

The Father of Golf in Canada: Andrew Whyte Smith



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Introduction

On September 1st, 1900, ten golfers from Ontario and Quebec gathered at the Quebec Golf Club for a tournament to be held that day on the fourteen-hole course at Cove Field.

These players had been invited by the Royal Canadian Golf Association to make up the Canadian golf team that would engage ten men from the United States in the third annual international golf match between “the pick of the amateur golfists in Canada and the United States” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 18 August 1900, p. 1).



Figure 1 Andrew Whyte Smith (1849-1901). *Official Golf Guide 1899*, ed. Josiah Newman (New York: Privately Printed, 1899), p. 312.

The oldest player on either team, at fifty-one years of age, was Andrew Whyte Smith (1849-1901).

Smith had also played for Canada in 1898 and 1899 (the photograph to the left shows him with the 1898 team). But this international team match would be his last.

When he died in the summer of 1901, the *Globe* revealed that “He had been in poor health **for some time**” (20 July 1901, p. 19, emphasis added). In Scotland, the *Daily Record* of Glasgow said that he “died after a **lingering** illness” (13 August 1901, 4, emphasis added). So, it seems likely that by the time of the third international golf match late in the summer of 1900, Smith was experiencing the effects of the illness that would kill him ten months later.

The *Montreal Star* reported in August, just a week before the tournament was to begin, that, “Unfortunately, Mr. A.W. Smith, Toronto, who made such a valiant stand in the match last season, ... will be unable to play” (24 August 1900, p. 6).

The year before, Smith had been the only Canadian player to win a round against an American player – and that player was the reigning US amateur champion – so his absence would have been noteworthy.

But this report was premature, and ultimately proved to be incorrect: Smith played, after all.

Still, a week later, in an article about the impending contest, Toronto's *Saturday Night* magazine warned golf fans that "The veteran A.W. Smith is not feeling at all on his mettle"; and yet it seems to have been agreed both by team selectors and by golf fans in general that "No Canadian [golf] team would ... be complete without this grand old golfer, who may be said to be the father of the game in Canada, and even on a decidedly off day can play the majority of our scratch men to a standstill" (1 September 1900, p. 6).

It turns out that from 1881 to 1901, Andrew Smith was widely recognized as Canada's best golfer – whether amateur or professional. When he died, Glasgow's *Daily Record* confidently predicted "he will be long remembered in connection with the history of the game in the Dominion" (13 August 1901, p. 4).

Alas, how wrong the Glasgow newspaper's prediction proved to be! Few people today have even heard of him.

This biographical essay sets out to restore Andrew Whyte Smith to his rightful place in Canadian golf history.

Family Background in St Andrews

Born 6 February 1849 in St Andrews, Scotland, Andrew Whyte Smith entered a family that was large already, and would get even larger in the years after he was born.

Andrew shared a birthday with his twin sister Agnes. These two were the seventh and eighth of the eleven children born between 1838 and 1856 to Thomas Smith (1804 - mid-1860s) and Christian Wallace Thomson (1815 - 1885), who were married in St Andrews in November of 1836.

Paterfamilias Thomas Smith was a Master Baker, and despite the fact that his wife Christian was almost perpetually pregnant between 1837 and 1856, she may well have worked alongside her husband in the bakery, for she later seems to have become a Master Baker herself.

Note that Christian's uncle Robert Wallace was a twenty-seven-year-old baker in St Andrews when he unexpectedly died in 1820. Given how few bakeries there were in St Andrews in 1820, it is possible – if not likely – that Christian's future husband – sixteen-year-old Thomas Smith – was an apprentice of Wallace's when the latter died. And if the Wallace and Thomson families maintained the bakery after Robert died, Christian may well have acquired experience working in a bakery even before she met her future husband, Thomas Smith.

By the 1840s, with the business of Thomas and Christian Smith thriving, and the family expanding every other year, the couple hired a nanny to take charge of their children. Mind you, no nanny could replace Christian, who would prove to be the biggest influence in the lives of her children: she was a strong, independent woman with a will that would not be brooked.

When her husband Thomas died in the mid-1860s at about the age of sixty (when Andrew was still in his teens), Christian took over the bakery. By 1871, she was employing two men (including one of her sons) and two boys (who may have been her apprentices).

And note that Christian was not misnamed: she seems to have been a very devout Presbyterian. Every Sunday afternoon of their childhood, her children were required by Christian to recite to her what she regarded as the Golden Text of the Bible: "For god so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). And she was fond of telling her children instructive stories from the Old Testament.

It is possible that the Andrew Smith who was elected to the executive committee of the Young Men's Christian Association in June of 1870 was her son. The new committee of which he was a part set about a renewal of the organization: "The meetings of these young men are conducted altogether in a more orderly manner than formerly" (*Fifeshire Journal*, 9 June 1870, p. 5).

Inevitably, Christian became a dominant figure in her children's emotional lives.

For instance, her eldest son, William Thomson Smith (born in 1838), who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company in the Canadian West during the tumultuous 1860s and 1870s, seems to have sustained himself psychologically while living so far from all that he knew and loved by writing to her regularly: "a few lines every day in a voluminous letter" (*A Gentleman Adventurer*, p. 179).

I quote here from *A Gentleman Adventurer: A Story of the Hudson's Bay Company* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1924), a novel written by William Thomson Smith's London, Ontario, neighbour, Mary McGregor (1876-1961), who went by the penname Marian Keith. During what would prove to be the last year of Smith's long life, she had interviewed him extensively about his life and times in order to turn his life story into a novel. It was published in 1924, the year Smith died. She dedicated the book to him:

To the memory of My Dear Friend,

MR. WILLIAM THOMPSON [sic] SMITH,

And

The many happy days we spent together recalling his

experiences as an officer of the company of gentleman adventurers,

This Book Is Lovingly Dedicated.

Marian Keith. London, Ont.

She changed the names of the people involved in Smith's adventures, because many of their descendants had by the 1920s come to hold important positions in Canadian society, but the events described seem to be historically accurate. I assume that her frequent descriptions of the main character's thoughts about his mother reflect what William had told the novelist about his own relationship with his mother.

It seems, then, that when William fell asleep after a difficult day, he often dreamed of her. And he lived for the receipt of her packages from St Andrews, which made their way into the Canadian West from Minnesota (after as much as a year in transit). These packages contained both her letters with news of home and year-old Scottish newspapers. He read and re-read everything many times.

William had apparently deferred thoughts of marriage until he was almost forty because of his intense emotional relationship with his mother: up until the point she died, it seems, his “mother had been his comrade and sweetheart” (*A Gentleman Adventurer*, p. 36).

Readers curious about William’s relationship with his mother might wish to consult Sigmund Freud’s writings on the Oedipus Complex, in which he argues that a son who is overly invested in a loving worship of his mother may well end up a lifelong bachelor.

And consulting Freud may also help with an understanding of younger brother Andrew. He was even more successful than his older brother in deferring thoughts of marriage: in fact, he never got married.



Figure 2 Madras College, St Andrews, circa 1838.

With their bakery prospering, the Smiths made sure that their children received the best education possible, enrolling them in Madras College at St Andrews (known locally as “The Madras”).

This college was an exemplary school in Britain, famous for its system of using older students – who had been previously taught the lessons by the school’s Masters – to teach the younger students in turn.

Of course, the friends that Smith chummed with were also students at The Madras.

In its obituary notice about him many decades later, the *St Andrews Citizen* recalled that Smith “was a school mate of the famous professionals, David Strath and Tommy Morris” (10 August 1901, p. 4). Smith was a better student than the friends he called Davie and Tommy. The latter, however, were less interested in school than their friend Andrew. They made the decision as teenagers to become golf professionals. Andrew, however, began as a teenager to work as a clerk in a local bank – a job he pursued in one form or another for the rest of his life.

Although it had been clear from the beginning that Andrew was the better student at “the Madras,” it would take a few years to sort out which of the three boys was the best student at golf.

Learning Golf in St Andrews

Remembering Andrew Smith when news arrived in 1901 that he had died, the *Glasgow Evening Times* recalled that “At an early age he evinced a liking for the game, and quickly became a formidable player” (cited in the *Globe* [Toronto], 30 August 1901).

The young boys of St Andrews who would become the dominant amateur and professional golfers of the 1860s and 1870s did not necessarily begin their golf careers on the links of St Andrews. Instead, as Roger McStravick points out, when they were still too young to be allowed onto the golf course, they played a form of “street golf” along North Street, which appears in the 1870 photograph below (*In the Footsteps of Old Tom Morris* [St Andrews: St Andrews Golf Press, 2015], p. 73).



Figure 3 North Street, St Andrews, circa 1870. McStravick, p. 73.

In time, however, Smith learned to play proper golf on the most famous golf course in the world, the Old Course at St Andrews.

And he played dozens of matches over that links course against some of the best golfers in the world – particularly Young Tom Morris (who won the Open Championship four times: 1868-70, 1872) and Davie Strath (who had seven top-ten finishes in the Open and tied for first place in the Open Championship of 1876, in which he refused to play-off for first place because of a rules dispute).



Figure 4 Young Tom Morris, circa 1870.

Many of the young boys of St Andrews who were smitten with golf in the 1860s – Andrew Smith, Davie Strath, and the latter’s two brothers, Andrew and George, who became professional golfers like their brother (Andrew actually winning the 1865 Open) – were attracted to the golf shop of Old Tom Morris, where they liked to hang out with golf prodigy Young Tom:

He used to be found in the back shop of his father’s, sitting away up at the end of the bench “nicking” balls. Every ball was so treated by hand, as the moulds were all smooth.

And there were great matches made between him and Davie Strath, Jimmie Anderson, Bob Kirk, and other bygone heroes, as the work progressed. We boys gravitated, naturally, to that back shop, and breathed into our nostrils the breath of golf. (“Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forget, by ‘The Colonel,’” Golf, vol 11 no 1 [July 1902], p. 16)



Figure 5 Reverend Dr. J.G. McPherson.

Reverend Dr. J.G. McPherson, a prominent St Andrews amateur golfer (he was known as the longest driver of his day in the 1860s, and he subsequently became a well-respected writer about golf), witnessed the development of Andrew Smith’s golf game and later wrote about it.

Six years older than Andrew Smith, McPherson was a divinity student at St Andrews University who was regarded by many as the unofficial “amateur champion” of the game in the early 1860s. He was “a terror to all golfers, amateur or professional, who dared oppose

him”; in fact, “He alone could keep Tommy Morris in check” (“Reminiscences, by ‘The Trilobite,’” *Golf*, vol 3 no 6 [December 1898], p. 345).



Figure 6 David Strath, in William Weir Tulloch, *The Life of Tom Morris* (London: T. Werber Laurie, 1909), p. 170 a.

According to McPherson, Andrew Smith (whose nickname was “Curl”), Davie Strath, and Tommy Morris were obsessed with golf, and “In their ‘teens’ the three were playing regularly with each other” (McPherson, “The Second Stroke,” *Golf* vol 4 no 1 [January 1899], p. 12). The *Glasgow Evening Times* recalled that “many a stiff match took place between them” (cited in *Globe* [Toronto], 30 August 1901).

As to the question of who was in those days the best young golfer in St Andrews, McPherson says that “for many a day it was a toss up between him [Smith] and Tommy Morris and Davie Strath” (McPherson, “The Right Stroke at the Right Time,” *Golf*, vol 4 no 3 [March 1899], p. 136).

McPherson notes, however, that “Curl [Smith] kept to his own business, while the others took to professional golfing, otherwise he would have been equally well known” (“St Andrews Golf,” *The Golfer*, vol 6 no 6 [April 1898], p. 233).

And so, “Curl” Smith would not become a professional golfer: his destiny was to become one of Scotland’s and Canada’s top amateur golfers.

The Rose Golf Club

Certainly, as a young boy, “Smith had capital training” in the game, and he kept up his training when boyhood was over: “While a clerk in a St Andrews bank, he used to play a round every summer’s evening with Tommy Morris or Davie Strath” (McPherson, “The Second Stroke,” p. 12).



Figure 7 Photograph of Rose Golf Club members ranged around their champion, Young Tom Morris, 1870. Courtesy of University of St Andrews Libraries and Museums.

Working as a clerk at a local bank made Smith eligible for membership in the Rose Golf Club of St Andrews, established in 1868 for “drapers, writers, clerks, etc.” (*Dundee Advertiser*, 13 April 1868, p. 4).

As Roger McStravick observes, “This club was made up of the educated young men of the town, including Tommy Morris. They were, up to that point, not old enough to be allowed into the respectable Thistle Club, but yet not overly keen to be frequenting with the caddies of the Mechanics Golf Club” (*In the*

Footsteps of Old Tom Morris [St Andrews: St Andrews Golf Press, 2015], p. 20).

Joining Smith in the club in addition to Tommy Morris were both Davie Strath and Jamie Anderson (who would win three Open Championships in a row between 1877 and 1879).

After Young Tom won the Championship Belt in 1870 (his third win in a row, which entitled him to outright ownership of the Belt), Smith and his fellow club members gathered to celebrate the momentous event in the local establishment where they regularly met to conduct club business, “The Golf Inn”: “When news of Tommy’s third Open win came through from Prestwick, ... The Golf Inn was the place to be. It heaved with everyone who was anyone on the Links” (McStravick, p. 20).

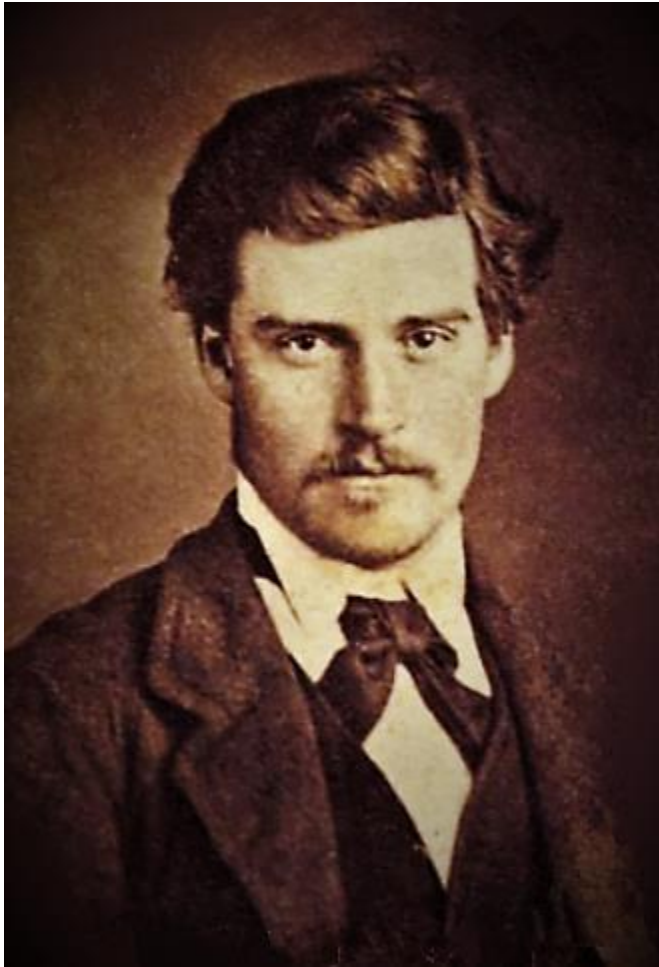


Figure 8 I believe this figure from the 1870 photograph above of Rose Golf Club members is 21-year-old A.W. Smith. His nickname was “Curl”: was that because of his hair?

In the Rose Golf Club’s competitions, Smith played in 1872 as one of the scratch players, as Davie Strath had done in 1868. Note, however, that in the nineteenth-century, a scratch player was not necessarily a golfer capable of shooting par scores, but rather simply one of the best players at a golf club. Regardless of whether such players took (on average) seventy, or eighty, or ninety strokes to complete eighteen holes of golf, their scores were the scratch basis for handicapping all the other members of the golf club.

Of the three young golfers who played so much golf together, Smith, Davie Strath, and Tommy Morris, McPherson observes that “next to Allan Robertson, Tommy Morris was the best player that ever lived,” whereas “Davie Strath had the best style of all,” and so “Smith had therefore an exceptionally good opportunity for learning all the points of the

game, as well as of acquiring the perfect style” (McPherson, “The Second Stroke,” p. 12).

Smith and the St Andrews Swing

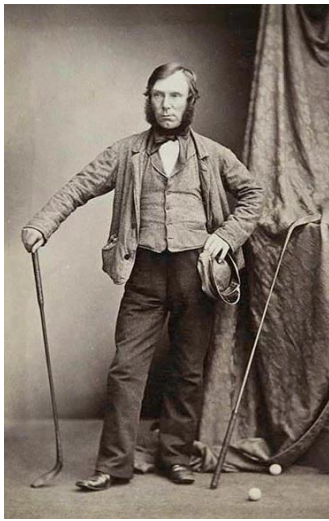


Figure 9 Allan Robertson, late 1850s.

The golf swing that Smith acquired, according to McPherson, was the classic St Andrews swing of Allan Robertson, the world's greatest golfer until his death in 1859 (when it was agreed to hold an Open Championship to decide his successor as best golfer). McPherson said: "I do not think that Andrew Smith ever saw Allan Robertson play in a big match Yet [he] ..., with me, inherited Allan's marvellous swing... [G]enerally speaking, Allan marked the St Andrews style" (McPherson, "St Andrews and Golf," *The Golfer*, vol 6 no 6 [April 1898], p. 233). The "St Andrews style" preceded today's style, in which we draw the club back over our heads. For more than 400 years before this, the club was drawn around the side of the body at shoulder height, the torso remaining vertical, as seen in the images below of the backswings of Smith and Young Tom's brother James.



Figure 10 Left: A.W. Smith, sketched in the *New York Journal and Advertiser*, 9 October 1899, p. 8. Right: James ("Jim") Morris, in Sir Walter Simpson, *The Art of Golf* (Edinburgh 1887), p. 64.

The left arm remains straight today, but the left arm bent around the torso in the St Andrews swing

(as it does for a baseball batter), straightening only on the downswing. The result was a relatively flat, roundhouse swing. Whereas today's swing (apart from the driver swing) bottoms out beyond the ball after the latter has been struck with a descending blow, the St Andrews swing picked the ball off the ground, hitting it slightly on the upswing. This swing seldom produced a divot. The result of the swing was a low, line-drive shot with little spin.

And the Scotsman who would become the grand old man of Canadian golf retained the St Andrews swing to the end. In 1899, McPherson marvelled that even though Smith was "in his fiftieth year," and "getting stout," "Yet he has the true St Andrews style" (McPherson, "The Second Stroke," p. 12). He returned to the topic in another article written later in 1899: "Yet Mr. Andrew Smith, of Toronto, can show a style – even at his age – which brings out the innate facui [sic] of the St Andrews player in the days of Tommy Morris and Davie Strath, when skill regulated force" (*Golf*, vol 5 no 1 [1 July 1899], p. 10).

The *Glasgow Evening Times* remembered the virtuosity of Smith's swing in its obituary notice: "Standing about 5 feet 8 inches and of an athletic build, he had a fine, free swing, and [as] a graceful, hard hitter, Mr. Smith would be hard to beat even by the leading men of to-day" (cited in *Globe* [Toronto], 30 August 1901).

A Dundee Interlude

A.W. Smith seems to have spent part of 1871 working in Dundee, where he played golf on the Carnoustie Golf Links. In fact, “While located in Dundee, he took a prominent place in one of the tournaments held at Carnoustie in the early seventies” (*Glasgow Evening Times*, cited in *Globe* [Toronto], 30 August 1901).



Figure 11 Tournament play on the Carnoustie Golf Links circa 1870. From the website of the Carnoustie Golf Club.

In those days, Carnoustie hosted an annual tournament, comprising three separate competitions on three successive days: the first, a tournament for professional golfers; the second, a tournament for “gentleman amateurs”; the third, a tournament for “Artisans.”

Each tournament required competitors to make three rounds of the ten-hole course. Smith’s good friend Davie Strath “played a really brilliant game” and won the professional tournament by a stroke (*Field*, vol 37 no 960 [20 May 1871], p. 412). Strath had taken 137 strokes. Taking 150 strokes, Smith tied for second place among the thirty gentleman amateur contestants from England and Scotland (he subsequently lost the playoff for second place, and so had to settle for the third prize).

A St Andrews Clerk's Golf

In its obituary notice of the death of A.W. Smith, the *Dundee Evening Post* recalled that he “was once a well-known figure on the St Andrews links,” where he “had gained a strong golfing position” (6 August 1901, p. 5). The *St Andrews Citizen* observed that before Smith went to Canada, he had already “gained some fame,” for he had “won prizes in tournaments both at St Andrews and Glasgow” (10 August 1901, p. 4).

At the Carnoustie tournament in the spring of 1871, Smith had been listed as a player from St Andrews. By the end of the year, he seems to have been back in St Andrews, where on December 30th he teamed up with Davie Strath for a match-play victory over two amateur members of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. Smith's residence in Dundee seems not to have lasted long enough for his golf affiliation to have changed.

The next summer, playing off scratch, Smith finished second in the Rose Golf Club's “half-yearly competition,” an eighteen-hole handicap contest (*North British Daily Mail* [Glasgow], 9 July 1872, p. 5). In the fall of 1872, he represented St Andrews at the St Nicholas Golf Club whose members played on the Prestwick Links. Alongside the St Nicholas Club's William Hunter (an amateur golfer who had finished 8th in that year's Open Championship while playing alongside the eventual champion Young Tom Morris), Smith played “a fine game” (*North British Daily Mail*, 29 October 1872, p. 6).



Figure 12 James ("Jim") Ogilvy Fairlie Morris (1856 – 1906).

Smith played in Rose Golf Club competitions until at least the beginning of 1874. In January, he finished seventh in a tournament that included both Young Tom's younger brother James Ogilvy Fairie Morris and Davie Strath's older brother George (*Field*, vol 43 no 1098 [10 January 1874], p. 41).

By the fall of 1874, Smith had gone “west” – that is, had moved to the “West of Scotland” – where he became a member of the Glasgow Golf Club.

Yet even after he had left his golfing haunts in St Andrews and Dundee for Glasgow, Smith regularly returned to play at the Old Course. In fact, in the 1870s, when the Old Course became part of the

rota of three golf courses (along with Prestwick and Musselburgh) where the Open Championship was played, he could not stay away.



Figure 13 Burial Ground, St Andrews Cathedral.

And, of course, twenty-six-year-old Andrew Smith returned to his beloved hometown for the saddest of funerals when his friend Tommy Morris died on Christmas Day in 1875 at just twenty-four years of age.

Immediately a plan was made to seek donations from golf clubs across Scotland for the purpose of building a proper memorial over Young Tom's grave (it is seen to the left). When Smith returned to Glasgow, he acted as the Glasgow Golf Club's receiver of subscriptions for this memorial.

A Glaswegian Clerk's Golf

Smith moved to Glasgow sometime in 1874. Whereas in St Andrews he had worked as a bank clerk, by the end of his stay in Glasgow in the early 1880s, he had become a law clerk.

As soon as he arrived in Glasgow, he joined the Glasgow Golf Club, which had been dormant for about forty years before its revival in 1870. In 1873, it moved onto the grounds of Alexandra Park, where a ten-hole course was laid out. Although we read that “The portion of Alexandra Park which has been formed into a golf course is a beautiful stretch of undulating ground skirting the banks of the Monkland Canal,” what struck the artist John Smart when he sketched the course in the mid-1880s (the sketch is seen below) was the proliferating and polluting industrial mills and factories of Glasgow that formed the backdrop to this otherwise attractive park (*Field*, vol 45 no 1160 [20 March 1875], p. 293).



Figure 14 John Smart's sketch from the mid-1880s of the Glasgow Golf Club's 10-hole golf course at Alexandra Park.

Smith's participation in club events began late in the fall of 1874 when he played in a December “match between the members of the Glasgow Golf Club residents on the north side and those on the south side,” Smith represented the north side (*Glasgow Herald*, 8 December 1874, p. 7).

Smith lived in apartments at 145 West George Street in a prosperous part of Glasgow's north side.



Figure 15 Glasgow's West George Street in the late nineteenth century. The photographer stands near Smith's apartment building at 145 West George Street.

Within a few months, Smith became an important member of the Glasgow Golf club's executive committee: "Mr. A.W. Smith was appointed joint secretary along with Mr. Gordon Smith," who had been secretary since the revival of the club in 1870 (*Field*, vol 45 no 1160 [20 March 1875], p. 293). He maintained this position until he left for Canada in the spring of 1881.

On 20 March 1875, immediately after the Glasgow Golf Club's annual meeting at which Smith was appointed joint secretary, club members played two rounds of the ten-hole course in the annual scratch competition for the Rae Arthur award: Smith finished first with a score of 82 ("He played a very steady game, his driving on some occasions being particularly good"; second place went to William Doleman, who had taken one more stroke (*Field*, vol 45 no 1160 [20 March 1875], p. 293).

Doleman was a Glasgow resident (like Smith, a north-sider) who had been forced to join the St Nicholas Club at Prestwick in the late 1860s before the revival of the Glasgow Golf Club in 1870. With this close contest between them in the spring of 1875, they began a rivalry for the honour of club champion that would last seven years.



Figure 16 William Doleman (1838-1918).

Their friendly rivalry would become the occasion of one of the historical coincidences that the golf gods seem to favour. In 1859, when Doleman was a sailor in Britain's merchant fleet, taking his golf clubs with him on voyages around the world, he had played golf on a rudimentary course that he laid out on Cove Field on the Plains of Abraham at Quebec City. Thirty-one years later In 1890 his friend A.W. Smith would become a member of the Quebec Golf Club and win that year's club championship by setting the course record on a fourteen-hole course laid out over the same Cove Field.

Before Smith and Doleman met at the Glasgow Golf Club in the mid-1870s, Doleman had become well-acquainted with Smith's long-time friends Tommy Morris, Davie Strath, and Jamie Anderson. In fact, at the 1870 Open Championship, Doleman had orchestrated the conversation amongst

them that resulted in the invention of the concept of par.

For the first 500 of golf history, there had been no such thing as a par score for a golf hole or for a golf course. The goal of the golfer was to take as few strokes as possible to complete a golf hole and, in turn, a golf course: for neither a golf hole nor a golf course was there recognized a theoretically proper number of strokes that a first-class golfer should take in completing them.

PRESTWICK GOLF CLUB.
THE CHAMPION BELT.

Mr. Y. Morris Junr. #1869

1ST ROUND.		2D ROUND.	
STROKES.	HOLES.	STROKES.	HOLES.
6	111111	6	111111
4	1111	4	1111
4	1111	4	1111
6	111111	4	111111
5	11111	5	11111
5	11111	6	11111
3	111	7	1111
1	1	8	1111
6	111111	9	111111
3	111	10	1111
3	111	11	1111
4	1111	12	1111
50		55	
1st Round,			
TOTAL,			

Figure 17 Scorecard of Young Tom Morris for the first two rounds of the 1869 Open Championship at Prestwick, Scotland.

Note the photograph to the left, for instance, which shows the scorecard of Young Tom Morris for the 1869 Open Championship at Prestwick Golf Club in Scotland: it simply lists by number the twelve holes in the order in which they were to be played, with neither a yardage indicated for any hole, nor a par score indicated for any hole.

As things turned out, Young Tom won the three-round championship on this twelve-hole course by eleven strokes, his second win in a row, and in doing so he recorded the first hole-in-one in Open Championship history on the eighth hole during the first round (as recorded on the scorecard shown to the left).

At the next Open Championship in 1870, another first occurred in golf history when the word “par” was used in reference to a golf

score in a discussion amongst some of the top competitors who had returned to the same Prestwick course to battle again for the Championship Belt.



Figure 18 Alexander Hamilton Doleman (1836-1914).

The discussion was initiated by William Doleman and his older brother Alexander Hamilton Doleman, two of the top amateur players of the day.

A.H. and William Doleman, along with their younger brother Frank, were sharing a cottage at Prestwick with Scotland’s top three professional golfers: Jaimie Anderson, Davie Strath, and Young Tom Morris. It was assumed that one of these three would win the championship, Young Tom having won the previous two.

Talk amongst the housemates turned to the question of what the professionals thought the winning score would be. American golf writer Charles Quincy Turner summarizes the conversation that ensued:



Figure 19 David Strath (1849-1879).

Davie Strath, Jamie Anderson, Tom Morris, Jr., and the brothers Doleman were staying in the same cottage, when naturally they fell to discussing what score ought to win on the morrow. Some said one thing, some another. At length William Doleman, so says his brother A.H., asked Davie Strath and Jamie Anderson what a certain hole should be done in, if played correctly.

Davie Strath gave the required number at once.



Figure 20 James Anderson (1842-1905).

“Ah!” says Jamie Anderson, “that’s a’ very guid, but what about a bad lyin’ la’?”

“Tut! Tut! says Davie, “that has naethen’ tae dae wi’ it, Jamie; that’s the number you should do it in.”

And Davie laid great stress on the “should.”

By degrees M[r]. W. Doleman led the professionals on to give the “should” for all the other holes.



Figure 21 William Doleman, 1880.

And this ideal, or perfect, round was found to be 49 for the twelve holes.

And then says Davie, “That is the number we should do it in, if we play perfect golf, but I know we won’t do it.”

While Davie was still talking, in walked Tom Morris, Jr.

And hearing what Strath was saying, he shook his head, smiled, and then said, “We’ll hae to try ony how.”



Figure 22 Young Tom Morris (1851-1874).

And Young Tom did try, and made a noble effort, coming within two strokes of perfect golf by holing the thirty-six holes in 149 strokes, very nearly an average of fours.

Mr. A.H. Doleman, thinking it would be a good thing to have some word to indicate the required number of strokes for a hole, and so for the whole round, on an infallible principle, chose the word “par.” (Golf, an Official Bulletin of the U.S.G.A., vol 14 no 2 [February 1904], p. 100)

A.H. Doleman had chosen the word “par” for the number of strokes that a hole should normally take because such a number struck him as analogous to the number used by stock traders to indicate the normal price or “par” value for a stock between the extremes of its high and low prices over time.



Figure 23 Thomas M. Harley (1855-1943), wearing the first-place medal for the 1895 Amateur Championship of Canada.

Marking another of the historical coincidences favoured by the golf gods, Smith and Doleman were in 1875 members of the twelve-man Glasgow Golf Club team that travelled across Scotland to East Lothian to play a friendly match against the team of the Luffness Golf Club, which was led by young Thomas M. Harley, who, twenty years later, in 1895, would win the first Amateur Championship of Canada held in Ottawa, which Smith might well have won if he had not been in Toronto fighting a charge of having played golf on Sunday just a few days before at the Toronto Golf Club (*Glasgow Herald*, 22 May 1875, p. 6).

By 1873, the Glasgow Golf Club had hired its first golf professional: Nicol Patrick. Smith and Doleman regularly played against this professional, either as a two-man team or as individuals, as was the case in April of 1875: “Mr. W. Doleman took a round from Mr. Nicol Patrick by three holes. Mr. A.W. Smith, Mr. W. Doleman, and Mr. Nicol Patrick had a three-ball match, the former winning by two holes” (*Field*, vol 45 no 1165 [24 April 1875], p. 414). Smith and Doleman seem to have been as good as the professional.



Figure 24 George Strath (1843-1919).

The next year, the newspaper reported: “An interesting foursome between Wm. Doleman and Nicol Patrick (prof.) and A.W. Smith and George Strath was played. The former won by two holes up and one to play” (*Northern British Daily Mail*, 10 July 1876, p. 6).

George Strath was the older brother of Davie Strath, the mutual friend of Smith and Doleman. At this time, George Strath seems to have been an amateur golfer, but he would become the professional at Glasgow by 1877.

Smith regularly partnered with Strath in matches at the club against other club members or took a partner to play against Strath in matches that drew many spectators who were interested to see the best golf that the club could offer: "A very interesting match was played between Messrs. A.W. Smith and George D. Low against Messrs. George Strath and John Fraser. Fifty-four holes were played, the former couple winning by three and two to play. A large number of spectators witnessed the game" (*Field*, vol 46 no 1175 [3 July 1875], p. 13). And occasionally all four of the best golfers would play a match: "An interesting foursome came off between W. Doleman and Nicol Patrick (prof.) against A.W. Smith and George Strath, the former couple winning by two up and one to play" (*Field*, vol 48 no 1229 [15 July 1876], p. 83).

Smith played at least two singles matches against George Strath in 1877: in the first, they played two rounds of the Glasgow course, finishing all square; in the second, they played just one round, and Smith "won by 2 holes up and 1 to play" (*Northern British Daily Mail*, 16 October 1877, p. 7).

When Davie Strath came from North Berwick to visit his older brother George in Glasgow, he played a match against the best ball of his old friends "Andy" Smith and "Willie" Doleman:

An exciting match was played between Davie Strath, (prof) from North Berwick, against Wm. Doleman and A.W. Smith, the best of their balls. Davie was in splendid form and won the first round easy by 4 holes up and 3 to play. Starting afresh at this point, the latter won by 2 holes up and 1 to play A number of spectators witnessed this match. (Glasgow Herald, 5 March 1877, p. 5)

Smith and Doleman shared many rounds of golf together, perhaps none as special as their match in the monthly handicap competition at the Glasgow Golf Club in September of 1877, during which the club mustered extraordinary resources to help the two men complete their round in darkness:

The weather ... was all that could be desired, and the only drawback was the length of the grass, which if cut would add considerably to the comfort of the players and a reducing of the scores. Notwithstanding the difficulty, however, A.W. Smith, a scratch player, took the twenty holes at the low score of 88, a very fair figure even with the course at its best and one all the more creditable when it is mentioned that Smith and W. Doleman, who was opponent in the competition, and who scored a 95, played nearly the whole of their rounds Thursday night in the dark. They finished at half-past eight o'clock, and it was only with the aid of a large number of brother golfers that they were able to find their balls after each stroke. At the last hole, a

small fire was lighted by G. Strath, the professional, to guide the players. The golfers present, who had never before seen the game played in the dark, were greatly astonished at the precision with which both Smith and Doleman wielded their clubs under the circumstances.
(Northern British Daily Mail, 19 September 1877, p. 6)

Smith and Doleman travelled to North Berwick late in the summer of 1880 as members of the Glasgow Golf club team of twenty taking on the Edinburgh Viewforth Golf Club that played on the North Berwick links. Doleman's opponent did not show up and the Edinburgh Club achieved an "easy win," but Smith demolished one of the best amateur golfers in Scotland:

The most interesting feature of the match was the meeting of Mr. A.W. Smith, a St Andrews player now resident in Glasgow, one of the cracks of the west, and Mr. A.M. Ross, who is seldom beaten in any amateur match. These players were followed throughout their round by a number of spectators, who, while disappointed at not finding the match so close as had been anticipated, were fortunate in witnessing one of the best performances ever made by an amateur over these links. At the outset, Mr. Smith stepped out in front, and the half round finished in his favour by two strokes In the return journey, Mr. Smith rapidly increased his lead, taking the first five holes with figures which any professional would find it difficult to equal, and when the round was finished, he was ten strokes to the good. (Field, vol 56 no 1447 [18 September 1880], p. 434)

Regularly matched against golf professionals, and regularly compared to golf professionals, Smith was also like golf professionals in regularly accepting matches at the Glasgow Golf club against two-man teams in which he would play his ball against the team's best ball. He seldom lost.

Smith's Biggest Amateur Wins

Aware that in Smith and Doleman it had two of the strongest amateur players in the world, the Glasgow Golf Club organized several big amateur tournaments in which these two could take on the best players that Scotland's other golf clubs had to offer.

Doleman's best performances were to be in Open Championships against the professionals, but Smith won the big amateur tournaments that the Glasgow Golf Club sponsored in the years just before the British Amateur Championship was inaugurated.

First, the Glasgow Golf Club sponsored a "Grand Tournament" at the beginning of 1878, and spared no effort to make it a great showcase for Scottish golf:

The course is now in excellent order and under the care of George Strath, the professional, has improved to a wonderful extent.... An additional incentive to Strath for putting the course into its very best form is the fact that in March a grand tournament is to be held under the auspices of the club. Valuable prizes, both in the shape of money and trophies, are to be then offered for competition, and it is anticipated that the best players produced by the country will come forward. The tournament will extend over March 28th and the two following days, the first of which is to be set apart specially for the professionals, the second for members of invited clubs, and the third for the yearly contest of the Glasgow Club. (Northern British Daily Mail, 3 January, p. 6).

William Doleman won the club championship on March 30th, for which he was awarded the Rae-Arthur Medal. Davie Strath won the professional tournament on March 28th before "a large number of enthusiastic golfers" who followed him during his three rounds of the ten-hole course (*Glasgow Herald*, 29 March 1898, p. 8). He received £10 for his victory over twenty-eight Scottish professionals – "almost every well-known professional in the country" – including former Open Champions such as Old Tom Morris, Willie Park, Mungo Park, Tom Kidd, and Bob Martin (*Northern British Daily Mail*, 29 March 1879, p. 2).

On Friday, March 29th, however, A.W. Smith competed in what was implicitly the amateur championship of Scotland: "Friday is to be devoted to the competition for a valuable cup This contest is open to the members of invited clubs, and invitations, it may be stated, have been sent to all known clubs in the kingdom" (*Northern British Daily Mail*, 25 March 1878, p. 3). And so, "From St Andrews, North Berwick,

Musselburgh, Lanark, Montrose, Prestwick, Leith, and Perth players came forward, all viewing with interest and curious as to who would prove the 'best man' among such a puzzling assemblage of 'cracks'" (*Field*, vol 51 no 1319 [6 April 1878], p. 418).

Whereas twenty-eight professionals had played the day before, almost twice as many golfers entered the amateur competition:



Figure 25 A photograph of the 27-inch-high trophy won by A.W. Smith at the "Grand Tournament" of the Glasgow Golf Club in the spring of 1878. Once the property of Andrew Smith, the trophy was in August of 2020 offered for sale at auction in London, expected to sell for between £30 and £50. The inscription reads: "Glasgow Golf Tournament's Captain's Cup, presented by William Watson, won 29 March 1878 by A.W. Smith at 89 strokes.

uncertain. (Northern British Daily Mail, 30 March 1878, p. 6)

The weather was again beautifully clear yesterday, when there were competed for by amateur members of united clubs a number of prizes, the principal of which was an elegant silver cup, presented by Bailie Wilson, the captain of the local club. The desire for the possession of this trophy was evinced by the large number of golfers that came forward to take part in the contest, and by the long distance which some had come [O]n comparing cards at the close of the match, it was found that William Fernie, St Andrews, and A.W. Smith, Glasgow, had tied for the first place with a total of 89 strokes for the two rounds of ten holes each. The low figure was attained by really excellent play, especially when it is considered that some of the greens, which slope considerably, were so keen by the frost ... that the putting was rendered very

William Fernie would become the golf professional at Troon from 1887 to 1924, and he had in fact competed in the professional tournament the day before, finishing third (four strokes behind Davie Strath).

But Fernie had not accepted the prize money to which he was entitled by his third-place finish. He regarded himself still as an amateur – although when he was a young "lad," as he put it, he had indeed

accepted prize money for winning a tournament – apparently without realizing what that meant for his status in the game.

As he explained in his own words,

A puckle o' us lads played a competition. I won a prize. They offered me money. I took it. And that was my first fee as a professional. It was a wee ane. I thought nae more about it until I went into the Royal and Ancient clubhouse. They had heard what I had done and I was told that I had forfeited my right to enter. I had played for money, was a professional, and had better get out. (<https://www.antiquegolfscotland.com/antiquegolf/maker.php3?makerid=34>)

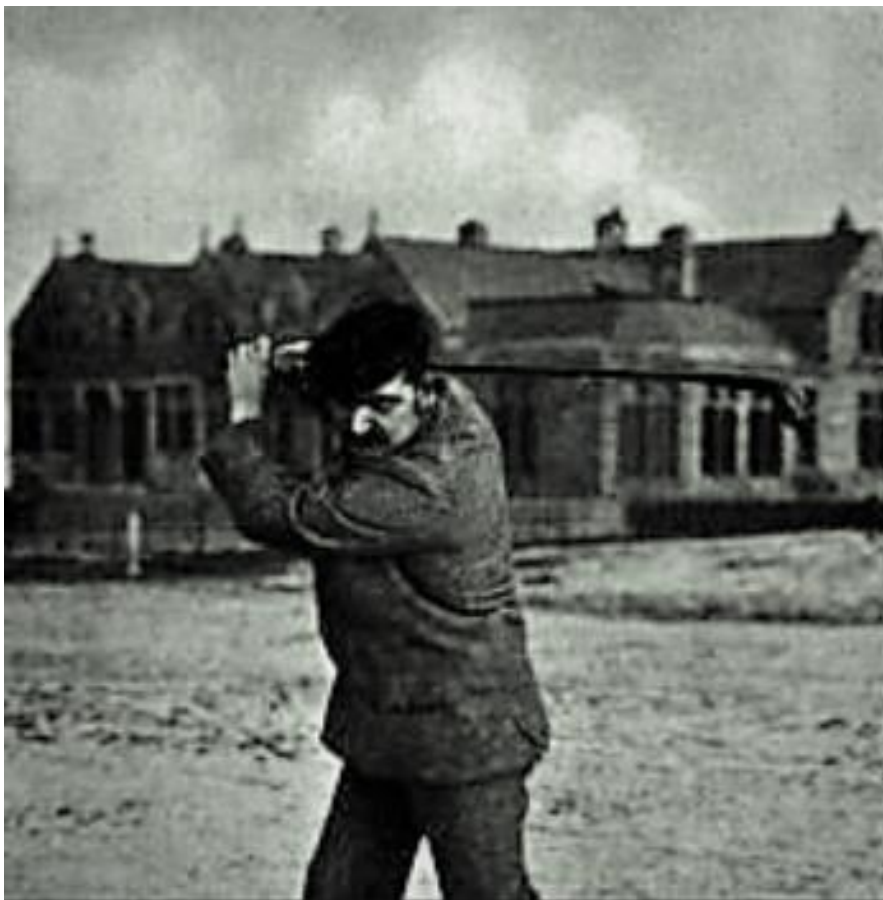


Figure 26 William ("Willie") Fernie demonstrates his St Andrews swing in the late 1880s.

