

**A Chronicle of the
Philadelphia Section PGA and its Members
By Peter C. Trenham
The Leaders and The Legends
1895 to 1915**

The Leaders

Walter Fovargue
Willie Hoare
Joe Roseman
John Reid
Willie Tucker
Robert White

The Legends

Willie Anderson
Jack Burke, Sr.
James G. Campbell
Alex Findlay

Johnny McDermott
Gil Nicholls
Horace Rawlins
Alec Ross

The Leaders

Walter G. Fovargue

Walter Fovargue (pronounced Fo-varg) was born in Ohio in 1881, which made him one of the first American born golf professionals. He learned to play golf as a caddy at the Cleveland Country Club and by the age of 17 he was working as a golf professional at the club. Fovargue was the head professional at the Philadelphia Country Club in 1902 and 1903. In 1916 as the pro at the Skokie Country Club in Chicago he was a member of the PGA's first Executive Committee when the PGA of America was founded. He represented the Middle States Section PGA. In 1912 Fovargue finished tied for fourth in the Western Open, which was considered a major tournament at that time. Fovargue moved to San Francisco in 1917 and worked as a pro golf salesman for a golf ball company. After World War II he became a golf course architect. He designed golf courses in California (in partnership with Wilfrid Reid), Washington state and Japan.



*Walter Fovargue
Founder of the PGA,
Club professional
Golf course architect*

William Vincent "Willie" Hoare

Willie Hoare was born in England in 1873. In 1896 and 1897 he was the head professional at the Philadelphia Cricket Club and he played in the U.S. Open both years. In 1897 he had a good chance to win but a near unplayable lie in a bunker on the last nine cost him several strokes and he finished fifth. At the 1899 U.S. Open Hoare won the driving contest, which was held the day before the tournament began,



*William Hoare
Professional golfer, Turf
Expert, Golf Course
Architect, Club Designer*

with a drive of more than 269 yards. That year he was working for the Crawford, McGregor & Canby Company (later MacGregor) in quality control. After winning the long drive contest the company began using him in its ads as the "Long Drive Champion U.S.". He worked as a pro-green superintendent in at least seven states and during the late 1890s he laid out golf courses in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Tennessee. At that time he held course records at numerous courses. When the PGA of America was formed in 1916 he was one of the founding members. He was a member of the PGA's first executive committee and served as a vice-president representing the Central States Section as a professional in Memphis, Tennessee. Hoare was a prolific club maker and had several patents and registered trademarks. Many of his clubs came from Spalding but had markings unique to him. In the 1930s Hoare was an executive with the Wilson Sporting Goods Company. Wilson sent him to California as its "ambassador of golf". No one was acquainted with more golf professionals than Hoare. While confined to a hospital for three years in the 1930s he wrote letters to 1,100 professionals promoting a new set of woods that he had designed for Wilson. They were named the Willie Hoare Wood and the set was composed of driver, brassie, # 3 spoon and # 4 spoon (right hand and left hand).

John “Jack” Reid

John Reid was born in Scotland in 1874. He immigrated to the United States in 1895 and that year, as the Philadelphia Country Club’s professional, he played in what was the first official U.S. Open. As well as being a golf professional he was also a green superintendent and a golf course designer. Between 1897 and 1901 he laid out the first golf courses for the Huntingdon Valley Country Club, Belfield Golf Club, Atlantic City Country Club, Riverton Country Club, Wilmington Country Club, Philmont Country Club and the Lancaster Country Club. For his work at the Lancaster Country Club he was paid \$28. He served as the pro-green superintendent at eleven clubs in the Philadelphia Section. Reid’s most lasting creation was probably what would come to be called the South Course at Philmont Country Club. Reid completed the first nine holes in 1907 and the second nine opened for play two years later. In 1911 Reid went to work at the Country Club of Scranton building nine new holes for the club and nine years later he built nine holes for the newly organized Fox Hill Country Club. Several times he was hired to put a new course in playing condition after the contractor had completed his work. This happened at Atlantic City Country Club, the Berkshire Country Club and the Gulph Mills Golf Club. Reid played an important role in the first thirty-five years of golf in the Philadelphia region. He was not related to the John Reid who was considered to be the father of American golf.



