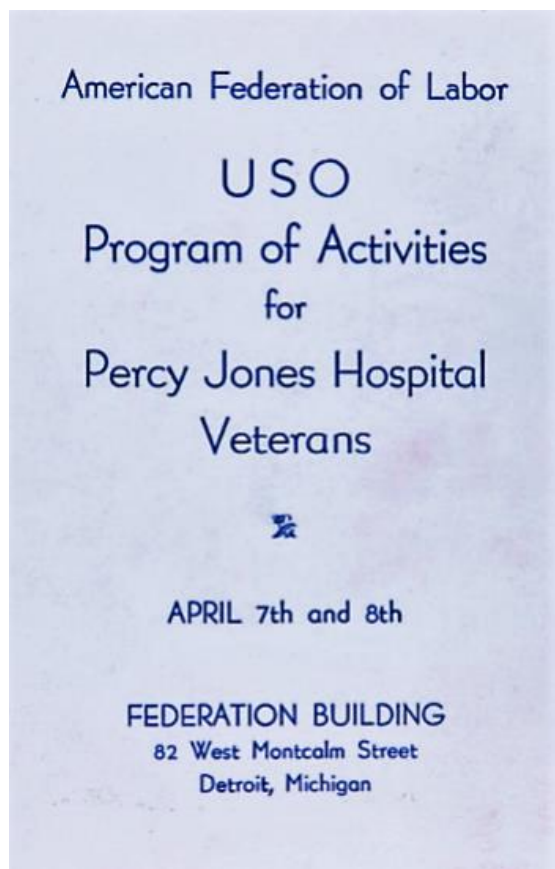


Figure 77 Program cover, April 1945.

Perhaps Brazier had gone to Detroit in 1945 to perform his amazing golf trick-shot routines at the two-day entertainment extravaganza sponsored in Detroit in April of that year by the Detroit USO and the Detroit American Federation of Labour for the benefit of the soldiers being treated at the Percy Jones Army Hospital in Battle Creek, Michigan.

By 1945, the Percy Jones Army Hospital had become the largest army hospital in the United States. There were more than 11,000 wounded soldiers in the hospital by this time, and so it carried out many thousands of operations each year.

Veterans in the hospital were regularly visited by America's most famous politicians, sports figures, and entertainment celebrities – the latter including Ed Sullivan, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Jimmy Stewart, and, of course, Bob Hope.

Billy Brazier

Had Hope told the Detroit USO about Brazier?

The Percy Jones Army Hospital veterans who could travel from Battle Creek to Detroit were brought to town by plane or by bus for the first weekend in April of 1945. They were greeted upon arrival by volunteer hostesses, who thereafter accompanied them during the two days of activities.

The photograph below shows a group of veterans arriving in Detroit and the volunteers who met them.



Figure 78 Veterans from Percy Jones Army Hospital arriving in Detroit, greeted by volunteer hostesses, in April 1945.

After World War II, Bill Brazier did not return to the precarious existence of the golf club professional. But he retained his love of golf.

In fact, he frequently played in veterans' golf tournaments.

In the fall of 1946, for instance, he won the low gross championship for veterans of World War I with a score of 79. The next year, he won the “Army-Navy tournament” low gross championship with a score of 73 (*Globe* [Toronto], 30 September 1947, p. 18).



Figure 79 Bill Brazier, in top hat and tails, at a post-World War II golf tournament. Photo supplied by Sandy Gougeon.

On the golf course, Brazier remained the showman.

In one tournament, he climbed a tree to play a ball that had come to rest high in its branches. Perhaps to settle his nerves after this adventure (that could so easily have ended in misadventure for a man in his late fifties), he stopped to have a drink at the club bar after nine holes. As a result, he was disqualified from the tournament, and the heroic arboreal recovery shot went for nought.

Brazier continued to play high-level golf up to the age of 61, competing against notable stars of the next-generation – such as Nick Weslock and Al Balding in 1952 (*Globe & Mail*, 5 June 1952, p. 22).

He had apparently given up the job of club golf professional not because he had lost interest in the game, but rather because he preferred to form a partnership in Toronto with his sons in a landscaping business, operated out of the Brazier home on Douglas Avenue (off Avenue Road).

The photograph below, taken in the early 1950s, shows two of the company’s brand-new trucks, which have the following information proudly painted on their sides: “BRAZIER & SONS, Landscape Gardeners, Ornamental Railings, 353 Douglas Ave, RE 4816, Toronto.”



Figure 80 Trucks belong to the company Bill Brazier & Sons: Landscape Gardeners, Toronto, circa 1950.

During the winter months, the Braziers delivered coal.

Alas, the 1950s did not end as well as they had begun for Bill Brazier. After forty-one years of marriage, his wife Mabel died in 1956 (aged 66), and one of the sons with whom he was in partnership died suddenly in 1958 at just forty years of age.

In the wake of these sad events, Bill Brazier decided that he would retire and spend the rest of his years in the city of his birth: Brighton, in the county of Sussex, on the south coast of England. He re-married, and he enjoyed a happy and healthy retirement virtually up until his passing on August 6th, 1971, three days short of his eightieth birthday.

His Canadian granddaughter Sandy Gougeon recalls visiting him in Brighton two years before his death, noting: “as a 16-year-old, I found it hard to keep up to him walking down the street” (email to the author, 9 July 2022).

At the time of his passing, Bill Brazier lived quite close to the golf course where he had begun his professional career in golf as caddie. In accordance with his wishes, his ashes were spread upon it.

Napanee and the Partners Hook-Up

Having apprised his readership of the unique and clever partnership proposed by Rickwood and Brazier, Reville goes on to say, "By all means get in touch with these experts. Address, St Clair Avenue Golf School, 17 St Clair Avenue, Toronto. It will be money well spent to get Brazier and Rickwood to go over your course and give golfing instruction to your members" (967). The St Clair Avenue address was where Bill Brazier maintained his winter golf school (three miles from the Prospect Cemetery on St Clair Avenue where Fred Rickwood is buried).

Was it this April, 1927, item in *Canadian Golfer* that led the directors of the Napanee Golf and Country Club to engage Rickwood and Brazier for "Golf Week" at the beginning of June in 1927? Or had they already been in touch with Rickwood even earlier? Reville also writes that "It is satisfactory to know that already several clubs have booked them up for engagement" (967). This is a rather curious fact, for Reville's April item in *Canadian Golfer* is the first mention of the partnership. How could several golf clubs have already engaged Rickwood and Brazier even before word of their plans had been published either by Reville or by their own advertisements?

I wonder if Rickwood and Brazier, even before they spoke to Reville about their planned partnership, had taken the initiative of communicating with certain golf clubs – clubs that one or the other of them had heard through the grapevine might be interested in what they had to offer. Had they heard that Napanee Golf and Country Club was contemplating a makeover?

Just what they had to offer, and how far they were willing to travel to deliver it, is indicated in their monthly advertisement in the *Canadian Golfer* that ran throughout the last half of 1927:

PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION AND CONSULTATION ON GOLF COURSES

W.T. Brazier and Fred Rickwood, two of the best known professionals in Ontario, have this season decided to join forces and visit clubs desiring their services in Ontario and the West without the services of professionals, for the purpose of giving Golf Lessons and Advice on the Alteration and Maintenance of Golf Courses. Exhibition Matches can also be arranged.

Secretaries of clubs desiring such expert service can have all particulars, on writing St Clair Avenue Golf Shop and Golf School, 17 St Clair Ave. W., Toronto.

Certainly the directors of the Napanee Golf and Country Club knew that Rickwood and Brazier were available for hire before these golf professionals ran their first advertisement in *Canadian Golfer*, for Rickwood and Brazier were actually established in Napanee conducting “Golf Week” before the first advertisement was published. Did someone at Napanee Golf and Country Club see the April reference in *Canadian Golfer* to the “unique and clever” partnership between Rickwood and Brazier and decide to contact them, as editor Reville suggested clubs should?

Note that the *Napanee Express* had published on 12 April 1927 that the directors of Napanee Golf and Country Club had decided that “any funds remaining after the usual expenses are paid, will be used for the general improvement of the grounds and club house to the end that the town will soon have a splendid recreation centre.” It is possible that by April of 1927, the club had already made a decision to seek plans for course improvements from an architect. Reville’s reference in April to the services to be offered by Brazier and Rickwood may have come at just the right time for the Napanee Golf and Country Club.

Or could Napanee Golf and Country Club have been one of the several clubs that had already arranged for Rickwood and Brazier to visit them in 1927 even before Reville mentioned the innovative partnership between Brazier and Rickwood in the April issue of *Canadian Golfer*?

Perhaps Rickwood had learned of Napanee Golf and Country Club’s need of new greens before Napanee had learned of Rickwood’s availability for the job.

Rickwood, for instance, must have known the Napanee Golf Club’s mid-1920s professional, Harry Robinson, who had been appointed in 1923. The year before that, Rickwood had played in the 1922 J.A. Willoughby Invitational golf tournament, which included Harry Robinson in the field, who was then an assistant professional at the Weston Golf Club. There was a small field of professional golfers in the Willoughby tournament, so it is quite likely that Rickwood made Robinson’s acquaintance, especially since both were associated with Percy Barrett, the head golf professional at Weston. Robinson and Rickwood may have stayed in touch after meeting at this tournament, and Robinson may have mentioned that the Napanee golf course needed to improve its greens.

Or once in Napanee, Robinson might simply have mentioned to various club directors that if they were ever looking for a man to upgrade their greens, Rickwood was the one for the job. For undoubtedly

during his apprenticeship at Weston, Robinson would have heard about what Rickwood was doing at the Summit Golf and Country Club for Stanley Thompson. If Rickwood himself had not talked to Robinson about his work at Summit, the work being done there would have been talked of generally at Weston, for Summit golfers often played matches against Weston golfers. Moreover, Robinson in particular would probably also have discussed what was going on at Summit with Rickwood's assistant professional Harry Shepherd. These two Toronto assistant professionals would have known each other from playing golf together. One of those whom Robinson trounced at the Canadian PGA assistant professionals championship in 1921 was Harry Shepherd. In fact, after the medal play round, they played against each other in the first round of match play (*Ottawa Journal*, 29 July, 1921, p. 1).

I also note that the Napanee Golf and Country Club had not placed an advertisement in *Canadian Golfer* magazine announcing its intention to hire a golf professional back in 1923. This magazine was the only golf publication in Canada, giving it a monopoly on jobs advertising within the Canadian golf community, so if there was no Napanee Golf and Country Club advertisement in *Canadian Golfer*, there was probably no Napanee advertisement anywhere. This suggests that the club learned about Harry Robinson's availability for hire as a golf professional, and about his suitability for its particular job, by word of mouth. The same holds true in reverse: Robinson probably learned about the job, and about the merits of the job, by word of mouth. It seems likely that someone at Napanee Golf Club had a connection with the Weston Golf Club where Robinson worked, or perhaps knew Percy Barrett himself, for whom Robinson worked.

So there very well could have been lines of connection between Napanee Golf and Country Club and Fred Rickwood before the partnership between Rickwood and Brazier was announced in *Canadian Golfer*.

Note also that language in the account by the *Napanee Express* of Rickwood's visit may be read as indicating that Rickwood arrived in Napanee at the beginning of "Golf Week" in June of 1927 with plans for course improvements already drawn up: "Mr. Rickwood ... has prepared a plan for the improvement of the Napanee course, and while here laid out and completed a new number one green." The sentence perhaps suggests that the plans for improvement had been prepared and submitted to Napanee Golf and Country Club before Rickwood arrived for "Golf Week."

If so, it was probably agreed ahead of his visit that Rickwood would build a new first green while in Napanee for the week – probably as an earnest of the kind of work he would do elsewhere on the course, as a demonstration of how long it would take him to build a green, and as the first step in the implementation of his overall plan. If everything went as each of the parties hoped and expected it would, the contract for remodelling the course would be signed.

As indeed it was.

I would say there is no chance at all that Rickwood had not visited the Napanee Golf and Country Club long before his arrival in town for “Golf Week” at the beginning of June in 1927. As we shall see in volume three of this book, he made dramatic changes to the existing golf course at Napanee – changes that he would have had to have worked out with some care, and changes that he would have had to have persuaded the golf club directors to approve.

Golf course architects walk the land for which they have been asked to present a plan for improvements. At Napanee, Rickwood would not only have walked the land; he would no doubt have played several rounds of golf on the existing course to assess its potential for redevelopment. He would have hit some drives from areas where he thought a new tee box could go; he would have hit some approach shots to areas where he thought a new green might go.

The architect has to consider all options for the placement of greens and tees and for the routing of fairways. Everything from the direction of the prevailing wind to the direction of the rising and setting sun has to be considered. Par values and shot values have to be calculated for each option. How much rain falls? How does the land drain? There is the question of laying water pipes to water the golf course, and the location of a pump to provide the water. The cost of constructing option one needs to be presented alongside the cost of constructing option two, and so on. The cost of maintaining one set of possible changes needs to be set alongside the cost of maintaining another set of possible changes. All options need to be presented in relation to each other, and all permutations need to be presented to the club officers who will make decisions about the future of their golf course.

Rickwood’s mentor Stanley Thompson presented official blueprints of his course construction proposals to the golf courses for whom he worked, and he outlined all aspects of the construction, down to the diameter of the water pipes. His blueprints presented scale drawings of holes, tee boxes, greens,

Napanee and the Partners Hook-Up

fairways, trees, landscape features (from rivers to inclines), and so on. Rickwood would have worked from Thompson's blueprints when building golf holes for him at the Summit Golf and Country Club and the Thornhill Golf Club. It seems likely that when stepping out on his own as a golf course architect he would have followed the example of the architect who represented the state of the art in Canada.