The controversy followed him to the Glasgow Golf Club: "To Fernie's entry there was at first some objections, on the ground that at one time he ranked as a professional, and that, in consequence, he should be debarred from playing; but this objection was overruled by the captain and other officials in favour of Fernie" (*Field*, vol 51 no 1319 [6 April 1878], p. 418).

As the Captain of the Glasgow Club who overruled the objection to Fernie's entry into the

amateur championship was William Wilson, who had donated the elaborate silver "Captain's Cup" that was to be won, his opinion no doubt carried considerable weight.

The playoff between Smith and Fernie was over ten holes:

During the night there had been a considerable fall of snow, but as the morning wore on, however, the snow rapidly disappeared beneath a bright sun, imparting to the putting greens a much-needed softness.... Before the "tie" could be played off, the green had unfortunately got back to that hard and treacherous state that did so much to damage the play of the previous day; several of the putting greens being almost unplayable. In consequence of this, the scores of both men were slightly in excess of their former work. Mr. Smith's knowledge of the green stood him in good stead, and he came in with a 49, against 51 taken by his opponent, and accordingly became the winner of the trophy. (Field, vol 51 no 1319 [6 April 1878], p. 418)

Willie Fernie went on to win the 1883 Open Championship and become a revered figure in Scottish golf history, but Smith's victory over him in the Glasgow Golf Club's "Grand Tournament" of 1878 was significant: it placed Smith at the top of the amateur game in Scotland, a position that he would soon reinforce with two more victories in similar amateur competitions.

As it happens, the task fell to Smith himself to organize the next great Scottish amateur championship, which would award a cup presented by Wilson's successor as Captain of Glasgow Golf Club, Charles Tennant, the local Member of Parliament.

The matter was raised by A.W. Smith at the club's annual spring meeting in 1880:

The members of the Glasgow Golf Club engaged in their annual competition on the ground of the club on Saturday. The weather was beautiful, and considering the heavy rainfall, the ground was in fairly good condition. Thirty-two couples started After a capital game, in which some excellent play was shown, Mr. A.W. Smith won the club [championship] medal with a score of 87 strokes The members of the club dined together in the evening in the Royal Hotel After dinner and the usual loyal and patriotic toasts, Mr. A.W. Smith ... read the annual statement, which bore that the interest in the game was steadily on the increase [and that] the captain (Mr. Chas. Tennant, M.P.) had presented a handsome silver cup for annual competition, for which the members desired to return thanks. (Glasgow Herald, 15 March 1880, p. 6)

The competition was "open to all amateurs" and so, like Wilson's competition for the "Captain's Cup" of 1878, it would implicitly determine the amateur champion of Scotland for 1880 (*North British Daily Mail*, 23 March 1880, p. 7). Unlike Wilson's competition, however, Tennant's competition was not a one-off event; it would be an annual championship: "A competition for the amateur championship takes place in

the Alexandra Park on Saturday, 27th March. The winner holds for a year a beautiful silver cup presented by Mr. Tennant, M.P., and receives a gold medal as a memento of his victory” (*North British Daily Mail*, 15 March 1880, p. 2).

The “beautiful silver cup, presented by ex-Captain Charles Tennant for annual competition,” was described in detail by the *Glasgow Herald*:



Figure 27 Tennant Cup, 27 March 1880.

Amateur Championship at Glasgow ...

The [Tennant] cup is an exquisite piece of workmanship richly ornamented.

On the one side a party of golfers are represented, one of them holing out while his partner is looking on. Caddies are also to be seen in the background with the clubs.

On the other side is the inscription. The names of the winners will be inscribed on the rim, which has been made for that purpose. (29 March 1880, p. 5)

With “the arrangements under his charge,” Smith had less than two weeks to organize this championship (*Glasgow Herald*, 29 March 1880, p. 5).

Smith immediately advertised the tournament in the major newspapers, such as the *Glasgow Herald* and the *Northern British Daily Mail* (as seen below).

GOLF AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP.
This **COMPETITION** for **SILVER CUP** presented by **Mr CHARLES TENNANT, M.P.** (Open to all Amateurs), takes place at **ALEXANDRA PARK, Glasgow, on SATURDAY, 27th March, at 12 o'clock.** Winner receives small **Gold Medal** and holds Cup for year. **Security required, £20.** **Entry Money, 2s 6d, for Prizes.** **Intending Competitors address A. W. Smith, 145 West George Street, Glasgow.**

Figure 28 Northern British Daily Mail, 22 March 1880, p. 1

News of the new “amateur championship” competition spread quickly. Just a week after he had first told the annual meeting of the Glasgow Golf Club about the retiring Captain’s donation of what came to be called the Tennant Cup, we read that “an interesting match is anticipated, a number of crack players from other clubs having intimated their intention to compete” (*North British Daily Mail*, 23 March 1880, p. 7).

And so, less than two weeks after the Tennant Cup had been introduced to the world, twenty-seven of Scotland’s best amateur golfers came to the Glasgow Golf Club’s Alexandra Park grounds for the competition:

Golf

Amateur Championship at Glasgow

This competition took place ... on Saturday, at noon, for a beautiful silver cup, presented by ex-Captain Charles Tennant for annual competition....

Among the first to start was Mr. Doleman, who was looked upon as the probable winner, and as the result will show, this forecast was very nearly accomplished, he having finished his first round [of the ten-hole course] in splendid style for 43 and for the second 45 – total 88 – a score which has only once been beat hitherto....



Mr. A.W. Smith, who a fortnight ago won the club medal at 87 – the lowest score recorded in any previous competition – was also greatly fancied.

The arrangements under his charge, he was consequently amongst the last to start.

At the outset, Mr. Smith appeared to be in fine form, and this he maintained till the finish. His round was accomplished in 42 and the second in 44....

*Mr. Smith was declared winner of the Cup, which he holds for the year, and also receives a small gold medal as a memento of his victory, Mr. Doleman ... taking second. (*Glasgow Herald*, 29 March 1880, p. 5)*

Figure 29 I believe this is a photograph of 31-year-old A.W. Smith on 27 March 1880.

The Glasgow Golf Club regarded the inaugural amateur championship as historically significant, and so for the sake of posterity it arranged to have a photograph taken of the competitors, club officials, club members, and caddies (as shown below).



Figure 30 Competitors, club officials, club members, and caddies at the first annual tournament to decide the amateur championship of Scotland, 27 March, 1880.

Smith also entered the competition for the Tennant Cup the next year. On 23 April 1881, at the Glasgow Golf Club, “a keen contest took place”, although “in the early part of the day the rain fell heavily.” Still, “the play was watched with great interest by a large number of spectators”:

Last year, the first occasion on which the cup was played for, Mr. A.W. Smith was the winner, and Mr. Smith and his partner, Mr. Finlayson of Edinburgh, had a large following on Saturday. Mr. Smith was in magnificent form. He started with a couple of threes, each of the holes being well taken at four, and the round of nine holes, the par of which is 39, he finished at 40. The second round was gone over in an almost equally faultless manner at 41 His total of 81 was

an excellent performance.... When all the cards had been handed in, it was found that Mr. Smith had carried off the cup for a second time. (Glasgow Evening Post, 25 April 1881, p. 4)

His friend William Doleman eventually won the Tennant Cup in 1884.



Figure 31 The Tennant Cup, 2022.

The competition for this cup is still conducted annually today (the oldest continuing amateur stroke-play championship in the world).

There have been so many winners since 1880, however, that the cup has had rings added to its base – like the National Hockey League’s Stanley Cup – to accommodate the names of these winners.

At the Glasgow Golf Club’s annual meeting in March of 1881, Smith yielded the office of club secretary to another member. Smith’s arrangements for immigration to Canada had already been made, so he would not be able to serve as secretary for the 1881 golf season.

Three days after this annual meeting, Smith played one of his last matches at the Glasgow Golf Club on the first day of spring in 1881. Playing with his regular partner William Doleman, Smith won the club championship medal for the second year in a row, his friend Doleman finishing in second place. And he also won the prestigious handicap competition that day, playing off scratch.

Winning these two prizes in his last month in Scotland, along with the Tennant Cup, Smith certainly went out with a bang.

1870s Open Championships

After Young Tom's three successive victories in the Open Championship from 1868 to 1870, resulting in the Championship Belt becoming his personal possession, there was no championship held in 1871, but with a new trophy having been produced (the famous Claret Jug), the Open Championship was held again in 1872, to rotate annually between the courses of St Andrews, Prestwick, and Musselburgh.

Smith entered the competition at St Andrews in 1876, representing the Glasgow Golf Club. His friend William Doleman also played in the contest. The newspaper clipping below shows the pairings.

In addition to the cup there were eight money prizes. The following 17 couples entered the competition:—

1. Tom Morice, Blackheath, and J. O. F. Morris, St Andrews.
2. George Paxton and Mungo Park, Musselburgh.
3. Willie Park, Musselburgh, and Tom Morris, St Andrews.
4. Bob Kirk and Jamie Anderson, St Andrews.
5. David Anderson and Walter Gourlay, St Andrews.
6. Davie Strath, North Berwick, and Bob Dow, Montrose.
7. D. Simpson and Willie Thomson, Elie.
8. Bob Martin and Tom Kidd, St Andrews.
9. Robert Kinsman and David Ayton, St Andrews.
10. David Lamb, London, and W. Honeyman, St Andrews.
11. Mr Henry Lamb, London, and J. Thomson, Bruntsfield Links.
12. J. Halkerston, St Andrews, and W. Doleman, Glasgow.
13. Major Boothby and Mr Andrew Smith, Glasgow.
14. Mr J. Miller, Greenock, and Sergt.-Major Griffiths, St Andrews.
15. Alexander Disbart and Davie Corstorphine, St Andrews.
16. James Fenton ("The Skipper"), St Andrews, and Mr Charles Anderson, Leslie.
17. Mr W. Brand and Mr W. E. Brand, Dundee.

Figure 32 A.W. Smith went out in the 13th pairing, with Major Boothby. Glasgow Herald, 2 October 1876, p. 5. The correspondent of Field also recorded Smith as having started as part of the 13th pairing with Major Boothby. Field, vol 48 no 1241 (7 October 1876), p. 422.

I find no report, however, of Smith's scores. It is possible that he played so much below his own standards that he did not submit his scorecard (withholding score cards was a frequent occurrence). It is also possible that he gave up on the competition, for it was the most chaotic in Open Championship history.

A few days before the Open Championship began, Prince Leopold, Queen Victoria's youngest son, was installed as Captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. This was an enormous public event: "Workmen are busily engaged erecting arches, banners, etc., in the several streets, and on the most prominent points of the city, which has already begun to assume a busy and animated appearance. With every train, golfers and other visitors are arriving" (*North British Daily Mail*, 26 September 1876, p. 4). On Wednesday, 27 September 1876, all converged on the first tee of the Old Course:

The sun shone down with all the splendour and fervour of a July day, and enlivened all the proceedings, rendering more gay the brilliant and animated spectacle on the Links. The Ancient

City also, ornamented, almost clothed indeed, with banners and evergreens, looked its best. The Royal visitor ... during the forenoon drove into the city en route for the Links and was vigorously cheered by thousands of spectators. He arrived at the clubhouse shortly before 11 o'clock, where he was received by the retiring Captain, the Hon. Charles Carnegie. Thereafter he was conducted to the starting point, which was protected by a rope, and around which were an excited throng eager to catch a glimpse of His Royal Highness. The veteran keeper of the green, Tom Morris, then presented him with a play club, and his ball having been teed [by Morris], the Prince opened the meeting by striking off the first ball, and so became ... the Captain of the Club In view of the circumstances in which the ball was struck off, his drive was a remarkably good one, and was signalled by the firing of a cannon and the plaudits of the multitude. (Courier and Argus [Dundee], 28 September 1876, p. 3)



Figure 33 Prince Leopold stands on the first tee of the Old Course at St Andrews, club in hand, ball before him. Old Tom Morris, having teed the ball for the Prince, stands behind it, his hands on his hips. Prince Leopold officially becomes Captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews for the 1876-77 season when he strikes the ball.

Smith was no doubt part of the throng of spectators shown above at a few minutes after 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, 27 September 1876, on the first tee of the Old Course.

The new 1876-77 season at the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews was officially inaugurated by the new Captain's first shot, and in view of the fact that the new captain was Prince Leopold, "consequently, there was a great and distinguished gathering at the Autumn Meeting" (W.W. Tulloch, *The Life of Tom Morris, with Glimpses of St Andrews and its Golfing Celebrities* [London: T. Werner Laurie, 1907], p 200).

And the "distinguished" members of the golf club insisted on their prerogative to play golf on the Old Course when they liked, even during the Open Championship itself, which eventuated in the unfortunate situation that pairs of golfers who were participating in the championship were forced to tee off alternately with foursomes of regular members of the golf club – most of whom were duffers.

And so, golf balls were flying everywhere, and play was slow: "the links were so crowded with golfers as to interrupt the play. Often several of the couples had to stand waiting before they could play up to the putting greens. Indeed, to this fact may be traced the unfortunate result of the competition" (*Glasgow Herald*, 2 October 1876, p. 5).

Davie Strath tied for the Open Championship with Bob Martin, but a protest was lodged because Strath had played onto a green that one of the regular members had not yet left. Strath and his fellow player had assumed that they could not reach the seventeenth green (of the "Road Hole" at the Old Course) with the shots about to be played, but a strong wind in fact made the green reachable. Strath's ball bounced onto the green, and both Strath and his playing partner assumed that it had rolled over the green onto the road. Unbeknownst to them, however, the ball ran into a player leaving the green and therefore stopped on the green. Strath holed out in two shots from this position. The protester alleged that Strath had derived an advantage from the fact that his ball was stopped by hitting a member, finishing closer to the hole than it would have done otherwise.

Asked to play off with Bob Martin before the protest was scheduled to be decided by the tournament committee, Strath refused, insisting that before undertaking the playoff, he had a right to know whether he would be disqualified.

Martin was awarded the title, provided he walked around the course on his own. He did so and became the Champion Golfer of the Year for 1876.

If the golf professionals found the playing conditions difficult, Smith may have found them impossible, or not worthwhile.

Preceding the 1876 Open Championship, however, Smith played in celebrated exhibition matches. First, he partnered with Davie Strath in a match against professionals Bob Kirk and Jamie Anderson, which Smith and Strath won by a score of five up with four to play (*Field*, vol 48 no 1240 [30 September 1876], p. 395). Then he again partnered with Davie Strath against another formidable professional team:



Figure 34 Old Tom Morris, c. 1875.

Towards the end of the week [of the St Andrews autumn meeting] some excellent matches were played.

One of the most notable was a foursome between Tom Morris and Jamie Anderson against Davie Strath and Mr. A. Smith, a crack amateur.

One round was played, and at the conclusion of the outward journey, the latter couple were one hole ahead.

Coming home, the match was neck and neck, but eventually Tom and his partner secured victory by a single hole.

(Field, vol 48 no 1241 [7 October 1876], p. 422).

William Weir Tulloch, a minister in the church of Scotland whose father was Principal of St Andrews University and had entertained Prince Leopold in St Andrews when the latter was installed as Captain, later wrote a biography of Old Tom Morris in which he wrote a description of this match, observing that Smith had a chance on the last hole to square the match: “they were all square and 1 to play. The last hole was indifferently played, and Mr. Smith threw away a chance of a half by taking a leaf out of Old Tom’s book during the round and missing a short putt. Tom and Jamie thus won the match by one hole” (Tulloch, pp. 203-204).

It was a big match, widely regarded as one of the most significant played on the Old Course in 1876. Most Scottish newspapers carried a report of the match, as did many newspapers in England, such as the London *Daily News*, which spoke of it as the next big “attraction” at the St Andrews “autumn meeting” after the departure of Prince Leopold:

The autumn meeting of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St Andrews, lost one of its chief attractions today by the departure of Prince Leopold, who ... left in a special saloon carriage by an early train The Artillery Volunteers lined the entrance to the station, where a large crowd had assembled, and on the train moving off the prince was loudly cheered. The weather in the morning was very wet, but it cleared up during the day and several excellent matches were

played over the green, one of the most noteworthy being a foursome between Tom Morris and Jamie Anderson against David Strath and A. Smith. (Daily News [London], 30 September 1876)

Perhaps, in the face of the significance of that last putt, Smith's nerve had failed him

Below appears an unidentified, unexplained photograph that Tulloch includes in his brief chapter about Old Tom's life at St Andrews in 1876. The chapter covers the installation of Prince Leopold as Captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, the Open Championship tussle between Strath and Martin, and a fairly detailed description of the match between Strath and Smith, on the one hand, and Anderson and Morris on the other: it is possible that the photograph below depicts Smith's next-to-last putt in this match.



Figure 35 W.W. Tulloch, The Life of Tom Morris, p. 200 a. Tom Morris, on the far right, watches an unidentified golfer putt on the 18th hole of the Old Course, watched by a caddie holding the flag and two other golfers.

Along with about forty-six other competitors ("comprising the pick of Scottish golfers, professionals and amateurs"), Smith also played in the Open Championship at St Andrews in 1879, as did his Glasgow friends William Doleman and George Strath (*Glasgow Herald*, 29 September 1879, p. 5). The winner, for the third year in a row, was his St Andrews friend Jamie Anderson:

Anderson [with a score of 169], besides getting the trophy, wins £10 in money. The remaining £45 in prize money was divided in various sums amongst the following: Jim Allan, 172; A.

Kirkaldy, 172; G. Paxton, 174; T. Kidd, 175; R. Ferguson, 176; D. Anderson, 178; [J.O.F.] Morris, 179; T. Dunn, 179; W. Gourlay, 179; A.W. Smith (amateur), 180; J. Rennie, 181; W. Fernie, 181; J. Kirkaldy, 181. (Courier and Argus [Dundee], 29 September 1879, p. 3)

Smith finished “in the money,” but as an amateur declined to accept a cash prize. Newspapers listed him as finishing eleventh (the best showing among the amateur contestants, his friend Doleman tying with Old Tom Morris for seventeenth).

Glasgow was proud of Smith’s performance: the *Northern British Daily Mail* described him at the beginning of the next golf season as the “gentleman who last year occupied a high place in the championship competition at St Andrews” (15 March 1880, p. 2).

The Brother Factor

Andrew Smith's older brother, William Thomson Smith (1838-1924), had come to Canada in 1859 to work as an apprentice clerk for the Hudson's Bay Company.



Figure 36 Edward Ellice, Jr (1810-1880), Member of Parliament for St Andrews Burgh, 1837-1880. Image courtesy of University of St Andrews Libraries and Museums.

He was "one of the appointees of Mr. Edward Ellice, M.P. for St Andrews, the influential proprietor of much Company's stock, and ... always on the directorate" (Isaac Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers: A Narrative of Seven Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Company During 1867-1874* [Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913], p. 365). Isaac Cowie says that in addition to such a backer, "Smith not only had the advantage of being educated at 'The Madras,' but also some good business training before entering the service" (p. 365). This business training seems to have included work in a St Andrews bank (where his younger brother Andrew would also work), for when he retired from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1872, we learn that on account of his "possessing considerable banking experience, he was appointed manger of a bank in Strathroy," a small town near London in southwestern Ontario (*Ottawa Citizen*, 27 February 1927, p. 7).

By the early 1880s, he had served as manager of several banks in Strathroy and so was presumably able to use his influence within the local banking community to secure for brother Andrew a position as a bank clerk in nearby London, Ontario, in 1881.

Early in his service to the Hudson's Bay Company, it seems that Smith incurred the animosity of one of the company's factors by refusing the latter's proposal that Smith take one of his youngest daughters as a wife. This factor had apparently offered promotion to other men in the Company on the implicit condition that they marry one of his daughters. The result of the personal animosity that Smith incurred was that he was immediately sent to the remote outpost of Fort Rae, there to endure "the barren rocks and icy breezes of Great Slave Lake" (Cowie, p. 366).



Figure 37 Fort Rae I, Great Slave Lake, circa 1890.

Smith's pride and his sense of propriety led him occasionally to cross swords with other supervisors in the Hudson's Bay Company, but the most difficult situation he faced during his employment occurred in 1865, when an act of great carelessness on his part proved deadly.

Hudson's Bay Company employee James Lockhart wrote to a friend about the rumours about what Smith had done that were swirling through the Company's outposts:

Poor Smith ... has met with a melancholy accident. His gun went off in his hands and killed one of his men and some say it was not an accident. The consequence is that poor Smith has been sent out to Red River to stand his trial. Such an occurrence never took place in this district before. It has therefore caused considerable excitement. Some say there was a woman implicated, but I cannot tell you the rights of the case, for I have heard a hundred different versions. (James Lockhart to Robert Kinnicott, 26 June 1865, in The Modern Beginnings of Subarctic Ornithology: Northern Correspondence with the Smithsonian Institution, ed and introduced by Debra Lindsay [Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society, 1991], p. 190).

It turns out that Smith had set out from Fort Rae on a hunting expedition. He was carrying a loaded shotgun in his hands, both barrels cocked and ready to fire, when he stopped to talk with two Métis employees who were cutting wood. Cradling his gun across the front of his body as he vigorously rubbed

his hands to warm them, he accidentally caused the discharge of the gun into the chest of one of these men, immediately killing him.

In a panic, Smith convinced the other employee (the dead man's cousin) to conceal the body and not to speak of the incident until the district supervisor arrived for his scheduled visit a few days later. By the end of the day, however, the employee who had agreed to keep the matter a secret changed his mind and instead brought the body to the fort, where the Métis employees became enraged at Smith for his treatment of their dead co-worker and friend. A particular employee who had long nursed a grudge against Smith for refusing to put him in charge of his co-workers charged that Smith had murdered the man.

Smith was unceremoniously seized and imprisoned. In fact, he was handled quite roughly.

As Debra Lindsay notes, determined to separate proper evidence from rumour and innuendo, the Hudson Bay Company investigated the situation thoroughly:

In 1865 he was forcibly removed to Red River by his employees at Fort Rae in order to stand trial for the murder of Pierre Gendron, one of the labourers at his post. Company officials subsequently decided that the shooting was accidental. They also determined that the man who pressed charges against Smith, Neil McNevin, did so spitefully. (The Modern Beginnings of Subarctic Ornithology, p. 189)

Released from custody without ever having had to stand trial, Smith did not return to the district where the accident had happened.

Hudson's Bay Company employee Joseph Hargrave, who was surprised to learn from Smith that the two of them had attended "The Madras" together in St Andrews many years before, later wrote a history of the Red River settlement and described the history of this incident in detail. He noted that "on quitting the district in which the deplorable affair occurred, [Smith] did so much to the regret of all the officers with whom he had been on very familiar terms" (Joseph James Hargrave, *Red River*, p. 354). Hargrave concludes: "The conduct of the unfortunate gentleman himself after the accident was most praiseworthy. He made over the whole of what property he possessed, including the amount he had saved during all his term of service, to the widow and family of the deceased" (p. 354).

Smith had enjoyed his work at Fort Rae and had no intention of quitting the Hudson Bay Company. The company valued his services and promoted him to the position of accountant at Fort Pelly, where he would continue to serve the Company for another seven years.



Figure 38 Fort Pelly appears in the background of this undated image from the nineteenth century.

All the while that Smith worked for the Hudson's Bay Company, he took great interest in a land that was so unfamiliar to him. On the one hand, he collected specimens of arctic wildlife for the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. On the other hand, despite the Hudson Bay Company's wish that its territories be thought unsuitable for farming, Smith gained a reputation as "an early believer in the agricultural abilities of the North-West" (*The Company of Adventurers*, p. 512). According to Cowie:

Mr. Smith, among other useful accomplishments, was a good gardener, and he astonished me by declaring that the capabilities of the country at large were splendidly adapted for farming, if practised in a way suitable to the climate, and good seed were used. He had had great success with vegetables at Fort Pelly, from fresh seed which he had procured from St Paul, Minnesota, because the "assortment of garden seed" supplied with the regular outfit from York Factory was nearly as old as the Company itself, and originally not of suitable sort. This was rank heresy and denial of the doctrine that the country was no good for anything but hunting and would ever so remain, which article of belief ... was in and out of season impressed upon newcomers

by their masters and those in authority over them in the company. It was years, however, before I realized that Mr. Smith was right. (p. 365)

When Smith died forty-two years after leaving the Hudson's Bay Company, he was celebrated in the *Globe* as "a former Hudson's Bay factor, and one of Canada's most distinguished pioneers, a close friend of Lord Strathcona and other builders of the Canadian West" (3 March 1924, p. 1).

Cowie observes that when "Mr. Smith retired from the Company's service in 1872," he "found an opening and reward for his abilities in banking and financial affairs in Ontario" (p. 366). Smith became the manager of the Strathroy branch of the Federal Bank of Canada from about 1876 to 1888, at which point he became manager of the Strathroy branch of the Traders' Bank of Canada.

W. Thomson Smith enjoyed gardening well into his retirement from banking, spending a number of years in California tending a niece's orange grove. But most of his retirement was spent back in Strathroy, where he had become one of the first significant collectors of Canadian art. Today, Museum London maintains an impressive "W. Thomson-Smith Memorial Collection." Yet he was also "instrumental in starting many private art collections in Western Ontario" (Arthur J. Mitchell, cited in Nancy Geddes Poole, *The Art of London, 1830-1980* (e-Book by Nancy Geddes Poole, 2017], p. 122).

But those who love golf should remember that he was also an "instrumental" factor in bringing to Canada the younger brother who would become "the father of the game" in this country.

Sailing to Canada

A.W. Smith boarded the Corean at Glasgow on 10 May 1881 for its maiden voyage.



Figure 39 S.S. Corean.

The Corean sailed from Glasgow first to Liverpool, then to Queenstown (now Cobh), Ireland, and then to Quebec City, arriving on May 27th.

By the time it left Ireland, it had 13 cabin (or first-class or “saloon”) passengers, 24 intermediate passengers, and 563 steerage passengers. Smith was one of the “Gentleman” saloon passengers.

The crossing was difficult.

A passenger using the pseudonym “An Old Commander” wrote a letter to the editor of the *Montreal Gazette* to describe the voyage:

The New Allan Liner Corean

To the Editor of the Gazette

Sir, -- As an old sailor and passenger by the above splendid addition to the Allan fleet, I would feel obliged by your inserting a few of my observations as to her capabilities as a sea-boat during exceptionally severe weather on this her maiden voyage to Montreal We left Glasgow on the 10th ... and after adjusting compasses, proceeded to Liverpool, where we

embarked about 500 passengers, Swedes, Norwegians and Germans bound to Dakota and other parts in the far West. We then proceeded to Queenstown, where a few more passengers were received, bringing up the total to about 600, including those received at Glasgow. The weather all this time and on leaving Queenstown was very fine and clear with smooth water, and we were all in the hopes of its continuing all the way out, especially at this season of the year, but we were lamentably disappointed, for on the 3rd day out we experienced a hard gale of wind from the westward with a heavy sea, which retarded our progress considerably. This did not last long, but with brief intervals of moderate weather, gale succeeded gale all the way to the eastern edge of the Banks, straight against us or nearly so; one of these gales, almost approaching to a hurricane, created a sea which was most appalling, tossing our good ship about like a feather, she being rather light for such unexpectedly severe weather, ... causing our worthy Chief Engineer, Mr. Martin, and his assistants, considerable anxiety, as, raising her stern out of the water, the whirr of her screw made the whole ship tremble every few minutes, so that she really had no chance of proving her speed in such severe weather and in such light trim. Notwithstanding all this, and under such adverse circumstances, the Corean has proved herself an admirable sea-boat; her rolling is long and steady, without those uncomfortable jerks which throw unlucky landlubbers off their legs without warning, and while heading a heavy sea ... she moved steadily on her course, so that, on the whole, and having passed 27 years of my life at sea in all grades, I have no hesitation in saying that the Corean will be a very comfortable ship for either the conveyance of passengers or cattle. (31 May 1881, p. 5)

Landlubber cows having breathed a sigh of relief, the Corean left Quebec at 4:30 am on May 28th, bound for Montreal, where she arrived on May 30th.

In Montreal, Andrew Whyte Smith boarded a train for London, Ontario, where he would be met by his brother William Thomson Smith.

The Brantford Golf Club

The first newspaper accounts of A.W. Smith's golf exploits in Canada begin in 1882 and indicate that he was a member of the Brantford Golf Club.

The first golf club in Brantford was organized in December of 1878 or January of 1879, for we read in the *Brantford Courier* of January 8th, 1879, a report of the club's formal organization by a writer who was obviously unfamiliar with the game: "A golf club (whatever that may mean) has been organized in this city They will play Wednesdays and Fridays." The game made slow progress in terms of the public's awareness, for eighteen months later we read a virtually identical item in the *Brantford Weekly Expositor*: "Something New – A Golf Club (whatever that may mean) has been organized in this city They will play Wednesdays and Fridays" (11 June 1880, p. 1).

Mind you, golf was played in Brantford several years before the official formation of a club. George Maclean Rose writes in *A Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography* that when Alexander Robertson was appointed the manager of Brantford's branch of the British Bank of North America, he "introduced that excellent game into Ontario in 1872" (p. 663). Lorne Rubenstein and J. Briggs imply that other bank employees began to play golf in Brantford even before Robertson: "The Bank of British North America was an important institution of business in the early 1870s. Not only did it provide a financial centre, but it also provided the town with two employees who played the first golf in Brantford. On the common ground of Vinegar Hill ..., James E. Darling and James Cran, after rustling up a few clubs, played around a 4-hole course.... Soon, Darling and Cran were joined by others, including Alexander Robertson, manager of the British Bank of North America..." (*Brantford Golf and Country Club: 1879-1979* [privately printed, 1979], pp. 5-6).

Four decades later, when James Darling, himself, noticed the first issue of the Brantford-based magazine *Canadian Golfer* in 1915, he immediately wrote to the editor Ralph Reville about the origins of golf in Brantford: "I went to Brantford in 1871 and left there in the fall of 1873, and it was very shortly before leaving that Mr. Robertson and I determined to get some clubs and try introduce golf to Brantford.... I only played a few times and Mr. Robertson was never able to come out with me..." (*Canadian Golfer* [July 1915], vol 1 no 3, p. 188). At another time, Darling explained that "As the first player of golf in Brantford, I imported some clubs and played on the common called 'Vinnegar Hill' in the eastern part of the city I played a four-hole course several times" (*Expositor* [Brantford], 2 June 1923, p. 19).



Figure 40 Detail from 1875 County Atlas.

The “hill” of Vinnegar Hill is marked on the 1875 County Atlas along the west side of Clarence Street, as shown with brown shading on the map to the left.

Vinnegar Hill was also sometimes called “Sand Hill,” and so we also read in the 1870s of the “common near Sand Hill” (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 15 July 1873, p. 2). The town reservoir was built “at the top of Sand Hill” at the end of 1873 (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 24 November 1873, p. 3). So, also, was a public cemetery (highlighted on the map to the left).

Vinegar Hill or Sand Hill covered a large area; it was said to have its foot at Colborne Street and to have been marked by the rise of Clarence Street along the east side of Brantford toward the north. In fact, “at the east end, ‘Vinegar Hill’ was quite a ‘pull-up’ for a team” of horses (*Brantford Expositor*, 15 June 1907, p. 1).

We read that “Vinnegar Hill took up most of the east ward,” and that the hill was so extensive that “there was sleigh-riding on nearly every street” laid out across it (*Expositor* [Brantford], 22 December 1951, p. 16). Anytime a circus visited Brantford, its tents would

be set up in vacant areas of Vinnegar Hill.

By the 1870s, streets had been laid out east and west across Vinegar Hill from Colborne Street all the way up to the Grand Trunk railway tracks at what was called Durham Street. The new residential area became known interchangeably as Vinnegar Hill or as the East Ward: we read of “the classic heights of Vinnegar Hill – that is to say, the East Ward” (*Daily Expositor* [Brantford], 22 April 1875, p. 3).

It seems that “when it was called ‘Vinnegar Hill,’ it was the abode and resort of the roughest element, and few cared to wander in that direction after night” (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 9 August 1890, p. 4). And so, when T.S. Shenston acquired 150 lots in this area in the late 1870s, he campaigned against the

name “Vinnegar Hill,” and the area’s other slang name “The Sand Hill”: complaining that only vulgar people used such names for the area where he hoped to sell building lots (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 19 December 1879, p. 4). By the 1880s, the area began to become gentrified and was increasingly associated with fashionable homes.

Where golf might have been played on Vinnegar Hill in the 1870s is suggested by the 1875 Bird’s Eye View map of Brantford, which shows only two open areas along Clarence Street for such activity.

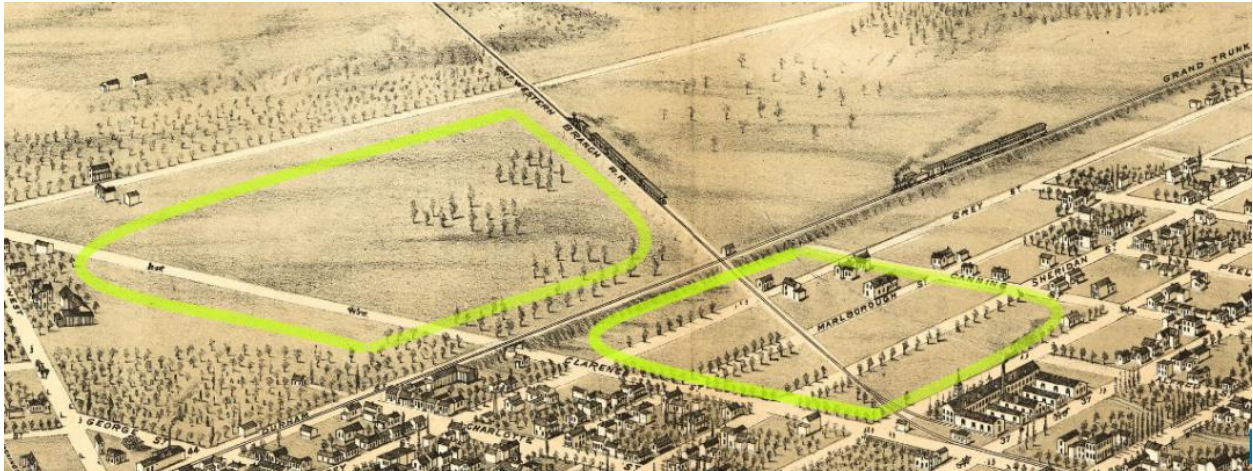


Figure 41 Bird's Eye View of Brantford, 1875.

There was room for golf north of the Grand Trunk railway track on “that beautiful tract of table land lying North of the city (including Mr. Jarvis’s ‘Fertile Belt’)” (*Daily Expositor* [Brantford], 16 December 1879, p. 3). The “fertile belt” of which C. Jarvis, Jr., was proprietor, was “just over the town line” (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 28 May 1874, p. 2). A fox hunt was held here in 1870 “on the plains adjacent to Vinnegar Hill” (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 23 December 1870, p. 6).

Whether or not the Vinnegar Hill site in the East Ward where Darling, Robertson, *et al*, played golf was also the site for the Brantford Golf Club’s first golf course is not clear.

The formation of the Brantford Golf Club in late 1878 or early 1879 may have coincided with the laying out of a new golf course on Terrace Hill. James A. Barclay says that “The club first played over a six-hole course laid out on Terrace Hill, a piece of land on the northern outskirts of the city, but the course was soon expanded to nine holes” (*Golf in Canada* [Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992]). At the beginning of the 1881 golf season, the *Brantford Daily Expositor* refers to “the links north of the city” – apparently confirming that the city’s golf ground was no longer associated with the East Ward or Vinegar Hill (15 June 1881, p. 4). An article in the *Globe* that year spoke of the Toronto Golf club team being welcomed

at the train station by the Branford team, after which “all drove to the links about a mile from the city, a field of 15 acres” (15 June 1881, p. 7). It is clear, then, that Andrew Smith would have begun his golf career in Brantford on the Terrace Hill golf course.

The Terrace Hill location of the new golf course is also visible on the 1875 Bird’s Eye View map.

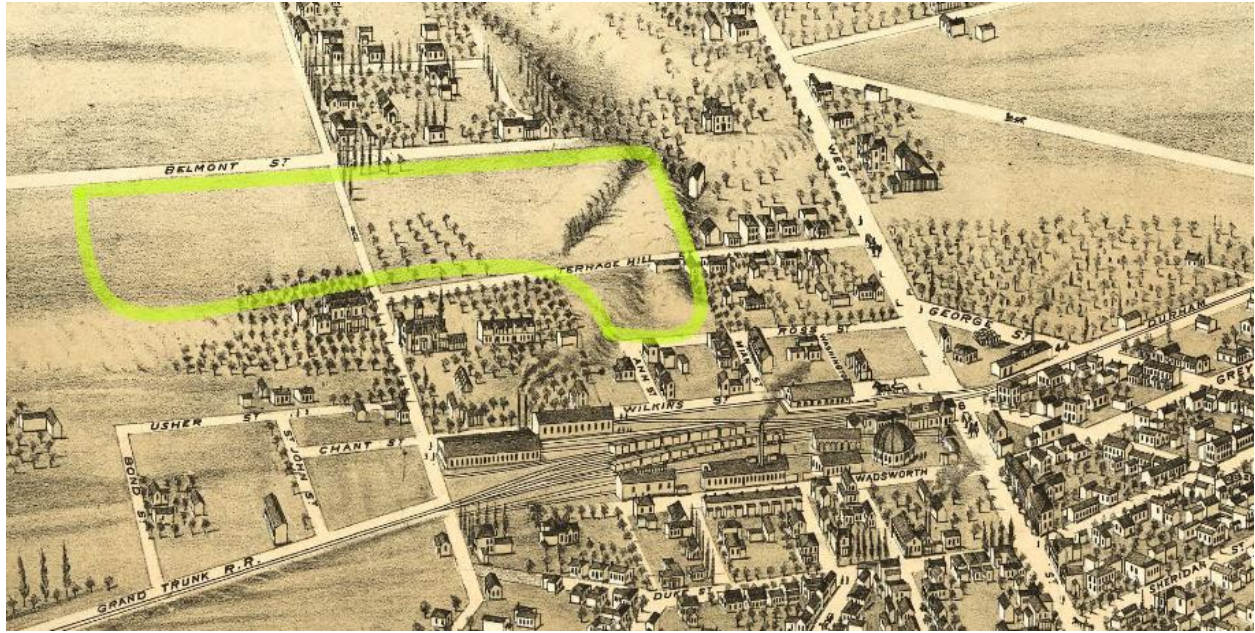


Figure 42 1875 Bird's Eye View Map of Brantford.

In *The History of the County of Brant*, we read that in 1883 “The grounds (technically called the ‘links’) belonging to this club are beautifully situated along a crest of hills which overlook the City of Brantford” ([Toronto: Warner, Beers, & Co., 1883], p. 313).

