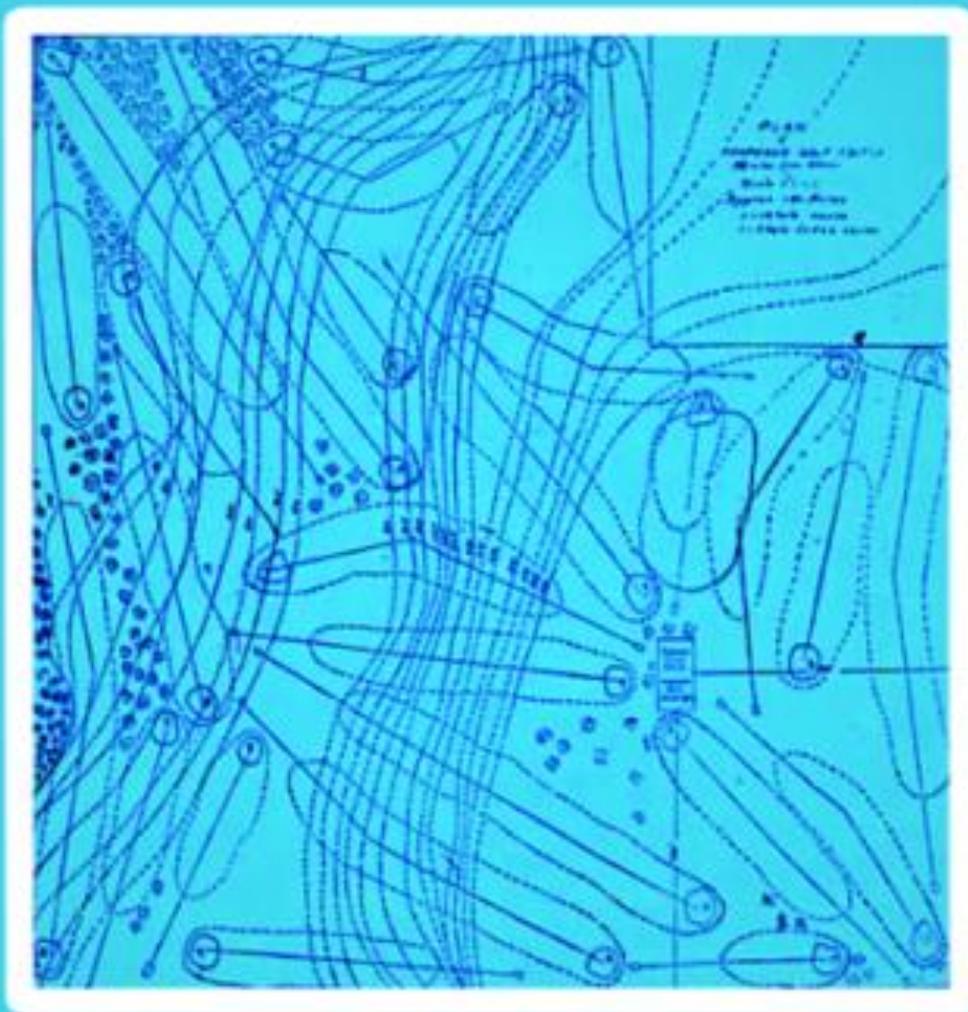


Ottawa's Hillcrest Golf and Country Club and Its Stanley Thompson Courses



Donald J. Childs

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club and Its Stanley Thompson Courses

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**Ottawa's Hillcrest Golf and Country Club
and Its Stanley Thompson Courses**

By Donald J. Childs

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Introduction

In the spring of 1924, Bill Gladish, the Sports Editor of the *Ottawa Journal*, reflected on the development of golf in the Ottawa area since World War I:

Golf is gradually crowding every other summer game out of the picture. The strides the game has made in Ottawa since the war have been immense. Three new courses have been added to the two which were in existence previous to the war. The baby club, the Chaudière, is just about ready to step out of its long perambulator and make way for the recently christened Hillcrest Club, which is also located on the popular side of the Ottawa River. (8 April 1924, p. 16)

The Hillcrest Club?

It turns out that there was a golf club incorporated in June of 1923 known as the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

Furthermore, its letters patent were issued before those of the Chaudière Golf and Country Club, so Hillcrest was actually christened not as Ottawa's fifth golf club, but rather as its fourth.

And as a sign of the new club's ambitions, it hired Stanley Thompson to lay out its two golf courses.

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club lasted for about a year, but it never managed to build a single golf hole, let alone two golf courses.

Ottawa's first three golf clubs were established by people dedicated to the game of golf. The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, by contrast, was created by people who did not know anything about golf. What they thought they knew for sure was that owning a golf and country club would be profitable: in the 1920s, it was like owning a gold mine.

Locating Ottawa's Fourth Golf Club

In the spring of 1923, five young people new to golf (two barristers, a bookkeeper, a stenographer, and the head of Ottawa's downtown office of the Canadian Pacific Railway) decided to found a golf club and build for it an eighteen-hole championship golf course and a nine-hole "ladies' course."

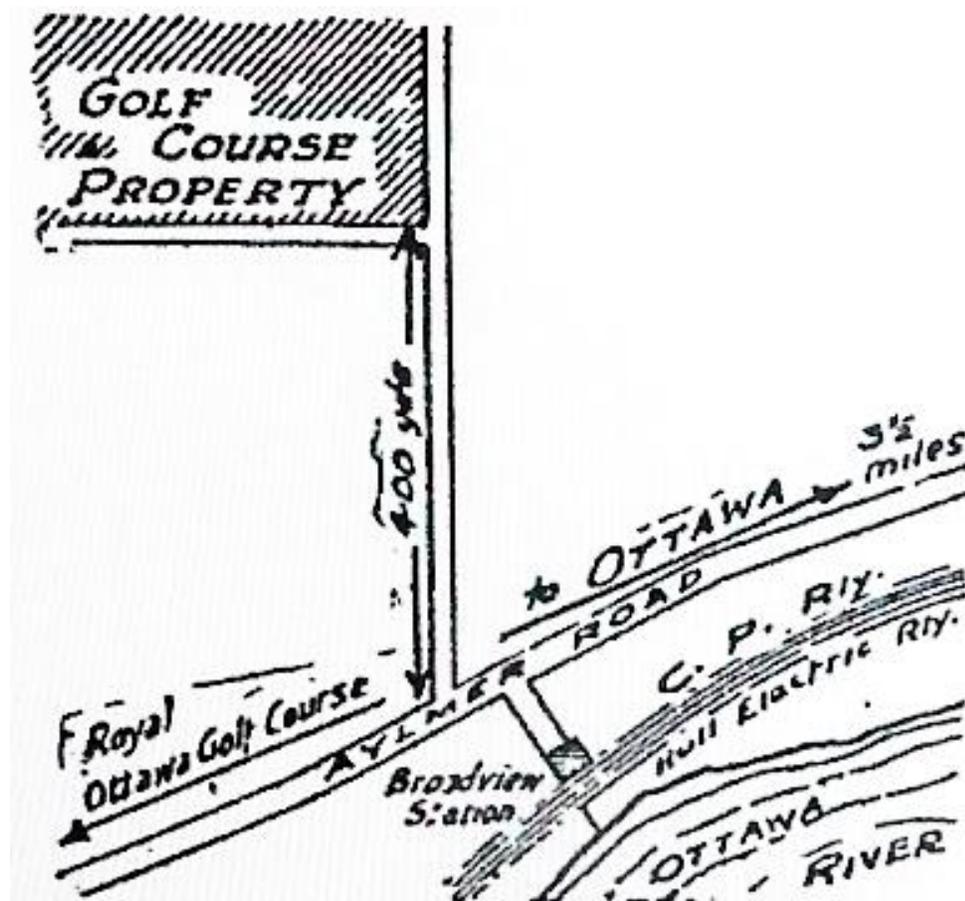


Figure 1 Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p. 3.

newspapers), the property was situated 400 yards north of Aylmer Road on west side of Brickyard Road (which has since been replaced by today's Boulevard Saint-Raymond).

An important purpose of the publication of the map was to show that the new golf course would be accessible to Ottawa residents: it would be within walking distance of the Broadview Station, which served both the Hull Electric Railway line and the Canadian Pacific Railway line. The club explained that "Its ease of access – being only a 10c fare and a 15-minute ride from the center of the city by either the Green Buses or the Hull Electric Railway – has a great appeal" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 30 August 1923, p. 11).

Ranging from nineteen to thirty-six years of age, these golf neophytes had negotiated an option to purchase 180 acres of land adjoining the property of the Royal Ottawa Golf Club along its northern boundary. As shown in the map reproduced to the left (which was published in Ottawa's main

The property that these people had chosen comprised a farmhouse, its related outbuildings, land largely cleared for grazing, and a portion of land along its western boundary that had second-growth trees and brush on it, as can be seen in the 1933 aerial photograph shown below.



Figure 2 The 180-acre farm to be purchased by the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. National Air Photo Library, A4572-50, 5 April 1933, modified and annotated.

A 1925 aerial photograph provides a view from an oblique angle of this farm and the Royal Ottawa golf course located next to it, as well as the fields where the Glenlea golf course would be built in 1929.

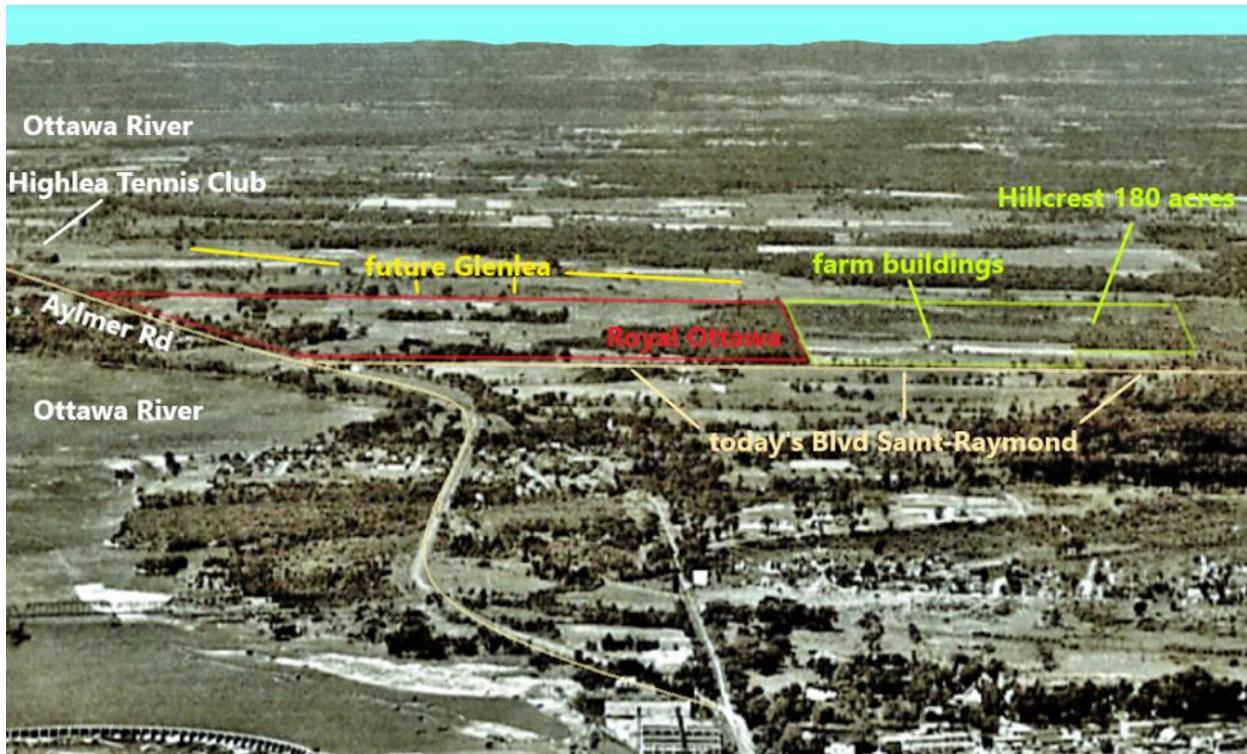


Figure 3 Enlarged, annotated, detail of a 1925 aerial photograph. Toronto Public Library.

The Foster Shouldice Farm

The farmland that the Hillcrest promoters proposed to buy – like all the farmland and golf courses in the area that are shown in the photograph on the previous page – was once part of land granted to Philemon Wright, founder of Hull in the late 1790s. Around 1907, the 180 acres of this particular farm were acquired by Foster Shouldice (1859-1922) of Masham, Quebec.

“Widely known and popular,” Shouldice farmed the land contentedly into the early 1920s (*Ottawa Journal*, 17 July 1922, p. 2). Then, disaster struck:

Lightning Strikes Barn

A large barn and silo owned by Mr. Foster Shouldice on the Mountain Road, Hull, valued at over \$3,000, was destroyed by fire yesterday morning, after it had been struck by lightning.

Although the Shouldice residence and stables were situated near to the burned buildings, they fortunately escaped damage through valuable assistance rendered by neighbouring farmers, who formed a bucket brigade.

In addition to the barn and silo, a number of small agricultural implements, a hay wagon and small quantity of grain, valued at \$500, were destroyed. The loss is partially covered by insurance. (Ottawa Citizen, 30 June 1921, p. 2)

And then an even bigger disaster struck: Foster Shouldice died one year later on 15 July 1922. Two days later, “The funeral of the late Foster Shouldice ... took place ... from his late residence to Pink’s cemetery” (*Ottawa Journal*, 17 July 1922, p. 2).

He was 62 years old.

Whether the losses that were not covered by insurance had weighed on the mind of Foster Shouldice and affected his health is not clear.

His twenty-five-year-old son Robert Albert Shouldice (1897-1958) was the one son who had stayed on the farm to work the land with his father, and so he inherited the property and buildings. He was clearly not committed to carrying on the work of the farm, however, for he agreed at the beginning of the 1923 farming season to sell the property to the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

Assessing the Land

Around the beginning of June in 1923, before incorporating as a golf club, the promoters of the new venture commissioned both Stanley Thompson & Company and George S. Lyon (8-time Canadian Amateur Golf Champion and 1904 Olympic golf gold medallist) to advise them whether the land and buildings that they proposed to purchase and develop as two golf course and a clubhouse was suitable for these purposes.

The two reports that they received arrived in mid-June, and they were unanimous in declaring the land very suitable indeed for golf.



Figure 4 George S. Lyon, circa 1914.

On 14 June 1923, Lyon wrote:

Dear Sirs,

At your request, I have examined the property, adjoining the Royal Ottawa Golf Club, where you propose to have the new golf course for Ottawa. I have found the land most adaptable in every respect for a first-class golf course. The soil is a sandy loam and should produce the finest of turf. There is just enough loam to make it very desirable. The situation of the property makes it quite accessible, being only 400 yards from the Aylmer Road. As to the character of the property, the ridge running through the centre, and the further ridge on the north side, will afford great possibilities for unusually interesting holes and the several ravines on the property will make good natural hazards. There is ample room for a full eighteen-hole gentleman's course and an auxiliary nine-hole course for ladies. A temporary nine-hole course can be laid out for play almost immediately. I

again say, without hesitation, that I recommend this property as being well-adapted for the purposes of golf.

Assuring you of my co-operation in your undertaking, I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Geo. S. Lyon (Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p. 3)

For his services to the club, and for the advertising value of the new club's association with Canada's most famous golfer, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club made Lyon one of its first members.

The report on behalf of Stanley Thompson & Company was written by the chief engineer, Kenneth Welton, on 12 June 1923:

Dear Sir:

We have gone over your property, off the Aylmer Road and about four miles from Ottawa, for the purpose of reporting on its suitability for a golf course.

We find that it is very accessible, both by radial and by road, from Ottawa. The property consists of 180 acres, with practically no waste land, and is of such a shape as to make the laying out of 27 holes of championship length a certainty.

This property is of a similar nature, both in soil and contour, to that upon which its immediate neighbour, the Royal Ottawa Country Club [sic], is built. This soil is of a light sandy loam nature, running to heavier black loam in spots. These areas of black loam are a valuable asset in the construction of the course, and the sandy loam, with its freedom from stone and excellent drainage, will facilitate economy of construction.

The site for the club house (where the farmhouse now stands) is a prominent one and commands a fine view of the surrounding country, as well as the course when built. There is a considerable area already in turf which could be renovated and made into fairways at a small cost. Most of the land is cleared and the small areas of old stumps and second growth would not be a serious problem to remove where necessary.

The contour of the land is of a gentle rolling nature, with many natural locations for greens, and with no precipitous climbs. We think that a very interesting and sporty 18-hole course could be laid out on your property as well as an ideal ladies' nine-hole course.

You might be interested to know that last year we constructed 16 golf courses in Canada and the United States, and have every expectation of doing even more work this season. The work we are

doing speaks well of our reputation as golf architects and golf course builders; and when you require services such as ours we would take a great interest in bringing out the latent possibilities and beauties in your property, thus making it famous for its excellent course.

Very truly yours,

Stanley Thompson & Co., Limited

Kenneth Welton

Chief Engineer (Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p. 3)

These reports gave the promoters of the new golf club all the confidence they needed to proceed with their plans: just days after they received the letters from Lyons and Welton they formally applied to be incorporated as the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

And so they were, with letters patent issued to five corporate members on 22 June 1923.

Eleven days before letters patent were issued to “The Chaudière Golf and Realty Company,” then, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Inc., joined the Royal Ottawa Golf Club, the Rivermead Golf and Country Club, and the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club on the list of Ottawa’s golf clubs.

Three Guys and Two Girls

Lyons and Welton should have addressed their letters to messieurs **and** mesdames, it turns out, for the five people who incorporated the new golf club comprised both men and women.

All were residents of Ottawa.

There were two barristers: Wilfrid Joseph Grace and William Michael Unger.

There was the manager of the Ottawa CPR office, Joseph Aristide-Aurore Vaillancourt.

And there were two young women: a “bookkeeper” and “unmarried woman” named Winifred Alice Arnold, and a stenographer (also described as “unmarried”) named Reta Viola Reaume (*Gazette Officielle du Quebec*, 18 August 1923, vol 18 no 33, p. 2477).

Who were these people?

Wilfrid Joseph Grace

At thirty-six years of age, Wilfrid Joseph Grace (1887-1964) was the oldest of the five people who incorporated as the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club in June of 1923.

Grace was the only one of these five people who would serve on the new club's Board of Directors. The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club seems to have been his brainchild.



Figure 5 Wilfrid Grace stands behind his father Thomas at Blue Sea Lake, circa 1911.

Grace was born in Kazabazua, Quebec, in 1887 to a father named Thomas, who had been born in a log cabin in Portage du Fort. With his brothers, Thomas Grace had by the late 1800s assembled a grocery store empire in the communities ranging between the Ottawa River and the Gatineau River. Grace Brothers, Limited, also had extensive property holdings and interests in mining and lumber, leading to this area's being known locally as the "Valle de Graces."

The son seems to have inherited the father's entrepreneurial spirit: Wilfrid Grace incorporated his first company in 1911 (the All Red Line Steamship Company) while still a "student-at-law" (*Ottawa Journal*, 20 February 1911, p. 3). Still at law school in 1913, he was an original corporate member and provisional director of the Continental Trust Corporation, Limited.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Grace ultimately subordinated his career as a lawyer to develop his business interests in various mining companies – interests that ultimately led him to leave Ottawa for Montreal.

After graduating from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto just before World War I, he was employed in Ottawa by the firm Ewart, Scott, Maclaren and Kelly, and was acclaimed a city Alderman in the municipal election of 1918. By 1920 he had set up his own practice, operating out of the Canada Life Building in downtown Ottawa.

In the early 1920s, he was also a corporate member or director of a number of new companies in Ottawa and Toronto, and he was Secretary of the Ottawa Reform Association (a political organization closely allied with the federal Liberal Party of Canada).

As City of Ottawa Alderman, he had chaired a committee in 1920 charged with making “a very exhaustive investigation” of “the question of market facilities in Ottawa,” and under him served fellow Alderman John P. Balharrie, who would be named the first treasurer of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 April 1924, p. 5). The committee’s report continued to guide policy decisions in Ottawa throughout the 1920s.

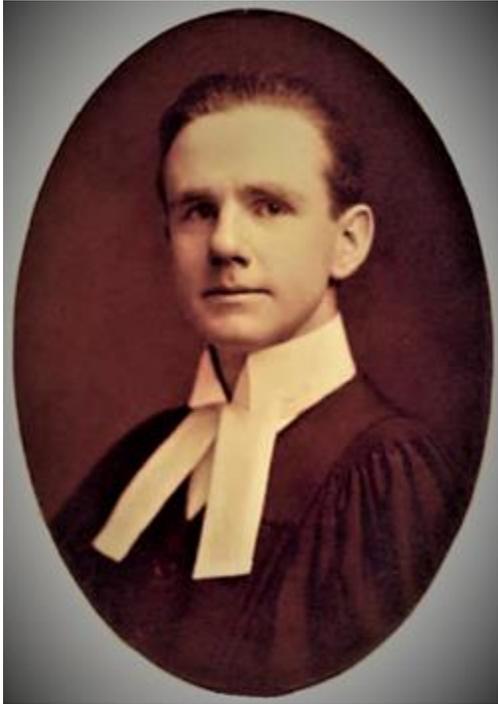


Figure 6 Wilfrid J. Grace, Osgoode Hall Law School, circa 1914.

Grace remained a respected lawyer and political figure in Ottawa throughout the 1930s (he was asked in 1935 to run for the Stevens’ Party, also known as the People’s Reform Party), but in the early 1940s he moved to Montreal, where he died in 1964.

His body was brought back to Ottawa for burial.

Grace served as the Secretary of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, and as such he was in a sense “the face” of the club, for its plan was to bring itself into being by correspondence: prospective members were to clip out an application coupon from a newspaper and send it to Grace’s law office in Ottawa’s Canada Life building.

Although Grace was the driving force behind the Hillcrest venture, there is no sign that he was ever interested in golf, or even knew one end of a golf club from the other. From the beginning of his adult life, he was out to make a profit by founding miscellaneous joint stock companies with miscellaneous associates.

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club seems to have been just another of his many capitalist ventures.

William Michael Unger

Also a barrister, William Michael Unger was younger than Grace by eight years, having been born in 1895.



Figure 7 William Milton Unger (1895-1937), Calgary Albertan, 15 April 1918, p. 5. (

Unger was a life-long resident of what was then called Ottawa East, a village just outside Ottawa's boundary until it was officially amalgamated into the city in 1907.

A "well-known local barrister" by the 1920s, "Bill" Unger was also a budding capitalist, like Grace, and a serious literary scholar (*Ottawa Citizen*, 25 November 1929, p. 2). In 1924, for instance, he formed the de la Ronde Supply Company in Ottawa (to manufacture and deal in automobiles, trucks, motors, et.), and in the same year he was writing a 57-page Masters dissertation for the Department of English at the University of Ottawa, submitting in May of 1925 a thesis with the title: "The Catholic Element in English Literature' and 'The Spirit of Catholicity has Ever Permeated the

Works of Poets and Writers of Worth."

A devout Catholic, Unger had been a commerce student for two years at the University of Ottawa before World War I and then continued in its arts programme.



Figure 8 William M. Unger, Ottawa Citizen, 22 November 1937, p. 10

Like Grace, he moved to Toronto to study law, graduating from Osgoode Hall in 1920 (six years after Grace),

Unger established his law practice in Ottawa East. He would later run for the position of alderman on Ottawa's city council, and after that he would also run as an Independent Liberal candidate in Ottawa East.

He seems to have been the only one of the five incorporators of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club who developed an interest in golf as a game. In fact, he became a "better than average golfer" as "a member of the Chaudière Golf Club," perhaps the greatest rival to the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club in 1923 and 1924.

In 1936, in fact, Unger “entered the golfers’ Hall of Fame ... when he made a hole-in-one on the Chaudière course” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 22 November 1937, p. 10).

A life-long supporter of the Ottawa Roughriders football club, he was overcome with excitement in the fall of 1937 as Ottawa scored a last-minute touchdown to defeat the Toronto Argonauts, turning to his companion in jubilation and declaring “The game is over,” when he suddenly collapsed and died (*Ottawa Citizen*, 22 November 1937, p. 10).

William Unger was just 42.

Joseph Aristide-Aurore Vaillancourt

Like Unger, Joseph Aristide-Aurore Vaillancourt was a resident of Ottawa East in the 1920s. But he had been born in Black Lake, Quebec, in 1890.

A brilliant student at the Lasalle Academy in Ottawa, he worked after graduation for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, becoming head of the Ottawa office in 1912. In October of 1924, however, he moved to Montreal to take up a senior position in the Jules Hones Travel Agencies.

Vaillancourt eventually returned to Ottawa, however, and in 1941 he qualified to work for the civil service. He spent the rest of his career in the Department of External Affairs, receiving the Department's trophy for the team bowling championship of 1951 when Lester B. Pearson himself presented the awards.

Nearing retirement, Vaillancourt took up photography and won awards in Ottawa competitions. He died in 1953.

Uniquely among Ottawa's existing golf clubs in 1923, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club advertised for potential members in both French and English newspapers, and Vaillancourt may have been responsible for this policy. Upon his graduation from Ottawa's Lasalle Academy in the early 1900s, Vaillancourt made promotion of local francophone culture a mainstay of his community service ever afterwards.

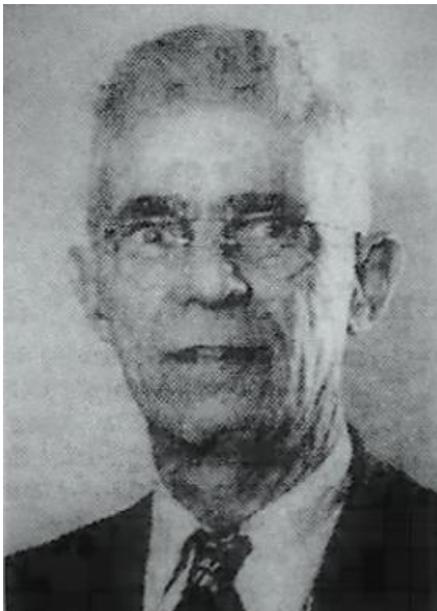


Figure 9 J.A. Vaillancourt, *Ottawa Citizen*, 1 December 1949, p. 35.

In 1914, for instance, he was elected vice-president of *La Gaité Canadienne - Français d'Ottawa*, and the next year served on its entertainment committee.

In the 1920s he and his wife Anna Galipeau were leading members of the *Cercle Mazenod de l'Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Canadienne*, hosting events in their own home in Ottawa East (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 April 1923, 12).

He also published an essay in *La Revue moderne* about a francophone's cross-country U.S. train trip in September and October of 1923 and proudly noted evidence in the life and times of Toronto, for instance, "*que nos avocats et nos médecins*

canadiens-français d'Ontario font connaître les belles qualités de notre race" (October 1924, p. 13).

He may also have hoped that at the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, *les golfeurs "canadiens-français ... font connaître les belles qualités de notre race."*

Winnifred Alice Arnold

Aspiring businesswoman Winnifred Alice Arnold was born in Brighton, County of Sussex, England, in 1901.

