

Perry D. Maxwell to Build Course

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blasting powder, ploughs, stump pullers, hydraulic miners, deforesters, sod-sockers and canal diggers.

"Now comes the Oklahoma obstetrician who lays gentle hands upon mother earth only to bring forth beauty which fills the eye of all beholders. Wherever he is called to perform his service that springs into life a playground for those who follow the ancient game; a course that blends with the natural lay of the land, retaining its comeliness.

Organized Golf Club

"Twenty years ago, in Ardmore, Okla., 'P. D.' a outlier by declaration, and a banker by profession, organized a golf club of 160 members, none of whom had ever before quipped or struck a ball. He then set about the task of laying out a course that would meet all modern requirements without courting bankruptcy.

"The minimum of expense was the first consideration," he said. "That and the importance of creating a course that would be a legitimate tax upon the skill of the players. It is my theory that nature must precede the architect, in the laying out of links. It is futile to attempt the transformation of wholly inadequate acres into an adequate course. Invariably the result is the inauguration of an earthquake. The site of a golf course should be there, not brought there. A featureless site cannot possibly be economically redeemed. Many an acre of magnificent land has been utterly destroyed by the steam shovel, throwing up its billows of earth, biting out traps and bunkers, transposing landmarks that are contemporaries of Genesis.

"We can't blame the engineers, surveyors, landscape experts and axmen for carrying out the designs in the blueprints, most of which come into existence at the instigation of amateurs obsessed with a passion for remodeling the masterpieces of nature. A golf course that invades a hundred or more acres, and is actually visible in its garnish intrusion from several points of observation, is an abhorrent spectacle. The less of man's handiwork the better a course."

"I expressed the hope that some day it would be my pleasure to see Ardmore.

"You will never see it until you play each of its 18 holes," replied the builder, "for the very simple reason that it does not obtrude and is not an eyesore. Not a square foot of earth that could be left in its natural state has been removed. No pimples or hummocks of alterations falsify its beauty. There are but six artificial bunkers, the rest are natural, and all the driving tees are within a few steps of putting greens. To date no man in competition has played Ardmore in par, yet my daughter, still in her teens, has broken 100 on it.

Pronounced Perfect

"Professionals and topnotch amateurs, who have played it, pronounce the greens and fairways perfect. The total cost of construction and upkeep over a period of 11 years is less than

enjoyed on marvelous links at one tenth the admission fees, dues, green fees, etc., that prevail in the land of the free."

"What caused you to take up the economical construction of courses?" I asked.

Made It His Life's Work

"It was my wife's suggestion that Ardmore be built. She did not live to see the course completed. I have since made golf architecture my life work, having built several along the lines of Ardmore, never, at any time attempting a piece of property devoid of natural features.

"A visit to Scotland and perusal of our home courses has convinced me that the time is ripe for a stupendous revision looking toward a saner and simpler plan for turning the good earth into playgrounds for those who follow through."

"More power to you, 'P. D.'"

\$38,000. By that I mean about \$3300 per annum. Nature has been kind, because we have not defied her. We co-operate with the seasons, and dividends never fall."

"Audibly I cursed various bunkers and traps that in the past had to do with my silvering hair.

"Far too many exist in our land," said Maxwell. "Oakmont, Pittsburgh, where the National Open will be played this year, has 200. Other courses famed everywhere average 150. From 20 to 25, plus the natural obstacles are ample for any course. Millions of dollars annually are wasted in devastating the earth; in obstructing the flow of the rainfall; in creating impossible conditions.

"Don't blame all of this on the architects; the guilt lies primarily with the influential misguided club members who take sadistic joy in torturing the good earth. As a result the majority of American golf clubs are in the red, gore of the steam shovel, blood drawn by the mound-builders. We have learned nothing from Scotland or England where the ancient and honorable game can be