And of course a neither a blueprint nor a detailed plan for improvements would have been the work of an evening's doodling on the first night of "Golf Week" in Napanee.



Figure 81 Left: Stanley Thompson 1931 blueprint of a golf course for Lethbridge Country Club, Lethbridge, Alberta. Right: Stanley Thompson 1928 preliminary study of a golf course route for the Briars Golf Club, Jackson's Point, Ontario.

Furthermore, to construct a golf green as Rickwood did during his week-long stay in Napanee, the builder needs men and equipment and horses. The equipment required includes at least one Fresno Scraper, at least one "Railroad" Plough, a spike-tooth harrow, and conventional rakes. Two work horses are preferred. And a man with foot problems and with hands that blister in summer heat probably needs at least a couple of men to help him with the horses and equipment. All of these things have to be on the property and ready for work as of the first day of "Golf Week, or Rickwood will have no chance of completing his "demonstration" green within the time available.

So men, horses, and equipment must have been arranged for hire well ahead of "Golf Week."

Similarly, it would be a very rare board of club directors that could receive plans for improvement at the beginning of a "Golf Week" and then within a few days accept those plans and give the go-ahead for

construction of a new first green. The Napanee directors must have reviewed and provisionally accepted Rickwood's plans before he arrived in town. "Golf Week" must have been arranged as an opportunity formally to conclude the contract tacitly already made – with the construction of a satisfactory "demonstration" green on the first hole having been agreed to as the deal sealer.

As mentioned above, I discuss the work that Rickwood carried out at Napanee Golf and Country Club in the fourth volume of this book: *Blending Penal and Strategic Design at Napanee*.

Between Belleville and Saugeen

The visit to Napanee by Rickwood and Brazier occurred right after their week-long visit to the Belleville Golf Club.

And we know that they had work lined up afterwards for the end of July: “Bill Brazier and Fred Rickwood, two well-known professional golfers, are touring Ontario. They are now at the Saugeen Club, Hanover, where they are giving exhibitions, including trick shots” (*Toronto Daily Star*, 23 July 1927, p. 12).

Before their end-of-July appointment at Saugeen, they no doubt also had courses to visit in June right after their week in Napanee. In fact, it may be that Rickwood was restricted to building just one green during his visit to Napanee in June of 1927 because he and Brazier were due at another course just a week later.

They seem to have spent a week at each of the golf courses they visited, following a Monday-to-Saturday schedule virtually identical to the one evident in Napanee. At Saugeen, there were lectures, demonstrations (“including trick shots”), and exhibition golf matches.

Pros At Hanover Club

Brazier and Rickwood Give Exhibitions at Saugeen Course

Hanover, July 25 – Mr. Brazier and Mr. Rickwood, professional golf players, were at the Saugeen Golf Club Thursday and Friday, giving an exhibition, including trick shots. Mr. Brazier was a former pro at the Sault Ste Marie Golf Club. He gave a short lecture on golf Saturday after an exhibition round. (Sun Times [Owen Sound], 25 July 1927, p. 6)

We see the same things at Belleville:

Mr. Bill Brazier and Mr. Fred Rickwood, two well-known Toronto professionals, are giving lessons at the Belleville Golf Club this week.

On Monday evening at the Club House, at 8 p.m., Bill Brazier will give a lecture on the wooden clubs, and on Thursday evening, at 8 p.m., he will give a lecture on the iron clubs.

There will be a competition on Thursday afternoon between Bill Brazier and Fred Rickwood and others.

Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock, Bill Brazier will give a demonstration. (Belleville Intelligencer, 30 May 1927)

As we know, Brazier not only talked the talk of the golf swing; when it came to the walk, he walked out onto the practice area and showed how every conceivable shot might be played:

Brazier's pupils have already shown considerable improvement in their game and his lecture on Thursday night at the club house was particularly well attended. He showed very clearly to his large audience how the different iron clubs should be used, and all feel confident that if only the members will remember the methods he advocated, they will find their game vastly improved....

On Friday afternoon Bill Brazier entertained a large gathering of members and friends with a practical lesson in the iron clubs. He demonstrated that if hit right, a ball could be driven with a putter two hundred yards or more. (Daily Ontario [Belleville], 4 June 1927)

The exhibition match that was played at the Belleville Golf Club involved two men from the Bay of Quinte Golf and Country Club: young amateur George Faulkner (who would visit Napanee a week later to participate in another exhibition match with Brazier and Rickwood) and the Bay of Quinte golf professional John ("Jock") Mitchell.

The match on Thursday afternoon between the famous British professionals, W. Brazier and F. Rickwood, versus the Country Club amateur, Mr. George Faulkner, and the Country Club professional, J. Mitchell, who hails from Aberdeen, resulted in a closely contested game which was followed by a large crowd of members. Mr. George Faulkner played a brilliant game and in this young player Canada has a very likely contestant for championship honours. Bill Brazier made a score of 76 for the eighteen holes and played a safe and very pretty game to watch. Fred Rickwood was more often in trouble than the other player, but the more difficult the shot, the better he appears to like to play it. His score was 76. Mr. George Faulkner also did the eighteen holes in 76. J. Mitchell, in taking 77, did not have the best of luck with many of his approach shots. His driving was a feature of a most enjoyable game, which resulted in a win of one up to Bill Brazier and Fred Rickwood. (Daily Ontario [Belleville], 4 June 1927)

Mitchell had begun his golf life as a caddie at Cruden Bay Golf Club in Scotland, but his career was interrupted by World War I, during which he served in the British navy. Discharged in 1919, he returned to Cruden Bay, where he served an apprenticeship under golf professional John McAndrew. Immigrating to Canada in 1924, he was helped by the recommendation of Percy Barrett to the position of Assistant Professional at the Lake Shore Golf and Country Club of Toronto. After two years at the Bay of Quinte Country Club, Mitchell was appointed the golf professional of the Belleville Golf Club, where he served as head pro for many years.

Between Belleville and Saugeen

The Belleville Golf Club had been established in 1895. Its grounds were located at Belleville's eastern boundary, one mile from downtown. Early twentieth-century directories indicate that its clubhouse was located at the end of Victoria Street, which ended at the western edge of the golf club's grounds.

The location of the golf course was marked on a 1933 topographical map of the area, as seen below.

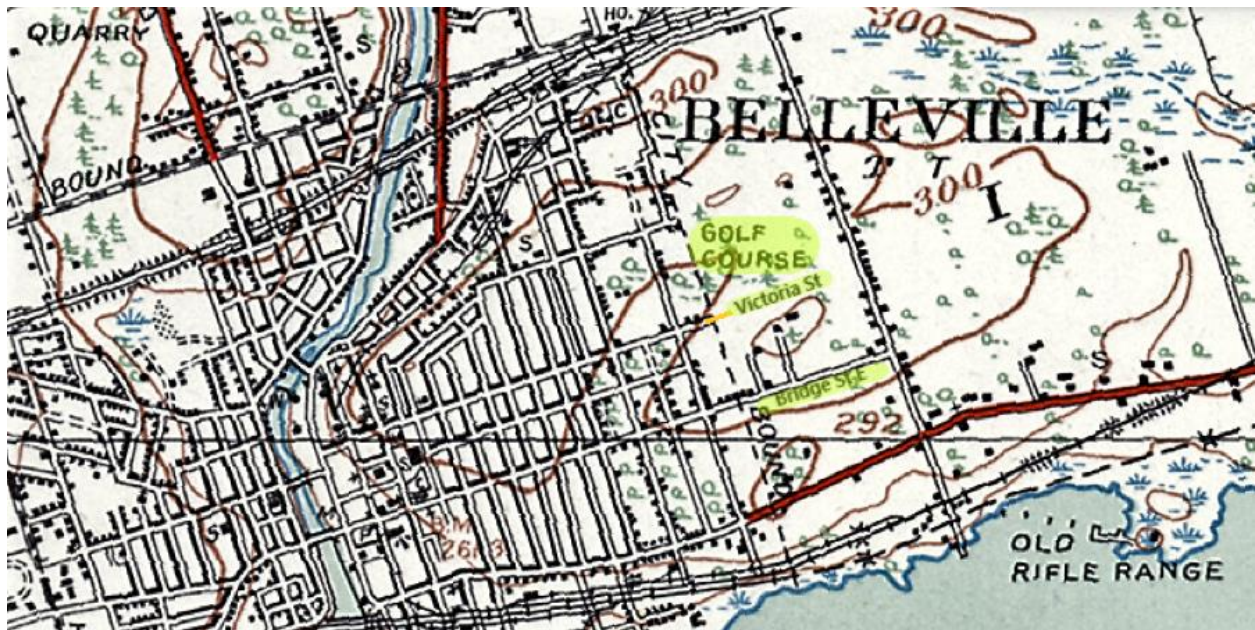


Figure 82 An annotated detail from a 1933 topographical map of the Belleville area.

Belleville directories would later indicate that when Macdonald Avenue was built, it cut across part of the western portion of the golf course on a north-south axis.



Figure 83 Docters Hotel, Belleville, circa 1930.

The southern boundary of the golf course was marked more or less by Bridge Street East, where Bertram Docter lived, a son of William Doctor (founder of Docters Hotel), who first leased the golf course land to the club in the 1890s. Belleville directories indicate that Bertram Docter lived on the "golf links." Today's Bertram Boulevard is presumably named after him.



Figure 84 William Docter.
Belleville Sun, 31 May 1895, p. 22.

After William Docter's death in 1903, the family continued to lease the Doctor property to the club.

The golf course was initially a short one. In 1916, it was a 1,960-yard nine-hole course. But it was lengthened on several occasions over the next ten years, such that by the time of the visit by Rickwood and Brazier in 1927, it was 3,000 yards long – a length consistent with the championship standards of the day (for instance, championship eighteen-hole golf courses laid out by Stanley Thompson in Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto in the mid-1920s were from 6,200 to 6,500 yards in length).

But by 1927, the directors of the Belleville Golf Club knew that they needed to improve the quality of both their fairways and their greens if they wished to keep up with the standards of the new Bay of Quinte Country Club, which had been laid out in 1923. And make no mistake: the Belleville Golf Club very much wanted to be seen as the equal of the new club in town, for there was already a “history” between them.

In 1921, the promoters of the new country club had been so persuasive in presenting their plans to the community that a majority of the members of the Belleville Golf Club voted to disband their own club and amalgamate with the new one:

Golf Club Amalgamation

A meeting of the members of the Belleville Golf Club was held Friday evening in the Chamber of Commerce to consider the advisability of amalgamating with the Bay of Quinte Country Club. At times the meeting waxed stormy and the opposition to go in with the Country Club was strongly voiced. The whole matter was threshed out and a vote taken which declared for the amalgamation. (Daily Standard [Kingston], 26 September 1921, p. 12).

But the agreement to amalgamate fell through, and so in 1923, when the Bay of Quinte Country Club opened, the Belleville Golf Club renewed its lease of the Doctor property for three years.

And the club had renewed the lease again by the time the directors brought Rickwood to the course for a consultation at the end of May in 1927. As he would at Napanee one week later, at Belleville, Rickwood immediately commenced his programme for improvements.

F. Rickwood is not only an excellent player and teacher, but has had considerable experience in laying out many of the best courses on the American continent. Since his arrival on Monday last, he has made so great an improvement on the course that the members are hoping that after they have finished their present tour, they will give the club another week of their time and give their extremely valuable advice on the many alterations being planned by the club. (Daily Ontario [Belleville], 4 June 1927)

It seems that the visit by Rickwood and Brazier produced an immediate influx of new members, whose membership fees were dedicated to an improvement recommended by Rickwood:

On account of the increasing interest in the Belleville Golf Club and the fact that a great many new members have joined the club, the directors some weeks ago decided to purchase a Worthington Tractor on the advice of Mr. Fred Rickwood, the well-known professional who is of the opinion that in a couple of months the course will be vastly improved by the use of the tractor and mower. (Daily Ontario [Belleville], 30 June 1927)

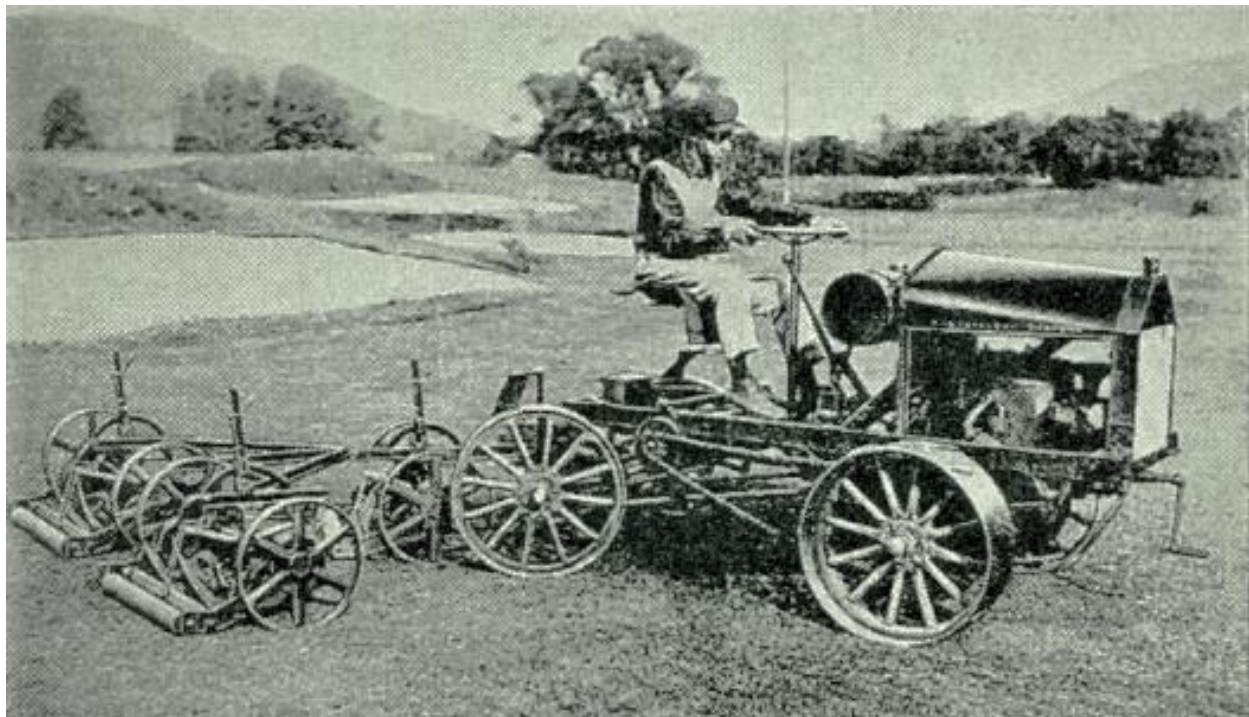


Figure 85 Worthington Tractor and mower, early 1920s.

