

## The Game of Golf By Frank C. Sheridan

A new form of recreation finally took roots here in Maynard in the form of the game of golf, which had become quite popular throughout the United States, and finally began to be tried out here in Maynard on July 16, 1916, when Arthur Sullivan (now deceased) tried to interest some of his fellow Maynardites in the forming of a golf club in Maynard. This effort was first proposed on July 21, 1916.

Mr. Sullivan had gathered several local people, and they started to play the game on what was the Ben Smith's Farm, which ran from the bridge next to the former car barn, and to what is known to all of us as Ben Smith's Dam. The Smith farm was then located just above Taft Avenue, with the Philips home next to the Smith Farm, and across the road was the Litchfield homestead. The proposed course was to be built from the Smith Farm and the Philips home as far as what was known then as Siloway's Corner (Stow Line).

About the same time, A. L. Lawrence, better known as "Len", and who owned a farm just over the Maynard-Acton line (High Street), also had built a three-hole course at what is called "Fletcher Corner". This course was called "Birchhurst". As a result, Arthur Sullivan suggested that Mr. Lawrence needed help to improve the course so he would give up the proposed Great Road course and that any golfers playing at the "Birchhurst" through their contributions would help to make the small course a better course and would financially help the owner. On November 14, 1919 when the season closed at "Birchhurst", golf was over for the season locally. November 19, 1919 a banquet was held at "Birchhurst" and a good time was had by all.

In the spring the golfers received some good news, and on July 22, 1921 an option was taken on the Calvin Whitney farm, which comprised sixty-eight acres of land, and would be large enough for a nine-hole course. Officers and members of the Club at that time stated that a larger membership would be allowed and the committee-in-charge of membership consisted of Howard A. Wilson, James J. Ledgard, Charles Courtney and William Brayden.

On August 5, 1921, forty members were present, with Howard A. Wilson, chairman, and James J. Ledgard, secretary. An architect's report that the barn could be converted into a clubhouse. The dwelling could be torn down or could be left temporarily for the greenskeeper's residence. The land was rich and supplied with town water for the greenskeeper. About eighty members signed up at the beginning, and it was estimated that seventy more could be taken into the club, as the sum of \$6,000 would be needed at the start. A committee of seven were appointed to get members and to raise the needed money. This committee was as follows: George Gutteridge, Dr. Edward Flaherty, William Brayden, Brooks Reed, James J. Ledgard, Wallace Priest and Frank E. Sanderson. By fall six holes would be ready to play on.

August 12, 1921, meeting held in Riverside Hall. Money pledged and will be paid back when finances are improved. Over one hundred have signed as members and five more members have been added to the committee of seven. August 19, 1921, papers have been passed as one hundred and fifty have signed, and charter will be closed. There are still some openings. See any of the following: Howard A. Wilson, James Ledgard, Oliver Trees, P. J. Sullivan, "Len" Lawrence, Brooks Reed, Dr. Flaherty, Wallace Priest, Frank Sanderson, James Packard, William Brayden and George Gutteridge.

In September the following holes were ready to be played on, No's 1, 2, 3, 6,7, 8. Numbers 4, 5, 9 were still swampy and had to be filled and graded. The house committee in which William Brayden and Brooks Reed put on a very enjoyable party in the apple orchard where the club house now stands. There were assisted by their wives and other members, and tables and chairs were set up in the apple orchard and a very enjoyable afternoon was had by all.

A part of the old homestead was set aside for the caretaker to live in and two other rooms were set up for the golfers. Then the house committee got together and built an open veranda facing the course. Meanwhile, the remaining holes were finished and every one was pleased with the course. The house committee and the board of governors decided to tear the barn down and left a long shed which was used for lockers; but as the visitors and the club members did not have sufficient place to change their clothes this matter was taken up at a board of governors meeting. Meanwhile some of the members who had visited and played on other courses discussed the matter of a clubhouse. This matter was taken up at a board of governors meeting and fully discussed by them. It was voted to lay the matter before the membership at the annual meeting, which was held in the High School and was well attended.

Previous to this meeting and all during the golf season, several of the Maynard golfers visited and played on other golf courses, and it gave us an opportunity to look over the courses and it also gave an opportunity to look over the various clubhouses, as to the size and cost of building a clubhouse at the Maynard course. In the discussion, one member stated a clubhouse would cost \$35,000, and another said \$50,000. Meanwhile I had a friend living in South Acton named Leonard Stiles and was studying in Boston, whom I contacted at his home, and he agreed to draw up a set of plans for a clubhouse for me for a very small sum, and he in turn gave me the a name of a contractor in Concord by the name of Ole Anderson, living near the Emerson Hospital, whom we contacted, and he agreed to build the clubhouse for approximately \$5,000, which was accepted by the directors, and Mr. Anderson built the clubhouse for the Golf Club. I also succeeded in procuring a nice hot water heater from the United Cooperative Society, which was not being used, for \$25, and it fitted nicely in the men's locker room and furnished hot water for the kitchen and the showers. With the completion of the new clubhouse, the membership increased tremendously. B. J. Coughlin was appointed custodian of the new building and he did an excellent job.

A representative of the Massachusetts Golf Association came to Maynard to play on the new course, and as a result of his visit he suggested that our club should hold a Massachusetts State Open Tournament, which would bring a lot of publicity for our new course. The board of directors voted that this tournament should be held, and voted some nice prizes for the occasion. Maynard had a nice turnout of some very nice golfers, including Jesse Guilford and George Aulback and many others who enjoyed their visit, and returned several times to play our course. (Incidentally, I had a good round and was awarded a cut-glass bowl.)

Two weeks later a tournament was held at the Wellesley County Club, and some of the Maynard golfers participated, and a member of the Wellesley Club and myself tied for the low net score. We played it off the following Saturday and again I had a very good round and this time came home with a beautiful electric coffee percolator set, consisting of tray, pitcher, sugar bowl and percolator. Subsequently, the next tournament was held at the Sandy Burr Country Club in Wayland and again I had a good day, and this time I received a pair of silver candleholders.

Our membership here in Maynard had increased very quickly and the club had to set a limit, as heretofore a wife could play on her husbands' membership. This slowed up the play tremendously and a change was made whereby on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays a wife or other women should not play before four o'clock, but could play all day on other days. This caused a lot of consternation and the club lost several members from Greater Boston, but this could not be avoided and the rule had to be carried out.

Meanwhile the club had tough sledding for a time but with the enlarging of the men's locker rooms, and the addition of whereby food and spirit -of-fermentae could be served under a club's license granted by the Selectmen, so as to pep up the tired golfers after they finished their game. This addition to the clubhouse added much to the membership and its good times, and it is hoped that they will have many successful years to come in the enjoyment of that great game of Golf.