

# The Growth of American Golf

By J. LEWIS BROWN

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America has a new National game. Even the most ardent fans must admit that baseball now has a dangerous rival for popular favor



Photo by Edwin Levick

Miss Glenna Collett, winner (for the third consecutive year) of the North and South contest at Pinehurst, North Carolina

IN seeking the reason for the miraculous growth of golf in America the thing that must be kept uppermost in the mind is that this is a traditional game. It had its inception in the days of the Huguenots in Holland, was cradled in the Highlands of Scotland in the days of Prince Charlie, and was nursed to robust youth in the days of the Tudors in England. Where tradition lingers there is always substantial growth. With such a background, golf has developed steadfastly, triumphantly, and even brilliantly; until to-day it stands head and shoulders over all other games as the international sport of sports.

Just as the Scottish shepherds and others found serious opposition to the enjoyment of their game, so it was in America when it was first introduced here. It seems almost incredible that less than forty years ago Robert Lockhart, a bonnie Scot from Dunfermline, the home of both John Reid (who after-

ward was credited with being the father of golf in America) and Andrew Carnegie, was arrested in Central Park, New York, for attempting to practice there. Fortunately for Lockhart, and also for the future of the game, Reid rescued his brother Scot from the clutches of the law and spirited him out to Yonkers, where they played to their heart's content in a large field just off North Broadway. Of the "Apple Tree Gang" that started from the nucleus of this pair and the subsequent formation of the first organized golf club in the United States, the St. Andrews Golf Club, now located at Mount Hope, New York, the golfing world is well aware, but even the most sanguine golfer of that period would never have dared to prophesy that the game would be as tremendous as it is to-day. Only tradition plus the fact that the American public is outdoor-sport loving could have made such inroads on success.

Any attempt to visualize the magnitude of the game in this country must sooner or later immerse one in a sea of figures. But even those intimately associated with its prodigious growth cannot fully appreciate the infinite enthusiasm, irrepressible organization, and unlimited wealth that have brought about this state of things. Even in the early nineties the game fought tenaciously for a foothold. Business men frowned upon golfers, intimating that they would be much better off doing something else rather than knocking and chasing a little white rubber ball over hundreds of acres of land that ought to be utilized for farming. To overcome prejudice of this kind and to withstand the ridicule which greeted the golfer every time he appeared on the street in golfing attire was something that required tenacity of purpose. However, like the snowball that gathers unto itself as it rolls, gradually one club after another sprang up, particularly in the East, and soon the game's influence followed in the wake of country clubs in the West. In fact, it may be said that golf was just one or two steps behind modern civilization in the far Western regions.

There are something like 2,500 golf clubs in the United States to-day, with a membership of something over 1,500,000. Around New York, in what is

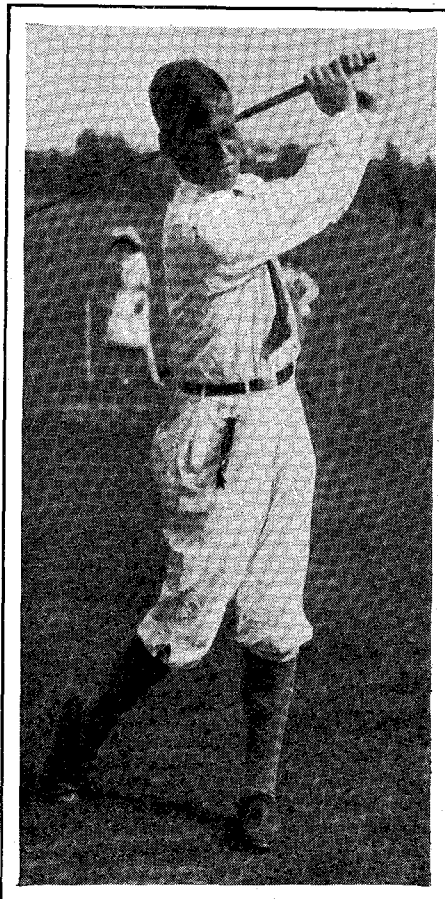


Photo by Edwin Levick

"Bobby" Jones, National Open Golf Champion, 1923

known as the metropolitan area, there are approximately 250 clubs, while in and around Chicago there are 105. In California alone there are over 30,000 golfers playing on the various courses. Nearly every town of any importance, and certainly every city, has its own golf course; like mushrooms, they spring up overnight from Maine to California, from Florida to Washington; they dot the countryside, and to them flock multitudes seeking exercise and recreation, "far from the madding crowd" and far removed from the whirl of finance and commerce.

