

On Monday 27th March 1893, Robert Alexander Grant was elected Captain of the Golf Section of the Wells Amateur Athletic Club. He had been proposed by Samuel H. Collins, and seconded by Edward Crosse, at a meeting held at the Swan Hotel. Grant, affectionately known as "Jock", was, as one might expect, a Scot. His knowledge of the game, coupled with his enthusiasm, soon generated the support of others. Golf had arrived in Wells! A member of the Vicars' Choral, he was undoubtedly responsible for the strong ties which exist today between the Club and the Clergy, and indeed, the annual Seniors' match against the Clergy is always well supported.

In the first year of Grant's captaincy, Samuel Collins became Secretary and Edward Crosse and B. Dyer, Committee members. Their immediate task was to obtain a suitable area for the playing of golf. The problem was quickly resolved, when a farmer allowed them to use a field on Milton Hill. In addition, for the princely sum of two guineas per year, a room was provided for their use, in a cottage at the top of the hill.

The members were empowered to re-lay turf, raise the greens and keep them in good order. Any members of the Athletic Club who wished to play golf, were required to pay a 2/6d. levy, and were issued with a membership card. This had to be produced if challenged on the Golf Links, as the course was then known.

The Professional at Burnham and Berrow Golf Club, Mr. W. Foord, supervised the formation of six holes, the work being carried out by members. Within a short space of time, the first games of golf were being played in Wells, and by the following year, 1894, there were 90 members, each of whom was required to pay an annual subscription of £ 7.12s.6d. Monthly handicap competitions were introduced, with a Medal being awarded for the best score. A statuette was presented for the best aggregate score over a six month period. We have managed to find the first ever Monthly Medal results and assume that the 6 holes were played three times.

During the course of the year, ladies were encouraged to join the Golf Section, but were only permitted to play before 2 p.m. each day, with the exception of Wednesdays when they could play all day.

The year 1895 is of particular significance to our members, as this saw the transfer of the Golf Section from Milton Hill to the new Links at King Castle Wood, the area from which our present course has been developed. It was probable that the Club's first Greenkeeper was appointed during the year and sufficient progress was made for a match to take place against the Theological College. The Golf Section lost by four holes!

Even in the early days of the Club, altercations were not uncommon. Ham, the Greenkeeper, complained of incivility to his wife, the caretaker. The minute, recording the Committee's action is detailed overleaf:-



Robert Alexander Grant

Portway Wells
27.3.93

Dear Mr Grant,

I trust I have not done wrong in proposing you a member of Wells Athletic Society, under the following circumstances :-

I carried my proposition as regards Golf section, and wishing for your guidance and assistance I committed the act above confessed in order to be able to further propose you

a member of a small Committee for carrying out the arrangements of the section.

Yourselves, L. A. Crosse, H. B. Dyer, & myself have to consider the matter of ground to start the "Show".

It will in fact, be placed in your hands as an experienced enthusiast to direct our ventures.

With our excellent patrons I feel

sure we shall be able to obtain the most desirable place to play on and as the 5/- subscription includes ticket for our Annual Sports I hope you will not think I have presumed too much on your desire to Southernize your National game.

Trusting the game may be duly established & become a feature in

Wells to the honour & glory of yourself & yours faithfully
Samuel H. Collins

Samuel H. Collins letter to Jock Grant
27th March 1893

PORTWAY,
WELLS,
26TH APRIL, 1894.

DEAR SIR,
WELLS GOLF CLUB.

In consequence of the Home Field on Milton Farm having been set aside for mowing this year, Members will be unable to play Golf over same until the middle or end of June. The Committee have decided to make a Link of Six Holes in the Hill Field, where play will be continued in the meantime.

This Field will be re-arranged for play, under the direction of Mr. W. FOORD, Professional, of Burnham Golf Club, to obviate as far as possible the difficulty that has arisen; and the Committee hope but little inconvenience will be occasioned.

Each Member will be supplied with a Card of Membership, and such card must be produced on demand by the tenant of the farm or a member of the Committee.

The front room of the Cottage on the Hill has been fitted up with coat pegs for the use of members.

A Member may introduce a non-resident Friend to the Links for one day free, providing he first enters the name of such Visitor in the book kept at the Cottage.

I am, Sir,
Yours truly,
SAML. H. COLLINS,
Hon. Sec.

