

Pembroke Golf Club

(years 1922-23)



Donald J. Childs

The Pembroke Golf Club, 1922-23

Donald J. Childs

Early in 1922, plans took shape in Pembroke for the formation of a golf club.

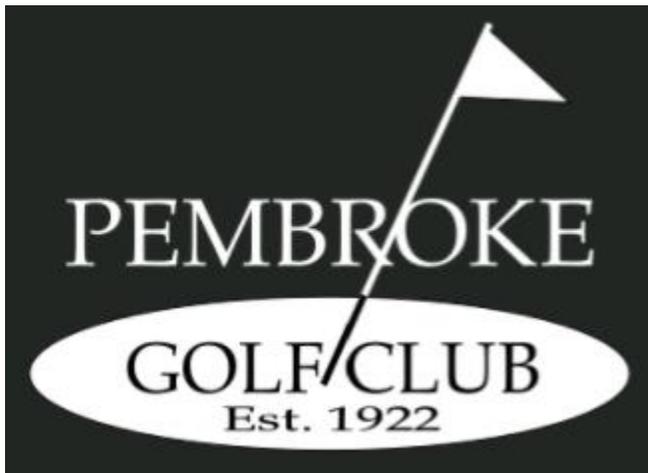


Figure 1 Contemporary logo of the Pembroke Golf Club.

Hard work behind the scenes by several devotees of the royal and ancient game led to a meeting in the rooms of the Pembroke Board of Trade on Monday, June 19th, at which twenty-three golf enthusiasts convened to organize what would become known as the Pembroke Golf Club.

It was announced to the people in attendance that “Shares in the club will be sold at \$100” and that “fifty-four golfers have already

enrolled and are expected to purchase at least one share each” (*Daily British Whig*, 22 June 1922, p. 10). The fact that organizers of the golf club had already signed up fifty-four prospective members means that preparations for the founding of the club had gone on for weeks, if not months, before the initial organizational meeting in June of 1922.

Further evidence of this early organizational work consists of the fact that well before the meeting in question, representatives of the prospective club had already negotiated an “option on the McMullen farm on the Petawawa Road” (*Daily British Whig*, 22 June 1922, p. 10). At this meeting, in fact, it was decided to take up the McMullen option and “lay out and build a nine-hole course” (*Daily British Whig*, 22 June 1922, p. 10).

The person who seems to have been the presiding spirit in this early organizational effort was John Worthington Smith. One of the “elected provisional directors” at the June meeting, Smith was “chosen as President” at a meeting of these directors at the beginning of August (*Daily British Whig*, 22 June

1922, p. 10; *Pembroke Observer*, cited in *North Bay Nugget*, 8 August 1922, p. 5). The next year, Smith donated “the handsome silver cup ... for competition among the members of the local club” that came to symbolize the men’s championship (*Ottawa Citizen*, 23 November 1923, p. 19).



Figure 2 John Worthington Smith, (1865-1928), *Who's Who in Canada* (Toronto: International Press, 1927), p. 647.

Born in Vermont in 1865, Smith came to Canada in 1886 to work for the Canadian Atlantic Railway Company in Ottawa. He came to Pembroke in 1904 to help organize the Colonial Lumber Company, of which he was vice-president in 1922, when it was bought by Edwards Lumber & Pulp Company, of which Smith became vice-president and general manager. He was also the president of the Pembroke Lumber Company, as well as several other companies in Ottawa and Toronto.

Smith quickly became a community leader in Pembroke, especially as President of the Board of Trade: “Mr. Smith ... is a man of strong personality, and members of the board are to be congratulated on having him at their head, as success is a habit with him” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 5 November 1912, p. 2).

He was also an active figure in the local Anglican community, regularly representing Holy Trinity Church at synods. At the beginning of 1925, furthermore, he was appointed Chairman of the Finance and Building Committee of Holy Trinity, which quickly raised the money needed to raise a new church.

Smith was re-elected president of the Pembroke Golf Club in 1924 and 1925, and he might well have been elected to further terms as president if he had not left the city in 1926 to accept a position at the Hawkesbury Lumber Company. Sadly, he died just two years later, in June of 1928,

Gone from Pembroke, Smith was not forgotten: the Pembroke Golf Club sent a notable floral tribute to his funeral in Ottawa.

