



COLLECTOR SPOTLIGHT: PHILIP TRUETT

Philip Truett embodies the quintessential British collecting vigor, imbued with visionary foresight, a keen sense of history, and a nose for the good stuff. He had the advantage to begin early, and additionally to find himself in the right spot at the right time.

His adolescent golfing summers were spent in the Sussex seaside town of Littlehampton where the dining room of the town course clubhouse was stocked with old golf books, mostly reference annuals for the members' use, a staple in settling discussions. These, young Truett spent many hours perusing, the facts and figures of an illustrious golfing past leaving their mark on a formative and impressionable golfing intellect.

When a remodeling led to the books' removal, Truett learned they had been stacked outside, awaiting the arrival of the dustmen in several days' time. Next morning, Truett arrived with two large empty suitcases, departing with the books that had kindled his interest. Many of those same volumes remain the cornerstone of what is today a superlative collection.

He was 25 at the time and living at home where there was precious little room for a golf library. That all changed with the acquisition of his own home when he was 30, so in 1973 his mission, which continues un-changed to this day, commenced with the idea of collecting every golf book published pre-1920 and only those books, subsequent to that date, in which he was personally interested and might even read!

The latter category include books concerning the history of the game, U.K. club histories, golf course architecture, selected biographies,



PHILIP TRUETT is shown in his library before a portrait by Charles Jacobs of His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Battenberg, who was captain of the Royal Isle of Wight Golf Club in 1894-5. In front of this is the silver gilt claret jug which was the Club's Captain's Prize, presented by Frank Hardcastle (pictured in the small picture to the right) and won by H.Parker on April 19th 1897. "I have a particular interest in the R.I.O.W.G.C.," Truett says, "and a large collection of memorabilia concerning its history. The club, with its nine holes on 34 acres, closed down in 1962."

ladies golf, reference books and books concerning golf collecting, although no such books existed in the 70s, except Joe Murdoch's *Library of Golf* (1968). Acquiring this bibliography allowed him to see, for the first time, what he was missing and, through Murdoch, enabled him to join the Golf Collectors Society (member No. 184).

This collecting has widened only slightly from those early days and now includes bound volumes of golf magazines, pre-WWII dust jackets, signed copies and antiquarian books with reference to golf from 1566 (the first ever mention) to 1850.

"Variations," such as different editions/bindings of significant books, are also prized. The most recent example is the acquisition of Chambers *Golfing* (1887) in blue cloth, to join the green, brown, red, and beige copies already in the collection.

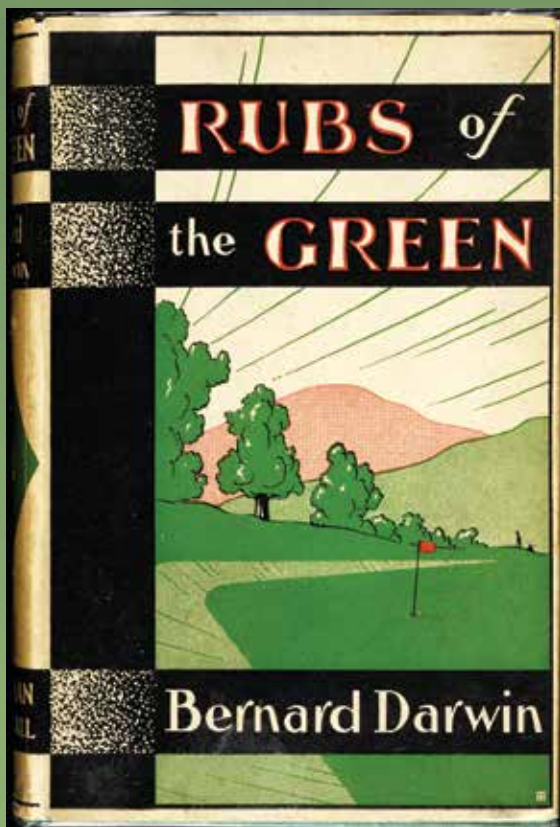
Considering Hutchinson's *Badminton Library – Golf* as a book which contributed more toward the playing of golf in the 1890s than any other publication, Truett has acquired 14 copies of this treasure. This includes all eight editions published between 1890 and 1911: the cheaper re-issue of 1901; the USA edition of 1890 (Little Brown, Boston); the large paper edition (No.151 of 250 copies); a deluxe first edition inscribed and signed by the editor, His Grace the Duke of Beaufort; a first edition belonging to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin complete with his signature and book plate; a seventh edition signed and inscribed by the author, Horace G. Hutchinson; another seventh edition including a tipped-in letter from A.J.T. Allan, winner of the Amateur Championship in 1897, who died a few months after his victory; and, finally, another seventh edition bound in a modern leather binding with a fore-edge