*John Reid
Pro and green
superintendent at
11 clubs in the
Philadelphia area*



*Joe Roseman
Invented the Roseman golf
course mowers*

Joseph A. “Joe” Roseman, Sr.

Joe Roseman was born in Philadelphia in 1888 and grew up in the East Falls section of the city. He started his career in golf as a caddy at the Philadelphia Country Club and at the age of 15 he turned pro. He went to work at the Country Club as an assistant to the professional Jack Hagen. As a young man Roseman moved to Des Moines, Iowa where he was the pro and green superintendent. A natural inventor he created a hitch for horses that allowed them to pull three gang mowers as a unit. He later adopted a Model T Ford to serve as a tractor to pull the gang mowers. Roseman and Jack Burke, Sr. operated an indoor golf school in Des Moines, Iowa one winter. He then moved on to Wisconsin as a golf professional. In Wisconsin he began designing golf courses. Then it was on to Chicago where he designed courses and served as a golf professional. In 1922 Roseman became the first president of the Illinois PGA. While in Chicago he switched from being a golf professional to manufacturing golf course equipment. He opened the Roseman Tractor Mower Company in Evanston in 1928. One of his inventions was a hollow mower roller to preserve the turf. In the year 2,000 the Roseman mowers were still in use and green superintendents were so intent on keeping the mowers in operation they were searching the Internet for parts. During his career Roseman helped design over 50 golf courses, pioneered the use of complete underground watering systems and in 1933 he built a night-lighted par-three course.

William Henry “Willie” Tucker

Willie Tucker was born in England in 1871 and was introduced to golf by working for his father who was the greenkeeper at Wimbledon Common Golf Club. At a young age he was an expert sod roller but he wanted to be a champion golfer. In an effort to improve his golf he went to work for Willie Dunn in Biarritz, France. He soon returned to England as a club maker for Slazenger’s in London. Still wanting to be a tournament player he then took the head professional position at the Redhill and Reigate Golf Club, where he stayed five years. In 1895 he came to the United States to join his brother Sam who was the professional at the St. Andrew’s Golf Club in Yonkers, New York. The brothers set up a business under the title of Tucker Bros., Defiance Clubs and Balls. Another opportunity presented itself that year when Tucker was hired to redesign the Philadelphia Country Club’s two-year old course and give golf instruction to the members. While Tucker was at the Country Club the Philadelphia Cricket Club borrowed him to lay out a golf course for its members. John Reid then came on board as the pro and head greenkeeper at the Country Club and Tucker rejoined his brother at St. Andrews. The next year the St. Andrews club moved to Mt. Hope and Tucker designed its new golf course, which featured the first fescue and bent grass greens in the United States. In 1896 he also found time to play



*Willie Tucker
Club Professional
Course Designer
Golf course construction*

in and win the International Championship of Canada. Tucker went on to a long career as a club professional and at the same time he was in the golf course construction business. He and his son did design and construction work on more than one hundred golf courses and built golf holes on twelve private estates. They also constructed polo fields and football fields. They built tennis courts for national tournaments at Newport, Rhode Island, West Side Tennis Club for the Davis Cup matches and the Germantown Cricket Club.



*Robert W. White
First president of the PGA
Professional & Greenkeeper at
Shawnee CC in 1914*

Robert W. "Bob" White

Robert White was born in 1874 in St. Andrews, Scotland. In 1894 White emigrated from St. Andrews to the United States to study agronomy. He worked as a professional and greenkeeper at several clubs including Shawnee Country Club in 1914. He wanted to be known as a green superintendent rather than a golf professional because he felt that more training was required for that profession. He thought that anyone who played well could be a golf professional. White helped many young men from the British Isles find work in the United States as golf professionals and greenkeepers. White, who had been the president of the Western Professional Golfers' Association in 1908, became the first president of the PGA of America in 1916, and held the office through 1919. During his career he also designed a number of golf courses including Buck Hill Golf Club, Berkleigh Country Club, Skytop Golf Club, Water Gap Golf Club, Green Hills Golf Club and the Glen Brook Country Club in the eastern Pennsylvania region. White also was one of the founders of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

The Legends

William Law "Willie" Anderson, Jr.