As part of his successful habits in business, Smith got the right people to do the jobs that needed to be done, and the same habits led to his choice of a particular architect to lay out the club’s golf course: as Scott MacLeod points out, the Pembroke Golf Club hired Karl Keffer (*Flagstick Golf Magazine*, April 2006).

By 1922, Karl Keffer (1882-1955) was in many ways the golf king of the Ottawa Valley.



Figure 3 Karl Keffer, Toronto Golf Club, 1896.

Living on the doorstep of the Toronto Golf Club in the mid-1890s, Keffer became a caddie as a teenager. After his creditable performance in the Canadian Open in 1905, Keffer agreed to work as an assistant professional to the Toronto Golf Club's head pro George Cumming, who taught Keffer the art of golf course design. Keffer won the Canadian Open in 1909 when still an assistant pro, and then won it again in 1914, by which time he had been appointed head pro at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club (serving in the summers from 1911-43) and head pro at the Jekyll Island Club in Georgia (serving in the winters from 1910-42).

Before his work at Pembroke, Keffer had overseen the introduction to play at Jekyll Island of the club's nine-hole Donald Ross course in 1910, had supervised the creation of the Ottawa Golf Club's 1911 nine-hole course, had accompanied Harry S. Colt around the Royal Ottawa property as Colt staked out his redesign plans for a new championship course in 1913, had laid-out (with Rivermead's head pro Davie Black) the temporary course of the Ottawa Hunt Club in 1919, and had laid out a nine-hole course at Blue Sea Lake in 1921.



Figure 4 Karl Keffer putts on a sand green of the Jekyll Island Donald Ross course circa 1914. Spalding Official Golf Guide of 1915, p. 172

Furthermore, at Jekyll Island in the early 1920s, where the members of what was known as "the millionaires' club" were said to own 1/6th of the world's wealth, Keffer was laying out a new nine-hole course to be added to the nine-hole Ross course to create the Jekyll Island Club's first 18-hole championship course.

In the 1920s, before purchasing property for development as a golf course, the people organizing a golf club such as the one at Pembroke generally consulted a golf professional for advice as to the kind of property that would be suitable for the laying out of a golf course, so it is likely that Keffer had visited Pembroke in the spring of 1922 to inspect the McMullen farm. Like other golf architects of the day, Keffer would have presented a written report on his

findings regarding the McMullen farm's possibilities for golf: commenting on the size of the property,

the accessibility of the location, the nature of the soil, the presence of suitable natural hazards, and so on. A line in *Canadian Golfer* about the new course may well be from Kaffer's report: "The terrain lends itself to a most excellent 9-hole course" (vol 8 no 9 [January 1923], p. 744).

He had presumably been called to Pembroke to look over the McMullen farm sometime after he returned from Jekyll Island in mid-April of 1922. And since the twenty-three people in attendance at the June meeting approved then and there the taking up of the option on the McMullen farm, organizers of the golf club must have either presented Keffer's report at the meeting or circulated copies of it in advance of the meeting.

But just when the golf course was first opened for play is not clear.

When was the purchase of the McMullen farm completed?

To purchase the land in question, the golf club had to be legally incorporated, and this process took about six weeks after the June organizational meeting:

Incorporate Golf Club

Letters patent have been issued to the Pembroke Golf Club, Ltd., and it is now a body corporate with the right to hold property and develop it along the lines usually followed by such clubs. The first meeting of the directors was held on Monday evening when J. W. Smith was chosen as President, E. B. Reed, Secretary, and R. L. McCormack, Treasurer. The other directors are E. A. Dunlop, J. G. Forgie, and D. A. Jones. It was reported that some \$3,000 was already in hand and that money was coming in well from subscribers. (Pembroke Observer, cited in North Bay Nugget, 8 August 1922, p. 5)

When was the land cleared of minor debris – rocks, branches, nuisance brush – that had no place in future fairways?

It is sometimes claimed that "the original nine holes [were] constructed ... by an avid group of local volunteers" (https://theottawavalley.com/company_category/golf-courses/). The sort of preparatory work mentioned above could have been done by such volunteers. These enthusiasts may even have prepared a rudimentary temporary course for play by the end of the 1922 golf season.

When were the architect's stakes driven into the ground to mark tees, greens, and hazards?