Sam Collins letter of 1894

GOLF.—About a year ago a golf section was opened in connection with the Athletic Club, and links of six holes were made on Milton Hill. For some time after the opening of the section Mr. R. A. Grant was about the only enthusiast of the game, and this was not to be wondered at seeing that he comes from across the border, where the royal and ancient game has so many votaries. Gradually, however, Mr. Grant's enthusiasm became infectious, and the golf section is now one of the most popular of the various sections of the Athletic Club, and it has a large number of members. Mr. S. H. Collins is the hon. secretary of the section, and Mr. Grant its captain. Monthly handicaps have now been started, the prize for the best score being a medal, and for the best aggregate score in six months a statuette is to be the prize. The first of the monthly handicaps commenced on Tuesday and Wednesday. The links were in good condition, and very enjoyable play was the result. There were three rounds of six holes, or a total of 18 holes. Mr. L. Crosse proved the winner, having completed his rounds in 107 points, the object being to complete the rounds in as few points or strokes as possible. The scores were as follows:—

	Actual number of strokes made.	Points given and deducted.	Result.
L. Crosse	121	14	107
R. A. Grant	108 (scratch)	—	108
George Tyte	139	27	112
E. O. Davis	147	30	117
Dr. Risdon	150	30	120
B. B. Dyer	148	27	121
E. A. Crosse	140	12	128
A. H. Taylor	148	20	128
S. H. Collins	153	27	131

Press Report of the first Monthly Medal results - 1894

LOCAL RULES.

1. No Player or Caddie is allowed to go into Kingzale Wood.
2. A ball may be lifted from a rabbit scratch or loose mole heap and dropped behind. No Penalty.
3. On the Putting Green, mud may be removed from the ball.
4. A ball in an unplayable position may be lifted and dropped behind within a club's length, not nearer the hole. Penalty, one stroke.
5. All ditches on the Course are hazards, but leaver may be moved provided that the position of the ball is not changed. Players may not ground a club in a hazard.
6. Players must wait until the Green is clear, at Nos. 2, 4 and 5.

Turf Cut or Displaced by a Stroke should be at once Replaced.

Wells Golf Club.

MATCH PLAY ODDS.

In Singles 2 of difference between handicap allowances.
In Foursomes 3 of difference between the aggregate handicap allowances on either side.

Handicap	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
3	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
6	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
7	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
11	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
12	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
13	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
14	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
17	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
19	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
20	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39

Wells Golf Club Card - Local Rules

WELLS GOLF CLUB
BOGEY CARD

Player P. A. Grant 27/6/06

1	5	5	3
2	3	3	3
3	4	4	4
4	5	5	7
5	3	3	3
6	4	4	5
7	5	5	3
8	4	4	4
9	5	5	4
10	3	3	3
11	4	4	4
12	5	5	4
13	3	3	3
14	4	4	5
15	5	5	6
16	5	5	5
17	4	4	2
18	4	4	5
Total		38	38

Result total 76
Scorer Basil Dwyer
Mark for Win + HALF O' LOSE

Grant's Record Card - 1906

R.A. Grant
6-Inch Stymie Measure.

Name of Competition Aug 4 '09
Date 2nd Round

Name of Player 1st round

Hole.	Bogey.	Stroke Holes.	SCORE.		Result.
			Self.	Oppos.	
1	5		5	5	
2	3		3	2	
3	5		5	5	
4	3		3	4	
5	4		4	4	
6	5		6	4	
7	5		6	6	
8	4		4	3	
9	4		4	4	
38			38	37	

Bogey Score { Holes up ...
Holes Down ...
Result ... 75

Scorer's Signature Basil Dwyer

Hole.	Bogey.	Stroke Holes.	SCORE.		Result.
			Self.	Oppos.	
10	5		5	5	
11	3		3	3	
12	5		5	4	
13	3		2	3	
14	4		4	5	
15	5		4	6	
16	5		5	5	
17	4		4	2	
18	4		5	5	
38			37	38	

Gross Score 75+75 = 150
Handicap ...
Net Score ...

R.A. Grant - Score Card 1909



Professional Match - Wells Golf Club, June 5th, 1907



Professional Match - Wells Golf Club, June 5th, 1907

Complaint Ham complained⁽¹⁾ of incivility to his wife (caretaker) by Ham on the part of Mr. Clark;⁽²⁾ of his sons (in face of a notice to the contrary) practising putting on the 9th green;⁽³⁾ and of trespassing i.e. standing in or on a hedge endeavouring to get a ball out of the wood;⁽⁴⁾ Ham's wife complained that Mr. Clark's sons came into the Pavilion repeatedly with muddy boots, after she had requested them to use the brush & mat.