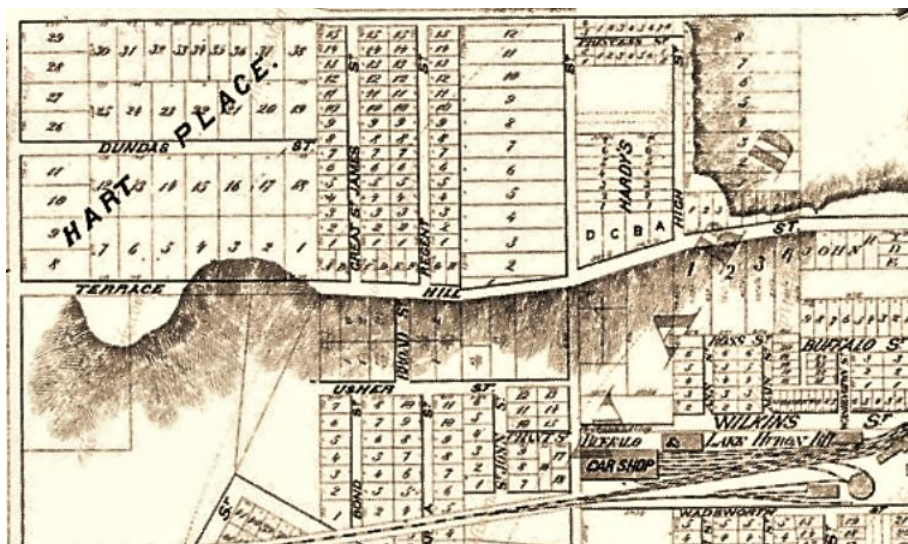


Figure 43 Detail from 1875 County Atlas.

The hills in question (seen as the shaded areas on the map to the left) were substantial enough that “there was a tobogganing party on the Golf grounds, north of the city,” in the fall of 1882. And yet there were also flat, level areas such that in 1883 “A game [of football] was played

on the Golf grounds in this city for the junior championship of the Province,” and such that lacrosse was played on the “golf green” in 1884, and such that baseball was played regularly on the golf grounds in the mid-1880s (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 1 December 1882, p. 1 and 18 May 1883, p. 7; *Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 25 September 1884, p. 1; *Brantford Daily Expositor*, 17 June 1886, p. 1).

The view from the top of the hills associated with the golf ground merited its own postcard in the late nineteenth century: the perspective below looks south from the golf grounds over the houses on Terrace Hill Street, Ross Street, and Wilkins Street, beyond which is the railway station and city below.



Figure 44 Postcard, circa 1900.

Ralph Reville, not just the editor of *Canadian Golfer* but also a member of the Brantford Golf Club, reviewed “the old minute books” and observed that “clubs and balls had to be imported direct from Scotland” (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 6 no 7 [November 1920], p. 499). We recall that Darling had had to import clubs in the early 1870s to enable play on his four-hole course. Rustling up golf clubs anywhere in North America in the early 1870s was no easy matter, let alone in Brantford. North America would not become home to a club-making golf professional until the spring of 1881, when Willie Davis was hired by the Montreal Golf Club and set up his club-making business in that city from 1881 until he left for Newport, Rhode Island, early in 1893.

That members of the Brantford Golf Club had to find a way to get clubs sent from Scotland in the early 1880s requires us to pay attention to a comment made by A.W. Smith at the farewell banquet organized for him by the Glasgow Golf Club in the spring of 1881. On the evening of Saturday, 23 April 1881, after Smith had won the Tennant Cup for the second year in a row, "he was entertained to a farewell dinner by members of the Glasgow Club and other gentlemen" (*Field*, vol 57 no 1479 [30 April 1881], p. 60). The "toast of his health" was "proposed by Mr. William Doleman," who was bidding adieu to a rival and friend. "In replying to the toast," Smith "mentioned that he had been commissioned to carry with him a number of sets of clubs to the New World" (*Field*, vol 57 no 1479 [30 April 1881], p. 60).

I presume that Smith was bringing golf clubs to Brantford.

Andrew and William Smith must have exchanged letters over the course of many months while planning Andrew's immigration to Canada. William would have been charged with two main tasks: finding Andrew a job and finding Andrew a golf course. Finding him a job in a bank would have been the easy task. But the only golf clubs that existed during the winter of 1880-81 when Andrew was working out his plans to immigrate to Canada were Montreal, formed 1873, Quebec, formed 1874, Toronto, formed 1876, and Brantford, formed 1879 (although golf had been played at Niagara-on-the-Lake since 1875, the Niagara Golf Club was formed only in the spring of 1881, while Andrew was sailing to Canada).

William found Andrew a job as ledger keeper in the London branch of the Federal Bank of Canada. Shortly after the Strathroy branch of the Federal Bank of Canada was opened in January of 1876, W. Thomson Smith took over as manager from Charles Murray, the man from the bank's London office who had acted as temporary manager. William no doubt used this connection with Murray to set up Andrew at Murray's bank in London.

William probably also put Andrew in touch with the Brantford Golf Club.

He might have directed him to Walter Lindsay Creighton, the Secretary of the Brantford Golf Club, who happened also to be the manager of the Brantford branch of the Bank of Montreal. Or he might have put him in touch with Alexander Robertson, the club Captain (as the club president was known in the 1880s), who happened to be the manager of the Brantford branch of the Bank of British North America.

Or perhaps he put him in touch with another member of the club, for about half of the original club members in the early 1880s were bankers. Note that when a match against the Toronto Golf Club was unexpectedly cancelled in 1885, the members divided themselves along the most natural fault line into

two teams for their own intra-club match: “The Brantford golf club ... organized a scratch match, the banks against the other members of the club” (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 28 October 1885, p. 1).

If, perchance, William Thomson Smith knew nothing of golf in Canada in the early 1880s, and so had been forced on his brother’s behalf to enquire of the bankers in London where the nearest golf club might be found, it is likely that these bankers would have known that virtually all of the bankers in Brantford had gone for golf in a big way.

Although the golf clubs that he had been commissioned to bring with him to Canada were presumably to be delivered to the Brantford Golf Club, it is interesting to note that Andrew Smith did not play in any of the matches between the Brantford and Toronto golf clubs during the 1881 season. As of the fall of 1881, in fact, we learn that in its competition with Toronto the Brantford Golf Club had no players who had learned the game in Britain: “The Toronto men had several old country players with them ... so that the Brantford men did not stand much of a chance” (28 October 1881, p. 1).

Note also that Smith’s name is not listed among the seventeen members of the Brantford Golf Club recorded in an old list of the club’s 1881 “Rules and Regulations” (*Brantford Expositor*, 2 June 1923, p. 19).

And when the Toronto Golf Club team visited Brantford in the fall of 1881, we read in one of the Brantford newspapers that “Mr. [Thomas Martin] Scott, formerly one of the Quebec club,” is “probably the best player in Canada” (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 28 October 1881, p. 1). Since Smith was a player noticeably superior to both Tom Scott (1853-1932) and his brother Andrew P. Scott (1854-1934), Toronto golfers who regularly defeated Brantford golfers, this statement by the Brantford newspaper suggests that Smith’s exceptional abilities as a golfer had not yet become known to Brantford golfers.

Making his way from London to Brantford to play golf on the Wednesdays and Fridays that the club had designated for its regular competitions would not have been easy for Smith – especially in the summer and fall of 1881 when it might have been difficult to ask for time off as he settled into his new job at the London branch of the Federal Bank of Canada.

Furthermore, as Ralph Reville recalled, golfers coming to Brantford (whether from Toronto or London), had to deal with the fact that “regular trains in the early eighties were few and far between” (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 6 no 7 [November 1920], p. 499).

In November of 1883, in fact, it was Smith's inability to catch a train from London to Brantford that led to an easy victory for the Toronto Golf Club over the Brantford Golf Club in the year's final match between them: "the champion, Mr. Smith, was absent from the Brantford team, having missed a train in London" (*Brantford Courier*, November 1883).

And it is possible that Smith may have found the golf course at Brantford not worth visiting for anything but the most important of club matches. Both the original Vinnegar Hill layout and the Terrace Hill layout seem to have been rather crude: Reville says that it was only long after Smith left Brantford – when the "third links" were laid out "beyond the G.T.R. station" in 1894 – that "for the first time some attempt was made to have decent greens and fairways" (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 6 no 7 [November 1920], p. 499).

Smith was certainly used to playing on top golf courses back in Scotland. Why travel to Brantford to play in primitive conditions? Rather than frequently or regularly making the difficult and time-consuming trip to Brantford, Smith may well have preferred to practise in London on his own and to travel to Brantford only when necessary.

And he no doubt practised in London, availing himself of nearby pastureland – as he would do on a two-year stay in Scotland from 1896 to 1898, when, while spending time at the home of the Reverend Dr. McPherson, he practised in an open field, as his host explained:

Two summers ago [1897] he was visiting me (my wife and he are cousins) and he used to practise driving on my glebe. His driving startled the old beadle [the church officer who assisted McPherson], who never saw the game before. The old man remarked to me: "Hoo wonderfu'! He ca's the ba' jist as stracht as a furr." Like an arrow from the bow the ball rushed to us, stroke after stroke. How I admired the swing. (Golf vol 4 no 1 [January 1899], p. 12)

Still, it is clear that by the end of the 1882 golf season, Smith had demonstrated that he was the best golfer at either the Brantford Golf Club or the Toronto Golf Club:

The return match between the Toronto and Brantford Golf Clubs was played on the grounds here [Brantford] on the 9th. The playing of the Toronto men was almost phenomenal, they playing an exceedingly fine game. A.W. Smith for the home team made some fine plays, he being the only Brantford man who defeated his opponent. (Brantford Daily Expositor, 10 November 1882, p. 1)



Figure 45 Andrew P. Scott, 1896.

The Toronto man that Smith had beaten was Andrew P. Scott, brother of Tom Scott, the man declared by the Brantford newspaper the year before to be “probably the best player in Canada” (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 28 October 1881, p. 1). R.G. Cassels, a president of the Toronto Golf Club, who knew both A.W. Smith and Tom Scott, said of the latter: “While he was not as good as Smith, he was quite good enough to give him a good game and to beat him occasionally” (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 16 no 10 [February 1931], p. 776).

Andrew (an accountant) and Tom (a manager for the Dominion Bank) were from Edinburgh, where they had honed their games on the Musselburgh Links. They had immigrated to Quebec City by the mid-1870s, where they were members of the Quebec Golf Club until 1881 (Andrew Scott winning the club’s handicap medal for 1876). Lifelong bachelors, they moved to Toronto and joined the Toronto Golf Club, where Tom served as Honorable Secretary from 1881 to 1893 (after which A.W. Smith became secretary). The brothers were closely matched in ability: “They were both fine players, A.P. being a bit the better of the two” (R.G. Cassels, letter to the editor, *Canadian Golfer*, vol 16 no 10 [February 1931], p. 776).

In the Toronto Golf Club’s matches against other clubs, sometimes it was Andrew who was matched against the opposing team’s top player; sometimes it was Thomas. At Brantford, Andrew was marked as Toronto’s best player, meaning that he led off the contest against Brantford’s best player, A.W. Smith. Tom started second, playing against Brantford’s next best player, club secretary W. Lindsay Creighton, defeating him by seven holes.

Either the members of Toronto Golf Club were greatly impressed by Smith’s performance in the first leg of the match when Brantford visited Toronto, or Smith was one of the “several members of the Brantford Golf Club [who] played with Toronto and Niagara Clubs on the lovely grounds of the latter” at the beginning of July, for in the inaugural interprovincial golf match between Ontario and Quebec in Montreal at the beginning of October, Smith was the only Brantford Golf Club member chosen to play on the Ontario team that otherwise comprised members of the Toronto and Niagara clubs (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 7 July 1882, p. 3). And Smith was sent out first; Tom Scott went out second; Andrew Scott went out third: “The play on each side was exceedingly good, the scores of Mr. Smith, 86, T.M. Scott, 90, A.P. Scott, 90, heading the list” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 9 October 1882, p. 8).

In 1883, not surprisingly, Smith was the Brantford club champion. He played in most of the matches between the Toronto and Brantford golf clubs, recording the lowest score of any of the golfers on the Toronto golf course during the July match (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 6 July 1883, p. 8). At the end of the golf season, he represented the Brantford Golf Club in the interprovincial match between Ontario and Quebec at Niagara-on-the-Lake on 19 October 1883.

Although Smith had missed the train that would have allowed him to play at the Brantford course against Toronto in mid-November of 1883 (meaning that Brantford was trounced), he was available for the match between Brantford and Toronto on the latter's course in November of 1884. Once again, he was matched against A.P. Scott, and once again, he won. Indeed, this match was the high-water mark for the Brantford Golf Club in its annual matches with the Toronto Golf Club: "At a game of golf on Thanksgiving Day, Brantford defeated Toronto on the Toronto links by twenty-[five] holes up. Twelve players on each side" (*Montreal Star*, 19 November 1884, p. 2).

Golf in Brantford seems to have languished after 1885.

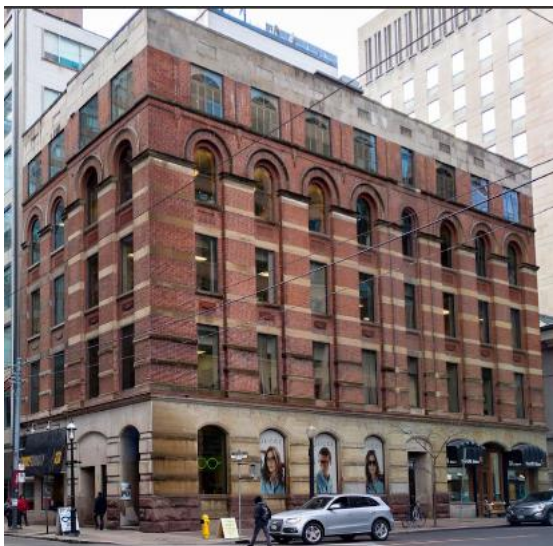


Figure 46 The Quebec Bank Building in Toronto as it looks today, 50 King Street East.

The Brantford Golf Club's best player, Smith, not longer represented the club after the 1884 season, having moved to Toronto to become a clerk in the office of the Quebec Bank on King Street East. Furthermore, the club's energetic secretary, and its second-best player, W. Lindsay Creighton, had been transferred to a bank in Kingston, where he became a founding member (and the first Captain) of the Kingston Golf Club in 1886.

The Brantford Golf club's golf course had been located since the early 1880s on Terrace Hill, but this property became in 1884 the site of the construction of the John H. Stratford Hospital: bricks had been delivered to the site by the spring, the roof was being slated in August, and the building was virtually finished by December. Stratford, who donated the funds for the construction of the hospital, was a member of the Brantford Golf Club, having served as treasurer since the formation of the club. How golf had been played during the 1884 season under these construction conditions is not clear.

But there certainly seems to have been enough room to play golf around the construction site, for we read in May of 1884 that “The military movements on the Queen’s Birthday will be a march to the golf grounds, near the hospital,” where, on the day, “thousands awaited them” (*Brantford Weekly Expositor*, 23 May 1884, p. 8; *Brantford Daily Expositor*, 26 May 1884, p. 1). For the Queen’s Birthday in 1885, a military “parade and sham fight on the golf grounds” was planned, and “two thousand people” showed up (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 23 May 1885, p. 4 and 26 May 1885, p. 1).

Still, although there was room for golf near the hospital for the duration of the 1885 season, it is clear that development of the hospital grounds would soon cramp the golfers. Seventy-five years later, the *Brantford Expositor* recalled that “The John H. Stratford Hospital took most of that site in 1887 and the club went into a temporary decline. Some members continued to play golf as individuals over the unoccupied portion of the course” (*Brantford Expositor*, 10 January 1961, p. 10).

And there was continual pressure from suburban development in the area. At the end of June 1886, seventeen lots were sold “on the golf grounds” (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 28 June 1886, p. 1). And by November, “a number of houses on the golf grounds had gone up” (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 23 November 1886, p. 1). A further “75 Lots on [the] Golf Ground” were offered for sale or rent in March of 1888 (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 5 March 1888, p. 4). Certainly, this part of the city continued to be “known as the Golf Grounds” to the end of the 1880s, (*Brantford Daily Expositor*, 19 June 1888, p. 4). And as late as 1893, we read that “A baseball match took place last evening on the golf green” (*Brantford Expositor*, 16 May 1893, p. 4). But the playing of golf in the city seems to have been constrained by the slow strangulation of the Terrace Hill golf grounds.

And so, in 1894, a search was on for new golf grounds: “A committee ... was appointed by the golf club to select suitable grounds for the game. They were out inspecting different places yesterday afternoon and the choice will be between the grounds at the Institution for the Blind and Strawberry Hill, near the site of the old brewery” (*Brantford Expositor*, 13 October 1894, p. 1). Within three weeks, the club had re-settled: “Members of the golf club practice nearly every day on their new grounds at the easterly end of Elgin Street” (*Brantford Expositor*, 3 November 1894, p. 4).

Interprovincial Golf

By the time of the first interprovincial golf match between Ontario and Quebec, played at the Montreal Golf Club in the fall of 1882, it is clear that the other members of the Ontario team – all but Smith were from the Toronto and Niagara clubs – recognized that Smith was the best golfer among them, for he was designated to lead off the contest against the best of the Quebec players.

Smith was thereby brought face-to-face with the Montreal Golf Club's founder: Alexander Dennistoun (1821-1895).



Figure 47 Alexander Dennistoun (1821-1895), circa 1881.

A Scotsman born into an important family in Dunbartonshire, Dennistoun was the organizing force behind the founding of the Montreal Golf Club in 1873. As Gerald Redmond observes, Dennistoun “had played in his younger days over the famous links at St Andrews and Musselburgh and was a member of several other leading clubs in Britain” (*The Sporting Scots of Nineteenth-Century Canada* [London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1982], pp. 218-19). And even after immigrating to Canada, he returned regularly to Britain on extended golf vacations to play at such courses as Royal North Devon (also known as Westward Ho!).

In the interprovincial matches of the 1880s and 1890s, the Ontario and Quebec team scores were calculated by adding up the number of holes by which team

members had vanquished their opponents over the course of a full eighteen-hole match. A match did not end when a player was up on his opponent by a number of holes greater than the number of holes that remained: a match was played to the (occasionally bitter) end.

After reporting the results of the 1882 matches, the *Toronto Mail* noted: “It will be observed that Mr. Smith, of London, who represented the Brantford Club, greatly distinguished himself, beating the best player of the combined Quebec team by not less than ten holes” (cited in *Canadian Golfer*, vol 10 no 9

[January 1931], p. 678). What this means is that Smith took a surplus of ten holes over the eighteen holes that he contested against Dennistoun.

Although Dennistoun was sixty-one years old, he had two years before played a match against the Quebec Golf Club's Tom Scott (who, we recall, some thought to be the best golfer in Canada in 1881) and Dennistoun had beaten him by six strokes. And in the fall of 1881, Dennistoun had beaten Andrew Scott (the younger brother of Tom – Andrew ultimately coming to be regarded as the better player) by one hole. So, the ease with which Smith had dominated one of the best golfers in Canada produced a certain amount of shock and awe.

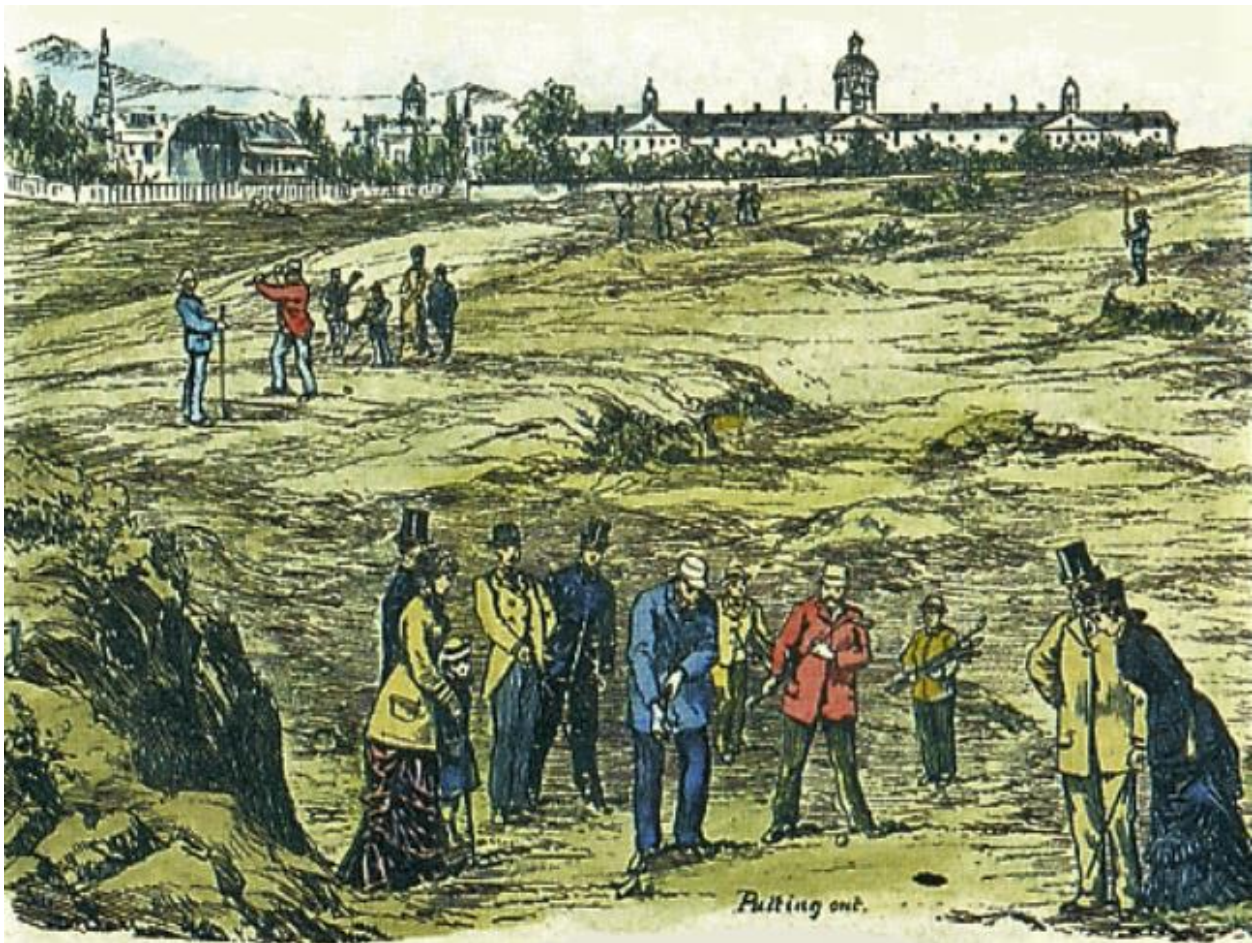


Figure 48 Quebec G.C. versus the Montreal G.C. for the Challenge Cup, October 1880. *Canadian Illustrated News*, 1880.

With Canada's best golfers gathered at this interprovincial event, the best medal scores attracted interest. The *Morning Chronicle and Commercial and Shipping Gazette* observed that "It was well known that the head of the Upper Province team, consisting of Mr. A.W. Smith and the Messrs. Scott, were stronger than any players the Lower Province could bring against them" (11 October 1882, p. 1). Since

Smith's score was four strokes better than that of any other player on either team (the Scott brothers being tied four strokes behind him), Canada's best golfers knew who the best golfer among them was.

At the end of the official matches, competitors and spectators alike were eager to see more golf, so the two best golfers in the province of Quebec were to be pitted against Andy Smith, the best golfer from Ontario, and a special partner.



Figure 50 Members of the Quebec and Ontario teams (as well as some of the spectators) at the Interprovincial Competition at the Montreal Golf Club, October 1882. See the image below for a possible identification of Smith and Davis in the photo above.



Figure 49 This enlarged detail from the photograph above shows Davis (marked D), dressed like a golf professional, and the possible image of Smith (marked S) next to him.

This exhibition match was between the team of Dennistoun and the Montreal Golf Club's professional, Willie Davis, on the one hand, and the team of "Messrs. A.W. Smith and Stewart, of Glasgow," on the other (*Gazette* [Montreal, 9 October 1882, p. 8).

It is not clear who Mr. Stewart "of Glasgow" was.

Stewart had not participated in the interprovincial match. Of course, neither had

Montreal's golf professional Willie Davis, for the match was between amateurs. It is possible that Stewart was a visitor to the city and a guest that day of the Montreal Golf Club. Both the Quebec and Montreal clubs welcomed visitors from English and Scottish golf clubs.

The person in question may well have been Henry Stewart or William B. Stewart, brothers who were members of the Glasgow Golf Club. Smith knew them well. He had regularly contested various club competitions with them from 1876 to 1881. In 1877, Smith teamed up with William Stewart in a friendly match against Henry Stewart and his partner. In March of 1881, just six weeks before he sailed to Canada, Smith partnered with Henry Stewart in a friendly match against two other members of the Glasgow Golf Club. Although they were not able to beat Smith before he left the Glasgow Golf Club in 1881, by the mid-1880s the Stewart brothers had become two of the best players at the club, to which they donated a trophy named the Stewart Cup for handicap competition.



Figure 51 William F. Davis, early 1890s. *Golf*, vol 2 no 2 (December 1895), p. 51.

In any event, "Messrs. A.W. Smith and Stewart, of Glasgow, beat Messrs. Dennistoun and Davis, of Montreal, by two holes" (*Gazette* [Montreal], 9 October 1882, p. 8). The *Montreal Herald* reported that "In this match the play of Messrs. Smith and Davis was very much admired, and in order that they should have full scope for their skill a 'single' was arranged [Smith versus Davis], which attracted much attention, and resulted in a 'tie'" (9 October 1892, p. 6)

As of the fall of 1882, then, Andrew Smith was not only universally recognized as the best amateur golfer in Canada; he was also seen by the best golfers of Ontario and Quebec to have proved himself the equal of the first and only golf professional resident in North America: Willie Davis.

Although there were several occasions over the next thirteen years when no interprovincial matches were organized, Smith played in all the interprovincial competitions that were held between 1883 and 1894, sometimes playing for Ontario, representing first the Brantford Golf Club and then the Toronto Golf Club, and sometimes playing for Quebec, where he was a

member of the Quebec Golf Club. He lived in Quebec City from 1890 to March of 1893, after which he moved to Toronto, but even though he was thereafter a member of the Toronto Golf Club, and even while back home in Scotland from 1896 to 1898, he maintained his membership of the Quebec Golf Club and as late as 1898 decided to represent Quebec in the interprovincial match.

Whether representing Ontario or Quebec, Smith usually played in the lead-off match against the other team's top player.

The Golf Instructor's Top Pupils

When *Field* mentioned in 1881 that A.W. Smith would soon be leaving the Glasgow Golf Club because he had “received an appointment to a bank in Canada,” it suggested that “Under such an able teacher, golfing should soon obtain a firm footing in the Dominion” (vol 57 no 1479 [30 April 1881], p. 60).

Twenty years later, in its obituary notice regarding Andrew Smith, Scotland's *Daily Record* observed:

Smith went out to Canada in 188[1], and he at once threw himself with enthusiasm into the congenial task of fostering the national game of his native country.... He was a St Andrews man, and assuredly he played the St Andrews game. It stood him in good stead, and he has left behind him a battalion of players who built their style upon his. (13 August 1901, p. 4)

Smith will have taught members at the Brantford Golf Club how to swing a golf club, but none of his pupils there went on to become national champions.



Figure 52 J. Stuart Gillespie sits at the foot of his mentor A.W. Smith in a photograph of competitors at the Toronto Golf Club during the Interprovincial matches between Ontario and Quebec in the fall of 1898. Official Golf Guide of 1899, p. 312.

The story was different at the Quebec Golf Club, which Smith represented from 1890 to 1892 while working for the Quebec Bank in Quebec City. Here, he exerted a great influence on the development of a future Canadian Amateur Champion: J. Stuart Gillespie (1878-1964).

Gillespie's greatest year in golf occurred in 1896. Not only did he win most of the important competitions at the Quebec Golf Club, but he also won the Canadian Amateur Championship at the end of September on his home course. And Canadian golfers knew from whom he learned the game: “Mr. J. Stuart Gillespie, who won the Canadian championship this year at Quebec, defeating such golfers as Mr. T.M. Harley, of Kingston, received his first lessons in Golf from Mr. Smith” (*The Week*, vol 13 no 51 [13 November 1896]).

Gillespie moved to Connecticut in the late 1890s and spent the rest of his life in the United States, but he competed for Canada at the first two international matches between Canada and the United States in 1898 and 1899.



Figure 53 W.A.H. Kerr, Osgoode Hall hockey team, 1892.

Smith also taught another future Canadian amateur champion how to play golf: William Archibald Hastings Kerr (1870-1908).

Before he took up golf in his mid-twenties, Kerr had established himself as an athlete of the highest order. After graduating from the Royal Military College in Kingston in 1889, “he came to Toronto in 1890 and studied law at Osgoode Hall, graduating with honours in 1893,” and “while at the law school he was prominent as an athlete, and was captain of the rugby team, which for two years in succession won the dominion championship” (*Weekly British Whig* [Kingston], 23 April 1908, p. 4). He also played on the Osgoode Hall hockey team.

Immediately upon graduation in 1893, Kerr was invited to become a partner in one of Canada’s oldest and most important law firms, Blake, Lash & Cassels, and one of his new partners, Walter Gibson Pringle Cassels, president of the Toronto Golf Club, immediately invited the famous athlete to join the club.



Figure 54 Archie Kerr, 1896.

Known familiarly as “Archie,” Kerr developed rapidly under Smith’s tuition:

“Mr. Smith’s ... kindness and readiness in instruction have left their mark upon many young players Mr. W.A.H. Kerr, who holds at present the amateur record of the Toronto links, and whose play throughout this season would warrant the belief that if he keeps up his practice he should soon take first rank as a golfer, received his first lessons in Golf from Mr. Smith” (Week [Toronto], vol 13 no 51 [13 November 1896]).

This prediction of future golf success proved correct. Kerr won the Canadian Amateur Championship in 1897, and then he won it again in 1901 on the golf course of the Toronto Golf Club, where hearts were still heavy after the passing of A.W. Smith just two months before.

Poor Archie Kerr was not fated for a long life either: he died in his thirty-eighth year after a failed operation to treat appendicitis in 1908.



Figure 55 Alfred J. Piddington (left) and A.W. Smith, 1898. *Official Golf Guide 1899*, p. 312.

Smith also taught one of his best friends how to play golf, a fellow clerk at the Quebec Bank in Toronto named Alfred J. Piddington (1859-1922).

In 1893, Smith and Piddington were renting rooms in a house on the south side of Harbord Street in Toronto. At home, at work, and on the walk to work, Piddington must have heard a great deal of talk about the game from the golf-obsessed Smith.

Piddington was thirty-three years old in 1893 when Smith invited him to the Toronto Golf Club to try the game. Up to this time, Piddington's outdoor interests seem to have been of the "field-and-stream" sort, but he was soon hooked on the new game.

In the spring of 1894, after just one season of instruction and practice, Piddington entered the

inaugural competition at the Toronto Golf Club for what would become one of its most famous prizes: the Osler Trophy.

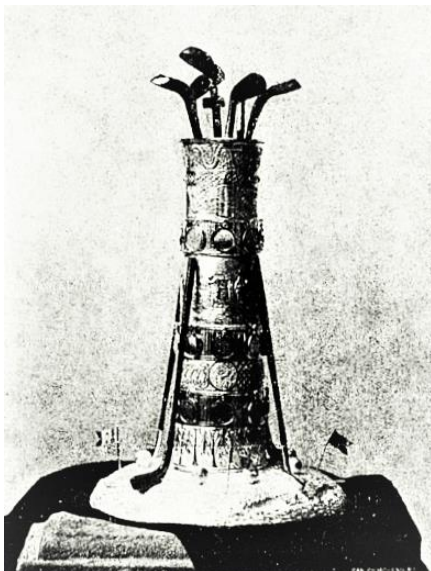


Figure 56 Trophy donated by E.B. Osler, *Globe [Toronto]*, 16 June 1894.

The British journal *Golf* provided an extensive report on the competition:

Golf at Toronto

The beautiful silver trophy, presented to the Toronto Golf Club by Mr. Edmund B. Osler, who has been many times captain of the club, and who has always taken a great interest in the game, was designed and manufactured by Messrs. Hamilton and Inches of Edinburgh. The idea emanated from a member of the club, and the details in every particular are perfectly worked out. It is for annual competition among members only and is styled the "Osler Trophy." The conditions are handicap, and the maximum allowance is 24 strokes, over two rounds of the course, or eighteen

holes. The contest is by strokes, and the competitors play off in couples in a series of matches, the winners in the first series playing again in the second series, and so on to the finish. The winner has his name engraved upon the trophy, together with the best score for any two rounds of nine holes each made by him when competing.

The first competition took place on April 21st, when thirty-six members entered.... As invariably happens in a contest of that nature, several of the stronger players were put out by the younger frequenters of the green. Many of the matches were very close and well contested, and Friday, June 1st, witnessed the final between Mr. A. Piddington and Mr. A.W. Smith. The former had an allowance of 14 strokes, while Mr. Smith started from scratch. This was a very keen game from start to finish, and the play was remarkably good considering the unfavorable condition of the weather, rain falling during the entire game. Mr. Piddington played in splendid form, and, considering that he only took to the game a little over a year ago, deserves great credit for the good game he played against his tough opponent and instructor, who had his early training over St Andrews. The result ended in a win for Mr. Smith by a narrow majority of three strokes. The score taken by Mr. Smith was 39 strokes for each of the two rounds, total 78; Mr. Piddington finishing his first round in 47, and the second in 48, total 95, which, after deducting 14 allowance, brought his score down to 81.

The record score of the green was made by Mr. Smith in his match against Mr. Dyce Saunders, when Mr. Smith finished the two rounds in good style in 37 and 38 strokes respectively.

Mr. A.P. Scott, another of the strong players, was well in to the finish, having fought his way through not a few well-contested struggles, until at last he was put out by Mr. Piddington. Mr. Scott's best score was ... 81. His brother, Mr. T.M. Scott, who, by the way, is not this season playing up to his usual good form, was disposed of early. (vol 8 no 202 [26 June 1894], p. 343)

By the fall of 1893, Piddington was good enough to be selected as a member of Ontario's team in the interprovincial match between Ontario and Quebec (he won four holes for the Ontario team). What Smith's instruction had wrought within less than a season in the case of this mid-thirties' novice seems to have been recognized by fellow club members as quite remarkable: in 1896, they told the *Globe's* reporter that "Mr. A. Piddington ... owes the finish of his style to the coaching of Mr. A.W. Smith" (*Globe*, 7 November 1896, p. 1).

In the 1880s and 1890s, golf professionals instructed club members by playing a round of golf with them for which they charged a prescribed fee. When Willie Davis was hired at the Montreal Golf Club in 1881, for instance, “for teaching beginners his charge was to be a shilling, or twenty-five cents, a round of nine holes, one-third of which was to be returned to the club” (*Gazette* [Montreal, 22 October 1921, p. 21]. Smith did precisely this sort of work; of course, he did it for free, and he did it for more than just personal friends like Piddington.

We read in an 1891 account of one of the semi-annual Challenge Cup matches between the Quebec Golf Club and the Royal Montreal Golf Club that “The junior members of the Quebec Club showed up well, thanks to the attention given to them by Mr. A.W. Smith, one of their members who walks round the course instructing them” (*Golf*, vol 2 no 39 [12 June 1891, p. 234].

Similarly, C.A. Masten, who joined the Toronto Golf Club in 1890, recalled fifty years later that A.W. Smith tutored virtually all the new members who joined the club in the early 1890s when “development of the club was rapid”:

Many youngsters joined and enthusiasm ran high. I cannot say as much for the quality of the game At this juncture, we were in one respect most fortunate. Our best golfer was Andy Smith, an old St Andrews boy who had been a boyhood pal of young Tom Morris. He was very kind in giving to us novices suggestions and pointers on how to drive, approach, and putt.
(*Canadian Golfer* [August 1940], p. 24)

At every golf club in Ontario and Quebec where he became a member after his arrival in Canada in 1881, Smith was equally generous in his teaching of both new and old members who needed instruction in the art of the golf swing.

And so, fifteen years after his arrival in Canada with bags of golf clubs and golf balls for others, and after stints at the Brantford, Toronto, and Quebec golf clubs, Smith’s contribution to Canadian golf was celebrated by the Toronto newspaper called *The Week*: “His name is known over all Canadian links, particularly in Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec, and his kindness and readiness in instruction have left their marks upon many young players both here [in Ontario] and in Quebec, where he spent some years” (vol 13 no 51, 13 November 1896).

Photographs of the swings of three of the Toronto Golf Club’s members in the 1890s suggest that Smith had taught them all to use the St Andrews swing for which Smith himself was widely celebrated.



Figure 57 Left: W.G.P. Cassels, *Globe* [Toronto], 7 November 1896, p. 1. Centre: J. Stewart Gordon, *Outing*, vol 32 (June 1898), p. 266. Right: Anonymous member of the Toronto Golf Club (possibly Alfred Piddington), *Buffalo Morning Express* and *Illustrated Buffalo Express*, 18 November 1894, p. 5.

It was no doubt in part because he had instructed two generations of Canadian golfers between 1881 and 1900 that at the beginning of the new century, *Saturday Night* called Smith the father of golf in Canada.

Canadian Amateur Champion?

In the spring of 1895, the Governor-General of Canada, Lord Aberdeen, encouraged the Secretary of the Ottawa Golf Club, Alexander Simpson, to organize a “Canadian Golf League” similar to the United States Golf Association, which had been formed at the end of 1894. A “special report” sent to the *Montreal Herald* from Kingston indicates that Simpson had already organized the Canadian Golf League by March: “The annual meeting of the Kingston Golf Club was held last evening [25 March 1895] A resolution was unanimously passed affiliating the Club with the Canadian Golf League, recently formed at Ottawa at the instance of the Governor-General” (27 March 1895, p. 2).



Figure 58 Thomas M. Harley, 1895 Amateur Champion of Canada. The Golf Book of East Lothian, ed. John Kerr (Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable, 1896), p. 243.

As an inducement to the formation of this organization, “the Governor General ... announced his intention of giving a handsome challenge cup for the team championships of Canada” (*Ottawa Journal*, 28 March 1895, p. 6).

This “handsome challenge cup” became known as the Aberdeen Cup, the only known image of which appears to the left in a photograph of the 1895 Amateur Champion of Canada, Thomas M. Harley of the Kingston Golf Club.

Nearly every golfer in Canada assumed that A.W. Smith would win this trophy – and would win it many times.

He never did.

But so high was his standing in Canadian and American golfing circles that many golf writers in Canada and the United States

assumed that he had – and had even done so on multiple occasions.

The first Canadian Amateur Championship tournament, which Harley won, was held in June of 1895 at the Ottawa Golf Club. A.W. Smith did not even enter the tournament (he seems to have been preoccupied in Toronto at the time of the tournament with the fight against his conviction for playing golf on Sunday).

The 1896 tournament was played at the Quebec Golf Club in September, Smith's former student J. Stuart Gillespie winning. Again, Smith did not play in the tournament: he was in Scotland at the time, as he was for the 1897 tournament, held at the Royal Montreal Golf Club, which was won by another of his former students: W.A.H. Kerr.

Smith returned to Canada in time for the 1898 tournament held at the Toronto Golf Club and duly entered the competition. George S. Lyon won his first Canadian amateur championship in this tournament, Smith having lost in the semi-finals.

At the 1899 tournament, won by Vere C. Brown in Ottawa at the end of September, George S. Lyon defeated Smith in the scratch championship – the *Ottawa Journal* observing that “Smith is a fine golfer and was looked on as a dangerous man in the championship race” (29 September 1899, p. 3). Smith won the handicap tournament, however, playing off scratch, and beating the next best scratch player, Lyon, by two strokes: “A.W. Smith ... covered the course in 85 strokes, two strokes behind the best performance of the tournament” (*Montreal Star*, 2 October 1899, p. 2).

Smith did not play in the 1900 tournament at the Royal Montreal Golf Club, where Lyon won his second Amateur Championship.

Yet the newspapers in the United States, Britain, and Canada that regularly referred to A.W. Smith as the former champion of Canada are legion. For instance, a *New York Sun* report on Smith's play at a tournament in Niagara Falls in September of 1895 introduced readers to “A.W. Smith, the Canadian champion”: “Smith's playing is a treat to watch. His drives are marvellously clean and accurate, and his putting deliberate and scientific” (7 September 1895, p. 4). The same newspaper, reviewing golf events in the United States during 1895, noted that “A.W. Smith, the Canadian amateur champion, made a good impression in the open” (*New York Sun*, 14 October 1895, p. 6). Similarly, the *Boston Globe*, observing that Smith “did some very fine putting” in the U.S. Open referred to him as “the Canadian champion” (5 October 1895, p. 4).

Reporting the next year on the 1896 U.S. Open, *The World* (of New York) observed: “The amateur champion of Canada is A.W. Smith. He is an able Scotch golfer He played in the open tournament,

making the best amateur record” (16 August 1896, p. 13). When the mistaken rumour circulated in the United States and Canada that Smith was returning to U.S. Open competition at the Baltimore tournament in 1899, the *Baltimore Sun* referred to him as a “former Canadian champion” (9 September 1899, p. 6).