We read in *Canadian Golfer* magazine in November of 1922 that Pembroke was one of three eastern Ontario towns “taking steps to establish golf courses in 1923” (vol 8 no 7 [November 1922], p. 541). That the “steps” taken at Pembroke by November of 1922 involved construction work is suggested by *Canadian Golfer’s* next reference to this golf course, which came in the January issue of 1923: the magazine observes that “A new course which **will be put into play** the coming season is that of the Pembroke Golf club,” phrasing that seems to imply that the golf course already existed in some form as of January of 1923 and was just waiting to be put into play (vol 8 no 9 [January 1923], p. 744).

But whatever had been prepared for play by April of 1923, it is likely that workers with more specialized skills were employed over the next three years to achieve the architectural vision outlined in Keffer’s plans for the course. Indeed, the club’s expenditures on the golf course between 1923 and 1925 virtually confirm this supposition.

Note that bringing the Pembroke course to finished form was both time-consuming and expensive. Thousands of dollars were spent on the golf course in both 1923 and 1924, and a similar amount of money seems to have been allocated for the same sort of work in 1925: “Arrangements were made for the carrying on of the work for the summer [of 1925]. Some \$5, 169.88 had been spent on ground improvements in the past two years” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 9 May 1925, p. 12).



Figure 5 Harry S. Colt, circa 1913.

We can get a sense of how substantial this work on the golf course was by observing that when the world’s greatest golf architect, Harry S. Colt, submitted plans ten years before to the Royal Ottawa Golf Club for the redesign of its 18-hole championship course (proposing to reverse the direction of several golf holes, build ten new greens, and add extensive bunkering), the cost of this work was estimated to be \$5,000.

From 1923 to 1924, the Pembroke Golf Club had spent more than this amount to bring its nine-hole golf course into play, and even more was to be spent in 1925.

There is no doubt that the construction work going on at Pembroke from 1923 to 1925 was of a kind beyond the ability of “an avid group of local volunteers” to accomplish.

We can see that it took time for the greens of the Pembroke Golf Club to assume their finished form. The original greens upon which play commenced in April of 1923 seem to have been flat, and they also seem to have been laid out to match the level of the surrounding fairway and rough



Figure 6 *Canadian Golfer*, vol 11 no 7 (November 1925), p. 609.

For instance, in the *Canadian Golfer* photograph to the left showing a Pembroke caddie tending the flag on the green in front of the clubhouse sometime between 1923 and 1925, note that the level of the green is continuous with the level of the ground surrounding it. Only the lower mowing of the grass on the green seems to distinguish the putting surface from the fairway or rough behind the green.

This kind of golf-course construction might well have been accomplished by avid local volunteers.

But the greens that Keffer designed no doubt required push-up construction: raising the green above the level of the

surrounding ground, and pitching it upward from front to back, with progressively steeper shoulders from front to back, producing a drop-off at the back of the green of several feet in height.

Greens of this sort were designed by Keffer in 1924 for the Arnprior Golf Club and greens of this sort were designed by Keffer in 1929 for the Glenlea Golf and Country Club (now Champlain). They are quite typical of 1920s green design and construction. Today, a number of the oldest greens at the Pembroke Golf Club are of this sort, an example of which can be seen in the photograph below.



Figure 7 Contemporary green at Pembroke Golf Club.

In the 1920s, with no mechanized earth-moving equipment yet available for such golf-course construction work, horses and plows did this work by well-known, tried-and-trusted methods. The main instrument was a pull-plow called the Fresno Scraper, often operated by one person and pulled by one or two horses.



Figure 8 Drawing of early 20th-century Fresno Scraper.

Seen in the drawing to the left, the Fresno Scraper came in different widths, depending on how much soil the horse or team of horses could scrape and pull, which in turn depended on the nature of the soil (loam, sand, clay, topsoil, etc.).

Typical methods for the construction of golf greens in the 1920s are described by L.W. Sporlein, who explains construction strategies where greens and green-side

traps were to be built with soils from the green site – which was presumably the situation at the Pembroke Golf Club.

Using a Fresno Scraper, one began by scraping away the turf and topsoil from the green site. According to Sporlein,

In cases where it is desirable or necessary to save the topsoil at the green site for replacement on the green after it has been roughly shaped up, the surface soil only is removed, and piled up as near as possible to the green. It is placed either directly in front of, or to the one side most convenient for, hauling back onto the green surface, after roughing in with the less fertile soils. (cited in Michael J. Hurdzan, Golf Greens: History, Design and Construction [Toronto: Wiley, 2004], pp. 23-26).