painting of Horace Hutchinson. This book had previously belonged to Sir Guy Campbell and depicts him, as a little boy, opposite page 236.

To the purist, the above demonstrates the enormous variety of interest there can be in just a single publication.

True to form for the genuine article of golf historian, Truett relishes playing golf with hickory shafted clubs, always impeccably dressed in period attire. A past Scottish, English, and Welsh Hickory Champion, he has been the archivist at Walton Heath G.C. for 35

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RUBS OF THE GREEN
by Bernard Darwin, c. 1936

Largely a collection of his essays from *The Times* and *Country Life*. A classic dust jacket depicting the style of the period. These were never meant to be kept. They were there to protect the book in the book shop and then to be disposed of upon purchase, hence their rarity today.

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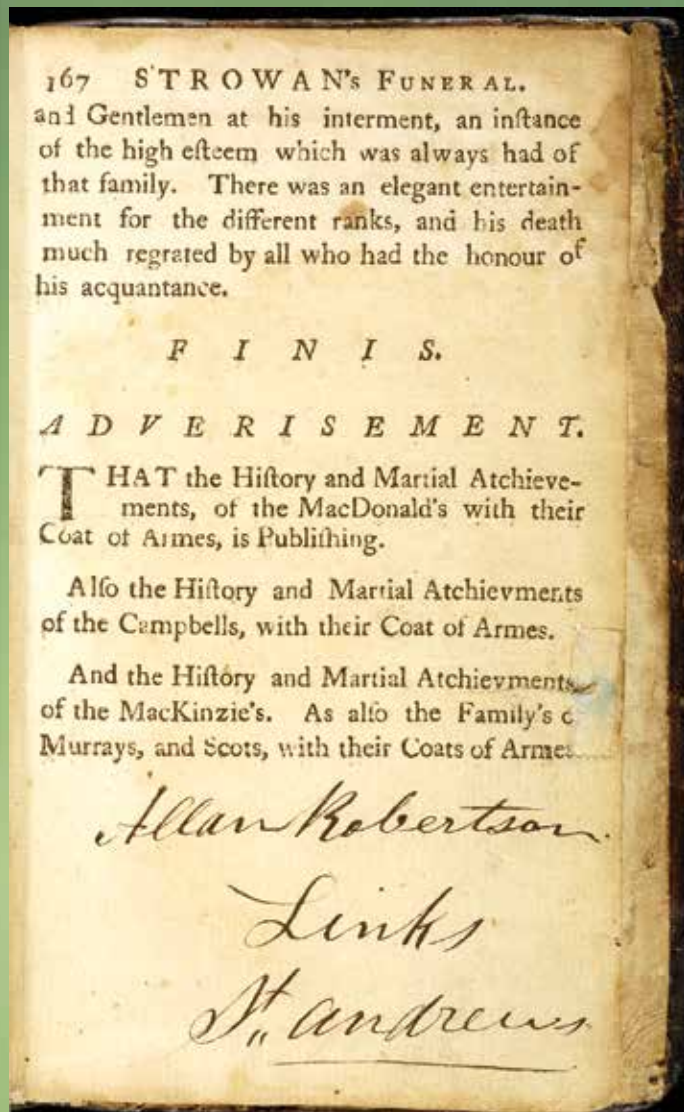
years. He has served as a director of the GCS, was a founding member of the R&A Heritage Committee, and currently serves on the USGA's Museum and Library Committee. He was one of five founding members of the British Golf Collectors Society in 1987 and is a former captain and now president of the Society. He is proud to have played for the European side in the Hickory Grail against the USA Members of the BGCS, since its inception in 2000.