Similarly, in its report on the Canadian amateur championship of 1901, the *Dundee Evening Post* observed: “The championship cup was the gift of Lord Aberdeen, and is now held by George S. Lyon, of Toronto. The late Mr. Andrew W. Smith, of St Andrews, was a regular attender of this meeting, and he held the trophy more than once” (24 September 1901, p. 5).

In Canada, the *Montreal Gazette* wrote of Smith as “the Canadian champion” as early as 1894 (14 November 1894, p. 8). In 1895, the *Free Press Home Journal* of Winnipeg told readers of the progress in the tournament at Niagara Falls of “A.W. Smith, champion of Canada” (12 September 1895, p. 1). After the international match between Canada and the United States in 1899, the *Montreal Star* observed that “On the Canadian team the best men were Vere Brown, the present champion, and A.W. Smith, G.S. Lyon, and J.S. Gillespie, who have all held the Canadian championship in former years” (10 October 1899, p. 2). Similarly, when describing the interprovincial tournament of 1898, the *Montreal Gazette* explained that “A.W. Smith, the ex-champion of Canada, played with Quebec” (for, although resident in Toronto and a member of the Toronto Golf Club, Smith also maintained his membership of the Quebec Golf Club).

And, regarding the Canadian amateur championship tournament that preceded the 1898 international match, *The Sketch* picked out A.W. Smith as a golfer “likely to contest the final tie,” describing him as “an old Scotch golfer and a former Champion” (vol 24 [26 October 1898], p. 38).

Presumably availing itself of information about Smith provided by his brother, the *Strathroy Dispatch* wrote the following about him just days after his death: “Mr. Smith’s record as a golf player is one known to all golf enthusiasts in Canada. He was champion for many years, until the honour fell to Geo. S. Lyon” (*Strathroy Dispatch*, 24 July 1901, cited in *Golf Illustrated*, vol 9 [16 August 1901], p. 123). In Vancouver, British Columbia, the headline that announced Smith’s passing was simple: “Ex-Champion of Canada Dead” (20 July 1901, p. 5). The *Montreal Gazette* explained to readers that Smith was “formerly for some years champion golf player of Canada” (20 July 1901, p. 16). In Toronto, the *Globe* agreed: “Golf players in Canada will learn with regret of the death of Mr. Andrew Smith, ex-champion golf player of Canada” (20 July 1901, p. 19).

So, between 1894 and 1901, in Canada, Scotland, and the United States, are the consistent and incessant references to Smith as a former amateur champion of Canada instances of mass delusion?

Or was there a reason that contemporary golfers and journalists regarded him as such?

On the one hand, it may be that Canadian golfers of the 1880s and early 1890s regarded the interprovincial championship matches of those years as the way of identifying Canada's best golfer. All the best golfers were selected to play in the tournament, and since all matches played out the full eighteen-hole round, there was at the end of the day a list of the medal scores that the competitors had submitted.

And so, just as in 1882, everyone knew that Smith had beaten all other golfers by four strokes or more, so at each subsequent interprovincial match all golfers knew which golfer had posted the lowest score, and it was almost always Smith. Canada's best golfers may have regarded these matches as determining the champion among them, producing the widespread talk of A.W. Smith as having been Canada's champion amateur golfer of the 1880s and early 1890s.

On the other hand, just as there was an open championship of the United States before there was the first U.S.G.A. open championship of 1895, so there may have been an amateur championship of Canada before the first R.C.G.A. championship of 1895.

In the United States, Willie Dunn, Jr, won the 1894 open championship of America at the St Andrews Golf Club in Yonkers, New York:

Golf Cracks at Play

In the Tournament for the United States Championship

[The] professional contest ... brought out such experts as Willie Campbell, of the Brookline Country Club, Samuel Tucker, the St Andrews instructor, Willie Dunn, the Shinnecock Hills crack, and W.F. Davis, the Newport professional. They played for a \$150 purse and a gold medal emblematic of the United States professional golf championship Their work was very clever and aroused considerable applause In the first round, Campbell beat Tucker two up Dunn then had some fun with Davis and beat him six up, with five holes to play.

In the final round, Dunn defeated Campbell by a score of two up. (Sun [New York], 12 October 1894, p. 5)



Figure 59 Willie Dunn, Jr. wearing his gold medal awarded for the US Professional Championship of 1894.

And so, the *New York Times* referred to the victor as “Willie Dunn, the champion golfer,” and the *Boston Globe* referred to him as “Willie Dunn, champion of the United States” (21 October 1894, p. 17; 8 May 1895, p. 3).

With the formation of the U.S.G.A. in December of 1894, however, and with this organization’s subsequent domination of the American golf landscape, the first U.S. Open came to be thought of as the first one sponsored by the USGA in 1895: Horace Rollins won; Dunn finished second; and A.W. Smith tied for third. Consequently, Dunn’s accomplishment in 1894 retreated into a relative oblivion. And, ironically, one of the accomplishments for which Smith is today best remembered is that he finished third in the “first U.S. Open” – by which historians mean the 1895 U.S. Open – although Smith himself may have regarded it as the second U.S. Open.

Similarly, before the establishment of the Canadian Golf League in March of 1895, which would be renamed the Canadian Golf Association in June of 1895, and before the first competition for the national amateur championship organized by the new association, there seems to have been a competition organized to determine the amateur champion of Canada, and Andrew Smith was the first to have won it.

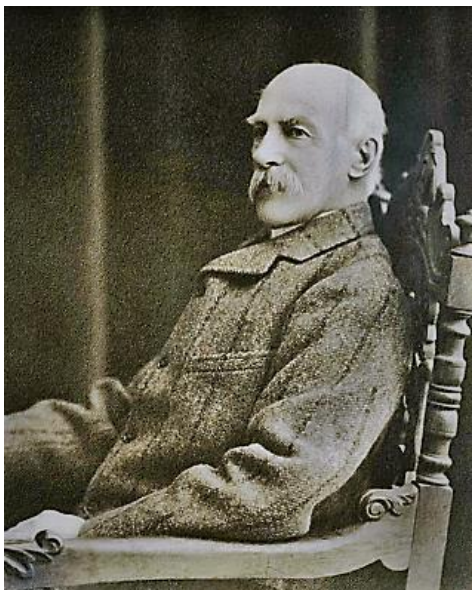


Figure 60 Charles Hunter (1830-1922), c 1890.

In 1889, Charles Hunter, the president of the Toronto Golf Club, and a founder in 1881 of the Niagara Golf Club in Niagara-on-the-Lake (where he maintained a summer home), offered a medal for the winner of an amateur tournament to be held at the Toronto Golf Club. This prize became known as the Hunter Medal, and he intended that it be awarded to the champion golfer of Canada.

Inaccurately, it seems, the first tournament in which players competed for the Hunter Medal was described in the *Toronto Daily Mail* as the “Ontario Golf Championship”:

A.W. Smith Wins Ontario Golf Championship

The annual competition for the golfing championship of Ontario was brought to a close Wednesday when Mr. A.W. Smith, of the Quebec Bank, won the final from Mr. Thomas Scott, of the Dominion Bank, thus winning the championship and securing the trophy for a year and a handsome gold medal, the captain of the Toronto Golf Club's prize, which accompanies it.

Play began sharp at three o'clock on the beautifully situated ground of Mr. G.W. Clendenan, opposite the Woodbine Race Course, which he kindly allows to be used as a links by the golf club. There were a number of interested spectators on the ground to see the match, as the men were evenly matched, Mr. Smith having been known as one of the crack amateurs of Scotland some ten years ago, and probably the best player in the Dominion today, while Tom Scott, of the famous Scott brothers, has a well-earned golfing reputation on all Canadian greens, so a close competition was looked for. Mr. Smith made a fine start and playing a steady, cautious game, won the round in the exceedingly low figure of 32, 4 strokes to the good....

Mr. Smith's play during the round was simply faultless, he not making a single error, in spite of being closely pushed by Mr. Scott, who was also playing in great form. After a short interval, the second round was begun, Mr. Smith taking the honour The play of the second round was not quite as strong as the first. Still, it was a great exhibition of skill, Mr. Smith's double round of 68 [32 + 36] being the best yet made, his driving and putting being perfect. (Toronto Daily Mail, 1 November 1889, p. 2)

News of the tournament result was picked up by the *Glasgow Herald*, which also referred to it as the Championship of Ontario and happily took the opportunity of reporting on Smith's win to reprise for its readers Smith's sterling amateur career in Scotland:

The Championship of Ontario

Advices from Toronto state that the annual competition for the golfing championship of Ontario has been won by Mr. A.W. Smith of the Quebec Bank. In the first round of nine holes Mr. Smith's score was 32 and in the second 36, a total of 68. Mr. Smith was a member of the Glasgow Golf Club from 1874 to about 1881, when he went to Canada. He frequently won the most important medals and cups of the club, and in the competition for a cup, open to all amateurs, given by the Glasgow Golf Club in 1878, won it after a tie with the now well-known ex-champion, W. Fernie. As a match player, he was equal to any amateur player at that time. Perhaps one of his best performances was when he and the late Davie Strath beat the late Bob

Kirk and Jamie Anderson in a 36-hole match over St Andrews' course in 1876, just the year before Jamie began his three great successive wins in the championship. It would seem that he is still maintaining his fine form, as nine holes, however short, in 32 is a really first-class performance. (9 December 1889, p. 8)

In the United States, however, the *New York Clipper Annual* reported that on 30 October 1889, the “Annual tournament for the golf championship of Canada concluded; A.W. Smith beat Thomas Scott in the final contest – Toronto, Ont.” ([New York: Frank Queen Publishing Company, 1890], p. 20). It was recognized in America that the Hunter Medal represented “the golf championship of Canada.”



Figure 61 A.P. Scott, 1896.

Perhaps because the Hunter Medal was won in 1890 by Andy Scott and in 1891 by Tom Scott (Smith's greatest rivals at the Toronto Golf Club), the competition for the Hunter Medal seems in many golfers' minds to have become no longer associated even with Ontario-wide competition, but rather with a competition exclusive to the Toronto Golf Club.

And so, on the eve of the fourth competition for the Hunter Medal in the fall of 1892, the *Montreal Gazette* attempted to set the historical record straight by reminding readers that the competition for the Hunter Medal had from the beginning been open to all amateur golfers in Canada:

The Hunter Medal

Some time ago, Mr. C. Hunter, of the Toronto Golf Club, donated a handsome golf medal, open to all golfers in the Dominion of Canada. The first match was won by Mr. A.W. Smith, the second by Mr. A.P. Scott, and the third by Mr. T.M. Scott. There seems to be a general impression that this trophy is open only to the Toronto club. This is a mistake, as it is open to the whole Dominion. (31 October 1892, p. 5)

It seems that when Charles Hunter offered his prize for competition in 1889, the Hunter Medal was understood by Smith and his fellow competitors as similar both to the “Captain's Cup” that Smith won at Glasgow in 1878 in a competition “open to all amateurs” and to the “Tennant Cup” that he won in 1880 and 1881 in competitions that were also open to all amateurs: all these competitions, that is, were implicitly understood to be national championships (*Glasgow Herald*, 9 December 1889, p. 8).

And so, it may well have been Smith's record-setting triumph in the first competition for the Hunter Medal that was the ultimate source of the conviction among so many of his peers and among so many of the golf journalists of the late 1890s and early 1900s that A.W. Smith had once been the champion golfer of Canada.

Of course, any chance that articles like that in the *Montreal Gazette* in 1892 might have been able to re-establish the annual competition for the Hunter Medal as a national golf championship was prevented by Lord Aberdeen's request that a Canadian golf association be formed and that one of its mandates be to organize annually a national amateur championship.

The Rematches Between Andy Smith and Willie Davis

During the ten years after their first match, A.W. Smith, the best amateur golfer in Canada, and William F. Davis, still the only golf professional resident in North America, met in several eighteen-hole and thirty-six-hole matches over the golf courses of the Quebec and Royal Montreal golf clubs.

On every such occasion, large crowds followed them, and the contest was usually described in the newspapers in some detail.



Figure 62 William F. Davis (left) and A.W. Smith. Although this photograph appeared in Golf, vol 2 no 2 (December 1895, p. 51, it was probably taken after their last match in Montreal in the fall of 1892.

When Smith was transferred by the Quebec Bank from its Toronto office to Quebec City in 1890, he immediately joined the Quebec Golf Club and he immediately played for his new club against the Royal Montreal Golf Club in the first of the two matches between the clubs that year.

Once more, he played against Royal Montreal's best player, Alexander Dennistoun, but this time Smith took just three holes from the now sixty-eight-year-old veteran golfer.

And, once again, Smith was pitted against Davis in an exhibition match:

[After the match between clubs,] the afternoon was devoted to foursomes, in which all the players joined, beside which there was a match between Mr. A.W. Smith, who has recently joined the Quebec Club, and W.F. Davis, the Montreal professional, which resulted in a victory for Mr. Smith by two holes, after a most keenly contested game, in which there was an exhibition of such fine play as one seldom has an opportunity of seeing. (Quebec Weekly Chronicle, 29 May 1890, p. 2).

Smith and Davis played again in 1891 after Challenge Cup match between Quebec and Montreal at Quebec in May, and the match turned out quite differently:

Many of the Montreal players remained in Quebec [another day] ... and played some very pleasant foursomes, but the most interesting match was between Mr. A.W. Smith, of Quebec, and W.F. Davis, professional, of [the] Montreal Club; W.F. Davis being 8 up and 7 to play, all even on the bye. Mr. A.W. Smith, although playing a good game, was a little off with his putting, an exceptional thing for him. (Golf, vol 2 no 39 [12 June 1891, p. 234).

Two years later, on 24 May 1892, on the Quebec Golf Club's fourteen-hole course over Cove Field, Smith and Davis played another exhibition match after the Quebec team "won easily" over the Montreal team in the first leg of the annual matches between these two golf clubs: "W.F. Davis, professional, played Mr. A.W. Smith a single, in which he led all the way, until in the uncomfortable position of being 3 holes ahead and 4 to play. Mr. Smith won the next two, and halving the third left Davis dormy. The last hole was won by Mr. Smith, bringing the match all even" (*Golf*, vol 4 no 93 [24 June 1892], p. 251).

Playing Smith again at Quebec on 1 October 1892, Davis exacted a measure of revenge:

Perhaps the finest match of golf ever played in Canada took place in Quebec last Saturday between Messrs. Davis, professional of the Royal Montreal Golf Club, and A.W. Smith, a member of the Quebec club. The match arranged was called a "Home and Home Match," 36 holes to be played on the Quebec links and 36 holes on the Montreal links next Saturday. In the first round of 36 holes at Quebec, Mr. Davis came off the winner by 3 holes. Both parties played a magnificent game. Those who want to see what really good golf is should not fail to go to the Montreal golf ground next Saturday. (Gazette [Montreal], 4 October 1892, p. 8).

One week later, In the return match at Montreal, Smith turned the tables: “Mr. Smith was three holes up, and as Mr. Davis was three up in the first half of the previous match played in Quebec on Saturday last, the result of the series was a tie” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 11 October 1892, p. 8).

In a match later in October over the golf course of the Royal Montreal Golf Club, just before the 1892 interprovincial match, Smith again played Davis: as in their meeting in May, the amateur “played a plucky up-hill game and eventually overhauled the professional, who lost by a putt at the last hole, and Mr. Smith won by one up” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 31 October 1892, p. 5).

And so, ten years after the interprovincial competition at Montreal in October of 1882 when A.W. Smith announced himself superior to any other amateur golfer in Canada and established himself as the equal of professional Willie Davis, he again confirmed his unchallenged standing as Canada’s best amateur golfer and showed himself now perhaps superior to Davis, having in 1892 won two matches against him, drawn one, and lost one.

At the banquet after the day’s matches, the golf professional was gracious in acknowledging his loss to the amateur: “Davis ... said he [Smith] was the best man he had ever met. He also hoped to meet him again” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 31 October 1892, p. 5).

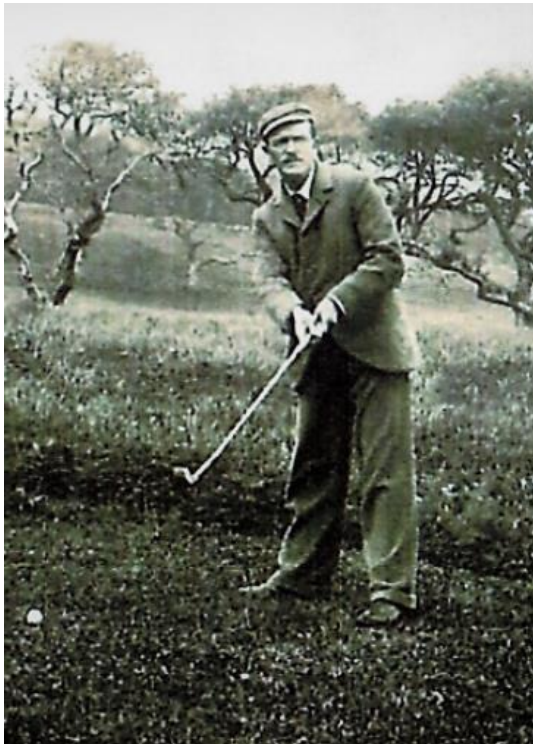


Figure 63 Willie Davis at the Newport Golf Club, Rhode Island, U.S.A., late 1890s.

Three years later, Smith and Davis met again – but only indirectly when both competed in the U.S.G.A.’s inaugural U.S. Open played over the golf course of the Newport Golf Club, where Davis was the resident golf professional.

Davis was also the designer who had laid out the Newport golf course, choosing the site when he was loaned to Newport in November of 1892, and then laying out the holes the next spring after being hired by the Newport club.

After the thirty-six-hole competition, Smith bested Davis by two strokes.

And in 1896, both Smith and Davis competed in the U.S. Open played over the Shinnecock Hills golf course, twelve

of the holes having been designed by Davis himself five years before. At the end of this thirty-six-hole competition, Smith was nine strokes ahead of Davis.

On these occasions when they both competed in the U.S. Open, I expect that Davis sought out Smith. Davis missed Montreal, which was the home of his wife. He even wrote to the editor of the *Montreal Star* to complain: “I get lonesome sometimes for Montreal news and feel that I would like to know what is going on” (14 October 1893, p. 7). One hopes they had a chance to reminisce about old times. Thirty-five-year-old Willie Davis had just six more years to live – one more than Smith.

Smith versus Canada's Second Golf Professional

As in Scotland, so in Canada: Smith enjoyed testing himself against professional golfers. When Davis left Montreal to take up his duties at Newport, Rhode Island, in the spring of 1893, Smith accepted an invitation from the Ottawa Golf Club to play an exhibition match against its first golf professional, Alfred Ricketts.

The Ottawa Golf Club had hired Davis to lay out its golf course in Sandy Hill, Ottawa, at the end of April 1891, and it had also engaged him to supply sets of golf clubs. But as of the end of the 1892 season, the club had in mind the hiring of its own professional: "The Ottawa Golf Club is engaging a professional for next year and it is more than likely they will be able to put some strong players in the field" (*Ottawa Daily Citizen*, 1 November 1892, p. 5). A contract with Ricketts may have been in place by the end of 1892.

Born Alfred Henry Ricketts in England in February of 1869, he was described by the *Ottawa Free Press* as "a professional from Wimbledon," the town of his birth, about 10 miles south-west of London, England (cited in the *Montreal Star*, 2 May 1893, p. 5). When Ricketts arrived in Ottawa on March 20th of 1893, about a month after his 24th birthday, he was presumably fresh off an apprenticeship at one of the two golf clubs that played on the golf course laid out on the Wimbledon Common in the 1860s (this was the third oldest golf course in England).

When Ricketts was at Wimbledon in the late 1880s and early 1890s, there were two golf clubs playing on the same golf course on Wimbledon Common. Located in the more commodious red-brick clubhouse at one end of the course was the Royal Wimbledon Golf Club; located in the more spartan "Iron House" at the other end of the golf course was the London Scottish Golf Club. Nine holes went each way from clubhouse to clubhouse, the members of these clubs commencing play at the tee closest to their own clubhouse.

What the Ottawa Golf club wanted most from its first golf professional was effective instruction in how to play the new game: "A. Ricketts, the professional engaged by the Ottawa Golf Club, has arrived here for the season. Under his tuition it is expected that golf will boom" (*Ottawa Daily Citizen*, 21 March 1893, p. 4). And at Wimbledon, he will have worked with excellent instructors.

Each golf club had its own golf professional. One of them, "[David Murdoch] Patrick, who used to look after matters at the Wimbledon end, was more of a club-maker than player" (*Pall Mall Gazette*

[London], 4 November 1896, p. 10). Originally from Leven Links in Leven, Scotland, Patrick had replaced his brother Alexander at Wimbledon in 1891 (at a reduced salary and with the title of greenkeeper only, not professional). At the other end of the common, at the London Scottish Golf Club, the golf professional from the 1880s to 1900 was Peter Fernie, from St Andrews. Like all golf professionals of the day, Fernie was a club-maker (in fact, he became so famed for his club-making skills that he was one of the three club-making judges at the International Golf Exhibition in St Andrews in 1910). But he was also an excellent instructor, and he was a serious competitive golfer. He was a regular competitor in Open Championships from 1880 to the late 1890s and a participant in the professional tournaments and match-play contests that began to be staged in the London area in the 1890s.

Ricketts might have apprenticed under Fernie, Alexander Patrick, or David Patrick. Moving through the stages of apprenticeship from caddie to club-maker and golf instructor, it is possible that over the years he worked with each of them.



Figure 64 The only known image of Alfred Ricketts. Democrat and Chronicle, 28 October 1923, p. 33.

Ricketts was certainly a very good golfer, and he was at least as good as Willie Davis.

After he left Ottawa at the end of the 1895 golf season for the Albany Country Club, and then (after one year) the Rochester Country Club, Ricketts played regularly in the U.S. Open from 1896 to 1902, finishing as high as sixth.

His first important match in Ottawa was against one of Ontario's top amateur golfers and an old Scottish opponent of Smith's: "Ricketts, the Ottawa professional, defeated Harley, the Kingston pro., by six holes" (*Ottawa Journal*, 25 May 1893, p. 1). An indignant letter from Kingston later corrected the mistaken description of Harley as a "pro,"

but the new Kingston player was certainly regarded as capable of matching the game of golf professionals, so Ricketts' easy victory over Harley was no doubt regarded as a clear demonstration of his high quality as a golfer.

Smith, for instance, had taken just two holes from Harley at Montreal in October of 1892 during that year's interprovincial competition, in which Smith represented Quebec as a member of the Quebec Golf Club and Harley represented Ontario as a member of the Kingston Golf Club.

In the spring of 1893, Smith had been transferred by the Quebec Bank back to Toronto: "Golf, which is going to be a most popular game in Toronto this coming season, will doubtless be much encouraged by the removal to Toronto of Mr. [A.] W. Smith, of Quebec, who is probably the best golf player in Canada" (*Gazette [Montreal]*, 27 March 1893, p. 8). In Toronto, it was clear that Smith's game was still in good shape, for the old pecking order seems to have been re-established immediately: "The first monthly competition of the Toronto Golf Club took place on Saturday afternoon.... The best individual scores were made by Mr. A.W. Smith, scratch, 76; Mr. A.P. Scott, scratch, 78; and Mr. T.M. Scott, scratch, 80" (*Montreal Star*, 8 May 1893, p. 3).

And so, in 1893, Smith would represent Ontario in the interprovincial match at Ottawa:

On Friday next the Interprovincial Golf match, Ontario vs. Quebec, the greatest golfing event of the year in Canada, will be played on the Ottawa links. It will bring together the best men from Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, and Ottawa, 20 men a side. Some fine play is expected....

In the morning, it is expected an exhibition match between A.W. Smith, the leading amateur of Canada, and A. Ricketts, the local club's professional, will be played. (Ottawa Daily Citizen, 4 October 1893, p. 8)

The exhibition matches were in fact deferred until after the official matches: "A large crowd of players and members will be here [for the interprovincial golf match].... After the match of the day is over, exhibition matches will take place between the principal players" (*Ottawa Daily Citizen*, 6 October 1893, p. 5). And so, "At noon, the whole of the 15 pairs had been started by Col. Irwin, president of the Ottawa club, and the ... first pairs arrived home shortly after on the first half of their round. These players gave Ontario a good start, notably A.W. Smith who had eight holes up [for nine holes played!] on Senator Drummond" (*Ottawa Journal*, 6 October 1893, p. 7). And Smith continued in the same form: "Prof. Cappon of Kingston and Mr. A.W. Smith of Toronto played a splendid game, getting no less than 20 of the 37 points scored by Ontario" (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 October 1893, p. 8).

And so, Smith inevitably featured in the most important exhibition matches: "After the interprovincial games, Messrs. Smith and Scott of Toronto play[ed] Mr. Harley of Kingston and A. Ricketts (pro.) of Ottawa. The Toronto side won by one hole after a fine exhibition of the game" (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 October 1893, p. 8).

Smith then played Ricketts in a singles match, the two men tying with course-record-setting scores of 83.

Smith and Ricketts met again indirectly in the 1896 U.S. Open, the first in which Ricketts played: Smith finished five strokes ahead of him.

The International Tournament at Niagara

Perhaps the most celebrated match that Smith ever played in North America was at the International Tournament staged by the Niagara Golf Club at Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1895.

The original idea for the tournament came from the management of the Queen's Royal Hotel at Niagara-on-the-Lake more than two years before a ball was struck: "Messrs. McGaw & Winnett of the Queen's Royal Hotel, Niagara, are endeavouring to arrange a golf tournament for a handsome challenge cup among other prizes. It is thought that players from Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec, Toronto and Kingston would enter" (*Ottawa Journal*, 15 May 1893, p. 8).

The pavilion of the Queen's Royal Hotel was located at one end of the Niagara Golf Club's original nine-hole course along the shore of Lake Ontario, while at the opposite end of the course was the summer residence of Charles Hunter (one of the first to play golf on the Fort Mississauga Common in the late 1870s and one of the founders of the Niagara Golf Club in 1881). The sketch below, from the *Buffalo Courier* in 1895, shows the view towards the Queen's Royal Hotel (seen in the far background on the extreme right side of the sketch) from the front of the property of Charles Hunter.

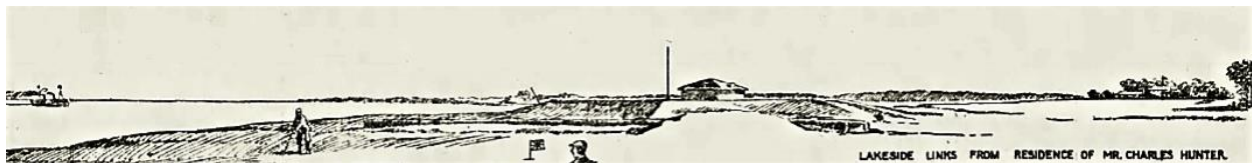


Figure 65 *Buffalo Courier*, 18 August 1895, p. 9.

On the left side of the sketch is Lake Ontario (with a passenger steamer arriving at Niagara-on-the-Lake from Toronto), and in the centre of the sketch is Fort Mississauga.

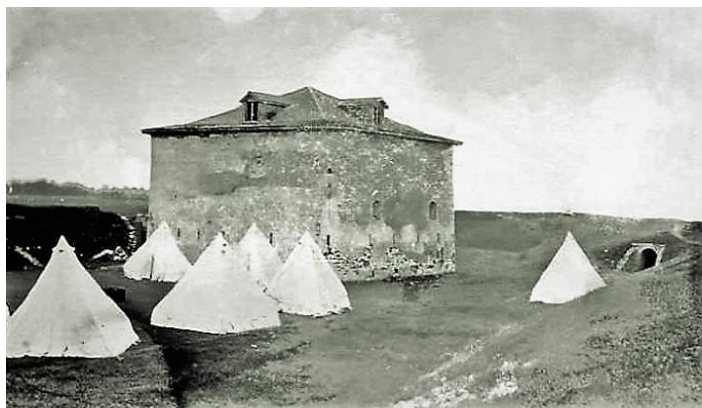


Figure 66 *Fort Mississauga circa 1870.*

Built during the War of 1812, Fort Mississauga still exists on the Niagara-on-the-Lake golf course, accessible via a footpath that warns visitors that golfers have the right of way. In 1895, the second green and the sixth green were located on opposite sides of the building at the bottom of the dried-up moat where the tents are pitched in the photo to the left.

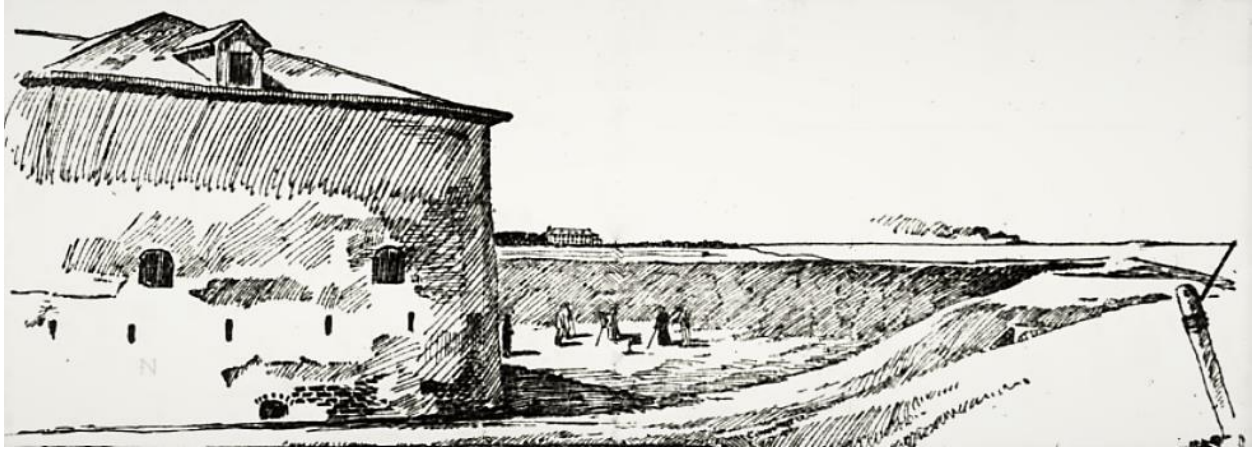


Figure 67 Players putting in the Fort Mississauga moat on the sixth green of the Lake Side Links of the Niagara Golf Club. The summer residence of Charles Hunter is visible on the horizon in the background. Buffalo Courier, 18 August 1895, p. 9.

The 1895 layout of the Lake Side Links appears below, the first tee and ninth green located beside the Royal Queen’s Hotel, the fourth green and fifth tee located in front of the residence of Charles Hunter.

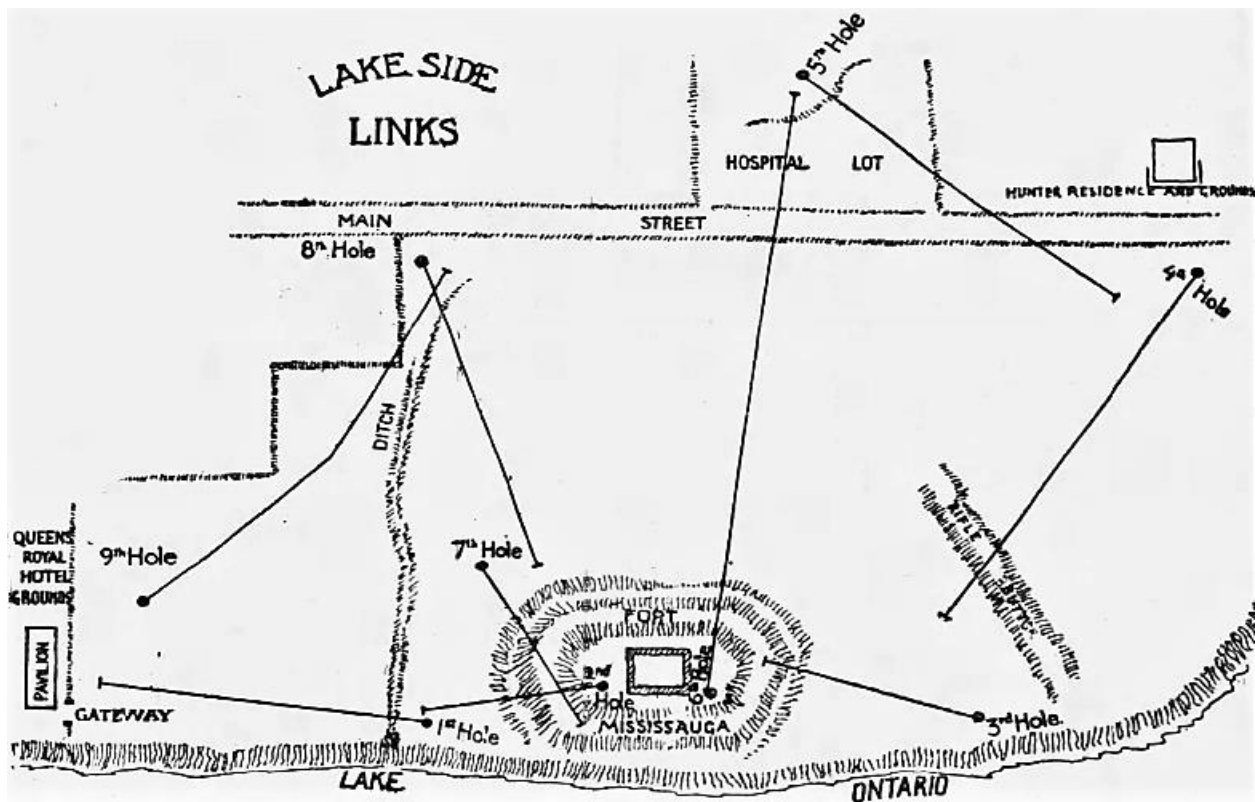


Figure 68 Buffalo Courier, 18 August 1895, p. 9.

Between 1893 and 1895, the ambition of the Queen’s Royal Hotel’s Henry Winnett – who “offered a sterling silver trophy, valued at \$300, for competition” – grew larger, such that by the time a tournament was finally organized for the late summer of 1895, the committee in charge of it was

international, comprising important Americans such as Charles Blair MacDonald, vice-president of the U.S.G.A., and H.O. Talmadge, secretary of the U.S.G.A., as well as a number of Canadians drawn from the ranks of the senior members at the Niagara and Toronto golf clubs (*Montreal Star*, 8 July 1895, p. 3).

And by September of 1895, the Niagara Golf Club was ready to unveil its new eighteen-hole championship layout: although many of the greens were still in poor shape, the organizing committee decided to introduce the Niagara Golf Club's new Fort George Links into play so that the International Championship could be conducted on a proper eighteen-hole championship course.

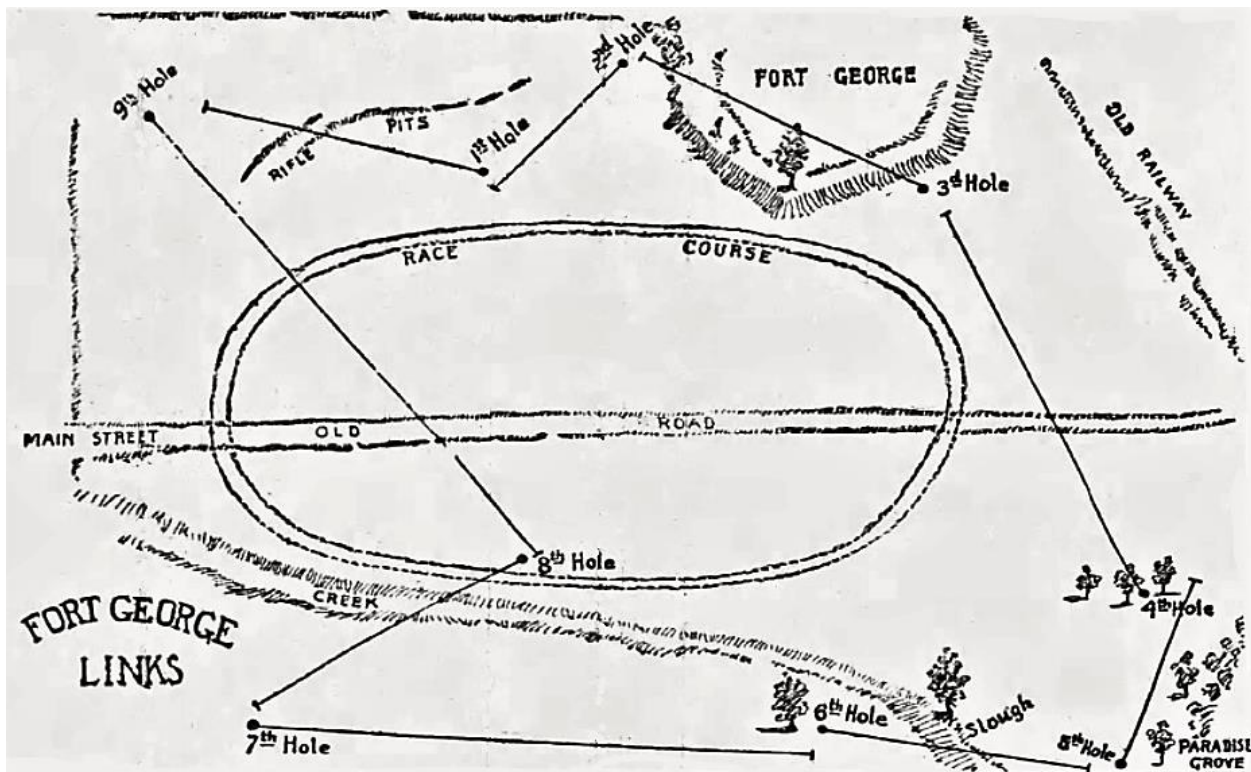


Figure 69 Buffalo Courier, 18 August 1895, p. 9.

The prestige of the "International championship" in the world of North American golf in 1895 cannot be overestimated. After all, both the U.S.G.A. Amateur Championship and the U.S. Open were delayed in 1895 in order to accommodate the Niagara tournament: "The championship golf matches, both amateur and professional, which were to have been played on the links at the Newport Golf Club early in September, have been postponed until the first week of October on account of the Canadian tournament in the second week of September" (*Boston Globe*, 21 August 1895, p. 7).

As reported by the *Quebec Gazette*, there was no doubt as to which Canadian the Americans wanted to see: "Entries from Canada will include T.M. Harley, of Kingston, the Canadian champion; A.P. Scott,

Toronto; A. Simpson, Ottawa; F. Stancliffe, Montreal, and F.B. Betts, London. It is also hoped that A.W. Smith, of Toronto, will be able to be present, as the American golfers are looking forward to meeting him” (11 September 1895, p. 2).

By his victory in the inaugural 1895 International tournament, Charles Blair Macdonald – widely regarded as the best amateur golfer in the United States at this time – began to redeem his two surprising second-place finishes in 1894: first, at the so-called “American” amateur championship at the Newport Golf Club of Rhode Island in September of 1894, and, second, at the so-called “United States” amateur championship at the St Andrews Golf Club of Yonkers, New York, in October of 1894:

Chicago claims the champion golf player of the continent. Charles B. Macdonald, president of the Chicago Golf Club, won the international championship Macdonald after his victory of yesterday was in capital spirits and good form His powerful driving was the great feature in the matches with A. Simpson, of Ottawa, Ont., and A.W. Smith, of Toronto. The latter was regarded as the strongest of the Canadian players, but he succumbed to Macdonald’s great drives and lofting after a close contest. It was anybody’s match up to the last hole, and Macdonald by a clever loft won. Willie Dunn, the professional, said it was the finest game played in America without a doubt. (Inter Ocean [Chicago], 9 September 1895, p. 3)

Even after MacDonald won the 1895 U.S.G.A. amateur championship at Newport, Rhode Island, a few weeks later, the same newspaper ranked MacDonald’s win at the International Championship as equal to the amateur championship, and noted that the International Championship had been more difficult to win:

Charles Blair MacDonald, amateur champion of the United States and international champion, now holds the only two championships worth striving for. His most recent victory was much more easily won than the final round of the international championship, when he and A.W. Smith actually halved the first seventeen holes, the championship being won by MacDonald at the eighteenth hole. Such close playing has rarely, if ever, been equalled. (Inter Ocean, 4 October 1895, p. 4)

The match was perceived as a contest between the two best amateur golfers in North America, the one titan representing the United States, the other titan representing Canada.

Yet MacDonald, like Smith, had learned his golf at St Andrews. Born in Niagara Falls, Ontario, in 1855, MacDonald had been sent by his parents to St Andrews University in 1872 (when just sixteen years of

age). He was tutored at golf by Old Tom Morris and quickly became proficient enough to earn a round or two with Young Tom Morris. MacDonald seems not to have met Smith in St Andrews although their residence in St Andrews seems to have overlapped by several months. When MacDonald returned to his parents' home in Chicago in 1874, he became a stockbroker and did not play golf again until the game became a fad in the United States in the early 1890s.