The “less fertile soils” in question were generally “obtained while building the trap” (Sporlein, cited in Hurdzan, pp. 23-26).

As one had done on the green site, one scraped the turf and topsoil away from the bunker sites that had been marked out around the sides of the green, adding this topsoil to the pile of such soil already waiting for re-spreading onto the top of the green built-up by the soil of inferior quality to be scraped out of the bunker sites.



Figure 9 Fresno Scraper teams building bunkers and greens. Harry S. Colt and C.H. Alison, Some Essays on Golf Course Architecture (London: Country Life, 1920).

The Fresno Scraper operator himself, or an assistant, led the horses around and around in a circle, with the scraper operator scooping rough soil out of the bunkers and depositing it on the green site to build up the green. Fresno Scraper teams might work together in sequence, going around and around in a circle, as seen in the photograph to the left.

With a full scraper, the operator or assistant directed the horses to the location on the green site where the next deposit of soil was due. The operator would push up on the Fresno Scraper handle to make the scraper become vertical and

thereby dump its load of soil over the spot chosen, as seen in the photograph below.



Figure 10 The handle of the Fresno Scraper has been pushed upright to empty the contents of its bucket, the operator holding onto a rope attached to the handle in order to pull it back down when the soil had been deposited on the targeted area.

According to Sporlein,

in constructing the green, it is best first to build up the entire surface to a more or less uniform height and to place the high slopes or rolls in afterwards, when the approximate shape is obtained. By a single adjustment of the spreader bar on the Fresno, so as to cause the load to spread out to a uniform thickness instead of dumping in one spot, the topsoil when ready for placement can be evenly distributed over the green surface. After the surface has been ... dragged with a spike tooth harrow, the hand work of raking into final shape is very much simplified. (Sporlein, cited in Hurdzan, pp. 23-26).

The construction crew would eventually level out and smooth this built-up soil with a device called a "Railroad Plow" (or "sturdy plow"). It comprised two heavy metal bars oriented parallel to each other like railway tracks and welded together across a gap of approximately two feet. The operator would direct the horse or horses pulling the Railway Plow around and around the surface of the green under construction.



Figure 11 Railway Plow in operation.

In the photograph below, we can see both a Railway Plow and a Fresno Scraper at work : there is a bunker being excavated in the left foreground by a Fresno Scraper and there is a green site beyond it, which rises from front to back, that is being smoothed out with a Railway Plow.



Figure 12 Fresno Scraper and Railway Plow operating in concert during green construction.

Perhaps it will help readers to imagine construction of the greens at the Pembroke Golf Club if this image is placed beside the image of the virtually identical Pembroke green already reproduced above.



Figure 13 One hundred years ago, the Pembroke green on the right must have looked very much like the green under construction on the left, rough soil from the bunker being used to raise up the green surface.

To bring the new golf course into play during the 1923 golf season, Keffer seems to have used his influence to instal one of his assistant professionals as the Pembroke Golf Club’s first head pro:

Wm. Mulligan Will Be at Pembroke

Pembroke, April 12 – (Special)

At a meeting of the directors of the Pembroke Golf Club it was decided to engage as professional for this season William Mulligan, who is now located at Montgomery, Ala., but who was formerly assistant instructor to the Royal Ottawa Club in the Capital. Mr. Mulligan has a number of relatives in Pembroke and would like to come back for the summer. Besides acting as instructor, he will also take care of the grounds. (Ottawa Journal, 13 April 1923, p. 19)

Keffer had been grooming Mulligan (1896-1978) for this sort of appointment for more than ten years.

As soon as he took up his position at the Ottawa Golf Club in 1911, Keffer had advertised in local newspapers for caddies: “Wanted – A number of respectable, well-mannered boys, ten to fifteen years old, with references, to act as caddies (carrying clubs) afternoons during season at the Ottawa Golf Club, Aylmer Road. Take Hull electric car and apply Karl Keffer, Club House” (*Ottawa Journal*, 28 April 1911, p. 1). Michael and Esther Mulligan had boys who fit this description. In the early 1900s, they had brought their young family from Montreal to Hull. When Keffer published his caddie call, William was fifteen and already working in a store. Younger brother Harry was just ten, but ready to work “during the summer holidays,” he recalled (*Ottawa Citizen*, 3 May 1955, p. 9). So although most golfers are happy to get one Mulligan: Keffer got two!

