

SOME

LADIES'

GOLF

CLUBS.

BY MRS. G. W. WILLOCK  
("L. M. W.")  
AND MRS. H. C. WILLOCK.



From a photograph by Russell & Sons.

MISS K. G. TEE, SECRETARY OF THE WIMBLEDON LADIES' GOLF CLUB, AT RANELAGH.

THAT golf may be played all the year round is undoubtedly not the least of its many attractions. In spring, when the world grows beautiful again and sunshine gladdens all the way, we sally forth with renewed energy and the excitement of the championship humming high in every heart; in summer, when days are long, how pleasant to stroll up to tea at the club and play till light fails on the course! Autumn is perhaps the very cream of the golfing year: the glorious brine-laden breezes, the sweetness of sea air sifted over the moorland, and the crisp touch of early frosts impart an uplifted sense of well-being. We

drift apart at the close of the season and commencement of holidays; then come the gay autumn meetings, friends gather again, and it is, "Hail fellow, well met!" on the green. And when "the wheel has come full circle," and the old year is dying in the arms of winter, though the balls drop without a sound and refuse to roll on newly fallen snow, the golfer, donning that trim red coat, and armed with red balls instead of white, nothing daunted, will play with enthusiasm worthy of all praise. Weather, indeed, counts for little. Even as we pen these lines play continues, despite thick fog; and news has just been brought in of two fair members who were lost and have been found in a despairing state on the men's links.

*The Golfer's Annual* states St. Andrews Ladies' Golf Club to be the oldest, dating, as it does, from 1867; but it is considered "doubtful if any club but a putter was used." Following next were Westward Ho, the Wimbledon Ladies' (formerly London Scottish Ladies'), Carnoustie, Troon, Bath, Hayling, Cupar, and Great Yarmouth. But it was from 1886, when the first men's amateur championship was played, that ladies came forward prominently in golf; and the number of ladies' golf clubs rapidly increased,



From a photograph by E. Welch, Belfast.

MISS MCGILL (SILVER MEDALLIST, 1899) DRIVING OFF FOURTH TEE AT NEWCASTLE.

and there are now over two hundred and twenty.

Links are of various kinds—"seashore," "down," "common," "park," and "pasture,"—seashore links, being natural, taking first rank. In Miss Issette Pearson's opinion—and can we quote a better?—5,000 yards is the most suitable length for ladies' links, taking turf and amount of run available on the ball into account; and in proof she cites the championship lengths, 4,007 (Portrush) and 4,863 (Gullane), the par varying from seventy-seven to eighty, the latter being considered sufficiently high.

The Golf Union, which founded the Ladies' Championship, was started in 1893, and fifty-five clubs are now affiliated with it, Miss Issette Pearson being the ever-kind, ever-courteous Hon. Sec.

St. Andrews is admittedly the Mecca of golf, but no special links have been laid out for ladies. There is, however, a



MRS. HARRY WILLOCK PLAYING A BRASSIE SHOT.



MISS BENNET-PASCOE, LADY CHAMPION, 1896.



MISS SPARROW PUTTING.

From photographs by Russell & Sons.

putting-course, which, it must be explained, in no way resembles a putting-green, for it covers five acres, and is virtually a kind of small links of a particularly sporting character; no hazards, but tiny greens, so undulating as to render play very difficult, and the use of a

wooden putter only is allowed for negotiating the ball. Our illustrations are from special photographs, obtained through the kind efforts of Mr. How, Hon. Sec. of St. Andrews Golf Club, and Lady Nicholson.

The Blackheath ladies suffer many disadvantages, their course being too near the town and abutting on the public path. It is limited to nine holes, of which the sixth (ninety-seven yards) is the most sporting. The club is at 1, Montpelier Row, and the members, in spite of the difficulties, are keenly enthusiastic; and in Miss Issette Pearson's opinion the excellence of the handicapping system is unequalled.