Willie Anderson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1879 and began his golfing career as a caddy at the North Berwick Golf Club. In 1895 he and his brother Tom moved to America with their father, Tom Sr., who was a greenkeeper and golf professional. Even though Anderson was born in Scotland he was fifteen when he arrived here, so he learned most of his golf in the United States. As he often said himself, he was for all intents and purposes an American golfer. He was a very quiet player as he hardly said a word when he played. He never bragged about his accomplishments and they were many. His drives weren't quite as long as some of his rivals but he was straight. Around the greens and on the greens he was one of the best. At the age of 17 he finished second in the U.S. Open, missing a playoff by only one stroke. In 1910 he moved to Philadelphia to take the head pro job at the Philadelphia Cricket Club. He signed up for the position in order to give himself a better chance to win the U.S. Open, which was being played at the Cricket Club that year. This was his tenth different position as a golf professional in fourteen years. When he was hired by the Cricket Club he had already won four U.S. Opens and four Western Opens. In winning the 1902 Western Open with a score of 299 it was the first time in America that a score of 300 for 72-holes had been bettered on a 6,000+-yard course. In 1902 he was still playing the gutta percha golf ball. Anderson didn't win the 1910 Open as he finished 11th, but he did finish second that year to Johnny McDermott in the Philadelphia Open on his home course. While Anderson was at the Cricket Club he was instrumental in the installation of several new bunkers in preparation for the U.S. Open. He was also the green superintendent at most of the clubs where he served as the professional along with being an accomplished club maker and teacher. Anderson died on October 25, 1910 at the age of 31 and was buried in a cemetery near the club in Chestnut Hill. The Eastern Professional Golfers' Association provided a large marble monument for the gravesite, which mentions his four U.S. Open victories. In early 1914 his father Tom Anderson, Sr. died and was buried next to Willie. Willie Anderson is a member of the PGA Hall of Fame as he and McDermott were in the second group voted in, in 1941.



*Willie Anderson
Won the U.S. Open 4 times
Won Western Open 4 times*



*Jack Burke, Sr.
2nd in 1920 U.S. Open
1941 PGA Sr. Winner*

John Joseph “Jack” Burke, Sr.

Born in 1890 in the East Falls section of Philadelphia, Jack Burke got into golf as a young boy caddying at the Philadelphia Country Club. He became a club maker at age 15 and worked as a professional at the Delaware County Field Club, Hershey Country Club, Philadelphia Country Club, Aronimink Golf Club, and the Old York Road Country Club. In his early 20s he moved to Canada and then to the mid-west. As a professional in St. Paul, Minnesota he tied for second in the 1920 U.S. Open. While working in Minnesota Burke won the Minnesota Open four times in five years. Later in the 1920s he settled down in Houston, Texas. Many give Burke credit for being the first to bring a real knowledge of golf to Texas. His son Jack Burke, Jr., who won both the Masters and the PGA Championship in 1956, said there was always a golf pro or a salesman at their dinner table who was trying to learn something about golf from his father. Burke returned to his roots in 1926 to finish third in the Philadelphia Open and in 1939 at the age of 49 he qualified for the U.S. Open that was being held at the Philadelphia Country Club where he started his career. In 1941 he won the PGA Seniors' Championship. Burke invented the all-weather grip for golf clubs. The grip was a rubber grip with cotton cord running through it. Burke had a patent on the idea and sold the grips through the Burke Par Company as the Burke Grip. He also was the uncle of Dave Marr, the winner of the PGA Championship in 1965. As of 1922 the Falls section of Philadelphia had produced 40 head professionals and 10 assistant pros. They all had learned the business caddying, repairing clubs and making clubs at the Philadelphia Country Club and other clubs in the area.

James G. “Jimmie” “Jamie” Campbell

Jimmie Campbell was born in Scotland in 1878 and immigrated to the United States from North Berwick, Scotland. Before 1900 he served as the professional at the Torresdale Golf Club and the Belmont Golf Association, which became the Aronimink Golf Club. After that he became the Wilmington Country Club's first golf professional in 1901. In 1903 Campbell moved to the Mt. Airy Country Club and stayed there until the club closed in 1907. Some of the members from Mt. Airy moved to the new Whitmarsh Valley Country Club and in 1908 Campbell joined them there as the professional. He won the Philadelphia Open in 1905 and 1907 and he was the runner-up in 1908. Campbell played in four U.S. Opens between 1902 and 1910. He wasn't related to Jack and Andy Campbell.