As so many of the members had hoped, Rickwood soon returned to the Belleville Golf Club.

In fact, he was back in the city by the end of the month, and even spent the Canada Day weekend on the golf course: "Several interesting games have been arranged by the captains for July 1st and, besides other attractions for the members, Fred Rickwood will give an exhibition game" (*Daily Ontario* [Belleville], 30 June 1927). But Rickwood's main reason for visiting the club was to check how the new greens he had built were doing: "The new greens are coming along well and Fred Rickwood, who is again in Belleville, believes that they will be playable the early part of August" (*Daily Ontario* [Belleville], 30 June 1927).

Rickwood became something of a superstar at the Belleville Golf Club, returning the next year for opening day festivities. He played golf with the members, donated a hand-made golf club as a prize, and inspected the progress of the greens he had built:

Opening day of Belleville Golf Club ... proved most successful, the members thoroughly appreciating the matches which had been arranged by the Captains, who had the invaluable assistance of Fred Rickwood, the well-known professional. Mr. Rickwood has accomplished wonders with the course and his lessons and advice have brought many of the players already into mid-season form.... [T]he players had a very pleasant surprise when they heard that through the attention of Mr. Rickwood, who came again to Belleville two days ago, they were able to play on three of the new greens.

Several very low scores were made on the newly constructed course, now certainly one of the best nine-hole courses in Ontario.... The match in the afternoon between the President's and Vice-President's teams was remarkable for the many low scores made, Fred Rickwood easily leading the field.

Mr. A.J. Whelan and Mr. D. McConnell tied for the Rickwood Club presented ... for the lowest net score and a most interesting match should result in the play-off. (Belleville Intelligencer, 25 May 1928)

Rickwood's work at the golf course certainly seems to have made the Belleville Golf Club attractive to local golfers. Membership applications continued to flow into the club in great numbers throughout 1928, and in the spring of 1929, the Belleville Golf Club had to close its membership list for the first time in its thirty-six-year history: "Since the close of last season, many applications have been received for membership and the executive committee decided last night to close the list. No further applications will be entertained, but those applying will be placed on a waiting list and they will be admitted as others drop out" (*Daily Ontario* [Belleville], 20 April 1929).

Between Belleville and Saugeen

When the clubhouse burned down in 1945, the golf club was disbanded, and the Doctor property was sold for development as a residential suburb to accommodate Belleville's expanding population after World War II.

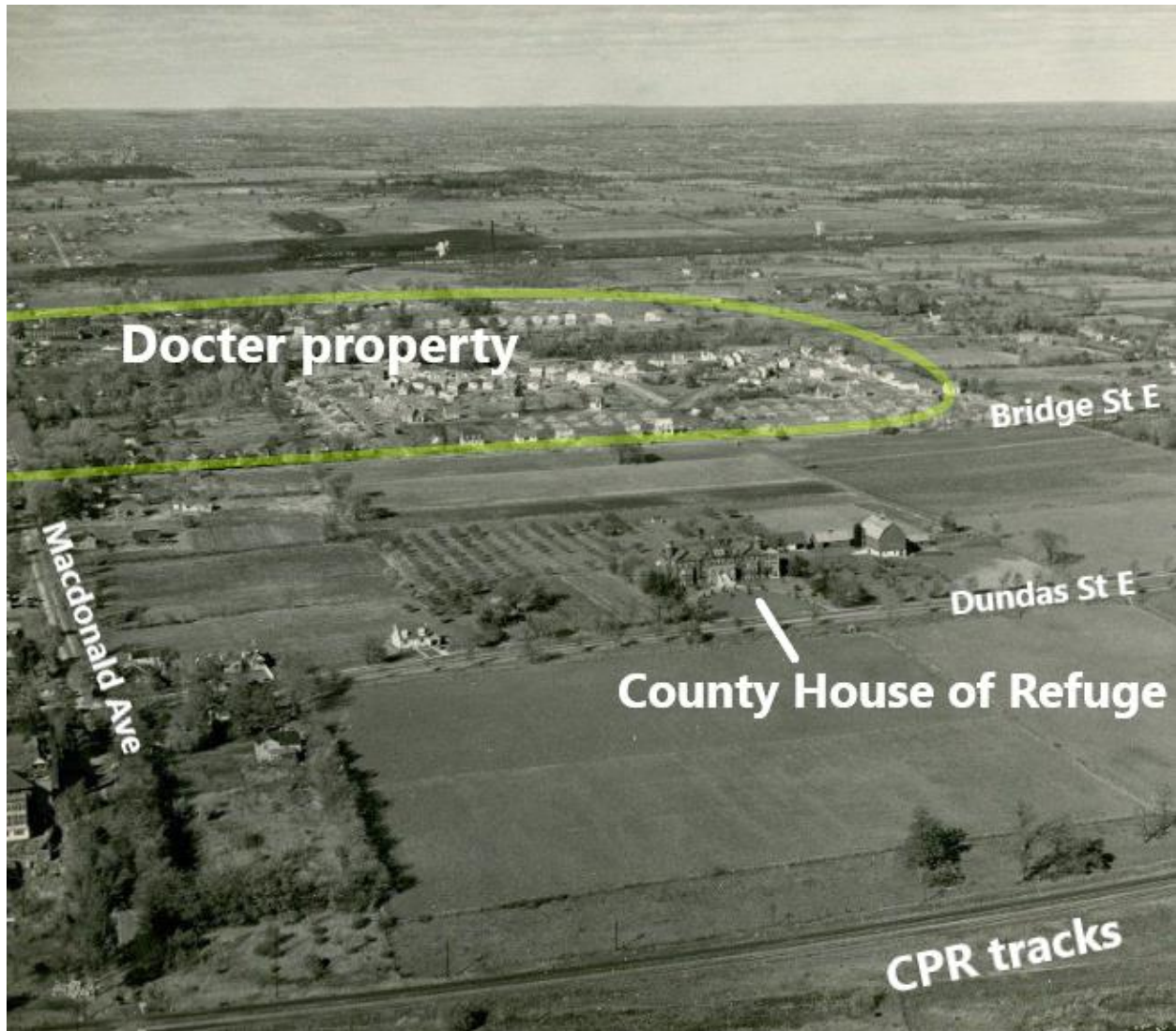


Figure 86 1948 aerial photograph showing the east side of Belleville where the Doctor property that the Belleville Golf Club had leased from 1895 to 1945 was being developed for residential housing.

Today the Belleville Golf Club is remembered by the names of two of the streets in this neighbourhood: Golfdale Road and Fairway Avenue.

Alas, there is no Rickwood Road.

Rickwood's Prospects Post-Napanee

After his re-modelling of the Napanee golf course in the late spring, late summer, and early autumn of 1927, Rickwood continued to work both as a professional golfer and as a designer and builder of golf courses.

While Rickwood and Brazier were partnering in their winter golf school and planning their tour of small golf towns later in 1927, in addition to the advertisement about that tour an advertisement appeared in *Canadian Golfer* that I suspect was placed by Fred Rickwood. It appeared in the April, 1927, issue of *Canadian Golfer*: "Pro-Greenkeeper with excellent references desires permanent position. Good construction man, 7 years at former position. Apply F.R. at the *Canadian Golfer*."

"F.R." is almost certainly Fred Rickwood.

This advertisement appeared in the same issue as the one in which the editor Reville spilled the beans on the Rickwood and Brazier partnership for 1927. I believe that Fred Rickwood set all three things in motion at once: first, he arranged with Reville his personal "job wanted" advertisement; then he arranged with him the advertisement about his partnership with Brazier in golf instruction and golf course construction; finally, the enthusiasm that he showed in his conversation with Reville about his hopes for his innovative partnership with Brazier infected Reville with enthusiasm, too, leading the latter to announce the partners' plans before the Rickwood and Brazier advertisement could do so.

Incidentally, the phrase "Good construction man, 7 years at previous position," implies that Rickwood may have been employed not just as a pro by the Summit Golf and Country Club for five years and as a course superintendent by the Thornhill Golf Club for two years, but also as a construction man by Stanley Thompson for seven years. For Rickwood was not employed as a professional golfer at the Summit Club for seven years (only five), and he was not employed as a course superintendent at Thornhill for seven years (only two), but he *was* employed for seven years continuously building tees, fairways, and greens on two Stanley Thompson golf courses.

So is the phrase "Good construction man, 7 years at previous position," implicitly a reference to a position with Stanley Thompson & Company? Such a fact would be consistent with what we learned above about Thompson's practice of placing his own best men at the golf courses that he built.

Rickwood's Prospects Post-Napanee

It would seem that the “excellent references” of which Rickwood could boast in his 1927 advertisement probably included testimonials from two of the biggest names in golf history in the first half of the twentieth century: Stanley Thompson and Harry Vardon.

No wonder Napanee Golf and Country Club was impressed by him.

And yet he was without a position as club pro for 1928. But not for long.

The Couchiching Golf and Country Club

Rickwood was not without a position as professional golfer for very long, for he was appointed the head professional golfer at Couchiching Golf Club in Orillia at the beginning of the 1928 golf season. We are not surprised to find him appointed once more as the professional golfer at a Stanley Thompson golf course. When a highway project devoured one of the holes on the original course designed in 1915 by George Cumming, Stanley Thompson re-modelled the golf course in 1923 and restored it to a proper championship length for a nine-hole course.

What might have seemed somewhat surprising, had we not surveyed the evidence of Rickwood's reputation as one of Thompson's greens specialists, is that Fred Rickwood was hired not just to serve the Couchiching members as their club pro, but also to remodel the golf course. In particular, he was to re-do the greens: "At the annual meeting of the shareholders and directors of the Couchiching Country Golf Club [sic] at Orillia, Ontario, the financial statement showed that this Club had in 1918 the best year in its history. After comparatively large expenditures, the sum of \$700,000 still remains in the treasury. Under the careful supervision of the convenor of the green committee, Mr. W.C. George, a great deal of constructive work has been done on the greens, with Mr. [Fred] Rickwood in charge of making the new greens and improving the others.... Further improvements will be carried on the coming season" (Canadian Golfer, vol 14 no 9 [January 1929], p. 768).

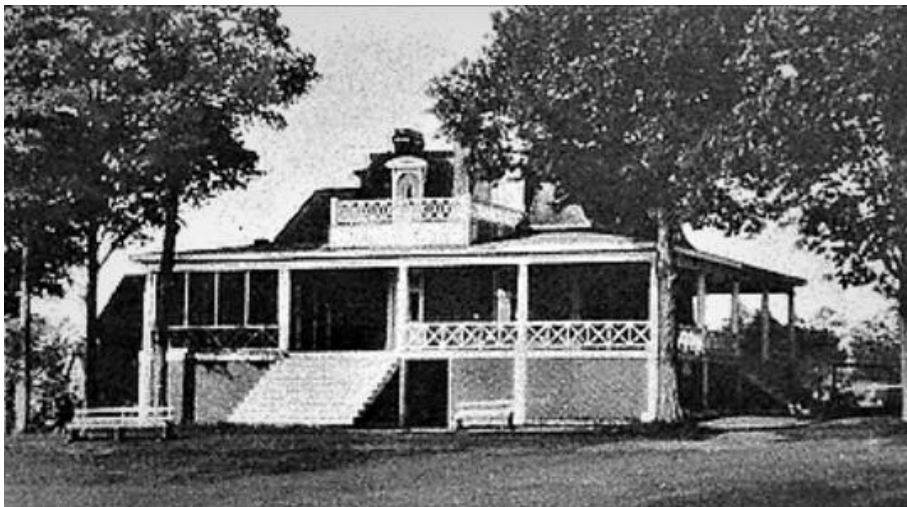


Figure 87 Original clubhouse of Couchiching Golf Club, founded 1915

Rickwood may have experienced a bit of *déjà vu* at Orillia, for he was serving a tourist market somewhat similar to the one he had served at Digby. *Canadian Golfer* observed that "It is the opinion of many that this is one of the sportiest nine-hole courses to be

found in Ontario and in addition it has the advantage of natural scenic beauty, which has been much

The Couchiching Golf and Country Club

admired by the many tourists who play here during the season.... Showing the popularity of the Orillia course with tourists, some 2,400 transients played over it last year” (vol 14 no 9 [January 1929], p. 768).