One of twelve siblings, she immigrated to Ottawa with her family in 1904 and by the age of six was winning running races at the summer picnic of the families of the Governor General's Foot Guards held at the Rockcliffe Rifle Range (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 May 1908, p. 9).

From her arrival in Canada to her entrance into Junior High School in 1914, she was affectionately known to family, friends, and teachers as "Winnie."

Having left England when she was three years old, Arnold nonetheless retained an attachment to the land of her birth, becoming as a young woman a member of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire.

During World War II, she was a member of the IODE's Lorraine Chapter in Ottawa, being chosen as the Regent's assistant in 1941. She later served as the Lorraine Chapter's Navy League convenor – raising charitable funds to purchase objects to benefit sailors on the Canadian navy ship that the chapter had adopted (*Ottawa Journal*, 12 October 1944, p. 6). In 1945, she was elected both Navy League convenor and the chapter's "standard bearer" (*Ottawa Journal*, 24 February 1945, p. 10). In 1943, as canteen treasurer, she had also been active in organizing increased provision of meals through the Girls' United War Services Canteen" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 18 March 1943, p. 5).

Arnold continued to display the entrepreneurial spirit shown in the Hillcrest incorporation of 1923 as she became involved in a number of business ventures in the years that followed, ranging from the Liberty Investing Corporation, in which she served on the Board of Directors in 1929 (its charter was surrendered in 1932) to Graphic Publishers, Limited, in which she served as a provisional director in 1929.

Although described as a bookkeeper in 1923 when incorporating the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Arnold was actually trained as a stenographer. In 1923, she worked for lawyer Charles L. Bray in Room 23 of the Canada Life Building, where Grace operated next door out of Room 25. She must have known the entrepreneurial Grace at least socially, if not professionally.

When her boss Bray accepted appointment as the Clerk of Carleton County Court and Registrar of the Surrogate Court, “Miss Arnold decided to break into the legal sphere” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 24 May 1951, p. 19). In fact, she became “an outstanding legal secretary,” working for many years in one of Ottawa’s leading law firms (*Ottawa Citizen*, 25 May 1951, p. 19).

Name Woman County Court Deputy Clerk

Miss Winnifred Arnold, of 172 O'Connor Street, an outstanding legal secretary in the Capital for a number of years, was yesterday formally appointed deputy clerk of the Carleton County Court and deputy registrar of the Surrogate Court for the County of Carleton by County Judge A. G. McDongall at the opening of County Court.

Figure 10 Ottawa Citizen, 24 May 1951, p. 19.

In 1951, however, on the recommendation of the Attorney-General, she was “appointed deputy clerk of the Carleton County Court and deputy registrar of the Surrogate Court for the County of Carleton” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 25 May 1951, p. 19).

She retired in February of 1966:

Staff Honors Court Official on Retirement

Miss Winnifred Arnold, assistant justice administration officer of the County and Surrogate courts, was honored by fellow members of the courthouse staff yesterday on the occasion of her retirement.

In presenting a departure gift, Senior County Judge Peter J.

Macdonald said Miss Arnold would be sorely missed by members of the legal profession and her post would be “a most difficult one to fill.” (Ottawa Citizen, 28 January 1966, p. 38).

Described in the 1950s as “a greying woman of considerable charm,” she never married (*Ottawa Citizen*, 25 May 1951, p. 19). Interestingly, however, she is mentioned prominently in the 1972 obituary of Mary Dorothy Hillis. We find Hillis described as “sister of Willard, and close friend of Miss Winnifred Arnold, cousin of Mrs. Margaret Crozier and Osborne Shields” (*Ottawa Journal*, 18 July 1972, p. 30).

Adding to the list of Hillis’s brother and two cousins the name of her “close friend” Winnifred, this obituary deploys a verbal formulation frequently used in the old days as an oblique indication of a same-sex relationship.

Well into the 1950s (and their own fifties), both “Miss W. Allen” and “Miss Dorothy Hillis” (a Registered Nurse and pioneering cancer Radiotherapy Technician who graduated from the Ottawa Civic Hospital School of Nursing in 1930) were regular fixtures “assisting” at showers given for young middle-class

women in their circle who were about to be married – women in those days quaintly referred to as “brides-elect” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 12 May 1950, p. 11).

Together, they were also “assistants” at “a successful tea and money shower in aid of St. Barnabas Church” in 1952 (*Ottawa Citizen*, 21 January 1952, p. 9).

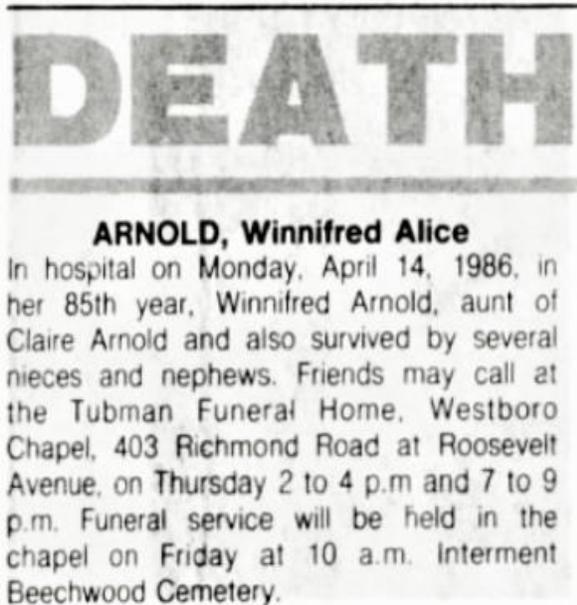


Figure 11 *Ottawa Citizen*, 17 April 1986, p. 65.

Winnifred Arnold died in 1986.

The death notice seen to the left suggests that no one replaced Dorothy Hillis.

Incidentally, I can find no reference to Winnifred Arnold as ever having been a golfer.

Interestingly, however, as we shall soon see, advertisements for the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club promoted it as a progressive, democratic organization, one of the prominent features of which would be its granting of equal access to all golf facilities by both men and women. One wonders if the confident, forceful young entrepreneur

Winnifred Arnold was responsible for the aspect of the Hillcrest club’s advertising that addressed the golf-and-country-club aspirations of women in particular.

Reta Viola Reaume

One of the young women at whose shower Winnifred Arnold assisted was that of her fellow incorporator and fellow stenographer: bride-elect Reta Viola Reaume.

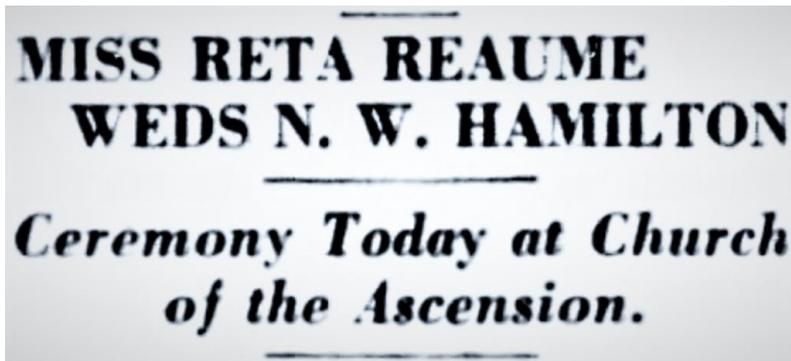


Figure 12 Ottawa Citizen, 19 September 1929, p. 29.

In September of 1929, in a wedding socially significant enough to get its own headline in the *Ottawa Citizen*, Reta married Norman Robert Walter Hamilton in Ottawa, and after their honeymoon in New York and Atlanta, the couple lived in Montreal.

Reta was the youngest of the five incorporating members of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. She was just 19 years old when the club was founded. The year before, when she was still 18, she became a corporate member and provisional director with Wilfrid Grace of the Silica Rock Company of Ottawa.

She still lived at home with her parents on Echo Drive.

In 1923, she was a stenographer for lawyer Stanley G. Metcalfe, whose office was located in the Canada Life Building where Grace's office was located: Metcalfe had Room 24 and Grace had Room 25. Given Grace's invitations to the teenager to participate in certain of his entrepreneurial adventures, one presumes that Reta knew him professionally or socially.

Or perhaps her friend Winnifred Arnold was responsible for Reta's involvement with Grace and the gang in the Hillcrest venture.

Reta (sometimes spelled Rita) Reaume (sometimes spelled Rhéaume) was born in 1903 in Buckingham, Quebec, where her grandfather had settled in 1878 as head of the shipping department of Ross Brothers of Quebec City, a company prominent in the waning days of the square timber industry (*Ottawa Citizen*, 23 December 1919, p. 15). But her mother and father moved Reta and her two older brothers to Ottawa East when she was a toddler. Like her friend Arnold, Reaume was an athletic young girl. When she was just **five** years old, for instance, we find her finishing third in the 100-yard race for girls **under ten** at the

1909 picnic of Holy Trinity Church, where her father was an alderman (*Ottawa Citizen*, 15 July 1909, p. 3). Four years later she finished first (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1913, p. 5).

Whether or not she was a golfer is unknown.

Reta Hamilton died in 1967 and was buried in Ottawa's Pinecrest Cemetery.

The Stanley Thompson Golf Courses

There were to be two golf courses: an eighteen-hole championship course and a nine-hole ladies' course.

When did Thompson come to Ottawa to lay out these courses?

Thompson probably visited the Hillcrest property when he was attending to matters at the Marlborough Golf and Country Club of Montreal. He had inspected this new club's land at Cartierville and drawn up plans for two golf courses in the fall of 1922: "The course itself was inspected and laid out last fall by Stanley Thompson, golf architect, and plans call for 27 holes, including an 18-hole championship course and a nine-hole ladies' course. The 9th and 18th greens of the main course and the 9th green of the short course will all be within view of the verandah" (*Gazette* [Montreal], 2 March 1923, p. 16).



Figure 13 Photograph of the clubhouse of the Marlborough Golf and Country Club and part of the three green complexes located around its. The golf course no longer exists.

A regular practice by Thompson, the grouping of greens around the Marlborough clubhouse – two ninth greens and an eighteenth green – was to be a feature at Hillcrest, too.



Figure 14 Stanley Thompson circa 1923.

Thompson personally supervised the beginning of the work at the Marlborough club at the end of April in 1923: “With a view to having nine holes ready for the first of June, Stanley Thompson, the golf course architect, of Toronto, started the work yesterday afternoon of laying out the course of the Marlborough Golf Club.... Thompson will lay out twenty-seven holes, the temporary nine holes to be laid out first” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 21 April 1923, p. 23).

After his April work on the Marlborough Golf and Country Club course, Thompson travelled at the beginning of May to northern Ontario and Manitoba to lay out two golf courses: “Stanley Thompson, golf architect, Toronto, is in Winnipeg in connection with laying out the new Niakwa club course and also the new course at Kenora” (*Winnipeg Tribune*, 12 May 1923, p. 2).

At the request of the Board of Directors of the Marlborough Golf and Country Club, Thompson returned to Montreal on May 21st to promote his plans for the two golf courses at a meeting of the shareholders: “Plans for the coming season, the first in the club’s history, were formulated at a meeting of the shareholders of the new Marlborough Golf Club held last night at the Mount Royal Hotel. Over 130 shareholders assembled Stanley Thompson, golf architect, spoke enthusiastically of the course which he is to lay out” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 22 May 1923, p. 7).

Since visiting two or more golf sites on one trip was an economically sensible part of Thompson's *modus operandi*, it is likely to have been around the time of this late-May visit to Montreal that he came to Ottawa to inspect the 180 acres of farmland north of the Royal Ottawa golf course that the Hillcrest promoters proposed to purchase.



Figure 15 Lieutenant Kenneth Welton (1894-1988), 4th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery, 14 January 1918.

Kenneth Welton's subsequent letter on 12 June 1923 about the suitability of the land for championship golf course development suggests that he himself was also personally quite familiar with the property's features, so I presume that he accompanied Thompson to Ottawa at his time.

Thompson and Welton did not immediately provide the promoters of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club with a blueprint for the two golf courses they laid out; rather, they provided a scale-drawn sketch of Thompson's routing for twenty-seven holes.

Perhaps the latter was more suitable to the club's advertising purposes.

For to announce the formation of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club and to outline its plans, the Board of Directors published an advertisement on 4 July 1923 in the *Ottawa Citizen*, the *Ottawa Journal*, and *Le droit*. These advertisements referred readers to an "accompanying sketch" of the course design, but this sketch was accidentally omitted from all three newspapers (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

Better late than never, however, the sketch seen below appeared eight weeks later in a newspaper article about the club's nine-hole ladies' course. (Note that I have coloured the ladies' course blue, the front nine of the championship course green, and the back nine of the championship course yellow, and I have added hole numbers otherwise difficult to make out on the original newspaper image.)

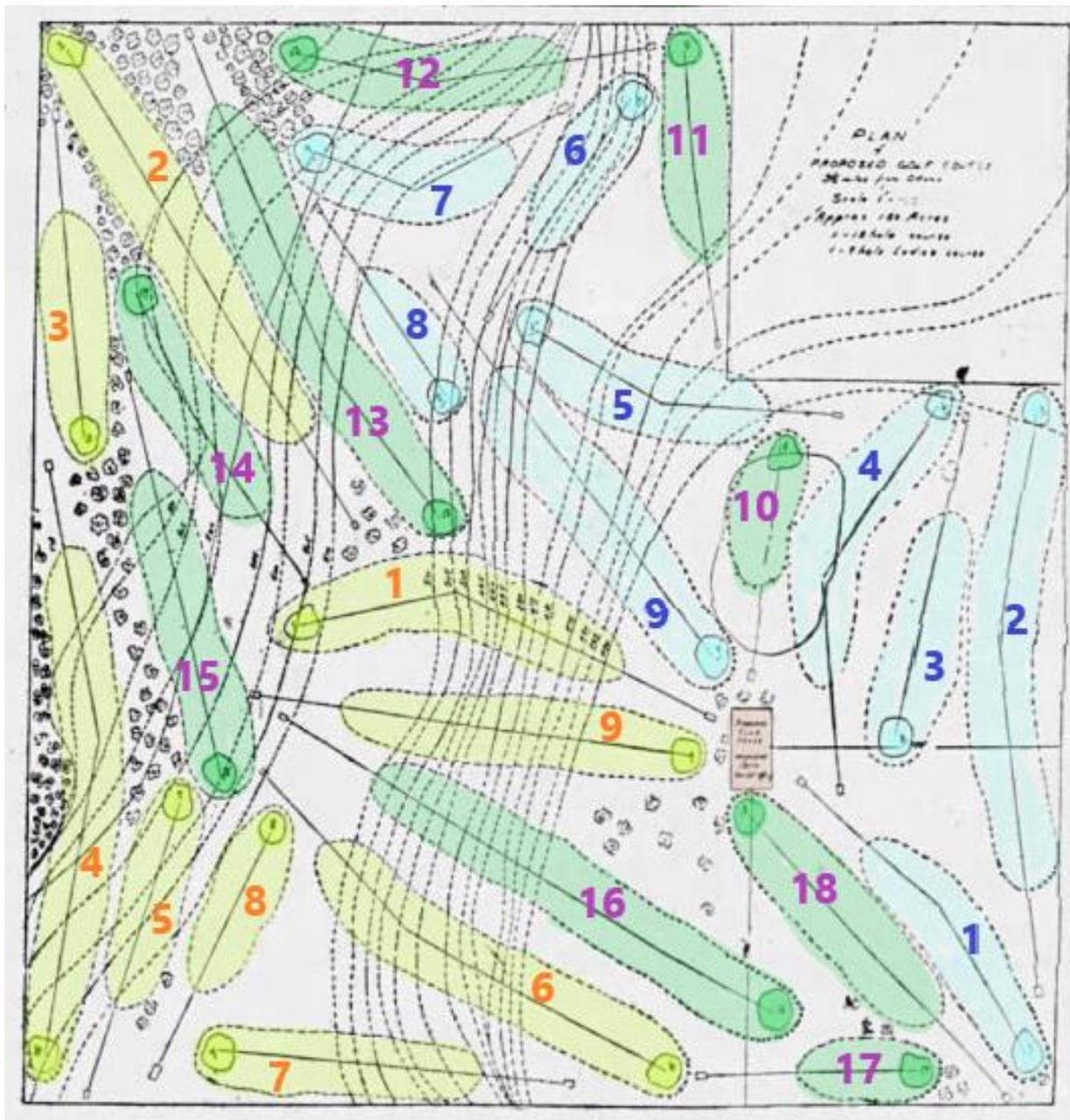


Figure 16 Modified, enhanced sketch by Stanley Thompson & Co. of the 27 holes to be built for the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p.3. I have coloured the clubhouse light brown. The nine-hole ladies' is coloured blue; the first nine holes of the championship course are coloured green; the second nine holes of the championship course are coloured yellow.

The Scorecard

Welton told the Hillcrest promoters that their proposed golf-course property could “certainly” accommodate “27 holes of championship length.” What did Stanley Thompson & Company regard as a “championship length” golf course in 1923?

Note the company’s plan for the Marlborough Golf and Country Club: “the 18-hole course will be 6, 250 yards long. The 9-hole course will be 2,500 yards long” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 5 May 1923, p. 18). In the spring of 1923, Thompson also laid out a 6,500-yard course for the Uplands Golf Club of Toronto.

Hillcrest Golf & Country Club		
Scorecard		
Championship		Ladies
1 380	10 210	1 320
2 510	11 270	2 480
3 290	12 310	3 290
4 530	13 460	4 330
5 280	14 300	5 280
6 430	15 360	6 220
7 300	16 470	7 230
8 230	17 180	8 170
9 360	18 340	9 360
3,310 yd	2,900 yd	2,680 yd
6,210 yd		

If we take the Marlborough length as the length proposed for Hillcrest’s eighteen-hole course, then interpretation of the scale-drawn sketch suggests that the front nine of the championship course was about 3,300 yards long, the back nine of the championship course was about 2,900 yards long, and the ladies’ course was about 2,680 yards long.

Further interpretation of the scale-drawn sketch allows the length of the individual holes to be suggested on the “reconstructed” scorecard shown to the left.

Figure 17 This scorecard derives from an interpretation of the scale-drawn sketch of the Hillcrest layout, assuming that the championship course was to be about 6,200 yards long.

If, however, the championship course was planned to be somewhere between 6,350 and 6,500 yards long, then adding approximately ten yards to figures for the shortest holes, fifteen yards to the figures for the mid-length holes, and twenty yards to figures for the longest holes would produce a reasonably accurate scorecard for a Hillcrest championship course of that length (and the same calculation could be made for the ladies' course).

The Contours of a Design

A 1925 topographical map of the area shows that the land rises from just under 250 feet above sea level on its south-east corner to a height of over 275 feet above sea level at its north-west corner.

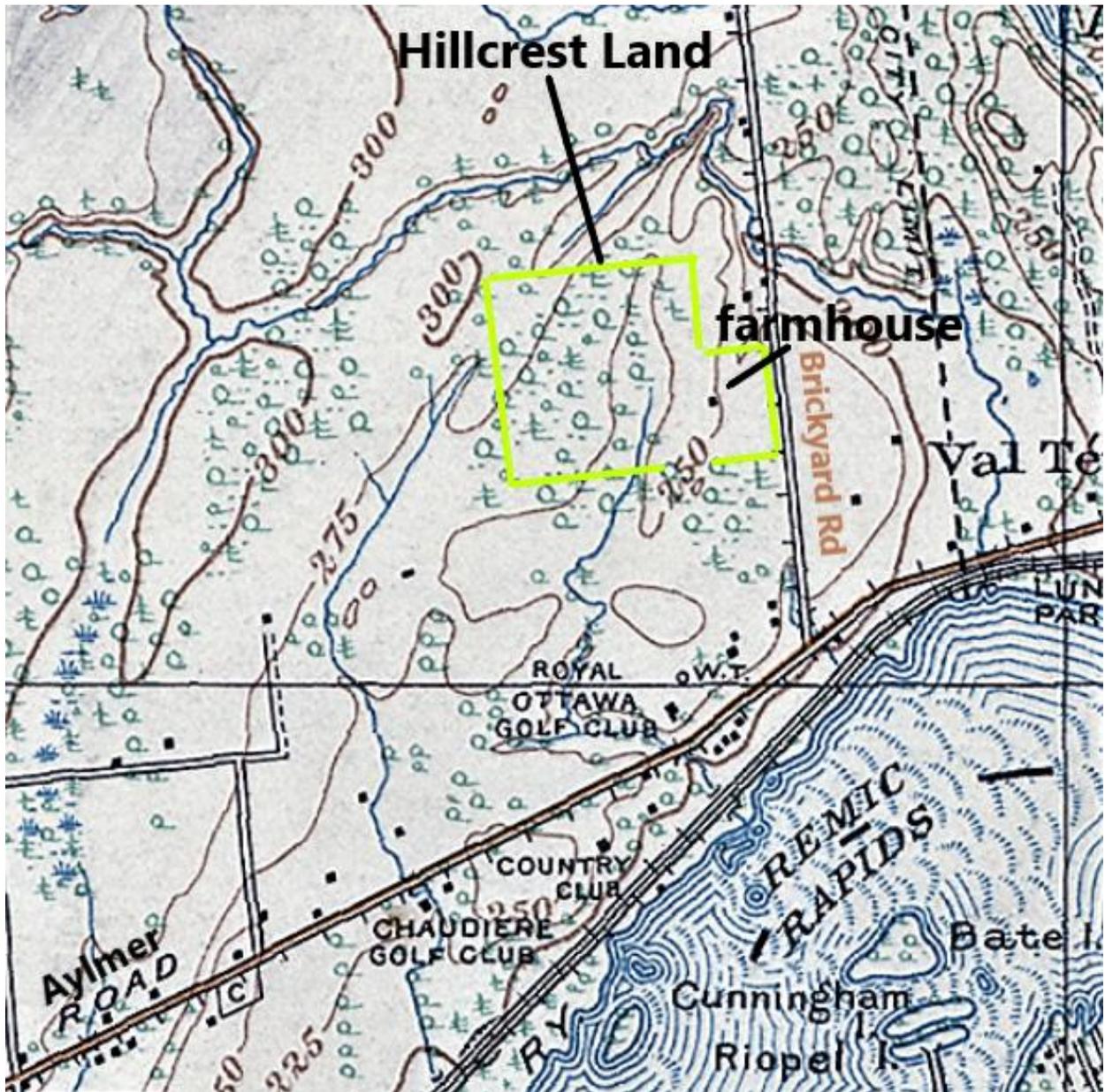


Figure 18 Geographical Section, General Staff, Department of National Defence, 1 January 1925. Detail enlarged and annotated.

Welton, who made the drainage of golf courses one of his specialties, may have been the one who drew the contour lines on the sketch of the twenty-seven holes provided by Stanley Thompson & Company.



Figure 19 Enlarged, annotated detail from Stanley Thompson & Company sketch of the Hillcrest golf course.

These contour lines are numbered from 470 to 515. It is not clear what unit of measurement these numbers represent. Clearly the topographic map's convention of drawing contour lines according to 25-foot increments was not subtle enough for Stanley Thompson & Company. Perhaps Chief Engineer Welton used a half-foot measure, by which 250 feet became 500 half-feet. His numbers make sense according to this hypothesis.

The area of the sketch on which the contour lines were labelled appears to the left. It shows the two main ridges and ravines on the course.

We also see to the left Thompson's design for the approximately 380-yard first hole of the championship course. It was a dogleg hole turning left, with the drive required to carry a ravine dropping gently twenty feet below the tee box and rising gently towards the crook of the dogleg where Thompson placed the landing area, which was ten feet above the tee box.

A drive hit too far through the corner of the dogleg would end up in trees.

Another feature of the hole that the contour lines on the sketch allow us to appreciate is the location of the green: the front edge of the green is at approximately the same level as the fairway, but the area behind the green drops 7.5 feet.

Recall that Lyon reported that the Hillcrest land had natural features that would be exploited by an architect: "the ridge running through the centre, and the further ridge on the north side, will afford great

possibilities for unusually interesting holes and the several ravines on the property will make good natural hazards." The sketch provided by Stanley Thompson & Company proves Lyon's prescience: Thompson oriented not just the first hole of the championship course across ravine and ridge, but every hole that he could – on both the championship course and the ladies' course.

Also routed alongside the first hole across the deepest ravine on the property from ridge to ridge were the par-4 sixth, par-4 seventh, par-4 ninth, and par-5 sixteenth holes of the championship course and the par-4 fifth and par-4 ninth holes of the ladies' course.

Routed across the shallower ravine were the par-5 second, par-5 fourth, par-3 fifth, par-4 twelfth, par-5 thirteenth, par-4 fourteenth, and par-4 fifteenth holes of the championship course, as well as the par-4 seventh hole of the ladies' course.

Two of Thompson's holes were interestingly routed along the sides of the ravines: the short par-4 fifth hole of the championship course teed off from the top of the central ridge and descended along the side of the shallow ravine to its bottom; the short par-4 sixth hole of the ladies' course was routed for its entire length along the west side of the hill that ascended from east to west out of the deepest ravine.

Unfortunately, Thompson's bunkering does not appear on the sketch. Recall, however, that contemporaneous with his layout at Hillcrest was his layout at Marlborough, where he applied the following design philosophy:

"One criticism which may be directed at the Marlborough course is that it is too easy," commented Mr. Stanley Thompson, of Toronto, the architect who designed the new club at Cartierville, and he added, "But, while the fairways are comparatively easy, the greens have been well trapped and bunkered. It must be remembered that the so-called 'average' player forms ninety-two per cent. of the membership of all clubs, and it ought to be the main aim to provide the most enjoyment for the greater number." (Gazette [Montreal], 30 April 1924, p. 16)

So perhaps it is only bunkering around the greens that is missing from the sketch above.

Kenneth Welton

When Stanley Thompson decided in 1921 to form his own company in succession to Thompson, Cumming & Thompson (which he had formed with brother Nicol and their mentor George Cumming, the golf professional of the Toronto Golf Club), his experiences in Europe during World War I left him determined to employ as many Great War veterans as possible: the most prominent among them was his Chief Engineer, Kenneth Welton.

Welton was born on 15 July 1894, the son of Baptists Herbert R. Welton and Mary Speir. His father was a barrister who had come to Toronto from Nova Scotia in the late 1880s. His mother had been born in New Jersey.

Young Welton, then, was a Toronto boy from the start, attending school and playing sports in the city. He was an athletic boy, fond of competition in the gymnasium and on the track, and he also played rugby at a high level.

Eager to do his bit during the war that broke out in August of 1914, Welton enlisted in the Canadian militia. He served two months in Kingston in 1915 with the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, and in the spring of 1916 joined the 71st Battery of the Canadian Field Artillery in St. Catherines.

All this was while he was a student at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, where he was enrolled from 1912 to 1916. Academically, he ranked near the middle of his class, but he was a serious student and an accomplished researcher. In 1915, he published an article in the *OAC Review*, and then he published another (“Balanced Rations for Poultry”) in a newspaper called the *Montreal Weekly Witness and Homestead* (16 November 1915, p. 12). In 1916, he completed a fourth-year thesis on “The Value of Feeding Weed Seeds to Poultry for Crate Fattening” (see *OAC Review*, vol 29 no 9 [May 1917], p. 399).

