

Donald Ross, famous golfing name

Donald Ross, the Dornoch man who planned and built 600 golf courses in North America, including the four at Pinehurst, is one of the most distinguished names in the annals of American golf. It is prestige for the golfer if he can say: "Yessir; I knew Donald Ross."

In 1962, when the fine new golf course was being constructed for the Country Club of N.C., only three miles from Pinehurst, and well-heeled Carolinians began to build their residences around the lake, it was the veteran American golfer of an earlier vintage, Richard Tufts, who advised, "Call it Royal Dornoch Golf Village." I have the word of Herbert Warren Wind for that. It was done.

"SIGNED AND SEALED"

Scottish names like Aberdeen and Maxton (Macs-town) remind us that hundreds of Highlanders emigrated to the colonial Carolinas in the years after the disastrous Forty-five Rebellion in 1745 and the consequent desolation of the Highlands. This historic link was vividly brought home to me during my first lecture tour, a generation back, when I found myself giving a day's programme in "Flora Macdonald College," N.C. This close association, personal and historical, has now been signed and sealed in the presentation of fraternal messages along with the coat of arms of old Dornoch to the golfers and citizens of the New Dornoch in North Carolina.

"Come to us in April; the dogwoods will be in bloom." So wrote the president, Richard Urquhart, jun., setting up the date for my visit. Dawn on April 12 was ushered in by a sudden thunderstorm and a downpour of rain. Then the sun shone and the dogwoods brightened the landscape. Assembled for the presentation, 200 guests had dinner that evening in the spacious dining-room of the Country Club.

ARTHUR LACEY

I, as guest speaker, found myself constantly engaged in talk or repartee. An eager voice reaches me: "Mr Grant, I want you to meet my husband, Arthur Lacey." "Hello, Arthur; I'm glad to meet you again; especially to meet you here." After two minutes with that

Ryder-cupper of 25 years ago, I listen with small surprise to another couple accosting me: "Mr Grant, we spent 10 days last summer in Barra in the Hebrides. It was great. We're going back." Larry Johnson was next. Four years ago I met him and his wife when he organised my visit to the Historical Society, in Aberdeen, N.C., for my lecture on "Scotland and The Highlands." Later that year they had toured the Hebrides and the Orkneys.

Eight o'clock and 200 faces turned towards "High Table." The president, Richard Urquhart, stood up; talk quietened, ceased. Briefly he explained the purpose of the occasion, the ceremonial linking of Old Dornoch, Scotland, with the New Dornoch, North Carolina. Then he introduced me, the envoy.

I stood up; took a quiet look at the expectant audience, filling my lungs the while. At that moment the tentative skirl of bagpipes tuning-up floated in the silence. All waited. In marched stalwart caber-tossing Arnold Pope, who earlier had talked with me about caber-tossing and Highland Games, he himself being a tosser, almost annually, in Scotland. Stepping to and fro before High Table he held us to the marching measure of "Hielan' Laddie." For me, standing there between the Old World and the New, the pipes called up echoes, quickened memories:

"With the spring long-buried
springs in my heart awaken,
Time takes the years but the
springs he has not taken;
My thoughts with a boy's wild
thoughts are mixed and
shaken . . ."

Then I began my speech.

DONALD GRANT.