On the famous and far-stretching common



the Wimbledon Ladies' Golf Club was started in 1872, at first near the windmill, but moved to its present position in 1890. A ranger's cottage happening to become vacant and needing repair, the conservators allowed the ladies to use this site. The cottage was then practically rebuilt and enlarged, and now forms one of the prettiest golf clubs imaginable, with an old-fashioned little garden and straight pathway up to the

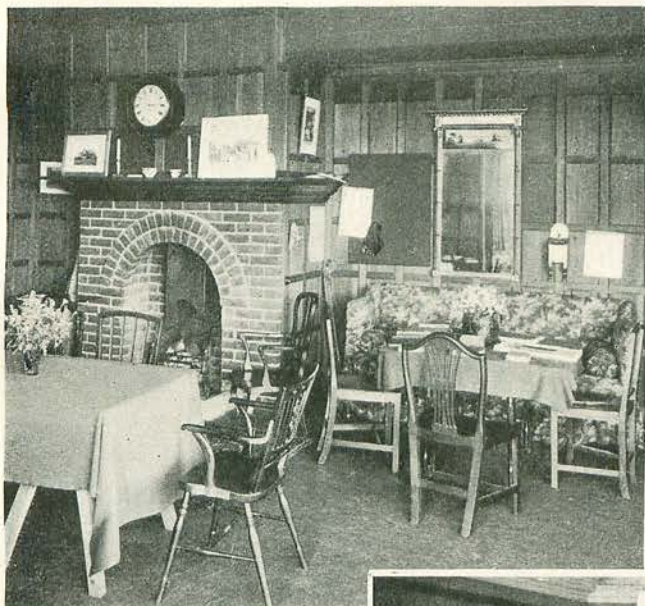


*Photo. by Russell & Sons.*

WIMBLEDON LADIES' GOLF CLUB.

here is perfectly natural, the chief hazards being gravel patches and gorse. It has been considerably lengthened since last October, and, when the roughness of the new holes has been overcome, will afford far better golf. Some of the carries for the drive are of fine length; scope is allowed for full iron shots through the green—a somewhat unusual advantage on ladies' links.

Prince's Ladies' Golf Club,



*Photo. by Russell & Sons, Wimbledon.*

PRINCE'S LADIES' GOLF CLUB.

long, low verandah. The summer-houses, of pitch-pine, are always so freshly swept that tea may be partaken of without fear of stray spiders in one's cup; and the clubhouse itself is most comfortable. The subscription entrance is five guineas, and one guinea yearly. The capital balls, "Dormie," made by Mrs. Frost (caretaker) and her husband, are well known to golfers. The course



*Photo. by Albert Wiggins.*

LADIES' CLUBROOM, LYTHAM AND ST. ANNE'S.



founded in 1894, is well described as "the cardinal point of London golf"; and owing to the energy of

Road, Rushes, Triangle, Langley's Fortress, Gog and Magog, Excelsior, Simplicity, Bunker, Thorns, Pot, Valley, Trap, Home—and all are cleverly described in the charming account of Prince's Ladies' Golf Links, written by Miss Bennet-Pascoe for "Our Lady of the Green," to which book we are indebted for many helpful notes. The club has a very large verandah and delightful panelled room overlooking the links. In the kitchen Mrs. Ridgeway is the presiding genius, and excellent luncheon and tea she prepares, too, on that small range, often for very large numbers. Miss Blanche Anderson holds the record for full competition course with seventy-six. The record medal is given to any player who makes the lowest score over a competition course. The club sends a strong contingent to the various open meetings and matches, as, for instance, the Ranelagh-Pearson Cup. Among well-known members are Miss Pascoe, Miss B. Anderson, Miss Phillips, Miss Armstrong, Mrs. Stanley

Miss Langley, Hon. Sec., a very fine golf club has been erected, approached by a picturesque wooden bridge over the railway line; but, the course being of insufficient scope for first-class play, the members cast about for better ground, and Miss Langley, with admirable quicksightedness, discovered a suitable piece of ground on the farther side of the Croydon line. It certainly presented many difficulties, being marshy and abounding in reeds and rushes; but she valiantly proceeded to have it drained, clearing away these obstacles, and of the nine holes on the old side made seven, and eleven holes on the new side, the result being good natural links. The hazards are somewhat too severe, but time and judgment will doubtless improve these points. The holes are variously named—Diamond, Pond, Railway, Chasm, Gorse,

Stubbs, Miss Sparrow, Mrs. Harry Willock, and

MISS BURY KNIGHT, MRS. HOW, MISS ISSETTE PEARSON, MRS. RYDER-RICHARDSON, MISS BRYAN.

*From photographs by Garland, Mackenzie, Brown, Watkin, and Debetham.*





Miss Evans, Miss Marion Langley being Captain. Miss Langley, Hon. Sec., possesses the crowning grace of a gentle voice and winning manner, and the great success of the club is largely due to her kindness, tact, and good judgment.

In 1886 Lytham and St. Anne's was founded, and in 1897 moved to its present position. It is of nine holes, the longest about 360 yards. Being a somewhat new course, there is little to say. The ladies have no separate clubhouse, but quarters have been allotted them in the really fine club opened by the Marquis of Lorne last year.

