

John Cuthbert: The Unknown Designer of the Shinnecock Hills Golf Course



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Cover photograph: John Cuthbert at Stanmore Golf Club mid-1890s.

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Introduction



Figure 1 William F. Davis (1861-1902). Golf, vol 2 no 5 (May 1898), p. 16.

As those interested in the history of the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club know, for most of the twentieth century, the Club's early golf professional Willie Dunn, Jr, was mistakenly assumed to have laid out the original golf course.

But thanks to twenty-first-century research by David Moriarty, we have recovered the awareness that was widespread during the 1890s and early 1900s that the first nine holes were actually laid out by Willie Davis in July and August of 1891 (See David Moriarty, "The Origins of Golf in the Shinnecock Hills, A Confused History," *Golf Club Atlas*

<https://www.golfclubatlas.com/forum/index.php?topic=46842.0>).



Figure 2 Willie Dunn, Jr (1864-1952), wearing the winner's medal for his victory in the 1894 US Championship.

Dunn, it turns out, first arrived at Shinnecock Hills in May of 1893. He worked as the Shinnecock Hills golf professional from spring to fall in 1893, 1894, and 1895, spending the winters of 1893 and 1894 in Biarritz, France.

And so, since Davis laid out only nine holes in 1891, and since the Club had a 12-hole course in 1893, many have assumed that it was Dunn who expanded the course to 12 holes.

But it turns out that the golf course had 12 holes by 1892, well before Dunn first set foot in North America.

The following essay suggests that the person responsible for the 12-hole layout was the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club's 1892 golf professional: John Cuthbert.

By hiring Cuthbert in the spring of 1892, the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club became the first to hire a British golf professional to come to the United States to work as a resident professional. Yet this milestone has been forgotten, along with Cuthbert's architectural achievement during the five months he spent at Shinnecock Hills.

A Historic Mistake

In the early 1920s, when the president of the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club asked Samuel L. Parrish, one of the few founding club members still alive at that time, to share his recollections of the origins of the golf course more than thirty years before, Parrish mistakenly attributed the original design to Willie Dunn:

We asked the late Charles L. Atterbury, who was about to visit Montreal on a business trip, if he would interview the authorities of the Royal Montreal Golf Club (organized in 1873, the oldest golf club in Canada, and therefore in the western hemisphere) and arrange with them to have their professional come to Southampton and look over the ground.

As a result of this interview, the Scotch-Canadian professional, Willie Dunn by name, arrived at Southampton with clubs and balls in the early part of July 1891, consigned to me.

Immediately upon his arrival, we drove out to Shinnecock Hills but had proceeded only a few hundred yards ... when Dunn turned to me and remarked in a somewhat crestfallen manner that he was sorry that we had been put to so much trouble and expense, but that no golf course could be made on land of that character.

We had already turned our faces homeward toward Southampton when I said to Dunn: "Well, Dunn, what do you want?"

He then explained that ground capable of being turned into some sort of turf was necessary

I then drove him to a spot in the valley ... composed of sandy soil comparatively free from brush and capable of some sort of treatment appropriate for golf at a reasonable outlay of time and money.

(Samuel L. Parrish, Some facts, reflections, and personal reminiscences connected with the introduction of the Game of Golf into the United States, more especially as associated with the formation of the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club [privately printed by Samuel Parrish, 1923], pp. 5-6)

Neither in 1923, nor at any time until the early 2000s, did anyone recall that as the Club prepared to host its first US Open in 1896, Parrish had regaled a *New York Times* reporter with the same story, but with a different golf professional in the lead role:

Mr. Atterbury, who had learned something about the celebrated Scotch professional, Willie F. Davis, now at the Newport Golf Club, but who at the time had charge of the Montreal Golf Club course, suggested that the Shinnecock Club secure the services of Willie Davis to lay out a course in the vicinity of Southampton.

Davis was accordingly requested to come down and look over the sand hills of Long Island and pass his opinion upon their golfing merits.

He did not at first sight launch forth into eulogies of their similarity to the old St Andrews course in Scotland.... That portion of the Shinnecock Hills over which Willie Davis was first taken did not meet with his favor at all.

Mr. Parrish, in telling the result of this walk over hills, says that at one point, Willie Davis was anxiously asked what he thought of the grounds, [where] there was a large growth of underbrush, particularly thick. "With a sad voice and troubled look, Willie Davis replied," Mr. Parrish said, 'Well, Sir, I don't think you can make golf links out of this sort of thing.'"

At this point, however, it was suggested that they visit the hills across the railroad track ... where the ground had more of the qualities of a sandy turf, and it was while viewing this section ... that Willie Davis's face lighted up, and with true golfing ardor he exclaimed:

"This is more like it."

(New York Times, 8 March 1896, p. 25)

Davis was on the Shinnecock site for between four and five weeks in July and August of 1891, residing in a nearby cottage as he supervised members of the Shinnecock Indian tribe in the laying out a full nine-hole course for men and a nine-hole course for women, the latter being "about a mile" long (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

How Long Is *Your* Course?

Note that in the United States in the 1890s, reports of the length of golf courses regularly specified the distance in terms of miles and fractions of miles.

For instance, in 1893, R.E. Cherrill, a friend of Willie Dunn's, described the 12-hole Shinnecock course in these terms: "At Shinnecock Hills, Long Island, there is a fine undulating course of two and a half miles" (*Golf*, vol 7 no 165 [3 November 1893], p 134). The *Baltimore American* reported in 1894 that the Baltimore Golf Club had just opened "an excellent nine-hole course" that was "about a mile and a quarter in length" (*Baltimore American*, 30 November 1894, p. 6). In 1895, the New York *Sun* reported that at the St Andrews Golf Club in Yonkers, "the course is fully one and one-half miles long" (*Sun* [New York], 16 June 1895, p. 16).

As an outdoor form of recreation that was new to Americans, golf was often described in the newspapers of the day as an invigorating walk, and that way of thinking about the game meant that indicating the distance of the walk in miles and fractions of miles made sense to reporters. But this way of thinking also meant that the distances reported did not represent only the total of the yards from tee to green for each hole. What was reported was generally the total of the yardage for each hole plus the distances that had to be walked from each putting green to the next tee box.

And so, just what it means that the ladies' course was "about a mile" long is not clear.

The person who described the distance of the ladies' course as "about a mile" was a reporter sent by the *New York Herald* to interview Willie Davis. And she makes clear that she saw the golf course as a lovely place for a walk:

Viewed merely as a pretext for an outing, there is much to be said for golf.

It is worth more than a long ride on that queer Long Island Railroad just to stand on top of the future Shinnecock Club links and let the breeze whistle through your hair as you progress toward the tantalizing holes on the nine "putting greens" which must be reached in the course of the game.

Nine is not the regulation number. In Scotland, as a rule, there are about eighteen, and the links spread over three to four miles. The links at Shinnecock are only half that length and the holes are placed at intervals of two to four hundred yards....

Mr. Davis tells me that the Montreal ground is barely one mile round, so the Long Islanders will not do so badly.

(New York Herald, 30 August 1891)

It is only by adding up the yardage of each hole as indicated on Davis's own map of the course that we know that his nine-hole main course was 2,589 yards long (the yardages are highlighted in yellow below).

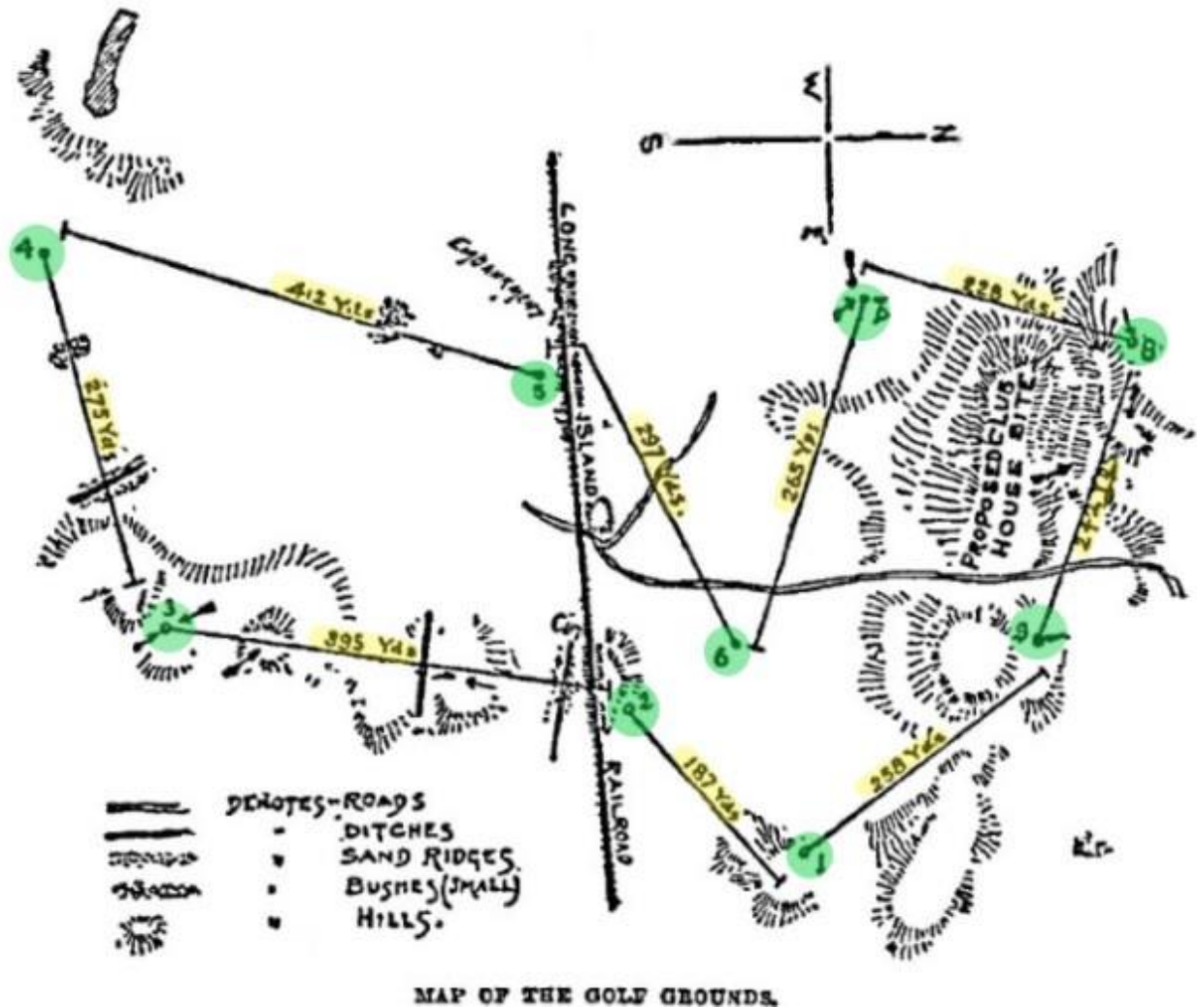


Figure 3 Davis's "Map of the Golf Grounds." New York Herald, 30 August 1891. Hole yardages highlighted in yellow and putting green numbers highlighted in green.

Hole 1, 258 yds; Hole 2, 187 yds; Hole 3, 395 yds; Hole 4, 275 yds; Hole 5, 412 yds; Hole 6, 297 yds; Hole 7 265 yds; Hole 8, 228 yds; Hole 9, 272 yds.

Fan Girl

The woman reporting on the golf course at Shinnecock Hills for the *New York Herald* was very impressed by her encounter with Davis and became something of a fan.

Although Davis was born in Hoylake, Cheshire, England (descending from families that had lived and worked there for at least three generations before him), the reporter thought he was from Scotland (as all golf professionals had hitherto been): “Mr. Davis ... is the famous Scottish expert who acts as conservator of the links at Montreal. He has been retained by our Long Island enthusiasts as their instructor and mentor, a task for which his skill and reputation amply qualify him” (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).



Figure 4 "W.F. Davis, The Crack Golf Player." *New York Herald*, 30 August 1891.

She found the 29-year-old golf professional's attitude toward the game curiously serious:

I drove over to the farm house near Southampton which Mr. Davis has made his temporary home and induced him to escort me to the links he has planned out at Shinnecock

In half an hour or so, we halted on the brow of a low hill just below the well-known windmill.

Here Mr. Davis directed my attention to a round green clearing twenty-five or thirty feet in diameter.

"This," said he, in tones which sounded strangely solemn, "is a putting green. We golfers hold it sacred as a sanctuary."

(*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891)

She was amused: a devotee of the Royal and Ancient Game seemed to be initiating her into a new religion – golf!

She decided to humour him: "'Now look,' he added, when I had shown that I was properly impressed, 'here, a few yards from the putting green, is the 'teeing' ground from which you drive the ball when you begin the game. You will observe it is bounded by these chalk lines, beyond which it is not allowed to step when you make your drive'" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

A few weeks before this, Parrish had also observed a notably intense enthusiasm about the game in the way "Willie Davis's face lighted up ... with true golfing ardor" when he recognized

the better promise of the second of the Shinnecock Hills sites he was shown (*New York Times*, 8 March 1896, p. 25).

As the day progressed, Davis's explanation of the nature of the game to the reporter, as well as the golf lessons he gave her, enabled her to overcome the scepticism about golf that she had brought with her to Shinnecock Hills:

A professor at St Andrews once defined the game as "knocking little balls into little holes with clubs extremely ill adapted to their purposes"

I have shared the vulgar view myself, and it was only this week that I recanted, after taking a hand in an informal game on Long Island under the skilled guidance of that prince of golfers, Mr. Davis.

(*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).



Figure 5 W.F. Davis. *The Golfer*, vol 2 no 2 (December 1895), p. 51.

As they walked the golf course together, Davis taught her how to play certain strokes:

The first of the teeing grounds at Shinnecock, one of the loftiest points of the links, is at the foot of a gentle slope below the Windmill Cottage.

Thence to the first putting green, the way is clear.

But between the first and second holes there stands the railroad, with a hillock beyond, to surmount which with one stroke of the lofting iron is, so Mr. Davis says, no mean feat.

I am not a great "dab" at golf myself.

In fact, I have never played the game till this week.

Yet with a very little coaching from the Scottish expert, I lofted my ball at the first stroke across both obstacles.

From which I am unable to determine whether to infer that my instructor is a genius, or that I am.

Mr. Davis smiled sardonically as we drove to the next putting green ...

(*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891)

Davis smiled because he knew that our intrepid reporter was in for a fall: on the very next putting green, she four-putted and thus discovered that golf can be a most vexing game.

The reporter's problematic putting stroke is relatively uninteresting, but her surprisingly successful lofting shot on the 2nd hole calls for attention.

Two 2nd Holes

When she played her exceptional shot on the 2nd hole, the reporter says: “I lofted my ball” across “the railroad” and the “hillock beyond.”