The excitement caused by the colossal contest in prospect prompted the *Buffalo Courier* to send a reporter to describe the match hole-by-hole, and even shot-by-shot:

When MacDonald and Smith began their final struggle on the St George Course of nine links, the sky was inky black and rain was falling, but the rain soon ceased, and the golfers paid no heed to atmospheric ruction.

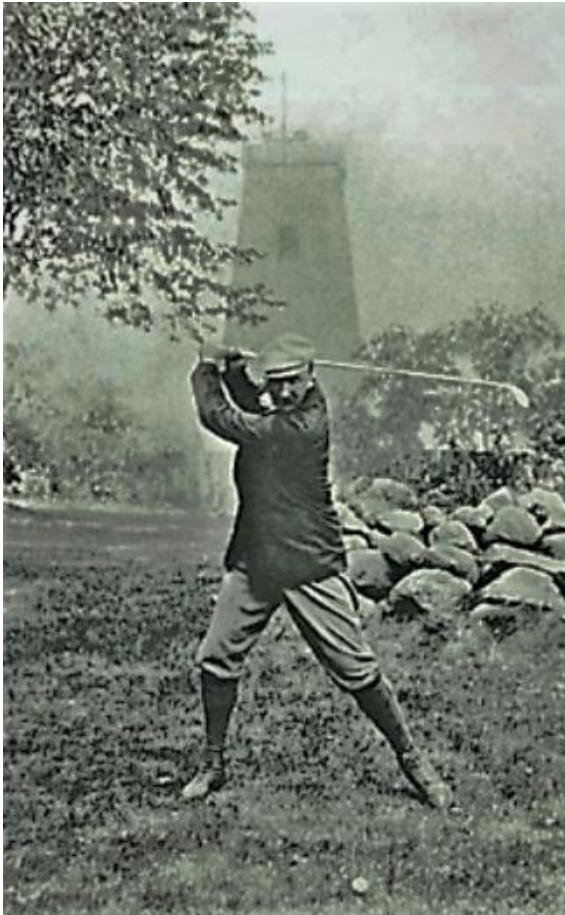


Figure 70 Charles Blair MacDonald (1855-1839). One can see in this photograph from about 1895 that MacDonald used his old St Andrews swing when he resumed playing golf in North America in the mid-1890s.

The play on this links was spirited and clever, several fine driving shots of both sides being the features of the play. The first half ended in a tie and a great crowd of men and women assembled on the Fort Mississauga links to witness the end of the great match. It was a contest to delight the hearts of true golfers and has never been surpassed in this country or on any American links.

In lofting to the first hole on the second half, both players made remarkably clever shots against a strong wind and the balls landed just two inches apart. McDonald's putting shots were superior, but the hole was won by both. On driving to the second hole, MacDonald missed the ball and drove a lot of dirt with it. It was his first poor shot. Smith's drive was too far, and the ball went over the cliff to the beach. A beautiful drive sent it back. MacDonald's ball was in a gully and a

cleek shot drove it against an obstructive post, losing a shot, but [he] won the hole. The next hole was won by Smith, again tying the score. The drives for this hole were poor, but MacDonald made a couple of bad putting shots which lost him the hole.

Smith's ball landed in a cavity in driving to the next hole and in trying to get it out, it fell only two feet away. It was won by MacDonald. MacDonald likewise won the next hole, as Smith landed in a gully outside the embankment. He made three attempts to get the ball over the steep cliff and then gave up the hole. For the next hole, won by both, there was some especially fine putting and both players were applauded.

A long driving shot by MacDonald to the next hole was "a beauty," as one woman loudly proclaimed, and Smith followed with an equally fine shot, the longest drive ever made on the course in match play. The second shot landed MacDonald's ball in a gutter in front of a residence, but he sent it over several obstructions to within a few feet of the hole, and he acknowledged that it was the best shot he had ever made. The next ball sent by Smith dropped in a fence-post hole and he lost two strokes by taking it out.

To regain these, he attempted a long and difficult lofting shot over two fences and some trees. It was a fine shot and all cried, "bravo," but when Smith went to look for his ball he found it over the cliff, 100 feet below, on the sand.

Up to this time the contest was a tie and the interest was intense, but Smith's forlorn hope was soon abandoned. He made two attempts to get the ball over the cliff and then gave up the contest.

"Think of it!" exclaimed one old golfer, "a tie on 17 holes and only one up!"

MacDonald was congratulated by Mr. Smith and many of the crowd, and the international champion in turn thanked Smith for his courtesy, fairness, and good wishes. (8 September 1895, p. 11)

The "fine shot" in the late stages of his match against MacDonald that prompted all to cry, "bravo," seems to have been atypical of Smith's game. Six years later, in its obituary item on Smith, a Scottish newspaper recalled that although he "had great capacity in driving," he was "perhaps ... at times a little over cautious" (*Daily Record*, 13 August 1901, p. 4). On the last hole, Smith showed no caution "when he attempted a long and difficult lofting shot over two fences and some trees."

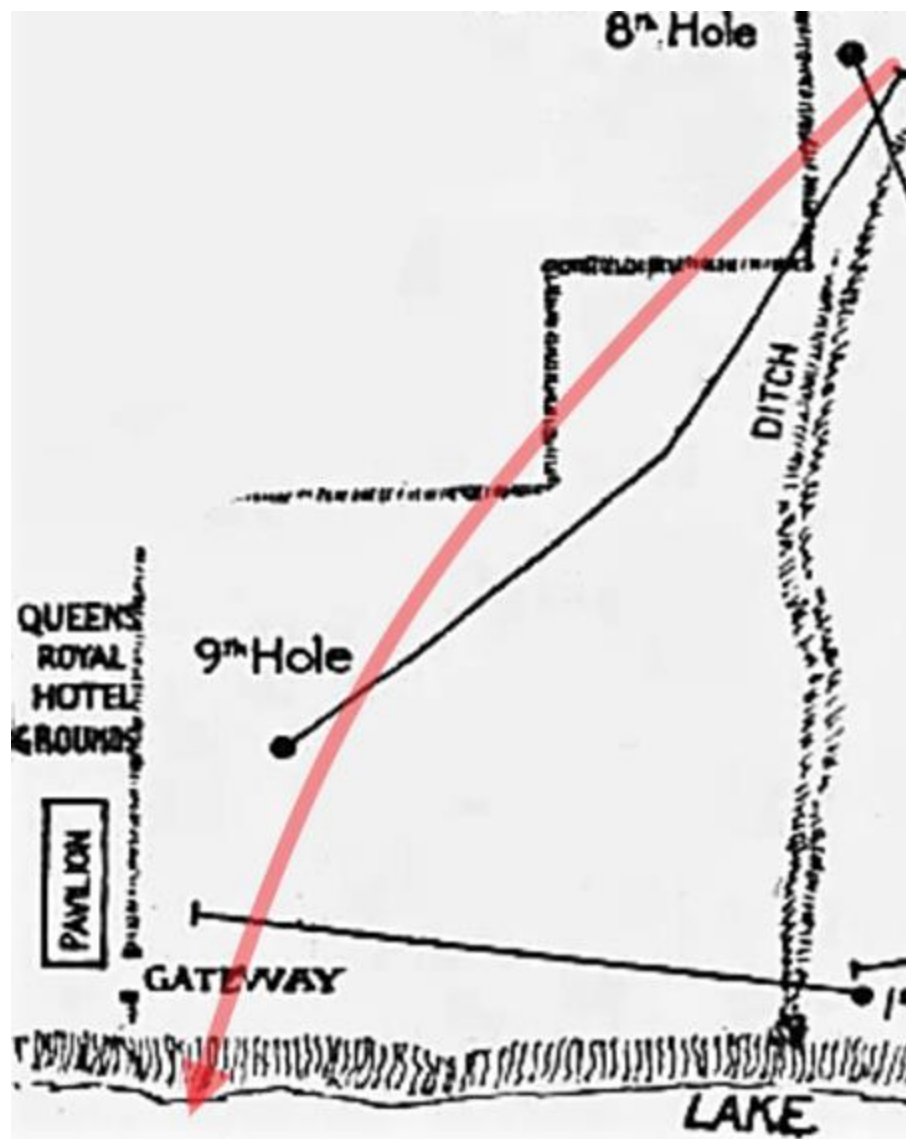


Figure 71 Buffalo Courier, 18 August 1895, p. 10. A red line is added to the illustration to indicate Smith's drive on the eighteenth hole.

Tied with MacDonald after seventeen holes, Smith seems to have attempted to drive the green on the final hole, requiring him to carry fences and a field full of apple trees.

His drive apparently carried all that he was required to carry, but it seems to have been of such prodigious length that it ended up going over the cliff and down onto the beach at Lake Ontario – a position from which Smith was unable to return the ball to play.

After the match, MacDonald had thanked Smith for his courtesy and fairness, but many years

later he revealed in his autobiography that there had been some people among the spectators and the forecaddies who were interested in neither courtesy nor fairness:

Smith and I reached the finals. Smith was a very good Scotch player and, I think, quite my equal in playing the game. We were all square at the seventeenth hole. The eighteenth hole was a dog-leg hole, an orchard which was out of bounds butted into the fairway. To carry the trees made the hole an easy four. Smith attempted a long and difficult lofting shot for a four, but he pulled his ball badly and it went over the cliff. Failing to get it back in the fairway he picked his ball up, giving me the hole and the match.

I shall never forget my caddy, ... lying over my ball to see that no one tampered with it, as the feeling was running very high.

A regrettable but amusing incident occurred in our match. As the golf course was quite rough, with bogs full of long grass in many places, we decided to have a fore-caddy. At one of the holes, Smith drove and almost hit the fore-caddy and then I drove. I noticed the fore-caddy going at once to where my ball lay.

Coming up, we were looking for Smith's ball. We asked the fore-caddy where it was. He denied having any knowledge of it whatever. We told him we saw he had to dodge for fear it would hit him, but he was adamant.

Finding Smith's ball all right, we went on.

Late in the evening after due celebration of our victory, one of my party confessed to me that he had given the boy five dollars to be sure and always stand by my ball. (C.B. MacDonald, Scotland's Gift, Golf: Reminiscences by Charles Blair MacDonald [New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928])

Given that MacDonald's caddie believed that he needed to protect his golfer's ball from interference by spectators on Smith's side, and given that a fore-caddy had been bribed to mark only the location of MacDonald's golf ball, one might wonder whether it was bad luck simply or perhaps one of two instances of fore-caddy interference that saw Smith's drives end up in a "cavity," in a "fence-post hole," and "over the cliff."

"Feeling was running very high" and skulduggery was afoot: perhaps the fore-caddy had resorted to an "adamant" denial of "having any knowledge ... whatever" of the location of Smith's ball – despite the fact that both MacDonald and Smith had seen him jump out of the way of it – because he had not only neglected to mark its position for Smith but had also nudged it into a bad lie! (This was precisely the sort of thing that MacDonald's caddie defended against on the last hole.)

We shall never know.

MacDonald's status as International Champion was enhanced by this victory over Smith in particular. The *New York Times* observed that it was greatly to MacDonald's credit that he had "lately beaten, at the International Tournament, held at Niagara on the Lake, the Canadian champion, A.W. Smith, ... by

one hole, after a stiff fight, for Smith is an able golfer, and ranks in Scotland among the gold medal players, an honor only obtained by the very best" (29 September 1895, p. 15).

End-of-the-season reviews of the year's events in the United States recalled that "A.W. Smith, the Canadian champion, ... gave Charles B. Macdonald his hardest game of the year in the finals" (*Sun* [New York], 23 December 1895, p. 8).

Smith missed the International Tournaments of 1896 and 1897 because he was in Scotland, but after he returned to Canada in the spring of 1898, he entered that year's International Tournament and won it. He was pushed in one match to a playoff hole, but he easily won his semi-final and final matches:

Smith Won Championship

Niagara, Ont. September 5 – A.W. Smith, the veteran Canadian golfer, easily won ... the Niagara golf tournament on Saturday, and becomes the holder of the championship trophy for the coming year. Smith played Charles Ransom, of Buffalo, in the finals, but the latter was outclassed and badly beaten 8 up, 7 to play. (Montreal Star, 5 September 1898, p. 2)

Charles M. Ransom, the captain of the Buffalo Country Club, would win this tournament the next year.

By 1898, however, the International Tournament at Niagara was no longer held in the esteem with which it was greeted in 1895. The golf writer for the *Montreal Gazette*, in fact, was dismissive of the event and begrudged Smith the title of Niagara "champion":

The Niagara tournament is nothing more than a hotel affair, which this year has been put under the patronage of the Niagara Golf Club. It has been played under the rules of the Canadian Golf Association, but not under its auspices. The success of Mr. Smith, of Toronto, therefore, in this tournament, hardly deserves the name of championship. His proving himself the best at Niagara has no national or international significance. The Canadian Golf Association tournament ... alone can decide about championship honours

Mr. Horace Hutchinson, in this month's Golf, protests against the too general application of such titles as champion to the winner of every small match. His remarks seem applicable to the Niagara tournament, and its winner this year. (7 September 1898, p. 5)

Ouch!

Nostalgia for the quality of golf played in the original 1895 battle at Niagara between Smith and MacDonald was still so strong in 1898, however, that at the conclusion of the Canadian national championships at the Toronto Golf Club on 30 September 1898, MacDonald (who was in Toronto to play in the next day's international match between Canada and the United States) agreed to play an exhibition match against Smith (*Gazette* [Montreal], 1 October 1898, p. 13). Smith and MacDonald would not face each other in the international match, for as the top-ranked Canadian, Smith would play the top-ranked American, the reigning U.S. amateur champion H.J. Whigham. And as the second-ranked American, MacDonald would play the second-ranked Canadian, George S. Lyon. The exhibition match between Smith and MacDonald was for old time's sake.

U.S. Opens

There was a rumour that A.W. Smith intended to play in the first national amateur golf championship of the United States that had been organized at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1894:

Canadians Were Refused

The Newport Golf tournament is now drawing to a close. Several Canadian players, including Mr. A.W. Smith, of Toronto, and Mr. F. Stancliffe, of Montreal, sent entries, but they were not allowed to play on account of not belonging to a club on the other side of the line. In the final, Mr. Charles MacDonald, of Niagara Falls and Chicago, came within one hole of the winner. Mr. MacDonald, while being a skilled player, is not equal to either of the Canadian cracks, his measure having been taken on the Niagara links this summer. It looks as though a Canadian would have carried off the laurels. (Gazette [Montreal], 22 September 1894, p. 8)

Royal Montreal Golf Club member William Watson competed in the tournament, finishing fifth, and later denied that Canadians had been unwelcome at the tournament:

The Canadians at Newport

To the Sporting Editor of the Gazette:

Sir, -- The item ... to the effect that Canadian players, including Mr. Smith, of Toronto, and Mr. Stancliffe, of Montreal, were barred from the Newport Golf tournament on account of their not belonging to a club on the other side of the line is not in accordance with the facts.

Mr. Stancliffe and myself, as members of the Royal Montreal Golf Club, signified our intention of competing and our names were accepted and entered by the green committee of the Newport club ...

Mr Stancliffe was unable to take part in the competition; but I played and received a most cordial and hearty welcome from the executive committee and other members of the Newport club. These gentlemen further regretted Mr. Stancliffe's inability to compete and expressed the hope that a larger representation of Canadian players would be present at the next tournament....

So far as I could see there is not the slightest feeling of jealousy on the part of American golfers toward Canadian golfers....

W.W. Watson (Gazette [Montreal], 24 September 1894, p. 6)

The basis for the claims made in the *Montreal Gazette* story is not clear. If the *Gazette* reporter somehow mistook the inability of Stancliffe to travel to Newport as the Newport Golf Club's refusal of his application, one wonders if the same is true for A.W. Smith: had Smith, like Stancliffe, applied and been accepted, only to find that he was not able to travel to Newport?



Figure 72 Daily Mail and Empire (Toronto), 11 July 1896.

The next year, however, Smith found that he was not welcome in the national amateur championship: the United States Golf Association did not allow anyone to play in the tournament who was not a member of an American golf club. So, in both 1895 and 1896, Smith entered the U.S. Open Championship instead.

Whether a North American amateur golfer would be competitive in the Open Championship with the Scottish professionals then working in America was hardly a subject for debate:

The open championships abroad have been won by amateur players, including John Ball, Jr., and H.H. Hilton, but that an amateur should win in the open event at Newport, unless he were a visitor [i.e., a visitor from Britain], is not regarded as possible.

It would certainly enhance the competitive spirit in the first American open championships to have amateur players from abroad enter the lists. (Sun [New York], 16 June 1895, p. 16)

On the eve of the tournament, three American amateurs had signed up for the Open tournament alongside Smith: “What the [three American] amateurs will do is all problematical. They will show their form in the earlier [U.S.G.A. Amateur Championship] competition. A.W. Smith is dangerous” (*Sun* [New York], 30 September 1895, p. 9).

As things turned out, however, Smith was the only amateur to contest the 1895 U.S. Open: “L.B. Stoddart of St Andrews, Charles B. Macdonald of Chicago, amateur champion, and Winthrop Rutherford of Newport withdrew, which, except for A.W. Smith, of Toronto, narrowed the meeting down to professionals, and all now in this country were engaged” in the U.S. Open competition (*New York Times*, 6 October 1895, p. 15).

After the first round, Smith was tied for the lead.

At the conclusion of play, however, Willie Davis’s new apprentice, young Horace Rawlins (fresh from England), was the winner. Willie Dunn, Jr, was second (two strokes behind Rawlins), and Smith and James Foulis (who would win the 1896 US Open) were tied for third (one stroke behind Dunn).



Figure 73 Left to right, first-place to third-place finishers in the 1895 US Open: Horace Rawlins, wearing his 1895 US Open Champion medal; Willie Dunn, Jr, wearing his 1894 US Open Champion medal; A.W. Smith, circa 1895; James Foulis, wearing his 1896 US Open Champion medal.

In the opinion of the golf writer for the *Boston Globe*, “the only amateur in the tournament” might well have won the U.S. Open, but “Smith, the Canadian champion,” unfortunately “struck hard luck” (5 October 1895, p. 4).



Figure 74 The U.S.G.A. golf medal won by Horace T. Rawlins at the 1895 U.S. Open.

With better luck, Andrew Whyte Smith might have saved a few strokes and found his name on the U.S.G.A.'s first-ever U.S. Open gold medal.

Smith had fallen just four strokes short of immortality.

His performance in the 1895 US Open nonetheless attracted considerable notice. "A.W. Smith, the Canadian amateur champion, made a good impression in the open match" (*Sun* [New York], 14 October 1895, p. 6). "For an amateur, A.W. Smith of Toronto made a fine record. Were he a professional he would have divided third money with Foulis" (*New York Times*, 6 October 1895, p. 15). "Smith,

the Canadian champion, the only amateur in the tournament, ... did some very fine putting. Smith tied [Foulis], but received no prize, as the provisions for amateurs were only made for first" (*Boston Globe*, 5 October 1895, p. 4).

Undaunted, Smith entered the 1896 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills.

He again finished third, this time behind Foulis, in first place, and Rawlins, in second. And, again, his good play attracted attention:

Great Golf by Foulis

He Wins the Open Championship at Shinnecock

There were thirty-six players in the open championship of the United States Golf Association today. The start was made at 10 o'clock in the morning. T.A. Havemeyer, H.O. Tallmadge, and James Swan had charge of the pairing off of the men. There was again a large attendance. The weather was perfect, but a strong wind in the morning interfered with the drives....

Notable pairs, who were followed by a "gallery" in consequence of their reputation as players, were W. Dunn and Lloyd, Whigham and Wilson, and Davis and Rawlins, the champion last season....

Davis topped his ball, but, with this exception, the drives from the first tee were excellent. Lloyd played his ball from the turf without teeing it, his invariable rule at this tee. The others,

however, all made the usual dirt tees, and drove the ball from the usual cone [of sand] in the regular style.

[Amateur] MacDonald did not keep his card in the afternoon but made 90 in the morning.

[Amateur] Whigham made an 82 A.W. Smith, the Toronto amateur, who was third in the open championship last year, played with W. Campbell. He scored 78, one of the best cards handed in....

Going out, the best card was 36, made by Douglas, Smith and Lloyd each taking 37. Rawlins, who went out in 38, made the eighth hole in two, Smith made the fifth in two, and Douglas the third in the same figure. These were the only holes made in two during the morning. In each instance, the approach play from thirty or forty yards off the green rolled straight into the cup. It was luck, pure and simple, yet the drives were so long that the players merited the good fortune....

In the second round, Whigham outplayed all the professionals save Foulis and Rawlins....

Campbell seemed to be paralyzed on the putting greens and missed eleven one-foot putts.

Foulis showed golf good enough to win a championship in any country. His score for the second round was 74, tying the great record made by Whigham, the amateur champion.... Rawlins showed a style that made it evident that his victory at Newport was not a fluke.... When all the cards were handed in, it was seen that the winner was James Foulis of the Chicago Golf Club....

A.W. Smith [placed among the money winners] ... but of course he would not accept any money.

The Toronto man is a reliable and at times a brilliant player. He has now placed two years in succession for the open championship.

James Foulis, the new open champion of America, has been in this country for two years, and was tied with A.W. Smith last year for third place in the open championship at Newport. He learned the game at St Andrews, in Scotland. (Sun [New York], 19 July 1896, p. 4)

Smith finished well ahead of his old rivals Willie Davis, Alfred Ricketts, and George Strath. But from the American point of view, perhaps his most interesting accomplishment was finishing one stroke ahead of the celebrated 1896 U.S. Amateur Champion H.J. Whigham.



Figure 75 Theodore Havemeyer (1839-1897), co-founder of the Newport Golf Club and first president of the U.S.G.A.

Since Smith was an amateur, “of course he would not accept any money,” but the U.S.G.A. president nonetheless tried to make him take his share of third-place money: “Some amusement was caused at the time by the late Mr. Theodore Havemeyer, then president of the United States Golf Association, wanting him, although he was an amateur, to take a money prize” (*Golf Illustrated*, vol 9 [16 August 1901], p. 124).

Smith’s last appearance in the U.S. Open was in 1899: but he appeared only as a premonition, brought to mind by another entrant with the name “A. Smith.”

Andy Smith’s intimidating reputation did the rest.

In fact, there was widespread discussion of A.W. Smith’s prospects in advance of the 1899 U.S. Open at the Baltimore Country Club. After the Toronto Golf Club professional Arthur Smith entered the 1899 U.S. Open as “A. Smith, Toronto Golf Club,” many people in the United States assumed that the great Canadian amateur Andy Smith was returning to U.S. Open competition after his two-year absence in Scotland.

The *Baltimore Sun* excitedly listed his name with the names of the two top American amateurs entered in the Open: “The entries for the open golf championship which begins next Thursday at Baltimore have been announced by Secretary R. Bage Kerr, of the United States Golf Association. In all, 78 aspirants sent in their names, embracing these amateurs: Herbert Harriman, amateur champion; A.W. Smith, former Canadian champion; W.J. Travis” (9 September 1899, p. 6).

On the basis of this news, the *New York Sun* included Smith in its list of possible winners (although it got quite a few facts wrong about him):

Last, but not least, the entries include A.W. Smith, the Canadian ex-champion amateur. He was fourth in the open of '95 [he was actually third] and fifth the following year [actually, he again finished third], leading [U.S. amateur champion] H.J. Whigham by a stroke. In '97, Smith lasted to the third [actually, the fourth] round in the amateur championship at Muirfield, and he did not return from Scotland in time for the open championship last year. It will be interesting to note whether Smith can lead our amateurs in the race as easily as he did in '96; in fact, he will

unconsciously serve as a trial horse to an extent to show to what degree our players have improved. (9 September 1899, p. 5)

The *Sun* was talking about a fifty-year-old man as the best measuring stick of the abilities of America's best amateurs!

Mind you, a report from Toronto suggested that Smith was indeed turning back the clock: "Mr. Andrew Smith, of the Toronto Club, with a string of victories behind him, extending over 30 years, is always a hard man to meet on a golf course, and this year he is playing, if possible, a better game than last year" (*Ottawa Journal*, 25 September 1899, p. 7).

Finally, the *Toronto Daily Star* corrected the mistake made by newspapers in two different countries:



Figure 76 Arthur Smith, born 1873. *Pittsburgh Daily Post*, 1 September 1901, p. 6).

One of the evening papers stated a day or two ago that Mr. A.W. Smith of the Toronto Club had entered for the open golf championship event at Baltimore this week.

Mr. A.W. Smith did not.

He is playing steadily on the Toronto links, getting ready for the Canadian championship tournament at Ottawa, but Mr. A [Arthur] Smith, professional at the East End Club [i.e., the Toronto Golf Club], is trying his luck with the formidable United States pros on the other side of the line. (18 September 1899)

When Andrew Smith did not show up in Baltimore for the 1899 U.S. Open, the golf writer for *Brooklyn Life* offered high praise of Smith while expressing disappointment that he would not be playing in the tournament: "It is to be regretted that A.W. Smith of Toronto, whose name was among the entries, did not start, for I doubt if there is a stronger amateur player on this side of the Atlantic, and I have always hoped to see him in the field for the [U.S.G.A.'s] amateur championship" (23 September 1899, p. 32).

Open and Amateur Championships in Britain 1897

Toward the end of the 1896 golf season, Smith decided to return to Scotland for an extended stay, which lasted just less than two years.

During this period abroad, he played in both the 1897 Amateur Championship and the 1897 Open Championship. And although he was forty-eight years of age, he definitely made his mark. In 1901, the *Dundee Evening Post* recalled that Smith, on “his return to St Andrews some years since, again became a prominent figure in open championships” (6 August 1901, p. 5).



Figure 77 James Kirk, circa 1900.

Smith began his preparation for the championships of 1897 with a tournament played in the fall of 1896. In October, along with partner James Kirk (a St Andrews player contemporary with Smith who also played matches on the Old Course with Smith’s friends William Doleman and Old Tom Morris), he represented the Thistle Club of St Andrews in an amateur Championship at North Berwick.

The *Glasgow Herald* expected them to be a formidable team: “The Thistle representatives are James Kirk, hero of about a score of contests, and A.W. Smith, also a skilful player” (28 September 1896, p. 9). Another journal reported that Kirk and “Mr. A.W. Smith, the Canadian crack, who is home for a few months,” made it to the semifinals before losing by one hole to the pair

that would win the tournament (*Field*, no 2285 [10 October 1896], p. 605).

In December of 1896, when Fred Stancliffe (who was at the time the Secretary of the Royal Montreal Golf Club) visited St Andrews, Smith welcomed him to town and arranged for him to play a number of interesting matches on the Old Course.

Although Stancliffe had only taken up golf in 1893 when he was forty-five years old, he quickly became one of the best golfers at Royal Montreal – winning the club championship as a scratch player by the end of year. Smith had encountered him in the mid-1890s at interprovincial competitions between

Ontario and Quebec (he beat Stancliffe by nine holes in their eighteen-hole match at Royal Montreal in October of 1894).

The *St Andrews Citizen* described some of the matches they played alongside the best golf professionals of St Andrews:



Figure 78 Andrew Kirkaldy (1860-1934), circa 1896.

Mr. F. Stancliffe, Secretary of the Royal Montreal Golf Club, paid a visit to St Andrews last week. During his stay, he played some very good matches. On Thursday afternoon, Andrew Kirkaldy played the best ball of Mr. Stancliffe and Mr. A.W. Smith (late secretary of the Toronto Golf Club) and beat them by 3 and 2 to play. On Friday, they played the same match, two rounds, Kirkaldy allowing the amateurs 3 holes start in the 36. The amateurs, however, proved to strong for their opponent, and won by 4 and 3 to play. On Saturday, Mr. Smith and Old Tom played Mr. Stancliffe and Kirkaldy, the latter winning both rounds – the first by 7 and 6 to play, and the second by 1 hole. (cited in The

Globe [Toronto], 9 January 1897, p. 26)

The 1897 amateur championship was held at the end of April at the recently built Muirfield golf course, home of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers.

In an early round, one London newspaper reported that “A.W. Smith, the Toronto player, upheld the honour of America, by beating A.R. Paterson, of the Honourable Company” (*The Globe*, 28 April 1898, p. 7). Another reported that “Mr. A.W. Smith, the Toronto player, beat Mr. A.R. Patterson (Honourable Company) very easily by 8 up and 6 to play” (*Westminster Gazette*, 28 April 1897, p. 5).

Then “A.W. Smith, the Toronto golfer, beat in J. Oswald (Hon. Company) a very strong player. This was in the third round; and Smith won by 3 and 1” (*The Globe* [London], 29 April 1897, p. 6).

And so, Smith found himself advancing with the best of Britain’s amateurs: “Mr. Harold Hilton, and the Toronto player, Mr. A.W. Smith, with Mr. L.M. Balfour-Melville, found their way into the fourth round”

(*Westminster Gazette*, 29 April 1897, p. 4). There were now just sixteen golfers remaining in the tournament.

But then there was a surprise: “a young lad – A.J.T. Allan, attached to Edinburgh University, beat A.W. Smith” (*Dundee Advertiser*, 29 April 1897, p. 3).



Figure 79 Dr. J.A.T. Allan (1875-1898). *Golf*, vol 2 no 4 (April 1898), p. 31.

Allan (1875-1898), a twenty-one-year-old medical student, was playing the best golf of all the players who remained in the tournament, shooting in the high 70s while others were shooting in the mid-80s: “Allan played a strong game against Smith, evidence of the fact being that he went round in 79 – out, 39; in, 40” (*Courier and Argus* [Dundee], 29 April 1897, p. 7).

Allan subsequently won the championship trophy (defeating former champion Balfour-Melville in the quarter-final, Laurie Auchterlonie in the semi-final, and J. Robb in the final), only to die of pneumonia early in 1898. He had hardly had a chance to enjoy the championship, let alone defend it.

In his reflections on Allan’s winning performance, golf writer John Kerr (a minister of the Church of Scotland known as the “Sporting Padre” because of his sports journalism) quoted “an old golfer” who paid Allan a high compliment: “To his style the highest compliment was paid by an old golfer, who remarked that it was the nearest approach he had seen to that of the late Sir Robert Hay [one of the best amateur golfers from the 1850s to the 1870s], who was the prettiest player of his

day” (*Golf*, vol 2 no 4 [April 1898], p. 31).

Kerr had interviewed Smith at the Muirfield tournament where he was beaten by Allan. Among a gaggle of reporters looking to interview the only player from North America to enter the Amateur Championship at the new Muirfield links east of Edinburgh, Kerr reports that they finally tracked down

“a Mr. Smith, from Toronto”: “when we went up to him to have an interview, we found that he had ‘a guid Scotch tongue in his heid’ and could crack [on] about his matches with young Tommy Morris and Davie Strath, he being an old St Andrew’s player” (*Golf*, “Notes from the Old Country,” vol 2 no 3 [March 1898], 29). Smith having regaled Kerr and the other reporters with stories about the golfers of olden times, one wonders if during an anecdote about one of his old St Andrews contemporaries Sir Robert Hay, “old golfer” Smith was the one who offered the compliment in question about his young vanquisher, Dr. Allan.



Figure 80 Sketch of A.W. Smith in the *Daily Mail and Empire* (Toronto), 11 July 1896, just before Smith sailed for Britain.

Smith’s sixteenth-place finish in the 1897 Amateur Championship certainly attracted newspaper attention in British newspapers and golf journals: “The American entrant for the Championship, Mr. A.W. Smith, Toronto, made a capital appearance, defeating several strong opponents before he was defeated by Mr. Allan in the fourth round” (*Golf*, 7 May 1897).

Often, however, British journalists reminded readers that the surprisingly strong golfer from North America was actually a Scot who had learned the game in the old country.

A Scottish journalist observes that Smith “is entered as from the Toronto Club, but ... is a well-known St Andrews golfer” (*Dundee Advertiser*, 29 April 1897, p. 3). Another journalist notes that “Far-off Canada sent a capable representative in Mr. A.W. Smith, Toronto, who, however, learned his golf at St Andrews some twenty

years ago” (*Field*, no 2314 [1 May 1897], p. 683).

Implicitly, since Smith had learned his golf in Scotland, his strong performance was less surprising than if he had learned his golf at Toronto!

When Smith died four years later, however, the *Dundee Evening Post* gave him his due: regardless of where he had learned his golf, the newspaper was astonished that at nearly fifty years of age, Smith had “played into the fourth round” of the Amateur Championship (6 August 1901, p. 5). His friend

MacPherson compared him to William Gilbert Grace (1848-1915) who played first-class cricket for a record-equalling forty-four seasons from 1865 to 1908: “you have to remember that Mr. Smith is in his fiftieth year, which is a weighty handicap for a golfer. Dr. Grace’s powers as a cricketer at the half-century are exceptionally remarkable; so are Mr. Smith’s as a golfer” (*Golf*, vol 4 no 1 [January 1899], p. 12).

In both the old country and the new world, Smith had become the Gordie Howe of golf.

Less than two weeks after the Amateur Championship, Smith was back at St Andrews to represent the Thistle Club once more – this time in the “Competition Amongst St Andrews Clubs” (*Courier and Argus* [Dundee], 13 May 1897, p. 7).

Just days after the conclusion of this serious competition among the clubs of St Andrews, however, Smith was on the road again: off to Liverpool for the Open Championship, at which British golf’s new generation of young stars was expected to dominate:

No sooner has the excitement aroused over the Amateur Championship subsided than interest is again awakened in golf in the competition for the Open Championship this week at Hoylake. On Wednesday and Thursday eighty-six of the leading amateur and professional exponents of the game will be competing over the course of the Royal Liverpool Club A large entry has been secured for this year’s competition, and the contest is certain to be keen and exciting.... Harry Vardon appears to be in the best of form and seems quite capable of retaining the championship for another year. He will, however, have to reckon with such men as J.H. Taylor, A. Herd, G. Pulford, Andrew Kirkaldy, Willie Fernie, Willie Park, Bernard Sayers, the Toogoods, Archie Simpson, W. Auchterlonie, Tingey, and a number of younger men on the amateur side.... [M]ost of the outstanding gentlemen [that is, amateur] players of the day have entered. Mr. H.H. Hilton and Mr. John Ball, jun., have been accomplishing splendid work over Hoylake recently, and will make a bold bid to outstrip the professionals. (Glasgow Herald, 17 May 1897, p. 9)

Despite his good showing at the amateur championship three weeks before, no mention was made of Smith, who had entered the 1897 Open Championship not as a St Andrews man, but as a Toronto man: “Mr. A.W. Smith, Toronto Golf Club” (*Glasgow Herald*, 17 May 1897, p. 9).



Figure 81 Goerge Cumming, as an apprentice circa 1896. *Canadian Golfer*, vol 2 no 5 [September 1916], p. 246.

Interestingly, after the first round, in which eighty-six competitors began play (including twenty amateurs), Smith was fortuitously tied with an eighteen-year-old golf professional from Dumfries, George Cumming, who would in three years' time become the golf professional of Smith's home club, the Toronto Golf Club, where the Dumfries man would serve from 1900 to 1950.

The newspaper report placed their names side-by-side (Smith addressed as "Mr" because he was a gentleman amateur): "G. Cumming (Dumfries), 95; Mr. A.W. Smith (Toronto), 95" (*Morning Post* [London], 20 May 1897, p. 4). After two rounds, Smith was at 181 (95 + 86) and Cumming at 184 (95 + 89) (*Liverpool Mercury*, 20 May 1897, p. 6).

Smith's performance remained consistent over the next two rounds, and he finished forty-ninth, whereas Cumming's name does not appear in the final results: he "retired" at some point during the day when the third and fourth rounds were played, not submitting his scorecard – perhaps disappointed with his results after a poorer-than-expected performance. (Along with dozens of others, Donald J. Ross, then at Dornoch, also retired at some point during the third and fourth round and refused to submit his scorecard.)

The tournament was won by England's great amateur player, Harold Hilton.

Back at St Andrews in September, professionals Andrew Kirkaldy of St Andrews and Andrew Scott of the nearby Elie Golf Club were to play the second round of a well-publicized match against each other, and they were out the day before the match practising with local opponents, "playing in anticipation of their professional single over the green" (*Aberdeen Journal*, 16 September 1897, p. 7). Kirkaldy played an exhibition match against Smith: "Kirkaldy had a round with Mr. A.W. Smith. The match was halved" (*Aberdeen Journal*, 16 September 1897, p. 7). The next day, over 2,000 spectators followed the two professionals around the course, their excitement uncontrollable, the rope used to hold them back being ineffective in keeping them out of the fairways, thus narrowing the line of play. Smith was in the middle of it all, as Kirkaldy's representative in any discussions necessary on his behalf with the match umpire:

Mr. H.S.C. Everard acted as umpire, and on the green were also Messrs. A.W. Smith, St Andrews, and John Foggo, Elie. Old Tom took charge of the spectators, his stentorian tones

being heard all over the Links. His work was fatiguing in the extreme, but it must be said for the somewhat unmanageable crowd that it was a record one, and good order was hardly to be expected. (Courier and Argus [Dundee], 17 September 1897, p. 3).

After the Open Championship, Smith played one more tournament: “the third annual contest for the [Dundee] *Evening Telegraph Cup* and Scottish amateur golf championship” (*Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 29 July 1897, p. 3). In this contest played on the Leven Links, he represented the St Andrews Thistle Golf Club (*Courier and Argus [Dundee]*, 30 July 1897, p. 6). He was put out in the third round (the round of sixteen), 2 and 1, by the eventual winner Laurie Auchterlonie – who was soon to travel to the United States and become a golf professional (*Field*, vol 90 no 2328 [7 Aug 1897], p. 228).

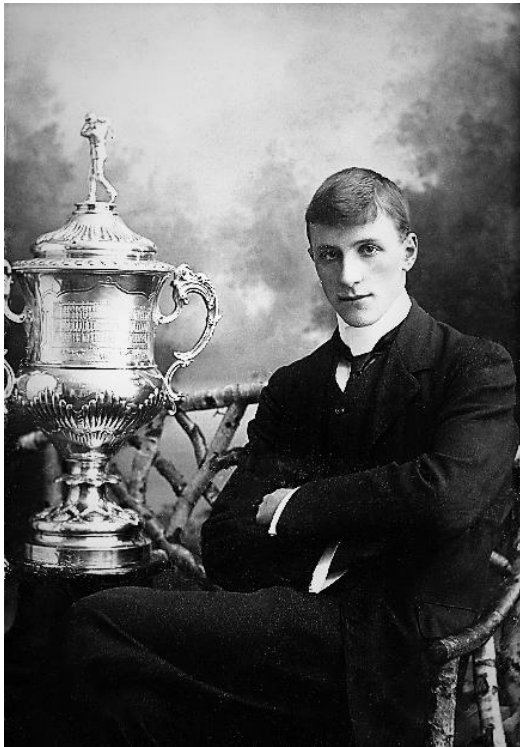


Figure 82 Frederick Mackenzie (1878-1938), with the Dundee Evening Telegraph Cup circa 1903.

Interestingly, the *Evening Telegraph Cup* was won three times (1899, 1901, and 1903) by Andrew Smith’s nephew, Frederick Mackenzie (1878-1938), who had by 1901 become so famous as the next great player in Scottish golf that when his Uncle Andrew died that year in Toronto, the *Edinburgh Evening News* noted that A.W. Smith “was uncle of Mr. Frederick Mackenzie, the crack St Andrews player” (5 August 1901, p. 2).

Smith’s nephew played for Scotland against England in 1902 and 1903, and then accepted appointment as golf professional at the Onwentsia Golf Club in Lake Forest, Illinois, in 1904. He finished third in the 1904 U.S. Open, duplicating his uncle’s feat in the U.S. Opens of 1895 and 1896. He gave up professional golf in the United States in 1905, however, after a tenth-place finish in that year’s U.S.

Open, and then returned to St Andrews, where he tried

but failed to regain amateur status. He tied Harry Vardon for sixteenth place in the 1910 Open Championship at St Andrews, and he missed the cut by one stroke at the 1927 Open Championship at St Andrews, when he was forty-nine.

Like his uncle, he had inherited the Smith family gene for golf and for athletic longevity.

I expect that uncle and nephew played golf together regularly on the Old Course during Andrew Smith's stay in St Andrews from 1896 to 1898, and I presume that the uncle passed along to the nephew helpful advice about the golf swing and golf strategy.

Andrew Smith had left Canada for Scotland in the summer of 1896, but he had also left a clear sign that he intended to return to Toronto someday: "Mr. A.W. Smith, though he has gone back to the old country, is still a member of the club" (*Globe*, 7 November 1896, p. 1).

Team Canada Golf

Smith represented Canada internationally in the three matches conducted between Canada and the United States from 1898 to 1900.