Welton was not a big man, growing to just five feet, seven inches in height, but he enjoyed competing at a variety of sports at college, including sports of the rough and tumble variety. He played on his graduating year’s hockey team, and he played for the College’s rugby team. But he was best known for his accomplishments on the track: “he was well-known as an athlete, being the winner of many medals as a long-distance runner” (*Toronto Star*, 23 June 1917, p. 1).

In October of 1916, Lieutenant Welton was sent overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, serving in the First Canadian Division.



Figure 20 Lieutenant Kenneth Welton, 4th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery, 14 January 1918.

Sent to France on April Fool's Day in 1917, he served two months in the trenches before, "in action" at Vimy (a couple of months after the more famous battle) he suffered a gunshot wound to the left lumbar region of the back on 19 June 1917. His legs were paralyzed for a short time by a contusion of the spine, but he soon regained sensation in them. He spent the next three months in York Hill War Hospital in Glasgow recovering from "severe wounds" (*Toronto Star*, 23 June 1917, p. 1; *The Globe* [Toronto], 25 June 1917, p. 9).

Lieutenant Welton was discharged from the hospital and given a month's leave because of the following observation: "He has some pain in the back, and is nervous, and easily fatigued." Doctors knew that the latter two symptoms were sometimes associated with what was then called "Shell Shock" (today known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). Nervousness and fatigue might develop into other typical shell-shock symptoms: loss of appetite, insomnia, uncontrollable trembling, and so on.

And so, the next observation in his medical file – "No tremor, sleeps and eats well. Feels fit and is fit" – shows that the medical board found no signs of "Shell Shock" after Welton completed his leave and so he was judged fit for duty.

Welton returned to France at the end of October in 1917 and served in the field until he was attached to the Royal Flying Corp from July of 1918 to January of 1919 as an "observer officer": an aircrew member whose job was to conduct reconnaissance by taking photographs of enemy

positions, troop movements, fortifications, equipment, and so on.



Figure 21 During World War I, a pilot has landed the airplane, and the observer immediately hands the reconnaissance camera to a member of the ground crew, who will give it to the soldier on the motorcycle to rush the camera's negative plates to headquarters for development and analysis.

Welton returned to Canada and signed his demobilization papers in March of 1919.

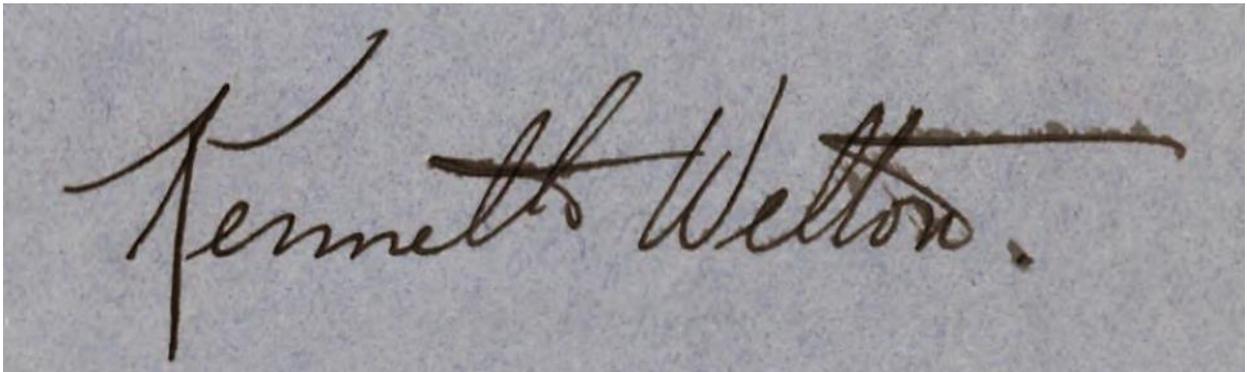


Figure 22 Kenneth Welton's signature on his demobilization papers in March of 1919.

For the rest of his life, Welton carried a bullet fragment in his body near the eleventh dorsal vertebra.

Immediately after his return to Canada, Welton also returned to his first love: agriculture.

During his first year back in Canada, he worked on a farm in Clarkson, Ontario, the *OAC Review* reporting that "It is rumoured that 'Blondie' Wilson '16 and 'Kenny' Welton '16 have gone into partnership on a farm north of Toronto" (vol 31 no 9 [May 1919], p. 441).

Wilson and Welton had been buddies throughout their time at OAC. They represented their graduating year on the hockey team, and their erudite banter was represented in the *OAC Review*:

Welton – “I don’t want to sign my name to this article. I think I’ll sign Cognosco.”

Wilson – “Why no, if you don’t want it to be known, sign it, Incognosco.”

(vol 28 no 4 [Dec. 1915], p. 176)

The outdoor life that farming involved was not enough for Welton; he also loved camping. He spent part of the fall of 1919 camping in Algonquin Park.

GOLF

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A FEW RECENT COMMISSIONS

Mississauga Golf & Country Club, Toronto; Grove Beach Golf & Country Club, Walkersville; Lewiston Heights Golf and Country Club, N.Y.; Municipal Golf Clubs, Toronto; Wanaka Golf & Country Club, Buffalo; Summit Golf & Country Club, Toronto; Muskoka Lakes Golf & Country Club; Brantford Golf & Country Club; Owen Sound Golf & Country Club; Bigwin Inn Golf Club; Royal Muskoka Hotel Golf Club; Briars Golf & Country Club, Jackson's Point; Lake Shore Golf & Country Club, Toronto; Thornhill Golf & Country Club, Toronto; Trumbull Golf & Country Club, Warren, Ohio.

STANLEY THOMPSON & CO., Limited
Golf and Landscape Engineers, Architects
24 King Street West,
Toronto

MONTREAL
New Birks Building

CLEVELAND
Lansax Building

Figure 23 Canadian Golfer, vol 8 no 1 (May 1922), p. 23.

But in 1921, Stanley Thompson came calling.

He explained that he was forming his own company “to plan, design, construct, repair, develop, maintain, grade and survey golf courses,” as well as “to contract for the construction, alteration, improvement, removal and destruction of buildings of every kind and designation,” and he invited Welton to become a founding member (*Canada Gazette*, vol 55 no 15 [October 1921], pp. 1499-1500).

And so, on 30 September 1921, “Stanley Thompson & Company, Limited,” was incorporated, with “Kenneth Welton, Professor in Agriculture,” named the only corporate member who was not also a member of the Thompson family (*Canada Gazette*, vol 55 no 15 [October 1921], p. 1499).

Welton also enjoyed playing golf, and was a better-than-average player, scoring in the mid-80s on top courses in Canada and the United

States. After World War I, he was a member of the Mississauga Golf Club alongside Stanley Thompson and a number of the latter’s brothers. He won the club’s low net championship in the early 1920s. In

1923, he also served on the Board of Directors at the Bayview Golf Club. This appointment was probably in relation to his role in Stanley Thompson & Company, which was then adding a second nine holes to the Bayview course.

In the fall of 1923, Welton married Margaret Jessie Trail Russell, a native of Pembroke, Ontario. (He may have met her when he was posted to the army base at Petawawa near Pembroke for several months in 1916 before he sailed for England.)

Golf was part of his marriage from the start, as we can see when his Mississauga Golf Club friends gave him a stag party: "About twenty of the young bachelor friends in Mississauga Golf Club" tendered him "a dinner at the club house" in celebration of the upcoming marriage: "It was a very jolly gathering" (*Toronto Daily Star*, 12 October 1923, p. 4). Similarly, it seems that the Welton honeymoon also had a golf theme: we find "Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Welton, Toronto, Canada," at the Pinehurst Inn in North Carolina (*Pinehurst Outlook*, 15 December 1923, p. 12).

Yet neither his marriage to Margaret nor his relationship with Thompson lasted very long. Margaret resumed her unmarried name and never re-married (dying in Toronto in 1973). Welton seems to have finished with Stanley Thompson & Company by the end of the 1924 season, for in March of 1925, he immigrated to the United States to join his mother in New Jersey, declaring at the border that he was a salesman coming to the United States seeking work. He indicated that his nearest relative back in Canada was his sister Katherine.

Perhaps it was the breakdown of his marriage that led Welton to leave both Toronto and Thompson for a new life in the United States.

By at least 1928, Welton was working for the Department of Agriculture in Washington. He wrote to his alma mater to announce in the "Changes in Graduate List" of the *OAC Review* that as of 1928 he was "Turf Specialist for the 'Green Section' of the United States Golf Association" (*O.A.C. Review*, vol 41 no 8 [April 1929], p. 369).

Although Welton worked in the Washington Bureau of the Department of Agriculture, he regularly attended U.S.G.A. meetings held throughout the United States to discuss problems submitted by greenkeepers, to answer questions on turf problems from delegates, and to deliver papers. His topic in 1932 was "Soils Structure of Putting Greens" (*NYT*, 20 January 1932, p. 23).

And he also travelled widely to speak to meetings of greenkeepers. In 1929, he addressed the Greenkeeper's Club of New England on "Some Problems Facing Greenkeepers." In 1931, he addressed the green section of the Central Ohio Golf Association on "Traps, Their Location and Maintenance." In January of 1932, he helped to organize the "educational conference held in conjunction with the annual golf show and convention of the National Greenkeepers Association," discussing "the upkeep of golf courses" with "more than 600 greenkeepers" (*New York Times*, 21 January 1932, p. 26). In September of 1932, we read that Kenneth Welton, "one of America's foremost authorities on turf culture," "will come to Des Moines Wednesday to discuss turf problems with members of the Iowa Greenkeepers Association" (*Des Moines Register*, 4 September 1932, p. 12). In 1934, he was one of the professors appointed to lecture in a course for greenkeepers at the University of Minnesota (*Monroe News-Star* [Monroe, Louisiana], 7 March 1934, p. 7).

Welton was part of a ground-breaking group of turf specialists creating new varieties of grasses, investigating turf diseases, devising optimum seeding, growth, and maintenance procedures, and so on. He and his U.S.G.A. colleagues were immediately recognized as essential innovators in the game of golf:

They are true pioneers into a new science, these men whose efforts are responsible for making your golf course a better course. The golfers of America should rise up and give a hearty vote of thanks to such men as Drs. Karl F. Kellerman, John Monteith, Harvey L. Westover, Kenneth Welton and their associates who have done so much to improve golf playgrounds all over the Nation. (Evening Star [Washington, D.C.], 1 February 1933, p. C-2).

Welton was also in charge of determining which grasses were best for putting surfaces and so he devised a blind experiment involving the game's top pros:

A "blindfold test" to determine which of many species of putting grasses is the best liked by leading professional golfers of the country is to be conducted by the greens section of the United States Golf Association at the Arlington Turf Garden next Friday. Invitations today are going out to most of the pros who will play in the National Capital open to go over to the turf garden equipped with their favorite putters to test out the putting qualities of the various kinds of grasses, most of which can be found of pure strain at the experimental garden plant of the Department of Agriculture.

After the pros have puttied on at least 10 different kinds of putting green grasses they will be asked to give their opinion as to which they like best There will be no marks of any kind on the grasses to tell beforehand what kind of grass is being used.

The test, according to Kenneth Welton of the United States Golf Association green section, can only be held here in Washington, where so many strains of pure putting green grasses are available, and are expected to be of immense value to the greens section

“We will value the results of these tests as expert opinion,” Welton said today. “Certainly the pros are equipped as few golfers are to decide what kind of putting green grass is best. We know that some do not like creeping bent because of the grain of the grass. Others do not like poa annua, while others favor a fescue. With this unbiased test, in which the pros will not know what grass they are using, we hope to obtain some valuable opinions on putting green grasses.”
(Evening Star [Washington], 7 November 1932, p. 29)

Among the famous pros who brought their favorite putters to Welton’s Arlington Turf Garden to test the pure putting green grasses were Tommy Armour and Walter Hagen.



Figure 24 Arlington Turf Garden, Washington, D.C. Golf Illustrated, March 1934, p. 35.

Yet it is also clear that Welton’s architectural experience was a resource of which the U.S.G.A. availed itself. In the early 1930s, the U.S.G.A. relied on Welton to assess whether golf courses chosen to hold national amateur championships were of the required calibre.

In advance of the U.S.G.A.’s 1932 national amateur championship at the Baltimore Country Club, for instance, Welton was sent to Maryland to “to check up on previous reports sent back to the U.S.G.A. regarding the changes needed in the local course for the national amateur tournament Welton ... agreed that the course already was up to the required standard for the national event” (*Baltimore Sun*,

17 February 1932, p. 16). But that turns out to have been a version of every architect's conventional compliment to a club's green committee before providing the list of recommended changes:

They deal with alterations to traps and addition of new ones, and relocation of tees.

On the first hole the exact position of the trap across the fairway was indicated. It is placed just at the rise of the fairway, about 325 yards from the tee. On this hole it was also recommended that the traps be opened to the view of the approaching player, making them less blind than at present.

An additional tee for the second hole, toward the hedge at the left of the present tee and 15 yards back of it, is desired to direct the shot away from the out-of-bounds hedge line, rather than towards it, as the present layout suggests.

Opening of the traps on No. 3 green for the same purpose as on the first hole is the only change there.

The addition of a tee-shot trap between the fifth and sixth fairways ... was approved with the proposal that a new and larger tee be built ... to the right of the fourth green.... This will add 20 to 25 yards to the hole, placing the traps in a proper relation to the tee....

The new trap on the eighteenth hole, to the right of the green, was sanctioned, and still another one stretching to the right in order to close the opening of the green This will result in leaving only an opening of about twenty yards for a pitch and run shot, plus the necessity of playing the drive far to the left, away from the angle of the dog leg. An effort to save distance by playing close to the corner will create the problem of carrying the green with the second shot because of the new traps. (Baltimore Sun, 2 April 1932, p. 15).

This summary of Welton's recommendations for the Matimore Country Club makes clear that Welton carried with him the lessons of strategic architectural design promulgated by Stanley Thompson.

By 1933, the Great Depression led to funding cuts for the experimental turf unit of the Green Section of the U.S.G.A. of which Welton was such an important part. Shocked by these budget cuts, famous golf architect A.W. Tillinghast sounded the alarm in the spring of 1934 in an article called, "This Work Must Not Falter." On the one hand, he observes, "Under the new restrictions the service for the entire country is shouldered by Dr. John Monteith, Jr., and his assistant Kenneth Welton, at Washington, D.C. Intimate familiarity with the progress of the Green Section since it was founded enables me to say that

never was the department in more capable hands nor so faithfully and intelligently directed" (*Golf Illustrated*, March 1934, p. 35). On the other hand,

The great work of the Green Section ... is in jeopardy. Is it to be destroyed utterly? It is no time to temporize. The situation is desperately urgent for immediate action and relief. As a creator of golf courses in all parts of our country for thirty years, it is likely that I am peculiarly qualified to speak with a through knowledge of the subject, and none can be more disturbed in viewing the impending catastrophe. I am crying "murder" before it may be done. (Golf Illustrated, March 1934, p. 35)

Welton's friends at the golf industry magazine *Golfdom* used the fact of the budget cuts to the Green Section for a more humorous purpose:

Ken Welton, Green Section Expert, Gets Married

Kenneth Welton, of the Green Section, USGA, and Miss Heidi Roos of River Forest, Ill., were married Jan. 21. They will be home after March 1 at 2511 Davenport Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

One look at the lovely Roos girl is ample explanation for Welton getting married despite reduction in the Green Section budget. Nothing seems to put love off the gold standard. (Golfdom, February 1933, p. 52)

The budgetary turmoil in the Green Section notwithstanding, Welton continued in his important work for the U.S.G.A. until the end of 1935, when he was appointed to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, which had just moved to Dayton, Ohio



Figure 25 Kenneth Welton, Dayton Daily News, 23 August 1936, p. 7.

His official title was Assistant Regional Conservator, Administration and Lands and Program Coordination. By 1945, he was working for the Indiana Soil Conservation Department as State Supervisor, and he was also Secretary of the State Soil Conservation Committee (*Journal and Courier* [Lafayette, Indiana], 7 February 1945, p. 3).

By the early 1950s, a staff of 175 employees worked under his direction.

But Welton still kept his interest in golf turf.

In addition to lecturing at Purdue University on soil conservation topics, he was also closely associated with the “experimental turf plots on the Purdue University farm”; in fact, at the university’s 1946 turf conference “attended by 210 specialists from eleven states,” one “afternoon was given to a symposium on drainage problems in green construction, in charge of Kenneth Welton, Lafayette” (*The Indianapolis Star*, 12 March 1946, p. 20).

In the late 1940s, Purdue commissioned Welton to build the university a second eighteen-hole golf course: “Ken Welton, who was with architect Stanley Thompson before he went with [the] USGA Green Section, designed and supervised construction of Purdue university’s new 6800 yd. course.... This fine second 18 holes at Purdue will be its tournament course” (*Golfdom*, October 1949, p. 3). Welton incorporated his construction project into his instruction at Purdue on land use: “Kenneth Welton, director of the soil conservation service of Indiana, discussed the construction of the new course on a tour of the new Purdue links” (*Journal and Courier* [Lafayette, Indiana], 28 September 1948, p. 3).

In 1994, celebrated golf architect Pete Dye was commissioned to renovate the old Welton course.



Figure 26 Contemporary photograph of the Pete Dye redesign of the Welton course at Purdue University. (It is today called the "Kampen Course.")

Unknowingly, Dye matched his design principles to environmental principles championed by Welton.

In a way that would have warmed Welton's heart, Dye collaborated with Purdue's departments of Forestry, Entomology, Water Quality Testing, and Agronomy to produce a 7,400-yard links-style layout of native grasslands and man-made wetlands that is today one of the top collegiate golf courses in the United States.

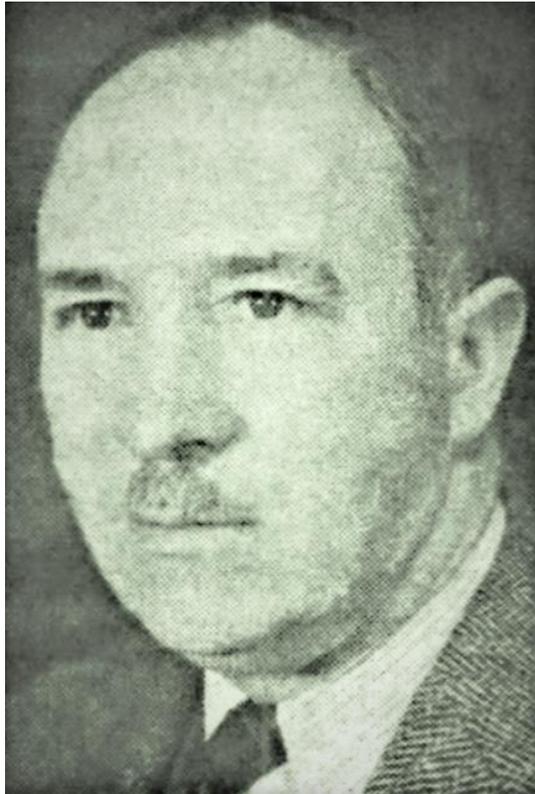


Figure 27 Kenneth Welton, Palladium-Item (Richmond, Indiana), 12 May 1945, p. 7.

Over the course of his career for the Department of Agriculture, Welton authored dozens of articles, ranging from "Golf Course Construction" published in a *U.S.G.A. Bulletin* in 1928 to articles on golf-course maintenance and putting green construction in the golf industry magazine *Golfdom* from the early 1930s to 1949. He also published articles on the maintenance of crop soils and the prevention of erosion on farmlands from the mid-1930s to the 1960s.

He maintained his interest in competitive amateur golf throughout his career. He regularly played in amateur tournaments around Washington, D.C. His best result came in 1934: "Kenneth Welton, of the U.S.G.A. greens committee, won top honors in the Middle Atlantic Greenkeepers' Association golf tournament today at Columbia" (Baltimore Sun, 23 October 1934, p. 15). He was a member of the Congressional Country Club, still

one of the top golf courses in the United States, where he seems to have been among the top four amateur members (*Evening Star* [Washington], 4 September 1933, p. 11).

After his work at Hillcrest in 1923, his renovation of the golf course of the Baltimore Country Club in 1932, and his design and construction of the Purdue University course in 1948, Welton resumed his career as a golf architect in the 1960s:

Welton and Collett Form Golf Architecture Firm

Kenneth Welton and Don Collett have formed a golf architecture partnership. Their offices are at 5646 Clarence Ave., La Jolla, Calif. Soon to be announced are three new jobs of their design. Collett retains his job as pro at Coronado (Calif.) CC. He has won numerous southern California

PGA and Open events and is highly regarded by fellow pros as a competent course designer. Welton is widely known for his work as a member of the USGA green section staff and for his agronomy and drainage work with the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. At one time he worked for the noted Canadian architect, Stanley Thompson. (Golfdom, June 1963, p. 116)



Figure 28 Golfdom, September 1963, p. 91.

Welton's much younger partner Don Collett (1926-2016) was a good professional golfer who had qualified for three Major championships by the early 1960s, even playing a practice round at the 1959 U.S. Open at Winged Foot with a nineteen-year old amateur named Jack Nicklaus. He was a good friend of star players Billy Casper and Gene Littler, with whom he produced *How to Master the Irons: An Illustrated Guide to Better Golf* in 1962, the first of a number of best-selling golf books co-written with Littler and Casper. Collett would go on to found the first version of the Golf Hall of Fame in Pinehurst, North Carolina, in the mid-1970s.

The identity of the three designs by Welton and Collett is not clear. But Collett went on to form a company along with his sons and later said: "All told, my company, Don Collett & Associates, has developed and/or managed 24 golf courses throughout the United States" (*The Well: Surviving a Summer of Terror in the Western Nevada* [New York: iUniverse, 2005], p. 283).

One of Welton's last designs was the Miramar Memorial Golf Course, a military golf course at the Miramar Naval Air Station in Sand Diego, which he co-designed with Jack Daray, Jr. Daray's father was himself a golf course architect and in 1947 was one of the fourteen founding members, along with Stanley Thompson, of the American Association of Golf Course Architects. One of the first courses that

Jack Daray, Jr., designed (along with his father) was the Coronado course where Collett was the head pro when it opened in 1957. Collett presumably later put Daray, Jr., in touch with his former partner Welton.



Figure 29 A contemporary photograph of the signature hole at the Miramar Memorial Golf Course, San Diego, California, designed by Kenneth Welton and Jack Daray, Jr.

Miramar Memorial Golf Course remains a thriving operation today.

Heidi, with whom Welton had two children, died in 1971. Welton himself died in San Diego, California, on 14 January 1988.

The Clubhouse

The Hillcrest promoters planned to use one of the existing farm buildings as a clubhouse: “These buildings are in good condition and with a little renovation and alteration to the extent of \$5,000 will make comfortable and picturesque quarters” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

Welton had indicated in his letter to the club that “The site for the club house (where the farmhouse now stands) is a prominent one and commands a fine view of the surrounding country” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

A 1933 aerial photograph shows the compound of farm buildings at the centre of the property, accessed by a laneway running east to Brickyard Road, crossing one of the property’s ravines along the way.

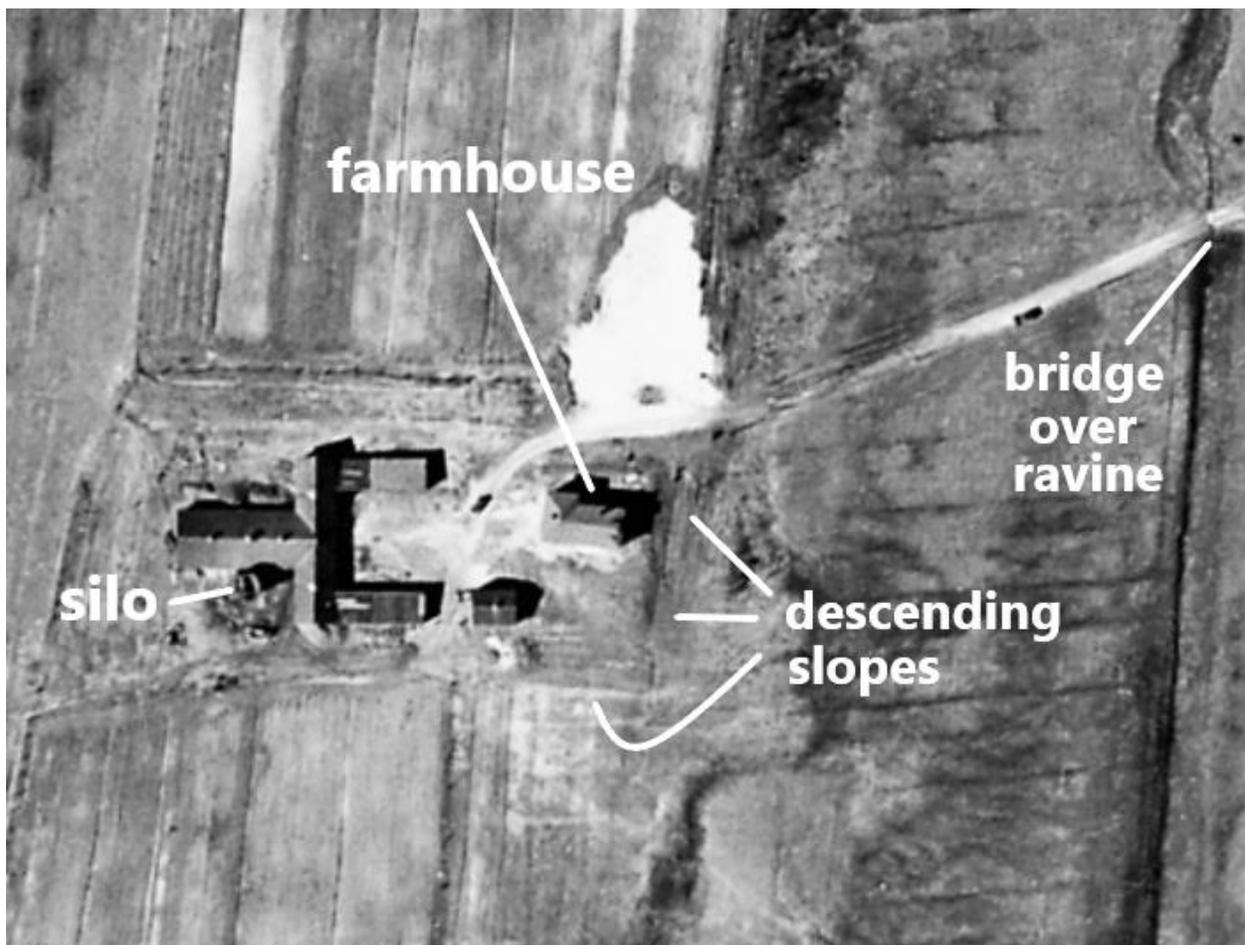


Figure 30 Detail, enlarged and annotated, from National Air Photo 1933 photograph, op. cit.