Rickwood spent the rest of his career as a professional golfer at the Couchiching Golf and Country Club, and he ultimately retired in Orillia.

Caddie Milne recalls that the Rickwood family initially “lived in the club house” (*Daily Packet & Times*, 28 July 1995, p. 20). Eventually, however, they moved out of the clubhouse and into a house on St Jean Street a block or two from the golf course. In this house, Fred Rickwood spent the final years of his life.

He continued to be mentioned in the *Canadian Golfer* magazine in connection with Couchiching and Orillia well into the early 1930s, when editorship of the magazine by Reville ended with its sale at the end of 1932. After the magazine resumed publication in 1934, no mention of Rickwood occurs again. This is not because Rickwood was inactive as a golf professional, however, but rather because the new editors of the magazine did not have the same broad personal acquaintance with Canadian professional golfers that the original editor had. *Canadian Golfer* magazine had returned in name, but not quite in the same spirit: it had lost its personal touch.

The last reference to Fred Rickwood in *Canadian Golfer* is typically complimentary. Reporting on a big women’s golf tournament held in 1932 at the Couchiching Golf Club, the writer singles out Rickwood for praise regarding the tournament’s success: “Under the experienced and capable supervision of Mr. Rickwood, the many duties connected with running a tournament ... were performed so well that everything ran smoothly and without a hitch” (vol 18 no 6, p. 306).

Here it is important to note that Fred and Edith Rickwood functioned as a professional team when they came to Orillia.

The tandem function of professional golfer and spouse was a regular feature of early Canadian golf life. Many advertisements in *Canadian Golfer* placed by professional golfers seeking employment included the information that the golfer’s spouse was capable of managing the social side of a golf club’s operations.

Caddie Milne recalls that at the Couchiching Golf Club, “Mrs Rickwood was in charge of the ‘house’ and looked after all the catering and special events taking place” (*Daily Packet & Times*, 28 July 1995, p. 20). So we know that with regard to the success of the big women’s tournament run by the Couchiching Golf Club in 1932, it was not just under “the experienced and capable supervision of Mr Rickwood,” but also under the experienced and capable supervision of *Mrs* Rickwood, that “the many duties connected with running a tournament ... were performed so well that everything ran smoothly and without a hitch.”

It is also interesting to note that first-born child Florence Rickwood was eighteen years old when her father was appointed as the Couchiching golf professional and so she may have assisted her mother in looking after the catering and special events. Perhaps she garnered her first professional kitchen experience in this way, for one notes that she later moved to Toronto and worked as a “cook.”

It may be that with the Rickwood family, the Couchiching Golf Club got not just two for the price of one, but three!

And recall that sons George and Robert may have served as assistant professionals.

Five for the price of one?

Parry Sound

While Rickwood was the head pro at Couchiching Golf Club, he also designed and built golf courses for other clubs. His work in this regard was well enough known in the 1920s to bring him fairly regular commissions of this sort.

One of the courses that he built was a nine-hole course at Parry Sound, Rickwood's second golf course built in the Muskoka Lakes tourist region. It was about twenty-five miles north-west of his Juddhaven course, and – like the latter – was built on the shores of a lake. It was laid out in 1928 (less than a year after the completion of Rickwood's work at Napanee) and ready for play the next year.



Figure 88 View circa 1930s of the top half of the Parry Sound Golf Club on the shores of Portage Lake.

In 1929, the year that the golf course opened, the Secretary of the new golf club wrote to the editor of *Canadian Golfer* to explain how the construction of this new Muskoka course had come about: "Several sites were investigated and then the services of Fred Rickwood were called in. He lost no time in advising us to accept the offer we had, and to acquire the present location.... Travellers who have seen it

and pretend to know courses throughout the Dominion inform us it is one of the prettiest layouts they have ever seen" (May 1929, vol 15 no 1, p.4). Rickwood had been skillfully and successfully choosing sites for golf courses since his first call to do so in Amherst in 1911.

Not surprisingly, local post-cards presented images of the Parry Sound golf course's beautiful fairways and first-class greens sloping toward the shores of Portage Lake, such as the hand-coloured example below that shows a golfer replacing the flag on the fourth green as another golfer walks off to the next hole.



Figure 89 A hand-coloured postcard circa 1930s showing golfers on the 4th hole of the Parry Sound Golf Club.

Similarly, in a letter to the editor of *Canadian Golfer* written in 1930, the professional golfer at the Parry Sound Golf Club celebrates his course designed and built by Rickwood: "It is really a wonderful little club. It is only a nine-hole course as yet but already has over 100 enthusiastic members. It is situated about four miles north of the town, right alongside Portage Lake, where a cool breeze is always blowing.... The course was laid out by Fred Rickwood, of Orillia, who certainly did a very creditable job, making it a real test of golf, and a very pretty course. This is the second year for the course, and already

Parry Sound

a large number of tourists have played over it and expressed their delight with the wonderful layout, keen greens, and beautiful scenery” (December 1930, vol 16 no 8, pp 607-8).

Observations like these about the beauty of the location that Rickwood selected and the beauty of the holes that he built are a consistent element in contemporary reviews of the golf course.

But the Parry Sound golf course had more than just a pretty face: the land along the shores of Portage Lake that Rickwood chose contained significant elevation changes – hills and slopes that not only provided panoramic views of the lake and surrounding countryside, but also allowed Rickwood to route the holes uphill, downhill, and side-hill so as to present golfers with all sorts of technical and strategic challenges. Note that the hilly, undulating aspect of the Parry Sound land that Rickwood chose for the golf course is a feature of the land that he had encountered at Napanee Golf and Country Club the year before – a feature that had led Rickwood and Brazier to assure the reporter for the *Napanee Express* that the Napanee Golf and Country Club’s “fairways were the best in Ontario” (14 June 1927).



Figure 90 A teeing ground in the right centre of the photograph shows the beginning of a hole running downhill.

The ninth green, for instance, the last of those nine “keen” greens celebrated by the Parry Sound pro, is at the top of a fairway running uphill – a suitable culmination of what the pro calls “a real test of golf.”

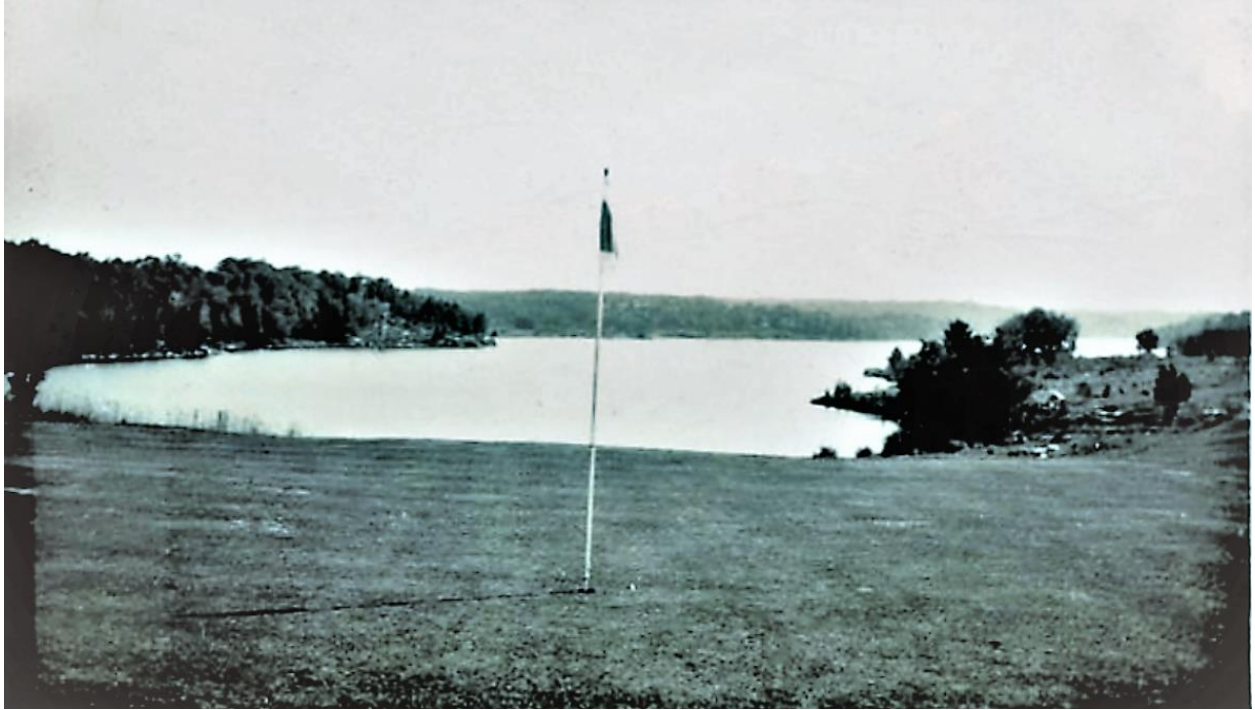


Figure 91 A 1935 photograph of the 9th green on the Rickwood course of the Parry Sound Golf Club.

It is clear from the comments of both the club's professional golfer and its Secretary that the officers of the Parry Sound Golf and Country Club understood that informing the golfing world of the late 1920s and early 1930s that one's golf course had been designed by Fred Rickwood was a good marketing idea. By this time, Rickwood had obviously established a solid reputation as a designer of good golf courses – and this reputation seems to have been well-known and widespread.

This fact is confirmed by Rickwood's next – and no doubt most significant – work in golf course architecture: Cutten Fields.

It seems also to have been his last.

Cutten Fields

Rickwood's most important, interesting, and intriguing job came to him at the beginning of the Great Depression when he was asked to help build Cutten Fields golf course in Guelph for the local boy made good in Chicago: multi-millionaire Arthur Cutten.



Figure 92 Arthur William "Buzz" Cutten, 1870-1936

Cutten was a Guelph boy who moved to Chicago in his late teens and eventually advanced from a position as a shop clerk there to a position as a Chicago trader in grain commodities, ultimately acquiring a seat on the New York Stock Exchange that made him so great a multi-millionaire that he was able to withstand the loss of \$50,000,000 in the 1929 stock market crash and still live as lavishly as before. He was eventually investigated, mind you, for irregularities in his trading practices and suspended from the New York Stock Exchange, so there were more to the methods of the shop clerk turned speculator than the government could countenance. Still, for all these setbacks, Cutten's philanthropic donations continued virtually unabated into the 1930s

when Cutten Fields golf course was finally completed.

Cutten's philanthropy is well documented.

In Chicago, he donated extensively to organizations for orphans and for the poor, as well as to Chicago art museums.

In Guelph, he paid off the Guelph YMCA mortgage; he donated funds to St. George's Church for stained glass windows, marble floors, a bell, an organ, and a carillon; to Woodlawn Memorial Park he donated funds for more land, iron fencing, entrance gates and other property improvements; and he was instrumental in creating Guelph's Cemetery Commission and establishing its Perpetual Care (Maintenance) Fund.

As well, he provided financial support for all of his many siblings.

But his most generous gift to the City of Guelph was Cutten Fields Golf and Recreational Club.

In December, 1928, the president of Guelph's Ontario Agricultural College visited Cutten in Chicago as the latter was considering the question of funding the construction of a large recreational area near the university both for the use of college students and faculty in particular and for the use of the people of Guelph generally. The original 1929 plans for Cutten Fields were to include a modern hotel, an eighteen-hole municipal golf course, a baseball diamond, a football field, a rugby field, a running track, tennis courts, a playground and a clubhouse. The expected cost was about two million dollars.

After discussions broke down because of the involvement of land speculators, however, the plans were reduced to the construction of a golf course with clubhouse for an estimated cost of \$750,000.

Cutten chose Charles "Chick" Evans to design the golf course.

Evans was the 1916 U.S. Amateur Champion and the 1916 U.S. Open Champion, the first to win both championships in the same year. He would go on to compete in fifty consecutive US Open championships and also to create the Evans Scholarship Foundation, which continues to award full four-year college scholarships to deserving caddies. (Today, the sponsor of the second tournament in the FedEx Cup playoffs, the BMW Championship, gives all proceeds from the tournament to the Evans Scholarship Foundation – more than \$30,000,000 since 2007!).

Of course Evans is now a member of the World Golf Hall of Fame.

Evans and Cutten were fellow members of the Edgewater Golf Club in Chicago, and Cutten was a very big fan of Evans's. In his 1936 autobiography, Cutten says that "Chick Evans made me a better golfer than a man who came into the world in 1870 has any right to be" (Arthur Cutten [with Boyde Sparks], *Story of a Speculator* [self-published: Chicago, 1936], p. 82).

Although taking up the game when he was well past his physical prime, Cutten became fascinated by golf, and developed a great admiration for golf champions like Evans, arguing that success at golf required the same traits of character and temperament required to make one a successful commodities speculator (of which he was then the most successful in the world): "Confidence in yourself is something you must have if you are going to be a successful speculator. You must have the same quality if you are going to walk a tightrope across the gorge below Niagara Falls, or fly from New York to Paris, or win a golf championship. To be able to stick in a risky position without shattering your nerves, you must have

a continuing confidence in the judgement that caused you to take that position in the first place” (p. 28). So Cutten implicitly ranked golfer Charles Evans alongside the world’s greatest tightrope walker, Charles Blondin, the world’s greatest aviator, Charles Lindbergh, and the world’s greatest grain speculator, himself.

So, as a personal favour to his friend “Buzz” Cutten, Evans agreed to plan the original layout of the Cutten Fields golf course – although he had never designed or built a golf course before!