And the Mulligan boys were two of the best caddies that he ever had. Willie was with Keffer for the long term. He caddied for five years and then was taken on as an apprentice clubmaker (*Montgomery*

Advertiser, 14 December 1922, p. 3). By March of 1920, he had been an apprentice for six years (*Le droit*, 11 March 1920, p. 2). Brother Harry started with Keffer, then moved to the Rivermead Golf and Country Club as an apprentice of Davie Black in 1915, but he returned to Royal Ottawa to finish his apprenticeship under Keffer in 1920 when Black moved to British Columbia, and back with Keffer is where everyone wanted to be, it seems, for, as Harry recalled years later, “Keffer was the king pin of Canadian golf in those days, winning just about everything in sight” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 3 May 1955, p. 9).

Willie also worked during the winters as Keffer’s assistant pro at Jekyll Island, where he learned to take the wealth and glamour of the millionaire club members in his stride: he “gave golf lessons to sons of such notables as William Rockefeller, George F. Baker, Ed. Gould and Vincent Astor” (*Montgomery Advertiser*, 14 December 1922, p. 3).



Figure 14 Edward, Prince of Wales, in Montreal, August 1919, during his tour of Canada. As well as playing with Willie Mulligan in Nova Scotia, he also played two rounds with Karl Keffer at Royal Ottawa.

In the spring of 1919, Mulligan did not return to Royal Ottawa as assistant professional. Instead, after “the winter season was over at the southern resort [Jekyll Island] he returned to Canada and was connected with the Yarmouth Country Club of Nova Scotia. At this club he had some golf games with the Prince of Wales who was on a visit to Canada, as well as with some ‘government house’ people” (*Montgomery Advertiser*, 14 December 1922, p. 3).

In 1920, however, he once again returned to Royal Ottawa as assistant pro, and did so again in 1921, but in the summer of 1922, he was again in the Maritimes, this time on Prince Edward Island at the Charlottetown Golf Club. In the fall of 1922, Keffer helped Willie to land the head pro position at the Country Club of Montgomery in Alabama. For the next ten years, Willie had a winter gig at one or another of the top courses in Alabama.

Keffer taught the Mulligan boys how to instruct beginners, taught them how to play golf, and not only introduced them to tournament golf, but also encouraged them to have ambitions of winning – particularly Willie.

When the latter wrote to an Ottawa newspaper in the spring of 1920 that he was determined to compete for Canadian Open championships, the newspaper noted that “He was a student of the Ottawa expert [Keffer] who taught him all the fine points of the game” (*Ottawa Journal*, 26 March 1920, p. 20). Keffer took Willie with him to the Quebec Golf Association championships of 1920, for instance, where Willie won the assistant professionals’ championship “by a comfortable margin” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 19 June 1920, p. 22). Later that year, he finished second in the assistant professionals’ division of the Canadian PGA championship. When Willie seemed to score in the mid-70s every time he played the Donald Ross course in the winter of 1922, Keffer made sure the newspapers back in Ottawa knew that his apprentice was achieving great scores on a difficult course. When Keffer informed the *Ottawa Journal* that his protégé was going to Prince Edward Island for the summer of 1922, the sportswriter gushed: “More will be heard of this brilliant young player!” (3 April 1922, p. 11).

Keffer was continually burnishing his assistant’s reputation with a view to placing him in head pro positions.

Still, despite the fact that Keffer kept an eye out for head pro positions for his assistant pros, it may have been Willie who asked Keffer to lobby on his behalf for the position at Pembroke. After he had arrived in Alabama, he wrote to Ralph Reville, the editor of *Canadian Golfer*, requesting old copies of the magazine:

William Mulligan, formerly Karl Keffer’s clever young assistant at the Royal Ottawa, writes under recent date:

“I am now at the Country Club of Montgomery, Alabama, acting pro. This is one of the best courses in the South for greens. I would be much obliged if you could send me along some of your back numbers of ‘Canadian Golfer,’ as while in Canada I was an ardent reader of your magazine.” (vol 8 no 8 [December 1922], p. 673)

And so, he would have read during his winter in Alabama of the opening of the new Pembroke course in the spring.

