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Charles O. Pfeil

A Tribute

By Honorable James Francis Burke

Speaking from the standpoint of the Royal and Ancient Game, it may be said that Charles O. Pfeil, on the 22nd day of December, 1927, died, "in sight of the promised land."

None of the activities to which he devoted his lifetime held a warmer place in his heart than the great outdoor game which in recent years has conquered two continents.

He had a keen perception of its charm as a pastime and its importance as a recreation.

He was impressed with its growing popularity among the great masses of the people. He realized that the startling suddenness with which it was adding to the number of its devotees was not without its dangers.

He feared that its universal popularity threatened the destruction of the finer attributes which for centuries had sustained its dignity and lofty spirit in the realms of sport.

His apprehensions in that regard were aroused by the increasing tendency of many thoughtless recruits of modern days to treat with indifference the rules and etiquette of the game which he felt was gradually depriving it of its charm as the finest sport in the world.

He was a lover of harmony and deplored dissension. He reveled in the thought that old misunderstandings between sections and sectional organizations would some day disappear like mists before the bright messenger of the morning, and that in the sunlight of intelligent understanding and good will the game would assume greater importance and those entrusted with its destinies would find increasing pleasure in the discharge of their duties with the passing of the years.

He wanted no East and no West, no North and no South, no European and no American invidious distinctions drawn wherever golf was concerned.

He reveled in the thought that the Royal and Ancient Game, given to us by the Scots and cherished by those countless ardent lovers in this country, would be free from every vestige of controversy, with one single undisputed authority in the United States, acting in concord with the Royal and Ancient authorities at St. Andrews, the seat of the golf government of the world.

When he died he saw that dream substantially realized, for concord and good will is now prevailing everywhere.



Charles O. Pfeil

Former President of the Western Golf Association, Vice-President of the United States Golf Association, and Nominee for the Presidency of the United States Golf Association for 1928.

Finally, as he was about to don the coveted mantle of the Presidency of the United States Golf Association, a distinction of which he had dreamed in his anxiety to render service, he was compelled to don the shroud instead.

But in his last hours in his home in Tennessee, in those dreams that preceded the parting of the final curtain on the last scene of life, he was happy in the thought that his contemporaries had virtually bestowed upon him the cherished mantle of honor and authority that comes to the few who attain the highest honors in American golf.

Sand Pits in Deep Clay Soil

Dr. Willis F. Manges, Chairman, Green Committee,
Springhaven Club, Wallingford, Pa.

At Springhaven, in the Philadelphia district, we have an unusually flat course for an inland area. We also have a very deep and compact clay subsoil, so that drainage of sand bunkers offers a serious problem. At least it did prior to the fall of 1924. The best proof that it offered difficulties was evidenced by the fact that we had no real sand hazards. Instead, we had mounds and large cross bunkers that stood out like great welts and bruises, obstructing what view was available, presenting a most unnatural appearance, and serving as hazards in more than one sense. Quite a number of our greens had no sand traps at all, and none of them had any except very shallow surface traps that were most unpleasant to get into and out of in wet weather, and especially in the spring of the year, because of the mud.

During the summer of 1924, we had made a survey of our grounds and with this we consulted one of our most popular golf course architects to see what could be done to our course to make it more nearly like a modern golf course. We were not greatly surprised to hear his first recommendation, which was that we sell this property and buy other and more suitable grounds. One of his reasons for this recommendation was the difficulty of draining properly constructed hazards. But it did not suit us to make so radical a change. We wanted to make the present course suit our purposes.

The architect's next recommendation was that we buy some additional adjoining property and change the entire lay-out. This did not suit us because it called for an outlay of a large sum of money and interference with play for at least one whole season. Instead, we wanted him to rebuild a green here and there, and give us some modern hazards, whether they were to be water hazards part of the time or not. This he did not want to do, and so, to avoid causing him any embarrassment, we asked him to suggest a lay-out for one hole. Our thought in this was that, if the members were given one real modern par four hole, they might be willing to authorize a radical change to meet the second recommendation of the architect.

When the sand pits for this hole were completed, it was evident that we would have no luck with them unless we could provide definite drainage. We drained one by means of tile leading to a near-by roadway. The rest did not lend themselves to such a procedure, so we decided to dig a well in the lowest point of each of the others.