Figure 93 “Chick” Evans circa 1920.

Yet Evans would not work on the project alone. At the beginning of May in 1929, Canadian newspapers from Ottawa to Winnipeg carried a news release announcing that American Charles “Chick” Evans, Jr, was collaborating with Canadian Fred Rickwood on the building of the new Cutten golf course in Guelph.

The following article from the *Winnipeg Tribune* was typical:

Evans and Rickwood Start on Golf Course

Guelph, Ont., May 09. “Chick” Evans, of Chicago, and F. Rickwood, of Orillia, two of the best known of the golfing fraternity in all America, have commenced the actual work of the construction of the big 18-hole golf course which is the gift of Arthur. W. Cutten to the city of Guelph. (10 May 1929, p. 19)

The *Ottawa Citizen* carried a second paragraph of the news release that had been omitted by the Winnipeg newspaper, but which makes clear the reason for the joint billing given by the *Winnipeg Tribune* to Evans and Rickwood:

These men are on the course devising the best layout possible and have a corps of workers with them carrying out their suggestions in the fixing of hazards of many sorts to and into the game [sic]. It is expected building work will begin early this summer. (10 May 1929, p. 13)

The news release – which must have been approved by each of Cutten, Evans, and Rickwood – clearly presents Rickwood as a co-designer of Cutten Fields.

The Toronto *Globe* carried its own story on this subject, and it implies that Rickwood was actually the lead designer:

Finish Preparations for Municipal Golf

“Chick” Evans and Fred Rickwood Associated in Planning Guelph Course

(Special Despatch to The Globe)

Guelph, May 9 – Preliminary work in connection with the municipal golf course presented to the City of Guelph by A. W. Cutten, wealthy Chicago financier, is completed and the task of laying out the course will be proceeded with at once.

Associated with “Chick” Evans, noted American golfer, who arrived in the city yesterday and who will supervise construction of the course which is to be completed and in condition for play by July, 1930, is Fred Rickwood, “pro” at the Orillia Golf Club, who will carry on the work of construction. Rickwood constructed the Summit golf course in Toronto, and in addition to being well versed in the ancient game, has had considerable experience in building links. He is already on the ground and with the assistance of Evans laid out the course, which is beautifully situated on high land overlooking the Speed River, and which has many natural advantages not possessed by the average links.

The layout, according to Evans, is ideal, with sufficient difficulties to make it interesting for championship competition, and at the same time satisfactory for the average player. He predicts that when completed it will be the premier course on the continent. No expense is to be spared to make it so.

(Globe [Toronto], 10 May 1929, p. 13)

Chick Evans was passionate about the subject of golf course architecture and wrote about it frequently, and at length, but he was not necessarily an accomplished architect.

In the 1920s, he arranged for himself to be taught a brief introduction to the practical dimensions of golf course design. Still, it is important to remember that before he undertook to design Cutten Fields, he had never actually designed a golf course, let alone built one.

So it is no surprise that he sought a partner.

What may be a bit of a surprise is that he asked Fred Rickwood to be that partner.

Less than a month after the above news release appeared, however, *Canadian Golfer* gives us an insight into the early days of the work on the course and lets us see Rickwood's value to Evans. The magazine's writer visited Cutten Fields as construction got underway and reported as follows in June of 1929:

GUELPH'S NEW COURSE IS GOING TO BE A CORKER

A despatch from Guelph, June 3rd:

A promise that he would have several of the world's most noted golfers visit Guelph on the occasion of the opening of Arthur W. Cutten's 18-hole golf course in a year's time was made by Chick Evans before he left the city for Chicago on Saturday, after inspecting the work on the new links, which is going ahead rapidly under his supervision. Expressing himself as being delighted with the progress being made on the construction of the course, the famous United States golf star seemed confident that the multi-million dollar recreation centre would be thrown open to the public by July, 1930, and went further to say that the links would be second to none on the North American continent.

In referring to the layout he had drafted, Evans did not hesitate to say the course would be as stiff to navigate as could be found anywhere. He declared that the first nine holes, which are well under way, will be as tricky as any he knows, and he has played on 700 or 800 courses during his brilliant golfing career. "Even the greatest golfer will have every club in his bag out before he gets round," he smilingly asserted.

Fred Rickwood, pro of the Orillia Golf Club, who is directing the actual work on the grounds, was equally as enthusiastic about the outlook, stating that he wouldn't be surprised if the new course brought the Canadian Championship to Guelph in three years' time. "One year after I finished the Summit Course in Toronto, the big match was pulled off there," stated Rickwood, "and this course will be a better one than anything in Toronto." (vol 15 no 4, p 134)

Chick Evans and Fred Rickwood collaborated on mapping a route for the holes and staking out tees, hazards, and greens, but Evans was not a builder of golf courses, so Fred Rickwood directed the actual work on the grounds. In doing so, he was no doubt employing all the best tricks of the trade learned when working for Stanley Thompson earlier in the 1920s at Summit and Thornhill, as well as when working on his own at Juddhaven, Napanee, Parry Sound, and Orillia.

For a Chicago resident such as Chick Evans (a giant in the world of American golf) to have come to Guelph to lay out a golf course, and to have decided that of all the possible golf course designers and builders with whom he might collaborate (in the construction of what he proposed to be one of the best golf courses in North America) he would choose Fred Rickwood shows what a good name – and what a

well-known name – Rickwood had established in the relatively small world of golf course design and construction.

It is no wonder that when spreading word of its new golf course, Parry Sound Golf Club foregrounded Rickwood's name both in regard to the selection of the land for their golf course and in regard to the design of that golf course. Rickwood's was a name to be conjured with!

The Cutten Fields project, however, turned out to be a difficult one, and it turned out to be too much for Evans, who could not meet his promise to throw the course open to the public by July of 1930.

The verdict that the course would not be ready for play in July was reached on April 2nd, 1930. As the *Windsor Star* announced the next day in its article "Cutten Golf Course Opening is Delayed": "An inspection yesterday of the new 18-hole municipal golf course, the gift of Arthur W. Cutten, Chicago financier, to this, his native, city, revealed that the links would not be in readiness for the official opening on July 1 as had been planned by Chick Evans, who has been supervising the work" (3 April 1930, p. 17).

The Cutten Fields website says that when Chick Evans reached his wit's end, he ultimately "recommended to Cutten that the detailed designs of holes be done by the Stanley Thompson Golf Company of Toronto."

The 1931 account in *Canadian Golfer* of the work being done in the spring of that year (two years after Rickwood first broke ground on the property) says something similar: "It was the idea of Mr. Cutten that the Golf Course should be first developed. Mr. 'Chick' Evans of Chicago, and a famous golfer, was selected as architect for this project and the work was undertaken in May, 1929. During the summer of 1930, Mr. Stanley Thompson, golf architect of Toronto, was enlisted to assist in the further development of the course. The task of clearing the land of fences and stones and the building of tees and greens has been a large one and has required a large amount of time and labour. The task alone of securing grass on this large area has been unusually difficult for two unusually dry seasons with little rain have been encountered. Notwithstanding all of the difficulties, the work has gone forward at a rapid pace and today the Eighteen Hole Course stands with highly developed greens and beautifully carpeted fairways as one of the best in the whole country" (June 1931, pp. 162-63).



Figure 94 An aerial photograph from 1931 shows the Rickwood-Evans-Thompson Cutten Fields golf course near the time of its official opening in July of that year.

When Evans decided in 1930 to withdraw from active architectural supervision of this golf course project, the high regard in which he must have held Fred Rickwood makes it a distinct possibility that he would have consulted him with regard to the question of which golf course construction company might be able to finish the job.

If Rickwood was indeed the one who recommend to Evans that Stanley Thompson & Company be brought in to complete Cutten Fields, it certainly would have been a fitting way for Rickwood to have paid back his old mentor Thompson for having given him work at the Summit Golf and Country Club at the very time when, just arrived from Nova Scotia and without a job, he needed help to establish himself in the world of Ontario golf.

In any event, when Stanley Thompson came to the Guelph construction site in 1930, he might have felt right at home – not just because he might have been together again with his old “construction man” Fred Rickwood, but more importantly because in Rickwood’s contribution to the routing of the course in 1929 he had probably proceeded – as much as was possible with Evans in the field beside him – according to principles that Rickwood had learned from Thompson himself.

Just which of the three architects – Evans, Rickwood, and Thompson – was responsible for what design features at Cutten Fields remains unclear. Of course it has been impossible up to now even to formulate a proper question about these matters since Rickwood’s role at Cutten Fields has been unknown. Now that we know of Rickwood’s role in routing the course and laying out hazards, a good resource for addressing our questions about the original design is Ian Andrew, who renovated Cutten Fields in the early part of the twenty-first century. Unaware that Rickwood and Evans routed the course together, he comments as follows on the relationship between, on the one hand, what we now know to be the original Evans-Rickwood design and, on the other hand, the subsequent work done by Stanley Thompson on the design that he inherited: “Chick Evans designed the Cutten Fields in Guelph, Ontario, for Arthur Cutten. The routing was done by Chick and the construction was done by Stanley Thompson.... I’m not sure I can add any great insight into his [Evans’s] work other than to say the front nine is an excellent routing and the back always felt like it was squeezed in” (GolfClubAtlas.com <http://www.golfclubatlas.com/forum/index.php?topic=26004.0;wap2>).

In the context of Andrews’ celebration of the first nine holes as “an excellent routing,” recall what Evans told *Canadian Golfer* in June of 1929: “He declared that the first nine holes, which are well under way, will be as tricky as any he knows” (vol 15 no 4, p 134). These first nine holes are precisely the ones that newspaper and magazine assure us that Rickwood had an equal hand in routing and constructing.

Similarly, David Kuypers (the golf course superintendent at Cutten Fields in 2008 when the renovation was underway) also celebrates the original design. Of the renovation work undertaken by Andrews on what survived into the twenty-first century of the golf course created by Evans, Rickwood, and Thompson, Kuypers writes as follows: “All but one of the original greens were intact, and while they had shrunk to a fraction of their original size, their original shapes were obvious and the green complexes had great character. Clearly the original design was classic and interesting, but it took some imagination to see it. The design was well worth restoring, so the idea of ‘preserving and enhancing’ was adopted as

Cutten Fields

a theme” (David Kuypers, “Restoring a Gem: Communication and Careful Planning and Organization Pay Off,” *USGA Green Section Record* (Michigan State University: September-October, 2008, p. 21).

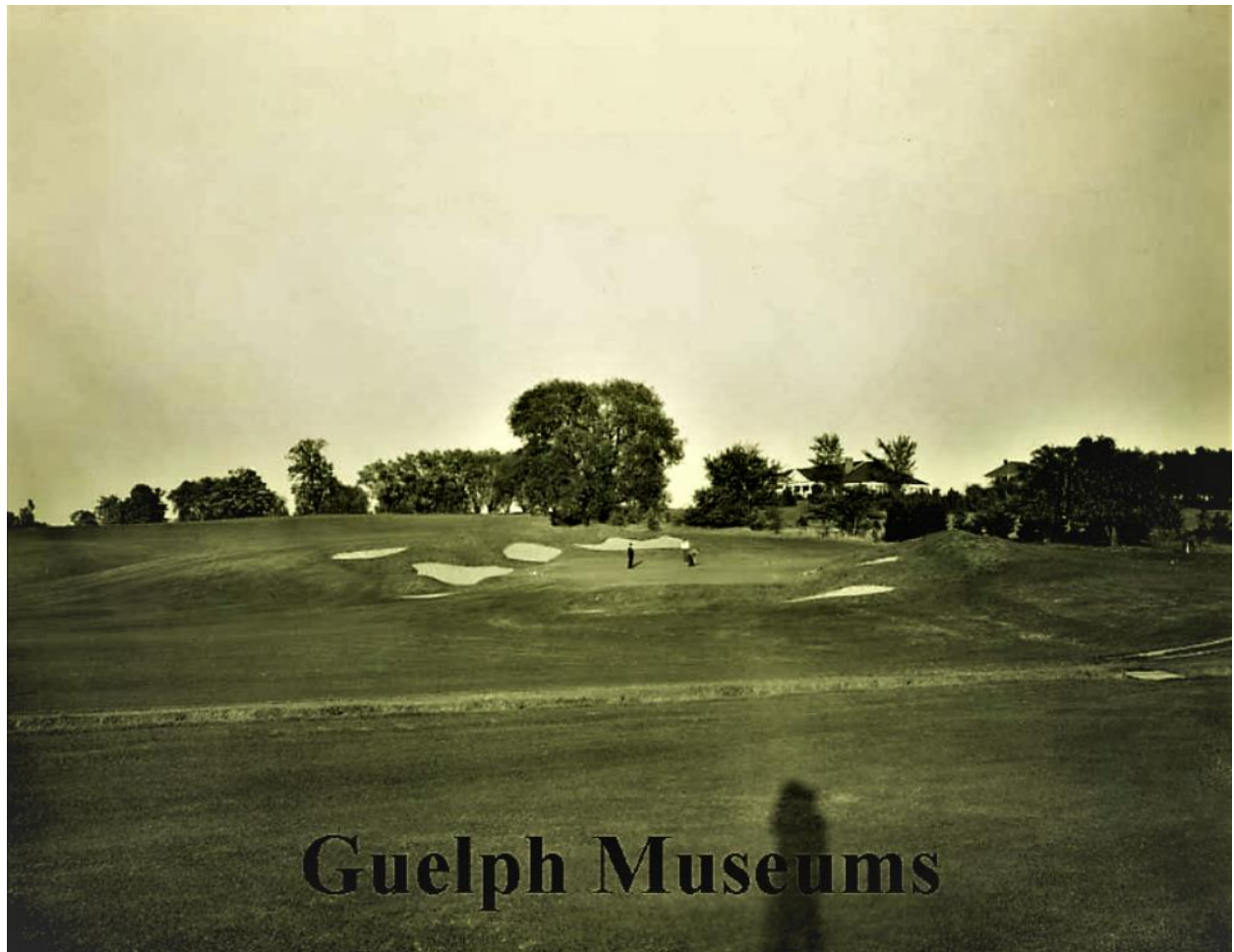


Figure 95 Late afternoon play on Cutten Fields in the 1930s as the golf course makes its way back to the clubhouse, which is visible in the background at the top of the hill.