Decision of the Committee while agreeing that Ham meant well, Committee decided that in future such complaints as the above should be reported to the Hon. Sec. & no personal reprimand be made to a member.

This was all the business.

R. J. Ross
Complaint - 12th March 1910 ... 12th March 1910



"Jock" Grant - October 1897

placed in perspective, when we note that Ham's salary was 6s.0d. per week. He was engaged as Professional, Greenkeeper and Steward!

Grant was again elected as Captain in November 1911; a position he was to hold for several years. Later in the same month, members paid tribute to his work for the Club by arranging a party in his honour at the Swan Hotel.

The first meeting of 1912 records that the Hon. Secretary was permitted to subscribe the sum of 5s.0d. to the Caddies' Aid Association. The same meeting agreed an extra 1s.0d. per week to Packer who we believe was assisting with the maintenance of the course.

The proceeds of a dance realised the grand sum of £ 5.0s.0d. and this was used towards the cost of purchasing and erecting a bicycle shed, the best quote being £ 6.17s.6d.

In the August of 1910 at a meeting held at the Swan Hotel, charges for the following year were detailed. Shortly afterwards, the question of Sunday play was discussed and a ballot of the members took place. In view of the closeness of the voting, the decision was postponed for a further year. At this same November meeting, Jock Grant was re-elected as Captain of the Club.

Minutes of a meeting held in June 1911 give some indication of the level of inflation in the early part of the century. The House Secretary, finding it necessary to increase the price of drinks, made the following recommendations:-
Lemonade to tuppence halfpenny.
Ginger beer to tuppence.
Lime juice and soda to tuppence.
(For the young, tuppence halfpenny is the equivalent of 1p).

The following October, the Treasurer showed a balance in hand on the year's trading of £ 21.14s.6d. This apparently small amount can be

Wells Amateur Athletic Union

GOLF SECTION.

A Meeting of the above section will be held at the Swan Hotel, on Saturday, August 27th, at 8 p.m., to receive the following Report of the Golf Committee.

REPORT.

Your Committee is pleased to state that a new agreement for the tenancy of the Links operates from October 1st next. Under this agreement the tenure is better secured than formerly and certain restrictions are removed, but the Committee has to meet an increase in the rental of £10 annually plus rates and taxes.

Golfers become more exacting in their demands year by year as they see the magnificent efficiency at some of the larger and fashionable clubs they visit.

The Committee in its humble way, with the slender funds at its command, has endeavoured to maintain the upkeep of your Links and to study the comfort of the Members, whilst many improvements have been made and others contemplated, provided the necessary funds are placed at its disposal. For this purpose the Committee recommends the following scale of increase in the subscriptions:-

Gentlemen	Green Money from 15/- to 21/- per annum.
Ladies	Subscription " 15/- " 17/6 "
Juveniles	" " 10/- " 12/6 "
Members of Theological College	" " 31/6 " 40/- during residence.

The Committee trusts these recommendations may be adopted, the increase being slight, even to vanishing point, when it is considered the facilities which have been made for recovering lost balls, the extra attention given at the Pavilion, and the better upkeep of the greens and course.

I hope you may be able to attend the Meeting.

Yours faithfully,

R. A. GRANT, Hon. Sec.

Wells,

1st Aug., 1910.

*The above was passed unanimously
Aug. 27th 1910*

Proposed Subscriptions - 1910

At the A.G.M. of 1912, the future of the Golf Section was clouded by a rumour that the owner of the Golf Club land, Mr. Tudway, was intending to dispose of the land in the following Spring. A committee was formed to clarify the position with Mr. Tudway and the Marquis of Bath, owners of the land, regarding the existing tenancy which was due to expire at Michaelmas, 1914.

In spite of concern for the future, the Club continued to establish itself with competitions and matches taking place on a regular basis. Early in 1913, the Committee was presented with a cup, donated anonymously to Jock Grant on condition that it was competed for by lady members.