Wherever the "Gulf Stream" of human tourists goes there you will find the golfer; although, in reality, this statement should be reversed to read that wherever the golfer seeks his pleasure there the human stream of tourists follows. Without golf no modern resort can be a success, but, once having been established in the golfer's favor, it proves an immediate and most attractive mecca,



which the footsore, yet ever hopeful, soldiers of Colonel Bogey's regiment strain every muscle to reach in the shortest possible time. When winter snows drive the itinerant golfer to sunnier climes in the South, he finds his needs amply taken care of. Even under the most exacting climatic conditions golf has found its place and held it successfully. In the arid regions of Texas, in the mountains of Arizona, in the palmetto groves and jungles of Florida, and in the sand hills of the Carolinas golf holds sway and reigns supreme over all other pastimes. The Southern climate attracts the golfing tourist, but it is the golf that holds him. Every day new courses are being started, magnificent new club-houses are being built, hundreds of acres of land are being sown with the most expensive grass seeds, and millions of dollars are being invested in these playgrounds of the Nation. And as yet the surface is but scratched. In the next five years I expect to see three million golfers in this country. The demand is greater than the supply, for golf has an appeal to all. It is an all-year-round game; it is a universal game in that it puts all in sport on an equal footing. Even novices, from the very start, become deeply interested and derive great benefits. No matter what size or what physical strength, all can participate, unlike baseball, tennis, football, and other sports of the more strenuous type. Golf has an individual appeal that is not frustrated or denied by lack of youth. Moreover, it is supplying the ever-present desire of the great American populace to be an active participant in some line of athletic endeavor. More and more the great masses, who have been content to watch

the contest on gridiron and diamond, are taking advantage of golf's opportunity to be actors in sport rather than onlookers. The baseball and football fan of to-day is the golfer of to-morrow.

Besides the joy of competition which golf affords, there are many reasons for this great enrollment in the ranks of the creak and mashie. No other game gives the companionship that golf does, no other game brings the contestants closer to nature in her natural surroundings, and no other game develops health and happiness to the extent that the ancient Scottish pastime does. Golf is a true sport, and every lover of nature and the great outdoors can find in it something he can find nowhere else.

Golf also has its super-athletes—men who hold the public attention and whose every move is chronicled in elaborate detail. One has but to mention such names as Bobby Jones, Max Marston, Jess Sweetser, Robert A. Gardner, "Chick" Evans, Francis Ouimet, Jesse Guilford, Dr. Paul Hunter, Dr. Willing, and others of the present-day amateur school to corroborate this—to say nothing of such men as Walter Hagen, Gene Sarazen, Jock Hutchinson, Jim Barnes, and Joe Kirkwood. These are names to conjure with, and behind them is the traditional background, ranking down from the first championships played at Newport in 1895, when Charles B. Macdonald won the Amateur title and Horace Rawlins won the Open. Then we have the veteran Walter J. Travis, and his famous Schenectady putter, the only American ever to win the British Amateur championship. Following him came the Intercollegiate star, H. Chandler Egan, and later the famous iron player, Jerome D.

Travers, along with such professional stars as Willie Anderson and Johnny McDermott, the latter's name being all the more interesting because of his attempt at the present time to come back after an illness of several years. These men stand out in the field of golf and are worshiped by duffer and caddie alike, just as Mathewson, Lajoie, Cobb, and Collins are in the baseball field. They have stood for the best in golf; they have played and maintained the fundamentals laid down in the traditional days of golf's childhood. It is that type of high sportsmanship which has elevated them in the public eye to a place that I feel is unapproached by any other idol in any other branch of athletic endeavor. It is little wonder that thousands seek to emulate them. Likewise, there are the brilliant women stars of the game, with Miss Edith Cummings, Miss Glenna Collett, Miss Marion Hollins, and Miss Alexa Stirling as the ranking leaders in the game to-day. Their skill on the links puts many a man to shame, and scores of other members of the fair sex are showing great improvement and are covetously seeking the laurels of this famous quartet.

It is from the youth of to-day that the real golfers of the future must come. As the gospel of the game spreads thousands of all ages will flock to its colors; but to maintain the supremacy which America can now honestly claim in golf there must be an education started among the boys of this generation. In the big colleges and universities the game has already secured much prominence. The Intercollegiate championship ranks almost as high as the National Amateur, and well it may, for the colleges de-



The first green of the St. Andrews Golf Course, at Yonkers, New York, in 1888



veloped such men as H. Chandler Egan, Ned Allis, A. Lucien Walker, Jr., Jess Sweetser, J. Simpson Dean, Pollack Boyd, S. Davidson Herron, Robert A. Gardner, and Dexter Cummings, the present Intercollegiate champion and brother of Miss Edith Cummings, the women's champion. A movement is on foot to introduce golf in the public schools. Particularly is this prominent in Chicago, where, of course, the public links movement is at its height and the possibilities greatest. San Francisco has adopted it in its high schools as a major sport, and there seems no question that, once this movement is thoroughly founded, the future of the game is in the proper hands. None can estimate what enormous strides the game will take when all these youngsters start measur-

ing their ability with General Par and Field Marshal Eagle.

Probably the most outstanding success of the game, numerically speaking, can be seen in the public links players. Although hampered by lack of courses, for I know of no public links that has not the problem of overcrowding, the horde of players increases with amazing rapidity. In Chicago, where public and semi-public links have been built more than in any other section of the country, it is amazing to delve into the figures of play. In many instances it seems almost incredible. New York is woefully weak in public courses, yet its public links players are among the best. There should be a common campaign and a country-wide one for more public links. They will prove one of the

basic factors in producing less expensive golf. At the present time the bane of the game is its exorbitant cost. Public and semi-public links will make the game accessible to practically all, and gradually as they take care of the demand the cost of the supply will be materially decreased.