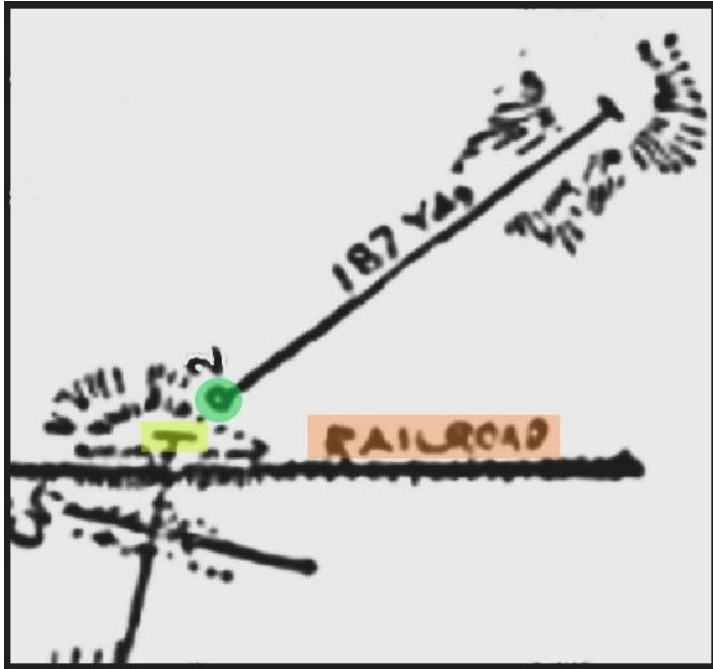


Figure 6 Detail from the Davis map published in the New York Herald, 30 august 1891.

It turns out that the 2nd hole that the reporter played on the day she visited Davis was not the 2nd hole that Davis bequeathed to the club upon completion of his work at Shinnecock Hills – the 2nd hole that he drew on his own map of the finished course.

As seen to the left, Davis’s map shows that the entire 2nd hole was laid out north of the railroad. And unlike the 2nd hole that Davis and the reporter played during the latter’s visit to the property, the 2nd green shown on Davis’s map was not accessed by a shot played

from south to north and lofted over the railroad. And the map shows that neither was there a hillock to be lofted over on the way to the putting green.

A hillock on the north side of the railroad is appears on the map above, but it was used as the teeing ground for the 3rd hole (the 3rd tee atop this hillock is marked yellow on the image above).



Figure 7 "Miss Curtis Playing Out Of Railway At Sixth Hole." Margaret Curtis (wearing a white dress) finished runner-up in the 1900 US Ladies' Amateur Championship held at Shinnecock Hills.

The hillock on the right side of the railroad shown in the photograph to the left was the elevated site for Davis’s 3rd tee – which became the 6th tee from which Margaret Curtis (holding the golf club in this photograph) fozzled her drive onto the

railroad in the 1900 U.S. Ladies' Amateur Championship (the railroad was treated as a "natural hazard" in those days and so she had to play her ball where she found it and as it lay).

Since Davis's 1891 map shows the 2nd green located where it would also be found on this hole when it became part of the 12-hole layout of 1892 and then became part of the 18-hole layout of 1895, we know that there was a different 2nd hole when the reporter toured the course with Davis.

The reporter's substantial *New York Herald* article about the development of the golf course appeared on August 30th, but her interview with Davis had occurred, she says, "some days ago" – and her word "ago" means not necessarily "some days" before the day of publication but "some days" before the day she sat down to write her story, which the newspaper indicates was filed on 15 August 1891 (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891). When she was writing up her account of the visit, she says "it was only this week" (after being instructed in the game by Davis) that she "recanted" her "vulgar" view of golf as a silly pastime (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

And so, she seems to have visited the Shinnecock Hills site relatively early during Davis's stay on Long Island, probably during the first or second week of August.

After she left, Davis had two or three weeks to change the layout significantly.

The Clubhouse Site

Davis's 1891 map marks a "PROPOSED CLUB HOUSE SITE" on a hilltop at the north end of the course.



Figure 8 Annotated detail from Davis map of the golfground at Shinnecock Hills. New York Herald, 30 August 1891.

Around this hilltop, Davis routed his 7th, 8th, and 9th holes (as seen in the enlarged detail from his course map that is shown to the left).

Yet the reporter indicates that during her visit, she had learned (presumably from Davis, himself) that when "hole five is reached," there is "a knoll upon which it is proposed to build a small clubhouse. The architect will be Mr. Stanford White or some

other first class man" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

On Davis's map, however, we can see that the "Proposed Club House Site" was nowhere near his 5th hole, which was far away on the south side of the railroad. Instead, Davis marks the site for the proposed building as lying between the 8th and 9th greens – very close, in fact, to where the clubhouse would be built in the fall of 1891 (the place marked by the yellow "X" drawn on the map above).

What gives?

Was another clubhouse site under consideration when the reporter walked the course with Davis?

It turns out that when the reporter visited the Shinnecock Hills site, not only were certain holes not in their final form, but all the holes had numbers different from the ones indicated on Davis's map. What she knew as the 5th hole at the beginning of August became by the end of August the 8th hole.

The August 1891 sketch below (called “VIEW OF THE GOLF GROUNDS FROM CLUB HOUSE SITE”) shows Davis and the reporter standing on the knoll that is marked on Davis’s map as the “Proposed Club House Site.” Note the windmill on a hill far to the south.

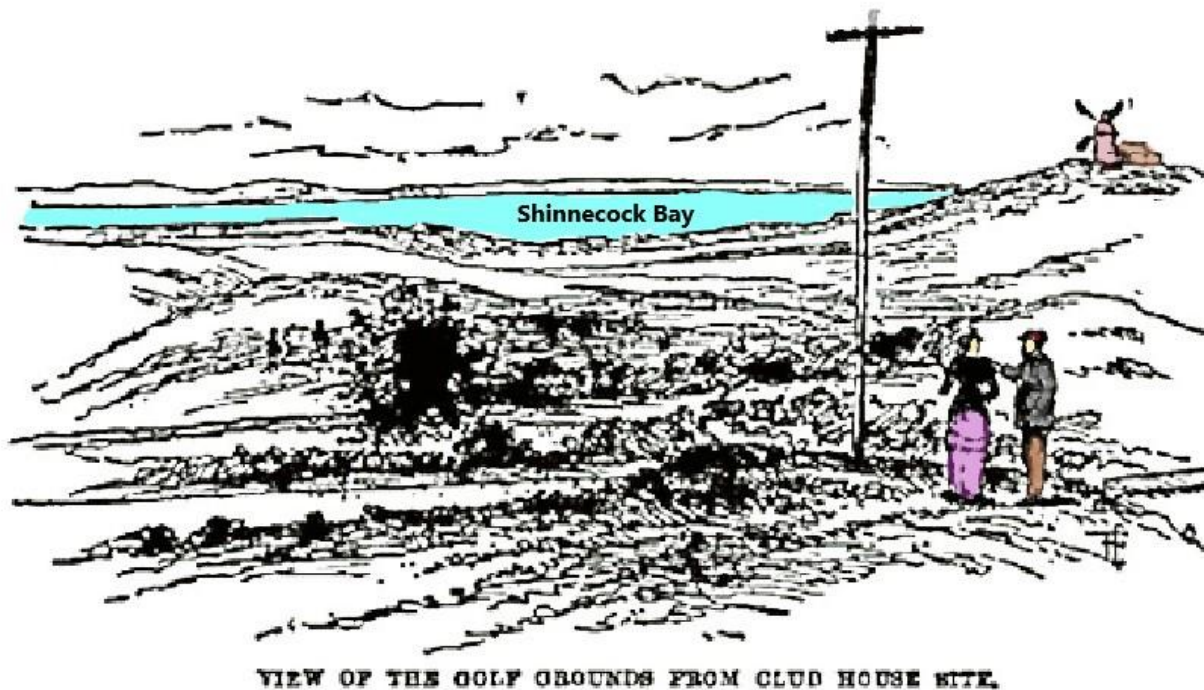


Figure 9 Modified sketch from the New York Herald, 30 August 1891.

Originally built in 1714 and located several miles away from Shinnecock Hills on Mill Hill in Southampton, the windmill depicted in the sketch above was purchase in 1890 by Janet Hoyt (alias Mrs. Walter Hoyt) and moved to the site shown above. She used it as her residence when attending the nearby Shinnecock Hills Summer School of Art, which was run in the late 1880s and throughout the 1890s by famous painter William M. Chase.

The windmill remains today in approximately the same location.

The reporter informs us that the first tee of Davis’s original layout was located just below the residence at the windmill called Windmill Cottage:

I drove over to the farm house near Southampton which Mr. Davis has made his temporary home and induced him to escort me to the links he has planned out at Shinnecock

In half an hour or so, we halted on the brow of a low hill just below the well-known windmill.

Here Mr. Davis directed my attention to a round green clearing twenty-five or thirty feet in diameter.

*“**This,**” said he, in tones which sounded strangely solemn, “**is a putting green.** We golfers hold it sacred as a sanctuary.”*

(New York Herald, 30 August 1891, emphasis added)

This putting green must have been the 9th green, for the reporter reveals that this green was next to the 1st tee: “The first of the teeing grounds at Shinnecock, one of the loftiest points of the links, is at the foot of a gentle slope below the Windmill Cottage” (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891). This 1st teeing ground was “a few yards from the putting green” to which Davis had pointed (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

So, it turns out that there was a Davis layout that preceded the one shown on his map published in the *New York Herald* on 30 August 1891. And this older layout started and finished at the south end of the property, with the 1st tee on one of the highest points of ground just below the windmill, and with the 9th green visible somewhere nearby below the hill on which the 1st tee stood.

This original layout did its job: it was the one on which Davis taught the first enthusiasts to play the game at Shinnecock Hills and the enthusiasm that it prompted led to the incorporation of the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in September.

The Original 1891 Layout

Fortunately, like the *New York Herald* reporter, another journalist, E.N. Lamont, also visited the golf course while it was in its earliest phases of development and he subsequently provided a crude map of the original layout that Davis and the reporter played over.

Born in Scotland in 1835 and educated at the University of Edinburgh, where he studied law, Lamont immigrated to the United States at the outbreak of the Civil War and served as an adjutant in the 101st New York Volunteers. After the war, he became a journalist, working initially as an editor for Chicago's *Inter-Ocean* newspaper, but in 1879, he moved to New York City to work as editor for the *Commercial Advertiser*. He was also a freelance writer, publishing essays, short stories, and verse in a wide variety of American and British magazines.

In the summer of 1891, he wrote "The Royal Game of Golf," an essay published in *Harper's Weekly Magazine* in September. His purpose was to introduce the game to American readers who knew nothing about it: he covered the history of the game, the rules, the nature of the ground upon which it was played, the instruments used to play it, and so on. He was obviously quite familiar with the game, describing it in a knowledgeable and accessible way.

He also suggests that he was familiar with the way the game was developing on Long Island, both at Cedarhurst (since 1890) and at Shinnecock Hills (during the summer of 1891):

Long Island is rich in courses [Lamont uses the word "courses" to mean "undulating down country"] which would take a golfer's fancy and there is no reason why the game should not become popular at the various summer resorts along the coast...

The first move for establishing the game on this side has already been made, and at Southampton and Cedarhurst they are making the plays and mastering the mysteries with great success.

(*Harper's Weekly Magazine*, vol 35 no 1812 [12 September 1891], p. 695)

Had Lamont witnessed golfers "making the plays and mastering the mysteries" at Shinnecock Hills?

He provides no description of the Shinnecock course or of any golfers playing on it, but in addition to sketches of golfers playing various kinds of golf strokes, his article is accompanied by a curious illustration called "Diagram of Golf Links" – and attention to this part of his article shows that Lamont had indeed visited the golf course that Davis was laying out.

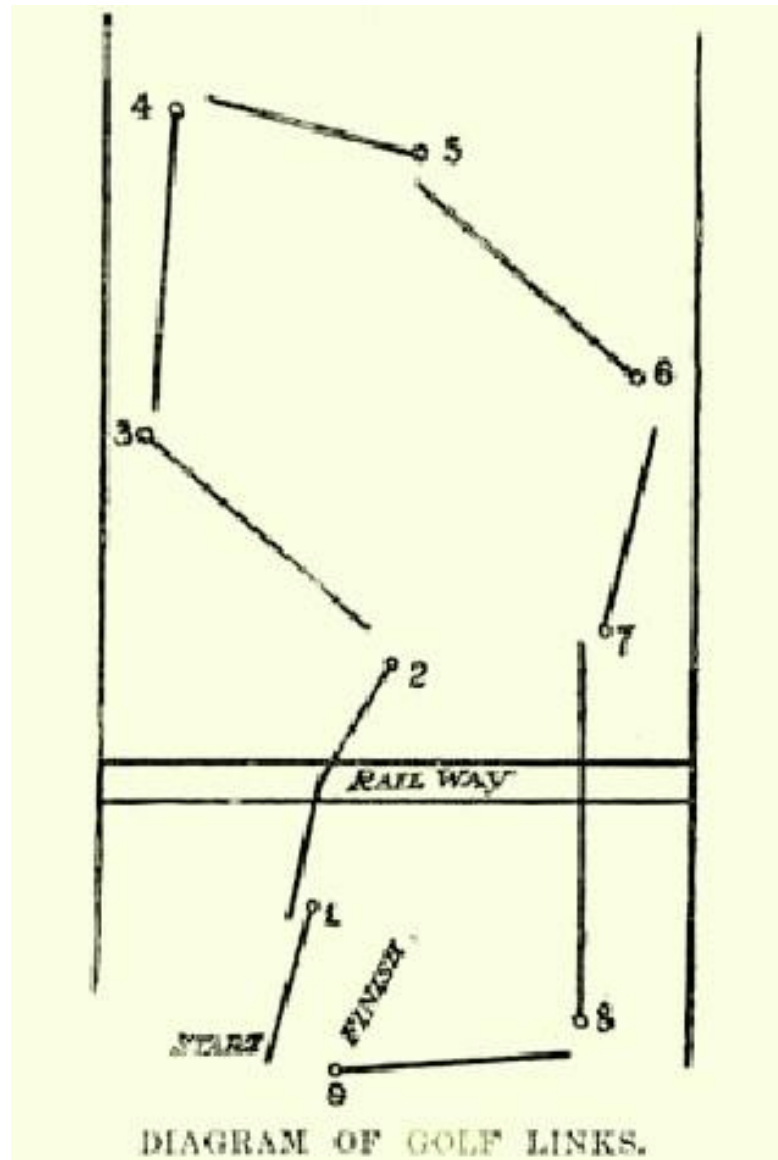


Figure 10 "Diagram of Golf Links." E.N. Lamont, "The Royal Game of Golf," Harper's Weekly Magazine, vol 35 no 1812 (12 September 1891), p. 695.

Harper's Weekly Magazine, vol 35 no 1812 (12 September 1891), p. 695).

Implicitly, by suggesting the typical length of a golf course is a "a mile to a mile and a half," Lamont refers to a nine-hole course, but the diagram of such the nine-hole course that he provides is not in accord with his theoretical recommendation of holes cut in the ground "from 100 to 150 yards" apart. For instance, we can see that the longest hole depicted on the map cannot be 150 yards and the shortest hole cannot be 100 yards, since the longest hole, the 8th, is about 2.3 times longer than the shortest hole, the 1st, which is implicitly 100 yards long.

Note that there is no indication in the article that Lamont's diagram (seen to the left) depicts an actual "Golf Links" -- whether at Cedarhurst, Southampton, or anywhere else.

Indeed, a reader of Lamont's article might well take this map to be a drawing of a fictional, generic nine-hole layout.

In his article, Lamont wrote nothing about existing golf courses on Long Island, merely generalizing instead about how one might theoretically go about designing a course: "In laying out a golf course, all that is required is the punching at intervals of from 100 to 150 yards of small holes about 4 inches in diameter. The course may extend from a mile to a mile and a half" (E.N. Lamont, "The Royal Game of Golf,"

An important piece of information was lost in the editing process, I think, and that was the fact that the “Golf Links” depicted in the diagram represent a fairly accurate map of a very particular golf links that Lamont had visited: Davis’s original nine-hole layout at Shinnecock Hills – the one Davis played with the *New York Herald* reporter.