Golf collecting has played a large part in Truett's life for more than 40 years.

"I have had a huge amount of fun from it," he says. "Doors have opened that would never have opened otherwise."

Meanwhile, he is concerned that there appears to be no new generation of golf collectors coming along to take up the pastime.

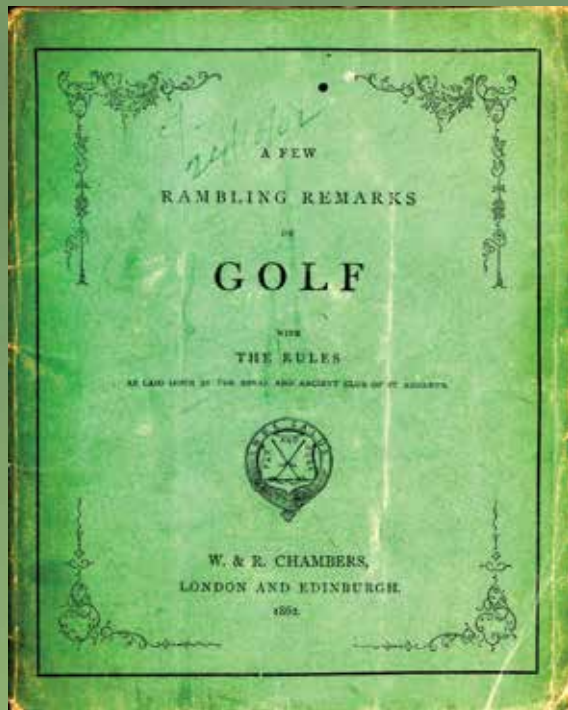
"They don't know what they're missing!" he says.



ALLAN ROBERTSON AUTOGRAPH, c. 1850s

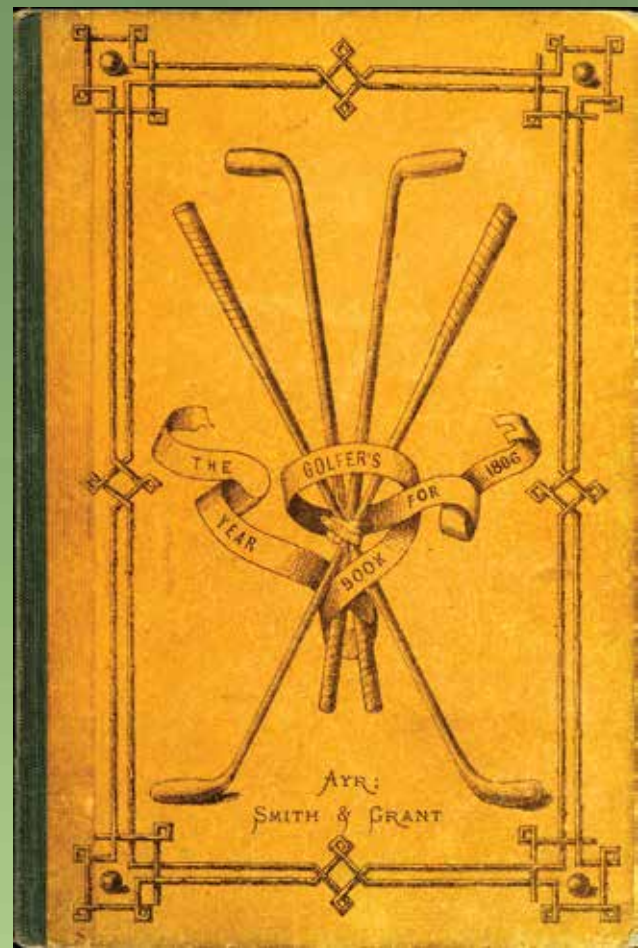
One of four similar autographs found in Robertson's copy of *The History and Martial Achievements of the Roberts of Stroyan, c. 1775*. He bequeathed this book and his other possessions to his brother, David, who had immigrated to Australia. Mention of this book in his Will demonstrates how proud he was to actually own such a book. Allan Robertson (1815-1859) was a famous ball-maker and the Champion Golfer of his time. With his early death in 1859, it is always said that the members of Prestwick G.C. decided to hold the first Championship in 1860, to establish Robertson's successor as the "Champion Golfer". Robertson's signature is almost totally unknown.