Baseball and tennis have long scoffed at the Royal and Ancient game. They have had their years of popularity, and will continue to do so; but, like the tortoise in the fable, golf, away to a bad start, is rapidly overhauling them, if it has not already done so. It is destined in the not very distant future to occupy the center of the limelight of popularity as America's National pastime and one in which Uncle Sam's players will reign supreme the world over.

## Canoeing Safety

By ELON JESSUP

**Fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and the expert canoeist declines to attempt stunts which many duffers try to their sorrow. Mr. Jessup tells why**

**T**WO men, close to exhaustion from clinging to a capsized canoe in one of the wide stretches of the Hudson River, were eventually rescued by a passing steamer. One of them subsequently offered the following explanation of how they had come to upset:

"I don't know how it all happened. The canoe suddenly shot out from under us and we were in the water."

Neither is the foregoing situation especially unusual nor is its explanation very clear. In fact, the haziness of the explanation is quite significant of canoe

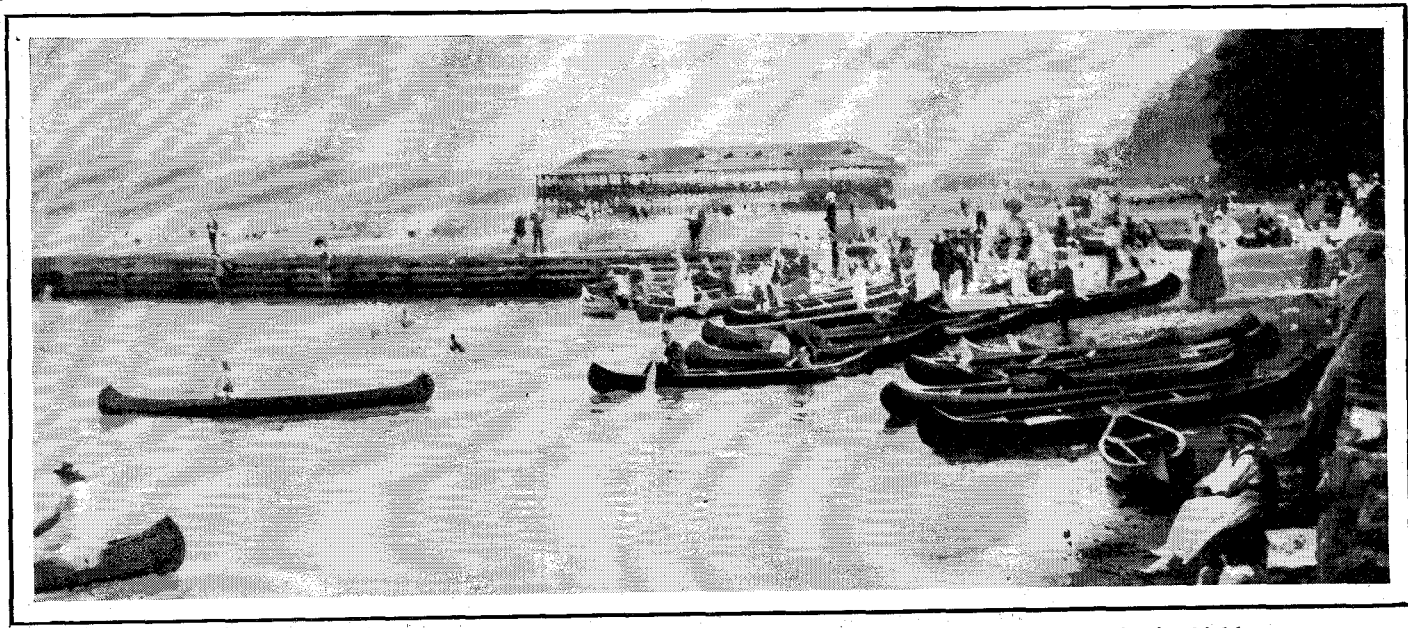
upsets in general. Things move so fast that one doesn't stop to reason out the connection between cause and effect. Yet there always is a definite cause. A canoe does not upset of its own accord.

There are varied reasons why a canoe upsets. A few of these are beyond human control. But in the majority of instances, and speaking in a general way, a capsized canoe is the direct result either of carelessness or lack of understanding upon the part of its recent occupants. The canoe, in spite of its essentially skittish nature, is, when prop-

erly understood and properly handled, an amazingly safe little craft. Canoeing for the most part is just as safe or just as dangerous as one chooses to make it.

People who know most intimately the canoe and its possibilities never lose sight of this cranky little boat's limitations. They appreciate just how close to the danger-mark they dare venture. And while there are some experts who are sufficiently clever to become a bit spectacular in the handling of a canoe, there is none who is downright foolhardy.

Perhaps the best example of this fact



Along the Hudson shoreline opposite New York City—an indication that the canoe is popular in thickly settled districts as well as in the wilderness