Blundellsands, West Lancashire, is the only ladies' links of eighteen holes in the north, and is very beautiful, with perfect hazards and fine sand-hills, and *salix caprea* willow, described as "scrub" by the golfers. Mrs. Ryder-Richardson, Miss Kennedy, the Misses Young, Mrs. Fowler, and Miss Carr are among the members.

The open meeting which the Ranelagh



MISS L. SMITH.



MISS KENNEDY.



MISS A. L. TYRWHITT-DRAKE.



MISS LANGLEY.



MRS. G. HUNTER.

From photographs by Elliott, Brandebourg, Stanborough, Vandyk, and Byrne.

Golf Club annually organises for ladies is one of the most popular events of the year. There is no separate course, but competitors for the open meeting must obtain a voucher. The Manor House, full of old-world charm, and surrounded by loveliest grounds, through which the river flows, is familiar to most of our readers; and at no time does it appear in greater beauty than in spring, when the open meeting takes place: fruit-trees are bursting into bloom, while sunshine shimmering through tall elms and glinting here and there on the ancient brick walls is a gladdening sight to see.

The mid-Surrey has its links in the Old Deer Park, Richmond.

The soil is sandy—a rare feature in inland links. This is not only one of the best, but one of the longest of ladies' links, being 2 miles 660 yards, when the nine holes have been twice completed. The ladies' clubhouse is close to the

great gates, and has a pretty little room, long, narrow, and simply furnished.

Of extreme beauty is the situation of



Ashdown Forest Ladies' Links, with glorious views stretching away to the Eridge Hills, and a very heathery course, whereof the greens are very sloping and difficult. Mrs. Ryder-Richardson holds the record, and her skill as a golfer is widely known. She has won the Challenge Bowls at Eastbourne and Brighton-and-Hove, also many other prizes, and was Bronze Medallist in the championship of 1895 (Portrush).

Woking is famed for the loveliness of its scenery, and the ground chosen for the links commands some of the finest views in Surrey—Hog's Back, Fox Hill, Staple Hill, and Bagshot Heath. The fifth hole is called Paradise, from its beautiful surroundings. The ladies' club is small, but they have the privilege of playing over the men's links (Saturday and Sunday excepted), there being no ladies' course. Long driving is required, as there is a formidable hazard of rough ground and reeds to be carried from nearly



LADIES' GOLF CLUB, ASHDOWN FOREST.

every tee; and scientific putting is necessary, too, as many of the greens are extremely undulating, while others are situated on little plateaux, so that the iron approach has to be accurate, pitched well above the hole, otherwise the player sees her ball careering into grass, reeds, bushes, and like difficulties. Mrs. Hunter holds the ladies' record with ninety-five in May, 1899, Miss Pascoe coming next with ninety-six. Miss Knight is Hon. Sec.

Westward Ho (Royal North Devon) is a great centre for golf. The ladies' course is of nine holes only, and the hazards are chiefly ditches and rush patches. These rushes go by the name of Fog, pronounced "Fug" in the dialect of dear old Devonshire.

Littlestone Ladies' Golf Club is close to New Romney. The course lies between the men's links and the beach, the hazards consisting of the said shingle beach, big sand-hills, rabbit-holes, bent, and a canal, which players have to cross twice. Mrs. Harry



From a photograph by Russell & Sons, Wimbledon.

MID-SURREY LADIES' GOLF CLUB, OLD DEER PARK, RICHMOND.



Willock is Captain; Miss Stringer was Hon. Sec. for many years, also Captain, and immensely advanced the prosperity of this rapidly increasing club.

North Berwick Ladies' Club is flourishing as to members, but the course is hardly worthy of the many fine players who foregather there, among whom are the Misses Gillies-Smith, Miss B. Anderson, Miss Campbell, Miss M. Aitken, and the Misses Orr.

Quite one of the prettiest of links is Minchinhampton—of nine holes—situated on a spur of the Cotswold Hills, nearly 700 feet above sea-level, and possessing magnificent views in every direction. The turf is excellent, giving splendid brassie lies through the green. The hazards display much variety, ranging from vast stone quarries to Danish entrenchments.

Though in the first place a driver's course, it nevertheless brings all the clubs into play, and well tests a golfer's powers. The bogie is forty for nine holes and eighty-one for the double round: it is not often done under that, and the record is seventy-two, made by Mrs. Leslie two years ago. Miss Beyan (bronze medallist, Newcastle, co. Down, in 1899), Miss L. Smith, and Mrs. Storry are well-known representatives of the club.