The top of Lamont’s map is north and the “RAIL WAY” drawn on the map is the Long Island Railway. Orienting Davis’s map so that it appears on the same axis as Lamont’s map enables an illuminating side-by-side comparison.

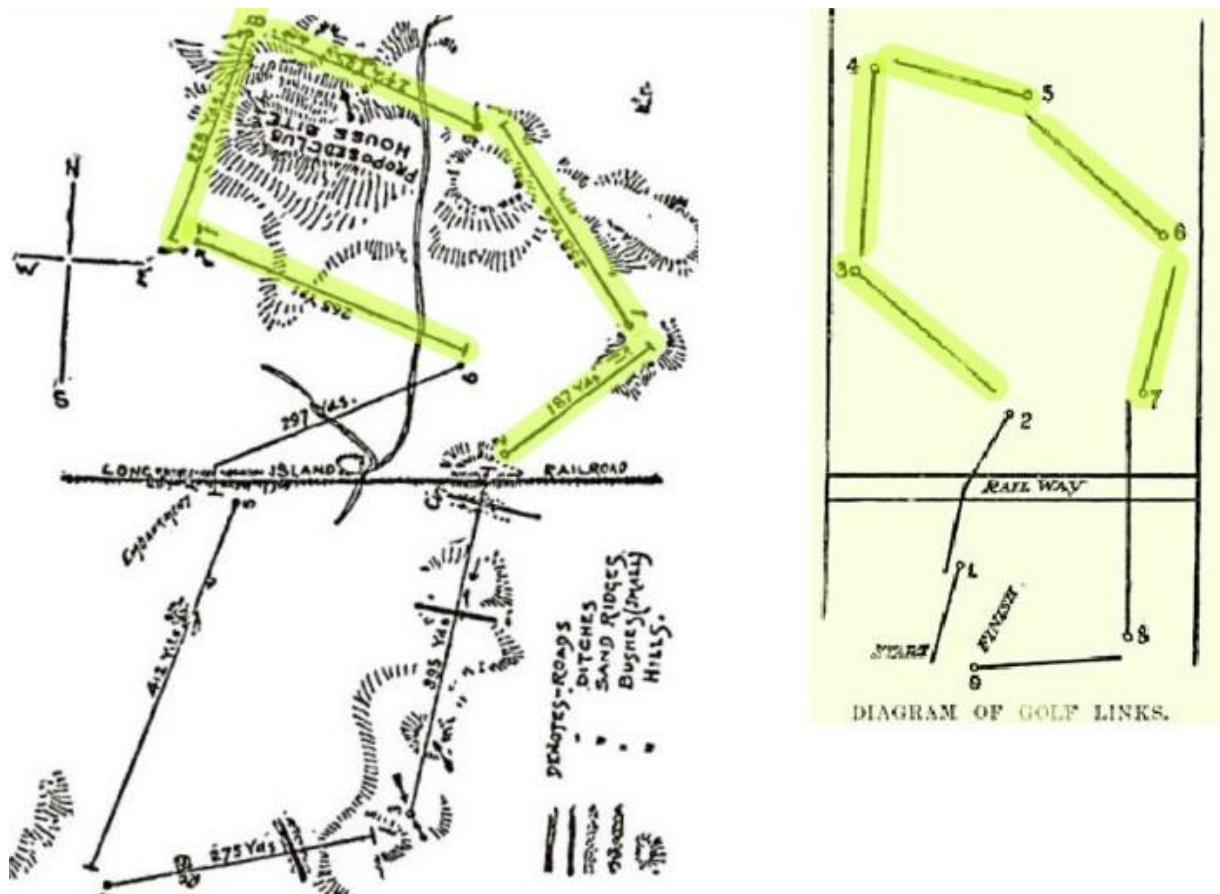


Figure 11 Left: Davis map of the Shinnecock Hills golf ground. *New York Herald*, 30 August 1891. Right: “Diagram of Golf Links.” E.N. Lamont, “The Royal Game of Golf,” *Harper’s Weekly Magazine*, vol 35 no 1812 (12 September 1891), p. 695.

Comparison of the two maps suggests that at an early stage in his work, Davis settled on the final form of his five holes north of the railroad: that is, we can see that the five holes north of the tracks that he and the reporter played at the beginning of August are the same five holes north of the tracks depicted on Davis’s map.

But the holes south of the railroad are a different story.

Davis's original 8th hole was made much longer when it became his 3rd hole.

The orientation of his original 9th hole was duplicated by the orientation of what became his 4th hole, but the latter hole was moved significantly further south because of the lengthening of the preceding hole.

The 2nd hole that Davis and the reporter played at the beginning of August would be eliminated. Its green north of the railroad probably served as the green for a new hole running west to east as the 6th.

The original 1st hole would become the 5th: it would be tripled in length (consuming the beginning of the fairway for the original 2nd hole).

Now, with the discovery of Lamont's map of the original course, we can understand the reporter's description of the course that she played.

The "Start" of the golf course marked on Lamont's map corresponds to what she describes as "the brow of a low hill just below the well-known windmill": "The first of the teeing grounds at Shinnecock ... is at the foot of a gentle slope below the Windmill Cottage" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

And the "Finish" of the course was nearby. From the brow of the low hill in question, Davis pointed to the 9th green: "'This,' said he, '... is a putting green. We golfers hold it sacred as a sanctuary'" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891). This was "a round green clearing twenty-five or thirty feet in diameter" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

This course seems already to have been in play when the reporter visited Shinnecock Hills, for Davis had chalked out tee boxes: "Now look," [Davis] added, "... here, a few yards from the putting green, is the 'teeing' ground from which you drive the ball when you begin the game. You will observe it is bounded by these chalk lines, beyond which it is not allowed to step when you make your drive" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891).

One presumes that just as Davis and the reporter had made their way to the course by travelling to Windmill Cottage, thence descending to the tee below, so the first players at Shinnecock Hills had done the same. With no clubhouse, and with no road yet built to access the future clubhouse site, the way onto the course was where Davis originally located the first tee.

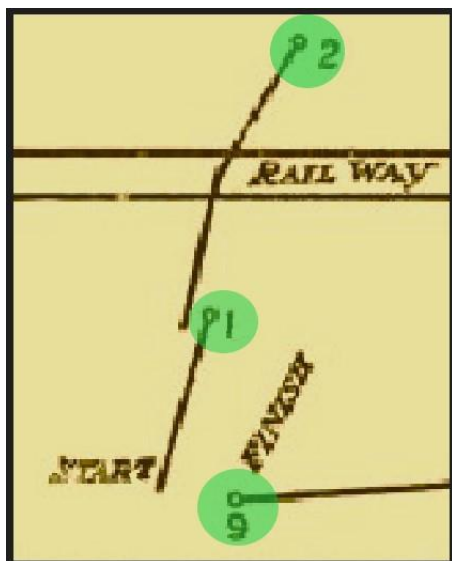


Figure 12 Enlarged detail from the Lamont map above.

The newspaper reporter's description of playing the second hole suddenly makes sense, for Davis's original 2nd hole played from south to north over the railroad (as shown to the left):

The first of the teeing grounds at Shinnecock, one of the loftiest points of the links, is at the foot of a gentle slope below the Windmill Cottage.

Thence to the first putting green, the way is clear.

But between the first and second holes there stands the railroad, with a hillock beyond, to surmount which with one stroke of the lofting iron is, so Mr. Davis says, no mean feat.

(New York Herald, 30 August 1891)

The reporter does not describe the 3rd hole in detail, indicating only that when she reached the putting green, it became the site of a vexing four-putt.

And then she describes the approach to the proposed clubhouse site via what were at the beginning of August the 3rd, 4th, and 5th holes (the holes that were numbered 7, 8, and 9 on Davis's map at the end of August):

UPS AND DOWNS



Figure 13 1894 photo looking north over the flag on Davis's 6th green (originally his 2nd green at the beginning of August); we see the descent of the land into a valley beyond it and the curve around the hillside towards the clubhouse site on the knoll the reporter mentioned in 1891. The Illustrated American, vol 16 no 227 (25 August 1894), p. 229.

From the second hole, the links descend to the third and fourth, after which they sweep up in an irregular curve, passing over hillocks, bushes, and sand, till hole five is reached, on a knoll upon which it is proposed to build a small club house....

From the fifth to the sixth, seventh and eighth holes, the "green" [i.e. the golf course] curves again, passing over sandy and undulating ground till at last it brings you back to your starting point – the teeing ground near Windmill Cottage.

(New York Herald, 30 August 1891).

Today, Windmill Cottage still exists (it can be seen below), but there are no more golf holes south of the railroad.



Figure 14 Windmill cottage as it appears today.

The Ladies Course

The *New York Herald* reporter indicates that the day she was at Shinnecock Hills, the ladies' course had already been completed: "the ladies' links ... are traced out and **ready for business**" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891, emphasis added).

Since the ladies' course was completed even before the reporter played Davis's original main layout, and since Davis had time after their round together for substantial redesign of four of his original holes, we know that Davis completed the ladies' course well before completing the main course shown on his map.

The reporter says that the ladies' course was "beyond the railroad" (*New York Herald*, 30 August 1891). I presume that her point of reference was the "Start" of the course marked on Lamont's map (where she and Davis commenced play) and that her phrase "beyond the railroad" therefore indicates that the ladies' course was north of the railroad.

In those days, a shorter and easier course was provided for women as an accommodation of their supposedly having a more "delicate" nature than men, and so, for the same reason, the ladies' course had to begin and end near the clubhouse: ladies could not be expected to trek all the way across the main course simply to begin play on their own course. Since the "Proposed Club House Site" was at the north end of the property, it certainly makes sense that Davis would have laid out the ladies' course north of the railroad.

But how far north?

A ladies' course (which would come to be known as the "Red Course") was marked on maps of the Shinnecock Hills courses beginning in 1893. The nine-hole ladies' course marked on the 1893 map, mind you, was not just north of the railroad, but almost entirely north of the main course (which had by 1893 come to be called the "White Course").

Davis does not mark his ladies' course on his 1891 map.

I do not know whether his 1891 ladies' course is the one that we find marked on maps as of 1893.

Artificial Bunkers on the Final 1891 Layout

We can see from Davis's map of the final version of his 1891 course that his development of new holes south of the railroad took considerable time and energy. Perhaps this is why he left their final development to the end of his stay.

As we know from comparing the Lamont map of the original Shinnecock nine-hole layout with Davis's own map of the final layout, Davis not only renumbered the holes but also changed four holes substantially: his original 8th hole became the much longer 3rd hole. The 9th hole was replaced by a longer 4th hole with the same east to west orientation. The 2nd hole was eliminated, its green becoming the green for a new 6th hole running from west to east. The 1st hole would be tripled in length and become the 5th.

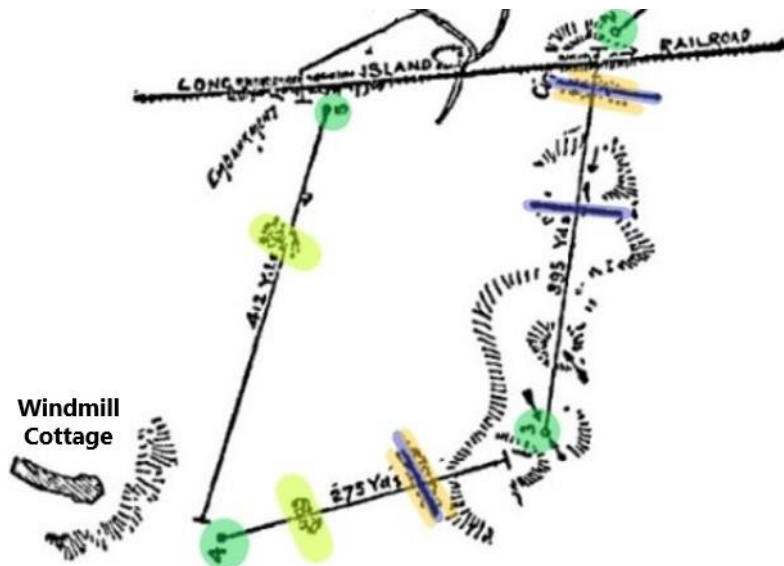


Figure 15 Davis map detail. *New York Herald*, 30 August 1891.

These four holes became the longest on the course, the two longest among these four being laid out south of the railroad. Clearly, however, Davis determined that length alone did not make his long holes sufficiently challenging, so he created artificial hazards to make them more difficult – the

3rd, 4th, and 5th holes of his final layout being the only ones to which he added artificial hazards.



Figure 16 Key from Davis's map. *New York Herald*, 30 August 1891.

Davis not only marked each of these hazards on his map but also provided a key to the map (seen to the left) to explain the nature of each hazard.

Presumably attempting to duplicate (respectively) the ditch, cop (i.e. turf bank) and rush hazards on the only proper links golf course he had ever known, the

Hoylake course of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, Davis added fairway-wide cross bunkers to these three new holes – cross bunkers comprising “DITCHES,” “SAND RIDGES” (ridges of sand seem to have been raised on each side of a ditch), and “BUSHES (SMALL).”

The fact that Davis took care to show and explain these artificial creations on his map may indicate that he was proud of them.

Not too proud, one hopes, for they were all gone by the next summer.

The 12-Hole Course

A new 12-hole course was opened in the spring or early summer of 1892 – perhaps at the same time the new clubhouse was officially opened, July 2nd.



Figure 17 William Merritt Chase, "The Chase Homestead, Shinnecock," circa 1893. San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, California.

In July of 1892, a reporter for the *Providence Journal* visited the Shinnecock Hills area to describe the Shinnecock Hills Summer School of Art (run by William M. Chase, whose painting of his family home at Shinnecock Hills is seen to the left).

Observing the “summer girl students on the Shinnecock Hills” (where they were wont to paint what the reporter called “Godforsaken hillocks of sand”), the reporter also visited the new golf clubhouse and observed the golf course:

Now the Shinnecock Hills are ultra fashionable.

That’s where our elite play the ancient and r-r-r-oyal Scotch game of golf, don’t you know

A party of New Yorkers were speeding along over one of the loose sand roads of the Shinnecock Hills on the way to see the brau and thochtful game that the late James of bonny memory lo’ed sae well [but] golf was not going on at the time.

The stations or holes marked by little tin banners were seen all about the golf club houses.

They numbered twelve and were strung along an irregular up hill and down dale course of about two miles.

Properly, there should be eighteen holes, and the course may be five miles around.

The red coats and white trousers of the players hung in the lockers, and the queer clubs – for all the world like sets of exaggerated dental instruments – were seen by the score.

It was a pity to have missed the sight of the players at work in pairs, each with his box, carrying an outfit of different clubs, walking along together and trying to get to the last hole with the least number of strokes.

(Portland Journal, 31 July 1892).

The person who laid out this 12-hole course by the summer of 1892 is likely to have been the golf professional who arrived at the Club in May of 1892 and spent the next 20 weeks as the resident professional.

Advertising for a Professional

The Shinnecock Hills Golf Club seems to have been intent on hiring a golf professional from the moment Davis left.