The 1923 farmhouse was destroyed by fire in 1927, but the farmhouse above seems to sit on the same prominence as the original, with steep slopes (marked above) descending on its east and south sides.

The “renovation and alteration” required to make a suitable clubhouse on this site would be undertaken by Stanley Thompson & Company.

*- Proposed alterations to Club House and Quarters —
by Stanley Thompson & Co. Limited. Toronto
Golf Architects & Engineers.*

Figure 31 *Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3.

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club published Thompson’s sketch of his proposed clubhouse.

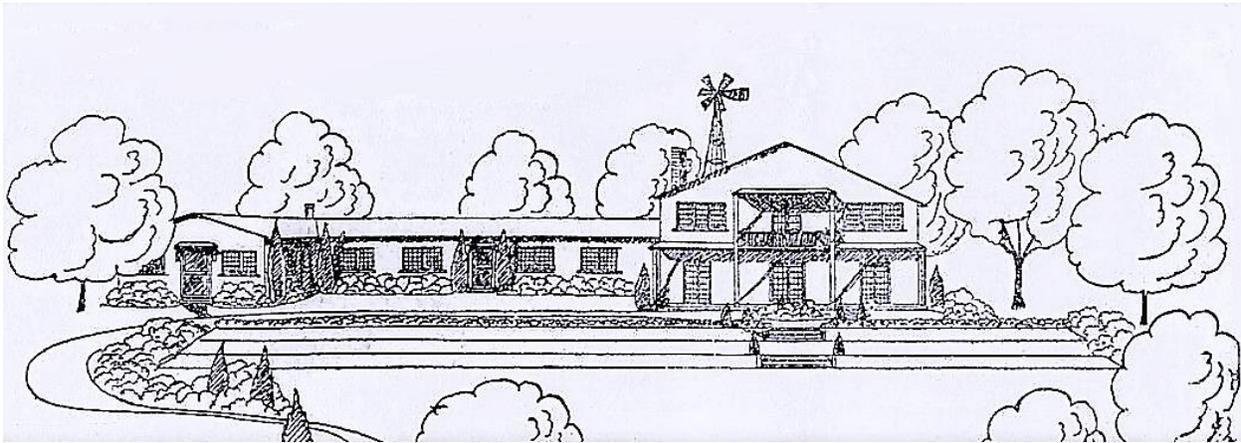


Figure 32 *Le droit*, 4 July 1923, p. 1.

The two-storey building on the right side of the sketch seems to represent the 1923 farmhouse.

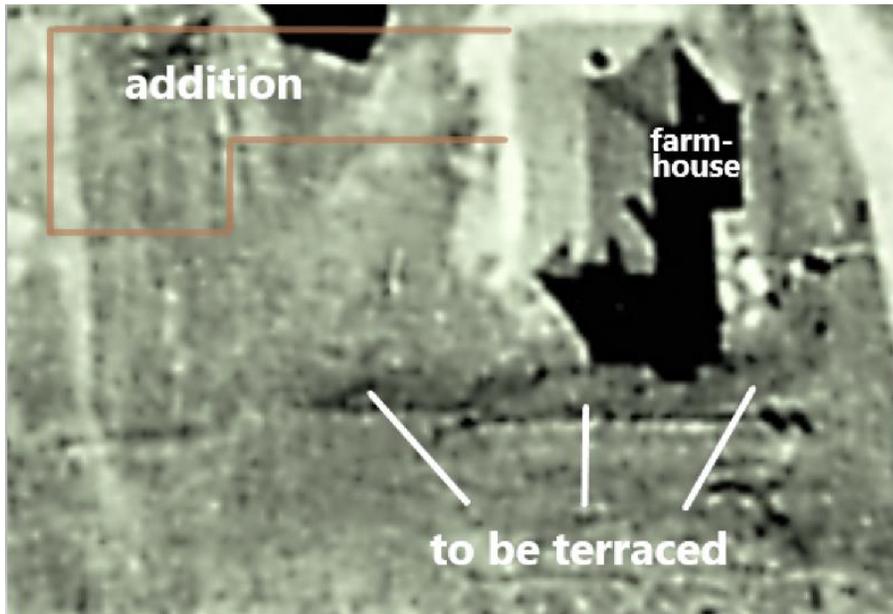


Figure 33 *Enlarged, annotated detail from 1933 aerial photograph, op. cit..*

Added to the left side of this east-facing structure would be a one-story structure that would complement the original building in a balanced U-shaped formation.

Recall that Welton had observed that “The site for the club house (where the farmhouse now stands) is a prominent one and commands a fine view

of the surrounding country, as well as the course when built.” The building’s “prominent” location seems to have been enhanced by building up the land on which it was constructed, such that the yard just in front of it descended steeply to the original level of the land surrounding the site.

We can see from the sketch above that Thompson planned to terrace this ground in front of the clubhouse and build steps down to the original ground level.

The landscaping of the proposed clubhouse was no doubt Thompson’s personal responsibility.

After beginning his life in golf as a caddie under George Cumming at the Toronto Golf Club, Thompson had studied landscaping at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph before enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915 and spending the next three years overseas as a gunner in the Canadian Field Artillery, so when he joined his brother Nicol and their mentor Cumming to form Thompson, Cumming, & Thompson after World War I, Stanley made sure that landscaping was foregrounded as one of the company’s main services. And so in *Canadian Golfer’s* 1920 article on the new firm, we read that “Stanley Thompson’s specialty will be landscape gardening, he having taken courses in this interesting profession” (February 1920, vol v no 10, p. 614).

In May of 1920, the references to his landscaping work in just a single issue of *Canadian Golfer* show the importance that Stanley Thompson attached to this aspect of his architectural mission. At the Niagara Falls Golf and Country Club, where his brother Nicol had previously been working independently as an architect, we learn that under Thompson, Cumming, & Thompson, “Much landscape gardening will also be undertaken” (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 86). At the same time, when Mississauga Golf and Country Club was implementing “the plans of Donald Ross” for its bunkers and greens, we find that “the grounds about the club house are being beautified by the landscape architects, Thompson, Cumming and Thompson”: “They will plant a row of maple trees along the road and Austrian pines and blue spruce along the brow of the hill” (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, pp. 88-89). We also read that “The club house of Summit ... will present a very dignified appearance indeed, when the half circle driveway, banked with blue spruce and evergreens and huge flower beds, planned by Mr. Stanley Thompson, who has the landscape scheme in charge, is completed” (*Canadian Golfer*, May 1920, vol vi no 1, p. 29).

Before-and-after photographs of the clubhouse of the Summit Golf and Country Club are instructive.



Figure 34 Left: the clubhouse of the Summit Golf and Country Club circa 1920, not yet landscaped. Right: the clubhouse of the Summit Golf and Country Club circa 1930, now landscaped according to the plans of Stanley Thompson.

We can be confident that in his landscaping plans for the Hillcrest clubhouse, Thompson will have had specific plants in mind, from the deciduous trees shown surrounding the clubhouse in his sketch to the small conifers, shrubs, and flowers shown in the gardens fronting the clubhouse and lining walkways.

Blueprints

The blueprints themselves were completed by Kenneth Welton in July and were displayed in the Canada Life building in downtown Ottawa where Secretary Grace maintained his offices.

With the blueprints on display, both the *Ottawa Journal* and the *Ottawa Citizen* reported on 21 July 1923 that Welton was on the property “several days this week making his final surveys for the new golf course of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club” (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 July 1923, p. 25). He reported: “all preparations are complete for proceeding with the actual work on the course” (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 July 1923, p. 25).

The items in the two newspapers were identical, right down to the misspelling of Welton’s name as “Walton,” which suggests that the text they printed had been supplied as a press release by the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

The Board of Directors had visited the property on July 13th or 14th for “a complete survey of the spot acquired for the links and the clubhouse”:

Mayor Plant and the directors of the newly created Hillcrest Golf and Country Club have made a further tour of inspection of the property on the Aylmer Road selected by experts as the best possible location for the club, and as the result of the trip are more than ever assured of the success of the new venture. (Ottawa Journal, 14 July 1923, p. 9).

What happened during this visit to increase the assurance of the directors that the Hillcrest venture would be a success?

Perhaps tees, greens, and bunkers had been staked out so as to allow them to imagine the two golf courses.

Or perhaps Thompson and Welton were there on the course with the directors explaining the company’s plans.

The article in the *Ottawa Journal* about the directors’ visit to the property was perhaps written by the newspaper’s Sports Editor Bill Gladish, who would become a director of Hillcrest Golf and Country Club in April of 1924. Yet it reads as though it paraphrases a description of the property’s golf merits by Thompson or Welton:

Scarcely removed from the Aylmer car lines, sequestered in the midst of ideal country scenery, this most adaptable property comprises some 180 acres of hill and dale, with a most desirable soil, free from rocks and troublesome obstructions. Every acre of the property promises to give good returns in green landscape and rich turf with the minimum of endeavour, great tracts of which are now ready for play. The course is naturally punctuated by terraces and flats, and rolling stretches, with scores of splendid hazards. (Ottawa Journal, 14 July 1923, p. 9).

Whether or not Welton was on site finalizing the blueprints as early as July 13th is not clear. And neither is it clear whether or not Thompson visited the property at this time.

But Thompson was certainly in Montreal around this time to inspect work on the Marlborough course. The *Montreal Gazette* of 20 July 1923 says that “Stanley Thompson, architect for the Marlborough Golf Club, was a visitor in the city recently and spent a day at the course,” so he may well have combined a visit to Montreal at this time with a visit to Ottawa, perhaps to finalize the staking-out of the twenty-seven holes so that Welton could work up the blueprints for display in the Canada Life Building (p.14).

A Capital Strategy

The barristers, the CPR manager, and the stenographers intended to raise the \$100,000 with which the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club would be capitalized by selling 1,000 shares for \$100 each:

Ownership of one share constitutes a membership in the Club – gives the holder a voice in club administration – and is a bond on the club assets.

These shares are offered to the first 300 members at \$100.00 each, payable as follows:

\$50.00 when called – and balance – \$25.00 in 30 days and \$25.00 in 60 days after the call. No call will be made nor any obligation due from applicants until 300 memberships have been secured. (Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p. 3)

The shares were to be offered via newspaper advertisements.

Application for Stock	Ottawa	1923
To the Directors of Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited, 25 Canada Life Bldg., Ottawa		
I HEREBY subscribe for.....shares of the Capital Stock of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, at \$100 each, which I agree to pay as follows: \$50.00 on call; \$25.00 thirty days later and \$25.00 sixty days after the first call.		
The Directors reserve the right to accept or reject any or all applications.	It is understood that no call will be made and that I am liable for no payment under this agreement until 300 membership applications have been secured.	
	Signed	
	Street and No.	
	City	
	Occupation..... Telephone No.....	

Figure 35 Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p. 3.

Dominoes would begin to fall when “300 membership applications [had] been secured”: “The minute we have 300 names – we take possession of the grounds – and in two weeks later will have 9 holes in play. Messrs. Stanley Thompson and Co. are holding themselves in readiness to expedite the work” (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 July 1923, p. 26).

Although there would be “No canvassing and personal solicitation” on behalf of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, it seems that potential investors may have personally approached the club with criticism of the plan requiring \$50 to be paid on the first call, and the full \$100 share price to be paid within sixty days, for we find a new application form with significantly different payment terms published in the newspapers just over two weeks later (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923).

Fill This Out Today and Mail

**Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited,
25 Canada Life Bldg., Ottawa.**

OTTAWA 1923.

Reserve for me One Share of the Capital Stock of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited, at \$100 par, which I agree to pay as follows:

\$25 on call.	
\$25 thirty days later.	Signed
\$25 sixty days later—and	Occupation Street and No.
\$25 ninety days after first call.	Telephone No. City

No call will be made until 300 memberships have been secured.

Figure 36 *Ottawa Citizen*, 21 July 1923, p. 26.

There would now be four equal payments of \$25 spread out at thirty-day intervals over ninety days.

Costs

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club advertised certain of the main costs that the new organization faced: “The land has been secured by an option. The purchase price \$33,500 for the 180 acres and all the buildings thereon. These buildings are in good condition and with a little renovations and alteration to the extent of about \$5,000 will make comfortable and picturesque quarters” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

Perhaps the \$38,500 in costs that were specified in the prospectus were meant to suggest why a total of 300 membership applications promising the club \$30,000 within sixty days of the call was the key to getting everything underway.

There was no mention, however, of what would have been the largest expense: the cost of having Stanley Thompson & Company lay out and construct the golf courses.

Perhaps the costs at the Marlborough Golf and Country Club are instructive in this regard.

Marlborough was also having 27 holes built, and just as Welton told Hillcrest certain features of its property would “facilitate economy of construction,” so Thompson told Marlborough that “the quality and richness of the soil will not only ensure splendid texture of fairway and greens, but will contribute considerably to economic construction” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3; *Gazette* [Montreal], 2 March 1923, p. 16). Just as at Hillcrest Welton assured the club that “most of the land is cleared and the small areas of old stumps and second growth would not be a serious problem to remove where necessary,” so at Marlborough Thompson assured the club that it would not be necessary to remove trees, for “The trees and bushes on the property can all be utilized for both scenic and hazard purposes” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3; *Gazette* [Montreal], 2 March 1923, p. 16).

At Marlborough, we learn, “The construction of the course will cost little more than \$75,000” (*Gazette* [Montreal], 21 April 1923, p. 23). Would the cost for Hillcrest have been similar?

Such a figure is just a little bit lower than what Stanley Thompson & Company was charging seven years later for comparable work, as revealed in discussions between Thompson and Robert Trent Jones, snr, about the possibility of their forming a partnership in 1930:

On June 30, 1930, [Jones] wired Thompson’s general manager John Inwood – whom everyone called “Major” in honor of his service in the First World War – with a request for Thompson’s

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

In 1923, when Thompson was able “to size up the situation” of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, I presume that he recognized right off the bat that the question of the “prosperity of the Club” was a mysterious thing, given that it was starting with nothing. He would have recognized that the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was by no means backed up by the sort of moneyed members that made up Ottawa’s three existing clubs. He would not have seen Hillcrest as in the same league as Royal Ottawa, Rivermead, or the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, so he is unlikely to have quoted Hillcrest a figure from “the upper range” of what he was receiving in 1923.

Perhaps elementary math suggests the fee that Thompson had proposed to charge Hillcrest for his company’s work: Hillcrest’s \$100,000 (from 1,000 shareholders at \$100 per share), minus \$33,500 for land and buildings and \$5,000 for clubhouse alterations, equals \$62,500.

Whatever the figure Thompson quoted for the completed golf courses, it would seem that the work by Stanley Thompson & Company up to July of 1923 when its completed blueprints were put on display in the Canada Life building cost the Hillcrest club somewhere between \$1,500 and \$4,500.

The Board of Directors

The five incorporating members of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club planned to sell shares in “A New Convenient Country Club for Busy Business Men!” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923). And they meant “men” in a gender comprehensive sense: “The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club is a businessman’s club, for the busy businessman and woman” (*Ottawa Journal*, 14 July 1923, p. 9).

And the club would be created according to the businessperson’s way of doing business: “Time is money. This is a business man’s enterprise – and to save both time and money – we are seeking members only by advertising in the newspapers, it being the quickest and most business-like way of telling the story and securing results” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923).

And so there would be “No canvassing and personal solicitation” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923). Such old-fashioned methods wasted time. “Don’t wait for us to come to you,” said one advertisement, with the instruction on the application coupon reading in bold type: “Fill this out today and mail” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 21 July 1923, p. 3).

The appeal to busy businessmen and businesswomen was simple and straightforward: “Read this prospectus carefully and decide for yourself” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

Not surprisingly, then, the five incorporating members assembled a board of directors comprising exemplary businessmen: confirmation of the club’s declared purpose of founding a golf and country club for the use of “the busy businessman and woman,” we read, “is instanced by its list of officers and directors” (*Ottawa Journal*, 14 July 1923, p. 9).

The Hillcrest promoters were particularly interested in two kinds of businessmen: first, businessmen who also held local political office; second, businessmen who had demonstrated acumen in local advertising.

No interest in golf as a game was required.

Frank H. Plant

In July of 1923, Mayor of Ottawa Frank H. Plant (1883-1952) had his plate full when it came to golf.

Not only was Plant the president of the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, but as the Mayor of Ottawa he was also leading an effort to keep the federal government from “selling Rockcliffe rifle range to private interests” before “considering whether it would not be more advisable to allow the city the land for a golf course at some future date” (*Ottawa Journal*, 6 July 1923, p. 4). He recommended to the federal government that “the Rockcliffe Rifle Range should be transformed into zoological gardens, with a civic golf course, and an extension of the driveway under the Ottawa Improvement Commission” (*Ottawa Journal*, 9 July 1923, p. 1).



Figure 37 Frank H. Plant (1883-1952), mayor of Ottawa, 1921-23, 1930.

Plant had come to Ottawa with his family in 1900 from London, Ontario (where he was born), when his father was given an appointment in the Department of Labour. As a teenager, Plant started his work life in the business office of the *Ottawa Citizen* (and played for its hockey team), but he soon gained employment as an accountant for other Ottawa firms before becoming general manager of Watson Carriage Company, which led him in turn to form his own company at the same time he was fronting the Hillcrest venture: F.H. Plant, Limited, Carriage Makers.

He entered municipal politics as an Ottawa alderman in 1917, then became city controller before being elected mayor in 1921, 1922, 1923, and 1930 (serving as controller again in the intervening years). He was made a director of the Central Canada Exhibition Association in 1921 and ultimately served on the executive committee

as a lifetime director until his death. After his retirement from civic politics in 1930, he was not long afterwards appointed to the Ottawa Hydro-Electric Commission, on which he served for almost twenty years, as Chairman for twelve of them.

He was keenly interested in sports, and “seldom missed a hockey, baseball or football match” of consequence in Ottawa (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 November 1952, p. 20). He became president of the City Baseball League, president of the Ottawa Hockey League, vice-president of the Ottawa Amateur Athletic Federation, and a commissioner of the Central Canada Hockey Association. He had served for several years as a vice-president of the Ottawa Senators Hockey Club. And he later became a member of the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club.

Ottawa Mayor Charlotte Whitton was a great admirer of her predecessor:

Frank Plant had a mind of unusual capacity for the mastery and retention of detail, with clear judgement, and a courage of decision and power of will of equal strength. Alert, energetic, devoted, he spent his store of gifts of spirit, mind, and heart without stint as controller, mayor and chairman of Hydro. (Ottawa Journal, 7 November 1952, p. 1).

The power of his memory regarding details was widely regarded as “amazing”: when speaking publicly about “the most intimate of Hydro affairs and prospects,” for instance, he typically “delivered a comprehensive verbal statement” in which “he was able to give facts and statistics without hesitation,” and all of this “without use of a single written note” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 7 November 1952, p. 20).

One can see why the five incorporating members of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club sought Mayor Plant as the president of their Board of Directors. When he died, the *Ottawa Citizen* observed that “In all things, Mr. Plant was not only a leader, but a conscientious worker” (7 November 1952, p. 20).

Ottawa’s Plant Bath was named after him.

Joseph Romeo Lafond

Joseph Romeo Lafond (1879-1931) represented Hull as Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1923 to 1927.

Having won the 1923 election as a candidate for the Liberal Party, however, he lost the 1927 election as an Independent Liberal, running against three others: another Independent Liberal, the official Liberal Party candidate, and the Conservative Party candidate, who won.



Figure 38 Joseph Romeo Lafond (1879-1932), *Ottawa Citizen*, 13 January 1931, p. 1.

Born in Hull, Quebec, Lafond received his early education at Hull college and then proceeded to study at the University of Ottawa, where he perfected his English language skills, and then studied medicine for two years at Laval University in Montreal (now the University of Montreal).

Lafond then returned to Hull to work with his father in the dry goods business and “par son initiative et son sens des affaires” became one of the city’s most prominent merchants (*Le droit*, 15 January 1931, p. 4).

When Lafond died at just 52 years of age in 1931, *Le droit* wrote of him: “Catholique convaincu, patriote sincère, homme d’affaires énergique et courtois, le défunt fut un politique pondéré” (*Le droit*, 15 January 1931, p. 4).

Of this man with a “pleasing disposition and ever-readiness to serve,” the *Ottawa Citizen* observed :

With the passing of the former representative in the Quebec legislature, the city of Hull is deprived of one of its most ardent citizens – one who had contributed much to the political and communal advance of his native city. A friend of the laboring classes, he was wont to listen to their trials and tribulations, rendering aid wherever possible.... In political, public, and charitable circles of Hull, Mr. Lafond gained a wide reputation for his sincerity of purpose and desire to actively participate in any of the organizations with which he was identified. He was the founder and first president of the Hull Kiwanis Club; a former president of the Retail Merchants of

Western Quebec and the Alliance Nationale of Hull; a former president of the Hull Liberal Association, where he obtained his first desire for political office. He also held the office of president of the Hull Technical School Association, the present modern technical school in Hull being a monument to his earnest endeavors in furthering educational facilities of his city. (13 January 1931, pp. 1-2)

When half of the original members of the 1923 Board of Directors were replaced in the spring of 1924, Lafond was one of the directors who remained, but he gave up his position as vice-president and became a director without portfolio.

John Paul Balharrie

His parents having arrived from Scotland and having established a bakery in Ottawa in the 1870s, John Paul Balharrie (1883-1952) was born in the city in 1883.



Figure 39 John Paul Balharrie, Ottawa Controller 1923, Mayor 1925-27.

Known as “Jack,” he and his three brothers would eventually become partners in the bakery company founded by their father, taking it over in 1913.

“Closely associated” with Mayor Plant during their careers on council, Balharrie was “a builder of Ottawa,” a person “outstanding in service to his city” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 7 April 1952, p. 6).

He had become a member of council at the end of World War I and served on the Board of Control as Controller while Plant was mayor, and he would serve three years as mayor himself from 1925 to 1927, after which he became a judge in Ottawa’s family court for the rest of his career.

In the combination of Frank Plant and Jack Balharrie, it was a municipally dynamic duo that the five incorporating members of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club had secured to serve as

president and treasurer, respectively, of their Board of Directors.

Treasurer Balharrie, however, would leave the Hillcrest Board of Directors after the 1923 season.

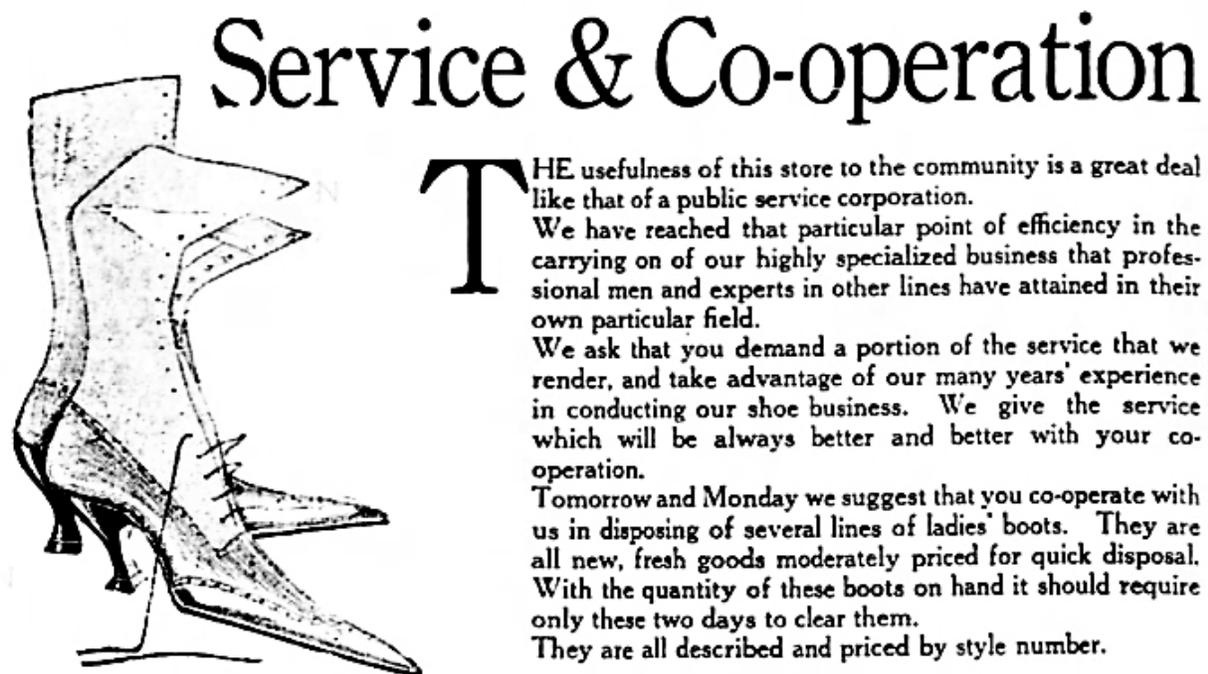
Charles Roy Teetzel

Charles Roy Teetzel (1877-1941) was the manager of Gales & Company, a successful Ottawa shoe store.

He had been born in Fingal, Ontario, and entered the shoe business as a boy and spent “all his life in retail boot and shoe trade” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 5 November 1918, p. 5). He worked as a retailer in Montreal before coming to Ottawa at the time of World War I.

Given Hillcrest’s plan to “advertise” itself into existence, it is interesting to note that Gales’ advertisements were often celebrated in trade journals for their effectiveness, both in terms of their language and in terms of the images and print type: “Gales & Co., of Ottawa, are persistent advertisers and put out some pretty good stuff from time to time.... All the Gales ads. are quite high-class in character” (*The Shoe and Leather Journal*, vol 32 no 2 [15 January 1919], p. 34); Gales & Company published “A nice little shoe ad that got a lot of business up in Ottawa. The type arrangement and selection is excellent” (*Dry Goods Economist*, vol 76 [7 October 1922], p. 143).

A typical example of a Gale advertisement is shown below.



Service & Co-operation

THE usefulness of this store to the community is a great deal like that of a public service corporation. We have reached that particular point of efficiency in the carrying on of our highly specialized business that professional men and experts in other lines have attained in their own particular field. We ask that you demand a portion of the service that we render, and take advantage of our many years' experience in conducting our shoe business. We give the service which will be always better and better with your co-operation. Tomorrow and Monday we suggest that you co-operate with us in disposing of several lines of ladies' boots. They are all new, fresh goods moderately priced for quick disposal. With the quantity of these boots on hand it should require only these two days to clear them. They are all described and priced by style number.

Figure 40 *Ottawa Citizen*, 28 March 1919, p. 12.

Teetzel presents Gales & Company as virtually a gift to shoe buyers: “The usefulness of this store to the community is a great deal like that of a public service corporation.”

This trope would be echoed by the Hillcrest strategy of presenting the new golf club as virtually a public health service to the busy businessperson.

One might suppose that the Hillcrest Board of Directors sought to take advantage of Teetzel's experience and skill in advertising to promote the club to potential members.

When he opened his own store in Ottawa in the fall of 1923, Teetzel was described as "the popular shoeman": "a local man" who had "built up a wonderful connection" to the people of Ottawa and had "numerous friends" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 2 November 1923, p. 13).