The conclusion is unavoidable: at least part (and perhaps a good deal) of what was preserved and enhanced at Cutten Fields – the “classic and interesting” “original design” – had originally been contributed by Fred Rickwood.

In the end, Stanley Thompson certainly came to feel right at home at Cutten Fields, and not just because he may have met the familiar face of Fred Rickwood there when he took on the course construction work in 1930, and not just because he may have recognized his own principles at work in the routing of the course. It turns out that Cutten Fields would within ten years become the only golf course that Thompson ever owned, having purchased it with partners in the late 1930s.

Yet it was also to become much more than his “home” course, so to speak, for Thompson actually made his home on the grounds of the golf course and lived there until his death in 1953. The house in which he lived still stands, in fact, being located to the left of today’s twelfth hole. Cutten Fields thereby became a unique golf course in the Stanley Thompson oeuvre.



Figure 96 Elevated tee box on the first hole at Cutten Fields shortly after the official opening in July of 1931.

Today, Cutten Fields is ranked seventy-fourth in a list of the top 100 golf courses in Ontario (there are more than 800 golf courses in the province), and after recent renovation work by Ian Andrew with a view to restoring some of its original 1929-31 design features, its stock continues to rise in lists of Canada’s top golf courses (top100golfcourses.com).

Today, of course, discussion of the golf course foregrounds its architecture – as is always the case when Stanley Thompson is associated with a golf course. The Cutten Fields website subtly downplays the work of Evans, and elevates that of Thompson: “Evans began developing the course in May of 1929. However, by the summer of 1930, it appears that Evans’ inexperience in course design precipitated the need for assistance, so he sought the help of Stanley Thompson.” Yet the Stanley Thompson Society website splits the credit more evenly between Evans and Thompson: “Together they completed the project in

Cutten Fields

1931.” Similarly, “The Top 100 Golf Courses” website refers perfectly even-handedly to “the historic Chick Evans and Stanley Thompson-designed golf course.”

Yet no one anywhere even mentions Fred Rickwood’s role in the creation of Cutten Fields, let alone celebrates it or scants it.

Despite the fact that in 1929 the newspapers unambiguously announced that Evans and Rickwood were co-creators of Cutten Fields, it is sadly clear ninety years later that all trace of Rickwood’s role in the creation of this excellent golf course has been erased from memory.

Of the many forgettings that comprise Fred Rickwood’s forgotten life in Canadian golf, perhaps this is the biggest.

We can now see, however, that by the early 1930s, Fred Rickwood was an important part of the network of golf professionals, superintendents of course construction, greenkeepers, and landscape gardeners that Stanley Thompson brought together on a situational basis for work at this course or that one when he was called in to build, expand, re-design, or renovate a golf course.

Dozens of others served in this capacity over the forty years that Stanley Thompson was designing golf courses (among them his most famous disciples), but Rickwood had a more important role than many of them insofar as he was responsible for directing the ground work on two of Thompson’s most important Toronto area golf course construction projects during his busiest years in the early 1920s as he established his reputation. For Thompson regularly listed his achievements at the Summit Golf and Country Club and the Thornhill Golf Club in his company’s 1920s advertisements as examples of the kind of results that future clients could expect to get from him. Rickwood’s success in directing Thompson’s crews of veterans so that the architect’s vision was realized in landscape – success widely noticed in reviews of this work – contributed significantly to Thompson’s success.

As Stanley Thompson’s main man on these important designs, Rickwood clearly gained invaluable experience regarding the laying out golf courses, building them, and organizing the resources of money, men, and time necessary to accomplish the work planned. As golfers of a very high order themselves, Thompson and Rickwood would have discussed why the routing of a hole in one way was preferable to the routing of a hole in another way – no doubt talking about the length that the hole should be, the

orientation of the fairway in relation to natural hazards, the orientation of the green in relation to the fairway, the number and orientation of the bunkers around the green in relation to the approach shots to be invited by the design of the hole, the orientation and elevation of the tee-boxes, and so on.

Many golfers enjoy such conversations; architects live for them.

The Napanee newspapers remarked on the years of experience in laying out golf courses and constructing greens that Fred Rickwood had accumulated before coming to Napanee. But they neglected to mention that most of that experience was acquired by working with Stanley Thompson.

But now we know.

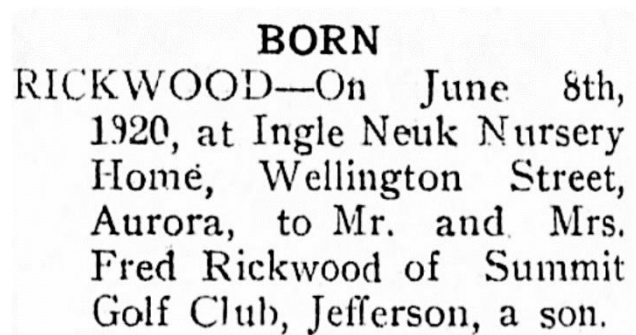
A Biographical Postscript

So what became of Fred Rickwood and his family?

After Fred Rickwood and Edith Florence Barrett were married in Toronto in November of 1909, their first child Florence was born in Quebec City in 1910. A son George was born in St John, New Brunswick, in 1912. As we know, Edith and her children Florence and George stayed in Fred Rickwood's home town of Ilkley, Yorkshire, during World War I while Fred served in France.

Shortly after the Rickwood family returned to Nova Scotia in July of 1919, Edith became pregnant. The couple's second son William John was born in Toronto on 1 June 1920.

We know that Fred Rickwood's professional life was a full one during his years at the Summit Golf and Country Club in the early 1920s, and so was his family life. The Rickwoods purchased a home in Jefferson, Ontario, less than a mile from the Summit Golf and Country Club, where they would live for the next seven years. Here the children would attend school, and Florence and George would experience the first long-term stability – in terms of school friends and neighbourhood friends – that they had ever known.



BORN
RICKWOOD—On June 8th,
1920, at Ingle Neuk Nursery
Home, Wellington Street,
Aurora, to Mr. and Mrs.
Fred Rickwood of Summit
Golf Club, Jefferson, a son.

Figure 97 Aurora Banner, 18 June 1920, p. 4.

And the family would grow. Edith had arrived in Ontario pregnant with the couple's second boy (William John), who would be born in June of 1920.

And just over a year after the birth of William John, the Rickwoods had another son, Robert, born 25 June 1921, in the same Ingle Neuk Nursery Home in Aurora (*Aurora Banner*, 8 July

1921, p. 7).

Later in 1921, however, Fred Rickwood experienced a serious health scare. The editor of the *Canadian Golfer* magazine, always ready to report on the life and times of the "popular" pro Fred Rickwood, wrote of the matter: "Many golfing friends, professional and otherwise, will be sorry to hear that Fred

Rickwood, professional of the Summit Golf Club, was last week removed to the Toronto Hospital to undergo an operation for appendicitis" (August 1921, vol vii no 4, p. 286). A fuller story came out in the next issue: "Fred Rickwood, the popular pro of the Summit Golf Club, Toronto, shortly after the Open Championship at Toronto, was seized with appendicitis and had to be taken to the hospital for an operation. He is now convalescing, many friends will be glad to hear. A successful benefit was recently staged for him at the Summit Club" (September 1921, vol viii no 5, p. 260).

Over the course of 15 years of references to Fred Rickwood in *Canadian Golfer*, the editor often described Fred Rickwood as "popular": the success of the Summit Golf and Country Club benefit on his behalf gives evidence that the description had some basis in fact. And do not think that this benefit was simply a sentimental exercise: Fred Rickwood would have had to pay for his hospital care. This benefit may have saved the Rickwood family from considerable financial hardship.

There was an even worse problem for the family to deal with the next year.

One year to the day after Fred Rickwood had played in the celebrated exhibition match with George S. Lyon, George Cumming, and William Thompson staged for the official opening of the Summit Golf and Country Club, on July 9th, 1922, the Rickwoods' fifth child, a fourth son, was born.

But also on July 9th, 1922, that son died.

The official cause of death was that he was "prematurely born." He was given no first name, only his last name. Yet he was given a proper burial the next day when he was interred at the Aurora Cemetery on Yonge Street, about four miles north of the Rickwoods' home.

In 1924, readers of *Canadian Golfer* learned very sad news. The Rickwoods' son William John died unexpectedly in April: "Sincere sympathy of many friends will go out to Fred Rickwood, the popular pro of the Summit Golf Club, Toronto, and Mrs. Rickwood, in the death last month, after a brief illness from pneumonia, of their bright little three-year-old boy" (vol 10 no 1, May 1924, p. 60). A doctor had attended the little boy for two days before his death, which was officially caused by "membranous croup."

A Biographical Postscript

Like his unnamed sibling, William John Rickwood was buried in the Aurora Cemetery. He had been known to his family as “Jack.”

Today, as can be seen from the photograph below, the Aurora Cemetery overlooks Beacon Hall Golf Course, built in the 1960s, so the Rickwood children lie close to their father in spirit, if not in fact.



Figure 98 Aurora Cemetery in Markham, Ontario, where two of the Rickwoods' children are buried.

Fred Rickwood's years as the head professional golfer at the Summit Golf and Country Club were very busy and very stressful times for him both personally and professionally.

He was building golf courses, one at the Summit Golf and Country Club for Stanley Thompson and the other at Juddhaven for himself. He was playing regular tournament golf, making golf clubs, giving lessons, and mentoring young assistant golf professionals. He was serving two terms on the Executive Committee of the Canadian Professional Golfers Association.

At home, he was welcoming several new children into the family, getting the first two kids settled into their first Canadian school, suffering the premature birth and death of one child and then suffering the unexpected death of their next child at three years old.

In terms of his health, he was suffering from a long-term foot problem that could make walking difficult, suffering from occasional blistering on the hands requiring full bandaging, and suffering a bout of acute appendicitis.

It all makes me wonder if Fred Rickwood's resignation as golf professional at the Summit Golf and Country Club at the end of the 1924 golf season was not just because he had accepted a new position as Superintendent of the course at the Thornhill Golf and Country Club, but also because he simply did not have the physical or emotional energy to carry on with all the work that being head professional at Summit brought with it.

By comparison, supervising construction work at the Thornhill course would be simple – and perhaps that would help to simplify his life as a whole.

Simply or otherwise, however, life goes on.

Sometime in the mid-1920s, perhaps around the time that they were mourning the death of their son William, the Rickwoods had their final child, a girl named Mary.

Of the seven children born to Fred and Edith Rickwood, she would be the longest lived (as I write this paragraph in June of 2022, she lives in Toronto, Ontario, as she approaches her ninety-sixth birthday) and she would be one of the family's highest achievers.

References to the family's life in Jefferson occur occasionally in the local Richmond Hill newspaper called *The Liberal*. We find in 1921, for instance, that Florence and George Rickwood have graduated together at the Junior II level in the local public school. Similarly, in 1924 we find them promoted together from the Junior III level to Senior IV level. The fact that Florence is at the same grade level as her brother George (who was two years her junior), may indicate that Florence's formal schooling had been disrupted by the dislocations in her family's residences caused by the family's peregrinations during and after World War I.

A Biographical Postscript

By 1926, George Rickwood had passed his Richmond Hill High School entrance exams. The next year, he was recorded by the Department of Education as among those who passed the Lower School Exams in all the subjects written. Throughout his school career, he proved to be no scholarship winner, but he was generally awarded fairly high Second-Class Honors.

The rhythm of Rickwood family life in Jefferson was upset dramatically on a frozen winter morning in 1928 when family members had to evacuate their home because of a fire:

Fire Brigade Called

The local fire brigade had a call this morning about 10:30 to the home of Mr. Rickwood, Yonge Street. It is understood that the fire was caused by the flaming up of an oil stove and the removal of the stove from the house before the brigade arrived averted a more serious fire. (The Liberal, 2 February 1928)

It was a Thursday morning. Florence, George, and Robert were probably at school, but Fred and Edith, as well, perhaps, as their final child Mary, were probably at home.

I imagine that Edith had Mary in hand or on her arm as she telephoned the Fire Brigade while Fred dealt with the stove. He was forty-five years old at the time, but he was fit enough to wrestle that stove out the kitchen door and dump it into the snow. Perhaps his six weeks of work remodelling Napanee Golf and Country Club the previous fall had put him in top shape.

I note that the fire occurred on Groundhog Day.

Yet no more fires were ever reported at the Rickwood home.

Having for the first time settled into a community for the long term, so to speak, Fred Rickwood took up curling. From January to March of 1928, he represented Richmond Hill in matches against the vaunted Granite Club of Toronto, and he also participated in the Bradford Bonspiel.

Rickwood's victories as a curling skip were few and far between, mind you, but he seems nonetheless to have become thoroughly invested in the classic seasonal rhythms of country club life: golfing in the summer and curling in the winter.