Upon his return to Montreal from Southampton, Davis seems to have discussed what he had done for the gentlemen and ladies of Long island with the secretary of Royal Montreal Golf Club, J. Hutton Balfour, for, at the end of October 1891, the latter wrote about what he had learned of the goings-on at Shinnecock Hills to A.J. Robertson, the editor of *Golf* (London), with whom he had long corresponded:



Figure 18 J. Hutton
Balfour, circa 1886.

Several gentlemen in Long island, New York, [requested] that we would permit our professional to go there for a month to lay out a green and instruct them;

this we gladly did, and a good eighteen holes have been laid out, and there is a fair promise of good players;

this club should be a success, there are so many Scotchmen in New York.

I understand they are now advertising for a professional.

(Golf, vol 3 no 61 [13 November 1891], p. 140)

I presume that Davis was the one who informed Balfour that he had laid out “a good eighteen holes” at Southampton, that he had found some good players there, and that the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club planned to hire a professional.

I suspect that the subject of hiring a professional arose because the Long Island gentlemen made an offer to Davis, himself.

But since no advertisements by the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in the fall of 1891 have yet been discovered (so far as I know), it may be that what Davis reported to Balfour was not that “they are now advertising for a professional” but rather that the Club had decided to advertise for a professional for the 1892 season. After all, if the Club planned to offer a golf professional a five- or six-month contract (as was the practice in Montreal, and as would be the practice at the Newport Golf Club when it hired Davis in the spring of 1893), the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club would have been premature to have advertised for a golf professional in the fall of 1891.

By the spring of 1892, however, the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club was indeed advertising for a golf professional and doing so in the game's authoritative weekly newspaper, *Golf* (London).

With *Golf* charging three shillings and sixpence per four lines of advertising text, it is interesting to note that of the three golf clubs advertising for golf professionals in March of 1892, one club used four lines of text, another club used six, but Shinnecock splurged for thirteen (no doubt confirming for many British golf professionals their preexisting belief that Americans were rich!).

See below.

THE SHINNECOCK HILLS GOLF CLUB, near New York, desires to engage a Professional for the coming summer. He must be sober, of good address, as he will have to instruct ladies as well as men, a good teacher and player, and a good club-maker. The club will make an engagement for twenty weeks beginning June 1st, at two pounds per week, and will also pay for a second-cabin ticket to and from America. The professional will be expected to superintend the green. He will receive, besides the profit on clubs, a price per hour for giving lessons. — Address, with full particulars and references, SAMUEL L. PARRISH, ESQ., 44, Broadway, New York, U. S. America.

Figure 19 Golf (London), vol 4 no 79 [18 March 1892], p. 15.

The Club's strategy of being loud and proud in its advertisement seems to have worked. It certainly drew a good deal of attention.

In Scotland, the *Scottish Referee* (a Scottish newspaper devoted only to sports) offered further free advertising for the Club when it decided that the advertisement was newsworthy in its own right:

Golf is beginning to boom along in America.

The Shinnecock Hills Golf Club advertises for a professional for twenty weeks, his services at £2 a week, travelling expenses paid, etc., etc.

(Scottish Referee [Glasgow, Scotland], 28 March 1892, p. 4)

In one of his columns in *Golf* (London), editor Robertson also decided that the first such advertisement from the United States deserved discussion as a news item:

We should like to call attention of professional golfers to the advertisement in another column offering a splendid engagement to a capable man as green-keeper to the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, New York, United States.

It is a great opportunity and shows how the game is spreading all over the world.

(Golf, vol 4 no 79 [18 March 1892], p. 4)

And so, the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club got a good bang for its ostentatious spending of shillings: we can be confident that the advertisement will have attracted many applications.

After all, when the first person to come to North America to work as a golf professional, Willie Davis, was hired by the Montreal Golf Club in 1881, the Club's advertisement in various British newspapers (the newspaper *Golf* did not appear until 1890) – an advertisement containing very similar employment terms – attracted 14 applicants.

One can be certain, then, that the successful Shinnecock applicant had recommendations that made him stand out from a large pool of candidates.

And one of those recommendations, it turns out, came from Old Tom Morris.

John Cuthbert

As we learn from an American newspaper report in the summer of 1892, the successful candidate for the Shinnecock Hills job was a 19 year-old clubmaker from St. Andrews, Fife, Scotland:

At Southampton, a fashionable summer resort on the South Shore of Long Island the Southampton Club has eighty acres in the midst of which a clubhouse has been erected.

About this house, over the hills and down the plain, has been laid out the golf ground, which is defined by little posts, marking a line or "round" some three miles in extent. At the foot of each post is a hole....

The groups of players, in their many-colored costumes, scattered over the green, form an animated picture, and one can easily conceive why the game has won such favor with Englishmen and Scotchmen.

The Southampton Club has brought over from St. Andrews, Scotland, where is the greatest golf club in the world, an expert player, John Cuthbert, to teach its members the art.

(Portland Daily Press [Portland, Maine, United States], 22 July 1892, p. 2)

Born 19 August 1892, John Cuthbert lived in St. Andrews on North Street with his mother and father – the latter working as a joiner.



Figure 20 North Street, Fife, St. Andrews, early 1870s.

Many of the young working-class children in Cuthbert's neighbourhood first learned to swing a golf club by playing a makeshift game of golf on North Street.

The ones with an aptitude for the game often became caddies and thereby gained access to the Old Course. The

best of them would be offered apprenticeships as clubmakers and ball makers by one of the town's golf professionals.

By his mid-teens, young John Cuthbert had become apprenticed as a club maker and ball maker to the grandest golf professional of all: Old Tom Morris. And by his late teens, Cuthbert was competing at St. Andrews in artisan tournaments conducted by the town's dozens of club makers and ball makers.



Figure 21 John Cuthbert, circa mid-1890s.

At the age of 18, Cuthbert also began to play in professional tournaments at St. Andrews.

His regular opponents were such formidable well-established local professionals as Hugh and Andrew Kirkcaldy, Alex Herd, 1885 Open Champion Bob Martin, four-time Open Champion Old Tom Morris, and so on.

One of his most regular opponents in those days was Willie Auchterlonie. The same age as Cuthbert, young Willie would just three years later win the 1893 Open Championship.

Cuthbert would be no Auchterlonie, but he showed great potential as a golfer. In a prestigious professional tournament held on the Old Course in October of 1890, he finished in 7th place.



Figure 22 Old Tom Morris with his clubmakers and apprentices in 1888. It is not clear which of the ones without facial hair is 16-year-old John Cuthbert.

The field comprised 22 golfers, including Old Tom Morris.

John Cuthbert, then 18 years old, and Old Tom, then 69 years old, were each accorded a handicap of 6.

But it was later observed that Cuthbert was of too nervous a disposition to win the big matches and the big

tournaments that golfers with no more talent won:

On his own course, Cuthbert is undoubtedly a fine golfer, though away from home, he hardly shows the same skill.

The reason for this is, perhaps, to be found in the fact that, like many other capable and brilliant golfers, he does not possess that iron nerve and complete indifference to surroundings which is so marked a characteristic of our front rank players.

(The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, 22 February 1902, p. 942)



Figure 23 R.B. Wilson (1868-1947).

Cuthbert's 7th place finish in the St. Andrews tournament of 1890 was one place ahead of Robert Black ("Buff") Wilson, who would follow Cuthbert's path to Shinnecock Hills in 1896 (succeeding Willie Dunn, and replacing Willie Park, Jr, who had reneged on his promise to serve as Shinnecock's golf professional for the 1896 season). Wilson would prepare the Shinnecock course for the 1896 U.S. Open.

Just six months before coming to Shinnecock Hills, Cuthbert competed in his first Open Championship. Playing over the Old Course at St. Andrews in the fall of 1891, 19-year-old Cuthbert went out in the 4th group in a drenching rain, former and future champions all around him.

He finished tied 54th.

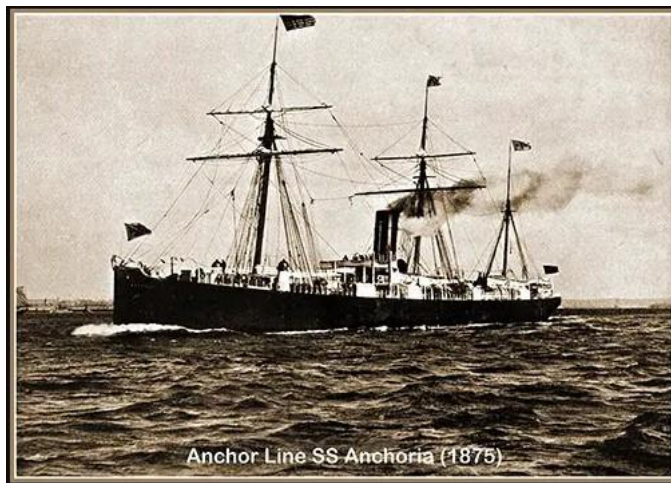


Figure 24 Postcard commemorating the maiden voyage in 1875 of the S.S. Anchoria of the Anchor Line. The ship primarily carried passengers back and forth between Glasgow and New York.

On 28 April 1892, a 20-year-old person named John Cuthbert board the S.S. Anchoria at Glasgow and travelled by "2nd Cabin" fare to New York City, arriving on May 9th.

Although he is recorded on the ship's passenger manifest as a "clerk", this John Cuthbert seems to be our man.

Why is his profession not recorded as "golf professional" or "golf club maker"?

Perhaps the keeper of the transatlantic passenger ship's manifest was not familiar with such jobs. Cuthbert was just the second golf

professional ever to have sailed to North America with a contract in hand to work for a golf club as its resident professional. When the first of them, Willie Davis, sailed from Liverpool to Montreal in April of 1881, he was recorded on the passenger list as a “mechanic.” And so, regardless of whatever terms Cuthbert used to describe his exotic job to the keeper of the Anchoria’s manifest, the latter may simply have decided that the word “clerk” would suffice to describe a person who worked in some sort of shop.

But the more likely explanation is that Old Tom Morris told Cuthbert not to mention to anyone that he had a contract to work as a golf professional for the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club.

Old Tom's Advice

When John Cuthbert died in 1915, a St. Andrews resident who as a schoolboy had been present in Old Tom's shop when news arrived that Cuthbert had been awarded the Shinnecock job, wrote to *Canadian Golfer* magazine to tell about the events of those days:

The death of a certain John Cuthbert in a town in England forces me to tell a little story which may interest the readers of the Canadian Golfer.

Johnny Cuthbert, as he was affectionately called, was brought up in a small house where a large hotel now stands. It is called the Marine Hotel It is interesting to note that the house stood on a piece of ground almost overlooking the last green of The Old Course of St. Andrews....

Johnny was apprenticed to the firm of Tom Morris; served his time faithfully and well; when one eventful day news came that a professional was wanted for a club near New York, U.S.A.

This was great news....



Figure 25 James Ogilvy Fairlie Morris (1856-1906), 1887.

The man to get the job was Johnny Cuthbert, and he left amid much anxious fears on the part of Old Tom and his son, Jamie, or as he was popularly known – “J.O.F.” [James Ogilvy Fairlie].

They were afraid he would give away the fact that he had been engaged from the American side and so get turned back.

The immigration laws then, as now, were very strict, and no one could go out to accept a position under a contract previously made.

It seems but yesterday as a boy from school I entered the shop and heard the worldly advice given by the son, mixed with much that was wise and kindly from the old man.

Johnny gripped hands all round, pulled himself together, and left for the station.

Soon came the news that he had safely arrived, orders [for clubs and balls] came in, and happiness reigned in the house of Morris.

The arrival of this golfing Columbus was unnoticed, even by the American press, and it is said that while on the way from the steamer, clubs in hand (as what true golfer would entrust such treasures to unappreciative strangers), he was taken for a new species of street entertainer....

Cuthbert, after one season, returned home.

He had missed the opportunity of a lifetime in view of the tremendous hold the game has since taken in the United States, but when one understands the necessity golfers are under of finding others to "talk golf to," he is entitled to be excused....

Today, as I write at the desk where were gathered round all the personages mentioned on that eventful evening many years ago, ... I take from the desk a photograph showing Old Tom surrounded by his staff. It looks more the picture of a father and his sons.

Johnny Cuthbert, the "Golfing Columbus," is in the centre as the youngest apprentice.

They look a happy crowd.

I place it reverently back in the drawer. I look seawards. The links are deserted. Nothing disturbs the winter stillness. The cry of the curlew is silent. It is good at such a moment to be alone.

(Canadian Golfer, vol 1 no 1 [May 1915], p. 23)

New Holes at Shinnecock Hills

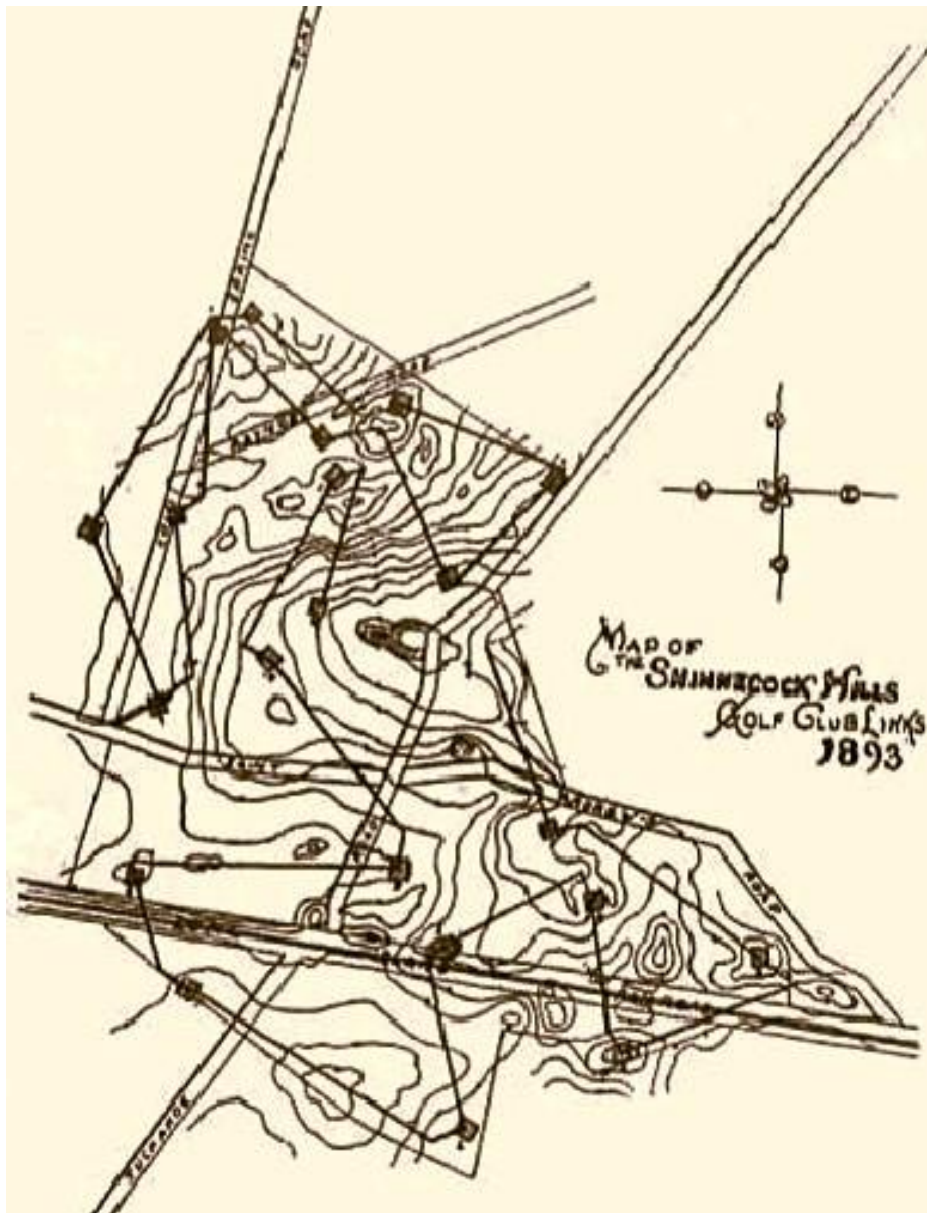


Figure 26 Map of the Shinnecock Hills golf courses, 1893. The closed 9-hole circuit of holes at the north end of the property (at the top of the map) is the ladies' course, which came to be called the "Red Course." The circuit of 12 holes beginning and ending at the clubhouse shows what came to be called the "White Course." The image of this map comes from David Moriarty, "The Origins of Golf in the Shinnecock Hills, A Confused History," Golf Club Atlas <https://www.golfclubatlas.com/forum/index.php?topic=46842.0>

According to the Club's advertisement: "The professional will be expected to superintend the green." There was no mention of laying out new golf holes.