Perhaps his new venture was not a success, however, for he moved to Victoria, British Columbia at the end of 1924 to work as a shoe manufacturer's agent. He died in Vancouver in the fall of 1941.

Charles Howard English Askwith

Charles Howard English Askwith (1878-1953), was an Ottawa-born newspaperman and writer, described as “one of the most colorful journalists Ottawa has seen in this century” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 October 1953, p. 2).

Askwith worked as news editor for the *Ottawa Journal* in the 1890s after graduating from Lisgar Collegiate. He attended McGill University in Montreal, but then caught “gold fever” and went to the Yukon toward the end of the gold rush in the late 1890s, editing the *Yukon World* and the *Dawson City Sun*. On the long way back to Ottawa, he worked at the *Brandon Sun*, the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and the *Montreal Star* (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 October 1953, p. 2). Back in Ottawa, he worked first for the *Ottawa Free Press* and then joined the *Ottawa Citizen* after World War I.



Figure 41 C.H.E. Askwith (1878-1953).

Having entered the newspaper business in Ottawa in 1896, Askwith had been a journalist for more than “a quarter of a century” by the time he was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

Askwith had served in World War I as a lieutenant in the Mechanical Transport Services, commanding the unit at Kingston, Ontario. In 1922, he was elected President of the Great War Veterans Association of Canada and throughout the 1920s worked in the civil service as an Official Soldiers’ Adviser with regard to appeals of army pension decisions by the federal government (*Ottawa Citizen*, 21 September 1925, p. 18).

He was a stalwart Liberal in his politics and knew Wilfrid Grace well, serving in 1924 as Treasurer of the Ottawa Reform Association, of which Grace was Secretary. These were apparently “consolation” appointments, as they had both been

defeated in the election for president (*Ottawa Citizen*, 30 January 1924, p. 7).

Askwith was said to have had a “genius for friendship” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 October 1953, p. 2). Given that it was said in the 1920s that he “is known to, and knows, as many people probably as anyone in the

city,” one can see how he would have been helpful to Hillcrest in spreading word of the club’s ambitions to become the most popular country club in the area (*Ottawa Citizen*, 21 September 1925, p. 18).

Yet more important to the club than any gladhanding excellence on Askwith’s part must have been the fact that he was in 1923 the “star reporter” for the *Ottawa Citizen* (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 October 1953, p. 2). Perhaps Hillcrest would get some positive and free publicity via news items about it.

Joseph Wilfrid Gauvreau

Joseph Wilfrid Gauvreau (1891-1933) was one of Ottawa's most famous criminal lawyers, having handled a number of newsworthy cases.



Figure 42 Joseph Wilfrid Gauvreau (1891-1933).

Like Grace and Askwith, Gauvreau was an active member of the Ottawa Reform Association, well-known to them before they joined forces at the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. He once ran for the Liberals in an Ontario provincial election campaign.

And like Vaillancourt, he was a supporter of local French culture: in 1915, for instance, he was vice-president of the *Club Littéraire Canadien-Français d'Ottawa*.

Like Unger, Gauvreau was an undergraduate of the University of Ottawa and a graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School. He was known as a "brilliant avocat Franco-Ontarien"; in fact, he was poised to become "le premier Franco-Ontarien à siéger sur le banc de la cour supérieur d'Ontario" when he died in September of 1933: he had tried to save his son from drowning while they were on a

fishing trip at Lake Constance (*Le droit*, 5 September 1933, p. 1).

Gauvreau served on the Board of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club in 1923, but he was replaced in April of 1924.

Harry Stuart Binks



Figure 43 Harry S. Binks (1882-1956).

Harry Stuart Binks (1882-1956) was an Ottawa insurance and real estate broker.

In the last years of the nineteenth century, Binks began in the insurance business as an errand boy in a private firm, went next to the Ottawa Fire Insurance Company, and in 1918 opened his own business in Ottawa.

He declared in his advertisements: "This office will conduct the business of Insurance and Real Estate along modern lines – selling you service and integrity in every transaction" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 29 April 1918, p. 6).

Like Gauvreau, Binks served on the Board of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club in 1923, but he was replaced in April of 1924.

Thomas Foley

The final member of the 1923 Board of Directors was Thomas Foley (1885-1938), one of the Ottawa area's most successful real estate agents – probably the one who facilitated the negotiation of the purchase option on the 180 acres of the Shouldice farm that the Hillcrest club proposed to develop.



Figure 44 Thomas Foley (1885-1938), *Ottawa Journal* 11 February 1938, p. 12.

Born and educated in Aylmer, son of a father from County Wexford, Ireland, who settled in Aylmer in the 1840s when it was a settlement called Symmes Landing (comprising just a few houses), Foley became an accountant of the Crown Bank of Canada after graduation from the University of Ottawa and then served as manager of branches in Ottawa, Winnipeg, and other places in Western Canada before returning to Aylmer and entering the real estate and insurance business in 1913.

During the national Victory Bond campaign of World War I, we read that “Mr. Thomas Foley, the well-known real estate man, is in charge of South Hull and Eardley, and is a special canvasser for the town of Aylmer and is devoting practically all of his time to covering this territory” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 31 October 1918, p. 7).

He became a member of Aylmer town council in the early 1920s, ran for mayor of the municipality of South Hull in 1923 (unsuccessfully), and was

among the local people discussed as a possible Liberal candidate in federal elections. Named president of the Ottawa Real Estate Board in 1925, he had become “one of Ottawa’s leading real estate and insurance men,” with “some large deals to his credit” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 11 February 1938, p. 1; *Ottawa Citizen*, 20 February 1926, p 18).

Foley was “Interested in sub-division and development” on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River where he was “well known” (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 February 1938, p. 12). He typically facilitated the sale of farmland to developers:

Slater farm, on Aylmer Road, near Ottawa Golf Club, has been taken over by a syndicate of Ottawa men who will subdivide and offer very large lots to the public at moderate prices in the near future. The price paid was in the neighborhood of \$125,000. This is one of the largest suburban deals ever put through in Ottawa. The deal was negotiated through T. Foley
(*Ottawa Citizen*, 27 May 1921, p. 3)

Also along the Aylmer Road, Foley developed the “summer colony” known as “The Gardens,” in which he lived (*Ottawa Citizen*, 11 February 1938, p. 1).

In the spring of 1924, when some of the original members of the Hillcrest Board of Directors were replaced, Foley stepped-up his involvement: he was elected treasurer (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19).

On the collapse of the Hillcrest venture, Foley immediately turned his attention to a new country club venture along the Aylmer Road: in 1925, he became one of the “Promoters and Provisional Directors” of the Highlea Tennis and Country Club.

In 1929, this club became the Glenlea Golf and Country Club, which endures today as the Champlain Golf Club.

Bilingual Advertising

Just as the new golf club's businessmen directors frequently advertised in newspapers in order to acquaint the community with their goods and services and to bring patrons to their businesses, so they would advertise their prospective golf and country club in Ottawa newspapers and thereby secure sales to potential shareholders.

Advertising was the quickest, most cost-effective, and therefore most "business-like" way of telling the story of an enterprise and securing sales; surely the same would hold true for the story of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

As opposed to the *Field of Dreams* idea, "If you build it, they will come," the Hillcrest promoters believed that **if you build it up**, they will come.

Or at least they will send in a coupon.

Moreover, as good businessmen, the directors knew that English speakers and French speakers spent the same money. And so, unlike the other three Ottawa golf clubs, Hillcrest was determined to build up the idea of its club in a bilingual way.

As we have seen, founding corporate member Vaillancourt was a determined promoter of francophone culture and no doubt saw golf as another domain in which *golfeurs français* would express the genius of their people. Similarly, Gauvreau, an original member of the first Board of Directors, was a strong supporter of franco-Ontarian culture and a proud representative of its achievements in the legal domain. MLA Lafond had pursued a bilingual education, understanding his bilingual abilities as essential to success in both politics and business. The francophone contingent among the club's earliest and most influential promoters was substantial.

And so when several new people joined the Hillcrest Board of Directors in April of 1924, perhaps it is not surprising that one of them was William Milton Gladish, an anglophone journalist who was particularly interested in promoting the idea of a bilingual culture for Canada: in Hull, "Mr. W.M. Gladish ... gave an interesting treatise on the reasons why a knowledge of the two paramount languages of the country, French and English, were absolutely in the interests of good business and prosperity" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 17 September 1924, p. 2).

Selling Hillcrest

The Board of Directors used a variety of advertising strategies to sell the idea of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

Advertisements appeared in three forms: as specially bounded, specially typed and illustrated sections of the newspaper, as “news-ads” (text written by the club and presented in the newspaper to look like every other news story, except for a thin, black, rectangular line bounding it), and as a press release that the newspapers copied verbatim as a legitimate news item.

Initially, certain approaches to prospective members by the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club involved what might be called the “soft sell”: this approach to selling a product or service is customer-oriented, concentrating on relationship-building. It typically involves engaging the customer in conversation, determining the needs of the customer, offering the customer solutions in the form of the product or service to be sold.

Typically, the “hard sell” deploys direct language to incite the customer to take action: “buy now before time runs out”; “this offer is available for a limited time only”; “don’t miss out”; and so on.

Over the course of the summer of 1923, a gently hectoring note began to be sounded in certain advertisements. At times, advertisements implied that people would be foolish to miss the opportunities offered by Hillcrest membership.

And as we shall see, when desperation began to set in during the spring of 1924, the last advertisements published by the club simply resorted to begging.

The Soft Sell

“Soft sell” principles are evident in certain aspects of the club’s advertisements that pretend to be member-oriented, determining the needs of the potential member and offering the Hillcrest experience as just what people need to improve the quality of their lives.



Golf

—Join a club—
—Learn the game—
—Enjoy life!!

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club is a new club—a real club. No entrance fees.

Not a renting proposition. No CONNECTION with ANY OTHER CLUB (new or old). Ownership of a share makes you a part owner. Your small investment (as in all other successful similar clubs) should double or treble in a few years.

Ask us to reserve your membership.

Do It TODAY! Send No Money!

The Hillcrest Golf & Country Club
25 Canada Life Bldg. Phone 282 Queen. Limited.

These busy business men are your officers and directors:

President—F. H. PLANT, Mayor of Ottawa.
Vice-President—J. H. LAFOND, M.P.P., Hall.
Secretary—WILFRED J. GRACE.
Treasurer—JOHN P. BALHARRIF, Controller.
Directors—CHARLES ASHWITH, TOM FOLEY, J. WILFRED GAUVREAU, C. ROY TEETZEL, HARRY S. BINKS, all of Ottawa.

Figure 47 Ottawa Citizen, 11 July 1923, p. 2.

prospectus at the beginning of July), we are assured that “Golf is a tonic for the body and rest for the brain. It is a health maker” (Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923).

For example, the advertisement seen to the left emphasizes the opportunity for people to join a community of busy people with the same needs and aspirations: this is “a message to the busy business man”; “enjoy life”; “join a club”; become “a part owner.”

Furthermore, the Hillcrest community is at **your** service: “Ask us to reserve your membership”; “busy business men are your officers and directors.”

Although “your small investment ... should double or treble in a few years,” joining Hillcrest is not necessarily about the money—in fact, “Send No Money!”—it is about improving your life: “Do It TODAY!”

Other advertisements engage potential members in an implicit discussion about their health needs and about the social benefits of becoming a member of a golf and country club.

For instance, in the club’s very first advertisement (presenting the club

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"

Every Business Man Should Belong To a Golf or Country Club



AND --- this is YOUR opportunity---
 All doctors agree that fresh air and sunshine and exercise in the open are the best of all methods for keeping healthy, happy and fit. A prominent Toronto doctor, speaking before a convention in New York a few days ago, said: "If golf interferes with business -- drop business. Dropping business for golf, now and then, is a good way to make business grow."

To keep fit, join the Hillcrest Club NOW. The Hillcrest Golf Club is ideally situated--only 3 1-3 miles--just 15 minutes from the city. Messrs. Stanley Thompson & Co., Limited, Golf Architects, and Gen. K. L'Jou have approved of the grounds.

This club will not stop at golf alone. It will be a real country club--with tennis courts, swimming pools, lawn bowling greens, riding facilities, hunting and fishing lodge and everything to enable members to get the utmost of benefit and pleasure. The property is excellently situated for all these.

As an example of the enthusiasm with which the public of Ottawa should accept a real club like this--with a splendid course and democratic ideals--let us point out to you that Toronto has gone from 7 golf courses to 23 in three years, and Montreal from 5 to 17 in the same time. Besides being a good investment--ownership of a share makes this your own private club and gives you a voice in the management.

Send no money, sign this application now, cut it out, mail to us and become a charter member

Application for Stock Ottawa 1923

To the Directors of Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited, 25 Canada Life Bldg., Ottawa

I HEREBY subscribe for shares of the Capital Stock of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, at \$100 each, which I agree to pay for as follows: \$50.00 on call; \$25.00 thirty days later and \$25.00 sixty days after the first call.

It is understood that no call will be made and that I am liable for no payment under this agreement until 100 memberships have been secured.

Signed

Street and No.

City

Occupation Telephone No.

Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited
 Incorporated under Quebec Companies Act, June 13th, 1923.
 Capital Stock \$100,000. Divided into 1,000 Shares of \$100 each.
 Temporary Office 25 Canada Life Building 75 Sparks St. Telephone 222 Queen.

Officers and Board of Directors:
 President--FRANK H. PLANT, Mayor of Ottawa, President, F. M. Fleet, Limited, Carriage Mfg., Ottawa.
 Vice-President--J. R. LAPOINTE, M.P.P., M.A., Gen. G. Lafont & Fils, Merchants, Hill, Quebec.
 Secretary--WILFRED J. GRACE, Barrister, Ottawa.
 Treasurer--JOHN F. BALSARIN, Chartered, Ottawa, Jas. & Balsarin & Sons, Bankers, Ottawa.

Directors:
 CHARLES AERWITT, Journalist, Ottawa, President, Great War Veterans' Assoc., Box of Ottawa.
 TOM FOLEY, Realtor, Ottawa.
 J. WILFRED GADYKRAU, Realtor, Ottawa, Desvres & Burns, Ottawa.
 C. ROY TERTRELL, Merchant, Ottawa, Gies & Co., Shoes, Ottawa.
 HARRY E. ECKER, Treasurer, Ottawa, Hicks & Shaw, Ottawa.

P.S.--Bear in mind the following points:--
 No money need accompany application--
 No intention for fee charter membership--
 No payments called until 100 approved applications are received--
 No fee a member you MUST be a shareholder--
 Your application for a share NOW makes you a share member.
 Any information or a full illustrated prospectus may be obtained at our office.
 Phone 222 Queen.

Figure 48 Ottawa Journal, 7 July 1923, p. 5.

The next ad begins: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" (Ottawa Journal, 7 July 1923, p. 5). It then makes just such an argument in earnest:

All doctors agree that fresh air and sunshine and exercise in the open are the best of all methods for keeping healthy, happy and fit. A prominent Toronto doctor, speaking before a convention in New York a few days ago, said: "If golf interferes with business--drop business. Dropping business for golf, now and then, is a good way to make business grow." (Ottawa Journal, 7 July 1923, p. 5)

The prominent Toronto doctor in question had been quoted in the *Ottawa Citizen* just the day before the Hillcrest advertisement appeared:

If Golf Interferes Then Drop Business

Corpulent Males Also Urged by Professional Man to Wear Corsets

New York, July 5 -- American men, though they are naturally of good physique, neglect themselves too much, in the opinion of Dr. P.F. Millard, of Toronto, who advocated golf and

corsets as the corrective for “pot bellies” and “creaky joints” in a speech today at the convention of the American Osteopathic conference.

“If golf interferes with business,” he said, “drop business. I notice with pleasure that a good many of the doctors who came to this conference are absent this morning, having left for the links. Golf is applied osteopathy. The swing of the club limbers the spine and the wrists. Dropping business for golf now and then is a good way to make business grow.”

Speaking of corsets, he said that absolutely the only cure for the fat man was a good strong set of stays. (6 July 1923, p. 10)

The Hillcrest ad made no mention of corsets for men, but the club’s advertisement succeeded not only in making its argument about the health benefits of golf but also in creating the impression that the Hillcrest directors were members of the same community as prospective members, reading the same newspaper stories.

Perhaps the club also availed itself of a hint in what the doctor said about playing golf to grow business: it may be that by the 1920s businesspeople were already beginning to notice that golf courses were a good place for businesspeople to build relationships and conduct business.

In a press release that was printed verbatim as a news item in the *Ottawa Journal*, we read that at \$100 per share, “the cost is negligible, considering the advantages to be derived from the membership it affords” (*Ottawa Journal*, 14 July 1923, p. 9). And these advantages were more than physical and psychological; they were also social: “if you buy a share – this becomes your own private club” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923).

An August press release presented as an identical article in the both the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Ottawa Journal* in August of 1923 pointed out the socially uplifting opportunity presented by Hillcrest membership:

In the minds of many people membership in a golf club is one of those unapproachable luxuries available only to those of means and lots of leisure. But more and more are the public beginning to see it in its true light – to regard this among other forms of sport – as necessary health insurance. And to put this and other outdoor recreations within the reach of all – many cities have established municipal golf links, tennis courts, skating rinks, ski slides, baseball fields and the like.

And—it is this trend of things which gives the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club such a fine start in its endeavor to form a commodious country club in which the yearly fees and initial cost will be such that any salaried man or woman can afford to belong. (Ottawa Citizen, 18 August 1923, p. 21)

Gosh! Putting golf “within the reach of all”! The ad makes it seem as though becoming a member of Hillcrest is like becoming a member of a revolutionary movement: middle-class golfers of the world, unite!

Indeed, the Board of Directors were selling the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club as an instance of democratic progress: it “is formed on broad, democratic principles The members will early appreciate that this will be their own club, in which they will become active as committeemen or directors, and in the policy of which they will have perpetual voice” (*Ottawa Journal*, 14 July 1923, p. 9). The directors were confident that “the public of Ottawa should accept a real club like this – with a splendid course and democratic ideals” (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 July 1923, p. 5).

But democracy had its limits.

The Board of Directors were interested in “any salaried man or woman.” Advertisements carefully made clear that the people who were submitting applications were from a certain socio-economic bracket:

It is with considerable satisfaction the Directors note the great number of persons in the Civil Service, both men and women, who are sending in applications.

Business and professional men and women are applying in such numbers that it is only a matter of a few days before the preliminary meeting is sure to be called to authorize the engineers to proceed with the work.... (Ottawa Citizen, 30 August 1923, p. 14)

Furthermore, application forms made clear that there was also a fail-safe mechanism: “The Directors reserve the right to accept or reject any or all applications” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

Hillcrest would have no riff-raff.

Within its particularly defined democratic parameters, then, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club presented itself as something of a public service. It was an occasion for civic progress: “As an example of the enthusiasm with which the public of Ottawa should accept a real club like this – with a splendid course and democratic ideals – let us point out to you that Toronto has gone from 7 golf courses to 20 in

three years, and Montreal from 5 to 17 in the same time" (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 July 1923, p. 5). Civic support of Hillcrest will allow Ottawa to catch up to Montreal and Toronto. Another press release masquerading as an article in both the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Ottawa Journal* invokes civic pride more explicitly: "The natural bent of all Canadians for outdoor sports of all kinds, at all seasons of the year, is shown by the rapid increase of country clubs from coast to coast, and the rapidity with which the Hillcrest club is shaping up is an indication that Ottawa is not a whit behind the rest of the Dominion in this respect" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 21 July 1923, p. 16).

For democratic people with the right demographic stuff, Hillcrest membership would allow golfers to boast that their course had been designed and built by one of the world's best architects:

Messrs. Thompson & Co. are unusually expert in this work, being actively engaged in the building of three courses in Cleveland, two in Montreal, two in Toronto and one in London, and, in having a reputation for excellent work to sustain, can be depended upon to give their best efforts to the Hillcrest Club, giving them all the advantages of the best features of the many golf courses that the Thompson firm have built. (Ottawa Journal, 21 July 1923, p. 25)

And they would also be able to boast that they were fellow members of Hillcrest with an especially famous golfer: "Mr. George S. Lyon, whom every golfer knows as many times champion ..., is now a Hillcrest member" (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 July 1923, p. 25).

The Hard Sell

The customer-oriented strategy of the “soft sell,” on the one hand, and the “buy now,” “limited time only,” “don’t miss out” strategy of the “hard sell,” on the other, are not mutually exclusive.

For instance, the club’s emphasis on the opportunities for physical and mental fitness that the Hillcrest club was making available to outdoor recreation enthusiasts in Ottawa precluded an urgent injunction typical of the hard sell’s emphasis on the time-limited nature of the opportunity available to the customer: “this is YOUR opportunity.... To keep fit, join the Hillcrest Club NOW” (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 July 1923, p. 5).

And the original advertisement’s presentation of golf as a tonic for body and soul was also coupled with “buy now” advice: the implication of the observation that “every \$100 share is bound to increase greatly in value during the next two or three years” was that one should buy immediately before the price went up (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923).

Another version of this argument appeared a month later in the *Ottawa Citizen*:

In every golf or country club that is run on the right lines – the membership shares in a few years are worth three or four times the cost at their inception and the number of sports devotees is increasing so rapidly that the supply of accommodation is always less than the demand – which is one of the big reasons why the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club designed to accommodate a thousand members – is receiving such a number of new applications day by day. They are all anxious to get in on the ground floor. Business and professional men and women from all lines of endeavor and Civil Servants in big numbers are sending in their applications.... If you want to be one of those first members – on the ground floor – communicate now with Secretary Wilfrid J. Grace.... (22 August 1923, p. 11)

This argument that demand for “golf or country club” memberships inevitably exceeded supply was a “hard sell” drumbeat in the summer of 1923: buy now while there is still supply; this is a limited-time offer.

On 10 July 1923, for instance, less than a week after the publication of the prospectus, we learn that “the total membership would probably be secured and the lists closed within the next few weeks” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 10 July 1923, p. 10).

S.O.S.

- a call of -
- attention and warning -
- to those who are -
- considering joining a -
- golf or country club.

THE heading should really be S-Y-S-- Save Your Ship -- and applies to those

- who are interested -
- who have enquired - and
- who have received a prospectus of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club

REMEMBER

"He who hesitates is lost"

If you want to be among the first 300--you must SPEAK NOW--or FOREVER AFTER HOLD YOUR PEACE.

We are not trying to sell you anything now. We simply want 300 persons to signify their interest in a business man's golf club--and--when we have 300--then we'll ask you to join--by purchasing a share at par--on easy terms.

Can you ask for anything fairer ?

Our S. O. S. is to get immediate action--NOW. For your own good--and to save time for both of us.

The moment we have 300 names--we take possession of the grounds--and in two weeks later will have 9 holes in play. Messrs. Stanley Thompson and Co. are holding themselves in readiness to expedite this work.

DON'T WAIT
for us to come to you
DO IT TODAY

Officers and Directors

President--F. H. Platt,
Mayor of Ottawa.

Vice-President -- J. E.
Laford, M.P.P., Hill.

Secretary -- Wilfrid J.
Grace.

Treasurer -- John P.
Fahnestock, Charlottetown.

Directors -- Charles
Ashworth, Tom Foley,
J. Wilfred Gauthier,
C. Roy Tavel, Harry
S. Binks, all of Ottawa.

and save yourself a most probable initiation fee, which is certain to prevail--after the first 300 memberships are secured, as this is the procedure that most all successful golf clubs have followed and are following.

Send in your reservation today
SEND NO MONEY

Hillcrest Golf and Country Club LIMITED

25 Canada Life Building. Phone 282 Queen

Points to Bear in Mind

1. This is NOT a raising proposition.
2. Your small contribution is an INVESTMENT.
3. ONLY 3 1/2 miles from Ottawa--this side of the Royal Ottawa course.
4. A recreational--rather than a social club.
5. No MONEY needed with your application.
6. No annual fees will be charged this year.

Fill This Out Today and Mail

Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited,
25 Canada Life Bldg., Ottawa.

OTTAWA 1923.

Reserve for me One Share of the Capital Stock of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited, at \$100 par, which I agree to pay as follows:

\$25 on cash.
\$25 thirty days later. Signed

\$25 sixty days hereinafter. Occupation .. Street and No.

\$25 thirty days after first call. Telephone No. City

No call will be made until 300 memberships have been secured.

Figure 49 Ottawa Citizen, 21 July 1923, p. 3.

In an article in the *Ottawa Journal* on 21 July 1923, we are told "applications are reaching the Hillcrest every day in generous numbers, and ... the initial goal of 300 charter members is only a day or so away" (p. 25).

In an advertisement on the same day (seen to the left), we are given an S.O.S. warning: "If you want to be among the first 300 -- you must SPEAK NOW -- or FOREVER AFTER HOLD YOUR PEACE" (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 July 1923, p. 26).

The same note is sounded in a mid-August press release (presented as a news item in the *Ottawa Journal*):

The Hillcrest goal in order to keep expenses at the lowest mark possible is 1,000 members and the preliminary charter membership of 300 is about attained -- which demonstrates the need of a club of this kind.... Those who have ambition of being charter members should hurry their applications to Wilfrid J. Grace, 25 Canada Life Bldg., Ottawa. (18 August 1923, p. 21)

Similarly, in an end-of-August press release presented in identical ways in both the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Ottawa Journal* -- it was titled "The Ladies Enthuse in Prospects and Plans of the New Golf Club: A Special Course for Ladies Always Available an Attractive Feature" -- we are again assured that the opportunity for securing a share in the club was disappearing fast:

It is with considerable satisfaction the Directors note the great number of persons in the Civil Service, both men and women, who are sending in applications.

Business and professional men and women are applying in such numbers that it is only a matter of a few days before the preliminary meeting is sure to be called to authorize the engineers to proceed with the work....

If you want to be one of the 1,000 members – do not neglect to send in your application now to Sec. Wilfred J. Grace (Ottawa Citizen, 30 August 1923, p. 14).

After more than six weeks of the same refrain – “Apply for your membership now because the supply is almost gone!” – one might have begun to wonder whether the claim was true.

Anatomy of a Bad Ad Campaign?

Over the course of the intense Hillcrest advertising campaign in July and August of 1923, several problems developed that may have undermined confidence in it.

Perhaps the most significant problem was the tension that developed between claims that the membership list would be closed within weeks, if not days, and the fact that the same claim was still being made two months after the first advertisement appeared. Anyone paying attention to the ad campaign must have suspected that applications for membership were not approaching the club's target number of 300 either as quickly or as inevitably as was being claimed.

And so people initially drawn toward the club by the "soft sell" of the healthy, progressive, democratic, middle-class luxury it promised were given reason to hesitate in the face of the contradiction that emerged over the course of the summer's "buy now or lose out" "hard sell."

Another problem was the confusion sown about how many memberships were available, and whether they would all be offered at the same price.

In the prospectus published on 4 July 1923, we read that "shares are offered to the first 300 members at \$100.00 each" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3). We know that the number 300 is important because when 300 members are secured, the property will be purchased and construction of the golf course and alterations of the farmhouse and farm buildings will begin.