Talked of as early as the national championships held at Royal Montreal Golf Club in September of 1897, the first international match was set up in February of 1898 when the U.S.G.A. officially accepted the challenge issued by the Royal Canadian Golf Association. The match was to be conducted on 1 October 1898 at the Toronto Golf Club after the Canadian championship matches and the interprovincial tournament between Quebec and Ontario: "The teams were ten men each and 36 holes were played, 18 in the morning and 18 in the afternoon. The match was an exciting one throughout" (*Montreal Star*, 3 October 1898, p. 2). The beginning of play was captured in the photograph below.



Figure 83 The first tee, the Toronto Golf Club, 1 October 1898. Official Golf Guide 1899, P. 311.

The first match was between A.W. Smith and H.J. Whigham.



Figure 84 H.J. Whigham, *Official Golf Guide* 1899, p. 56.

From the outset, it seems, “The chief interest centred in the match between A.W. Smith, the veteran Canadian golfer, and H.J. Whigham, of Chicago, ex-champion [actually, still the reigning amateur champion] of the United States” (*Montreal Star*, 3 October 1898, p. 2).

Although in his fiftieth year, Smith was still regarded as the best amateur golfer in Canada – George S. Lyon had just won the Canadian amateur championship, but Smith had one day later beaten him by two holes in the interprovincial match between Quebec and Ontario – so there was great interest to see Smith lead off the matches against the not-yet-thirty-year-old American amateur champion of 1896 and 1897: Henry James Whigham (1869-1954).

They certainly had the largest gallery (as seen in the photograph above): *Saturday Night* reported that “A long line of hundreds followed A.W. Smith and ex-champion Whigham, as much to see how the latter played as to compare the two men” (cited in *The Scotsman*, 25 October 1898, p. 7). In the event, however, “Neither man played quite up to form. Whigham was 5 up in the morning and 2 down in the afternoon, leaving him 3 up in all”

(*Boston Globe*, 2 October 1898, p. 6). Still, from the American point of view, for any American to have defeated Smith was significant:

Whigham’s defeat of A.W. Smith, the ex-Canadian champion, would indicate that the former is regaining his health and form, as will be admitted by any who have seen Smith play. Two years ago, it will be remembered, he played a good deal for several weeks over the Dyker Meadow course. He is a Scotchman and plays in the most finished style. (Brooklyn Life [New York], 8 October 1898, p. 16)

The International Match of 1899 took place at the beginning of October at the Morris County Golf Club in Morristown, New Jersey, each team again being represented by ten amateur golfers.



Figure 85 1st tee, Morris County Country Club. *Golf*, vol 5 no 5 (November 1899), p. 336.

In 1899, the Royal Canadian Golf Association had had difficulty securing some of the country's top golfers for the national team, which meant that the bottom four positions on its roster were filled with decidedly weak players.



Figure 86 Herbert M. Harriman (1873-1933), 1898 U.S. amateur champion.

Canada was wiped out.

American had been anticipating the match involving Smith: "A.W. Smith is the present amateur champion of Canada, and it is generally understood that he will be paired with the American champion, Harriman. The match will be the first in which the champions of the two countries meet, and the result will decide practically the supremacy of America" (*New York Tribune*, 7 October 1899, p. 4).

Smith was indeed matched against the reigning U.S. amateur champion, twenty-six-year-old Herbert M. Harriman (1873-1933).

And the large number of spectators who followed their 36-hole contest were not disappointed

The United States golfers fairly annihilated the Canadian golfers in the second annual international team match played on this occasion at the links of the Morris County Golf club

Saturday. Each American led his man at the end of the morning round of 18 holes, and the team held their opponents by 47 to 0.

The last half of the match was fully as spirited as the first half, and with the single exception of Harriman running a hole behind on his second round [against Smith], they had as great an increase in their lead, as they won the match by 93 to 0. It was certainly a Waterloo for the visitors.

The closest match of the day was between Herbert M. Harriman, amateur champion, and A.W. Smith, ex-champion of Canada, who is regarded as their most able match player. He held Harriman in great shape, and even did better work in the afternoon. (Ottawa Journal, 10 October 1899, p. 3)

From the American point of view, Smith was the only Canadian golfer worth watching. As several of the other matches became uncompetitive, the crowd following Smith and Harriman grew – especially in the afternoon.



Figure 87 Herbert M. Harriman (wearing a white shirt) watches A.W. Smith (dressed entirely in white) drive during their match at Morris County Golf Club in October of 1899. Golf, vol 5 no 5 [November 1899], p. 336.

All the newspapers agreed: “the best match of the day was furnished by A.W. Smith, who, though he finished 2 down to Harriman, cut a point off the champion’s lead in the second round” (*Brooklyn Life* [New York], 14 October 1899, p. 22). The *Baltimore Sun* observed that “The best game on each side was

put up by the captains, Harriman and Smith.... A.W. Smith, the amateur champion of Canada, made a single hole, the only one made by his team" (9 October 1899, p. 6). The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* concurred:

Herbert M. Harriman, the amateur champion of the country, had no easy task before him to defeat A.W. Smith, who is the best player Canada can produce. Harriman played the most brilliant golf of the day, doing the course in eighty in the first round, when he led by three up, and although he did the course in eighty-four in the afternoon, he fell one hole behind on the afternoon play, only winning out on the thirty-six holes by the narrow margin of two up. Their match was the closest and hardest fought of the day. (8 October 1899, p. 40)

Perhaps because of the drubbing administered to the Canadian team in 1899, the contest held at Quebec in 1900 did not garner much interest in the United States:

While the Women's National Golf Championship and the open tournament at Newport are absorbing the attention of the golfers this week, little attention is being given to the international match which will be played at Quebec this Saturday.... Despite the fact that these matches attract little attention, they should be one of the great features of the fall season. (Boston Evening Transcript, 29 August 1900, p. 8)

Although not attracting much media attention, the matches attracted a large number of spectators to the Quebec golf course: the "United States and Canada met today on the Quebec links in the annual international golf competition. The game started at 10 o'clock in the presence of a very large number of spectators" (*Boston Globe*, 2 September 1900, p. 4). And the spectators were entertained with good golf: "The match throughout was most interesting and was followed by a very large number of spectators, including a number of American visitors" (*Buffalo Morning Express and Illustrated Buffalo Express*, 2 September 1900, p. 19). In fact, "When half time, 18 holes, was concluded at 1:15, Canada was leading by one hole, and this was sufficient to draw an extra crowd at the afternoon game" (*Buffalo News*, 2 September 1900, p. 9).

George S. Lyon, the 1898 Amateur Champion, led the Canadian team, followed by Smith, Vere C. Brown, the 1899 amateur champion, and W.A.H. Kerr, the 1898 amateur champion:

The Canadian team ... included the five strongest players of the Dominion, all of whom had played on the previous two international teams. It was the inability of these to hold the best men on the Yankee team that lost the match for Canada, as the last four men on the Canadian team did all the scoring, while Reid beat Lyon, ex-champion of Canada, nine up; Averill won

from Smith by three holes in a splendidly contested match; Brock beat Vere Brown, the present champion of Canada, five up, and Hubbard and Moorehead scored a point each on Kerr and Macpherson, Stickney broke even with Taylor and the four remaining Americans were beaten. (Brooklyn Life, 8 September 1900, p. 18).

This was the first Canadian international team that Smith had not captained.

We recall, of course, that he was not even expected to join the team: the *Montreal Star* had reported in August, just a week before the tournament was to begin, that, “Unfortunately, Mr. A.W. Smith, Toronto, who made such a valiant stand in the match last season, ... will be unable to play” (24 August 1900, p. 6). Apparently, Smith had been in poor health for some time already, yet he rallied sufficiently to represent Canada one more time, but Toronto’s *Saturday Night* magazine warned golf fans not to expect too much from him: “The veteran A.W. Smith is not feeling at all on his mettle” (1 September 1900, p. 6).

Still, the team selectors of the Royal Canadian Golf Association seem to have agreed that “No Canadian [golf] team would ... be complete without this grand old golfer, who may be said to be the father of the game in Canada, and even on a decidedly off day can play the majority of our scratch men to a standstill” (*Saturday Night*, 1 September 1900, p. 6).



Figure 88 J.G. Averill, *Golf*, vol 6 no 2 (February 1899), p. 83.

Smith had been pitted against one of the youngest of the American scratch men, university student J.G. Averill, an important player on the Harvard Golf Team at the turn of the century.

Averill was playing the best golf of his life: he had just finished as the runner-up in the United States intercollegiate golf championship.

Again, it would seem that Smith’s match stood out: “Averill won from Smith by three holes in a splendidly contested match” (*Brooklyn Life*, 8 September 1900, p. 18).

With every year that passed, however, Smith’s American opponents were becoming younger and younger, and not only was Smith getting older and stouter, but his health was also declining.

The Spectator's Experience: Bravo!

From the time of his earliest big matches at St Andrews, Carnoustie, Glasgow, Musselburgh, Luffness and North Berwick, and whether playing a singles match or partnering with or against the likes of Young Tom Morris, Davie Strath, Jamie Anderson, George Strath, Old Tom Morris, Andrew Kirkcaldy, and so on, A.W. Smith often played before large groups of spectators.

The spectators drawn to Smith's matches in Scotland were generally well-versed in the game. They certainly appreciated the virtuosity of Smith's golf game and warmly applauded his play. Yet Smith's game did not often produce the shock and awe among spectators that Young Tom Morris's game regularly did.

Occasionally, however, Smith was capable of showing Scottish golfers something they had never seen before, as when he and William Doleman were forced by their late start in a Glasgow Golf Club tournament to complete most of their round of golf in the dark:

They finished at half-past eight o'clock, and it was only with the aid of a large number of brother golfers that they were able to find their balls after each stroke. At the last hole, a small fire was lighted by G. Strath, the professional, to guide the players. The golfers present, who had never before seen the game played in the dark, were greatly astonished at the precision with which both Smith and Doleman wielded their clubs under the circumstances. (Northern British Daily Mail, 19 September 1877, p. 6)

Smith also made quite an impression on Saturday, 14 August 1880, when he was invited to participate in the opening of the brand-new links course of the Ardeer Golf Club at Stevenston on the Firth of Clyde southwest of Glasgow.

After a full day of golf involving club members and notable golfers invited to Stevenston from other Scottish clubs, all repaired to a banquet at which many speeches were made in celebration of the new club. The Captain of the Ardeer Golf Club, Archibald Robertson, thanked the golfers from other clubs who had accepted invitations to come to Stevenston, explaining that "his object on the present occasion had been to engage all their own members and bring them in contact with members from a distance who were better exponents of the game. (Hear, Hear)" (*Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 21 August 1880).

And he wished to thank one person in particular:

The chairman said to one gentleman present they were much indebted for the fine display of golf he had treated them to. That gentleman was Mr. Smith, the best golfer in Scotland.

(Applause)

He had seldom seen golf played better than by him today. It had been like sweet music to him to see A.W. Smith in his game. (Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald, 21 August 1880)

Smith's golf was like sweet music. Oh my!

In Canada, many of the spectators who watched Smith's play from the early 1880s to the mid-1890s were so new to the game that the quality of his play frequently astonished them. In those days, most novice golfers had great difficulty getting the old gutta-percha golf ball airborne. For such people, the length, height, and accuracy of the shots that Smith produced with ease and regularity was a revelation to them.

Who knew that golf could be so beautiful?

The *Montreal Gazette* declared the matches between A.W. Smith and Willie Davis on the 1st and 8th of October 1892 "the finest exhibition of golf ever witnessed in Canada" (12 October 1892, p. 8). Just three weeks later, however, the fourth match of the year between Smith and Davis seems to have taken golf in Canada to an even higher level: "the golfers who witnessed the match could not find words to express their admiration. Mr. Smith came in for special commendation" (*Gazette* [Montreal], 31 October 1892, p. 5).

Spectators at a loss for words!

For the large crowd of spectators comprising sometimes highly partisan Americans and Canadians at the International Championship at Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1895, the *New York Sun* said that "Smith's playing is a treat to watch. His drives are marvellously clean and accurate, and his putting is deliberate and scientific" (7 September 1895, p. 4). The golf correspondent for the *Inter Ocean* newspaper of Chicago observed "several brilliant plays" in the matches – in particular, "Smith's drives being something almost miraculous at times in their precision" (8 September 1895, p. 11).

Marvellous, miraculous, brilliant precision!

The calibre of Smith's play seems to have improved as the tournament wore on. In his semi-final match, he was "landing the ball almost invariably within a few feet of the hole" (*Buffalo Morning Express and Illustrated Buffalo Express*, 7 September 1895, p. 9).

And in the championship match, when Smith "attempted a long and difficult lofting shot over two fences and some trees" in a valiant effort to win the eighteenth hole and defeat MacDonald, "It was a fine shot and all cried, 'bravo'" (*Buffalo Courier*, 8 September 1895, p. 11).

Following the spectacular golf at the Niagara tournament (which climaxed with what Willie Dunn, Jr, regarded as the best match yet played in North America) were a number of people from Rochester, where the Country Club had laid out a primitive golf course in its fields, the hazards comprising purpose-built rail fences across the fairways. The exceptional nature of the golf played across the proper championship course at Niagara provoked an epiphany for the Rochester fans:

Golf interests [in Rochester] were centered and brought under a permanent organization on the 28th ... September when the Thistle Golf Club was formed with these men upon the roster: President J.H. Steadman; ... treasurer, Frederick P. Allen.... The golf fever had been steadily spreading during the late summer months, but not till after the international tournament at Niagara-on-the-Lake ... did it become epidemic. The provoking cause was the enthusiastic report brought back by ... Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Steadman and Frederick P. Allen. (Democrat and Chronicle [Rochester], 22 November 1895, p. 15)

Hacking a gutta-percha ball over artificial fences would no longer cut it! The Rochester club immediately hired St Andrews golf professional Thomas Gourlay to lay out a proper golf course for the Thistle Golf Club and to instruct its members in the art of the golf swing. Smith was an important part of "the provoking cause" of all this.

As noted above, Smith's performance in the 1895 U.S. Open attracted wide notice: "A.W. Smith, the Canadian amateur champion, made a good impression in the open match" (*Sun* [New York], 14 October 1895, p. 6); "For an amateur, A.W. Smith of Toronto made a fine record" (*New York Times*, 6 October 1895, p. 15); "Smith, the Canadian champion, the only amateur in the tournament, ... did some very fine putting" (*Boston Globe*, 5 October 1895, p. 4).

And this good impression was made at Newport, Rhode Island, before perhaps the largest crowds he had ever experienced.



Figure 89 Crowds of spectators followed the players in the 1895 U.S. Open at Newport, Rhode Island.

At the 1896 U.S. Open, the *Chicago Tribune* observed: “Mr. A.W. Smith, the amateur champion of Canada, made an excellent score in his morning round, doing 78. He is an easy, steady player, and caused Willie Campbell, the able professional with whom he played, to speak highly of his play” (19 July 1896, p. 9). Beating Campbell by seven strokes as he tied for the first-round lead, Smith had virtually reduced Campbell to the role of appreciative tournament spectator.

After the 1896 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills, Smith stayed on in New York for several weeks to spend time with his friend George Strath, who was the golf professional at the Dyker Meadow golf course (which Strath had laid out). Smith’s play attracted attention:

The Dyker Meadow course ... has not lacked for the presence of high-class talent. A.W. Smith of Toronto, the amateur who finished third in the open competition over the Shinnecock Hills course, has been playing there regularly ... and has been showing golf of about as high quality as could be asked.... His style is admirably free and almost entirely devoid of preliminary swings or addresses. (Brooklyn Life [New York], 1 August 1896, p. 15)

And we recall that at the 1899 international match between Canada and the United States, Smith played Harriman, the US Amateur Champion, and theirs was the match that the crowd followed.: “The

Canadian gave his opponent a hot fight Smith is superb on his drives, getting away a long, low ball” (*Montreal Star*, 10 October 1899, p. 2).

Smith had been teaching players like Gillespie, Kerr, and Piddington to play the game by personal instruction, but it turns out that that during his twenty years of high-level competition in Canada and the United States he was also teaching many hundreds of spectators to love the game (and leading many of them to want to try the game) because of his demonstration in Brantford, Toronto, Quebec, Montreal, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ottawa, Newport, Southampton, Dyker Meadow, and so on, of how well the game could be played.

As the captain of the Quebec Golf Club noted after Smith’s performances against Harley and Davis in October of 1892, there was a great “impetus given the royal game by such matches as they had seen today” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 31 October 1892, p. 5). And as it was reported in *Golf* at the end of November of 1892 concerning the season’s electrifying matches between Davis and Smith at Quebec and Montreal, “It is hoped that some more matches of this kind will be arranged next year, as already, as a result of this [most recent] match, there are gentlemen applying for membership to both clubs, having got bitten” (*Golf*, vol 5 no 115 [25 November 1892], p. 176).

American News and Reviews

Golf writers in the United States had no doubt as to Smith's standing in Canadian and American golf.

Just before the International Championship Tournament at Niagara Falls in September of 1895, the golf writer for the *New York Sun* explained that "The greatest interest is centred in the event, as C.B. MacDonald of Chicago, who is in such fine form this season, and A.L. Livermore, captain of the St Andrew's Club, are pitted against A.W. Smith, the recognized leader of the game in Canada" (7 September 1895, p. 4). Smith beat Livermore, with the *New York Sun* reporter observing that "Smith excelled as usual in his driving, landing the ball almost invariably within a few feet of the hole," and then, in the final match, Smith lost on the last hole to Macdonald (7 September 1895, p. 4). But the golf writer for the *Buffalo Courier* implied that Smith deserved to win the tournament:

the final match [was] ... contested between two of the most clever golfers in America – Charles B. MacDonald of the Chicago Golf Club and A.W. Smith of the Toronto Club. Right well did the Chicagoan uphold the American colors, but his victory was a hard-earned one, for some of Smith's shots – long drivers and difficult putting – were phenomenally brilliant and but for downright hard luck in several places the expert Toronto golfer would have lowered MacDonald's colors. (8 September 1895, p. 11).

After the tournament, the editor of *The Golfer*, J.S. Murphy of Boston, observed that "The Canadians were well represented, notably by A.W. Smith, of Toronto, whom Canada universally concedes is their best player, T.M. Harley, of Kingston, who won the championship of Canada at Ottawa in June, A. Simpson, of Ottawa, and Charles Hunter, of Toronto, all good golfers" (vol 2 no 1 [November 1895], p. 1).

Understood to be the best golfer in Canada, and coming off his last-hole loss to MacDonald at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Smith was regarded by the *New York Sun* as a dark horse in the U.S.G.A.'s Open Championship at Newport, Rhode Island: "A.W. Smith is dangerous" (30 September 1895, p. 9). As we know, Smith ultimately finished third, and so the *New York Sun* acknowledged that "A.W. Smith, the Canadian amateur champion, made a good impression in the open match" (14 October 1895, p. 6).

Smith also played in the 1896 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills. His first-round playing partner was Willie Campbell – "By many ... regarded as the coming champion, but 85 for the first round dropped him completely out of the race": "Mr. A.W. Smith, the amateur champion of Canada, made an excellent

score in the morning round, doing 78. He is an easy, steady player, and caused Willie Campbell, the able professional with whom he played, to speak highly of his play” (*Chicago Tribune*, 19 July 1896, p. 9).

And when Andrew Smith did not show up in Baltimore for the 1899 U.S. Open, the golf writer for *Brooklyn Life* offered high praise of Smith while expressing disappointment that he would not be playing in the tournament: “It is to be regretted that A.W. Smith of Toronto, whose name was among the entries, did not start, for I doubt if there is a stronger amateur player on this side of the Atlantic, and I have always hoped to see him in the field for the [U.S.G.A.’s] amateur championship” (23 September 1899, p. 32).

Although in the international match between Canada and the United States in October of 1899 the Canadian team included reigning Canadian amateur champion Vere C. Brown, as well as former champions George S. Lyon and J. Stuart Gillespie, Smith was regarded by the Americans as Canada’s best player:

Most enthusiasm was aroused by the meeting between Herbert M. Harriman, the amateur champion of this country, and A.W. Smith, the pick of the Canadian players.

The latter expert had proven his quality in the ’97 tournament for the championship of Great Britain, when he survived until the third [actually, the fourth] round, and Harriman soon found that the visitor would require a lot of beating. It was a rare contest all the way between the clever pair, Harriman winning out finally [after 36 holes] by 2 up. (New York Sun, 8 October 1899, p. 8)

On the basis of the play produced “in the closest and hardest fought of the day,” the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* had no doubt that “A.W. Smith ... is the best player Canada can produce” (8 October 1899, p. 32).

Although later in the fall George Lyon defeated Smith for the championship of the Toronto Golf Club, the golf writer for the *Philadelphia Times* had no doubt as to which man was the better golfer:

The championship of the Toronto Golf Club was won last week by George S. Lyon, who defeated A.W. Smith by 5 up and 3 to play. Their rank in the Canadian golf world was shown in the recent international team match at Morris County Country Club, where Smith played No. 1 on the Canucks’ team, while Lyon was in second place. The former met the amateur champion, H.M. Harriman, and was beaten by 2 up in the closest match of the contest. Harriman was 3 up

in the first 18 holes, Smith cutting the lead down one hole on the second journey. Lyon met Findlay Douglas and was beaten by 6 up. (13 November 1899, p. 8)

Smith's performance against Harriman at the international match in 1899 brought him a great compliment from a Connecticut newspaper at the beginning of the 1900 golf season, which would be Smith's last:

[Harriman] is a golfer who rises to great emergencies, and while his public game this year has not been brilliant, it must not be forgotten that in beating F.S. Douglas, in the amateur championship, and A.W. Smith, in the international team match, Harriman last summer took the measure of two of the best all-round amateur golfers on this continent. (The Journal [Meridien, Connecticut], 21 May 1900, p. 4)

Course Records

Early in his golfing career, Smith began to set course records.

He set a record for two rounds over the ten-hole course of the Glasgow Golf Club at Alexandra Park in 1876:

The fifth monthly competition for the Wilson challenge Handicap Medal was completed on Saturday. Fifteen members competed with the following result: A.W. Smith, 76, scratch; ... George Strath, 83 ...; W.Doleman, 88 The score of Mr. Smith is worthy of note, it being the lowest the two rounds has yet been taken in any previous competition. The scores were – first round, 3, 4, 4, 4, 4, 3, 6, 3, 4, 4 – 39; 2nd round, 4, 4, 3, 5, 4, 3, 5, 3, 3, 3 – 37. (Field, vol 48 no 1234 [19 August 1876], p. 241)

The course was lengthened shortly after this record was set, and almost as soon as the new layout was introduced to play, Smith set another record:

The competition for the Wilson handicap medal for this month was completed on Saturday. Though the green was rather heavy with the recent rains, some good scoring was made, and the extension of the green has added considerably to the enjoyment of the game. On examining the cards, it was found that the medal had been won by A.W. Smith at 89 (scratch), closely followed by Wm. Doleman ... at 91 (scratch).... The second round by Mr. Smith is the lowest which has yet been made. His first round being high at 49, the following are the figures for the second, viz., 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 4, 5, 3, 5 – 40. (Glasgow Herald, 9 July 1877, p. 6)

At the Brantford Golf Club, Smith was the best golfer by far, immediately displacing club secretary Walter Lindsay Creighton as club champion. Smith was sometimes fifteen strokes better than Creighton over the course of eighteen holes. And Creighton was significantly better than most of the other players at Brantford in the early 1880s. Note also that Creighton lost by 20 strokes to Toronto's Tom Scott on the Brantford course in October of 1881 (and usually lost about seven holes to Scott over the course of an eighteen-hole round), and of course Scott regularly lost to Smith. As soon as Smith began playing golf in Brantford, it is likely that whenever he established a personal best score, he thereby established the course record.

In 1889, when Smith won what the newspapers referred to as the Ontario Championship, but which the donor of the Hunter Medal intended to be the Dominion championship, he set a course record for the nine-hole course that the Toronto Golf Club had laid out near the Woodbine Racecourse: “Mr. Smith’s play during the round was simply faultless, he not making a single error The play of the second round was not quite as strong as the first. Still, it was a great exhibition of skill, Mr. Smith’s double round of 68 [32 + 36] being the best yet made, his driving and putting being perfect” (*Toronto Daily Mail*, 1 November 1889, p. 2).

When working for the Quebec Bank in Quebec City from 1890 to the spring of 1893, Smith played regularly in the Quebec Golf Club matches on its fourteen-hole Cove Field course on the Plains of Abraham, and in winning the club championship of 1890, he set a course record that lasted through the 1890s: “Traditional ‘All Saints’ golfing weather contributed not a little on Saturday last to a capital day’s sport on the Cove-Field Links, when the Championship Golf Medal was played for, and gallantly won by Mr. A.W. Smith with the record-breaking scores of 77 and 80” (*Quebec Morning Chronicle*, 3 November 1890, p. 3). Smith’s 77 was still the course record in 1898 (*Golf*, vol 2 no 4 [April 1898], p. 17).

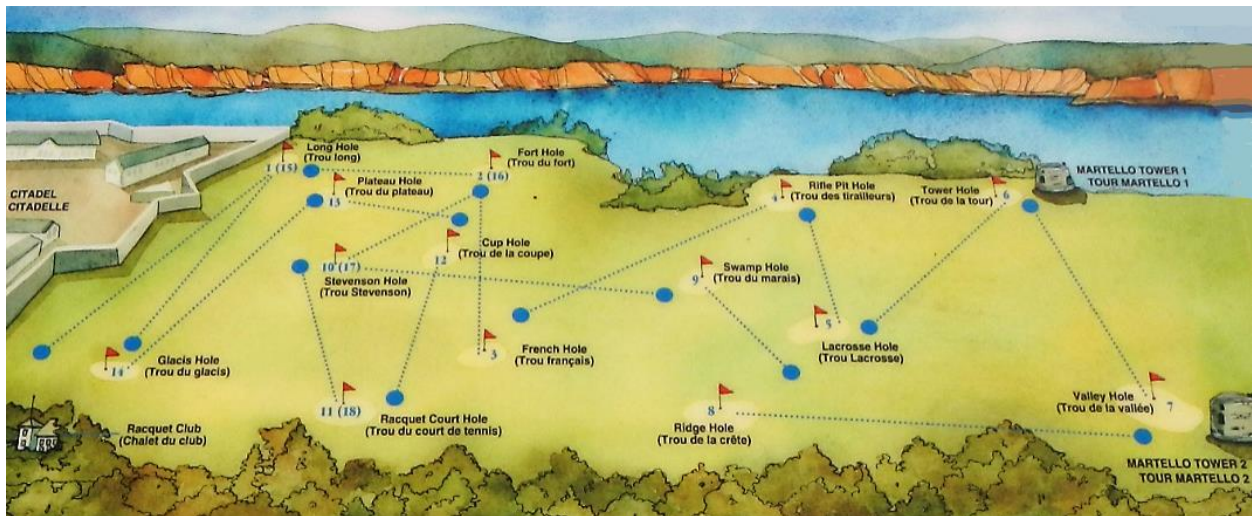


Figure 90 The 14-hole course of the Quebec Golf Club stretched from the Citadel on the east side of Cove Field to the two Martello Towers on the west side. Four greens were re-used in a further four-hole circuit to make up eighteen holes.

In his exhibition match with golf professional Alfred Ricketts over the Sandy Hill links of the Ottawa Golf Club in October of 1893, Smith tied Ricketts with a score of 83: the “Record for Green” (*Golfing Annual*, vol 7 [1893-94], p. 351)

Back in Toronto, Smith set a record in the spring of 1894 on the nine-hole course laid out on the Fernhill property to which the Toronto Golf Club had been forced to move from Woodbine: “The record score of

the green was made by Mr. Smith in his ["Osler Trophy"] match against Mr. Dyce Saunders, when Mr. Smith finished the two rounds in good style in 37 and 38 strokes, respectively" (*Golf*, vol 8 no 202 [June 1894], p. 343).

Having purchased the Fernhill property as one of the incorporators of the Toronto Golf Association and the Fernhill Land Association in the late spring of 1894 (and having replaced Tom Scott as the club secretary at the same time), Smith was probably an influential figure as the Toronto Golf Club's "green committee" set about laying out the club's first eighteen-hole course in the spring of 1895. Not surprisingly, when the course was introduced to play at the beginning of the 1895 season, we read that "The best record so far over this course is 84, made by the energetic secretary, that champion golfer, Mr. A.W. Smith" (*Globe*, 18 April 1895).



Figure 91 Dyker Meadow Golf Club clubhouse, circa 1900.

After Smith played in the 1896 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills, his old friend George Strath, who had also played in that Open and who was the golf professional at the Dyker Meadow Golf Club, invited Smith to stay with him for several weeks in the Fort Hamilton neighbourhood of Brooklyn, New York. Smith played the nine-hole Dyker Meadow Golf

Course designed by Strath almost every day of his stay and set the amateur course record:

The Dyker Meadow course ... has not lacked for the presence of high-class golfing talent. A.W. Smith, the amateur who finished third in the open competition over the Shinnecock Hills course, has been playing there regularly until a week ago, when he returned to Canada, and has been showing golf of about as high a quality as could be asked. His score of 38 for nine holes is now the amateur record of the links.... His statement that the Dyker Meadow course is one of the best and sportiest he has ever played over is a pretty good testimony to its quality. (Brooklyn Life [New York], 1 August 1896, p. 15)

Smith continued to set significant course records into his fifty-first year. At the 1899 Niagara International Tournament, there were so many entries for the championship that a preliminary round of

thirty-six holes of medal play was required to determine who would proceed to the match-play portion of the competition. The record for the eighteen-hole course at Niagara-on-the-Lake was 82 at the beginning of play:

The golf tournament at Niagara opened on Thursday with the largest entries for all events on record, including such good players as G.S. Lyon, champion of Canada; A.W. Smith, the holder of the Niagara challenge trophy; Dr. Hood, the Toronto expert from the Rosedale club; Maj. Charles M. Ransom of Buffalo, and runner-up in last year's tournament Some excellent scores were handed in on the qualifying round for the challenge event, A.W. Smith laying dead for 79, but missing the putt and scoring 80, the record for the green.... The sensation of the day was the score made by A.W. Smith in the second round of 77, the record for the 18 holes.
(Buffalo Morning Express and Illustrated Buffalo Express, 2 September 1899, p. 9)

Two course records in one day ... not bad.

Course Designs

As soon as he arrived in Toronto from Quebec in the spring of 1893, A.W. Smith was placed on a committee charged with laying out a new nine-hole course for the Toronto Golf Club.

After sixteen years of existence during which membership never exceeded thirty-five members, the Toronto Golf Club decided in 1893 to promote the game vigorously. When the secretary of the Royal Montreal Golf Club visited Toronto in mid-March of 1893, he “had an interview with the secretary of the Toronto Golf Club”, Thomas M. Scott: he reported that “It is their intention to boom the royal game in Toronto, as great preparations have been made and 40 new members were elected” (*Montreal Star*, 20 March 1893, p. 5).

One of the most important matters that the club faced was the need for a new golf course: “A ... meeting of the Toronto golf Club was held yesterday for the purpose of making arrangements for the coming play and for the laying out of proper grounds” (*Toronto Daily Mail*, 16 March 1893, p. 2). The existing golf course was too short either to accommodate the number of golfers that the club expected to entertain on its links or to nurture the calibre of golfer that the club expected the challenges of its golf course to develop.

When the *Montreal Gazette* learned that Andy Smith had moved to Toronto, it was confident that he would play an important part in the Toronto Golf Club’s plans for promoting golf:

Golf, which is going to be a most popular game in Toronto this coming season, will doubtless be much encouraged by the removal to Toronto of Mr. [A].W. Smith, of Quebec, who is probably the best golfer in Canada. Mr. Smith learnt the game on his native heath in Scotland. He arrived in Toronto yesterday and holds a responsible position in the Quebec bank. (Gazette [Montreal], 27 March 1893, p. 8)

And the Montreal newspaper was right to expect that Smith would make an immediate contribution to the Toronto Golf Club. At a meeting of club members just four days after Smith’s arrival in Toronto, Smith was appointed both to a committee “to look after the general interests of the club” and to “a green committee, composed of old golfers, viz.: A.W. Smith, A.P. Scott and F.W. Phillips, ... [to] look after the laying out of the course” (*Montreal Star*, 30 March 1893, p. 5).

The land where the new nine-hole course would be laid out was known formally as the Fernhill Property, but it was known locally as Norway Heights, named in relation to the village in East Toronto then known as Norway. The property's dramatic elevation changes, as well as its abandoned mansion (that would be renovated as a proper clubhouse in 1894) were depicted in an illustration in the *Toronto Globe* in 1890.



Figure 92 *Globe [Toronto]*, 17 November 1890, p. 2.

The Toronto Golf Club had moved to this site when displaced at the end of the 1889 season from its course near the Woodbine Racecourse. Toronto Golf club secretary Tom Scott explained to the editor of the *Golfing Annual* that “they have been turned off their ground by building speculators. But they have arranged for a new ground which they expect will be ready for next season” (vol 2 [1888-89], pp. 155-56).

At Norway, the Toronto Golf Club had laid out a short, simple, nine-hole course which served the club's needs until the end of the 1892 season:

The Toronto ground is down on the Norway Heights, some distance north from the Woodbine. It is hilly, and divided by a ravine, with a burn – as the Scotch golfers call it – running through it The unevenness of the course only adds to the excitement. Bushes increase the pleasure The longest distance at Norway Heights is only about 250 yards.... From hole to hole the

interest is kept up, and around and around the course, usually from four to five miles, but at Norway Heights less than two miles, the players will follow their balls and forget fatigue.

(Globe, 17 November 1890, p. 2)

One certainly needed golf holes longer than 250 yards to develop fully formed competitive golfers in the 1890s.

I can find no complete description of the nine-hole course laid out by the special committee comprising Smith, Andy Scott, and Phillips in the spring of 1893. We can see from the hole-by-hole description of the eighteen-hole golf course laid out in the spring of 1895, however, that at least four of the 1893 holes were integrated directly into the new course:

The first hole is the same as before, to the railway track, 220 yards.... The teeing ground for No. 11 is to the northwest of the brown house, and is practically the same as old No. 4 (167 yards) No. 17 is the old long ravine [hole?], and really the best hole on the course – a terror to the short driver. The green is in a dip just south of the brown house (180 yards). No 18 is the old No. 9 over the road, with the green just in front of the clubhouse. (Globe, 18 April 1895, p. 5)

The first hole was identical on the two courses: it departed from a tee on one side of the clubhouse. The final hole was identical on the two courses: its green was located on the other side of the clubhouse.

The photographs below show the first tee and the final green of both the 1893 nine-hole course and the 1895 eighteen-hole course.

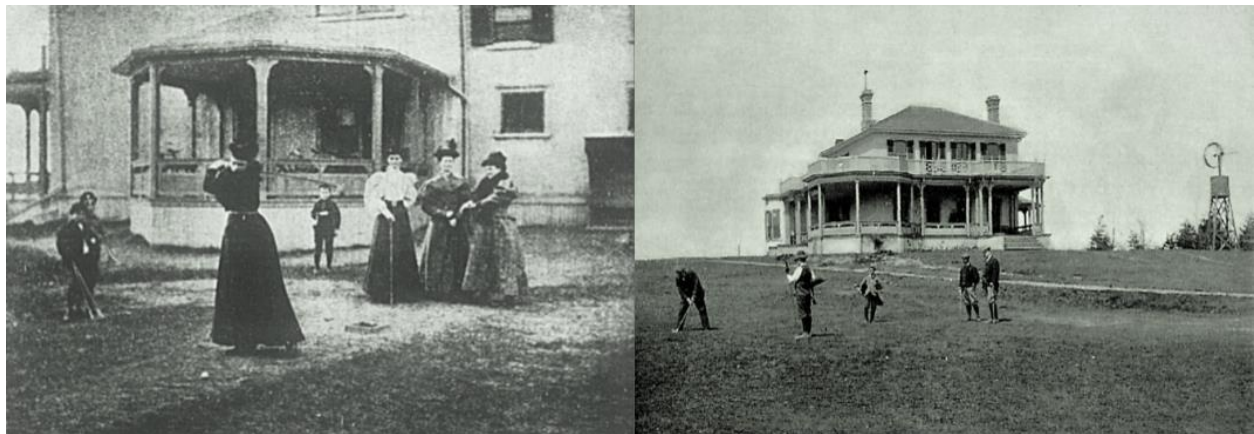


Figure 93 Left: Mrs. Scott, Miss Wilkie, Miss Benson, and Mrs. F.F. Blake, along with three caddies, on the first tee of the Toronto Golf Club. Globe, 7 November 1896, p. 1. Right. Players and caddies conclude a round on the last green of the Toronto Golf Club. Official Golf Guide of 1899, p. 319.

In the summer of 1894, to facilitate the purchase of the land on which this golf course was laid out, Smith, in company with a dozen other longstanding members of the Toronto Golf Club, incorporated as

two companies: the Fernhill Land Company, Limited, and the Toronto Golf Association, Limited. The club also acquired access to additional land on either side of Gerrard Street to the east of the existing golf course where seven new holes would be built.

And so, in the spring of 1895, the Toronto Golf Club laid out its first eighteen-hole golf course. Newspapers and golf journals indicated that the course had been laid out by the club's green committee. Elected club secretary in the spring of 1894, and the most respected golf authority at the Toronto Golf Club (if not in all of Canada), A.W. Smith must also have been involved in the design of the new layout:

The Toronto Golf Club having acquired the right to play on certain fields to the east of the present links, the Green Committee have laid out a number of new holes and changed some of the old ones, bringing the course up to the full eighteen holes and doing away with the necessity in medal competitions of going twice over the same ground....

The first hole is the same as before, to the railway track, 220 yards.



Figure 94 1st green, Toronto Golf Club. Golf, vol 2 no 6 (June 1898), p. 8.

Leaving the old ground, a stile is crossed and the railway followed for a couple of hundred yards, then over another stile, and the new ground is reached. The second hole is comparatively flat and uninteresting: due east over a stumpy field (333 yards).



Figure 95 3rd hole, Toronto Golf Club. Official Golf Guide 1899, p. 320.

Then [No. 3 goes] across two sandy roads, a corner of a field and a barbed wire fence, with the green on top of a slight rise (258 yards). To No. 4, the course is again due east with the green just on the outskirts of

East Toronto, 281 yards. From the teeing ground of No. 5 is obtained the grandest view to be had in the vicinity of Toronto From here the player returns across the [fair] green of No. 3, a distance of 290 yards, into a hollow

No. 6 is over the only genuine sand bunker in the whole course and over or through a clump of pine trees (191 yards). No. 7 is the easiest hole on the course, perfectly level and uninteresting (160 yards). To No. 8 the play is over two sandy roads, two board and two wire fences, then due west across a stumpy field (363 yards), the longest on the course.

The two stiles and the railway are then crossed [again] and No. 9 is on the old ground.... A pull lands ... behind or in a muddy ravine full of pine trees, while a cut necessitates climbing the railway fence, and, perhaps, playing from between the rails. The green lies beyond the aforesaid muddy ravine, and another one is jammed close up to the north-west corner of the club's property (250 yards).

The teeing ground for No. 10 is on the edge of the deepest ravine on the course, having crossed which it is comparatively plain sailing to the putting ground by the brown house (323 yards).... The teeing ground for No. 11 is to the northwest of the brown house, and is practically the same as old No. 4 (167 yards). No. 12 is a sporting hole, and consists of a good iron shot across a ravine into the punch bowl, and woe betide the player who fozzles his drive 100 yards.

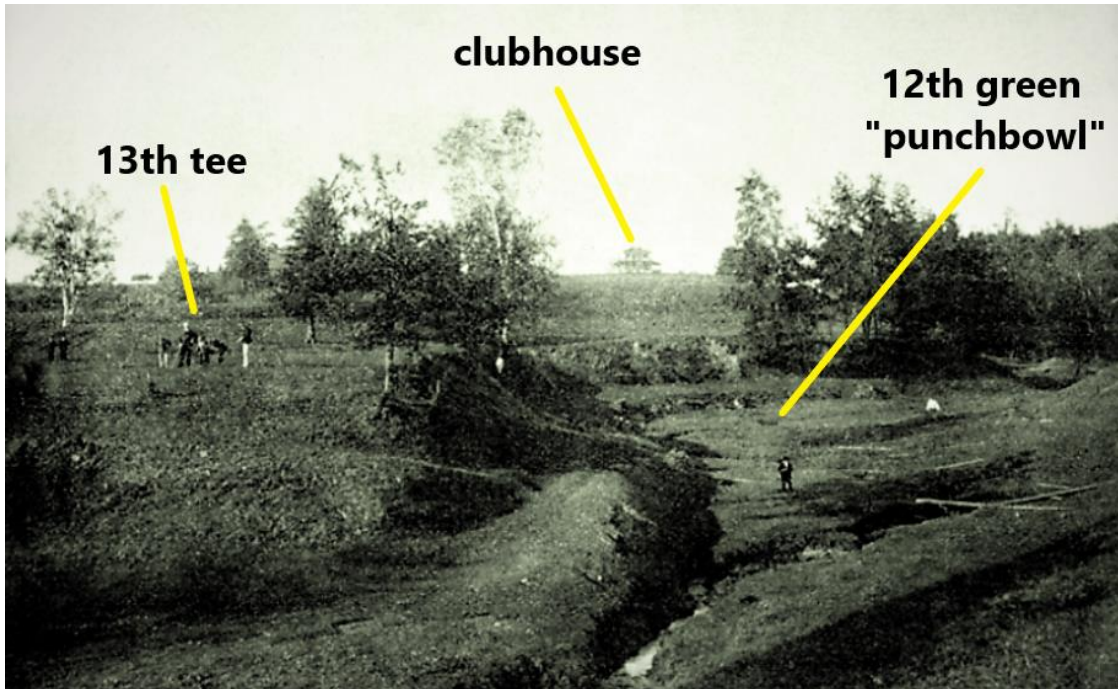


Figure 96 Undated photo, enhanced and annotated.