But during his twenty weeks at the Club, Cuthbert seems not only to have added three holes to the original golf course, but also to have replaced several of Davis's holes.

We can be confident that the 1893 map of the course shown to the left depicts Cuthbert's 1892

routing of 12 holes (and not work done by Willie Dunn in 1893) because a July 1893

report in the *New York Times* suggests that Willie Dunn did not interfere with the routing of the 12-hole course that he encountered that spring: "The twelve-hole course has been lengthened this year William Dunn, the champion golf player of Scotland, is the green keeper and

teacher of the game this season” (*New York Times*, 9 July 1893, p. 13). In other words, the 12-hole course existed before Dunn’s arrival. Dunn lengthened at least some of the holes on it.

The illustration below compares the nine-hole Davis layout of 1891 and the 12-hole layout as depicted on the 1893 map of the course.

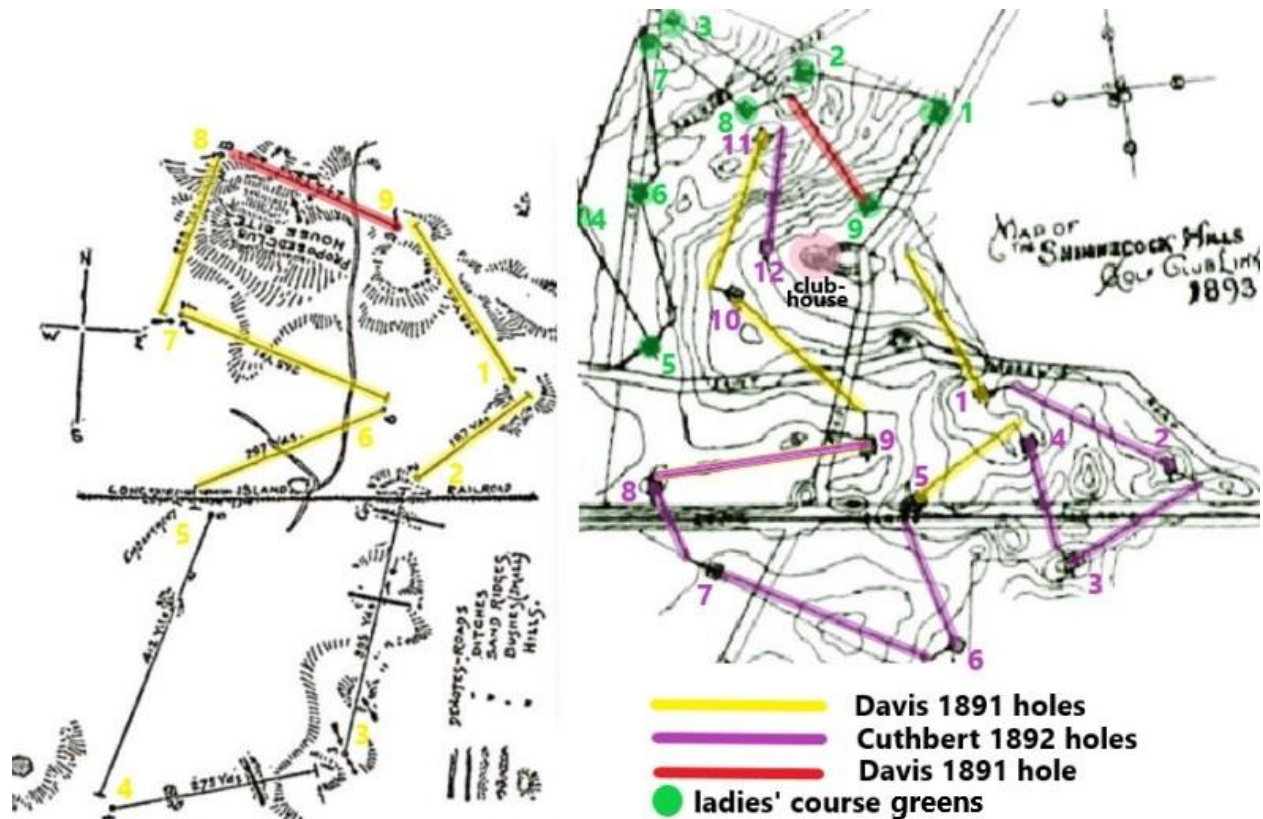


Figure 27 Left: Davis map (annotated), *New York Herald*, 30 August 1891. Right: “Map of the Shinnecock Hills Golf Links 1893,” as reproduced by David Moriarty, *The Origins of Golf in the Shinnecock Hills, A Confused History*, *Golf Club Atlas* <https://www.golfclubatlas.com/forum/index.php?topic=46842.0>

We can see from the 1893 map that Cuthbert had to make do with a slightly shortened version of Davis’s first hole because the original teeing ground was displaced by a new road (Tuckahoe) that had been built across the golf course.

Cuthbert apparently also retained Davis’s 2nd, 7th, and 8th holes just as they had been laid out by Davis (they became Cuthbert’s 5th, 10th and 11th).

Cuthbert seems to have slightly moved the tee box for Davis’s 6th hole to make way for a new green for Cuthbert’s 8th hole, but Cuthbert’s 9th hole otherwise seems to have remained essentially Davis’s 6th hole.

Cuthbert created three new holes between Davis's 1st and 2nd holes (they became the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th holes), and he created a new final hole, the 12th – whose green was laid out immediately below the new clubhouse (see the sketch below).



Figure 28 A sketch of play on what I take to be Cuthbert's new 12th green in front of the new clubhouse. Harper's Weekly Magazine, 27 August 1892, p. 832.

Davis had not known precisely where the clubhouse would be built (marking on his map a very large area as "Probable Club House Site"), and so he simply brought his nine-hole circuit to a close with a 9th green near his 1st tee.

As it happens, when the clubhouse was completed, the original 9th green was thereby located behind the

clubhouse, so Cuthbert's motivation in designing a new final hole may simply have been to bring play to a conclusion on a green within view of members watching from the veranda and steps of the clubhouse.

A New Ladies' Course?

It is not clear when the ladies' course depicted on the 1893 map was laid out.

Perhaps it was Davis's ladies' course from 1891, which had simply never been shown on a map before. Called the "Red Course," the ladies' course on the 1893 map comprised nine holes and was, as Davis's ladies' course was said to be, "just about a mile in circuit" (*New York Times*, 8 March 1896, p. 26).

Or perhaps the ladies' course shown on the 1893 map was a new one, laid out sometime after the 12-hole course was brought into play in 1892.

Note that the *Providence Journal* reporter found it easy to see and count all 12 hole markers on the main course at Shinnecock Hills in July of 1892. He mentions no such markers on a ladies' course. Yet several holes of the ladies' course marked on the 1893 map paralleled holes on the main course, and, more importantly, a number of the greens of the ladies' course were so close to greens on the main course that hole markers on several greens of the ladies' course should have been easily visible to the reporter who noticed the hole markers on the main course.

In 1892, did the reporter ignore the hole markers he saw on the ladies' course in 1892, or did he see no such hole markers in 1892 because they were not yet there?

Whenever the ladies' course shown on the 1893 map was originally laid out, side-by-side comparison of Davis's 1891 course map and the 1893 course map (as shown above in Figure 27) suggests that Davis's 9th hole from his 1891 main course may have become part the 9th hole of the ladies' course as of 1892 or 1893.

Marked red in their side-by-side depiction in figure 27, the two holes may have different tees: the fairway of the final hole on the ladies' course shown on the 1893 map might have started from a tee a little bit further north of Davis's original 9th tee. But Davis's 9th green certainly appears to have become the 9th green of the ladies' course shown on the 1893 map.

12 Flat and Level Greens

In the spring of 1895, Willie Dunn added six new holes at Shinnecock Hills. He appended them to the existing 12-hole course, adding six holes between Cuthbert's 8th green and his 9th tee.

They appear on the left side of the map below: holes 9, 10, and 11 running west in a straight line to "High Hill 'Ben Nevis'"; holes 12, 13, 14 coming back east to a new tee for the old Cuthbert 9th hole, which had emerged from the old Davis 6th hole (which had made use of the original Davis 2nd green).

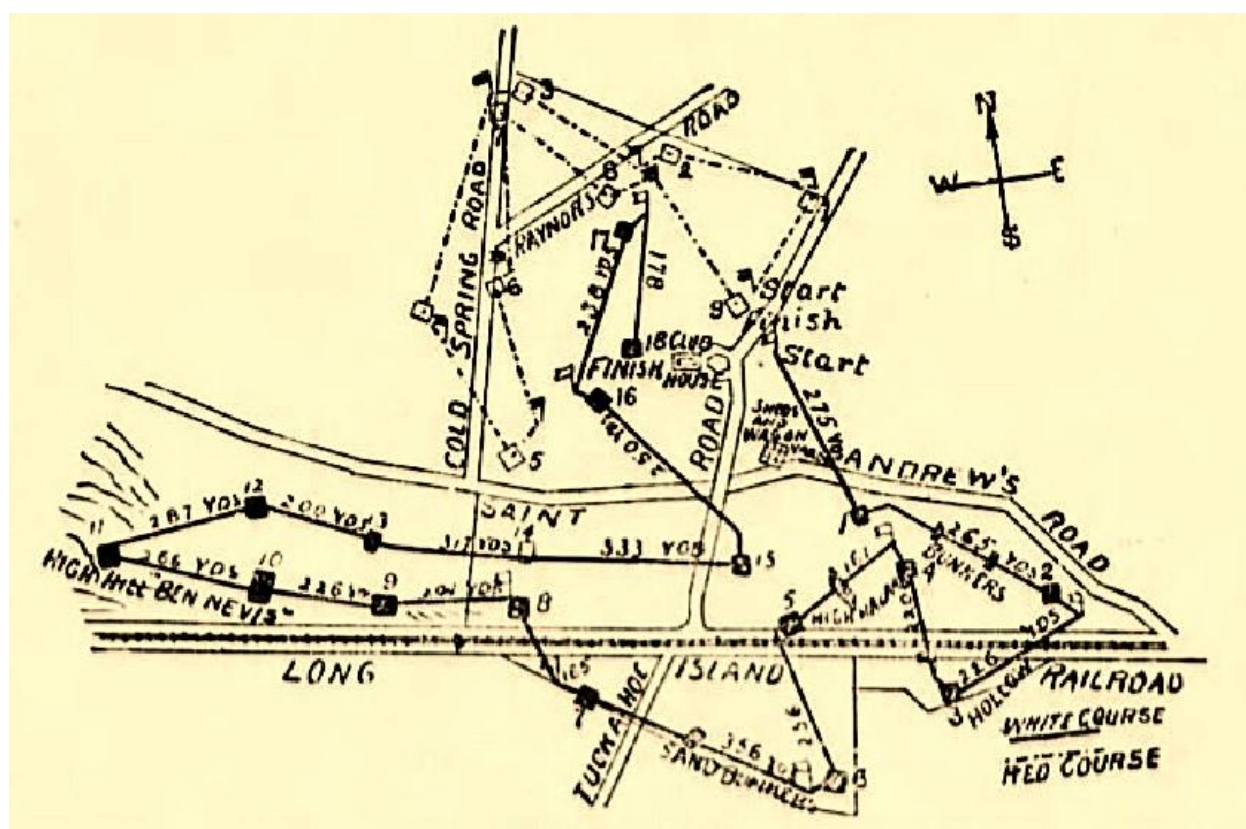


Figure 29 *Sun* (New York), 16 June 1895, p. 16.

Willie Dunn made a few changes to the 12-hole course but he seems to have left the original 12 greens untouched.

Six "new holes" having been added by Dunn in 1895, the greens of "the original twelve holes" were those designed by Davis and Cuthbert. Of the 18 greens that would be played by US Open competitors in 1896, New York *Sun* golf writer H.L. Fitzpatrick observed the following: "The putting greens are perfectly flat on the original twelve holes, but on the new holes, while smooth,

the greens have not been artificially levelled” (*New York Sun*, 14 July 1896, p. 5). Implicitly, Cuthbert followed Davis’s method of green construction, for the twelve original greens, comprising five built by Davis in 1891 and seven built by Cuthbert in 1892, were technically indistinguishable – all being “flat” and “artificially levelled.”

The greens on Dunn’s six new holes, however, were built according to a different architectural philosophy: Dunn built his six greens on the contour of the land as he found it. His 1898 greens at the Elmira Country Club (Elmira, New York) would exemplify the philosophy he had demonstrated at Shinnecock Hills:

The putting greens have been carefully constructed so as to conform to the natural undulations of the ground and are smooth, though not level like a billiard table.

Each green is slightly different from every other, so that putting requires judgement and skill.

(*Golf [New York]*, vol 6 no 5 [March 1898], p. 195).



Figure 30 George Strath (1843-1919).

Whether golf professionals should artificially level their greens was a question regularly raised in the new world of American golf course design and construction in the 1890s, for many British golf professionals laying out golf courses in the United States in those days had been trained to find green sites formed by nature. For instance, when recently arrived Scottish golf professional George Strath laid out a course for the Dyker Meadow Golf Club in 1895, he pointedly celebrated the superiority of his green locations to those of other nearby New York golf courses on which greens had been artificially improved by levelling work:

Mr. Strath spoke in the highest terms of the natural location of the grounds and of their excellent facilities for the game.

“Why,” he said, “the putting greens are the only natural ones in the area.”

“In all the other places, it has been necessary to level off the green – and that is not living up to the strict rules of this field sport.”

(*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 15 December 1895, p. 21)

According to Strath’s conception of golf as a field sport, one played the ball as one found it, one played the course as one found it, and one laid out the course on the land as one found it.

From this point of view, for an architect to level a green site was almost to cheat.

And so, in those days, when a new course was reviewed in the newspapers and golf journals, the philosophy reflected in the construction of its greens often drew comment.



Figure 31 William Gilbert Van Tassel Sutphen (1861-1945), circa 1900.

For instance, when the new 18-hole layout for the St. Andrew's Golf Club in Yonkers opened in 1897, the editor of *Golf* (New York), William Gilbert Van Tassel Sutphen, drew attention to the fact that some of the putting greens were decidedly "artificial":

Quite a few of the greens have been artificially levelled and terraced up.

The old Scottish-bred player may be inclined to criticize this concession to New World ideas, but in nearly every case this method of construction was made imperative on account of the lay of the land.