But the statement above implies that members numbered from 301 to 1,000 will not have access to shares at the price of \$100: it seems that shares will be offered only "to the first 300 members at \$100.00 each." And this suggestion seems to be reinforced by the observation in the prospectus that "every \$100 share is bound to increase greatly in value during the next two or three years": it is implied that one must hurry to become one of the 300 charter members if one wants to avoid an increase in the cost of a share (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923).

This claim about the appreciation of the value of the shares would prove true only if the supply of shares at \$100 each was exhausted. Yet according to the articles of incorporation of 22 June 1923, the "Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, Limited," will have "a total capital stock of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00), divided into one thousand (1,000) shares of one hundred dollars (\$100.000) each"

(*Gazette Officielle de Québec*, vol 55 no 33 [18 August 1923], p. 2478). The supply of \$100 shares would not be exhausted when 300 membership applications were secured.

Advertisements throughout July and August of 1923 created a question regarding how many shares were available at the \$100 price: 300 or 1000. And the question was not resolved.

And then a new number enters the equation when, less than a week after the publication of the prospectus, we learn that “The objective of the Club is five hundred members in and about Ottawa” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 10 July 1923, p. 10). One understands that 300 memberships are required to trigger land acquisition and construction, but where does the target of 500 members come from?

A membership of 500 at a private golf club was fairly standard in this period.

For instance, the Marlborough Golf and Country Club in Montreal, also having 27 holes built by Stanley Thompson & Company in 1923, had capped membership at 450 in 1923, and then increased this cap to 550 in 1924 (*Gazette* [Montreal], 21 April 1923, p. 23; *Canadian Golfer*, vol 10 no 1 [May 1924], p. 46). Royal Ottawa’s membership had been capped at 450 in 1905, increasing in 1909 to 475 (comprising 300 men and 175 women), after which 50 more men and 50 more women were admitted in 1910 from a waiting list.

So, perhaps the Hillcrest Board of Directors did not necessarily pull the number 500 out of thin air: perhaps it seemed to them that golf clubs with 27 golf holes available to members had agreed on a membership of about 500 as appropriate.

The 500 Hillcrest members in question would include not just people “in ... Ottawa,” but also people “around Ottawa.” The latter would qualify as “Associate Members”: “associate memberships are available by the purchasing of a share at prevailing prices – but the annual fees will be half those of regular resident members. An associate member must reside not less than 15 miles from the club” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

But the number 500 contradicts the number that the club published regularly in the last two weeks of August via the following statement: “If you want to be one of the 1,000 members – do not neglect to send your application now to Sec. Wilfrid J. Grace, 25 Canada Life Building” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 30 August 1923). Consistent with the articles of incorporation published in mid-August in the *Gazette Officielle*, the number 1,000 is not consistent with the numbers used in earlier Hillcrest advertisements.

Furthermore, there were statements in 1923 about closing the membership list before 1,000 membership applications were secured: “The objective of the Club is five hundred members in and about Ottawa, and it was reported that the total membership would probably be secured and the lists closed within the next few weeks” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 10 July 1923, p. 10).

Whether at 300 members or at 500 members, where does the idea of closing the membership list short of 1,000 applications come from?

Was it just an idle “hard sell” threat to stimulate applications?

In the spring of 1924, the club statement is different yet again: “The Directors of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club want the names of 1000 persons who are interested in golf and outdoor sports,” and so “they have formulated a ... plan” in order “to put this club more quickly in working order and to put all speed in the closing up of the membership list” (*Ottawa Journal*, 27 March 1924, p. 12). The title of the 1924 news-ad that referred to the plan to secure 1,000 membership applications was: “Why the 1,000?” Its subtitle was: “Reasons for Need of Big Membership.”

Now there is no talk of the membership list being closed before 1000 membership applications have been secured.

One wonders whether there ever should have been such talk in the first place.

Furthermore, one might surmise that there had been pushback from potential members during the ad campaign of 1923 as to “why the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club designed to accommodate a thousand members” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1923, p. 11).

After all, both a long-established club like Royal Ottawa and a newly established club like Marlborough had just over 500 members. How could this upstart Hillcrest club accommodate 1,000 members?

Wouldn't the golf course be overflowing with people on many occasions?

The ads had emphasized how big the property was, as if to imply that it could hold 1,000 members: “It is most unusual for such a club to own such a big terrain of adaptable ground – 180 acres in extent” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1923, p. 11); the club has had “a fine start in its endeavour to form a commodious country club.... It is a big championship course of 27 holes – 18 for men, 9 for women – on which women can play at all times” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 18 August 1923, p. 11). The claim would be made in

1924 that “the large acreage of the Hillcrest property warrants a big membership because it can amply accommodate them” (*Ottawa Journal*, 28 March 1924, p. 15).

Yet golfers knew that the number of members a club could accommodate was not a question of acreage. Royal Ottawa and Marlborough each had more than 180 acres of land, and they each had 27 golf holes. The number of members a club can accommodate is a function of the number of members who play golf and the number of golf holes that the club has. A club with 36 golf holes can accommodate more golfing members than a club with 18 holes.

If clubs like Royal Ottawa and Marlborough judged their 27 holes capable of accommodating a club membership of 500; how could Hillcrest’s 27 holes accommodate 1,000?

And how about the clubhouse?

A potential member who looked at Thompson’s sketch might well conclude that it would not be sufficiently commodious to serve the needs of a golf and country club with a membership of 1,000.

An unanticipated problem may have been a mismatch between the balance that the Hillcrest promoters expected to have between active and inactive members.

Conceiving the venture as a joint-stock venture, the purpose of which was profit through increasing share prices, Grace, *et al.*, may have anticipated a good number of like-minded investors buying shares of the club, not so that they could get physically and mentally fit by pursuing outdoor recreations, but rather so that they could become wealthier without ever setting foot on the grounds. What they may have found is that most of the potential members who enquired about the club were very much intending to become active members, primarily as golfers, and that these people were put off by the thought of there being potentially 1,000 fellow golfing members trying to get tee times on weekends.

A Temporary Course

It was usual during the construction of a golf course in the 1920s to build a temporary nine-hole course for members to play on while the proper course was under construction.

Such had been the case at the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, where a temporary nine-hole course designed by Royal Ottawa's Karl Keffer and Rivermead's Davie Black served members from 1919 to 1922.

And such was the case at the Chaudière Golf Club in 1923 where seven holes with temporary greens were opened on 30 June 1923, and twelve holes with temporary greens were opened by the end of the summer, as construction on the permanent greens began (they would take three years to complete).

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club counted on offering its members one of these temporary nine-hole golf courses – but only after the magical 300 membership total had been reached.

Initially, the club did not foreground this temporary course as either imminent or urgent: fall golf was the target. *Le droit* reported: “Dès l’automne, le club sera en mesure de se mettre à l’oeuvre sur un terrain de neuf trous” (10 July 1923, p. 2). The *Ottawa Citizen* published a similar item on the same day: since “the total membership would probably be secured and the lists closed within the next few weeks,” it should be possible “to have a nine-hole course, as well as the club buildings, completed and ready [for] play this autumn” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 10 July 1923, p. 10). But in the same article, we learn that Stanley Thompson & Company has given the Board of Directors reason to advance the timeline: “while the greens may not be all that they will be later on, the architects of the building and the course state that there is nothing impossible about having these ready early in September. (*Ottawa Citizen*, 10 July 1923, p. 10)

In fact, Hillcrest's prediction about when golf would begin at the new club was advanced ahead of the September possibility less than two weeks later when Kenneth Welton drew up the blueprints for the new golf courses:

Mr. Welton is very enthusiastic about the possibilities of the property and guarantees to have 9 holes in play within two or three weeks after the directors give his firm the word to start construction....

Inasmuch as applications are reaching the Hillcrest club every day in generous numbers, and as the initial charter of 300 members is only days away, it looks as if members of this newest country club will begin enjoying golf on their own grounds by the middle of August. (Ottawa Citizen, 21 July 1923, p. 16).

The last reference to the temporary course comes in conjunction with the announcement that as of 10 April 1924, enough applications have been secured to ensure the initial success of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club and that as a consequence of this milestone, “It is the intention to have the temporary course open toward the end of May” (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19).

Talked about from the start, and perpetually promised as imminent, but never actually built, the temporary nine-hole course became a symbol of the illusoriness of the club’s target of 300 membership applications.

Begging

By March of 1924, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was virtually begging for people simply to enquire about the club and its plans.

In the news-ad item below, we see Implicitly that the strategy of building a club membership through newspaper advertising had been far less successful than as advertised. In fact, we find the new club reduced to asking for an opportunity simply to communicate with possible members :

Directors Have Special Plan in Campaign for Membership

The Directors of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club want the names of 1,000 persons who are interested in golf and outdoor sports.

In order to put his club more quickly in working order and to put all the speed possible into the closing up of the membership list they have formulated a unique plan. All they want now is the names of people interested, and to these interested parties the plans will be explained. It is thoroughly understood that no obligation expressed or implicit is incurred with sending in their names – that all the Directors want is an opportunity to give the full particulars to interested parties. (Ottawa Journal, 27 March 1924, p. 12)

Reading between the lines of the item above, one might suspect that the club's strategy of inviting people to use a newspaper cut-out to apply for a \$100 membership share in the club had actually inhibited a number of people from contacting the club at all, apparently out of fear that simply by communicating their names to the club secretary they might thereby incur a financial obligation.

Two days after this revised sales pitch, with its embarrassing plea that people simply give the club secretary an opportunity to talk to them, there was further abasement:

If You Want To Be One Of The 1,000 ...

If you want to join the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club – or just want to know more about it – just send your name and address to the office in the Canada Life Building and say that you are interested.

A membership in the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club means subscribing for a share certificate at par value of \$100 – and if you will let us know on what terms you would like to pay for same your terms might be acceptable, because if sufficient like applications are received up to the thousand mark the success of the club with low annual fees will be assured. (Ottawa Journal, 29 March 1924, p. 5)

The first subscribers had agreed to pay for their \$100 share over sixty days, and the next subscribers had agreed to pay for the same over ninety days. One wonders what their reaction was to the club's proposal in 1924 that applicants set their own terms.

Advertisements now clearly betrayed a note of desperation.

New Directors

In the summer of 1923, the Board of Directors had indicated that Hillcrest members would be playing golf on a temporary nine-hole course as early as August, and it had suggested that it was possible for Stanley Thompson & Company to have 27 holes in play by September, although the greens would not then be all they would be in time.

That 300 membership applications would be secured that summer was treated as a given.

According, then, to the terms that the club's officers themselves had established, the original Board of Directors had failed in regard to the *sine qua non*: securing the minimum number of membership applications required for purchase of the land and the beginning of construction on the golf courses and the clubhouse.

In the Ottawa newspapers, there was no reference to the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club between September of 1923 and February of 1924, but things were happening behind the scenes.

Fifty percent of the 1923 directors would leave the Board of Directors; one would leave his office and become a director without portfolio; others directors were recruited. As of 11 April 1924, there was apparently still "one vacancy to fill" (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19).

There was an unusual meeting of directors on 31 March 1924. This meeting was the only one ever not described as a meeting of the Board of Directors. Rather, we read of "an important conference held ... at the Chateau Laurier of officials of the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club" (*Ottawa Journal*, 1 April 1924, p. 15). It may be that not all of the officials were present at this meeting and that the so-called "conference" was therefore not an official meeting of the Board of Directors.

We know that Balharrie, Binks, Teetzel, and Gauvreau left the Board of Directors and that Lafond gave up the office of the vice-presidency but continued to serve as a director. I suspect that Balharrie, Binks, Teetzel, and Gauvreau had already left the Board of Directors by the time of this "important conference" at the end of March.

What produced the changes on the Board of Directors?

Did people simply find themselves too busy with their other interests to continue to work on the Hillcrest project?

Was there dissatisfaction with the performance of any of these people as directors, leading to their ouster?

Did any of these directors lose confidence in the Hillcrest venture, leading to their resignation?

Was there a policy dispute, with the losing faction departing?

Whatever the answer to these questions, a new Board of Directors would determine the fate of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

By the spring of 1924, it was crunch time.

George Ritchie Nash

The new vice-president was George Ritchie Nash (1880-1939), the Mayor of Aylmer.

Born in Bryson, Quebec, he moved to Aylmer with his family when a young child and received his education in the town. He went to the Yukon to make his fortune in the late 1800s gold rush, played on its famous hockey team, and then attended the Lewis Institute of Engineering in Chicago, after which he worked for 18 years in the Public Works Department in Ottawa. He then developed a coal and supply business in Aylmer and became a prominent merchant who owned a store block on the town's Main Street.



Figure 50 George Ritchie Nash (1880-1939),
Ottawa Citizen, 1 September 1923, p.19.

He was elected unopposed to Aylmer Town Council in 1919. He served alongside councillor Thomas Foley, under whose chairmanship he served on the Waterworks Committee. In 1920, the federal government sent Nash up the Petawawa River to assess the value of lumber chutes and lumber equipment as far as its origin point in Algonquin Park. He canoed the entire length of the river.

In 1921, he became mayor, the chosen successor to longstanding mayor Therien: "I have been wanting Mr. Nash to come out for a long time,' said Mayor Therien. "I think I have served my time and as I feel that the honour should now go to an English-speaking person, I am very glad to resign in his favour" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 31 December 1920, 3).

It was while Mayor Nash was working late in his office on 10 August 1921 that he observed a fire broken out in a hotel on Main Street, raised the alarm and then personally drove down the Aylmer Road at breakneck speed to get extra fire-fighting equipment from Hull's mayor. Nonetheless, the fire spread: one person died and 700 people were rendered homeless (125 homes were destroyed) as the fire "left in its wake a parched and blackened ruin of what was formerly a quiet and picturesque town" (*Gazette* [Montreal], 11 August 1921, p. 1).

Mayor Nash thereafter organized relief, appealed for assistance from municipalities across Canada, and regularly met with the premier of Quebec to organize short- and long-term financial assistance for the stricken community.

In January of 1923, he organized and was elected president of the Aylmer Reform Association with plans “to hold regular meetings each month for the discussion of public affairs” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 12 January 1923, p. 1).

In the same month, he was elected unopposed to a second term as mayor. He had developed a reputation as a “hustler” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 1 September 1923, p. 19). In response to the catastrophic fire, he had made “plenty of low-priced lots available in the choicest part of town”: “Aylmer is being laid out, thanks to the enterprise of Mayor George Nash and his immediate associates, with a view to future rapid expansion” (*Ottawa Journal*, 15 September 1923, p. 21). He aggressively promoted the town of Aylmer as a place where businesses and industries would thrive:

Mayor George Nash has adopted a slogan all of his own for the town of Aylmer, which he and his associates are endeavouring to boost through frequent public campaigns. It is: “We have a great town and we want the world to know it. There’s room for the type of citizen who is ready to get out and shove the old town along. We want industries, and plenty of them.” (Ottawa Citizen, 1 September 1923, p. 19)

A promoter of sports in Aylmer (he was an honorary president of Aylmer’s Minto Hockey Club during World War I and an honorary vice-president of the Aylmer Hockey Club as of 1920), Nash was eager to develop a golf club in Aylmer. In 1926, he sold “the old Nash farm” (comprising a farmhouse and 217 acres) to a syndicate of Aylmer businessmen who had just incorporated as the Hull Golf Club (*Ottawa Journal*, 5 June 1926, p. 26). The Nash farmhouse became the clubhouse.

Robert Russell Sparks

Robert Russell Sparks (1878-1963) was a member of one of Ottawa's earliest pioneer families, his grandfather George Sparks having come to the Ottawa area from Ireland to work for Philemon Wright. Russell's father had died in a marine disaster on Georgian Bay in 1882, and Russell lived with his widowed mother in the family home until she passed away in 1923.

In the late 1890s, he entered the newspaper business, working first at the *Ottawa Journal*, then at the *Ottawa Citizen*, and next as City Editor for the *Ottawa Free Press* from 1899 to 1904. In 1904, he entered the clothing business in Ottawa with his brother, forming Sparks Brothers Wholesale Clothing Manufacturers, but then in 1912 he formed the Sparks-Cunningham Insurance Agency and spent the rest of his career as an insurance broker.



Figure 51 Robert Russell Sparks (1878-1963), *Who's Who and Why 9* Toronto: International Press, 1918), p. 742.

By the mid-1920s he was vice-president of the Ottawa Fire Agent's Association, and in the late 1920s was elected to office in the provincial association.

Well-educated, he developed various academic and artistic interests throughout his life. In fact, he was a frequent lecturer to various groups in Ottawa, on one occasion regaling an association of insurance salesman with a historical lecture on the development of the insurance industry from the ancient Greeks onward, and on another occasion entertaining the Arts and Letters Club of Ottawa with a lecture on "Peasant Life in the Basque Country."

Sparks was also a member of "the original cast of the Ottawa Players' Club

presentations” in the early 1900s, and he continued to perform in its plays until the mid-1930s.

He was also a director of amateur theatrical productions.

Sparks was active in Ottawa politics, from elections for alderman in Dalhousie ward before World War I to an unsuccessful run for the provincial Liberals in Ottawa South in 1928, by which point he had become Major Sparks.

He joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force during World War I and served as a lieutenant in the Railway Construction and Forestry Depot in Ottawa before being sent with the Canadian Forestry Corp to Southwestern France. While in France, he survived the Spanish Flu at the beginning of 1919 and returned to Canada that spring.

Sparks remained active in the Canadian military after World War I, serving as of 1920 as a lieutenant in the re-organized Ottawa cavalry unit known as the 5th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards (*Ottawa Citizen*, 15 April 1920, p. 3). By 1924, he had been promoted to the rank of captain and donated the Sparks Challenge Cup for the regiment’s shooting competitions.

He was well-known and well-connected member of the Ottawa Board of Trade when he was invited to serve on the Hillcrest Board of Directors in the spring of 1924.

William Milton Gladish

During the 1923-24 advertising campaign on behalf of the Hillcrest Golf and country Club, William Milton Gladish (1887-1978) was the Sports Editor of the *Ottawa Journal*.

He was well-disposed toward the Hillcrest venture, promoting it in the *Ottawa Journal* from the beginning with articles that were versions of the club's own advertisements. The article below, written after Gladish toured the property where Thompson and Welton had laid out 27 holes, is an example of the way he hyped the club's prospects:

The enthusiastic reception of this new recreational headquarters is not at all surprising after taking a complete survey of the spot acquired for the links and the clubhouse.

Scarcely removed from the Aylmer car lines, sequestered in the midst of ideal country scenery, this most adaptable property comprises some 180 acres of hill and dale, with a most desirable soil, free from rocks and troublesome obstructions. Every acre of the property promises to give good returns in green landscape and rich turf with the minimum of endeavour, great tracts of which are now ready for play. The course is naturally punctuated by terraces and flats, and rolling stretches, with scores of splendid hazards.

All this, within easy distance of the city, is offered to those enthusiastic for the game, and who require exercise or have cultivated a liking for real outdoor recreation.

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club is a businessman's club, for the busy businessman and woman, as is instanced by its list of officers and directors

It is formed on broad, democratic principles, charging only a moderate price for a share of the capital stock, and with the intention of keeping the fees down as low as is consistent with the running of the club. The members will early appreciate that this will be their own club, in which they will become active as committeemen or directors, and in the policy of which they will have perpetual voice. The shares are being held at \$100, which cost is negligible, considering the advantages to be derived from the membership it affords.

The opportunity offered the public to become one of the first 300 members is one the importance of which can scarcely be exaggerated. (Ottawa Journal, 14 July 1923, p. 9)

It is no wonder that Gladish was added to the Board of Directors in April of 1924.



Figure 52 William Milton Gladish (1887-1978), *Edmonton Bulletin*, 10 September 1935, p. 14.

Gladish had been born in Nebraska in December of 1887, but his father William was actually Toronto-born, a descendent of one of Toronto's earliest pioneer families, and so he returned to Toronto with his son and his Wisconsin wife in 1900.

Before World War I, Gladish had been a reporter for the *Toronto News*. Later, he would be Sports Editor for the *Sudbury Star*, and later yet he would be the *Ottawa Journal's* Farm Editor (he was honorary president of the Russell 4H Club in 1961). He became an entertainment critic for the *Ottawa Citizen*, reviewing everything from Hollywood movies to the Ice Capades. By the mid-1940s, he was an editor for The Canadian Press at its Toronto Bureau. By the 1950s, he was back in Ottawa, continuing his reviewing for the *Citizen* and serving as its farm columnist and the evening edition's "Stamp Editor" (in 1950, he had become president of the Canadian Philatelic Society). He was also on the Board of Directors of the Ottawa Press Club.

In another aspect of his business life, he managed movie theatres in various Ontario cities, including Toronto, London, and Sudbury.

Gladish was particularly active in promoting cycling competitions and became president of the Ottawa Bicycle Club in 1921 and then president of the Ottawa Bicycle Association in 1925. He was chairman of the Canadian Wheelmen's Association in 1924 and as such toured Europe that summer to report "on cycling as he saw it in Britain, France, Belgium and Holland" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 26 September 1924, p. 18). He was also honorary president of the Ottawa Motorcycle Club in 1924. In 1930, he was Secretary of the Ontario Amateur Athletic Association, and in the 1930s, he became Secretary of the Allied Sports and Amusements Association.

Gladish was active in the Conservative Party throughout his life, and, as noted above, he was particularly interested in promoting the idea of a bilingual culture for Canada.

On Labour Day in 1920, he and City of Ottawa Controller Frank Plant were together in charge of the mammoth field day at Lansdowne Park sponsored by the Trades and Labour Council (Gladish would for

many years continue to be active in the organization of this annual event), so he knew well the President of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club long before the idea of this golf club was born.

And Gladish was also a member of the Ottawa businessperson's association known as the 100 Club, socializing in it with original Hillcrest director Tom Foley and 1924 directors Robert Russel Sparks and Charles Edward Peabody, jnr.

The Advertising Guru: Charles Edward Peabody

After the failure of its 1923 advertising campaign, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club put its 1924 advertising in the hands of an international advertising guru: Charles Edward Peabody, jnr.

Peabody was also elected to the Board of Directors.

Born in Brandon, Vermont, in 1872, Peabody was the son of a Civil War veteran. He came to Ottawa to work as an “advertising specialist” (*Ottawa Journal*, 26 July 1927, p. 1). On the way, he had worked for printing companies in such big cities as Boston, New York, Montreal, and Toronto, setting up in a number of them Specialty Salesmen’s Associations at which “A few businessmen met once a week and exchanged tips for mutual benefit” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 18 January 1923, p. 5).

In Ottawa, where he formed the Peabody Advertising Company in 1915, he did the same, but the Ottawa Specialty Salesmen’s Association became “The 100 Club” in 1923, with Tom Foley, Robert Russell Sparks, William Milton Gladish, and Peabody all serving alongside each other in various capacities (*Ottawa Citizen*, 18 January 1923, p. 5).



Figure 53 Charles Edward Peabody, jnr (1872-1927), *Ottawa Citizen*, 11 May 1927, p. 4.

Peabody quickly became a notable business figure in Ottawa.

“Although he suffered physical disabilities for a long time,” he was described as “a man who held a unique place in the community – a man beloved by a very wide circle of personal friends and business acquaintances”:

Charles Edward Peabody was a man of rare qualities. He possessed a keen mind, was a student of human nature, a ready wit and a philosopher. His optimism, despite his physical handicap, was an inspiration for all with whom he came into contact.... His ability to look on the bright side of life was an outstanding characteristic, and this trait was in evidence through his long suffering. (Ottawa Journal, 26 July 1927, p. 1).

His physical disabilities confined him to “one diversion and that was fishing”: “He sometimes declared that he lived to fish, and he

spent as much of his time as possible in a boat at Wakefield Lake for his favorite pastime” (*Ottawa Journal*, 26 July 1927, p. 1).

But for all the pleasure he received from wielding a fishing rod, it seems that he also derived a great deal of pleasure from wielding a pen: “His facile pen was sought by many for souvenirs of special occasions, and his phraseology for club notices, circular letters, and display advertising was distinctive” (*Ottawa Journal*, 26 July 1927, p. 1).

He thought of advertisements as artistic creations and so turned his office into an artist’s studio:

His was an artistic temperament, and his drawings were familiar to a host of acquaintances. He embellished many of his advertising creations with his own sketches and line drawings. His office, where he spent many hours because of his inability to get around with ease, was more of a studio than a workshop, the quiet dignity of his surroundings giving material evidence of his professional inclinations. (Ottawa Journal, 26 July 1927, p. 3)



Figure 54 If Peabody was commissioned to do Hillcrest advertisements in 1923, a possible Peabody appears above. Le droit, 7 July 1923, p. 4.

The Peabody Principles

As an advertising specialist, Peabody acquired the reputation of being “a genius for his particular scope of business activity” (*Ottawa Journal*, 26 July 1927, p. 1).

Peabody was often called upon to address large audiences about the principles and best practices of his craft. An address he delivered to Montreal’s Publicity Association shows how thoroughly he had studied advertising philosophy, and it also suggests how he would be useful to the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club’s attempt to advertise itself into reality:

Making Type Talk

An advertisement to be effective must have three essentials – directness, force and human interest.

Directness is telling the story shorn of technicalities in virile, easily understood Anglo-Saxon, coming sharply to the point and hitting the high spots.

Forcefulness is emphasizing the vital points, making cold type talk, and remembering that pictures were primitive man’s first method of transmitting human thought.

Human interest is remembering that under the veneer we are all intensely human, that when an advertisement has news value it is live, vital and personal.

The first and last are important, and are the province of the copywriter; the second is equal to the other two and is the realm of the typographer. Many a well-written ad has been nullified or entirely spoiled by poor setting and display, and inversely many a poorly written and constructed ad has been made good by clever handling by the layout man and typesetter.

In preparing an ad for the newspaper, if it is to be without illustration of any kind, the typographer or layout man must paint a picture entirely by type, with the idea of attracting the eye and holding the attention. The general rule to follow to attain this result are these:

Select the lines to be displayed. Generally the most prominent ones should be the subject of the ad and the name of the advertiser.

Second in prominence come the names of the objects advertised and the prices.

The balance of the descriptive matter, whether of general interest to the subject as a whole or details of the special articles, should be kept even in tone and without prominence.

If illustrations are used the same rules apply, but the pictures simplify the effort and intensify the effectiveness of the type-story and display.

Individuality in advertising is secured by the adoption of a certain face of type, a standard method of display, a regular style of border, an individual trademark or decorative design, and a specially designed line for the firm name.

Psychologically the advertisement has to cater to the wants of the public by telling them that you can best supply them with something that they really need, or create in the minds of the public a desire for something that may add to their comfort or gratification.

Your object is best accomplished by making your ad so attractive typographically that it holds the eye and attention of the public long enough for them to find out what you have to sell and where they can get it.

In selecting the display type it is good practice to consider the line of business advertised and the class of people catered to. If the goods advertised are artistic, rich or dainty, a graceful, not too heavy style of type should be used. If you are catering to a refined or select class, use a refined type; if to the ordinary public, the heavier faces.