When Fred Rickwood became the head professional golfer at the Couchiching Golf Club in Orillia later that year, the Rickwoods lived first at the clubhouse, as they had at Summit, but then they acquired a house on St Jean Street, in a quiet neighbourhood of modest single-family dwellings just a few blocks from the Couchiching Golf Club. Here, Fred Rickwood continued to work as the head professional golfer at Couchiching until his retirement from golf in the mid-1930s.

The family settled into the community and made friends.

Fred continued within the rhythms of country-club life. He was the skip of a curling team in Orillia during the winter, leading his team in the 12th Annual Barrie Bonspiel in February of 1931, for instance. But golf was his passion, whether competing for money or demonstrating the power and virtuosity of his golf swing.

Caddy Earle Milne adored Rickwood, loved his golf swing, and appreciated the various golfing adventures that Rickwood involved him in, both on and off the Orillia golf course. Milne says, "I made it my business to be at his beck and call." So Milne was at the very top of Rickwood's list of preferred caddies.

Milne witnessed some great golf, both at the Couchiching Golf Club and at other area courses, for it turns out that although Rickwood's professional tournament play was over, he "liked to arrange games with 'celebrities,' that is, the pros from Barrie and Midland along with the best players from those communities." There was always money involved.

Some of Milne's fondest memories of Rickwood focus on these celebrity matches, which were caddying experiences he shared with his friend "Ches Larkin" who "was also high in his [Rickwood's] list" of preferred caddies. When a celebrity match was arranged, writes Milne, "Ches and I would be sure of a job in a foursome. They were playing for money and were very serious. We really enjoyed the jobs because you could learn from watching them perform."

What's more, Rickwood's "performances" were not limited to the golf course. Things that he did when in a condition of high spirits left Milne open-mouthed.

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One day, Milne writes, “Rickwood took us along to Midland for a game. We rode over in [club member] R.A. Brown’s Hudson Terraplane – the hottest car on the market at the time. We had a good day at the course, and Rickwood and Brown did a lot of celebrating. However, they eventually summoned us to the car to head for home.”



Figure 99 1935 Hudson Terraplane Deluxe Convertible Coupe.

We are to understand, I think, that Milne’s reference to “a lot of celebrating” by Rickwood and Brown means that the two men had a lot to drink.

The next part of the story suggests as much: “On the way home, we stopped in a village (probably Coldwater) where Rickwood decided to demonstrate his skills. He put a ball down on the middle of Main Street and delighted the crowd that gathered by lofting it over the highest building!”

Presumably Rickwood's flamboyant feat of golfing prowess involved a number of wagers. Milne's account of the event may bring to mind a similar golf wager in the movie *Tin Cup*.



Figure 100 Main Street in Coldwater, Ontario, circa 1919, ten to fifteen years before Rickwood played his golf shot heard round the town.

Concluding his account of what seems to have been an amazing adventure for this teenaged caddie, Milne observes laconically: "We were glad to get home safely from that one" (*Daily Packet & Times*, 28 July 1995, p. 20).

These were days long before MADD – Mothers Against Drunk Driving – and Rickwood had a penchant, we know, for whisky. Rubenstein learned in the 1980s from old members of the Summit Golf and Country Club that Rickwood may have been forced to resign as golf professional at the end of the 1924 season because of his drinking. He cites Bernal Maunder, who apparently worked as an assistant pro for Rickwood in 1923: "One of his main jobs was to go down to a liquor store at the corner of Wellington and Simcoe streets in the city to buy whisky for pro Fred Rickwood" (*Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 11 December 1986, section D, p. 4).

So we have confirmation that the man who occasionally over-stayed his leaves while enlisted in the Canadian Army, who was busted for being in an estaminet at the wrong time, and who came home with a new tattoo and re-arranged teeth was indeed a bit of a character. There seems to have been a hail-fellow well-met aspect to Rickwood that probably played no small part in his being quite regularly referred to in *Canadian Golfer* as the “popular pro Fred Rickwood.”

Edith’s life in Orillia is less well documented. We recall that she managed the clubhouse, the catering, and all special events. Like other members of her family, she is occasionally mentioned in the social columns of the local newspapers. We read in 1941 that “Mrs. Fred Rickwood, of Orillia,” and “Miss Florence Rickwood” visited the Hendersons of Thornhill, presumably old friends from Fred’s time as Superintendent of the course at Thornhill Golf Club (*The Liberal*, 14 August 1941, p. 8). Perhaps Edith had been involved in the management of the clubhouse there, too.

It sounds as though Florence was friends with the Henderson’s daughter, for in another newspaper item from the year before we read in the “Thornhill District News” that “Miss Florence Rickwood of Toronto visited with Miss Mae Henderson on Sunday” (*The Liberal*, 7 November 1940, p. 8). There are other announcements of similar visits by Florence to the same family.

George represented Orillia on the high-school rugby team, playing in a match against perpetual rivals from Barrie Collegiate. His playing position on the rugby team was that of “inside,” meaning that he was the player wearing number 12 on the rugby pitch, an early receiver of the ball when it emerges from the scrum, whose job is to read the developing play quickly so as to determine whether to kick the ball forward or pass it out to players left or right. He had to have been a good athlete and a strategically intelligent player to have played this position.

After graduating from high school, George stayed in Orillia, and in the mid-1930s was recorded on the Voters List as a “professional golfer.” He was twenty-three years old and still living at the family home at that time, so one presumes that he was an apprentice of his father at the Couchiching Golf Club. He may have been the model who drew young Bobbie Rickwood toward caddying.

Then, shortly after Fred Rickwood’s 59th birthday at the end of December, 1941, his health quickly deteriorated.

Suffering intense chest pains, he was admitted to the hospital in Orillia. The situation became very serious. The chest pain became regular and extreme. There was no relief. The hospital in Orillia did not have the resources to treat him properly. So on 29 January 1942, Fred Rickwood was transferred from Orillia to Christie Street Hospital in Toronto.

He would never return to Orillia.



Figure 101 Christie Street Hospital, Toronto, Ontario, circa late 1930s,

He was diagnosed with “angina pectoris,” the medical term for chest pain or intense discomfort due to coronary heart disease. It typically occurs when the heart muscle does not get as much blood as it needs. This usually happens because one or more of the heart's arteries is narrowed or blocked.

Perhaps he had known of this condition for some while. Perhaps it had led to his retirement from golf.

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Whatever the case may be, Rickwood fought for his life for almost ten weeks, but he never again emerged from the hospital.

He died in Christie Street Hospital on March 28th, 1942.

And so he was not sixty years old when he died, as his grave marker says, but rather fifty-nine years and three months old – to the day.

The autopsy revealed that he suffered from several chronic morbid conditions: coronary sclerosis, bronchitis, and psoriasis.

Interestingly, just as Fred Rickwood had lived and worked with soldiers – first in the South African war when he served for a year with the Imperial Yeomanry, then in World War I when he served for five years in Europe, and finally for many years as construction foreman of the veterans that Stanley Thompson hired to build his 1920s golf courses – so Fred Rickwood lived with soldiers at the beginning of 1942.

For every person in the beds in the Christie Street Hospital was a soldier. It was a veterans' hospital. And since World War II had been underway for well over two years by the time that old soldier Fred Rickwood was admitted to a bed, alongside him was an increasing number of younger wounded soldiers being sent back regularly from Europe.

There is now a historical plaque on the sidewalk in Toronto where this hospital used to be located: "On this site stood the Christie Street Veterans' Hospital, originally the National Cash Register Company Factory. In 1919 the factory was converted to the Toronto Military Orthopaedic Hospital. Although most of the soldiers had been wounded in World War I (1914-1918), a few residents had been disabled in the Boer War (1899-1902) and the Fenian Raids of 1866. In 1936 the name was changed to the Christie Street Veterans' Hospital. The influx of wounded veterans during World War II (1939-1945) caused overcrowding in the already inadequate facility. This led to the construction, in 1948, of Sunnybrook Hospital."

Today, however, nothing remains of the Christie Street Hospital except for this plaque that tells this condensed version of its history. But of course there is much more to the story of the hospital than any plaque can tell.

And there is more to the story of Fred Rickwood's death at the hospital than either the hospital plaque, his grave marker, or his autopsy report can tell, for it turns out that our retired golfer and veteran of both World War I and the South African War arrived at the hospital when conditions within it were at their very worst.

Alas, they would never get better.



Figure 102 A view of a patient ward in the Christie Street Hospital during visiting hours in the 1930s.

The factory building had been scarcely suitable for use as a hospital at the time of its opening. By the time Fred Rickwood was admitted, years of neglect had caused it to fall into a state of disrepair. By 1942, with no end to World War II in sight, Christie Street Hospital was growing cramped, and there was no apparent plan in place to replace it. When large numbers of wounded veterans began returning to Toronto during the early years of World War II, it became apparent that the facilities at Christie Street

were woefully inadequate. The hospital had replaced the cash register factory, but other factories belching smoke still surrounded the building. The hospital was also uncomfortably close to a busy rail corridor. Passing trains reportedly caused the building to vibrate, and spewed smoke into the hospital hallways. Newspaper reporters who visited the Christie Street Hospital noted that hospital linen freshly laundered in the morning had, by the end of the day, accumulated a layer of dust and dirt. One Christie Street doctor complained to reporters that the noise from the incessant train traffic prevented him from being able to hear the heartbeats of his patients.

A campaign directed by prominent Toronto citizens, led by a number of women's groups, was organized to petition for the building of a new veterans' hospital.



Figure 103 One of the well-organized protests in the early 1940s by women's groups in Toronto and from across Canada demanding that the federal government of Canada build a new hospital for the treatment of veterans.

Despite the federal government's argument that no new hospital could be built in time to help the influx of wounded veterans and that the best course was to try to make do with the Christie Street Hospital, the public outcry grew, and ground was broken on the Sunnybrook site in 1943.

Of course the new proper hospital for veterans was built too late for Fred Rickwood to have had a better end.

The Rickwoods must not have had sufficient financial resources to have afforded better care for Fred. I think that this supposition is supported by the fact that the grave marker at Prospect Cemetery, a few miles up St Clair Avenue from the site of the Brazier and Rickwood winter golf school in 1926-27, contains exclusively military references. It must have been paid for by the government. It seems that the family could afford nothing more personal.

Fred Rickwood was buried at Prospect Cemetery on 30 March 1942.

After his death, his widow Edith and their daughter Mary followed their oldest daughter Florence to Toronto.

In Toronto, Florence had begun her work life as a cook by the 1940s. One suspects that she assisted her mother in looking after the social side of life at the Couchiching Golf Club, probably gathering her first professional experience in the kitchen in connection with the catering of events at the clubhouse. She may have left home as much as ten years before this in her late teens, for Milne recalls seeing just two children (presumably the youngest ones, Robert and Mary) in the Couchiching clubhouse: "The Rickwoods had two children but they were not usually seen" (*Daily Packet & Times*, 28 July 1995, p. 20). By the end of the 1950s Florence had become a housekeeper. She never married. She lived well into her eighties, outliving her younger brother George (who died in 1989) by many years, but she passed away in the late 1990s.

Brother George also eventually moved to Toronto, having decided not to make golf his profession. He took a job there in the 1940s at the Numont Ful-Vue Corporation, a company making eyeglasses – but not just any glasses. The Numont Ful-Vue company had invented a process for attaching the side pieces of spectacle frames to a mounting on the top of the lens (giving wearers a "full view" peripherally), whereas the "regular" mounting attached the side pieces to the middle of the lens. The company had taken out a patent on this method and marketed their glasses as very fashionable spectacles.

George married Louise Hartman (1909-99) and with her had two children, son Courtenay and daughter Mary Louise.

The family lived for a while in Deseronto, where George was elected a town councillor. His mother and sisters visited in 1948: Mrs. F. Rickwood, Misses Florecne and Mary Rickwood, visited with Mrs.

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Rickwood's son, Councillor Rickwood, and Mrs. Rickwood, Dundas Street" (Kingston Whig-Standard, 3 January 1948, p. 9).

In Deseronto in 1953, George and Louise Rickwood hosted a teenage friend of the family from likely, Yorkshire, named Ruth Dickinson. She travelled with the family for winter holidays in Lakeland, Florida, in December (*Bradenton Herald*, 27 December 1953, p. 13). Ruth would move to Surrey, British Columbia, a year or two later and eventually marry George's young brother Robert.



Figure 104 George Rickwood, *Toronto Star*, 26 July 1961, p. 8.

In 1954, George moved to Niagara Falls, Ontario, and started his own company, Hastings Machine Tools, Limited, which was the only company in the world to plan, design, and produce machines capable of automatically producing optical glass. He enjoyed great success.

In the early 1960s, the *Winnipeg Tribune* wrote about his company as an example of a great Canadian success story: "Hastings Machine Tool Ltd estimates that during the last five years it has brought \$1,000,000 worth of business to Canada by building machines for the automated production of optical glass. The machines have won respect – and sales – in Germany, Italy, and the United States. Negotiations are under way to

set up and equip plants in Uruguay and Australia. Companies in Bangkok, Saigon, India, Italy, and England have shown interest in Hastings products. George Rickwood, 48, company president, says the secret of the company's success is 'simply quality.' That, he said, 'is what you need for repeat business rather than a one-shot sale' Mr. Rickwood travels more than 100,000 miles per year drumming up business for the company" (22 July 1961, p. 59).



Figure 105 Ontario Minister of Economics and Development, Robert Macaulay (left) wishes George Rickwood good luck as he prepares to board the plane for London. *Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 8 September 1962, p. 40.