(Harper's Weekly, vol 41 no 2131 [October 1897], p. 1066)

And as late as 1900, Sutphen was still drawing attention to the architecturally mixed nature of the Shinnecock greens: "The greens are not remarkable for their size, and some of the older ones show traces of artificial levelling. But they are all smooth and true" (*Golf*, vol 7 no 2 [August 1900], p. 111).

1893 Hazards

When Willie Dunn arrived at the Club in May of 1893, he found a 12-hole course in place. And it seems that he did not rebuild any of the perfectly flat, artificially levelled greens that he found on the original twelve holes. His changes to the course that year apparently comprised lengthening holes and adding hazards:

[At Shinnecock Hills,] The twelve-hole course has been lengthened this year, and several hazards put on the links.

William Dunn, the champion golf player of Scotland, is the green keeper and teacher of the game this season.

(New York Times, 9 July 1893, p. 13)

Since he does not seem to have rebuilt any of the original twelve greens, presumably he lengthened holes simply by moving teeing grounds back.

The artificial hazards marked on the 1895 map of the course are probably the hazards that Dunn added in 1893. Seen below are two “BUNKERS” added to Cuthbert’s 2nd hole, a hazard apparently called “HIGH HAZARD” added to Cuthbert’s 5th hole (Davis’s 2nd hole), and “SANDBUNKERS” added to Cuthbert’s 7th hole.

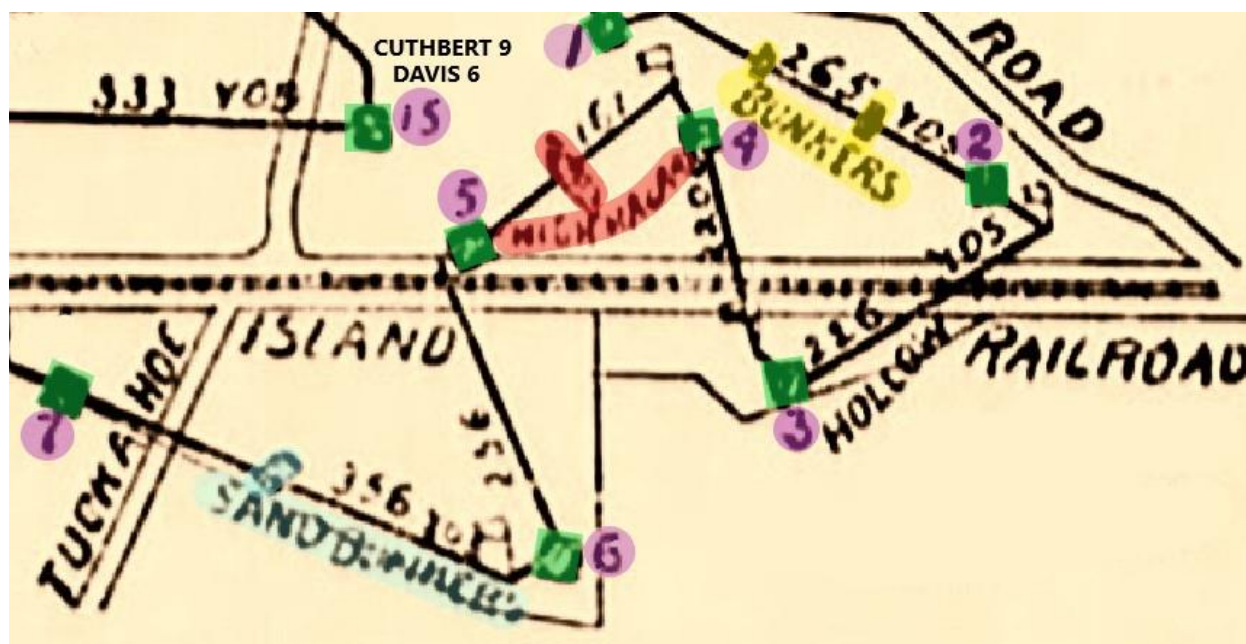


Figure 32 Detail from 1895 map annotated, Sun [New York], 16 June 1895, p. 16.

Seen below, the “High Hazard” was a distinct type of cross bunker called a “Bastion Bunker.”

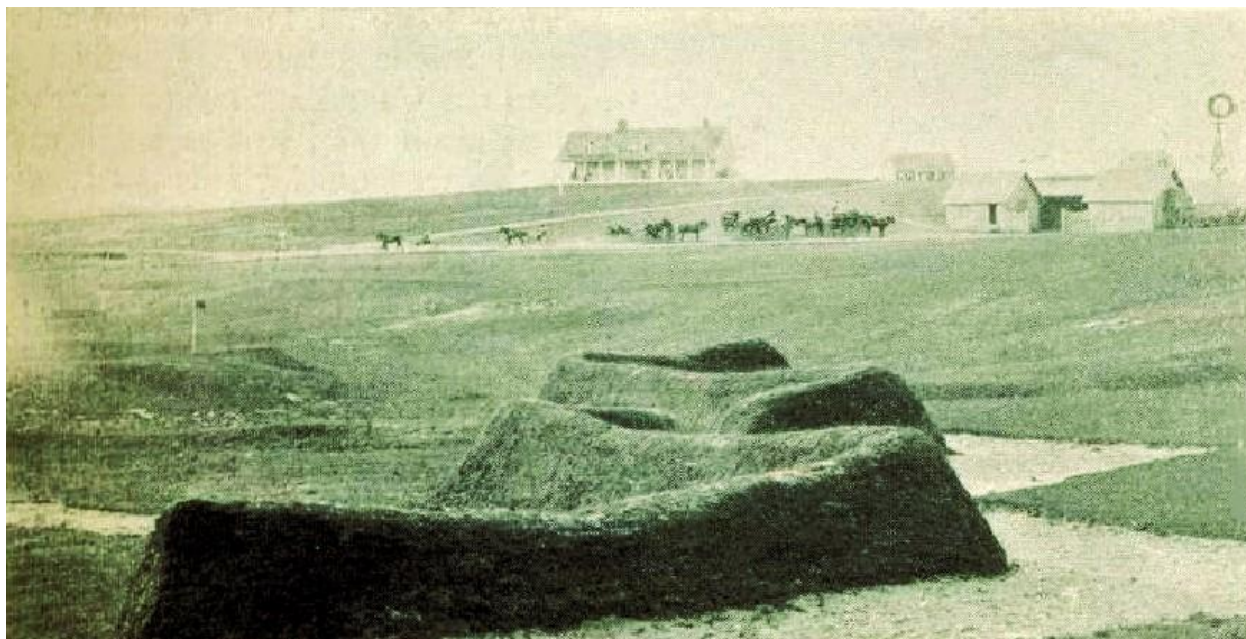


Figure 33 A summer 1894 photograph of Willie Dunn's 1893 "Bastion Bunker" – a "zigzag" cross bunker added to Willie Davis's 1891 2nd hole which had become John Cuthbert's 5th hole. *The Illustrated American*, vol 16 no 227 (25 August 1894), p. 229. On the left side of the photograph, in the middle-ground, a flag marks Davis's 1891 6th green (his original 2nd green), which became Cuthbert's 1892 9th green, which became Dunn's 1895 15th green (as indicated on the map above).

Bastion Bunker was a serpentine version of a bunker invented by Willie Dunn's older brother Tom Dunn when he laid out a private nine-hole course at Walton-on-Thames in London in 1890.



Figure 34 "A Typical Shinnecock Cop Bunker." *Official Golf Guide*, 1902 (New York: Grafton, 1902), p. 90.

Spanning the width of a fairway, oriented perpendicular to the line of play, a trench was dug by the Dunn brothers: it was about two feet deep and six or more feet wide, with the excavated turf used to build a steep-faced bank on the green side of the

trench, which was filled with sand (Willie's version of this kind of cross bunker is seen in the

photograph above called “A Typical Shinnecock Cop Bunker”). Willie Dunn seems to have introduced this standard form of his brother’s cop bunker on Cuthbert’s 2nd.

Tom Dunn’s conventional cop bunkers were often informally known in England as “rampart bunkers.” This implicitly military English nomenclature for what was otherwise called a cop bunker may have inspired Willie Dunn to call his more formidable version of this cross bunker a “Bastion.”

Dunn’s bastion bunker immediately proved popular. From 1894 onward, it was duplicated at other top American golf courses such as the Country Club at Brookline in 1894, the Newport Golf Club in 1895, the Morris County Golf Club in 1896, and so on.

The hazard called the “SANDBUNKER” that Dunn added on Cuthbert’s 7th hole, seen below, seems to have been a narrower version of the Dunn family’s standard fairway-wide cop bunker.



Figure 35 "Hell Bunker." Harper's Weekly Magazine, vol 38 no 1975 (26 October 1894), p. 1029. I take the road visible in the background of this photograph to be the recently built Tuckahoe Road.

By 1894, the fearsome Willie Dunn hazard seen above had come to be known at Shinnecock Hills as “Hell Bunker.”

Six New Holes

In the spring of 1895, Willie Dunn added just six holes to a 12-hole layout descending to him from John Cuthbert and Willie Davis, yet, as we know, after Parrish published his “Reminiscences” in 1923, Dunn would be regarded for the better part of a century as the original designer of the whole shebang at Shinnecock Hills.

Ironically, however, comparing the 1891 nine-hole layout, the 1892 12-hole layout, and the 1895 18-hole layout, as seen on the maps below, we find that the unacknowledged architect John Cuthbert contributed more holes to the first 18-hole course than either Willie Dunn or Willie Davis.

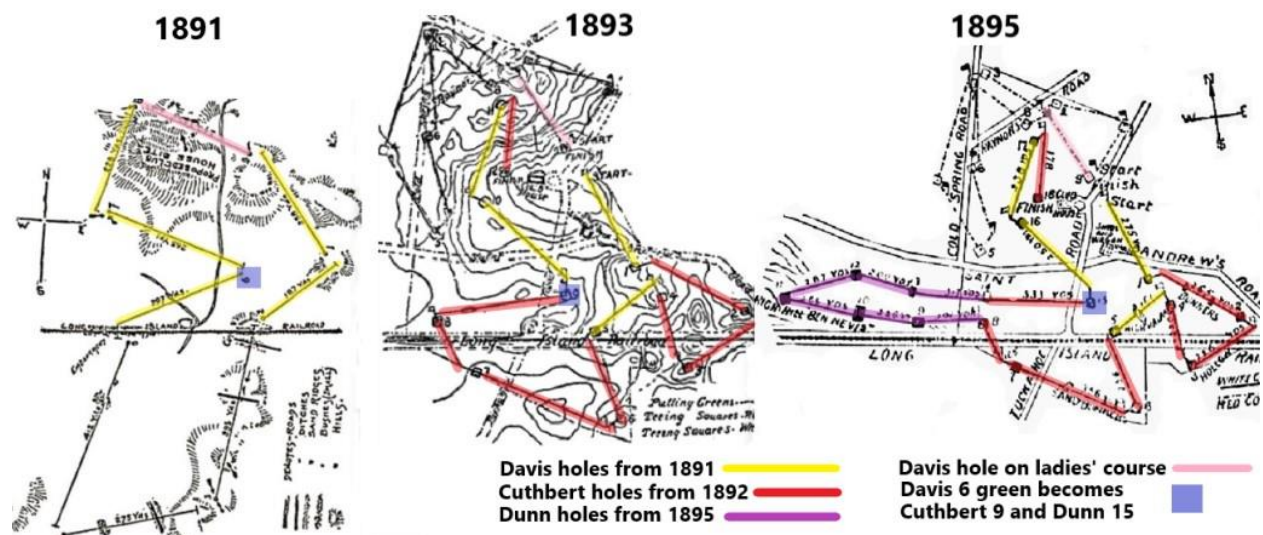


Figure 36 Left: Davis map of 1891 layout. Middle: 1893 map of Cuthbert route and greens, lengthened by Dunn. Right: six holes added by Dunn in 1895. Whether the 1895 15th hole should be regarded as designed by Cuthbert or Davis is not clear. Cuthbert moved the tee box north, but the fairway may not have been changed, and the putting green seems to have been Davis's. A decision in this matter affects the math presented in the paragraph below.

From studying the three maps above, we can see that on the 1895 layout, 4 holes and 5 greens descended from the Davis layout of 1891, 6 holes and 6 greens descended from the holes added in the spring of 1895 by Dunn, and 8 holes and 7 greens descended from Cuthbert's layout in 1892.

As we know, the 2nd U.S. Open (won by James Foulis) was held in 1896 on the 18-hole Shinnecock Hills layout completed by Dunn in 1895. If one were to describe the architectural development of the 1896 US Open course chronologically, one would describe it as a Davis-Cuthbert-Dunn co-design. But if one were to describe its development in terms of who was

responsible for the most holes, one would describe this co-design as a Cuthbert-Dunn-Davis layout.

Cuthbert rules!

Back to Britain

Virtually unacknowledged, and entirely unsung, John Cuthbert left Shinnecock Hills at the end of the 1892 golf season.



Figure 37 Clubhouse of the Stanmore Golf Club in the background; Tom Dunn cop bunker in the foreground.

Upon his return to Britain, his home base would not be St. Andrews, but rather the Stanmore Golf Club (in Hendon, London, England) where he looked after a golf course laid out by Tom Dunn in 1893.

Here, Cuthbert encountered for the first time examples of Tom Dunn's cop bunkers (seen in front of the Stanmore clubhouse in the photograph above) – the kind of cross hazards that Willie Dunn was adding contemporaneously to a number of Cuthbert's holes at Shinnecock Hills.

Throughout the 1890s, Cuthbert represented Stanmore regularly in professional tournaments, particularly in the London area.



Figure 38 John Cuthbert was among the 84 entrants in the Open Professional Tournament held at the Mid-Surrey Golf Club in April of 1899. Winner Harry Vardon is in the front row, 4th from left. Golf (London), vol 18 no 459 (28 April 1899), p. 180.

The field of competitors in such tournaments always included half a dozen or more of the day's stars, including Harry Vardon (see the photograph to the left).

But for one occasion, Cuthbert never finished higher than 12th in the dozen or so such tournaments in which he played. Yet he

seems to have been liked and respected by the other professionals. I note that he was invited to play individual matches with some of the more prominent among them, such as J.H. Taylor and James Braid, who would each win the Open Championship five times.

Cuthbert also continued to play in the Open Championship. He competed at Royal St. George's Golf Club at Sandwich in 1894 (his first round partner was superstar Douglas Rolland), he competed at St. Andrews in 1895, and he competed at Royal Liverpool Golf Club in 1897. At St. Andrews in 1895, his first-round partner was defending champion J.H. Taylor, who would win that tournament for his second Open Championship title in a row.



Figure 39 John Cuthbert drives from the 1st tee at the Stanmore Golf club, circa mid-1890s.

Cuthbert's greatest performance came one week before the 1894 Open, when he competed in a 36-man 36-hole invitational tournament held to mark the official opening of Stanmore. Cuthbert found himself the host professional of what was described by *Golf* (London) as "the largest professional competition that has ever taken place south of the [River] Tweed, outside the [Open]"

Championship meetings at Hoylake and Sandwich” (*Golf* [London], vol 8 no 198 [12 June 1894], p. 281).



Figure 40 Horace Rawlins, 1895.