But whatever the case may be in regard to who hatched the plan to put Mulligan in Pembroke, as of April, the new golf club not only had a resident golf professional who could teach new club members how to play the game, but also had a course superintendent familiar with Keffer’s design work in Quebec, Ontario, and Georgia who could bring his mentor’s vision for the Pembroke course to life.

But how long Willie Mulligan stayed at Pembroke is not clear. He seems to have been engaged by the Laurentian Golf and Country Club of Quebec at some point during the 1923 golf season, for we read in April of 1924 that “William Mulligan has been **re-engaged** as the professional of the Laurentian Golf and Country Club” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 17 April 1924, p. 19, emphasis added).

By April of 1923, then, the Pembroke Golf Club had a nine-hole golf course and a bona fide golf professional. What of a clubhouse? It turns out that also agreed at the organization meeting in June of 1922 was that the club would build a “a modest club house” (*Daily British Whig*, 22 June 1922, p. 10).

But although the club may have had a primitive golf course ready for play as early as the end of the 1922 golf season, the clubhouse was not built until the spring of the next year:

To Build a Golf Club House

Five tenders were received for the erection of a club house for the Pembroke Golf Club, Ltd., from plans prepared by W.E. Kieghley, architect, and at the meeting of the directors the contract was awarded to Mr. J.M. Kennedy, whose tender was in the neighbourhood of \$3,300. The building, which will be erected on a mound near the lake shore on the east end of the club’s property on the Petawawa Road, will be of frame construction, ornate in appearance, and in size will be about 61 x 40 feet, with modern interior accommodation and wide outside verandahs. (British Daily Whig, 18 May 1923, p. 5)

Completed by mid-August of 1923, the clubhouse was widely regarded as “attractive,” and it certainly served the golfers’ needs (according to the *Pembroke Standard*):

The club house, while not at all pretentious, is, says the Standard, handsome and sufficiently large to meet present requirements. It contains a large lounge room, attractively decorated, ladies’ locker room and kitchen at one end of the building and gentlemen’s locker room and the electric light plant at the other. A wide verandah at the front overlooks Allumette Lake and another verandah commands a fine view of the golf course. A dock has been built at the shore and the club house can be easily approached either by boat or by auto. (North Bay Nugget, 7 September 1923, p. 8)



Figure 15 Clubhouse of the Pembroke Golf Club, circa 1923.

The “main living room of the new building” could hold at least 150 people for dances (*North Bay Nugget*, 31 August 1923, p. 6).

And it would soon to filled to capacity.

FORMAL OPENING OF PEMBROKE GOLF CLUB

Karl Keffer, Royal Ottawa
Pro', and Others to be
Present at Inauguration.

(Special to The Citizen)
PEMBROKE, Ont., Aug. 17.—

Invitations are being issued for the formal opening of the handsome new club house of the Pembroke Golf Club, Ltd. in the afternoon games will be played over the links and among those taking part will be Mr. Karl Keffer, professional of the Royal Ottawa; Mr. John Cameron, of the Rivermead Club, and a number of others. In the evening there will be dancing. A committee of ladies composed of Mrs. J. G. Fogle, Mrs. J. L. Morris, Mrs. E. A. Dunlop, Miss M. Deacon, Mrs. D. A. Jones, Mrs. E. B. Reed, Mrs. J. W. Smith, will have charge of the opening. The catering will be in charge of the I.O.D.E. of this town.

Figure 16 Ottawa Citizen, 18 August 1923, p.11.

With the clubhouse completed, and with a season of proper work on the golf course behind it, the Pembroke Golf Club organized an official opening at the end of August.

Catered by Pembroke’s Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, the formal inauguration of the Pembroke Golf Club involved a number of events, the main ones being a special golf exhibition match in the afternoon and a dance in the evening for the 150 people who had come to celebrate the official opening of the golf course and the clubhouse.

As was usual in the early twentieth century when a new golf course was officially opened, the exhibition match featured the course designer, Karl Keffer, as one of the participants.