No. 13 takes the player from the top of the ridge right down to the southwest corner of the



Figure 97 13th green. Official Golf Guide 1899, p. 321.

south field (249 yards).

No. 14 is back again over the ridge, the green being in front of the white house to the east (312 yards).



Figure 98 14th green, Toronto Golf Club. Golf, vol 2 no 6 (June 1898), p. 7.

No. 15 lies to the east of the white house in a field covered with whins (200 yards). No. 16 back again over the same ground (157 yards). No. 17 is the old long ravine, and really the best hole on the course – a terror to the short driver. The green is in a dip just south of the brown house (180 yards). No 18 is the old No. 9 over the road, with the green just in front of the clubhouse.

The total distance is two miles 736 yards, giving an average per hole of 236 yards. This is only a few yards short of the celebrated Shinnecock links on Long Island, and is said by those who know them both to be considerably more difficult. The best record so far over this course is 84, made by that energetic Secretary, that champion golfer, Mr. A.W. Smith. (Globe, 18 April 1895, p. 5)

Note that by 1898, many of the holes described above had been redesigned. Comparing the description of the holes above to the hole-by-hole description of the 1898 course offered by W.H. Blake and Stewart Gordon in “The Toronto Golf Club” (Golf, vol 2 no 6 [June 1898], pp. 7-11) makes clear, for instance, that 10 has become 9, 11 has become 10, 12 has become 11, 13 has become 12, and 14 has become 13.

Perhaps the most interesting hole described above is the twelfth (in 1898, the eleventh) – the “punchbowl.” Whether it was part of the 1893 nine-hole layout or was designed especially for the 1895 layout is not clear. It is a style of hole deriving from Scotland’s ancient links courses, and so it is likely to have been identified as a possible golf hole on the Fernhill property by a player such as Smith who was familiar with the punchbowl template holes in Scotland. The photograph below shows the twelfth hole or “punchbowl” hole at the Toronto Golf Club, with golfers playing along the bottom of the ravine

toward the green to their right (they have perhaps fozzled their drives), and with three golfers seen on the horizon waiting to play from the twelfth tee.



Figure 99 Three golfers wait on the tee as golfers and caddies play along the bottom of the ravine to the "punch bowl" green at the Toronto Golf Club. Undated photo modified and enhanced.

In the days before irrigation systems were installed on golf courses, golf architects noted the usefulness for green construction of natural land formations that offered a bowl large enough to accommodate a proper golf green: rainwater would funnel down the sides of the bowl onto the putting surface, thereby keeping this grass healthy and green when dry spells stressed grass elsewhere on the golf course. In appearance, the green and its surroundings resembled a punchbowl – hence the name golf architects use for this kind of green construction. A punchbowl green typically has raised mounding all the way around it or on at least three sides of it.

The “punchbowl” green at the Toronto Golf Club – dating either from 1893 or 1895 – may well have been the first “punchbowl” green ever built in Canada (and perhaps the first in North America).

Having contemplated how some of the challenges of the links golf courses of Scotland might be created on the kind of inland property used by the Toronto Golf Club (such as by creating a “punchbowl” hole),

and having contemplated how holes should be designed to encourage proper development of golfers' abilities and strategies, Smith arrived back at St Andrews in 1896 ready to offer advice to Old Tom Morris about how the Old Course could be stiffened to face the challenge presented by a new generation of long but inaccurate drivers. As Smith explained to MacPherson:

There is no question about it, but that the old school of golfers were the scientific players. Nowadays the courses are so wide that a reckless shot from the tee is not punished as it should be. In every match we read of the tremendous drivers of the present day, the everlasting grand recovery shot which was made after a terribly bad shot – a mile off the course – from the tee. In our day (the sixties) it would have been a very grand recovery if the ball had ever been seen again. When at home (St Andrews), I advised Old Tom to run a barb-wire fence along the boundary of the Old Course as it used to be, and replant whins and give them a few years to grow, and I will bet a sovereign to a cent that there are more 85 scores on the card than has been for some years past. (Golf, vol 4 no 3 [March 1899], p. 136)



Figure 100 The barbed wire and whins (gorse) recommended for the Old Course at St Andrews by Smith, a "prickly" golf architect.

Talk about punishing a golfer for a wayward drive: barbed wire and gorse will each penetrate the skin of the toughest golfer!

One can glean from this advice to Old Tom Morris some of the design principles that Smith would have deployed at the Toronto Golf Club in 1893 and 1895 to teach his fellow club members how to play a “scientific” game.

A reviewer of the Toronto Golf Club’s new 1895 layout complained of precisely the punishments for errant driving that Smith so highly valued in the design philosophy that he recommended his friends Old Tom Morris and the Reverend Dr. MacPherson: “No 9 is the most objectionable hole on the course – a fatal one to the erratic driver. A pull lands him behind or in a muddy ravine full of pine trees, while a cut necessitates climbing the railway fence, and, perhaps, playing from between the rails.... No. 15 lies ... in a field covered in whins” (*Globe*, 18 April 1895, p. 10).

The designer of Toronto’s fifteenth hole clearly instructs the golfer: do not drive the ball erratically into the whins. The designer of Toronto’s ninth hole instructs the golfer even more emphatically: do not pull the ball into the muddy ravine or cut it onto the railway tracks.

The designer of these holes employ’s the design philosophy Smith recommended for the Old Course at St Andrews.

If Smith designed the seventeenth hole of the Toronto Golf Club, it is interesting to read an account of how he later confronted the very problem that he had created as a punishment for a poor drive. As mentioned above, the seventeenth sounds as though it was indeed part of the 1893 nine-hole course: “No. 17 is the old long ravine [hole?], and really the best hole on the course – a terror to the short driver” (*Globe*, 18 April 1895, p. 10). In match-play against a member of the Buffalo Golf Club in the summer of 1899, Smith pulled off a miracle on this hole:

He topped his drive from the tee and put his ball dead on the lower edge of the far side of the gully bank. His caddie stood on top and gave him the line, and to the astonishment of everyone, possibly himself included, Mr. Smith neatly lifted his ball up over the edge of the bank, down to the green and into the hole. His enemies, if he has any, would call it a fluke. (Saturday Night [Toronto], 22 July 1899, pp. 5-6.)

Similarly, we read in 1900 how Smith coped with the road that was designed as the hazard to be carried by the drive on the 1893 ninth hole, which became the 1895 eighteenth hole. Smith was in a four-hole playoff against George S. Lyon when they came to the par-four eighteenth hole, the last of the playoff holes, the match still all square:

Lyon drove a beautiful ball almost to the green. Smith ... fozzled his drive, landing in the drain at the side of the road. By a bit of play that has never been excelled in Toronto, he hooked his ball out of a most difficult lie with his niblick [nine iron], going over the fence some distance to the west. He next played a beautiful brassey [two wood] right on to the green, and went down only one stroke behind his opponent. (Saturday Night [Toronto], 23 June 1900, p. 6)

Smith spoke disparagingly of golfers “nowadays” who specialized in “the everlasting grand recovery shot which was made after a terribly bad shot,” but he was quite capable of such recovery shots when he was occasionally required to play them!

The Talk and the Walk of A.W. Smith

Everywhere Smith played, golfers loved to hear him speak. His life in golf had provided him with many stories, and he loved to tell them.

In the nineteenth century, important golf matches between clubs often concluded with a banquet. Toasts were offered to the Queen, local dignitaries in attendance, the captains of the opposing golf clubs, celebrated players, and so on. At the opening of the Ardeer Golf Club in 1880, we recall that the club captain offered a toast to A.W. Smith, eliciting applause when he described him as “the best golfer in Scotland” (*Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 21 August 1880). So, Smith was obliged to respond to the toast:

Mr. Smith returned thanks on his own behalf, and on behalf of the other Glasgow gentlemen connected with Glasgow golf clubs. He was sure if they had all enjoyed themselves as well as he had, they would have no cause to complain. He had played over nearly all the greens in Scotland within the last few years, but never had he gone to a new green in such excellent condition. On new greens, where there was a want of grass, and so on, it was difficult to play and one could not make a good score. It was not so on this [Ardeer] green, to play on which had afforded others besides himself great pleasure.

(Applause)

He thought some Saturday he would make a big team of 20 or 30. Many Glasgow folks would come down. Then they would be able to show young players what sort of practice would bring them into good form.

By playing together in clubs, they got a knowledge of the game. But it is when they come to engage in a contest with strangers that they generally failed for want of nerve. They might be good enough players when amongst members of their own club, but it was when a good player was pitted against another of the same class that he was apt to lose his nerve. An agreeable meeting such as the present was calculated to bring members of the club out well.

Their green, he ventured to say, would yet be one of the best greens in the West of Scotland – for this, among other reasons: they had no pontage [toll or duty for crossing a bridge] on this green.

(Applause)

He was glad to observe a number of the fair sex present during the progress of the game.

(Applause)

(Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald, 21 August 1880).

To judge by the number of occasions his speech was interrupted by applause, Smith seems to have been a good after-dinner speaker.

And he was a good interview.

We recall that golf writer John Kerr, among a gaggle of reporters looking to interview the only player from North America to enter the 1897 Amateur Championship at the new Muirfield links east of Edinburgh, finally tracked down “a Mr. Smith, from Toronto”: “when we went up to him to have an interview, we found that he had ‘a guid Scotch tongue in his heid’ and could crack [on] about his matches with young Tommy Morris and Davie Strath, he being an old St Andrew’s player” (*Golf*, “Notes from the Old Country,” vol 2 no 3 [March 1898], 29).

One of the stories that he loved to “crack on” about concerned a shot played with a niblick (similar in loft to today’s 9-iron) by his friend George Strath on the Alexandra Park golf course of the Glasgow Golf Club. Smith stayed with Strath at the latter’s home in Hamilton, New York, for several weeks after the 1896 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills and they each told this story at different times to members of the Dyker Meadow Golf Club, where Strath was the golf professional.

According to both Strath, who made the stroke, and Smith, who apparently witnessed it, the shot with the niblick carried fully 380 yards before it hit the ground. Golfers in the New York area who had heard this story of the longest niblick shot on record occasionally made it the subject of a bet with other golfers who (understandably!) could not imagine the possibility of such a long carry with a niblick:

[The wagers made, a golfer from Lakewood, New Jersey, explained:] “It happened a few years since, on a links near Glasgow, Scotland, and George Strath, now the professional at the Dyker Meadow Golf Club, made the record. One of the putting greens is close to an old coal pit, with a stone wall on the line of play. Strath, in attempting to get over the wall with the niblick, pitched the ball too high and far, and it dropped straight down into the pit, which was full of water,

and, by the official figures, 190 fathoms deep. As the ball fell plumb to the bottom, a brief calculation will demonstrate that this was a carry of 380 yards.”

“It was a standing joke among the Scots that Strath had the niblick record,” added a Dyker Meadow player “Strath told me the story and so has A.W. Smith, the Canadian amateur, who was in Glasgow when the play was made.” (Buffalo Courier, 2 May 1897, p. 2)

At the conclusion of the 1892 interprovincial match between Quebec and Ontario, Smith was invited to make a speech. He had lost none of the polish that he had shown in speaking in 1880 at the Ardeer Golf Club or in 1881 at his own farewell banquet at the Glasgow Golf club.

In his interprovincial match, Smith had defeated a new member of the Kingston Golf Club named Thomas M. Harley, whom Smith had first met at the Luffness Golf Club in East Lothian, Scotland, in 1875. And before that match, Smith had in the morning played for the fourth time in 1892 against the Royal Montreal golf professional William F. Davis, defeating him in a stellar competition that left spectators at a loss for words (Smith had run his record against Davis between 1882 and 1892 to a total of three wins, two draws, and one defeat). The crowd of spectators who had come to watch Smith and Davis in the latest of their titanic struggles had stayed to watch the twelve interprovincial matches. And then there was a banquet:

After the conclusion, adjournment was made to the Club house, where lunch was had Captain Hamilton ... spoke of the impetus given the royal game by such matches as they had seen today.

Mr. A.W. Smith, of Quebec, was next called on for a speech, and he made a very humorous one, after which he complimented Davis, the professional, and Mr. Harley. He thought he won from Davis more by good luck than good play, but for all that, he was not afraid to tackle anybody else....

After three cheers had been given for the visitors, ... they were loudly convinced that they were all jolly good fellows. (Gazette [Montreal], 31 October 1892, p. 5)

Familiar with Smith’s career as a competitive golfer across four decades and across three countries, we can appreciate that Smith truly “was not afraid to tackle anybody.”

In Canada, Smith had become a famous speaker after golf matches, and so, when he returned to Canada in the spring of 1898 and participated in the Quebec leg of the annual match between the Quebec and

Montreal golf clubs (Smith was eligible to play because while in Scotland, he had maintained his membership not only at the Toronto Golf Club, but also at the Quebec Golf Club), the strategy of formally toasting his health at the tournament banquet was used to induce a speech from him:

Lunch was served in the club-rooms after the match, [Quebec] Capt. Hamilton presiding, and having [Montreal] Capt. Watson on his right. The toast of her Majesty was given with all honors, and was followed by that of the Royal Montreal, Capt. Hamilton being particularly happy in his remarks toward our visitors. Montreal responded with exceptional vim upon being asked to drink the health of Quebec.

Capt. Hamilton drew the attention of all to the fact of Mr. A.W. Smith having returned to Canada, and of his intention to remain in the ranks of Canadian golfers, which information was received with marked satisfaction.

Mr. Smith's health having been proposed by Mr. Geo. Garneau [the first francophone elected to membership of the Royal Montreal Golf Club] had the desired effect of bringing him to his feet, and the great amateur was certainly in his most humorous vein, recounting his experience in Scotland as well as in this country. (Montreal Star, 25 May 1898, p. 9)

Smith was always ready to “crack on”!

When Supreme Court of Canada justice, the Honorable C.A. Masten, was asked by Ralph Reville to share with the readers of *Canadian Golfer* his memories of the early days at the Toronto Golf Club, A.W. Smith and his attitude toward golf loomed large in Masten's recollections:

I joined the club in 1890.... There were 35 members. From 1890 to 1894, development of the club was rapid. Many youngsters joined and enthusiasm ran high. I cannot say as much for the quality of the game, judged by present standards.

At this juncture, we were in one respect most fortunate. Our best golfer was Andy Smith, an old St Andrews boy who had been a boyhood pal of young Tom Morris. He was very kind in giving to us novices suggestions and pointers on how to drive, approach, and putt, but he did a great deal more than that.

Through him there was inculcated at the Club the tradition of old St Andrews, and through him and others (like the Scott brothers who had learned the game in Scotland) we imbibed ...directly

from the fountainhead the true spirit of the game: "Not the quarry, but the chase; not the trophy, but the race."

Long may that spirit continue! (Canadian Golfer [August 1940], p. 24)

Smith talked a good game – both before and after a round – and the game he played as he walked the golf course matched his talk.

Sunday Golf Freedom Fighter

Given the enthusiasm – bordering on obsession – shown by many votaries of the “Royal and Ancient Game,” and given that many of the bankers, businessmen, manufacturers, and professionals who constituted the majority of golf club members in the 1890s had just the weekend available for playing golf, golfers in Britain and North America began to defy the convention of not playing golf on Sunday – the Lord’s Day.

Controversy inevitably followed.

A letter to the editor of the *Ottawa Daily Citizen* in the spring of 1893 observed the phenomenon: “A resident of Theodore Street [in Sandy Hill] writes complaining that a number of men assemble in a field in his neighbourhood and play golf on Sunday” (10 May 1893, p. 8). The letter writer was concerned about a game being played on the Lord’s Day, in apparent contravention of the Lord’s Day Observance Act of Ontario.

Since the Ottawa Golf Club had been playing on its course in Sandy Hill since May of 1891 (but not on Sundays), and since Ottawa Golf Club members invariably wore bright red jackets when playing the game, if the Sunday golfers in question had been members of the Ottawa Golf Club, a resident of Sandy Hill in the spring of 1893 could not have failed to recognize them as such. So, the Sunday golfers prompting the complaint were probably ordinary citizens – perhaps Scottish immigrants – enjoying a day of recreation on a provisional golf course laid out in one of the many empty fields in the Sandy Hill of those days.

Out of a concern for “public morals,” the Lord’s Day Observance Act envisaged the “prevention of profanation of the Lord’s Day” by forbidding work, the opening of shops, the playing of ball games or other noisy sports, and so on, on Sundays, or the Sabbath. The Sabbath Observance Association, many Christian ministers, and a good number of ordinary devout Christians were vigilant in reporting contraventions of this law.

Presumably the Ottawa letter writer was one of these people.

When the New York *Sun* introduced its readers to golf in the spring of 1892 by means of a long essay about the history of golf in Scotland, complete with accounts of the heroic exploits of its greatest figures, the newspaper included the following observation:

The question of Sunday playing is one which causes much agitation and the desire to indulge in it has caused many a private links to be established. Golf is the thin end of the wedge on this Sabbatarian question. The existence of the Sandwich links [in Southern England] is almost entirely due to Sunday golf, ardent players who were busy all the week flying to what was a mere desert where they could play unseen. (3 April 1892, p. 17).

Across Canada and the United States in the mid-1890s, police officers began to charge the rare golfers who played golf on Sundays in defiance of laws like Ontario's Lord's Day Observance Act. Sunday Golfers were charged and found guilty in Massachusetts in September of 1894. Two months later, police raided the Brookline Country Club near Boston to prevent its golfers from playing on Sunday. Police in New Jersey did the same thing at the Meadow Brook Golf Club in May of 1895. In the same month, on 26 May 1895, two police constables laid charges against four Sunday golfers at the Toronto Golf Club.

One of them was the man who had set the latest course record on the new eighteen-hole layout that had opened at the club just the month before, "the energetic Secretary, that champion golfer, Mr. A.W. Smith" (*Globe* [Toronto] 18 April 1895):

Sunday Golf

Toronto, May 28. – A.W. Smith, V.F. Cronin, J.F. Edgar and F. Carter, charged with playing golf on Sunday, were before Justice of the Peace Richardson at Little York last evening. (Ottawa Journal, 29 May 1895, p. 1)

Smith and his co-defendants seem to have had a larger purpose than merely enjoying another round of golf on the new layout: "They claimed they had a perfect right to play the game any day they pleased They ... will fight the case" (*Ottawa Journal*, 29 May 1895, p. 1).

And it was not just a question of the individual rights of golfers; it was also a question of the rights of an organization such as the Toronto Golf Club to do as it liked on its own property:

Summonses have been issued for ... members of the Toronto Golf Club, one of the most fashionable organizations in the city, citing them to appear before the police magistrate in East Toronto to answer to the charge of violating the Lord's Day Act by playing golf at their links in Woodbine Avenue on Sunday. The right of a private club to play on its own grounds on Sunday will be made a test question. (Victoria Daily Times, 29 May 1895, p. 2)

The Executive Committee of the Toronto Golf Club and the members at large took the case quite seriously.

As of 1894, The Toronto Golf Association, Limited, was incorporated (A.W. Smith being one of the incorporators), enabling the Toronto Golf Club to purchase the land on which its nine-hole course had been laid out and eventually to purchase sufficient extra land to lay out its first eighteen-hole course. By the spring of 1895, the club was in a position to test the application of the Lord's Day Observance Act to activities confined to its private grounds.

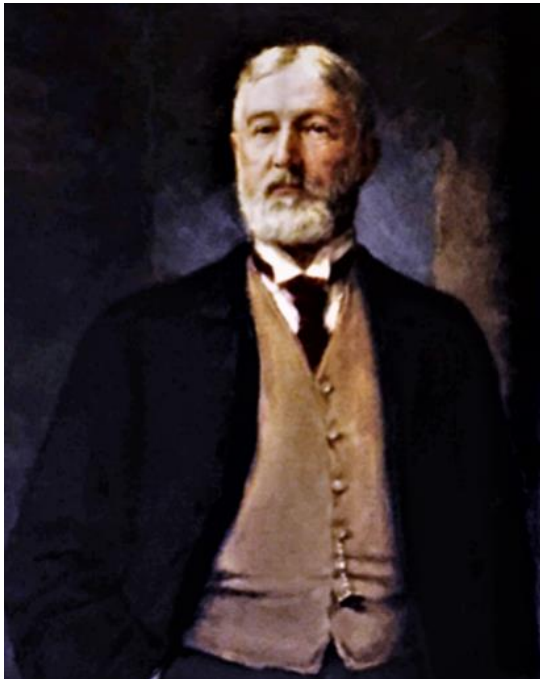


Figure 101 W.G.P. Cassels (1846-1923).

The President of the Toronto Golf Club, Walter Gibson Pringle Cassels (1846-1923), implied in his testimony during the initial trial that the club had prepared for legal scrutiny of members who played golf on the club's grounds on Sundays: "He had given orders that no caddies were to be employed on Sundays and that no strangers were to be allowed on the grounds so that no offence could be given in that way" (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5).

Anticipating that at some point golfers would be charged with offending against the Lord's Day Observance Act, Cassels – not only a lawyer himself, but also a Queen's Counsel – had obviously worked to make the behaviour and the rights of the club and its members the exclusive focus of the case, and not any ancillary matters about the impact of their behaviour on others.

Was what occurred in the presence of two police constables at the golf course on Sunday, May 26th, to a certain extent choreographed by Cassels? Note that when Cassels died in 1923, Sir William Ralph Meredith, President of the Supreme Court of Ontario, wrote "An Appreciation" in which he observed that Cassels' "activities were not confined to his professional and judicial duties. He was ... an ardent golfer, and it was through his efforts that the decision was reached that it was not unlawful to play golf on the Lord's Day, a decision that has stood unquestioned

to the present day, and has proved a boon to many golfers” (*Canadian Bar Review*, vol 1 [1923], pp. 297-98).

Although the *Globe* speculates that “Messrs. A.W. Smith, J.F. Edgar, V.F. Cronyn, [and] G.W.F. Carter ... were apparently so interested in their ‘foursome’ that they either did not see or did not understand the reason for the presence of County Constables Tidsberry and Kennedy,” given Cassels’ orders that no strangers be allowed on the grounds on Sundays, it is unlikely that Smith and his fellow club members would not have noted that they were being observed by uniformed representatives of the county constabulary (7 October 1895, p. 6). After all, as can be seen in the photograph below, a County Constable was easy to recognize in the 1890s.



Figure 102 Toronto Police constables (unidentified) in the mid-1880s. Canadian Courier, vol 3 no 18, 4 April 1908.

And it is even more unlikely that Smith and his fellow golfers would not have known why the constables were watching them. As a member of the executive committee, Smith would have been privy to the planning by President Cassels in anticipation of legal scrutiny of Sunday golf at the club: indeed, Secretary Smith was no doubt the one who disseminated to club members the news of the executive committee’s decision about the banning of caddies and strangers from the club grounds on Sundays.

Far from not seeing the constables or understanding the reason for their presence, Smith (at least) would have known precisely why they were being watched. And certainly he would have explained to his fellow club members what was afoot, if they did not already know. It may have been decided by all members of the foursome that they would nonetheless continue with their round of golf as a way of asserting their right to do so.

The four golfers in question had perhaps volunteered to be the ones to be charged. And if there were more than enough volunteers at the club for this cause, these four may have been chosen as the most useful of the volunteers to be charged. Note that they were immediately described as “prominent members of the Toronto Golf Club” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 4 June 1895, p. 1). Both their prominence and their respectability were widely reported as the case wound its way through the courts: “The case ... was a test one, certain private and highly respectable citizens having been prosecuted for playing golf just outside the city limits in East Toronto” (*Montreal Weekly Witness Commercial Review and Family News*, 2 November 1895, p. 16).

My guess is that Cassels and Smith recognized that in the Toronto Golf Club’s legal challenge to the Lord’s Day Observance Act, it would be important that the members charged with playing golf on Sunday be presented to the court of public opinion as quite different from the shouting and swearing young working-class lads who, when they played baseball or football on Sundays, were said to disturb the peace of Christians at their devotions.

As the club secretary, Smith was in a sense the most prominent club member charged by the constables, but he was not the most socially prominent of those ostensibly offending against the Lord’s Day Act.



Figure 103 J.F. Edgar on the Toronto G.C. 1st tee. *Globe*, 7 November 1896, p. 1.

Perhaps the most socially prominent of the four co-defendants was James Frederick Edgar (1866-1930), who was not only a lawyer (the newspapers noted that he was “of the law firm of Edgar and Malone”), but also the son of a long-serving, well-known Member of Parliament, James David Edgar, who would be named Speaker of the House of Commons one year later, and who would at the same time be knighted by Queen Victoria (*Victoria Daily Times*, 29 May 1895, p. 2).

Verschoyle Francis Cronyn (1866 – 1956) was a clerk at the Jarvis Street branch of the Bank of Montreal, but, more interestingly, he was a grandson of Benjamin Cronyn, the first Anglican Bishop of Huron and founder of Huron University College, which became the University of Western Ontario. A name associated with high office in the Anglican Church would be helpful, perhaps, in suggesting that playing golf on Sundays was not an anti-religious act.

When the *Montreal Gazette's* "own correspondent" in Toronto reported on the case, it was only Edgar and Cronyn who were mentioned: "A unique event took place on the Golf club grounds yesterday afternoon. Constables arrested J.F. Edgar, [V].F. Cronyn and two others who were knocking a ball about. The constables charged them with a breach of the Lord's Day act. The case will come up before Squire Richardson" (28 May 1895, p. 5).

George William Frederick Carter (1853-1917), son of Montreal lawyer Edward Brock Carter, Q.C. (who had been a member of the Quebec National Assembly and a member of Canada's House of Commons), was himself a lawyer and an all-round athlete and sportsman. He had been a member of the Royal Montreal Golf Club from about 1880 to 1894 (winning competitions on Fletcher's Field as early as 1881). A.W. Smith and Carter had first met in the 1882 interprovincial match between Ontario and Quebec in Montreal in 1882, when Carter represented Quebec and Smith represented Ontario. In the 1884 interprovincial competition, they were actually matched against each other, Smith winning by five holes (*Canadian Gofer*, vol 16 no 10 [February 1931], p. 775). Carter had only become a member of the Toronto Golf Club in 1894, but the quality of his golf was well-known and he was called on to play for Ontario against Quebec in the interprovincial match in the fall (*Montreal Star*, 8 October 1894, p. 2). While in Toronto, he seems to have lived with his first cousin, and prominent Toronto Golf Club member, W.A.H. Kerr (within two years, however, Carter would leave to pursue a legal career in British Columbia).

Less than two weeks after this infamous Sunday round of golf, Carter and Edgar were at the Ottawa Golf Club, competing in the first Canadian amateur golf championships, held from Wednesday, June 5th, to Saturday, June 7th. Carter did well in one of the more unusual competitions: "G.W.F. Carter, of Toronto, was first in the approach and put competition at 30, 40 and 50 yards, over an obstacle"; and he made it to the semi-finals of the amateur match-play competition, losing to the eventual winner, Thomas M. Harley (*Free Press Home Journal* [Winnipeg], 20 June 1895, p. 3).

Interestingly, however, A.W. Smith did not participate in this tournament, where he would have been the favourite to win the championship. I suspect that he had originally planned to compete in Ottawa but became so heavily involved in preparing for the trial on Saturday, June 1st, that he decided he would not be able to prepare properly for the tournament, which would begin just four days later.



Figure 104 Allen Bristol Aylesworth (1854-1952).

Cassels and Smith, along with other members of the executive committee, would have spent many hours in consultation with their lawyer, Allen Bristol Aylesworth (1854-1952), Q.C., explaining to him the nature of golf and helping him to prepare defense witnesses.

In the event, however, the trial took a turn that the defense had not anticipated. When “County Constable Tidsbury gave evidence that he found the four gentlemen in question playing golf on Sunday,” “this statement of fact was admitted by the defence” (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5). Magistrate John Richardson then elicited evidence from the two constables “that the ball was played across a street which divides the club’s grounds” and immediately declared

“that he would convict the accused without hearing further evidence” – “the Magistrate holding that golf is a game of ball and that the evidence of the constables that the ball was played across a street ... conclusively proved it was played in a public space” (*Globe* [Toronto, 7 October 1895, p. 6; *Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5; *Globe* [Toronto], 7 October 1895, p. 6).

Aylesworth, Cassels, and Smith were somewhat surprised by this declaration. They had arrived in court well-prepared to challenge the application of the Lord’s Day Observance Act to the game of golf. Indeed, anticipating that the question would obtain a hearing at this trial – after all, that was the whole point of the trial from the Toronto Golf Club’s point of view – “A number of members of the Golf Club were present” (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5).

So, Aylesworth opposed the magistrate’s intention to convict the Toronto golfers without hearing further evidence:

Mr. Aylesworth stated that he had some evidence to offer for the defence, and that the clause of the act under which the information was laid was as follows: ‘It is not lawful for any person on that day to play skittles, ball, football, racquets, or any other noisy game,’ and the defence contended that golf was not a game of ball or a noisy game. (Ottawa Journal, 5 June 1895, p. 5).

Justice of the Peace Richardson decided that “he would listen to Mr. Aylesworth’s argument,” but “His Worship again stated that he had made up his mind” (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5).

And so, Aylesworth called three well-prepared expert witnesses:

Mr. Walter Cassels, Q.C., president of the golf club, testified that golf was not a game of ball, and was by rule and custom a most quiet game. He stated that he would not himself play golf on Sunday but saw no harm in the game being played on that day, and that it did not come within the statute. He had given orders that no caddies were to be employed on Sundays and that no strangers were to be allowed on the grounds so that no offence could be given in this way. He considered that golf playing was a most innocent recreation, and that the narrow-minded people who had instigated the prosecution were doing great harm by their endeavors to make Sunday a day abhorrent to the young people.

Mr. H.J.P. [Henry John Prescott] Good, the well-known sportswriter, gave evidence that golf was not a game of ball, and that the term ball in either its ancient or modern signification could not possibly include golf, nor had he ever heard golf called a game of ball even by the most ignorant of people. As for its being a noisy game, he did not know of any field sport more quiet or orderly.

*Mr. Stewart Houston [of the Toronto and Niagara Golf Clubs] gave evidence to the same effect, pointing out that “ball” was a term signifying the game of ball as played from hand to hand, and was a well-known and recognized term, limited to a certain class of games. (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5)*

If the Toronto Golf Club had indeed choreographed this matter to bring publicity to the question of Sunday golf, it certainly succeeded. In Canada, newspapers from Nova Scotia to British Columbia informed their readers about the case at some point as it developed from the original charges and conviction at the end of May to the verdict of the appeal court at the end of October.

Several American newspapers followed the case, as well, and many newspapers, magazines, and journals in Britain reported on the case, but no one covered the trial more extensively than the golf writer in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* who went by the

pseudonym “Niblick.” He made great fun of the case, although he also made clear that he thought the conviction of the golfers for playing golf on Sunday was outrageous:

“O What a happy land is England.”

Golfers in Canada seems to fare very differently to those more fortunate individuals who play the game in this old country of ours. I have before me the Toronto Sunday World, and in it I read what a trying time golfers seem to have who think that health-giving and innocent recreation on Sunday is by no means criminal. It may be of some interest to golfers who are here – in most places, at any rate – allowed to go their own sweet way, to learn that Mr. Smith, Mr. Edgar, Mr. Carter, and Mr. Cronyn were summoned before one of Her Majesty’s justices of the peace for the county of York, at the village of East Toronto, for an offence alleged to have been committed by them against the provisions of Chapter 203 of the revised statutes of Ontario, 1887, entitled “An Act to prevent the profanation of the Lord’s day.”

Some of the evidence is distinctly funny, and as I think it may amuse some of those who honour me by reading these jottings, I shall give a few questions and answers.

The constable who was first called seems to have had a high opinion – whatever that opinion may have been worth – of Mr. Edgar, one of the summoned. In his evidence he says: “Mr. Edgar was the only really stylish one among them. He had a bag to carry his things. The other men had to carry theirs in their hands.” This was, from the constable’s point of view, where the style came in.... Passing on, I find it instructive to learn that the constable, on being questioned in regard to the ball, was good enough to say that “it is quite a nice ball.”

Just at this point when the technicalities of the game were being gone into, the judge became a little restive, and wanted to know to what all this questioning led. However, the counsel for the defence – Mr. Aylesworth, Q.C. – was not to be balked in his desire to show the innocent nature of the game. At last Mr. Aylesworth managed to get a very important admission from one of the witnesses for the prosecution. Thus counsel: “What you say is that it does not make any noise or disturbance in the neighbourhood?” A. “No, sir. I would not know there was anybody out unless I happened to see them.” I should have thought that this would have settled the case.

But no; counsel had to try and prove that it was not a game of ball, which seems to be prohibited on the Sabbath.

Then follows the question by his worship, which, with the answer from the president of the club, is somewhat instructive. "Do you think it would be conducive to the morals of the community to have the whole of the golf club out there on Sunday?" A. "I do not; I would not play. I have been brought up a strict Presbyterian, and I would not play golf on Sunday; but if you talk of the morals of the community, if you were to convict these young men here (which I do not think you will) you are simply putting a nail in the coffin of the clergy, because, I think, the whole neighbourhood will rise up in rebellion." Strong language this from a strict Presbyterian!

Some more evidence from the same man follows. He says: "I may take a couple of balls and play on my lawn in the city of Toronto and you might call that a game of ball. Well, if a man is so narrow-minded as to call that an infraction of the Lord's Day Act, then the Lord help the Lord's Day Act and the clergy. I am personally opposed to this playing on Sunday, but I do not think it is within the Act. It is left to each man's conscience."

Precisely. That seems to me the whole gist of the matter.

Then came, as a witness, a sporting expert, and from him I learn, and I dare say some others will learn, that the game originated among the Dutch!!!

Then followed some more evidence of a technical kind, and then his worship proceeded to fine each of these luckless golfers five dollars and costs, although he was good enough to give them leave to appeal.

So ended a curious case, and I have quoted from it very copiously because the question of Sunday golf has been more or less a burning one in many clubs. I can only express a hope that the golfers will be successful in their appeal. (20 July 1895, p. 754)

Canadian newspaper editors could not resist similarly ironic comment.

We read in the *Ottawa Journal*: "The defence tried the plea that golf was not a game of ball, and not a noisy game, but the magistrate was obdurate. Perhaps he had been at a golf afternoon tea" (6 June 1895). Tee-hee. And yet: "Seriously, there seems a large-sized screw loose somewhere when such a conviction is possible" (*Ottawa Journal*, 6 June 1895). When reporting on the conviction (a fine of "\$5 and costs"), the *Weekly British Whig* winked at

members of the local club: “By the way, has not Sunday playing been indulged in by members of Kingston Golf Club?” (6 June 1895, p. 5).

The *Quebec Chronicle* took the opportunity to bash Toronto culture generally: “Golf is played in Quebec on Sunday, and no one has been taken up and tried for violating the Sabbath Day, so far. But Toronto, which boasts of being the most dismal city on the continent on Sunday, has a lynx-eyed police force, and a Bench which takes delight in administering the law, on the slightest provocation” (1 November 1895, p. 2).



Figure 105 Montreal Herald, 28 May 1895, p. 2

Above a brief, matter-of-fact report that charges had been laid against Sunday golfers, the *Montreal Herald* used its headline to convey its attitude toward the affair (as shown in the image to the left).

The *Herald* came back to the topic again a few weeks later when the Sunday golfers launched their appeal:

The Toronto young men who were fined for playing golf on Sunday have appealed against the sentence. It may be some consolation to them to learn that they are by no means the first to suffer for their devotion to the game. As far back as 1651, one James Rodger and others were “complained of” and publicly admonished (with fines) for playing golf on the Lord’s Day. The British Solomon, James I, arranged conveniently that people might play golf on Sunday if they first went to church. Some such compromise might work well in Toronto. (Montreal Daily Herald, 14 June 1895, p. 4)

The *Herald* faulted those who had asked the police to intervene: “The conviction of golf as a ‘noisy game’ places the Toronto Sabbatarians in an odd light. If the judgement be upheld on appeal, the prosecutors, rather than the Sunday golfers, will be discredited; for, if there is one thing upon which the golfer may plume himself, it is upon the immaculate respectability of his diversion” (*Montreal Herald*, 5 June 1895, p. 4).

Toronto Golf Club president Cassels had issued a similar warning in his testimony: “He considered that golf playing was a most innocent recreation, and that the narrow-minded people who had instigated the prosecution were doing great harm in their endeavors to make Sunday a day abhorrent to the young people” (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5).



Figure 106 Reverend Charles Langford. *Sault Star*, 21 April 1924, p. 5.

When speaking of “the narrow-minded people who had instigated the prosecution,” Cassels seems to have directed his comments to a particular person in attendance at the trial: the “Rev. Charles Langford,” who was “An interested spectator of the proceedings” (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5).

Langford (1845-1924), a Methodist minister (“who was reared a Roman Catholic”) was thought by many to have instigated the prosecution of Toronto’s Sunday golfers (Thomas Edward Champion, *The Methodist Churches of Toronto* [Toronto: Rose & Sons, 1899], p. 204).

A week after attending the court proceeding against the golfers, however, Langford wrote a letter to editors of Toronto newspapers about the matter:

Rev. C. Langford has written to the press denying that he was responsible for the law being put in motion against the Sunday golf-players recently. He had never, he says, heard of the matter until he saw in the newspapers the story of their being summoned. He adds that had he known the law was being so violated, he certainly would have used his influence to stop it. (Globe, 12 June 1895, p. 10).

Cassels cast the issue as in part a conflict between the values of different generations when he warned the judge: “if you were to convict these young men here (which I do not think you will) you are simply putting a nail in the coffin of the clergy, because, I think, the whole neighbourhood will rise up in rebellion” (*Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 20 July 1895, p. 754). He added that conviction of the Sunday golfers would “make Sunday a day abhorrent to the young people” (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1895, p. 5).

It was a bit of a stretch for Cassels to say that the Sunday golfers were “young people,” for Smith was forty-six years of age, Carter was forty-two, and both Edgar and Cronyn were twenty-nine. The ages of

these men had never been published, and so reporters simply accepted Cassels' reference to "young people" as accurate.

And so, we later read of the appeal against their conviction by the "young men" who had "engaged in a game of golf" on Sunday (*St Catherines Standard*, 31 October 1895, p. 4). Similarly, unimpressed by the defense's argument that golf was not covered by the Lord's Day Observance Act, a Kingston newspaper wagged its finger at the "young men" for their immaturity: "Golf is as much an amusement to some people as any other game, and Sunday is not the day for it. The young men who indulge in it, thus, are singularly lacking in religious instinct and refinement" (*Weekly British Whig*, 7 November 1895, p. 2).

The four Sunday golfers reacted differently to their convictions.

Smith sought relief with dispatch. Within two weeks, he had appealed to the High Court:

Reg. v. A.W. Smith. – Aylsworth, Q.C., moved for order for a certiorari to remove a summary conviction of the defendant for playing a game of ball (commonly known as golf) on the Lord's Day, the 26th of May, 1895, at the golf grounds near the City of Toronto. The application was based upon the ground that golf is not a game of "ball," nor a "noisy game" within the meaning of the statute. (Globe, 18 June 1895, p. 5)

The court dealt with the question in a matter of minutes and relief was immediate: "Order made" (*The Globe* [Toronto], 18 June 1895, p. 5).

But nobody noticed that Smith had won the argument: Magistrate Richardson had made an error in law evident on the face of the record, and so, a *certiorari* removal of the conviction was necessary.

Aylsworth was right all along.