The Club had invited all the top professionals who would be coming south to play a week later at the Open Championship at Royal St. George’s Golf club at Sandwich. 21-year-old Cuthbert was also faced with a young up-and-comer named Horace Rawlins (who would win the first U.S. Open the very next year):

A stripling who attracted a good deal of notice was young Rawlins of Raynes Park [Wimbledon].

He is but nineteen, but he has acquired a good style and plays boldly.

(*Golf* [London], vol 8 no 198 [12 June 1894], p. 282).

To everyone’s surprise, 21-year-old Johnny Cuthbert defeated them all.



Figure 41 James Henry Taylor, early 1890s.

The closest challenger was J.H. Taylor, who would win the first of his five Open Championships a week later. Then came, in order, Tom Vardon, James Braid, Alex Herd, Hugh Kirkcaldy, Andrew Kirkcaldy, and reigning Open champion Willie Auchterlonie.

Cuthbert was congratulated by *Golf* (London) editor Robertson:

We congratulate the Stanmore Club on the success of their tournament.

They showed great pluck in organising it on such a large scale and bringing such a capital selection of players to the skirts of the great metropolis to face an exhibition of the game.

The club ought to be proud of their local professional, Cuthbert, who secured first place and thus upheld the honour of the locality.

(*Golf* [London], vol 8 no 198 [12 June 1894], p. 285)

Winning the tournament’s £12 first prize (from a total purse of £50), and also adding an extra £1 for joint lowest

single-round score during the event, Cuthbert won the equivalent of 6.5 times his weekly wage at Shinnecock Hills two years before.

Over the next decade, Cuthbert managed the golf course well, played in professional tournaments, got married and started a family, but then his health declined.

He was just 30 years of age.

Doctors advised that he seek a better climate.

And so, at the end of 1902, he moved to New Zealand, with his wife Sarah Growsell (married in 1895) and daughters Maggie (born in 1895) and Clarise (born in 1896).

Royal Wellington Golf Club

Cuthbert did not set out for New Zealand before securing a job there: “Mr. J. Cuthbert, of Stanmore, England, has been appointed ... professional of the Wellington Golf Club” (*New Zealand Times* [Wellington, New Zealand], 27 December 1902, p. 5).

But he did not get his job at Royal Wellington without a fight, as noted by Garden G. Smith, the editor of *Golf Illustrated* (London):

J. Cuthbert, professional of Stanmore, has been appointed, out of 40 applicants, professional to the Wellington (New Zealand) Golf Club.

Cuthbert's health has not been of the best recently and he has been advised that a change of climate would be beneficial.

I congratulate Cuthbert on so soon getting the kind of position he wanted, and from what I know of him, I feel sure the Wellington Club will not regret their choice.

(Golf Illustrated [London], cited in The Taranaki Herald [Taranaki, New Zealand], 28 January 1903, p. 2)

Almost immediately upon his arrival in Wellington, Cuthbert's play began to earn the respect of both his new Club and the wider golfing community: “Cuthbert, the recently imported English professional, has gone around [“the Wellington golf links at Miramar”] in 74 and 76, which indicates that when he gets into form, he will be able to beat almost any player in the colonies” (*Bush Advocate*, 20 April 1903, p. 3).

Shortly after this, he defeated the Club's champion in “an interesting game ... followed by most of the Wellington players” (*The Press* [Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand], 2 June 1903, p. 6).

Still just 30 years old, Cuthbert remained “an exceptionally good player” despite his health problems (*New Zealand Times* [Wellington, New Zealand], 27 December 1902, p. 5).

With Royal Wellington as his home, and with both its permission and its blessing, Cuthbert would over the next four years make a number of significant contributions to the development of golf in New Zealand.

Exhibition Matches

In 1903, at the New Zealand Amateur Championship on the Wai-o-hiki links (Napier, Hawke's Bay), Cuthbert played 18-hole and 36-hole exhibition matches against Fred G. Hood (a member of the famous Hood family of Musselburgh, Scotland) who had arrived in New Zealand in 1902 as the first British golf professional hired as such:



Figure 42 Cuthbert playing Hood.
New Zealand Mail (Wellington, New Zealand), 16 September 1903, p. 39.

The Professionals

During the morning, Hood, the Auckland coach [i.e. golf professional], did a round in 80, and J. Cuthbert (Wellington) did the 18 holes in 78 – a record for the links.

In the afternoon, the first round of a 36-hole match was played between these two golfers.

Hood won in 83, Cuthbert being 3 behind.

The other round will be played tomorrow morning.

(The Wanganui Herald [Wanganui, New Zealand], 8 September 1903, p. 6)

The final 18 holes of this 36-hole exhibition match produced the closest contest yet:

The second half of the match between Hood and Cuthbert, the Auckland and Wellington professionals, was played today, Hood winning the round 79 to 80 and the match by 2 up and 1 to play.

Both players showed capital form, their driving being very accurate, while Hood's putting was exceptionally good.

(The Press (Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand), 9 September 1903, p. 7)

The crowd was thrilled by the way Cuthbert, down six holes after 22 played, fought his way back into the match.

And so, there was great anticipation at their home clubs when Cuthbert and Hood met again three years later:

A golf match was proceeding at the Cornwell Links today between Cuthbert, the Wellington Golf Club's professional coach, and Hood, who acts in a similar capacity for the Auckland Club.

The match is one of 72 holes [it was actually 36 holes], the first round ... being played in the morning, and the second after lunch.

Great interest is taken in the contest in golf circles in Auckland and Wellington.

When these two players met on the Hawke's Bay links some time back, victory rested with the Auckland after a fine game.

(Auckland Star [Auckland, New Zealand], 17 March 1906, p. 4)

Cuthbert faced the disadvantage of engaging Hood on the latter's home course in Auckland, but the contest was once again extremely close, going to the 35th hole "The match was won by Hood with two up and one to play" (*New Zealand Telegrams* [Manawatu, New Zealand], 21 March 1906, p. 22).

Spectators curious about golf often came away from exhibition matches such as these very impressed by the high calibre of the professional game they had witnessed, and many of them then applied for membership at the clubs that had sponsored such matches. In fact, golf clubs counted on this effect.

We can see that the Nelson Golf Club self-consciously followed this strategy when, shortly after Cuthbert's 1906 rematch with Fred Hood, it asked Cuthbert to come to Nelson to play its top amateur player:

Arrangements are being made for an exhibition game to be played on Saturday next between Mr. N.F. Penton (a former runner-up in the New Zealand [Amateur] Championship) and the professional player [John Cuthbert].

The game should prove very attractive, both to players and the general public, to the former as an example of the fine points of the game, and to the latter as an exhibition of a game that is rapidly coming to the front in Nelson.

(The Colonist [Nelson, New Zealand], 12 June 1906, p. 2)

Cuthbert seems to have been happy to do his part in helping to publicize and popularize the new game.

The New Zealand Professional Championship

Although his various exhibition matches were important contributions to the growth of the new game in New Zealand, Cuthbert probably regarded the crowning achievement of his competitive golf career as his victory in the country's professional golf championship of 1905-06 at the Otago Golf Club in Dunedin.

In a quirk of scheduling for this 72-hole tournament, two rounds were played on 28 December 1905 and two rounds were played on 2 January 1906.

Cuthbert would lead after all four rounds. On the way to victory, he established a course record, thereby winning £5 for the lowest round of the competition. This money was added to the £25 he collected for winning the tournament. Not surprisingly, "The winner was accorded a hearty round of applause" (*Otago Daily Times* [Dunedin, New Zealand], 4 January 1906, p. 4).

One might have expected his victory in what seems to have been New Zealand's first professional golf championship to have earned Cuthbert a place in the annals of the country's golf history, but Cuthbert seems to have been largely forgotten.

Instructor and Coach

While in New Zealand, Cuthbert was also celebrated as an excellent instructor.



Figure 43 Annie Vida Kate Pearce
(1865-1957), circa 1892.
National Library of New Zealand,
PACOLLI-10493-2-04

For instance, one of Royal Wellington Golf Club's best players was a pupil of his: Annie Vida Kate Warren, alias Mrs. Arthur Pearce.

She and her husband were founding members of the Club, and by 1903 she had won the women's club championship twice already and finished second in the New Zealand Ladies' Championship in 1900.

And so, when the Club was awarded the national championship tournament for 1903, of course Vida Pearce entered.

The pressure was on: she was expected to uphold the Wellington Golf Club's honour.

And she did – with an assist from John Cuthbert.

The final contest in the match-play championship was played at the end of August 1903 “in wintry weather,” before “a large attendance of golfers and others interested in the ancient game,” and with “the happiest possible spirit” between the two contestants (*Evening Post* [Wellington, New Zealand], 29 August 1903, p. 5).

The large crowd was enthralled by the nip-and-tuck match:

Every phase of the play between the Auckland champion (Miss Lewis) and the Wellington 'rep' (Mrs. Arthur Pearce) was followed with interest and at times spectators were moved to an expression of applause at exceptionally fine drives, approaches, and putts

And the applause was thoroughly deserved, for a very excellent exhibition of golf was given.

(Evening Post [Wellington, New Zealand], 29 August 1903, p. 5)

39-year-old Vida Pearce was the victor, prevailing over “her young opponent” by 3 and 1:

A round of cheers greeted the win, and the first to congratulate Mrs. Pearce was her young opponent.

The next most conspicuous compliment came from the crowd of some twenty caddies who gave three rousing cheers “for Mrs. Champion Pearce.”

(Evening Post [Wellington, New Zealand], 29 August 1903, p. 5)

But there must also have been a perhaps less “conspicuous” compliment from John Cuthbert.

The newspaper noted two significant factors in her success: first, “Mrs. Pearce ... outplayed her rival in two most important departments of the game – approaching and putting”; second, “Mrs. Pearce was coached for the tournament by Mr. J. Cuthbert, the professional brought out from England by the Wellington Golf Club” (*Evening Post* [Wellington, New Zealand], 29 August 1903, p. 5).

That she “was coached for the tournament” probably means not only that Cuthbert was her instructor at the Club but also that he acted as her caddie during the tournament. In the early 1900s, it became a common practice in important women’s tournaments for the serious contenders to employ as their caddies the golf professional or “coach” at their home Club.



Figure 44 Competitors in the 1903 New Zealand Ladies' amateur championship at Royal Wellington Golf Club. Vida Pearce is perhaps the person in the front row, 6th from the right, holding her golf bag.

Most of the top women golfers of the early 1900s could easily afford to employ their golf professional as “coach” on these occasions, but eventually some competitors raised objections

that employing a professional for advice while competing for an amateur championship might not be consonant with a strict regard for the amateur ethos.

As Vida Pearce's coaching caddie in the New Zealand Ladies' Championship in 1903, Cuthbert may well have contributed a new element to the development of women's golf in New Zealand.

New Zealand Architect

During his time in New Zealand, Cuthbert also designed and remodelled several golf courses.

For instance, late in 1903 or early in 1904, the Otago Golf Club sought his advice regarding course improvements and solutions to drainage problems:

The [annual] report presented stated that a considerable sum had been expended on the course during the year.

J. Cuthbert, the Wellington professional, had suggested some slight alterations to the course, which had been approved by the committee and, in part, ordered.

The committee had been unable to move the Māori Hill or Rodyn Boroughs to do anything towards the drainage passing through the links beyond cleaning out the ditches

(Evening Star [Dunedin, New Zealand], 4 June 1904, p. 11)

The Otago committee soon seems to have ordered completion of the rest of the alterations suggested by Cuthbert, for at the annual meeting one year later, gratitude and congratulations regarding these alterations were in the air:

During the year, the committee have expended a considerable sum on the course and the results have been, no doubt, noted and commented upon by members....

The thanks of the Club are again due to the Wellington Golf Club for kindly lending the services of their professional (J. Cuthbert) toward whose expenses the Otago Ladies' Club have very generously paid £5.

(Evening Star [Dunedin, New Zealand], 7 June 1905, p. 4)

In 1904, Cuthbert was also asked to improve the golf course of the Christchurch Golf Club:

The Shirley Links, near Sumner, which have only been in existence for three or four years – the Christchurch Golf Club having used Hagley Park for some years – have been greatly improved during the last six months by the addition of various hazards, consisting of sands or sods and placed very advantageously, thanks partly to the fact that Cuthbert, the Wellington professional, was asked for advice on the subject.

(Otago Daily Times [Dunedin, New Zealand], 20 August 1904, p. 8)

It is likely that the Shirley Links “hazards consisting of sands or sods ... placed very advantageously” were versions of the cop bunkers that Tom Dunn had built at Stanmore and that Willie Dunn had built at Shinnecock Hills (just six months after the departure of John Cuthbert – who had known nothing about this new style of hazard in 1892).

In 1906, Cuthbert laid out a new 18-hole course for the Nelson Golf Club:

Golf –

Visit of J. Cuthbert

The Wellington Golf Club have kindly lent the services of their professional to the Nelson Club for ten days to lay out the course on the newly purchased links.

Mr. Cuthbert, who has had a wide experience in all matters connected with the game, arrived in Nelson yesterday and was shown over the links

He expressed himself in high terms as to the nature and suitability of the ground for the game.

(The Colonist [Nelson, New Zealand], 12 June 1906, p. 2)

The editor of the *Taranaki Herald* congratulated the Club on its “great enterprise in purchasing the freehold of 100 acres close to the Port where an eighteen-hole course is now being laid out by Cuthbert, of Wellington [It] promises to be one of the finest in New Zealand” (*Taranaki Herald* [New Plymouth, New Zealand], 24 July 1906, p. 6).

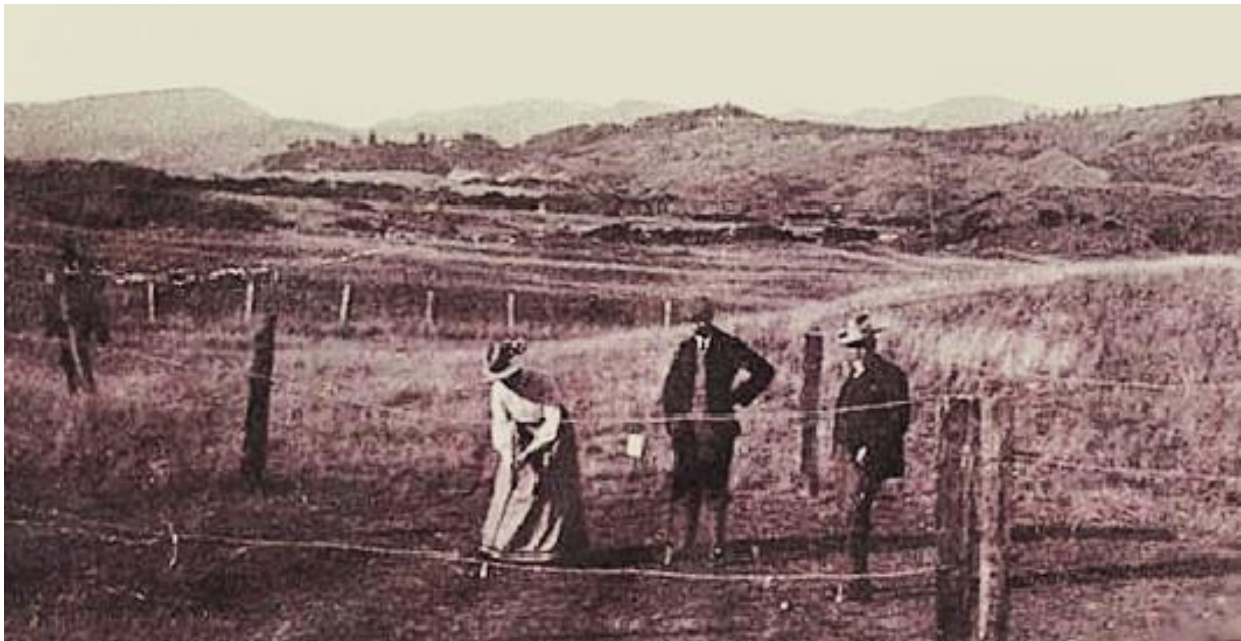


Figure 45 "The Corner Hole" of the Nelson Golf Club shortly after the course opened early in 1907. "History of the Nelson Golf Course," Nelson Golf Club website, <https://www.nelsongolf.co.nz/play-nelson-golf-course/history-of-ngc/>.