Don't try to emphasize every line in big caps; remember there is emphasis in contrast. Don't expect the printer to interpret what you intend to say; compositors are not mind readers. Somebody has said that the sweetest music is the stops, and likewise the best part of an advertisement is sometimes the blank space. I mean the white space surrounding the type, for many ads are too crowded to be effective.

(Gazette [Montreal], 29 May 1912, p. 5)

One can see that in the spring of 1924, as its future was hanging in the balance of the success or failure of its advertising campaign, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club had brought in a big hitter.

Hillcrest's Advertising Reset

The original advertising campaign of July and August of 1923 would seem to have been run by Hillcrest Secretary Wilfrid J. Grace.

He was at the centre of everything.

All applications were sent to the temporary office of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club in Grace's law office in the Canada Life Building. He was the one who knew how many applications had been received. He was the one who reported on the progress of the application campaign at all meetings of the Board of Directors. Since queries about the Hillcrest venture were literally addressed to him, he knew what questions were of concern to potential applicants.

So, it seems to be his voice, his arguments, his soft-sell and hard-sell strategies, and his writing style (in which the dash replaces commas, semicolons and colons) that we encounter in the advertisements, news-ads, and press releases of 1923.

As the force behind the incorporation of the club, and as the most hands-on director, in a sense Grace **was** the Hillcrest club. Although Frank Plant presided at meetings of the Board of Directors, it was always "with Secretary Grace officiating in his official capacity" (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19).

Grace ran the show.

At the end of March in 1924, Secretary Grace arranged for four news-ads in quick succession to address the question of "why the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club designed to accommodate a thousand members" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1923, p. 11). And in these advertisements, I think we can detect the influence of Peabody in the way these advertisements wasted no time in trying to mitigate the damage done by the inconsistencies and contradictions of the original advertising campaign.

The first ad appeared on March 26th.

Peabody must have counselled Grace that this ad's main purpose should be to remind readers about the Hillcrest venture and to sound a positive note about the "materializing" of the new club. And it seems that he also recommended introducing a subtext about the vexing question of the extremely large membership that the club's success apparently depended on – a subtext that would become the main message in succeeding advertisements.

“Open All Year Round”

The Policy of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club

Winter and Summer Sports

It will be welcome news to many golf enthusiasts and many others who have leanings towards golf and all other forms of outdoor sport that the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club on the Aylmer Road is materializing so well and that the Directors have perfected their plans for completing the big membership – so necessary to keep the club highly efficient at the lowest possible individual expense.

By its broad policy of keeping the club open all the year round and including sports of skiing, skating, snowshoeing, tobogganing in the Winter months with golf, tennis, riding, etc., in the Summer, it appeals to the broadest kind of clientele.

Its large acreage, excellent location and ease of access make all this possible. Making it the ideal club for the business man – the professional – the civil servant, in fact, for everyone.

Applications for shares and full particulars may be obtained by all who may be interested at the Hillcrest Offices in the Canada Life Bldg. (Ottawa Journal, 26 March 1924, p. 13)

Reading between the lines of this positive, easy-going “news-ad,” we can see that there is a low-key design, on the one hand, to justify the unusually large membership planned for the club and, on the other hand, to imply that the number is not quite as big as it seems, for the ad implies that a good number of the 1,000 members would not show up on the golf course, for many of the 1,000 members people would not be golfers, but rather enthusiasts of other sports, especially winter sports.

Having gently broached the subject of the “plans for completing the big membership,” Grace and Peabody in the next news-ad pretended to take on the issue of the ostensibly daunting task of actually securing 1,000 membership applications.

1,000 Names Wanted

Directors Have Special Plan In Campaign For Membership

The Directors of the Hillcrest Golf Club want the names of 1,000 persons who are interested in golf and outdoor sports.

In order to put this club more quickly in working order, and to put all speed possible into closing up the membership list, they have formulated a unique plan. All they want now is the names of people interested and to these interested parties the plan will be explained. It is thoroughly understood that no obligation expressed or implied is incurred with those sending in their names – that all the Directors want is an opportunity to give the full particulars to interested parties.

If everything works out according to schedule – the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club will undoubtedly be the most popular outdoor club in the city. And those who were in at the start, thus being in the position of being founders, will reap big dividends therefrom in satisfaction and pleasure to say nothing of its possibilities as an investment. All are requested to send in their names and addresses to the Hillcrest Offices, c.o. Wilfrid J. Grace, Secretary, Canada Life Bldg. (Ottawa Journal, 27 March 1924, p. 12)

So, there are “plans for completing the big membership”; in fact, there is a “special plan,” which is “a unique plan.”

But one might have wondered why the plans were not explained. Why not advertise them? Why the big secret?

Then on March 28th, Grace and Peabody took on the question of the 1,000-person membership more directly in an advertisement in which it appears that Peabody interviews Grace:

Why The 1,000?

Reasons For Need of Big Membership

“There are several reasons why a big membership is a good thing for a golf or country club,” says a director of the Hillcrest Golf Club when approached with a query about the number of members they were seeking.

“One of these is that the larger the membership the lower will be the pro rata cost for each membership for maintenance.”

“And again the large acreage of the Hillcrest property warrants a big membership because it can amply accommodate them. Messrs. Stanley Thompson & Co., Golf Experts, have laid out a plan for 27 holes of golf – a championship course of 18 holes and a ladies’ course of 9 holes --- and still there is lots of accommodation left for tennis courts and the like.”

“Another thing – with a membership of a thousand with a club run at prices which will be a burden to no one – this will be the most popular club on the continent.”

“That is why we want the thousand – and names are steadily pouring in to the Hillcrest Offices in the Canada Life Building.”

Send yours if you want to be one of the thousand. (Ottawa Journal, 28 March 1924, p. 15)

The third reason above for why the club must have 1,000 members is effectively a tautology: by having more members than any other golf and country club on the continent, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club will be the most popular club on the continent. The second reason is a *non sequitur*: because the club has so many acres, it must fill them up with a thousand people. Only the first reason – with a membership of 1,000, the club will lower its per capita costs – makes any sense.

Still, since, according to the news-ad from the previous day, up to 1,000 people who buy shares will receive great dividends of pleasure, satisfaction, and dollars, who wouldn't want to be one of them?

So, Peabody and Grace introduce here a new phrase – “the thousand” – to put a positive spin on the big membership number that has met resistance. It is not a question of a thousand members, but a question of **the** thousand. Proceeding as though they have established “the thousand” as a special, fortunate, even blessed cohort, they ask for names “If you want to be one of **the thousand**” (emphasis added).

Still working to make the big membership target of 1,000 a non-issue, they re-use the same phrase in their next news-ad on March 29th.

“I'll Meet You At The Club”

The Hillcrest Golf Club Soon To Be the Favorite Meeting Place of Outdoor Lovers

With its 1,000 members there is no doubt at all but what the favorite sentence on the tip of every member's tongue will be: “[I'll] meet you at the club.”

Pride of ownership is a great thing. And as a shareholder in the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club every member will be a part proprietor of the club, its buildings, its grounds, its advantages and its privileges. It will be the one spot in God's great outdoors that you will have a perfect right to enjoy and to entertain your friends.

And bear in mind that one share at the par value of \$100 makes the holder a part owner of 180 acres of ground, the club buildings and the club franchise.

All who join are charter members and get in on the "ground floor."

If you want to be one of the 1,000 – send in your name today to the Hillcrest Offices, Canada Life Building. (Ottawa Journal, 29 March 1924, p. 15)

And yet on a different page of the same issue of the *Ottawa Journal*, in a traditional-looking advertisement, we find a rather alarming suggestion about "the 1,000."

**If You Want to Be
One of the 1,000---**

—If you want to join the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club—if you want to know more about it—just send your name and address to the office in the Canada Life Building and say that you are interested.

A membership in the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club means subscribing for a share certificate at par value of \$100—and if you will let us know on what terms you would like to pay for same your terms might be acceptable, because if sufficient like applications are secured up to the thousand mark the success of the club with low annual fees will be assured.

Send Your Name Today

Hillcrest Golf and Country Club
Canada Life Bldg.

Figure 55 Ottawa Journal, 29 March 1924, p. 5.

The ad looks attractive on the page, mixing kinds of type and sizes of type, and using the white space on the page effectively.

Yet it seems to imply that “the success of the club” will not “be assured” unless “applications are secured up to the thousand mark.”

What a buzz kill!

As the Hillcrest club is trying to secure 300 membership applications in order to trigger construction of the golf course and clubhouse, it puts into circulation the idea that more than three times that number is what is really needed if the club is to succeed: the lower the number, the greater the risk.

And then On April 1st, 1924, there was one more ad.

It would be the last that the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club would ever publish.

American Associates

The Hillcrest Golf and Country Club had one last try at establishing for itself a reputation as the Ottawa club of the future. In what might have struck some as an April Fool's joke, Hillcrest published an ad on 1 April 1924 with the news that "applications had been received for associate memberships in the progressive young club from approximately 100 business men and others residing in New York state" (*Ottawa Journal*, 1 April 1924, p. 15).

If Americans are coming all the way to Ottawa to join the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, membership must be worth \$100 (Canadian)!

Yet this news-ad about the American interest in the club may have been largely an illusion created by "smoke and mirrors."

U.S. Golfers Join Hillcrest Club

Americans Show Desire To Participate In Sports In Canada Winter And Summer

At an important conference held yesterday at the Chateau Laurier of officials of the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, whose handsome property of 180 acres is situated at a very convenient spot on the Aylmer Road, the somewhat astonishing information was presented that applications had been received for associate memberships in the aggressive young club from approximately 100 business men and others residing in New York State. This is not only an indication of the wide popularity which the Hillcrest Golf and country Club will enjoy but it also shows the growing desire of American tourists and sportsmen to spend their vacations in Canada. Anxiety is shown in the desire to secure membership privileges at the Hillcrest Club, so that they can obtain the use of golfing facilities on a popular basis during their holidays.

The policy of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club to place golf, tennis and lawn bowling, as well as the outdoor winter sports, within the reach of all is finding favor among local enthusiasts and the drive to secure 1,000 members is progressing very satisfactorily. Those who desire to get in on the ground floor should obey the impulse.

Applicants for shares and full particulars regarding the Hillcrest organization may obtain all information at the Hillcrest Club offices, Canada Life Building. (Ottawa Journal, 1 April 1924, p. 15)

According to the official prospectus published in July of 1923, Associate Membership was supposed to entail payment of a full share price of \$100. The concession to the geographical remoteness of this category of share holder was to be an annual fee at half the price of the fee charged regular shareholders.

Had the prospective American associate members actually engaged to buy shares in the club by submitting the application coupon, as required by the prospectus?

If each of 100 Americans had applied for an associate membership as defined in the prospectus, then in one fell swoop 33.3% of the 300 applications required to trigger the process of buying land and starting construction would have been secured. Furthermore, the club would have secured 10% of the 1,000 applications by which “the success of the club with low annual fees [would] be assured” (*Ottawa Journal*, 29 March 1924, p. 5).

Note, however, that at a meeting of the Board of Directors on 10 April 1924, it was decided that shareholders would not be charged an annual fee for 1924: “Active members will not have to pay fees the first year, the purchase of stock covering this” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 11 April 1924, p. 10). So, “in lieu of the purchase of a club share,” “the decision was reached to abolish the annual fees of active members for the first year ... but the associate members will be required to pay stipulated dues for club privileges during the coming season” (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19). One draws the inference that the associate members in question had not purchased stock; otherwise, as part owners of the club through the purchase of a \$100 share, they could not have been denied club privileges in 1924.

In regard to associate membership, it would seem that the terms of the Hillcrest prospectus published in the *Ottawa Citizen*, *Ottawa Journal*, and *Le droit* on 4 July 1923 had been changed without notice. This prospectus was a legally significant document: “A copy of this prospectus has been filed for registration with the Provincial Secretary for Ontario, dated July 4th, 1923, as required by the Ontario Companies’ Act” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3).

Was the Board of Directors allowed to make these changes? Would a new prospectus need to be filed for registration?

Was there a dispute among the original directors about this decision? Is this why Balharrie, Binks, Teetzel, and Gauvreau left the Board of Directors?

The Hillcrest news-ad announcing American interest in associate memberships seems to have been intentionally ambiguous. It allows a reader to think that approximately 100 Americans have applied for approximately 100 Associate Memberships, which of course were supposed to have cost \$100 each. This verbal “sleight of hand” buttresses the claim made later in the ad that “the drive to secure 1,000 members is progressing very satisfactorily.”

It may be that this news-ad provides the first hint of the “unique plan” that the Board of Directors had come up with to secure the 1,000 memberships needed to assure the success of the club. Perhaps it was in working out how to accommodate the desire of “American tourists and sportsmen ... to secure membership privileges at the Hillcrest Club, so that they can obtain the use of golfing facilities on a popular basis during their holidays” **without having to purchase \$100 shares**, that led some of the directors – and most likely Secretary Grace – to come up with the idea of group memberships.

Group Memberships

As part of the explanation, justification, and promotion of its membership target of 1,000, the Hillcrest club had referred to its “unique plan.” This plan seems to have involved a redefinition of associate memberships, but there was more to it.

On 11 April 1924, the *Ottawa Journal* reports that at the meeting of the Board of Directors the day before, when a “strong board of directors” was appointed, an entirely new category of club membership was created:

An interesting proposal, which carries out the principle of placing golf within the reach of all, was adopted in the arrangement of a group system of membership whereby applications for membership may be accepted from a stipulated number of people, such as civil servants or employees of a firm, etc., at a special annual fee when such applications are made in a block.
(*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19)

Perhaps the “approximately 100 businessmen and others residing in New York State” who were anxious to find an Ottawa golf course where they could play while on holiday were admitted to membership “*en bloc* at a special fee,” making them one of the unspecified groups comprehended by the open-ended “etc.” above (*Ottawa Citizen*, 11 April 1924, p. 10).

Today, group membership of varying forms is a common feature of the golf industry (in Ottawa and elsewhere), but in 1923, Hillcrest’s plan was certainly unique, so it is not clear how such an innovative category of membership was received by the people who were buying a \$100 share as their way into the Hillcrest club – people who had not been offered a choice of this category of membership the year before.

The End of the Beginning

It is clear from the advertising at the end of March that there was still hope, if not optimism, that 1,000 membership applications could be secured. At the meeting of the Board of Directors on 10 April 1924, four new members were appointed, and the secondary headline of the newspaper report in director Bill Gladish's *Ottawa Journal* expresses approval: "Strong Board of Directors Has Been Appointed" (11 April 1924, p. 19).

The new Board of Directors was also gung-ho: "Enthusiastic Meeting Launches Preparations For Season" (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19).

Presumably Gladish himself summarized the result of the meeting of the Board of Directors that was published in the *Ottawa Journal*:

Announcement was made that the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club had secured sufficient members to insure the initial success of the undertaking and plans for the laying out of the first nine holes of the course, as well as improvement of the club house and other features, were adopted. It is the intention to have a temporary course open toward the end of May. Incidentally, the application was received from an experienced greensman and was given proper consideration. The golf architects, Stanley Thompson & Co., Limited, who have already laid out the two links on the property, one being a special nine-hole course for the ladies and the other being an 18-hole course, will be instructed to proceed with actual work to prevent the possibility of delay in the preparatory work. (11 April 1924, p. 19)

So, it was really happening: the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was "materializing."

Hillcrest's timing was opportune, for Stanley Thompson had arranged to be in Montreal on 29 April 1924 to inspect how the Marlborough course had come through the winter. He would leave in the evening for Winnipeg, where work was scheduled, as it also was in Kenora and Fort William (*Gazette* [Montreal], 30 April 1924, p. 16). But he indicated that "after a tour of the West," he would be back in Montreal to look at the course again "about the middle of the month" (*Montreal Star*, 2 May 1924, p. 26). He was no doubt ready and able to come to Ottawa to consult with the Hillcrest directors both at the end of April and in the middle of May, as required by the Hillcrest timeline.

And if anyone were sceptical that the long-promised temporary nine-hole course would ever be built, surely the news that “an experienced greensman” was waiting in the wings would put paid to that doubt.

Had Stanley Thompson & Company, as was their wont, put the new golf club in touch with a greenkeeper of the company’s choosing?

The Beginning of the End

And yet one hears no more of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club after April of 1924.

At the beginning of April, when the *Ottawa Journal* described the golf season to come in Ottawa, it referred to Hillcrest as a certainty:

Golf is gradually crowding every other summer game out of the picture. The strides the game has made in Ottawa since the war have been immense. Three new courses have been added to the two which were in existence previous to the war. The baby club, the Chaudière, is just about ready to step out of its long perambulator and make way for the recently christened Hillcrest Club. (Ottawa Journal, 8 April 1924, p. 16).

But by the end of April, it is silent about Hillcrest (*Ottawa Journal*, 28 April 1924, p. 13).

Hillcrest appears in the newspapers in May only as an implication in an *Ottawa Journal* article published on 2 May 1924 about a golf course likely to be built on the 250-acre farm of the Ritchie Brothers in Aylmer: “it will be the fifth on the Aylmer Road if it goes ahead” (p. 1). In May of 1924, one counts five courses on Aylmer Road only if one counts the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club alongside Royal Ottawa, Rivermead, and Chaudière. So we can see that Bill Gladish, the *Ottawa Journal* Sports Editor and a Hillcrest director at this time, clearly still expects at the beginning of May that the fourth golf club on the Aylmer Road – Hillcrest – is on course with its plans.

What happened in May to prevent the building of the temporary course and to cause the disappearance of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club?

Somehow, the Board of Directors meeting of 10 April 1924 that announced the end of the club’s long beginning seems also to have led to the beginning of its very quick end.

Fudged Prospectus Terms

Special fees for group memberships and the “stipulated dues” of associate members seem to have been the key to the club’s announcement on 10 April 1924 that “sufficient members have been secured to insure the initial success of the undertaking” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 11 April 1924).

Although the 1923 prospectus declares that “It is understood that no call will be made” and that membership applicants are “liable for no payment under this agreement until 300 membership applications have been secured,” there is no mention in April of 1924 of the actual number of memberships secured (*Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1923, p. 3). Reference to “sufficient members” is different from references to 300 members.

Had 300 applications for \$100 shares been received?

Or was the club attempting to get things going with less than the number of membership applications stipulated both in the prospectus and on the application coupons? Had the Board of Directors decided that a combination of less-than-300 applications for shares, on the one hand, and fees from group memberships and the stipulated dues of American associate members, on the other, meant that “sufficient members have been secured to insure the initial success of the undertaking”?

If the call was made for the first instalment of the share fee without the 300-membership target having been achieved, how many of the 1923 membership applicants declined to answer the call?

How many of the 1923 membership applicants objected to the apparent departure from the prospectus terms for the associate membership category and refused to answer the call?

Having been told for almost a year that “the thousand” who would meet at the most popular club on the continent would all be part-owners of the club, how many of the 1923 membership applicants objected to the creation of associate membership and group membership categories that would extend membership privileges to hundreds of people who were not part-owners, and therefore refused to answer the call?

And note the special problem created in connection with prospective civil service members. Proclaiming regularly in its advertisements throughout the summer of 1923 that “Civil Servants in big numbers are sending in their applications,” the Hillcrest Board of Directors then created a special category of group membership for civil servants in particular (*Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1923, p. 11). How many of the

1923 civil service membership applicants balked at the call for their first payment, asking instead to participate in a group membership plan?

By its freewheeling with membership categories in March and April of 1924, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club may have provided both a legal basis and a financial motivation for certain of its 1923 membership applicants to renege on their commitments to buy a share.

If so, it may be that the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was not just the first golf club to be **made** by newspaper advertising, but also the first golf club to be **unmade** by it, when certain membership applicants decided in the spring of 1924 that the prospectus advertised in the Ottawa newspapers in the summer of 1923 had become false advertising by the club's decisions in the spring of 1924.

No More Option

Perhaps the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was unable to exercise its purchase option on the Shouldice farm before the option expired.

The real estate option arranged by the Hillcrest promoters will have been a specially designed contract with R.A. Shouldice, the seller of the 180 acres (and related farm buildings) along Brickyard Road. Shouldice will have granted the Hillcrest promoters the option to buy his property at a fixed price (\$33,5000) by a specified date. In consideration of his granting this option to buy or not buy his property by the end of the holding period, Shouldice will have received a payment of an option premium from the Hillcrest promoters.

According to the terms of such an option, should the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club decide to buy the property (in other words, decide to exercise the real estate option), Shouldice would be required to sell the property to the club according to the terms of the pre-existing contract (regardless of any increase in the value of the land or any other better offers that had been received).

What was the expiry date on the option purchased by the Hillcrest promoters?

If we assume that the purchase option was dated 22 June 1923, the day the club was incorporated and thereby able to purchase property, we might suspect that the option was due to expire after a year on 21 June 1924. If so, the Hillcrest club may not have been able to finance the land purchase before the option expired.

Having given 1923 membership applicants up to ninety days to make their last instalment of the share price as of the declaration that sufficient memberships had been secured to trigger purchase of the land and construction of golf course and clubhouse, and having apparently offered 1924 membership applicants the opportunity of even longer periods of payment, the timetable established by the club's declaration on 10 April 1924 that it had secured sufficient members to get things underway meant that by the putative expiration of the purchase option on 21 June 1924, there might still have been outstanding more than twenty-five percent of the money due.

Mind you, given that a golf course was expected to be under construction sometime during the late summer of 1923, one knows that the purchase option was expected to have been exercised well before this point.

Had the Hillcrest promoters – supremely confident to the point of hubris – even thought to date their purchase option beyond the summer of 1923?

Noting that not a single advertisement about the Hillcrest club appeared after the last week of August, I wonder if the purchase option had lapsed by that point, effectively placing the Hillcrest plan in suspended animation as directors contemplated their next move.

We read that one of the first items of business at the meeting of the new Board of Directors on 10 April 1924 was the following: “The terms under which the valuable property, consisting of 180 acres of appropriate land adjacent to the Royal Ottawa Golf Club, was secured were unanimously adopted at the meeting” (*Ottawa Journal*, 11 April 1924, p. 19).

The terms of the option on the Shouldice farm purchased in June of 1923 had been implicitly adopted by the Board of Directors by the very act of negotiating and paying for the option at that time. This fact is confirmed by the declaration in July of 1923 that “The minute we have 300 names – we take possession of the grounds” (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 July 1923, p. 26). There would have been no need for the Board of Directors to go over the terms of that purchase option again at their meeting of 10 April 1924. So, one might wonder if this resolution on 10 April 1924 referred to a new purchase option negotiated after the expiry of the original option.

The promotion of real estate agent Tom Foley to the office of treasurer at the meeting in question may have been in acknowledgement of his close acquaintance with the club’s finances that will have come through his work on just such a new option.

And the unpredictable payment schedules that the Hillcrest club had created may well have bedevilled an attempt to finance purchase of the Shouldice farm by means of a second purchase option.

Discounted Hunt and Golf Club Memberships

In 1922, the least expensive membership at Ottawa's three existing golf clubs was \$200 (*Ottawa Citizen*, 17 April 1922, p. 18). This was presumably the rate at the newest club, the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, which had used a temporary nine-hole course until 1922, but was by 1923 enjoying its new eighteen-hole championship course designed by Willie Park, jnr. This club was still seeking members.

At the upper end of the socio-economic bracket to which the Hillcrest promoters were pitching their golf and country club will have been a certain number of people debating whether to become a member of the Hunt and Golf Club at \$200 or to become a member of the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club at \$100.



Figure 56 Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, circa 1929.

It was significant, then, that in the spring of 1924, as the final push to secure “sufficient members” to make Hillcrest’s plans viable was underway, the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club offered a “reduced rate” in a “drive for new members,” a drive that was reported by the end of April to have been “a huge success” (*Ottawa Journal*, 28 April 1924, p. 13). Ironically, on the very day of the 10 April 1924 meeting of the Hillcrest Board of Directors, we read that at the Hunt and Golf Club “Over 50 new members were added and an extension of time to May 1 has been granted to allow incoming members to take advantage of the special rate” (*Ottawa Journal*, 10 April 1924, p. 16).

Because of the membership sale at the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club in the early spring of 1924, how many prospective Hillcrest members plumped for the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club?

And how many 1923 Hillcrest membership applicants looked for a way, by hook or by crook, to jump ship?

Best of Times, Worst of Times

Even though the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club had not yet closed its membership list, the Hillcrest promoters were certainly correct in the spring of 1923 when they identified the need for another golf club to serve the Ottawa market.

From one point of view, 1923 was the best of times for founding a golf club in Ottawa: at least so it seemed to the three golf clubs that appeared in this year. From another point of view, 1923 was the worst of times for founding a golf club in Ottawa: it turns out that there was not room for three.

As the one that was crowded out, perhaps the biggest mistake that the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club made in competition with the other two golf clubs that appeared in 1923 – the Chaudière Golf Club and the Fairmont Golf Club – was not to offer potential members a temporary golf course on which they could begin to play the game they loved.

The two other two golf clubs literally beat Hillcrest into the field of play.

Chaudière Democracy



Figure 57 Sir Robert Borden, circa 1923-24.

In 1923, Sir Robert Borden, former Prime Minister of Canada, fronted a group, organized by Ambrose Eugene Corrigan, that intended to build an eighteen-hole golf course on the old Eddy Farm located between the Aylmer Road and the north bank of the Ottawa River.

Incorporated as the Chaudière Golf and Realty Company, most of the founding members of the company were golf nuts, such as Borden himself (seen in the photo to the left), as well as Corrigan, former club champion at Rivermead, and William Foran, a founder of Rivermead.

The Chaudière Golf Club first opened for play in the summer of 1923, although it did not begin its first full season of operation until 1924, when Harry

Mulligan was hired as its first golf professional in 1924.

As we know, by a matter of eleven days, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was incorporated before the Chaudière club. But the golfing public thought of the Hillcrest club as younger than the Chaudière club because the latter had its golf course in play before either of these clubs was incorporated.

So it goes when a club's founders are passionate about the game of golf: after "the course was laid out by George Cumming, of Toronto, ... work was commenced about the 1st June, 1923," and play commenced on seven holes with temporary greens on Saturday, June 30th (*Ottawa Journal*, 19 June

1924, p. 1; see also *Ottawa Citizen*, 27 June 1923, p. 3). And more holes were opened for play within a week: “Twelve temporary holes are now in play” (*Ottawa Journal*, 7 July 1923, p. 23).



Figure 58 Chaudière Golf Club, 1st tee, 21 July 1923.

There can be no doubt that the Chaudière club was a serious competitor with Hillcrest for the same kind of potential members.

For instance, those who wanted to be a part-owner of a golf club, perhaps convinced by the Hillcrest advertisements that golf club shares purchased in 1923 would significantly increase in value over the next few years, a share of the Chaudière Golf and Realty Company cost \$100 – the same as a Hillcrest share.

Significantly, however, one did not need to buy a share of the Chaudière club in order to play golf on its course.