The other three golfers, however, who were also represented by Aylsworth, chose to pursue the matter in the appeals court. At the beginning of October, therefore, before "Judge McDougall, sitting in Sessions," Aylsworth presented his argument for the third time (*The Globe* [Toronto], 7 October 1895, p. 6). The Crown "took the general ground that the good sense of Canadians had not heretofore allowed ball playing on Sunday and urged that the decision be sustained" (*The Globe* [Toronto], 7 October 1895, p. 6).

Judge McDougall reserved judgement, indicating that he would "read up the precedents submitted" (*The Globe* [Toronto], 7 October 1895, p. 6). Was the High Court's June decision in "Reg. v. A.W. Smith" one of the precedents that Aylsworth submitted to Judge McDougall? One infers from the newspaper's

report of the appeal proceedings that Aylsworth had contrived to mention in court that there were just three appellants because “Mr. Smith went to the High Court” (*The Globe* [Toronto], 7 October 1895, p. 6). Had the strategy been to take Smith’s case to the High Court in the hope (and, perhaps, the expectation) that a victory in that court would establish a precedent that the others could later cite? Had Cassels planned it all?

At the end of October, Edgar, Cronyn, and Carter won a reversal of the verdict: “That young gentlemen may go a-golfing on Sunday as well as upon every other day of the week without breaking the law is the opinion of Judge McDougall. He says that golf is not a game of ball similar in any sense to the games enumerated or intended to be prohibited by the statute and that it is not a noisy game” (*The Globe* [Toronto], 31 October 1895, p. 6).

Everyone noticed this decision: “Sunday Golf Not Illegal” (*Ottawa Journal*, 30 October 1895, p. 3); “Golf May be Played on the Sabbath” (*Vancouver Daily World*, 31 October 1895, p. 4).

Many a golfer said, “Amen to that!” But supporters of the statute were legion: “This decision will probably be appealed by the Sabbath Observance Association, or an amendment sought to the act at the next session of the legislature” (*Ottawa Journal*, 30 October 1895, p. 3)

On both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, the issue would roil communities large and small for decades to come.

A Lonely Passing

At the beginning of 1901, Smith was living alone in Toronto as a boarder at 151 John Street. On 31 March 1901, he was visited by a census taker to whom he explained that he was a “Clerk” and that although born in Scotland his nationality was now Canadian.

Smith had been ill for some time, but on Wednesday, July 17th, “he became suddenly worse and was taken to the hospital” (*Globe* [Toronto], 20 July 1901, p. 19).



Figure 107 A.W. Smith grave marker, Woodlawn Cemetery, London, Ontario, Canada.

Less than thirty-six hours later, on July 18th, he was dead.

His remains were collected by his only Canadian relative, William Thomson Smith, and taken to Strathroy for burial from his brother’s home.

Although it was only on July 17th that he became suddenly worse, it is not clear that Smith was able to play golf in 1901.

He had not played in the early May competition for the Brantford Medal at the Toronto Golf Club. Tellingly, a week later, he did not enter his name into the draw for the first round of the Osler Cup match-play competition at the Toronto Golf Club. A year before, we recall, he had played George S. Lyon in an

epic match in this competition, losing after four playoff holes.

Neither did Smith travel at the end of May to London, Ontario, or to Detroit, Michigan, with the Toronto Golf Club team led by George S. Lyon and Vere C. Brown that defeated the London Golf Club and the Detroit Golf Club.

R.S. Cassels, a cousin of Toronto Golf Club President W.G.P. Cassels, and himself subsequently a president of the Toronto club, recalled that even in 1898 Smith “undoubtedly was not playing the game of which he had been capable a few years before”: it was not just that he “was getting on in years,” but also that he “was suffering a good deal from ill health” (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 16 no 10 [February 1931], p. 776).

The Toronto Golf Club’s *Book of Honour* says that the lingering illness that eventually killed him was “cancer” (*Book of Honour: Portraits of the Men and Women Who Shaped Our Heritage*, introduction by Lorne Rubenstein [Toronto: Toronto Golf Club, 2015], p. 6). It seems likely that by the spring of 1901 this disease had progressed to the point that Smith was no longer able to play competitive golf.

One can only hope that Andrew Smith had more than his golf journals to keep him company during his final months, and that many more than a census taker called at his door.

Long Memories of “Curl” Smith

A.W. Smith was long remembered for his golfing exploits of the 1870s and early 1880s by his many friends in Scotland, where he was known by the nickname “Curl” – perhaps because of his wavy hair.

Virtually as Smith was preparing to board the *Corean* for his voyage to Canada, his name was invoked in support of the argument that there was a need for a national amateur golf championship in Britain comparable to the well-established Open Championship:

Amateur Championship Cup

A subject which has for a number of years back been much talked of in golfing circles all over the country ... is the institution of a championship prize open to all amateurs. Perhaps nothing has done so much to maintain and spread the love of the game as the important matches which have taken place now and again amongst the leading professionals, and the contests for the championship belt. No doubt the latter is open to amateurs, but it is a fact that not more than half a dozen of them have on any occasion ever competed for the trophy. This is all the more surprising when it is considered that our various golfing grounds can produce such men as ... Mr. Leslie Balfour, Mr. David Lamb ... of St Andrews; ... Mr. Roland ... of Elie; ... Mr. Doleman and Mr. A.W. Smith of Glasgow; Mr. W. Hunter of Prestwick ... not to mention a host of English players, such as ... Mr. John Ball, ... [and] Mr. H. Hutchison. (Field, 9 April 1881, p. 494)

When Smith won the Hunter Medal in 1889 with rounds of 32 and 36 at the Toronto Golf club, the *Glasgow Herald* took the opportunity to reprise for its readers some of the highlights of his amateur accomplishments in Scotland:

Mr. Smith was a member of the Glasgow Golf Club from 1874 to about 1881, when he went to Canada. He frequently won the most important medals and cups of the club, and in the competition for a cup, open to all amateurs, given by the Glasgow Golf Club in 1878, won it after a tie with the now well-known ex-champion, W. Fernie. As a match player, he was equal to any amateur player at that time. Perhaps one of his best performances was when he and the late Davie Strath beat the late Bob Kirk and Jamie Anderson in a 36-hole match over St Andrews' course in 1876, just the year before Jamie began his three great successive wins in

the championship. It would seem that he is still maintaining his fine form, as nine holes, however short, in 32 is a really first-class performance. (9 December 1889, p. 8)

When the Glasgow Golf Club honoured its long-time member William Doleman in 1894, the club's speaker included an acknowledgement of Doleman's friend and rival A.W. Smith: "[Doleman's] early rival was a St Andrews man, and capital player, Mr. A.W. Smith, who long worked hard for the club. He afterwards popularized golf in Canada, and the other day distinguished himself and the old park [the golf course at Alexandra Park] by winning the Osler Trophy against all comers" (*Glasgow Herald*, 7 July 1894, p. 4).

When Toronto Golf Club member R.S. Cassels visited North Berwick in 1899, the golf professional Ben Sayers (winner of more than twenty-four professional tournaments between the late 1800s and early 1900s) wanted to talk to him about "Curl" Smith, as Cassels later recalled in a letter to Ralph Reville:



Figure 108 Ben Sayers, 1894.

In Canada, he was known as Andy Smith, but in Scotland was known as "Curl" Smith. He was a very fine player and ranked with the very best players at St Andrews.

I remember going into Ben Sayers' shop at North Berwick in 1899 to have a club repaired, and when the old club maker saw the name "Toronto" on my club, he said to me, "You'll know 'Curl' Smith."

When I told him that I did, he held forth at length as to the quality of his game and various matches which he had taken part in at St Andrews.

I think that Smith was undoubtedly the best player on this Continent in the 80's and early 90's. (Canadian Golfer, vol 16 no 10 [February 1931], p. 776)

In 1916, the Toronto Golf Club professional George Cumming was visited by the seventy-year-old golf professional under whom he had apprenticed in the 1890s at the Glasgow Golf Club: Andrew Forgan. The latter wrote to Ralph Reville, editor of *Canadian Golfer*, about his visit to Toronto and about the time he spent with his old apprentice at the Toronto Golf Club: "George let me see 2 clubs belonging to the late A.W. Smith (Curl Smith) with photo of him in the clubhouse. They are much prized by the Toronto members" (vol 2 no 5 [September 1916], p. 244). Forgan then went over "Curl's record in Glasgow Golf Club where he was much thought of in Alexandra Park" (*Canadian Golfer*, vol 2 no 5 [September 1916], p. 244).

Fifteen years after death of Andy “Curl” Smith, his clubs were still revered at the Toronto Golf Club, preserved like the relics of a saint. Former Toronto Golf Club president R.G. Cassels wrote about Curl Smith in *Canadian Golfer* in 1931, and C.A. Masten did so in 1940. They had known Smith at the Toronto Golf Club as a fellow member who had taught them to play golf, and they knew that he was the best golfer in North America in the 1880s and much of the 1890s.

As late as 1946, an article in the *Montreal Star* about the origins of golf in Quebec recalled Smith: “Of the early players, ... the champion of them all was A.W. Smith, of Royal Quebec, who could play Young Tom Morris, St Andrews, Scotland, British Open Champion, on even terms” (11 June 1946, p 14).

The Sense of an Ending

The arrival of the end of one century and the beginning of the next makes everyone more than usually aware that time is passing, but for Andrew Smith there were disturbing signs of time passing dramatically and quickly in his own life.

He was getting older, of course, and so his golf swing was not what it once was. And he was getting stout, a fact that may have affected his swing even more than the fact that he was no longer as supple as he had been. He recognized that his time as a first-rate competitive golfer was passing.

More importantly, Smith was not well physically: he was originally not expected to play for the Canadian team in the International Match against the United States at the beginning of September in 1900. He was “not feeling at all on his mettle” – a phrase presumably employed by *Saturday Night* as a euphemism to acknowledge Smith’s health problems (1 September 1900, p. 6). He had been ill with cancer for some time, and he may well have recognized that time was coming to an end for him.

In addition to these intimations of his personal mortality, there were other reasons that for perhaps the last three years of his life Andrew Smith lived with the sense of an ending.



Figure 109 A.W. Smith, *Glasgow Golf Club*, 1880.

He was also aware of signs that the era of golf in which he had lived and flourished was coming to an end.

The St Andrews swing that Smith maintained to the end of his days was being displaced by the swing of Harry Vardon. Accurate driving was being replaced by power-hitting, producing a version of today’s bomb-and-gouge golf. The long-nosed, thin-faced club with a long shaft that Smith holds in the photograph to the left (many of which he had brought to Canada with him in the spring of 1881) had gone out of fashion by the beginning of the 1890s, replaced by a proliferating range of forged irons. As MacPherson acknowledged, “we played with thin-faced clubs for the purpose of picking up the ball more easily on the flat grass The thin face caught in below the centre of the ball, and made it rise gracefully like a swallow. (*Golf*, vol 4 no 1 [January 1899], p. 12).

Generally, irons struck with the descending blow of the Vardon swing replaced the old long-nosed, thin-faced, long-shafted wooden clubs.

And perhaps the biggest change of all was that the gutta percha golf ball, which had been introduced to play the year before Smith was born, would pass into history the year that Smith died.

That the tide of affairs in golf was changing was brought home to Smith by the visit of Harry Vardon (1870-1937) to Toronto in September of 1900, just ten months before Smith died. Vardon played the golf course of the Rosedale Golf Club in a match against the best ball of George S. Lyon, Canada's reigning amateur champion, and Vere C. Brown, the man who would win the championship at Montreal a few days after this match. A Toronto *Who's Who* of golf was involved in the match: the Toronto Golf Club professional George Cumming caddied for Lyon, the Rosedale Golf Club professional David Ritchie caddied for Brown, and the 1897 Canadian amateur champion Archie Kerr acted as the match umpire.



Figure 110 George Lyon admires an iron shot by Harry Vardon at Rosedale, 22 September 1900. *Golf Illustrated*, vol 6 (26 October 1901), p. 73.

Playing the eighteen-hole golf course of the Rosedale Golf Club for the first time, Vardon easily defeated Lyon and Vere by a total of six holes over thirty-six holes played, and on his first round Vardon broke Ritchie's course record of 73 by a stroke.

Lyon travelled to Montreal the next day and played a private round with Vardon on the course of Royal Montreal Golf Club before the latter took on the best ball of George Cumming and the Royal Montreal

golf professional Tom Simpson in a match played before hundreds of spectators (Vardon lost by a hole).

At Rosedale, Vardon had revealed to Toronto golfers the possibilities for increased distance and accuracy afforded by the Vardon grip, the Vardon swing, and the Vardon short irons. Two days later in Montreal, "Vardon's driving was a revelation to the onlookers. Some of his drives were away over the 200-yard mark" (*Toronto Daily Star*, 26 September 1900, p. 10).

As Herbert Warren Wind observed, Vardon's swing marked the end of the St Andrews swing:

Until the coming of Vardon, the old St Andrews-type swing, flat, exaggeratedly wide and lengthy, consciously muscular, served with few exceptions as the basic model for young men who were out to govern the gutty. Vardon introduced a revolutionary style: the upright swing. He stood with his feet generously separated, the right foot toed out a little bit, the left foot toed out markedly so that there would be nothing to impede the club head in coming through fast. His left arm bent at the elbow, he started the club back on a normally lateral course but, when his hands were hip-high, he would wheel his shoulders and his upper trunk into a brisk, full turn that gave his swing a pronounced, and for that day, unorthodox verticality. (Herbert Warren Wind, "The Age of Vardon," Sports Illustrated, 10 June 1957)

And Vardon spoke frankly to North American newspapers about the changes that he and his great rival J.H. (John Henry) Taylor (1871-1963) were forcing upon the game:

In speaking of the game, Vardon said he had violated all the instructions given in the books regarding the proper way to play golf, and Taylor has done likewise, as both play alike. "Still, we have won the championship five times between us in the past six years," he added. "Taylor won it in 1894 and 1895, and I won it in 1896, 1898, and 1899, while in 1897 it was won by an amateur."

"We were the first to introduce the overlapped grip in which the little finger of the right hand rests on the first joint of the index finger of the left hand. The advantage of this grip is to make the two hands work as one and not have the right hand try to get its work in over the left, which causes slicing and pulling. We were the first to introduce the short-handled clubs, which give one far more control over the direction of the ball, while one can get fully as much distance as with longer shafts. Our success has caused nearly all golfers in England to copy after our style of playing." (St Paul Globe, 12 February 1900, p. 8)

By the mid-1890s, Smith was directly acquainted with the drive to invent new golf clubs, for a fellow member of the Toronto Golf Club had invented a new cleek, and Smith's name was invoked in the newspapers in relation to its revolutionary potential:

It is not necessarily the case that improvements should be made in a game which is new to most of its players and in a new country, which is now finding so strong a hold in Canada. An enthusiastic member of the Toronto Golf Club has patented a new cleek, which is likely to create little short of a revolution in the use of golf clubs. The new patent does away with the

use of the wooden driver, and in reducing the number of clubs confers a great boon on the player. The idea is simple but effective. Instead of the cleek-head being of solid steel, there is a cavity in it for a filling of gutta percha. This filling gives a wonderfully increased momentum to the ball. So much so that several players of ordinary ability, in a test with the most expert golfers of the Toronto club, including Mr. A.W. Smith, the Canadian champion, drove farther with the new cleek than did the experts with the ordinary wooden driver. The cleek will also be of great assistance in a tight place, and the expert will be glad to add it to his bag of clubs. The novice in the game will find the new cleek indispensable and his task of learning the game will be made easier. The ladies, who are most ardent devotees of the sport, will welcome the new cleek with enthusiasm, as it gives the one thing needful to the feminine stroke. The club is called the Gordon Driving Cleek and has been patented in the United States and England, as well as in Canada. (*Gazette [Montreal]*, 14 November 1894, p. 8)



Figure 111 Stewart Gordon sits at the feet of A.W. Smith in the official photograph of participants in the International Match between Canada and the United States, October 1898. *Official Golf Guide* 1899, p. 36.

The inventor of the Gordon Driving Cleek was probably a man named Stewart Gordon, one of the Toronto Golf Club's better golfers – and certainly one of its most devoted. He was an accountant by profession, but he had also studied engineering. He served as club secretary from 1898 to 1905, and he served as secretary of the Royal Canadian Golf Association in 1898.

The Toronto *Empire* reported that the Gordon Driving Cleek “is being manufactured first in Toronto and is now on sale at the local sporting dealers. The workmanship and the finish of the cleeks are superior to those of the English clubs on sale here and are a credit to Canadian skill. Arrangements are now being made for placing the new Canadian cleek on the English and American markets. (*Empire [Toronto]*, cited in *Quebec Morning Chronicle*, 7 November 1894, p. 2).

This story appeared almost verbatim in various newspapers: it may have been a news release by the manufacturer of the Gordon Driving Cleek. Did Smith give permission for his name to be used in

this attempt to promote the new club? Or was he upset that golfers of average ability could use the new club to outdrive him when he wielded his trusty driver?

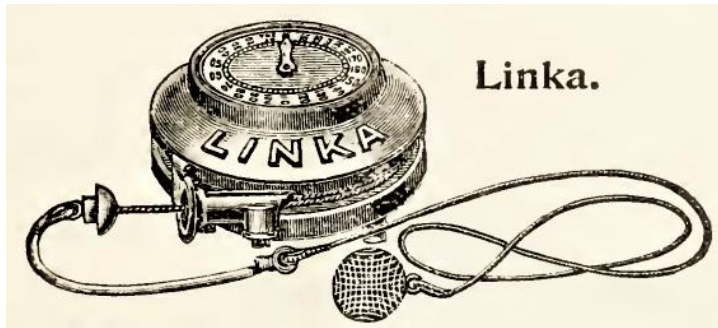


Figure 112 Spalding Athletic Library, vol 6 no 68 (June 1897), n.p.

The Gordon driving cleek continued to make news into the spring of 1895, producing the longest drive on the “Linka” machines at an indoor golf facility at the Toronto Athletic Club: “Mr. W.H. Cawthorn is credited with the longest drive on the machine, having driven 190 yards the other day with a Gordon patent

driving cleek” (*Globe* [Toronto], 28 March 1895, p. 8). The golf ball was tethered to a spring, such that when the ball was hit by the golfer, a gauge would measure the elongation of the spring and calculate the number of yards the ball would ostensibly have gone.

When this rare club can be found, the Gordon Driving Cleek is still used today by some hickory golf club players.

Endorsements were about to become a major factor in golf club production and sales. Vardon undertook his tour of North America in 1900 to promote golf clubs and golf balls bearing his name produced by the Spalding Company. Perhaps Smith had gotten in on this game at an early stage.



Figure 113 Harry Vardon surrounded by spectators at Rosedale, 22 September 1900. *Golf Illustrated*, vol 6 (26 October 1900), p. 73.

Noting that “A great number of outside clubs ... sent in for badges” to watch the match at Rosedale, I wonder if Andy Smith was among the “nearly 400 enthusiasts” who followed Vardon twice around the eighteen holes at Rosedale (*Toronto Daily Star*, 22 September 1900, p. 9; *Gazette* [Montreal], 24 September 1900, p. 2).

We recall that Smith had played in the 1897 Open Championship won by amateur Harold Hilton, with Vardon finishing in sixth place and Taylor in tenth place. Had Smith sought an opportunity then to watch Vardon play, or was Vardon’s lone championship win in

1896 not enough to convince Smith that he was going to be a revolutionary figure in golf?

Since Hilton’s win, however, Vardon had won the Open Championship both in 1898 and in 1899. He had become golf’s first international superstar. And the newspapers had been full of news of Vardon’s

virtually undefeated tour of U.S. golf clubs since his arrival in New York in February of 1900. Although unwell during the summer of 1900, Smith had recovered sufficiently well to play a “splendidly contested match” at the International Match in Quebec at the beginning of September. And although Smith did not enter the Canadian championship held at Royal Montreal shortly after Vardon’s exhibition matches in Toronto and Montreal, he may well have been ready, willing and able to follow Vardon around Rosedale.

If Smith was in the gallery at Rosedale, did he see what others saw in Vardon’s performance: the future of golf? Or, given that MacPherson affirms that Smith remained a perfect example of the St Andrews swing to the very end, did Smith see Vardon as a threat to the game that he had known and loved? Was he perhaps driven to a more fervent embrace of the past, as Willie Dunn had been after his own matches against Vardon?

Vardon had demolished Dunn in Virginia at the end of March: the 36-hole match officially ended after 26 holes when Vardon was 12 up with 10 to play. But they played the remaining ten holes anyway, and Vardon went a further four holes up. Less than two weeks later, Vardon and Dunn played another 36-hole match over the Scarsdale Golf Club’s course in Westchester, New York: Vardon was 8 up after the first 18 holes, winning eight straight holes at one point; he continued to dominate in the afternoon, officially winning again with a score of 12 up and 10 to play. Again, however, they completed the last ten holes and Vardon won six more holes.

Over the course of 72 holes against Dunn, Vardon had won 34 – almost half of them.

What the *Boston Evening Transcript* observed of the second match applied equally to the first: “The match demonstrated one thing, without question, and that is that Vardon is the most wonderful golfer in the world, and his play, compared to Dunn’s, was as a man’s to a child’s” (10 April 1900, p. 6).

What was Dunn’s reaction?

Just over a month after being demolished by Vardon, Dunn wrote an article criticizing Vardon’s play: “I do not think we have much to learn. Vardon is an excellent player, but he teaches little to others; perhaps he will do harm if people try to copy his peculiar style. Vardon plays the wrong way, his grip is wrong, and he has not a good swing” (cited in the *Gazette* [Montreal], 25 May 1900, p. 2). In his blindness to what he had witnessed, Dunn was on the wrong side of history, so to speak.

During his visit to Scotland from the summer of 1896 to the spring of 1898, Smith had talked with MacPherson about golf in the old days at St Andrews, leading MacPherson to observe that from the Strath brothers and from Tommy Morris in the olden days,

Mr. Smith had an exceptionally good opportunity for learning all the fine points of the game And one of these points was the care in playing the second shot. We were discussing that matter when he was on his visit here. And all golfers of the old school are aware of the importance of that shot. This was mainly because, in olden times, we played with thin-faced clubs for the purpose of picking up the ball more easily on the flat grass The thin face caught in below the centre of the ball, and made it rise gracefully like a swallow. (Golf, vol 4 no 1 [January 1899], p. 12)

As middle-aged people are wont to do, Smith and MacPherson had fallen into the habit of talking of “olden times” and of talking of themselves as members of the “old school.”

Smith later wrote in this vein to MacPherson to complain about the bad effect that the penchant for long driving was having on the game:

There is no question about it, but that the old school of golfers were the scientific players. Nowadays the courses are so wide that a reckless shot from the tee is not punished as it should be. In every match we read of the tremendous drivers of the present day, the everlasting grand recovery shot which was made after a terribly bad shot – a mile off course – from the tee. In our time (the sixties) it would have been a very good recovery if the ball had ever been seen again. (Golf, vol 4 no 3 [March 1899], p. 136)

Again, Smith’s rhetoric juxtaposes “the old school golfers” of “our time,” so long ago in “the sixties,” against the “reckless” players “nowadays.”

Considering both his conversations with MacPherson, and his letters to him, we can see that as the century was coming to a close Smith was certainly aware that club technology was changing, golf course architecture was changing, and golf strategy was changing. We recall that Smith had sought out Old Tom Morris to advise him to put a barb-wire fence along the boundary of the Old Course at St Andrews and to plant whins strategically so that the new generation’s “unscientific” driving would be properly penalized.

And then there was talk of a revolutionary new golf ball.

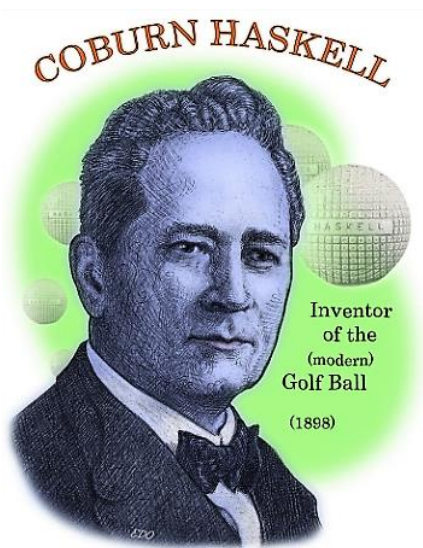


Figure 114 Coburn Haskell (1868-1922).

In the spring of 1898, golfer and dental surgeon Coburn Haskell called at the B.F. Goodrich plant in Akron, Ohio, to pick up his friend Bertram Work, the plant superintendent, for a round of golf. While waiting for his friend, Haskell picked up discarded rubber threads from the floor of the factory and wound them into a ball. When he bounced this ball on the floor, it rebounded to the roof. He showed this remarkable phenomenon to Work, who suggested that Haskell cover the ball with gutta percha and make a golf ball out of it.

Haskell applied for a patent for his golf ball on 9 August 1898, and the patent was granted 11 April 1899. The rest is history.

By early 1899, before the patent was granted, the new ball was being tested at various locations in the mid-West and rumours were spreading about an extraordinary new golf technology:

A new golf ball with which experiments are being made will work a revolution in the game should some defects be overcome which now keep it from the market. It differs from the present gutta percha as the lively ball does from the dead ball in baseball. With it the ordinary player will, it is said, make long drives with ease. (Scranton Republican [Scranton, Pennsylvania], 17 March 1899, p. 4).

Some of the reports stretched credulity:

A new golf ball invented by a Western man is attracting the interest of golfers. With it, the average golfer is said to be able to drive 300 yards with ease. "I assisted at a test of this ball at a Cincinnati links," said an Eastern golfer, describing it, "and after all those present had made their drives with the standard ball, the inventor of the new ball outdrove us all with a one-handed shot with a putter. Then I tried a driving iron, and after sending a regulation skyscraper with the new ball, it went nearly as high on the first rebound, and kept on with mighty leaps for fully 250 yards. The ball has a centre of pure rubber, which is tightly wound round with some sort of gut and then with twine. It is then coated with gutta-percha, and after moulding the ball looks like the ordinary type. Aside from its excessive liveliness, another fault is brittleness, for not one of them has yet withstood more than four hits with a driver. The men behind the ball are now striving to correct these faults." (Philadelphia Times, 14 March 1899, p. 8)

I do not know whether Smith encountered such articles in the newspapers that he read, but we know that he subscribed to *The Golfer* (he took copies of this journal with him to Scotland to show to MacPherson and encouraged the latter to write articles for it), so he will have encountered *The Golfer's* ironic summary of the above article:

There is a new golf ball – this one of American make and some surprising qualities. We have not seen it nor tried it, nor do we know anyone who has seen it or tried it. But in a paper from the West, we have been reading of its wondrous properties. It has marvellous resiliency. One player, a man of only ordinary power and skill, tried a drive with a putter. The ball soared aloft, swooping through the air like a bird of prey, but far exceeding such a creature in velocity. After the carry it bounded along in great jumps like a kangaroo. They found the ball had gone 300 yards.

The scribe further said that the superiority of this ball over all other balls lay in the fact that there was rubber at the centre of it – which caused us to pause and wonder what might be in the centre of the standard balls we have been using lately. Despite this description we shall wait a while yet in the hope of seeing this marvellous production. We are not at all sceptical as to the possibility of improving the gutta now in use. The large makers are bent on it all the time. But while we believe all things are open to improvement, this 300 yards with a putter is too great and sudden an increase for us to swallow easily. (The Golfer, vol 8 no 6 [April 1899], p. 303)

Golfer editor J.S. Murphy's intentional misrepresentation of the newspaper article reproduced above suggests the anxiety that reports of the new technology were creating in certain "old-school" types.

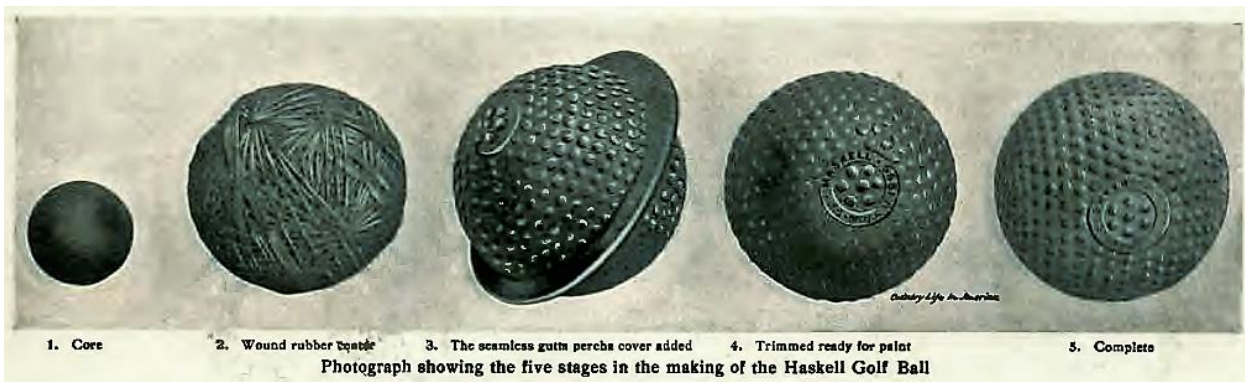


Figure 115 A pictorial depiction of the five stages in the construction of the Haskell Golf Ball: core, wound rubber centre, seamless gutta percha cover added, trimmed ready for paint, complete. *Country Life in America* (April 1905), p. 641.

If rumours about the distance that the ball could be driven by an average golfer were to prove true, there would be problems, On the one hand, the difference between average and expert golfers would perhaps be reduced. On the other hand, and more importantly, existing golf courses might be made obsolete as what had been two-shot holes became one-shot holes:

A new golf ball has been invented which will revolutionize the game, so say the parties who are to put it on the market next season. Instead of being made of solid gutta-percha, it is made, like the old-fashioned "lively" baseball, of a rubber core on which is tightly wound a rubber band or cord which gives a wonderfully resilient power to the new ball. With it, beginners can make drives of such length as to place them nearly on an equal footing with professionals and the length of the present links will have to be increased. (Sun-Journal [Lewiston, Maine], 11 September 1900, p. 10)

By September of 1900, fully six months before the Haskell ball was even scheduled to be put on the market, a movement was underway in the United States to encourage the U.S.G.A. to adopt an official golf ball:

Out there a movement has been started to secure the adoption of an official golf ball. Those back of the movement contend that formal action should be taken by the United States Golf Association at once; that unless such action is taken the coming open championship will be a farce. It is said that golf demands an official ball as truly as baseball, tennis, billiards and other sports, and that without it the game is certain to receive a setback....

What has caused this feeling is doubtless the new golf ball invented recently by a Cleveland player, and which, it is said, can be driven a hundred yards further than the ordinary variety, possessing, also, the same superiority in roll. This ball has made it evident that a revolution in links is imminent, should all that is claimed for it prove true. The ordinary distances from tee to green will prove wholly inadequate for such a 'bounder,' and players will demand added lengths and fewer holes. With this new ball to help him, a man will have a tremendous advantage over an opponent not so supplied, and consequently it is urged that the association should step in and say what is to be the official make. (Democrat and Chronicle [Rochester, New York], 25 September 1900, p. 13)

Various Chicago newspapers had undertaken a discussion of the problem, and the Chicago *Times-Herald* had even published an editorial on the controversy:

Yankee ingenuity has brought the game face to face with the same trouble that required such stringent legislation against the too lively baseball. In the early days the baseball manufacturers bent their energies to perfecting a ball that could be knocked "out of sight" without being at the same time knocked out of shape. It is unnecessary to say that they speedily manufactured a ball so lively that accessible ball grounds became too small to hold it, and Texas seemed the only state of the Union extensive enough to offer a home for the home-run batter. And now golf, the Scotch game to which Americans have taken with characteristic rush, is threatened by a lively ball to which the Scotch original is dead. It is estimated that if Harry Vardon were to hit one of these new India rubber stuffed inventions it would fly three hundred yards and roll one hundred yards further. An official standard must be established for golf balls or the game is doomed. (cited in the Democrat and Chronicle [Rochester, New York], 25 September 1900, p. 13)

As a much-respected authority on the game in both Canada and the United States, and having played with some of the best golfers in Canada and the United States at the International Match at Quebec at the beginning of September, and helping to welcome golfers to the Toronto Golf Club for the Canadian championships at the end of September, Smith must have been asked often for his opinion about the implications of this new golf ball.

Perhaps, like the editor of *The Golfer*, Smith was dismissive of alarmist talk.

After all, there had been talk before of "new" golf balls that would knock the gutta percha golf ball off its perch: golf balls that mixed iron filings into the gutta percha to give it more resiliency, golf balls that injected the centre of the gutta percha ball with compressed air to make the ball itself more compressible, and so on. All had come to nought.

Why think that Haskell's golf ball would be different?

Or perhaps the anxiety evident in many golf publications about the potentially revolutionary implications of this new golf ball was a further stimulus to Smith's sense that the venerable era of "old school" golf – with its legendary personalities, its record scores, its short golf courses, its long golf clubs, and its fifty-year-old golf ball – was coming to an end?

The new Haskell golf ball was advertised for sale widely in American newspapers and golf journals by the middle of March of 1901.

The Haskell Golf Ball
IN PERFECTED FORM

*IS NOW
READY*



*IS NOW
READY*

EXCLUSIVE MANUFACTURERS

The B. F. Goodrich Company, Akron Rubber Works
AKRON, OHIO

BRANCHES { NEW YORK, 66-68 Reade St.
SAN FRANCISCO, 308 Mission St.
BOSTON, 87 Chauncy St.

DETROIT, 305 Woodward Ave.
CHICAGO, 141 Lake St.

PHILADELPHIA, 922 Arch St.
BUFFALO, 9 W. Huron St.
DENVER, 1615 Tremont St.

Figure 116 Golf, vol 8 no 4 (April 1901), p. 234.

Smith will undoubtedly have seen such advertisements in the golf journals to which he subscribed.

Everyone wanted to give this new golf ball a try and to compare its performance to what they were used to with their gutta-percha balls. There can be little doubt that members of the Toronto Golf Club will have tried the new ball in the spring of 1901. They were available in Buffalo, New York. Charles Hunter probably brought a bunch of them across the lake with him from Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Although Smith entered no Toronto Golf Club competitions in 1901, he may have visited the golf course to play a bit of golf when he felt well enough to do so, and he may well have tried out the new golf ball. And even if he was not well enough to play golf at all in the spring and early summer of 1901, there can be little doubt that he will have had reports about the performance of the new ball from his friends at the club.

And Smith may even have had professional reasons to be curious about the rumours about how new rubber technologies might impact the production of golf balls.



Figure 117 Gutta-Percha and Rubber Manufacturing Company head office, Yonge Street, Toronto, circa 1900.

When Smith returned to Canada in the summer of 1898, he was no longer an employee of the Quebec Bank, but rather a clerk in the Gutta Percha and Rubber Manufacturing Company of Toronto.

This company had a head office in London, England, but it had a number of factories throughout the world, including those in Toronto and Brooklyn. The Toronto factory made conveyor belts, tires, mats, fire hose, waterproof clothing, rubber boots and shoes (the most famous line of footwear being called the “Maltese Cross”), and so on. Its Toronto factory was in Parkdale, but its head office was downtown on Yonge Street.

The Toronto factory also made hockey pucks. Perhaps someday it might make golf balls?

Confronted by the spring of 1901 with the success of the Vardon swing, the Vardon grip, and the shorter Vardon clubs, and confronted also with the aggressive marketing of a revolutionary new golf ball, Smith was also confronted with the news that Canada had declined the invitation from the United States Golf Association to participate in another International Match:

Local golfers were somewhat surprised to learn that the Canadian Golf Association had decided to abandon the international team competition this year, which had been one of the features of the golf world for the past three seasons. The probable reason, in the absence of any official notice to the United States Association, lies in the fact that the Canadians feel that they are in no better position to pick a strong team than they have been for the previous three years, and rather than encounter a long succession of continuous defeats, have decided to give up the attempt. (New York Times, 30 April 1901, p. 7)

Perhaps the likelihood that Smith’s poor health would prevent him from playing in the proposed International Match in the fall of 1901 was a factor in the R.C.G.A.’s decision to decline the U.S.G.A.’s invitation.

Although not well during the summer of 1900, and although skipping the Canadian national championships at the end of September, Smith had rallied to represent Canada at the International Match at Quebec on September 1st. These matches were important to Smith, and he invariably provided the top American player with stiff opposition. One wonders how the news that there would be no International Match in 1901 affected Smith. It was another sign that things that he had known and loved in the world of golf were coming to an end.

Although suffering from poor health almost from the moment he arrived back in Canada from Scotland in 1898, Smith was probably paying close attention to these changes in the world of golf. He read about golf voraciously in newspapers and golf journals: "In every match we read of the tremendous drivers of the present day" (*Golf*, vol 4 no 3 [March 1899], p. 136). Even if not well enough to play golf in the spring of 1901, he was probably still reading about it and talking about it with friends. It was only the day before he died that he "became suddenly worse" (*Globe* [Toronto], 20 July 1901, p. 19).

Perhaps the last-known match between Smith and George S. Lyon late in June of 1900 symbolizes the ending that others sensed in regard to Smith's future as a competitive golfer. Playing a match in the knock-out competition for the Osler Trophy, Smith and Lyon played eighteen holes to a standstill. They were required to play a four-hole playoff "to cut the knot, Lyon winning on the last green":

The play at the final hole was most interesting. Lyon drove a beautiful ball almost to the green. Smith, whose age was telling on him after the hard game, had lost a bit of his nerve and fozzled his drive, landing in the drain at the side of the road. By a bit of play that has never been excelled in Toronto, he hooked his ball out of a most difficult lie with his niblick, going over the fence some distance to the west. He next played a beautiful brassey right on to the green, and went down only one stroke behind his opponent. (Saturday Night [Toronto], 23 June 1900, p. 6)

Smith's "age was telling on him" and he "had lost a bit of his nerve"; one might say the same of the "old school" and the old swing and the old technology that Smith represented.

Lyon won the match. And the future would belong to Lyon, who would win the Canadian amateur championship another seven times after this last match with Smith.

Although just nine years younger than Smith, Lyon had taken up golf only in October of 1895 – by which time Smith had been playing the game at the highest level for thirty years. The future belonged to Lyon not just because he survived Smith, but because he rose to the challenge set by Smith: the challenge of

matching and striving to exceed the well-rounded, strategically-sound game with which Smith confronted every opponent he faced in Scotland, Canada, and the United States from the 1860s to the early 1900s. Fortunately for Lyon, what the one experienced in the world of golf with the sense of an ending, the other experienced with the sense of a beginning.

Conclusion

All the obituaries agreed that Smith had popularized golf in Canada, as he had promised to do at the farewell banquet held for him by the Glasgow Golf Club in April of 1881:

In replying to the toast of his health, proposed by Mr. William Doleman, who presided, ... [Mr. Smith] said it was not unlikely that he might, before long, bring a team across the Atlantic to try conclusions with the golfers of the Mother Country. Under such an able teacher, golfing should soon obtain a firm footing in the Dominion. (Field, vol 57 no 1479 (30 April 1881), p. 600)

As the “New York correspondent” for Britain’s *Golf Illustrated*, Van Tassel Sutphen, observed, over the next twenty years, Smith taught generations of Canadian golfers to play the game: “Mr. A.W. Smith, of Toronto ..., was practically the pioneer of the game on this continent, and long before golf was played in the United States, he was hard at work in Canada teaching the game to his friends and encouraging the spread of it” (*Golf Illustrated*, vol 9 [16 August 1901], p. 124).



Figure 118 Photographs of A.W. Smith, dated (from left to right): 1870, 1880, 1892, 1895, 1898.

As we know, Smith also won important championships in Canada at club level, provincial level, and international level, represented both Ontario and Quebec in interprovincial competitions, represented Canada in international team competitions, and flew Canada’s flag in the British Amateur Championship, the British Open Championship, and two United States Open Championships.

And by the way he talked about the game, its greatest players, its venerable traditions, and its fundamental and enduring ethos of honorably observing rules, he helped to establish a healthy and enduring golf culture at Canada’s earliest golf clubs. As late as the 1940s, he was remembered for his personal philosophy at the Toronto Golf Club: “Not the quarry, but the chase; not the trophy, but the race” (*Canadian Golfer* [August 1940], p. 24

Had there been a golf Hall of Fame in Canada when Smith died in 1901, there is no doubt that his peers would have elected him to membership in it. At the end of the 1900 golf season, “this grand old golfer” was acknowledged as “the father of the game in Canada” – a player who even in his fifties and “even on a decidedly off day [could] play the majority of ... scratch men to a standstill” (*Saturday Night* [Toronto], 1 September 1900, p. 6). He had done precisely this in June, when, despite the fact that his age was telling on him, he fought George S. Lyon to a standstill at the Toronto Golf Club.

Now that Canada and Ontario each have a Golf Hall of Fame, we should redeem an unfortunate oversight in provincial and national accounts of our golf history and induct Andrew Whyte Smith into both.