A special thank you to Dick McDonough whose book, Great Golf Collections of the World, was the inspiration for these Collector Profiles. Several photos and some of the text is this profile were included in that book.



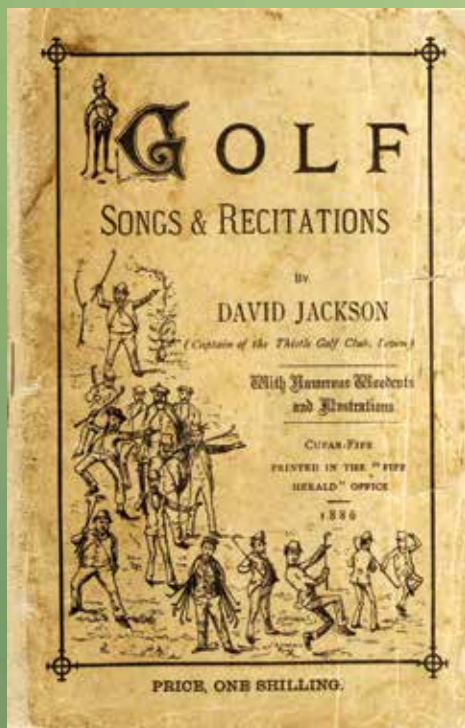
A FEW RAMBLING REMARKS ON GOLF
by W. & R. Chambers, c.1862

This second only instructional, with a chapter concerning the R&A's Rules of Golf, was written anonymously by the well-known Edinburgh publisher, Robert Chambers. It subsequently appeared in the much more widely available book Golfing (1887). It came from the John Low Library, which Truett acquired in the late 1970s, and is signed by Low.



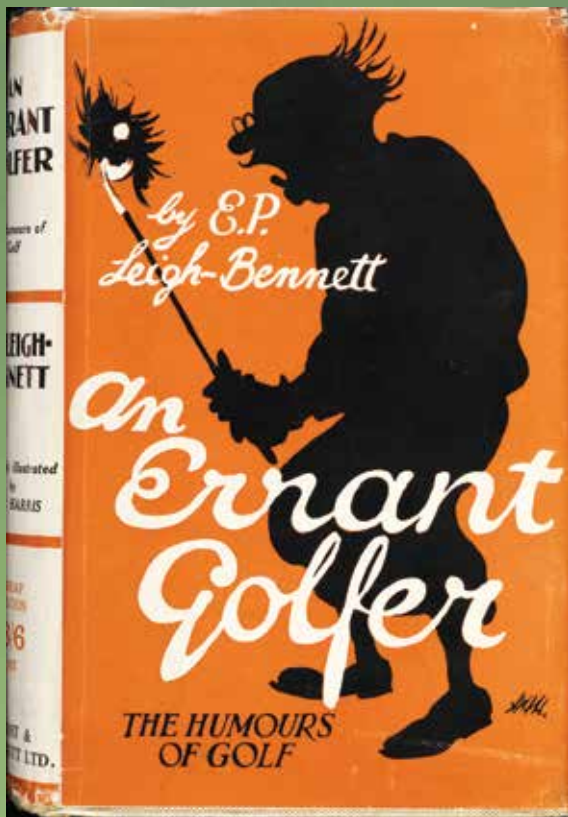
THE GOLFER'S YEAR BOOK FOR 1866
compiled and edited by Robert Howie Smith, c. 1867