*James Campbell
Won Philadelphia Open
1905 & 1907*

Alexander H. “Alex” Findlay Sr.

Alex Findlay was born of Scottish parents in 1865 on a ship in the North Sea. Findlay's father was in the British Army and the ship was transporting the family from Scotland to a new army assignment. He was the ninth Alexander in a long line of Findlays and he had a son, Alexander H Findlay, Jr. who constructed some of the courses that his father designed. Findlay began playing golf at age seven and by the time he turned 20 he was setting course records in Scotland. Findlay immigrated to the United States in 1887 and spent ten years working on a ranch in Nebraska. He designed a six-hole course on the ranch, which was the first golf course in the America west of the Mississippi River. After failing to interest the New York stores in stocking golf equipment Findlay got back into golf when the Wright & Ditson Co. of Boston hired him in 1897 to design and sell the golf clubs that the company would manufacture. The clubs bore the name A.H. Findlay. In the first nine months that he was with Wright & Ditson he set over fifty course records during his travels promoting the company's equipment. At that time A.G. Spalding & Bros. was a silent partner in Wright & Ditson. (Albert Spalding and George Wright had been teammates on the Boston professional baseball team) To generate interest in golf here in the United States Findlay went to England in 1899 and persuaded Harry Vardon to tour the United States. In 1900 Vardon came to the states and played an extensive tour of exhibitions set up by Findlay. In quite a few of Vardon's exhibitions



*Alex Findlay
Designed 100+ courses*

Findlay filled in as the opponent, while playing more than respectable golf each time. A portion of Vardon's remuneration for the U.S. exhibition tour came from Spalding for playing their new Vardon Flyer golf ball. Vardon finished off his 1900 visit to the states by winning the U.S. Open. Findlay also managed the 1913 American exhibition tour of Vardon and Ted Ray along with managing Joyce Wethered's 53-course exhibition tour of the United States and Canada in 1935. During Findlay's career he designed over 100 golf courses in the United States. More than twenty of those were in the Philadelphia Section. In 1899 Findlay laid out the Woodbury Country Club's first course and briefly served as the professional there. At one point he planned, constructed and operated golf courses for the Florida East Coast Railway. He later worked for Wanamaker's sporting goods division developing golf courses to further their business. In 1928 Findlay was designing the 36-hole Ft. Washington Country Club, which was to have 18 holes just for women. The 1929 stock market crash interrupted its completion and only 18-holes were opened. Findlay then designed the Pitman Golf Club and stayed on as the professional in 1931. In the late 1930s he lived in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. He was one of the true pioneers of golf in the United States and he could well be called "The Father of American Golf".

George L. Fotheringham

George Fotheringham was born in Carnoustie, Scotland in 1883 and he was the professional at the Williamsport Country Club in 1915. He was another of the Carnoustie trained professionals. Fotheringham won the South African Open five times, 1908, 1910, 1911, 1912 and 1914. In 1912 he finished 13th in the British Open. Fotheringham's playing career was on the wane by the time he moved to the United States, but he did have some success. As a professional in Illinois he qualified for the first two PGA Championships and won a match in 1919 defeating Eddie Loos by 8 & 6. Also in 1919 he finished in a tie for 29th at the U.S. Open. Fotheringham finished second in the 1924 New Jersey Open. In 1916 he was one of the founders of the PGA of America. He was a member of the PGA's first executive committee and served as a vice-president representing the Middle States Section. In 1920 he was the secretary of the Metropolitan Section while working on Staten Island, New York and he finished second in the Philadelphia Open. He also finished second in two other tournaments that would be the equivalent of today's PGA Tour events.