Closer to his former home in Orillia, the *Barrie Examiner* published an article about George Rickwood's 1962 appointment by the Ontario Government's Department of Economics and Development to serve as one of twelve members of the first Ontario Selling Mission sent to London, England, as part of the government's effort "to encourage and assist manufacturers from Ontario to export their products to Britain and to

European countries" (*Barrie Examiner*, 7 September 1962, p. 2).

Rickwood was thereafter quoted regularly in Canadian newspapers in the early 1960s as a significant industrialist advocating for Canadian government support of research and development industries that could be linked with universities to help educate students from developing countries in the skills needed to advance third-world economies.

I wonder if George helped to get Robert started in a similar line of work.

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Robert Rickwood and his wife Ruth (née Dickinson) established themselves in North Surrey, British Columbia, where Robert owned the Rickwood Equipment Company. Before they visited Ruth's parents in Ilkley in 1968, Robert and Ruth had welcomed the Dickinsons (who had retired to Scarborough, Yorkshire) to British Columbia in 1963 for a summer-long visit. So the Rickwood family maintained contact with its Yorkshire roots.

By the time he was 50, however, Robert no longer enjoyed good health (he was a heavy smoker who suffered from emphysema). He seems to have predeceased brother George and sisters Florence and Mary.

George Rickwood moved to New Jersey by the late 1960s and started an enterprise there called Precise Manufacturing Company and led the move to establish the Greater West Essex Chamber of Commerce. By this point, his marriage to Louise seems to have broken up, for when George was in his fifties, he married Muriel Priscilla Harley of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, a Nursing graduate of the New England School of Nursing (Boston) and a graduate after that of New York University. She served in the Army Nurse Corps during both World War II and the Korean War, helping to pioneer new techniques for treating battlefield wounds. She, too, was in her fifties when she married George Rickwood. The couple had no children but enjoyed many nieces and nephews on her side of the family. George died in 1989; Muriel, in 1996. Her obituary mentioned that she was "survived by her sisters-in-law, Mary and Florence Rickwood, of Toronto, Canada."

Nurse Muriel Rickwood had an interesting professional point of contact with her sister-in-law Mary Rickwood, the youngest of Fred and Edith's children, as well as with George Rickwood's first wife Louise: all were nurses.

Mary was the member of the Rickwood family who eventually returned to the Toronto Hospital where her father Fred had undergone his emergency operation for appendicitis all those years ago, and she would find herself in the same emergency room, too. Yet the circumstances of her return to the hospital and the emergency room were about as different as they could be, for by the 1960s, the Rickwoods' daughter Mary had become an emergency-room nurse at Toronto General Hospital, and – what's more – became by the 1970s the "Operating Room Departmental Nursing Supervisor."

In 1971, in an event covered by newspapers around the world, she was called on at a Coroner's Inquest to give expert testimony on operating room procedures in the investigation into the conduct of a surgeon who had left a towel inside the abdominal cavity of a patient upon whom he had operated.

Mary would still have been living at home when her father became ill at the beginning of 1942 and spent the last 10 weeks of his life in hospital. I wonder if her visits to see her father in the vast open wards of the ramshackle Christie Street Hospital, lying next to wounded soldiers, amidst the overcrowding, dirt and noise of that run-down, overwhelmed and underfunded institution, played a role in her decision to become a nurse.

As mentioned above, her sister-in-law Louise (who died in 1999) was also a nurse, who graduated from the University of Western Ontario in 1933 with a B.Sc. and served for many years in the Victorian Order of Nurses. In her name, there is today a Louise Rickwood PhD Scholarship in Nursing at the University of Western Ontario, donated by Mary Rickwood and by Louise's daughter and son-in-law, Mary-Louise and Paul Craven (respectively), in memory of Louise's son Courtney.

Like her older sister Florence, Mary Rickwood remained single. She seems to have been the one who looked after her widowed mother Edith, who lived at the same address in Toronto as her daughter Mary. When she was 80 years old, Edith had travelled to British Columbia on her own to visit a friend in 1964. But when Edith turned 90 in 1974, Mary took her to Victoria, British Columbia, to visit the same old friends. These trips to British Columbia presumably also included visits with Robert and Ruth in North Surrey.

According to the standards of her day, then, Mary would seem to have been a dutiful daughter.

If, as is said, children's children are the crown of old men, then Fred Rickwood's crown consisted of Courtenay and Mary Louise Rickwood, whom he did not live long enough to know.

Yet he would also earn a crown of another sort as another kind of progenitor — as a creator of golf courses. He produced a particularly fine nine-hole course at Napanee, and a particularly fine eighteen-hole course at Cutten Fields — each a jewel in the golf crown of the no longer forgotten man buried in Prospect Cemetery.



Figure 106 Prospect Cemetery, St Clair Avenue, Toronto.

Appendix 1: Golf Courses Laid Out, Remodelled, or Constructed by Fred Rickwood

The Stanley Thompson Society, in remembering, documenting, and preserving Thompson's golf legacy, maintains "a list of golf courses laid out, or constructed by, or remodelled by one of several companies that Stanley Thompson worked for or managed in the years 1912-1953."

To do as much for his one-time construction man Fred Rickwood, even though the list is much shorter and inevitably much less impressive, is an act of golf scholarship that is as unremarkable as it is necessary.

The following, then, is a list of courses laid out, remodelled, or constructed by Fred Rickwood (with a parenthetical observation as to whether his work on the course in question is certain, probable, or merely possible):

1 **Ilkley Golf Club**, River Wharfe site (Ilkley, Yorkshire, England), 1898-99 (9 holes): Constructed (likely, as his daughter-in-law wrote that Fred Rickwood was involved in laying out a course in Ilkley)

2 **Amherst Golf Club** (Amherst, Nova Scotia), 1908-1909 (9 holes): Laid Out (certain), Constructed (certain)

3 **Amherst Golf Club** (Amherst, Nova Scotia), 1911 (9 holes): Laid Out (certain), Constructed (certain)

4 **Riverside Golf and Country Club** (St John, New Brunswick), 1914-15 (9 holes): Laid Out (probable), Constructed (probable)

5 **Digby Golf Course** (Digby, Nova Scotia), 1919 (9 holes): Remodelled (certain)

6 **The Summit Golf and Country Club** (Toronto, Ontario), 1920-22 (18 holes): Constructed (certain)

7 **Juddhaven Golf Course** (Ontario), 1924-25 (9 holes): Laid Out (certain), Constructed (certain)

Appendix 1: Golf Courses Laid Out, Remodelled, or Constructed by Fred Rickwood

8 **Thornhill Golf and Country Club** (Toronto, Ontario), 1925-26 (18 holes, remodelled by Stanley Thompson): Constructed (certain)

9 **Belleville Golf Club** (Belleville, Ontario), 1927 (9 holes): Remodelled (certain), Constructed (certain).

10 **Napanee Golf and Country Club** (Napanee, Ontario), 1927 (9 holes): Remodelled (certain), Constructed (certain)

11 **Couchiching Golf and Country Club** (Orillia, Ontario), 1928 (9 holes): Remodelled (certain), Constructed (certain)

12 **Parry Sound Golf and Country Club** (Parry Sound, Ontario), 1929 (9 holes): Laid Out (certain), Constructed (certain)

13 **The Cutten Club** (Guelph, Ontario) 1929-31 (18 holes) Laid Out (certain), Constructed (certain).

Note that this list is not necessarily definitive. It represents only what my research has revealed or suggested *so far*.

Appendix 2: Fred Rickwood's "Iron Man" Fan

Because of the 8,500 rounds of golf he played over the course of his life (the equivalent of one round per day for twenty-three years), Ralph Kennedy has been compared to the "iron man" of baseball, Lou Gehrig, who played 2,130 consecutive baseball games.

A pencil salesman for the Eagle Pencil Company, Kennedy took up golf in 1910 when he was twenty-eight years old, playing his first round on a golf course in the Bronx of New York City. He immediately became obsessed with the game and soon formed the ambition of playing more golf courses than any other human being had ever played. Forty-three years later, he had played over 3,165 different golf courses in the United States, Canada, and about a dozen other countries. He saved a score card from each golf course that he played, and he had each one signed by a witness at the golf course to authenticate his having played it. He donated all the score cards to the USGA archives, where they can be consulted to this day.

He used to arrange his travels as salesman for the Eagle Pencil Company in such a way as to facilitate play at new golf courses. When he began to become famous for his "iron man" feats (appearing twice on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post*, for instance, and being the subject of articles in major and minor newspapers throughout the United States, as well as in the *Times* of London), the company began to encourage his quest because of the positive publicity it brought. Eventually, he was thereby able to play golf in forty-eight different American states and nine different Canadian provinces. But poor eyesight forced him to stop playing golf in the fall of 1953.

His extraordinary obsession (he described it as a "mania") made him the only person other than Fred Rickwood himself to play all of the golf courses that Rickwood built in Canada – or at least all of the Rickwood golf courses that existed when Kennedy played. The first Amherst Golf Course, for instance, no longer existed when Kennedy first took up the game, but he played the second Amherst course. He played the other Maritime courses, too: both the Riverside course at St. John, New Brunswick, and the Digby course in Nova Scotia. Of course, he played at the Napanee Golf and Country Club and the Belleville Golf Club, as well as the Summit Golf and Country Club and the Thornhill Golf and Country Club. He played the courses at Orillia, Cutten Fields, Parry Sound, and Juddhaven – the latter of which he called the "Ernescliffe" course.

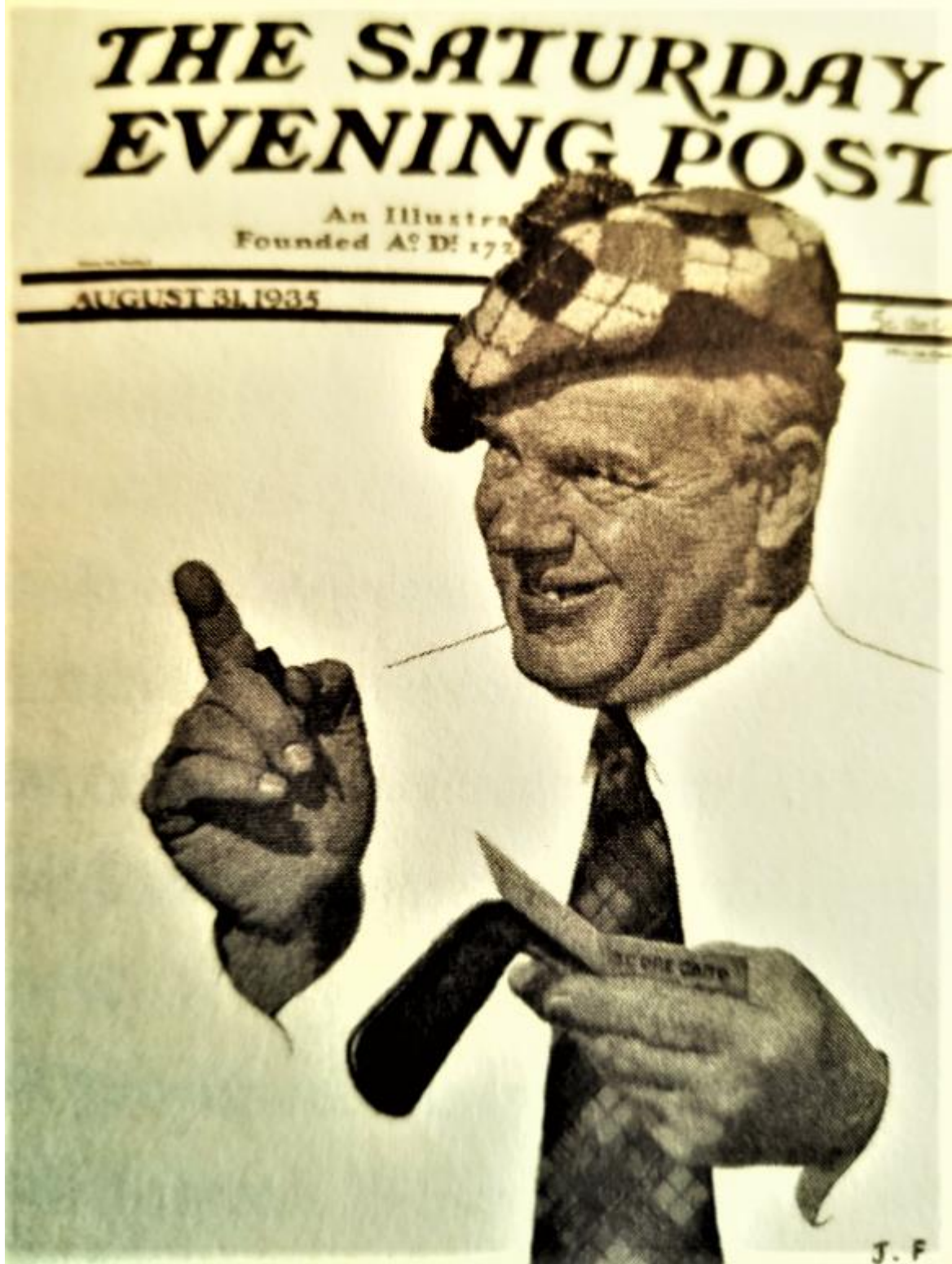


Figure 107 Ralph Kennedy depicted on a 1935 cover of the Saturday Evening Post.

Whether or not Kennedy ever knew that he was playing a golf course associated with Fred Rickwood is

unknown. But we can let the facts speak for themselves: at least eleven of the 3,165 golf courses that Ralph Kennedy played were built in whole or in part by Fred Rickwood.

Let's say that this fact makes golf's "iron man" something of a Rickwood fan.