The first such book of its type with the idea that it should be an annual publication, but never going beyond this first edition. Published, unusually so, in Ayr. Illustrated boards. Cloth spine. Includes three interesting advertisements on the rear cover – one for a museum at the Union Club, St Andrews for The Preservation of Old Relics of Golfing Celebrities; one from Tom Morris for Clubs and Balls; and one from Andrew Strath, Golf Club and Ball Maker. A similar publication, MacArthur's The Golfers' Annual for 1869-1870, was published, again in Ayr, in 1870, but like its predecessor, never appeared again. Truett considers this a most serious omission in his collection. He asks that, if you have a spare copy, you would be welcome to contact him, with a view to closing this gap!



GOLF SONGS AND RECITATIONS, by David Jackson, c.1886

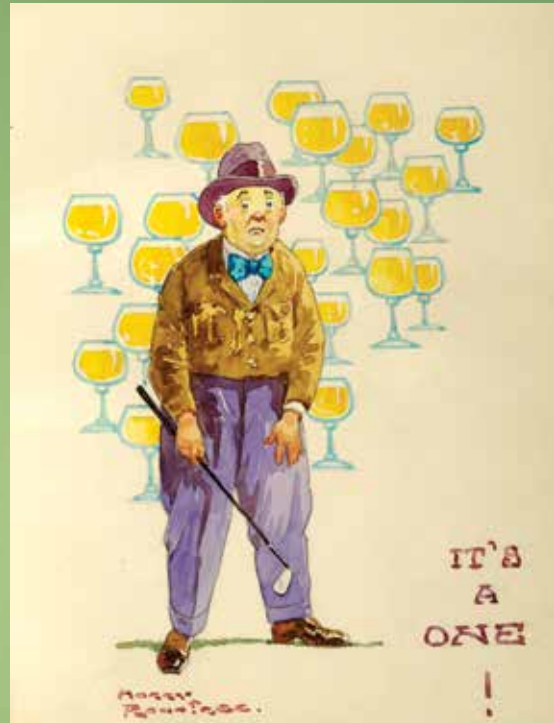
First edition. Privately printed. Illustrated wrappers. The author was Captain of The Thistle Golf Club, Leven. There was a second, revised, edition published in 1895 (not, corrects Truett, in 1886 as per Donovan & Jerris entry No. J1870).



AN ERRANT GOLFER

by E.P. Leigh-Bennett, c.1929, illustrated by H.H. Harris

Among a number of other Clubs, it features Littlehampton G.C., where the young Truett discovered his love of golf books, and Walton Heath G.C., where he has been a member for 50 years. H.H. Harris, a well-known illustrator and cartoonist was Captain of Pollards Hill Golf Club in south London. Truett's father, Bill, won Harris' Captain's Prize in the early 1930's. With his father's passing in 1945, the prize, the original of one of Harris' original non-golfing cartoons, has always been one of Truett's most treasured possessions.