Finally, at the Wellington Golf Club itself, "When the club began its move to Heretaunga late in 1906, its first professional, ... John Cuthbert, was given the responsibility for laying out the course" ("The Evolution of the Golf Course," website of the Royal Wellington Golf Club, <https://www.royalwellington.com/cms/the-evolution-of-the-golf-course/>).

Cuthbert had probably already been instrumental in the decision by the Club to purchase the new golf course property in the Heretaunga and Trentham area near Upper Hutt.

The question whether the Club should move from its present location had been decided for it:

For some years past, the members of the Wellington Golf Club have been considering the advisability of securing links to replace those now held on lease at Miramar, the term of which expires in January next [1907].

These links are considered to be very fine ones, but for the fact that cattle have been permitted to graze on them....

[But] there is no possibility of a renewal of the lease being obtained, so the committee of the club has been negotiating for some time past for the purchase of about a hundred acres of good golf country at Trentham

(New Zealand Times [Wellington, New Zealand], 3 August 1906, p. 3)

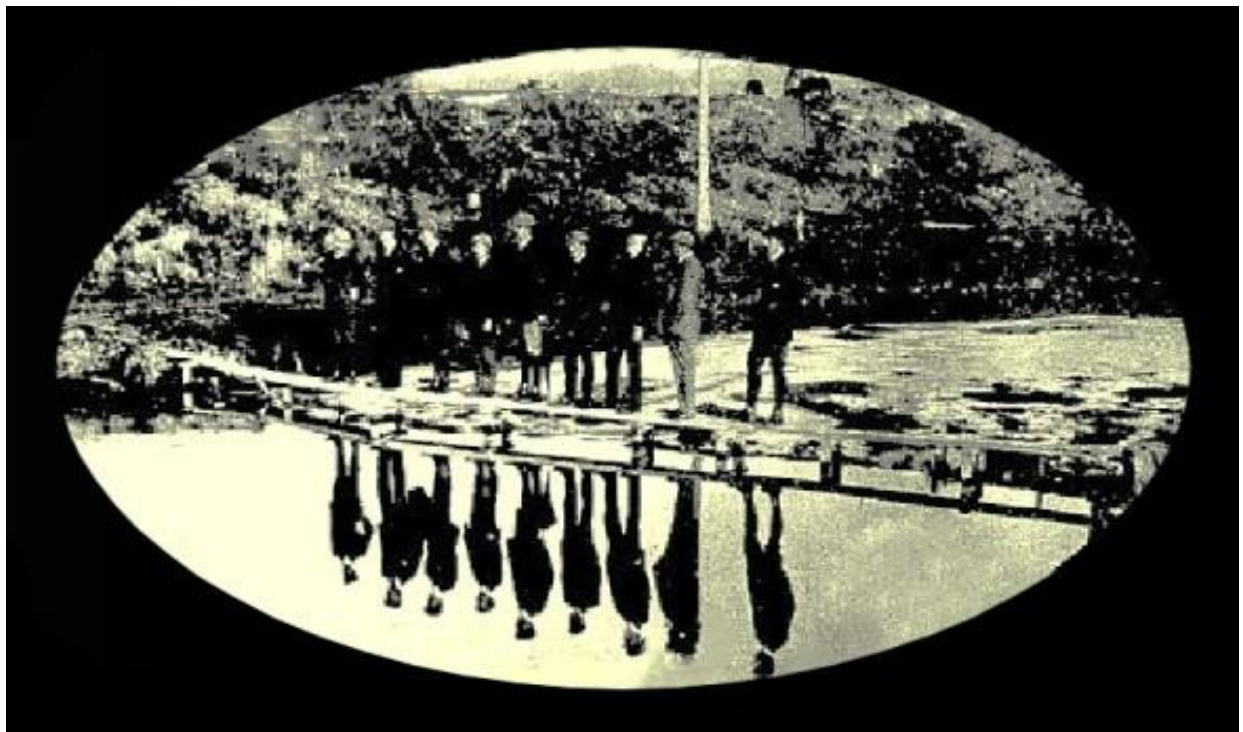


Figure 46 The five members of the 1906 Wellington Executive Committee, along with four other people (probably other Club members, and perhaps Cuthbert, as well), intrepidly cross the Silverstream River to inspect the Trentham property. New Zealand Mail [Wellington, New Zealand], 29 August 1906, p. 39.

The most important question that the Executive Committee faced was whether the Trentham property represented “good golf country”:

The accepted idea for years was that the only good links were near the sea, where the formation of the earth was more sandy – or rather less solid – than was likely to be the case at a distance from the coast, and that is to a great extent true.

But inland golf links have proved very successful in England of late and there is no reason to suppose that Trentham will not afford precisely the facilities needed for first-class links.

(New Zealand Times [Wellington, New Zealand], 3 August 1906, p. 3)

This question whether the Trentham property could be made into a proper golf course was one that Cuthbert was able to answer probably better than anyone else in New Zealand.

It was no doubt Cuthbert who informed the Executive Committee of Tom Dunn's architectural practices "of late" by which "inland golf links [had] proved very successful in England." And he was thereby able to reassure the Committee that he could turn their relatively featureless land not just into a proper test of golf, but also into a test of championship golf.

The photograph below shows the five members of the Executive Committee, as well as three others, on part of the Trentham property in August of 1906.



Figure 47 The five members of the executive committee of the Wellington Golf Club, as well as three others, on the Trentham property, end of August 1906. Photograph from "A Permanent Home," website of the Royal Wellington Golf Club. Courtesy of the Upper Hutt Library P4-168-3289.

Contrast the 1906 photograph above with the one below (taken during the 1911 New Zealand Ladies' Championship), which provides a panoramic perspective that seems to include the part of the property seen above.

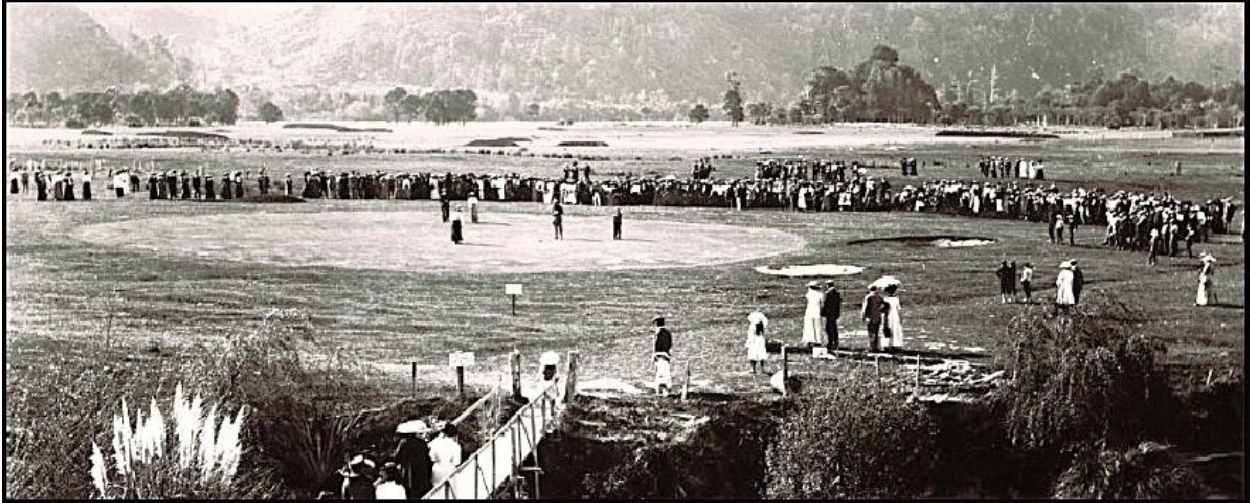


Figure 48 A view of the 18th hole of the Royal Wellington Golf Club, 1911. "The Evolution of the Golf Course," website of the Royal Wellington Golf Club <https://www.royalwellington.com/cms/the-evolution-of-the-golf-course/>.

Prominent in the background of this photograph that shows a view of much of the Cuthbert-designed course are more than a dozen examples of the style of fairway-wide cop bunkers invented by Tom Dunn for use as hazards on relatively featureless pasture land.

Golfers unable to carry such hazards often lost a shot because they had to play backwards or sideways away from the steep face of the cop or turf bank to make another attempt at getting over it. Implicitly penalizing golfers' failed shots by costing them a stroke whenever they hit into such hazards, this form of design became known as penal golf course architecture.



Figure 49 "Hanger Hill Golf Club London (1900 – WW2), Golf's Missing Links (<https://www.golfsmissinglinks.co.uk/index.php/england/south-east/london/771-gl-hanger-hill-golf-club>)

Dunn incorporated cop bunkers into most of the more than 130 inland courses he designed in Europe and England between 1890 and 1902, including his last and most famous layout at Hanger Hill (London, England) in 1901-02, where the early 1900s clubhouse view over the course (seen in the photograph to the left) was strikingly similar to the

1911 clubhouse view over the Royal Wellington course seen above.

Royal Wellington's classic – and ubiquitous – cop bunkers are clear evidence that its course was indeed designed by Cuthbert, who was not only familiar with Dunn's work around London in general, but also very familiar with the large number of typical cop bunkers that Dunn had built on Cuthbert's own 18-hole course at Stanmore in 1893 (as seen below).



Figure 50 One of the earliest photographs of the Stanmore Golf Club and its original cop bunkers, circa 1895.

Only the second golf professional brought to New Zealand to work as such, Cuthbert was probably the one who first brought penal golf course architectural philosophy to the country.



Figure 51 At Stanmore Golf Club in 1902, a golfer attended by a caddie, plays across the cop bunker on the 7th hole. I suspect that the golfer holding his own bag of clubs is club pro John Cuthbert. The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, 22 February 1902, p. 941.

Not all golfers would have thanked him for doing so in the early 1900s, mind you, and it seems that complaints about some of his cop bunkers led to changes over time:

One of the distinctive features of the early course was the formation of sod walls on fairways and near greens to liven up the otherwise flat course.

These walls were softened into mounds over time or removed, but remnants can still be found on the Terrace Course.

One conspicuous survivor is on the 7th, where tee shots need to crest an angled hump about 160 meters from the Black and White tee or skirt it on the left, where room was later provided for members unhappy with the required carry.

*(“The Evolution of the Golf Course,” Royal Wellington Golf Club website,
<https://www.royalwellington.com/cms/the-evolution-of-the-golf-course/>.)*

I expect that Cuthbert rolled over in his grave when that accommodation was “provided for members unhappy with the required carry,” and I would not be surprised if his ghost has ever since stalked the 7th hole, thwarting with a gust of wind those who aim to miss the angled hump, muttering to himself: “It’s all about the required carry!”

Back to Britain Again

After four relatively significant and influential years in New Zealand, Cuthbert returned to England at the beginning of 1907:

John Cuthbert has been appointed professional to the Rye Golf Club.

He is a St. Andrews man and was for nine years at Stanmore.

Subsequently, he went to New Zealand for the benefit of his health and, during his stay, won the New Zealand [professional] Championship.

He has only just returned to England.

(Evening Standard [London, England], 16 March 1907, p. 16)

The Rye Golf Club had more than 400 members in 1907 and would add 100 more over the next few years: Cuthbert would have his hands full as its golf professional.



Figure 52 A.J. Balfour plays from the 2nd tee of the Rye Golf Club in the 7th Annual Parliamentary Handicap Match, May 1907. The Bystander (London, England), 22 May 1907, p. 411.

For instance, in May of 1907, just months after Cuthbert's arrival, the Club hosted the 7th Annual Parliamentary Handicap Golf Match between the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Leader of the Opposition, Arthur James Balfour (who had been Prime Minister from 1902 to 1905) is shown to the left playing from the 2nd tee during the tournament.

As of 1909, whenever Cuthbert had occasion as head pro to deal with the Club Captain, he dealt with Balfour, an intimidating figure, but by no means the most prominent member of the Club.

The Rye Golf Club probably hired Cuthbert late in 1906, when famous golf writer Bernard Darwin was Club Captain and would have participated in the review of the many applications for the job.



Figure 53 "Mr. Bernard Darwin, runner-up for the Rye Challenge Plate at the Rye Golf Club's Christmas meeting." *Daily Mirror*, 26 December 1906, p. 8.

In 1907, the Club's 18-hole course, which had been originally laid out in 1895 by renowned architect Harry S. Colt, was redesigned by him in 1907 as land was reclaimed from the receding English Channel.

It is hard to imagine that the Club did not have in mind a role for Cuthbert in supervising the construction work necessary to realize Colt's vision.

During Cuthbert's years at the Club, certainly, there were ongoing course improvements, including the building of new holes and new greens.

Generally, however, Cuthbert lived a relatively quiet life during his seven years as Rye's golf professional.

In addition to his duties at the Club, he engaged in occasional match-play competitions with other local golf professionals and he competed in regional professional competitions such as an annual "Sussex Golf Tournament" and an invitational tournament at the Folkestone Golf Club.

But there was a last hurrah – almost.

Ambition stirred in John Cuthbert one more time. In 1908, he entered the Open Championship at Prestwick. He would engage a new generation of stars!

The Open Championship of 1908 was just the second in which a qualifying competition was held to determine the field for the tournament. Alas, Cuthbert did not play well in the qualifying round held on the challenging Prestwick course and "retired" from the competition without submitting his scorecard.

And then, in December of 1913, it was announced in newspapers in England and Scotland that Laurence B. Ayton, a "young Scottish professional" who was also "a native of St. Andrews," would succeed 41-year-old John Cuthbert at the Rye Golf Club in February of 1914 (*Dundee Courier* [Dundee, Scotland], 15 December 1913, p. 3).

But Cuthbert had not been hired elsewhere. He was not moving on to another job.

Still just 41 years of age, he was too young to have retired. Was he beset again by health problems?

At Rye, the new professional replaced him in February of 1914. One year later, to the month, Cuthbert was dead:

DEATHS

Cuthbert –

On the 16th February 1915, at his residence, Priory Road, Hastings, John Cuthbert, late professional to the Rye Golf Club, passed away, aged 42 years.

(South Eastern Advertiser [Sussex, England], 27 February 1915, p. 7)

Conclusion

John Cuthbert was engaged in the golf industry his entire working life.

He spent just 20 weeks of that life at Shinnecock Hills.

But by virtue of his 1892 contract with the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, Cuthbert became the first golf professional hired to serve at a United States golf club – and just the second golf professional (after Willie Davis) ever to have been hired as such in North America (and in another quirk of history, he would later become just the second golf professional ever hired to work as such in New Zealand).

Furthermore, by virtue of his work as an architect during his five months at Shinnecock Hills, Cuthbert was responsible for the design of eight of the 18 holes that determined the US Open Champion of 1896.

Not a bad legacy for a season of work at the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club!