Just as at the upper end of the socio-economic bracket that Hillcrest courted – the bracket comprising the businessperson, the professional person, and the civil servant – there were some people potentially interested in a more exclusive club like the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club (provided memberships were affordable), so at the lower end of this socio-economic bracket there were people wondering whether they could afford even the less-expensive Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. Chaudière was a viable alternative for the kind of potential Hillcrest member who was necessarily attracted by the promise of

low annual fees but who was not necessarily interested in becoming a shareholder, for at Chaudière, we read, "There is no initiation fee. The annual fee for 1923 will be \$30; but members, if they so desire, may pay a monthly fee of \$10 for the balance of the playing season. This will entitle them to playing privileges and the use of the club house" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 27 June 1923, p. 3).

It may be that feedback to Secretary Grace about the attractiveness of this aspect of the Chaudière club's fees led to the decision by the Hillcrest Board of Directors in April of 1924 to offer special categories of membership that did not require the purchase of a \$100 share. In other words, Hillcrest was trying to compete with Chaudière.

Also complicating the sales pitch of the progressive new golf club based on "democratic principles" was the even more egalitarian democratic principles and policies of the Chaudière Golf and Realty Company. Officers of the new club articulated these principles and policies at a meeting of the Board of Directors in July of 1923:

At a meeting of the shareholders of the new company held this week for organization purposes, Sir Robert Borden was elected president. He stated that he was associating himself with the enterprise with the sole idea that it was going to give a number of Ottawa people an opportunity to play golf who had hitherto been barred from membership in existing clubs owing to expense and other causes. By charging a nominal monthly fee for playing privileges and eliminating initiation charges, the new club, he thought, would provide some of the advantages usually obtained from municipal courses.

Mr. William Foran, who was the "father" of the Rivermead Golf Club, was elected secretary, Mr. A.E. Corrigan, manager....

Mr. Foran said that it would be the aim of management to cut out all unnecessary "frills" in order that the playing fees might be kept low and within the range of everybody. Clubs and other supplies would be available for players at practically cost price and there would be sets of clubs for rental by those who do not own them.

Mr. Corrigan predicted that the Chaudière Golf Club would soon develop some of the best golfers in Ottawa because it had been revealed that there were a number of gentlemen who resided in the city now who had played golf in Scotland and England but who had been compelled to abandon the game since coming to Canada. These now would be able to get on the links. (Ottawa Journal, 7 July 1923, p. 23)

One such golfer as Corrigan described was William Allison Divine from North Berwick, who had served as the golf professional at the Ottawa Golf Club when it was located at its Chelsea Road Links (1896-1904). When the club officially opened at its present location in the spring of 1904, Divine was replaced by John Oke (winner later that year of the first Canadian Open Championship) and Divine then gave up the game to become a baker on Wellington Street in Ottawa. But he joined the new Chaudière club and became the first member to record a hole-in-one on its golf course (*Ottawa Journal*, 27 July 1953, p. 26).

Harry Mulligan, the first head pro at the Chaudière (appointed in the spring of 1924) recalled that Corrigan acted on the democratic principles enunciated by the first directors. In an interview thirty years later, when he was the head pro at the Glenlea Golf Club, Mulligan recalled Corrigan fondly:

Working with A.E. Corrigan, Harry helped to get the first pay-as-you-play course [Chaudière] on its feet. "It was the greatest thing that happened to golf in Ottawa," the diminutive Glenlea pro stated. "It gave young golfers of the city, those with not too much money, a chance to play the game.... The thing I liked about Mr. Corrigan was the fact that whether they had money or not, they could still play a round or two," Mulligan recalled. (Ottawa Citizen, 3 May 1955, p. 19)

In the *Ottawa Journal* in 1929, a similar observation was made anonymously by a member of one of the older, more exclusive golf clubs: "A.E. Corrigan made golf popular in Ottawa when he built the Chaudière and brought the game within the reach of the man of average means" (*Ottawa Journal*, 27 May 1929, p. 19).

Not only did the Chaudière club more than match the democratic principles of the Hillcrest club; it also had a golf course open for play by its broader-based *demos* four days before the first advertisements for the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club were published

The Fairmont Golf Club

A golf course known as “Fairmount” (more usually spelled “Fairmont”) had also been established by 1923, located a little bit further along than the Shouldice farm on Mountain Road at Rue Gamelin just north of Fairy Lake (today more usually called *Lac des Fées*). It was “within ten minutes’ walk from the end of the Wrightville electric car lines, and located amid ideal and lovely surroundings” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 23 April 1925, p. 2).

The ideal and lovely surroundings consisted of the horseshoe of hilly land at the north end of Fairy Lake.



Figure 59 The fields at the north end of Fairy Lake during the winter of 1920.

The *American Annual Golf Guide* (1926) suggests that what came to be known as the Fairmont Golf Club was actually established in 1922, but the first news of it appears in the *Ottawa Journal* in July of 1923 in a column about local golf news called “Heard on the Green.” The writer recounts the opinion of an accomplished local golfer who had visited the new course: he “was very impressed by the possibilities of a new course at Fairy Lake He gave a vivid picture of its scenic beauties” (12 July 1923, p. 13).

Elsewhere in the column it is reported that “Fairmount is a caddie’s nine-hole course somewhere in the vicinity of Fairy Lake” (*Ottawa Journal*, 12 July 1923, p. 13).

Since the golf course was referred to as “a caddie’s course,” it may be that local caddies (there would have been many at Rivermead and Royal Ottawa who were not children, but rather young men in their twenties) developed a course of their own in the hilly fields above Fairy Lake, an area that was used in the winter and spring by the Cliffside Ski Club for cross-country skiing and ski-jumping and used in the summer and fall by Boy-Scouts and Sea-Scouts, for hiking, camping, and certain scout games.



Figure 60 View from the top of the Cliffside Ski Club's Fairy Hill Ski Jump, 1924.

Certainly in Britain, rough-and-ready short golf courses crudely shaped by caddies for their own practice and enjoyment were called caddies’ courses (see *Saturday Review*, 27 February 1909, p. 271).

Among the caddies who played the Fairmont caddies' course, one stood out: twenty-eight-year-old Harry Steele.

Steele represented Fairmont in the Ottawa and District Golf Tournament at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club in July of 1923: "The only Fairmont entry, L. [sic] Steele, did very well" (*Ottawa Journal*, 12 July 1923, p. 13). So, we know that a Fairmont golf club of some sort was established by 1923.

By the end of 1923, it would seem that what began as the Fairmont caddie's course had become a full-fledged golf club. Comprising a larger and non-caddie membership, it had applied for admission to the Royal Canadian Golf Association in the fall of 1923. And so, in January of 1924, the annual report of the RCGA indicates that "one of the clubs joining the association" is "the Fairmont Golf Club, Hull" (*The Globe* [Toronto], 23 January 1924, p. 9).

Consistent with its origins as a "caddies' course," the golf course of the Fairmont Golf Club was described by *The American Annual Golf Guide* (1926) as short – "a sporting one of 2,800 yards" – and the *Ottawa Citizen* seems to confirm that the new Fairmont Golf Club took over an existing golf course when it observes that "An attractive nine-hole course has been secured at Fairy Lake" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 23 April 1925, p. 2).

Steele, born in 1895 in Wright, Quebec (not far from where the Fairmont golf course would be laid out twenty-eight years later), was hired as Fairmont's first golf professional, and served in that role until 1927. He was said to have been "a man of considerable golfing ability" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 10 May 1943, p. 16). But he became a wandering man of all trades at several local golf courses after his stint at Fairmont: he represented the Gatineau Golf and Country Club in its "Field Day" tournament of 1940; he was the Gatineau club's caddie master the next year; in 1943 he served at Glenlea simultaneously as Harry Mulligan's assistant pro and as the head greenkeeper.

His Fairmont Golf Club was certainly well-established by July of 1924, and he was succeeding in raising the calibre of golf played on the course, for the *Ottawa Citizen* reported that the biggest "surprise" of the first round in the "City and District Golf championship tourney" of 1924 was the good score by "Kirke Ludington, of the new Fairmont Golf Club" (9 July 1924, p. 1).

So as of 1923, there was another serious rival for the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club. It was not a club with a big membership – the *Ottawa Citizen* says that in 1925 the Fairmont Golf Club opened that year "with a limited membership of fifty men and twenty-five women" – but if a significant number of those members had once been tempted to apply for membership at the new Hillcrest club, Fairmont's

negative impact on the fortunes of the new club will have been significant, given the difficulty Hillcrest had in reaching its 300 member target – to say nothing of its hopes for 1,000 (23 April 1925, p. 2).

The failure of the Hillcrest venture may in turn have helped Fairmont to grow. Beginning 1925 with seventy-five members, *Canadian Golfer* noted in May that it was “a progressive club with 125 members” (vol 2 no 1 [May 1925], p. 108). Fairmont had inherited Hillcrest’s label “progressive”; perhaps it had inherited fifty members, as well.



Figure 61 Ottawa Citizen, 10 June 1939, p. 22.

The Fairmont Golf and Country Club lapsed as a member-oriented golf organization with the defection of most of its members to the new Glenlea Golf and Country Club in 1929.

The golf course endured, however, and was renovated and redesigned several times over the next thirty years, but it was always offered to the public as a pay-for-play golf course. It had no golf club organized by members.

The Fairmont Golf and Country Club endured with the same name – offering pay-as-you play golf, country-club activities (including sled-dog races), and nightclub acts – until the early 1950s, when the Federal District Commission (forerunner of today’s National Capital Commission) targeted the property for expropriation in connection with development of parkways for accessing the new Gatineau Park.

Conclusion

On 28 May 1924, the *Ottawa Journal* ran an item it found in the *St John Telegraph-Journal*:

With so many golf clubs being organized there has sprung up a class of professional promoters of golf clubs who lease or option the land; sell the stock; see to the appointment of committees; build the club house and golf courses and then step out to start another club. They organize joint stock companies to own the club and sell stock. There is a commission to the promoter for the sale of stock.

With the incessant broadening out of golf, shares of stock in the various clubs have been in keen demand and market values of the shares have enhanced considerably. During the past few years most golf club shares have been good investments. (28 May 1924, p. 5)

Appearing when it did in the *Ottawa Journal*, this item might have been Sports Editor Bill Gladish's oblique retrospective assessment of the Hillcrest venture. Had he come to see the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club as little more than an attempt by Wilfrid J. Grace and his friends to make some money from the increasing popularity of golf?

Reviewing the advertisements of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, one finds little comment about the peculiar attractions of golf as a game (it is presented simply as a health-giving outdoor recreation that happens to be more popular than many others in 1923), but one finds in Hillcrest's promotional material a relentless focus on the economics of "the laws of golf course supply and demand" and the profitability of investment in golf and country club stock:

This project is undertaken by local business men who realize the necessity of a new golf club to cope with the wonderful growth of that popular game of outdoor recreation. There are hundreds of golfers and would be golfers for whom, at the present time, there is insufficient accommodation.... Interest in the game of golf is spreading over the country like wild fire. Every city and town is adding golf courses to its field of outdoor sports, and still the supply is much less than the demand.... If you buy a share – this becomes your own private club and every \$100 share is bound to increase greatly in value during the next two or three years. (Ottawa Citizen, 4 July 1923, p. 3)

So reads the prospectus.

The next ad shows an image of a golfer but mentions golf only in the injunction, “Learn the game,” proceeding directly to the matter that is always uppermost in the mind of the Hillcrest promoters: “Ownership of a share makes you a part owner. Your small investment (as in all other successful similar clubs) should double or treble in a few years. Ask us to reserve your membership” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 11 July 1923, p. 2).

One imagines the golf nuts at the Chaudière Golf Club writing a different final line: “Ask us to reserve your tee time.”

As noted in an earlier chapter, another version of the Hillcrest financial argument appeared at the end of August in 1923:

In every golf or country club that is run on the right lines – the membership shares in a few years are worth three or four times the cost at their inception and the number of sports devotees is increasing so rapidly that the supply of accommodation is always less than the demand – which is one of the big reasons why the new Hillcrest Golf and Country Club designed to accommodate a thousand members. (Ottawa Citizen, 22 August 1923, p. 11)

And so it went in news releases, advertisements, and news-ads for almost a year.

Wilfrid J. Grace, and the other promoters of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club, walked away from the project in May or June of 1924, and nothing was ever heard of it again. Grace went on to incorporate a number of joint stock companies prospecting for valuable minerals in northern Quebec.

Grace was particularly fond of gold, and eventually found a lot of it.

But alas, it turns out that as he surveyed the golf prospects of the grounds around the Shouldice farm, the glint in his eye was caused by the glister of fool’s gold.

Postscript

Curiously, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club was not officially dissolved until 1978.

In February of that year, we find the Hillcrest club included in a list of companies named in the *Gazette Officielle* that would be dissolved within 30 days of the *Gazette's* publication for not producing reports on its affairs as required by law, unless this situation was resolved (*Gazette Officielle*, 18 February 1978 [no. 7], p. 2044).

No Hillcrest representative having emerged to dissent from the government's proposed course of action, the letters patent of the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club were finally annulled in the spring of 1978 – fifty-five years after the Hillcrest promoters first approached twenty-five-year-old Robert Albert Shouldice about buying his farm (*Gazette Officielle*, 13 May 1978 [no. 19], p. 5967).

And so, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club disappeared from official business history, and of course it never really entered official golf history, its Stanley Thompson golf courses never having been built.

Mind you, the land where the golf courses were carefully measured and laid out by Thompson and Welton continued to exist. And landowner Shouldice, who went by his second name Albert, ultimately decided that he would spend most of his adult life farming the land as his father had done. He worked the farm continuously from the collapse of the Hillcrest venture in the spring of 1924 until the late 1940s.

But there were some very difficult times along the way.

In the fall of 1927, for instance, twenty-nine-year-old Albert came downstairs in the middle of the night, opened the kitchen door, and discovered a raging fire. It exploded through the opened door, burning his face, and burning off his eyebrows and most of his hair.

Running back upstairs, he roused his wife and two-year-old son. With no other way out, his wife Jean threw the baby Ross out the window and then jumped out herself. The baby sprained a foot when he hit the ground. Jean suffered cuts and bruises. When he found there was no way to battle the fire, Albert also jumped from a second-floor window.

The house was totally burned out. (The family's fortunate escape was front-page news: see the *Ottawa Citizen*, 11 November 1927, p. 1)

In 1934, in the depths of the Great Depression, Albert faced court-ordered repossession of certain electrical appliances that he had purchased but then been unable to pay for. Determined to refuse to allow the Sherriff of South Hull, acting as an agent of the court, to re-possess this property for resale, Albert gathered six neighbours to help him resist the representatives of the law. Ultimately, in defending what he regarded as his property, he personally assaulted the Sherrif and one of his assistants.

A day later, the same six men gathered around Albert and attempted to prevent the police officers who had arrived to arrest him from doing so. It took the drawn guns of the police officers to make the men back off and allow the arrest of their friend and neighbour.

When Albert Shouldice later appeared in court on charges of assaulting the Sherrif and resisting arrest, he apologized profusely and confessed his shame at his actions. At the request of the company that had sought court enforcement of its wish to repossess certain of its goods, the defendant was let off lightly. (These events were also big news; see the account in the *Ottawa Citizen*, 17 August 1934, p. 2.)

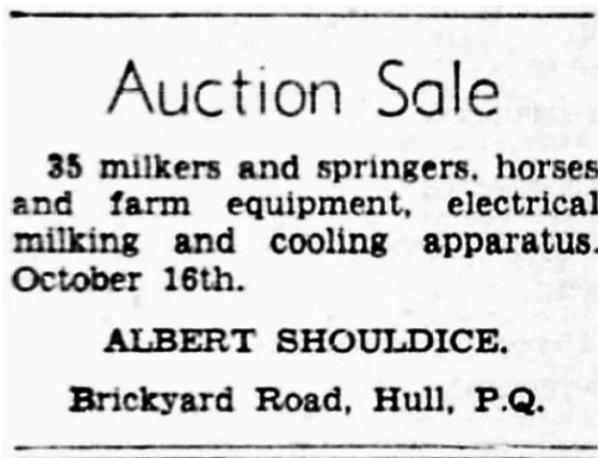


Figure 62 *Ottawa Citizen*, 11 October 1947, p. 27.

In 1947, South Hull township passed a proposal to rezone the land along Brickyard Road as residential. Shouldice immediately saw a chance to sell his 180 acres of farmland at a great profit, so in the fall of 1947 – even before the Council’s proposal to rezone the land along Brickyard Road was officially approved by a landslide in a South Hull township vote – he began to plan for a life after farming by auctioning off his 35 dairy cows, milking machines, horses, and sundry farm equipment.

Albert Shouldice subsequently sold his farmland for development as a residential area.

And so, from 1953 to 1956, we find Real Estate Broker Mervin Greenberg selling the 180 acres of the Shouldice farmland as building lots up to an acre in size at \$1,000 each. One of the people who sold several of the new homes that were built in this area was Albert Shouldice, who became a real estate agent himself.

This residential area became known as Birch Manor or *Manoir des Trembles*, its boundaries today largely describing the shape of the Shouldice property.

In 1953, Albert Shouldice joined with his brother-in-law Hibbert Vipond (a Brickyard Road contractor), as well as a number of other men and women of South Hull and Wakefield, to found the Brookdale Farm orphanage (“To provide an interdenominational Protestant Christian Home for orphaned, needy or neglected children”) on the Hyde homestead owned by Jessie Hyde at the north end of the Meech Creek valley near Farm Point (*Gazette Officielle*, vol 85 no 25 [20 June 1953], p. 2033).



Figure 63 Brookdale Farm, c 1960s.

Frequently expanded and upgraded, Brookdale Farm hosted as many as forty-five children at a time until it closed in 1975 when its service was taken over by other Quebec institutions.

Albert Shouldice was enjoying his life after farming, but that life was not a long one: he died at sixty years of age in 1958, remembered by his family as “a dear husband” and “father with a heart of gold” – in fact, as “one of the best fathers the world contained” (*Ottawa Citizen*, 30 March 1959, p. 26).

Today, the open ground of the Shouldice farm through which Stanley Thompson routed his eighteen-hole championship course and his nine-hole ladies’ course for the ill-fated Hillcrest Golf and Country Club is hard to recognize as the former site of an old farm or a potential golf course. The only part that remains open in a way that approximates how it looked in the 1920s when Thompson and Welton

imagined a golf course there is the area associated with today's soccer pitch (and the pathway running up to it, around it, and beyond it).

As shown on the satellite image below, this open area is where Thompson had laid out the never-built 11th hole of his championship course.

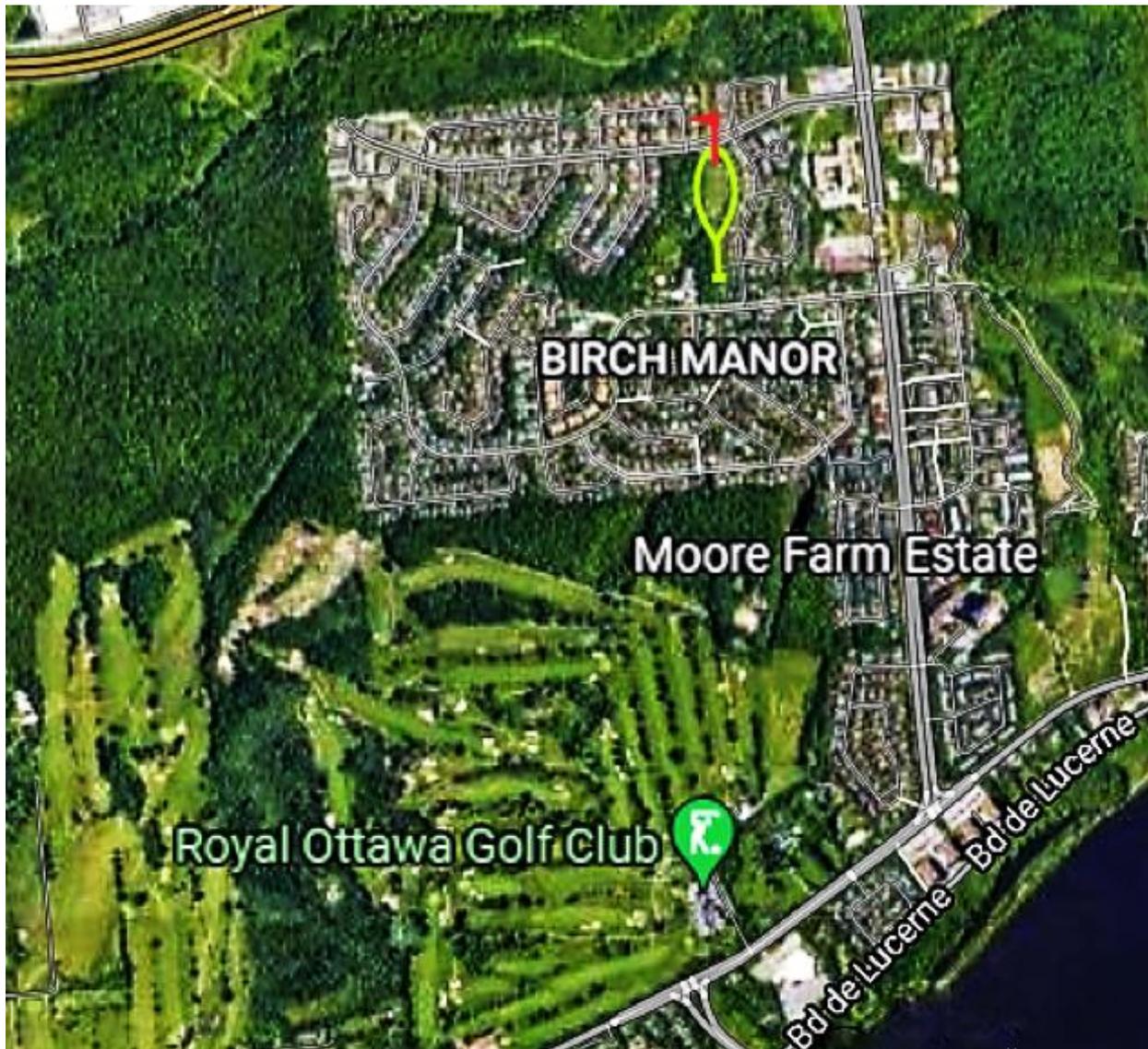


Figure 64 Contemporary Google Maps satellite image of Manoir des Trembles, occupying the 180 acres of the old Shouldice farm, with the area of the soccer pitch marked on it where Stanley Thompson in 1923 laid out the never-built 11th hole of his championship course for the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

A ground-level contemporary photograph of this area appears below, marked in a way to show the approximate location of Thompson's eleventh tee-box and eleventh green.



Figure 65 Soccer pitch at Manoir des Trembles (Birch Manor) where Stanley Thompson had in 1923 laid out the never-built 11th hole of his championship course for the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

Yet in an interesting way, the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club endured beyond its twilight existence in the out-of-date records of the *Gazette Officielle* and even endures today beyond the ghosted spaced of a Gatineau soccer pitch, for the effect of its brief and nebulous existence can still be seen and experienced in a golf course that thrives near this area today.

Tom Foley, Hillcrest director without portfolio in 1923 and Hillcrest Treasurer in 1924, seems to have been infected with enthusiasm for the idea of incorporating country clubs, and twice, after the failure of the Hillcrest venture, he succeeded in building up such clubs.

When the Highlea Tennis and Country Club was founded in the summer of 1925, one of the eight men who incorporated it was Foley, whose influence is perhaps seen in Highlea's explanation that it aims "to promote, organize and manage a golf, tennis, country and social club" (*Gazette Officielle du Quebec*, 22 August 1925, p. 2543). Golf comes before tennis in the above list of the club's goals. Accordingly, in October of 1925, the Highlea Board of Directors (which included Foley) decided that "the club will add

golf as well as tennis and bowling to its list of sports. Arrangements are being made to lay out a nine-hole golf course on the land adjoining the club house" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 9 October 1925, p. 3). And progress was made on this plan by December: "Land has been prepared for laying out of additional tennis courts in the spring, and arrangements are being made for a nine-hole golf course" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 2 December 1925, p. 10).



Figure 66 Highlea Tennis and Country Club, Aylmer Road (opposite the grounds of the Chaudière Golf Club), circa 1928. This clubhouse is marked on the map in Figure #3 above.

The Highlea Tennis and Country Club never built the nine-hole golf course in question.

But in 1928 certain Highlea members – presumably Tom Foley among them – put in motion the plans that would produce the Glenlea golf course in 1929 by commissioning Royal Ottawa head pro Karl Keffer to inspect the land adjoining the Royal Ottawa course on its west side with a view to its suitability for development as an eighteen-hole championship golf course. Keffer's report being entirely positive, he was commissioned to lay out such a golf course and immediately did so. It was under construction by the end of March in 1929.

Channelling the spirit of Grace that he found within himself, Foley worked throughout 1929 during the first season of Glenlea's existence to re-organize the club as a member-owned organization. Before the end of the year he was appointed to head a "special committee appointed to arrange for the re-constitution of the club" (*Ottawa Journal*, 21 January 1930, p. 16).

At the club's meeting in January of 1930, Foley was elected president, and made his first speech to members:

Mr. Foley detailed, in an interesting manner, the scheme of reorganization, emphasizing the practicality and solvency of the undertaking, and contrasted the bright prospects of the club as a member-owned concern with the many disadvantages experienced under private or syndicate control... and indicated that no effort or money will be spared to make Glenlea a remarkably fine venue for golf addicts.

The provisional agreement entailing the leasehold of the Glenlea property and containing an option for its purchase was presented to the meeting and received formal ratification. (Ottawa Journal, 21 January 1930, p. 16)

Even if it had not been the depth of winter, new president Foley would have allowed no grass to grow under his feet. Less than three weeks later, "At a meeting of the Directors of the Glenlea Golf and Country Club, the chairman, Mr. Thomas Foley, announced that the club officials now held the signed lease giving the club possession of the entire property at Glenlea as from 1st April 1930" (*Ottawa Citizen*, 13 February 1930, p. 25).

The Directors regarded this event as a great milestone, likely to be the key ingredient in the club's prospective success:

History Is Made At Glenlea Club

Property Formally Passes Under Directors' Control. Anticipate Early Opening.

The first day of this month made history for the Glenlea Club, as on that day, at two minutes past midnight, the final signatures were appended in the presence of the full body of directors to the documents transferring the charter of the club to the control of the board of directors appointed by the club members. Protracted negotiations throughout the winter were necessary for this satisfactory consummation ... and the board of directors hopes that the membership will realize that as from the 1st instant, the success of the club depends entirely upon its full use by the members. (Ottawa Citizen, 2 April 1930, p. 10)

At this point, however, Foley departed from the spirit that had guided Grace, whose interest in the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club had foregrounded personal profit. The Glenlea Board of Directors agreed

with Foley: “All profits, henceforward, will, of course, be devoted to club upkeep and improvement”
(*Ottawa Citizen*, 2 April 1930, p. 10)

And so, through Foley’s consecutive involvement in all three clubs – Hillcrest, Highlea, and Glenlea – we can recognize the Glenlea golf course as the heir of an initiative that Hillcrest first represented.

And Glenlea, of course, endures today as the Champlain Golf Course.