ORIGINAL HARRY ROUNTREE CARTOON

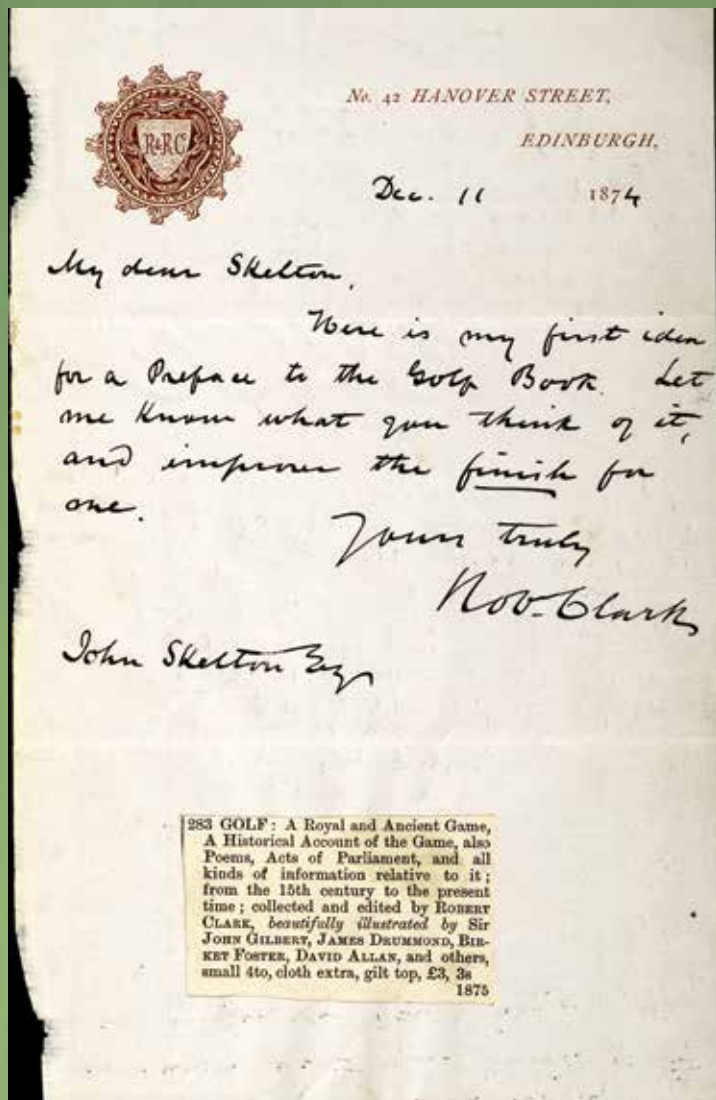
Bound in to a copy of Darwin's The Golf Courses of the British Isles (1910). Painted in water colours by Rountree, a well-known illustrator and cartoonist of the period, who was responsible for the 64 golf course illustrations contained within this book. Signed by Darwin. Full red leather binding with gilt decoration. All edges in gilt.

Marbled end-papers. Similar copies of this remarkably deluxe variation of this famous book are known to exist, but who was responsible for their production is unknown.

Philip Truett Library

A general view of Philip Truett's library conveys this noted collector's passion for the rare, the noteworthy, and the exceptional in the field of the serious collector of golf books.





CLARK'S LETTER, dated December 1874

This was discovered tucked inside *Golf: A Royal and Ancient Game*, by Robert Clark (1875) when Truett bought it in the early 1970's. Clark, a well-known Edinburgh printer and keen St Andrews golfer, was writing to his friend, John Skelton, asking what he thought of the Preface to the book and "improve the finish for one". For generations, people have slipped interesting items into books for safe-keeping, only to be discovered years later by some keen book collector. "Another reason for never giving up looking!" Truett says.

The antiquarian section of the Truett Library.

Truett looks over *Dibden's Tour of the Northern Counties of England and in Scotland* (1838). Two volumes. Dibden arrived in St Andrews on the day of, and subsequently attends, the R&A's Annual Dinner. He gives a full description of the dinner and, in particular, the initiation of new members, a tradition that continues to this day. Truett used this as his "text" at the 2006 Annual Dinner when proposing the toast to the "New Members".



THE NEW BOOK OF GOLF

edited by Horace G. Hutchinson, 1912

With contributions from well-known players of the time, Mrs. Ross (née Miss May Hezlet), Bernard Darwin, James Sherlock, A.C.M. Croome and C.K. Hutchinson. The classic cloth binding well depicts the style of the period.