*George Fotheringham
Won 5 South African Opens*



*Johnny McDermott
Won two U.S. Opens
1911 and 1912*

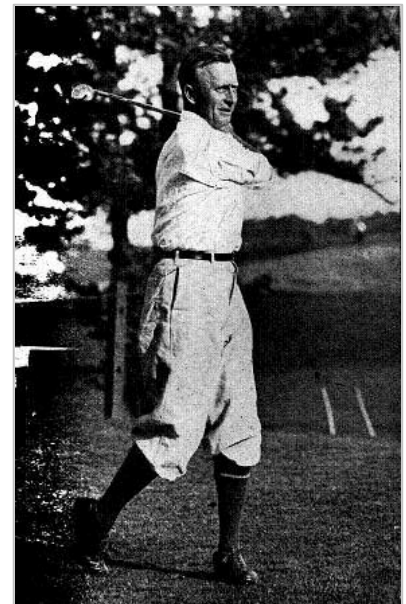
John Joseph "Johnny" "Jack" McDermott

Born in West Philadelphia on August 12, 1891 his friends called him Jack and the public called him Johnny. He was 5 feet-8 inches tall and at the peak of his career he only weighed 130 pounds. McDermott, the greatest player in the history of the Philadelphia Section, came within one stroke of winning three U.S. Opens before he was 21. The famous sportswriter Grantland Rice called McDermott "The greatest golfer that America had ever produced". If he had a weakness it was his putting, but otherwise from inside 150 yards he was the best in the United States. From the time he began as a caddy he always putted with his heels together and his knees touching. McDermott grew up on Florence Avenue in West Philadelphia. He first became aware of golf at the age of nine when he visited his grandfather whose farm was across the street from the Aronimink Golf Club, which had opened in 1897. The Aronimink Golf Club was located on 52nd Street and Chester Avenue, which was also the home of the Belmont Cricket Club. McDermott then decided that he wanted to be a caddy. The Aronimink golf professional Walter Reynolds got him started as a player and taught him the art of clubmaking. By the summer of 1906, and not yet 16, he was playing in the caddy championship at Aronimink with a "scratch" handicap. Two other boys, Frank Sprogell and Morrie Talman, grew up on the same block with McDermott and they all caddied at Aronimink. They all went on to very successful careers as golf professionals. McDermott gave the most credit for the development of his game to Bill Byrne, who became the head professional at Aronimink in 1906. McDermott began his

professional career as an assistant at the Camden Country Club in 1906 and he was the head professional at the Merchantville Country Club from 1907 to 1910. In 1910 he lost a three-way playoff for the U.S. Open championship at the Philadelphia Cricket Club. The next year as the professional at the Atlantic City Country Club he became the first American born to win the U.S. Open after being part of a three-way playoff again. McDermott was a serious and determined competitor. At Atlantic City he would be at the course at daybreak for practice. He would place newspapers on the ground at various distances for targets to shoot at. In 1912 he won the U.S. Open again and he also became the first player to break par for the 72-holes of the U.S. Open. In 1913 he won the Western Open and the Shawnee Open. He was the Philadelphia Open champion in 1910, 1911 and 1913. In 1914 he suffered a mental breakdown and was sent to the State Hospital in Norristown. No one is sure exactly what caused his problems but there were several possible reasons given. He is said to have had some heavy losses in the stock market. He also received a great deal of criticism for comments he made at the 1913 Shawnee Open, which he won by eight strokes. The Shawnee Open was played shortly before the U.S. Open with the great British professionals, Harry Vardon and Ted Ray in the field. During his victory speech he was quoted as saying that the British pros had been stopped there and they would be stopped again at Brookline. Afterwards, when McDermott was told that he had offended Vardon and Ray, he apologized to them. Vardon and Ray didn't seem to be offended but some of the press made a big thing of what McDermott had said. Several days after the Shawnee incident, the Philadelphia Public Ledger printed a detailed story of what McDermott felt that he had meant by his remarks, but the damage had been done. The incident was very unfortunate and unexpected. George Crump had taken him under his wing and given him the polish as a person that he possessed as a player. He had gone from being as well liked by his fellow professionals as he was disliked a few years before. It was said that McDermott had the suavity of Gil Nicholls, which was saying something. In 1914 he went to Scotland for a third attempt to win the British Open. All players had to qualify and a missed ferry connection from France to England caused him to miss his starting time for the qualifying round by one day. McDermott was in France when he should have been in London and he was in London when he should have been at the Troon Golf Club in Scotland where the qualifying event was being held. He then left for home on a ship, the Kaiser Wilhelm II. In a heavy fog on the English Channel his ship crashed into a grain vessel and began to sink. He made it to a lifeboat and after almost 20 hours he was rescued. He left for home a few days later on another ship. He played in the U.S. Open in Chicago that summer but the fire had gone out of his game. In mid October of that year he blacked out and collapsed in the golf shop at the Atlantic City CC. A number of PGA Sections played charity exhibitions to help his mother pay the weekly hospital fee for him. The hospital laid out a six-hole course on their grounds for him. In 1925 McDermott attempted to make a comeback by playing in the Philadelphia Section Championship, the Philadelphia Open, the Pennsylvania Open and the Shawnee Open. His scores were in the high 70s to low 80s and not competitive. Unable to resume a normal life he spent the rest of his years at the mental hospital. For more than thirty years his two sisters took him to various golf courses on weekends to visit the professionals that he knew and on occasion he would still play with some of them. On Mondays he would be in attendance at the local PGA event. McDermott died in August 1971 at the age of 79, after having attended the U.S. Open at Merion Golf Club just a few days before. He was still a resident at the State Hospital in Norristown when he died. He is in the PGA of America's Hall of Fame and he was an original inductee into the Philadelphia Section PGA Hall of Fame in 1992.

