

HE TURNED TO GOLF IN MIDDLE AGE

*Dean Leland,
Engineer, Professor
and Golf Curator*

MOST folk who develop a hobby do so from childhood. Not so Dean O. M. Leland, of Minneapolis, Minn., who was first and foremost an engineer, turned in middle age to golf as a recreation and to the collecting of golf literature as a hobby.

His hobby developed such intensity that when he recently turned over his entire golf library and other memorabilia to the USGA Museum and Library at "Golf House," in New York, the donation numbered more than 3,200 items.

Dean Leland was graduated in 1900 from the University of Michigan and went into government service with the General Land Office and the Coast and Geodetic Survey, work which took him all over the United States and to Alaska and Puerto Rico.

In both territories he made his mark. In recognition of his work in setting part of the demarkation line between Canada and Alaska, one of the mountain peaks was named Mt. Leland in his honor. In 1911 he was appointed by the Chief Justice of the United States to sit on the Costa Rica-Panama Boundary Arbitration Commission.

During World War I Dean Leland commanded a regiment of service engineers in France and Germany.

It was in 1920 that he was appointed Dean of the College of Engineering and Architecture and the School of Chemistry at the University of Minneapolis, where he remained until his retirement in 1944.

Dean Leland bought his first golf book in 1919. "I thought I ought to be intelligent about the game," he said, "and I was fortunate in picking up a copy of the Badminton Library volume 'Golf.' It was a good introduction to the game, but I did not read much of it for many years. But when I first broke 100, in 1935, I really became interested in the history and litera-

ture of golf and my library reached 500 volumes within three years."

From then on each journey had a dual purpose. Wherever his travels took him, he would seek out second-hand book stores in search of further volumes. From various sources he would hear of golfers with small collections, and so his library snowballed.

Over the years he corresponded with many of the leading golf historians in the Old World, and in 1947 he set out to cement the friendships born of a mutual love. In three packed months he played 35 famous British courses, watched the British Open Championship and visited libraries, book dealers, golf professionals and writers.

One of his cherished memories is playing golf at the heather-covered Walton Heath course, near London, with the late James Braid, five times Open Champion. Braid, then aged 77, breezed round in 75.

He took time to visit another of the Great Triumvirate, J. H. Taylor, at his native Westward Ho! in North Devon. Taylor, a man steeped in golfing lore and wise counsels, is still alive at the age of 87.

Flashing hours were spent in the company of Bernard Darwin, doyen of British golf writers; the late Robert Browning, historian and editor of *Golfing*; the late D. M. Matheson, editor of *Golf Monthly*; and Dutch golf writer J. A. Brongers.

Many of the old pictures, balls and curios now in "Golf House," along with several books belonging to his library, were acquired on that trip.

Dean Leland, a widower, is now an octogenarian, but that does not prevent his playing golf whenever the weather permits. Whether he is playing a match or just a few holes on his own, he pulls his own caddie cart, content in the sport which has enriched his declining years in so many ways.