Sunday Play. The first business was to receive the result of the vote as to the deletion or retention of Sunday play Rule 19. There showed 24 in favour of retention & 20 for deletion, whilst 22 gave conditional replies. It was decided to have these letters read & interpreted as far as against or neutral, with the result that the voting was declared to be 29 for the deletion and 20 for the retention of the rule. Mr. Pope then appealed to the meeting to suspend the operation of the vote for 12 months in consequence of the desire of many members for fuller discussion of the question and the closeness of the voting. This was agreed to & it was resolved that a Special General Meeting should be called during the month of September 1911 to fully discuss the matter, notice of such meeting setting out the business to be sent to each member.

Sunday Play - 1910



Burnside Cup

Dickenson Cup

Grant Cup

A large gathering of past & present members of the Wells Golf Club took place on the evening of Monday 29th November in the dining hall of the Swan Hotel to show their appreciation of the services to the Club of its father & for some years its Secretary Mr. A. Grant.

The chairman, Mr. Pope, on behalf of those present & of many old members who had left the district presented to Mr. Grant a silver salver, with a purr of Gold and an illuminated address setting forth the thanks of the subscribers.

Mr. Grant having suitably replied the remainder of the evening was spent in social intercourse, several songs being sung by the members.

The arrangements were admirably managed by a small Committee of which Mr. E. J. Wilson was Hon. Secy.

E. J. Wilson
Hon. Secy.

Grant's Party

Match	It was proposed by Mr. Grant & seconded by Mr. Evans that Vardon of Woolbury Club be asked to play a match with Ham on Wednesday July 17 th & that a charge of 6/- admission be made to visitors. The arrangements for the game & refreshments were left in the hands respectively of Mr. Grant & Mr. Wilson.
Notice	It was resolved that all notices to be posted in the Pavilion or on the course should be countersigned by the Hon. Secy if issued by Secys of Sub-Committees.
Lockers	The Hon. Secy asked permission for Ham to have some ventilating holes in the lockers. Granted.
	The Committee rose at 10.30 p.m.

Match Notice

Green Committee. It was decided to purchase 9 new Sand Lozes of the same size as those now in use.

The Conditions of the Grant Cup were read as follows:

1. The Cup to be called the Grant Cup & vested in the Management Committee of the Club, & shall be held in trust by the Treasurer of the same.
 2. The Competition shall be open to the Ladies of the Wells Golf Club only.
 3. The Cup shall be a "Challenge Cup" and be inalienable. A replica to be given to the winner on his winning it the first time.
 4. It shall be played for in the Spring of each year according to S. Andrews match play rules.
 5. The Winner's name shall be inscribed on a board kept for that purpose in the Club house, each year.
- The Cup and conditions were accepted & a vote of thanks passed to the anonymous donor, who had presented it to Mr. Grant.

Conditions of the Grant Cup

Minutes	The Minutes of the last General Meeting were read & confirmed.
Treasurer	The Hon. Treasurer presented his financial statement for the past season showing a balance in hand of £12.11.6 which on the proposition of the Chairman & seconded by Mr. A. Grant was passed & adopted.
Business	A question was asked as to the tenure of the Links, which was answered by the Hon. Secy stating we were secure until 1914, but a rumour being in circulation that Mr. Induray was disposing of the property in the Spring of 1913 it was deemed advisable for the Club to ascertain its position with Mr. Induray & the Marquis of Bath, for which purpose a Committee consisting of Mr. Somerville, Mr. A. Water, & Mr. E. A. Gorse was appointed.

Tenancy details - 1914

FROM R. A. GRANT, VICARS' CLOSE, WELLS.

May	20.	Gundy(27)	$37+36+37 =$	110
June	19.	Evans.	$37+37 =$	74
"	22	Sygn	$37+39 =$	76
July	1	allan	$38+39 =$	77
"	3.	Hel.	$38+39 =$	77
"	4	Hcb & Dno.	$41+39 =$	80
"	6	Evans	$38+39 =$	77
"	8	Ridm & Mb.	$38+40 =$	78
"	9	Thorn	$40+39 =$	79
"	11	Evans	$38+40 =$	78
"	18	Blackwood	$37 =$	(76) 76
"	"	Willh	39	
"	20	Ridm, Dyer def V. Elliott	$40+37$	77
"	23	Vernon	$42+38$	80
"	24	Ellicott	$40+38$	78
"	26	Ella	$— 37$	37
"	27	Edith	$37+37$	74
"	29	Ogden	$42+40$	82
"	30	Parkins	$40+37$	77
"	31	Clifford	$38+41$	79
Aug	1	Conn: Betty	$40+39$	79

Results of a Competition - 1912