Gilbert E. "Gil" Nicholls

Born in England in 1879 he arrived in Boston in 1898. That year he opened what was thought to be the first indoor golf school in the United States. From 1909 until early 1916 he was the professional at the Wilmington Country Club. When the PGA was formed in 1916 he was one of the prime movers of the organizing committee and a member of the PGA's first Executive Committee. In the 1930s Nicholls was the professional at the Seminole Golf Club in Florida. He finished second in the U.S. Open in 1904 and 1907 and he was in the top ten on six other occasions. While the professional at Wilmington he won the Philadelphia Open in 1909 and 1912. He won the North and South Open in 1911 and 1914, the Shawnee Open in 1915 and the Metropolitan Open in 1911 and 1915. He won five more times on the professional golf tour after 1915. Nicholls won the first two New England PGA Championships in 1921 and 1922. As well as being a great player he was known as the longest hitting professional in the country at that time. Nicholls went into partnership with Cuthbert S.



*Gil Nicholls
 Won Met Open 1911 & 1915
 Won North & South Open 1911 & 1914
 RU in U.S. Open twice
 Won 1915 Shawnee Open
 Won Philadelphia Open 1909 & 1912
 PGA of America founder*



Horace Rawlins
Won the first U.S. Open 1895
RU 1896 U.S. Open

second in the first Philadelphia Open, which was held at the Philadelphia Cricket Club's St. Martins course. In 1907 he returned to the Philadelphia area to win the U.S. Open at the same St. Martins course. Between 1904 and 1915 he won the North and South Open five times. Ross won the Massachusetts Open six times during that same period. In 1916 he became the professional at the newly opened Detroit Golf Club that had been designed by his brother Donald Ross the renowned golf course architect. He was the professional there for 31 years. In the first Michigan Open in 1916, Ross finished second to his assistant and caddy master, 17 year old Leo Diegel.

Butchart and formed the Butchart-Nicholls golf company. They started shipping clubs in 1926. They made a line of clubs that had woods and irons fitted with laminated bamboo shafts. The two pros created the Swingrite Company to manufacture the shaft that Nicholls had had patented. The clubs were good but the timing was bad because steel shafts were legalized for tournament play in 1925. The clubs were still being sold in the 1930s.

Horace T. Rawlins

As an assistant at the host club, Newport Golf Club, Horace Rawlins won the first U.S. Open in October 1895, at age 19. He is still the only player to win the championship on his home course. Born in Benbridge, Isle of Wight, England in 1876, he had arrived in the United States just nine months earlier. The next year he finished 2nd in the U.S. Open. His brother Harry worked at the Atlantic City Country Club in 1903 as the teaching professional and Horace was hired as The Springhaven Club's first golf professional in 1904. In 1906 he was a member of the organizing committee for the Eastern Professional Golfers' Association.

Alexander "Alec" Ross

Alex Ross was born in Dornoch, Scotland in 1881 and came to the United States in 1900. As the professional at the Wilmington Country Club in 1903 he finished



Alex Ross
Won 1907 U.S. Open
Won North & South Open 5 times