Hoylake Ladies' Links, of which we give two illustrations, are of a hilly nature, the holes all good, and play must be accurate. The first, eighth, and ninth are those which

require a drive and iron shot; the other greens can be reached in one, but care must be taken not to go too far. The hazards are mostly hillocks, whin-bushes, and a chasm of sixty yards. Mrs. Ryder-Richardson holds the record with sixty-three.

Rhyl represents gallant little Wales, and is, we believe, the oldest golf club in the principality. Jack Morris, professional of Hoylake, laid out the course; beginning with nine holes, it was increased to eighteen, and again reduced to nine. The ladies' course

is exactly like the men's links. The ladies have no club, but are allotted excellent quarters in the clubhouse, of which we were unable to obtain a photograph, there being only one in the club scrapbook. The club contains a very fine collection of *Vanity Fair* cartoons, framed.

Ireland is represented by the County

Down Ladies' Golf Club; and the links are very wild and hazardous. The ladies' club is very small. The championship was played last year on the long course, the winner being Miss M. Hezlet. Lady members are allowed to play on the men's links (except Saturdays and match days), provided they be qualified to play the round in or under one hundred. The holes are named the Corner, Alps, MacCormac, Southdown, St. John, Donard, Pitch, Deception, Chasm, Sheepfold, Old Drum, Railway, Punchbowl, Field, Saucer, Matterhorn, Home.



*From a photograph by Bacon & Sons.*

THE LADY MARGARET HAMILTON-RUSSELL, CHAMPION,  
1893, 1894, 1895.

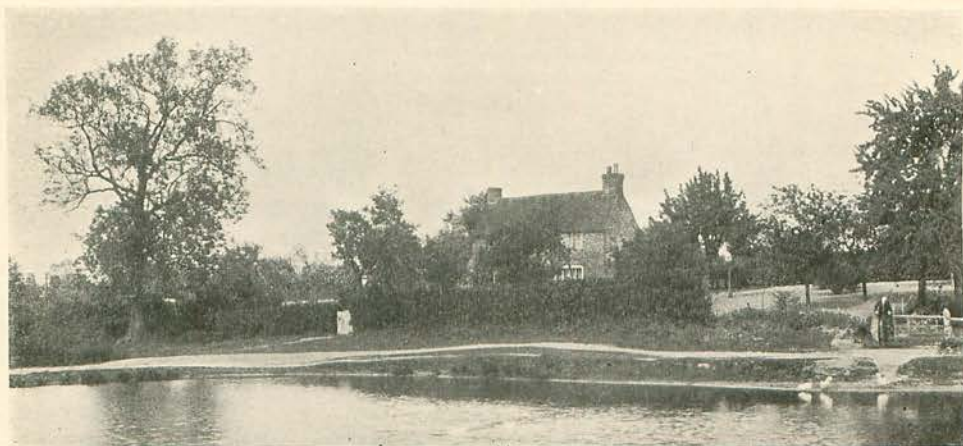


MISS BADCOCK, LADY NICHOLSON AND MISS G. BRUCE-JOHNSTON, TOM MORRIS AND MR. HOW, HON. SEC., ON THE PUTTING-LINKS, ST. ANDREWS.

Royal Portrush may be described as decidedly sporting links: streams, wide ditches, bunkers, and sand are the hazards. The Ladies' Championship, 1895, was played over the long course at Portrush, and won by the Lady Margaret Hamilton-Russell (then Lady Margaret Scott), whose skill in golf is too widely known to need comment. Mr. Horace Hutchinson "is inclined to think her the finest lady player he has ever seen." Of the nine-hole course at Stowell Park—the seat of her father, the Earl of Eldon—over which she has played from childhood's days, we hoped to have had a photograph, but up

to the time of going to press it had not arrived.

Lady Nicholson, whose husband, General Sir William Nicholson, has been appointed Adjutant-General on Lord Roberts' Staff in South Africa, is a very expert rifle-shot and a great admirer of the "royal and ancient game of golf," though unable now to devote much time to it. She is a generous donor of prizes, and belongs to the St. Andrews, Wimbledon, Brighton-and-Hove, and the Cannes ladies' golf clubs, and also founded the Ladies' Rifle and Golf Club at Rawal-Pindi and Murree in India.



From a photograph by Russell & Sons.

WOKING GOLF CLUB: VIEW FROM EIGHTEENTH HOLE.