Keffer had not won a golf tournament since late in 1919, when he won the Manitoba Open, but he had entered a period of very good form by the time he visited Pembroke at the end of August in 1923. In June, he lost the Quebec Open by a single

stroke to his great friend and rival Charles R. Murray, who was said to have had a “narrow escape” after a “great fight” with Keffer (*Ottawa Journal*, 23 June 1923, p. 13). In August, Keffer lowered his own record for the Royal Ottawa golf course by a stroke with a three-under-par score of 69.

But who could serve as an appropriate opponent for such a formidably accomplished golfer as Keffer?

That Willie Mulligan was not involved in the exhibition match suggests that by this point in the summer he had already moved on to the Laurentian Golf and Country Club. So Keffer proposed that he play against John (“Jack”) Archibald Cameron (1902-1981), an up-and-coming young amateur player from the Rivermead Golf and Country Club.



Figure 17 John Cameron, *Canadian Golfer*, vol 18 no 3 (July 1932), p. 145.

Cameron, an all-round athlete who would win championships in other sports like hockey and badminton, was developing his golf game quickly and was by 1923 much talked about as a potential future Canadian amateur champion.

Even with a relatively high handicap of 11 in 1922, when he was still nineteen years old, he was invited to join high-ranking amateurs and Ontario’s best professional golfers in a tournament at J.A. Willoughby’s privately-owned course at Georgetown. At the end of the summer, he defeated his brother for the junior championship of Ottawa and District (*Ottawa Journal*, 31 August 1922, p. 14).

So Keffer certainly expected more than token opposition from young Cameron. And so, sure enough, on “the occasion of the opening of the course,” Cameron shot not just the best round of the day, but recorded the lowest total ever recorded at the Pembroke course: a nine-hole score of 39.

In subsequent years, both Keffer and Cameron went on to greater golf accomplishments. For instance, Keffer won the Quebec Open in 1927, and Cameron won it in 1928.

Interestingly, Cameron's course record would fall less than three months after it was established when club member J. McLaren Beatty shot 37 (*North Bay Nugget*, 9 November 1923, p. 8). But Cameron may not have noticed, or even cared, for he was on to a greater adventure.



Figure 18 Jack Cameron in his Team Canada uniform, January 1924.

Cameron moved to Toronto in the fall of 1923 to play goaltender for the Toronto Granites, the hockey team that would represent Canada in Chamonix, France, at the first ever Winter Olympic Games in January and February of 1924.

And so just months after his record-setting exhibition match against Keffer at Pembroke, 21-year-old Cameron was sailing across the Atlantic Ocean for France.

The Canadian team was the best by far in the Olympic hockey tournament. It easily won the gold medal. Indeed, Cameron allowed only one goal to be scored against him during the entire tournament.

Cameron later chafed at talk that because Canada's hockey team had been so superior to its opponents, its goaltender had had so little to do in each game that he had had little role in the victories. A story frequently told of him, for instance, was that because his teammates held the opposition in their own end of the rink for long stretches of each game, Cameron became so bored that he regularly skated to the side of the rink to flirt with French girls in the stands.



Figure 19 Jack Cameron, in net, during Team Canada's match against the United States in Chamonix, France, 1924.

Cameron's frustration with this narrative was longstanding, but it was somewhat alleviated fifty years later.

In 1974, during the eight-game series between the Soviet Union hockey team and representatives of the World Hockey Association (WHA), Cameron was pleased that in recognition of his contribution to Canada's international hockey success fifty years before he was asked to appear on live television to present the MVP awards to Bobby Hull and Valeri Kharlamov after the first game of the series in Quebec City.

One might have discussed many other figures in addition to Jack Cameron, Karl Keffer, Willie Mulligan, and John Worthington Smith in an essay about the first two years in the history of the Pembroke Golf Club, especially the other club members who served on the board of directors – not to mention their wives, who generally undertook to manage the social life of the club and who were leaders in the formation of a ladies' club, which in 1924 began play for the Dunlop Cup, symbolizing the ladies' club championship.

And beginning in 1924, there were golf professionals from England and Scotland who oversaw the grounds and instructed club members well into the 1930s before homegrown talent succeeded them.

All these people, in their own ways, exhibited “habits of success” such as President Smith was famous for, and these habits may have been their greatest legacy to succeeding generations of club members who have ever since been stewards of a golf club whose continuing success is affirmed by its 100th anniversary.