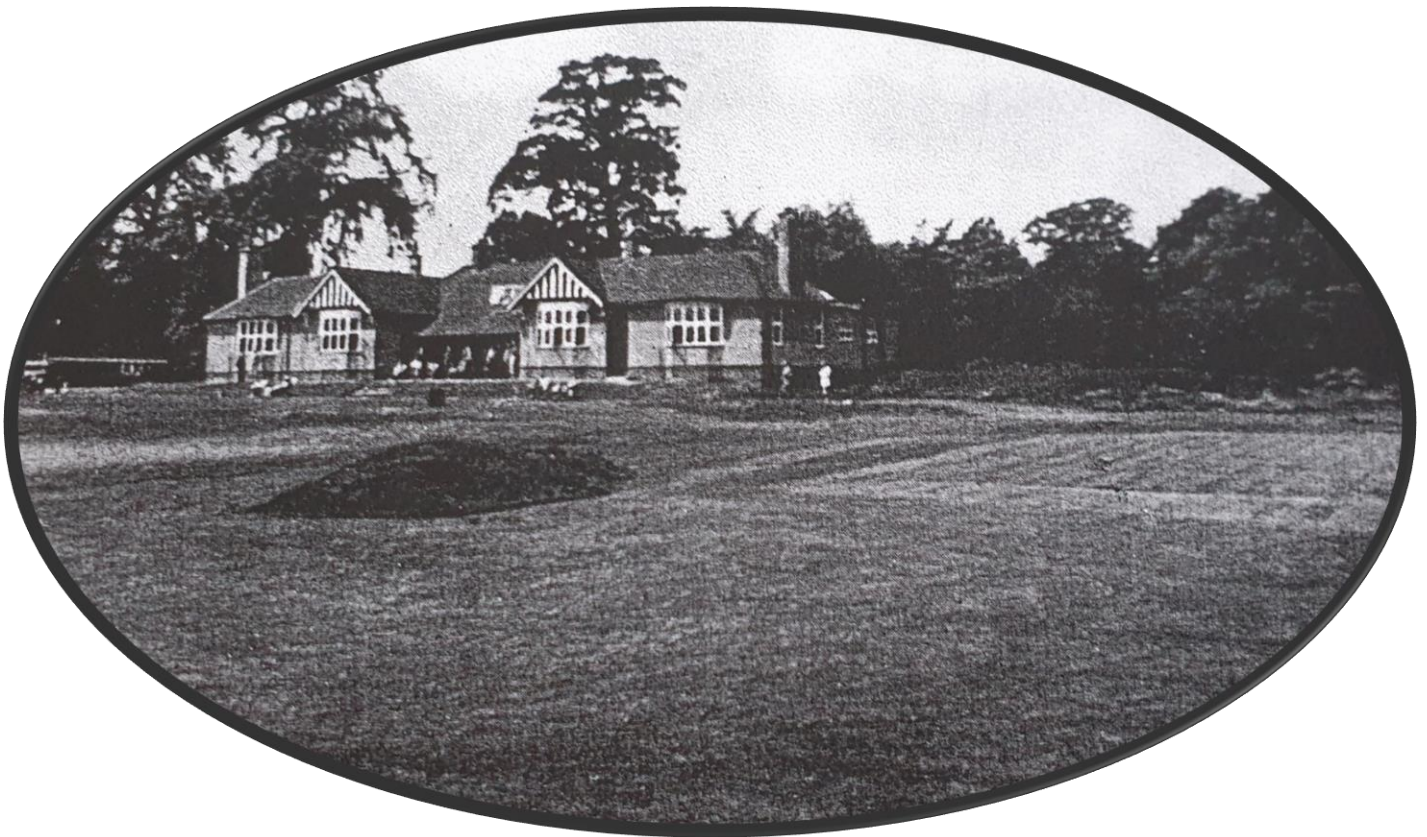
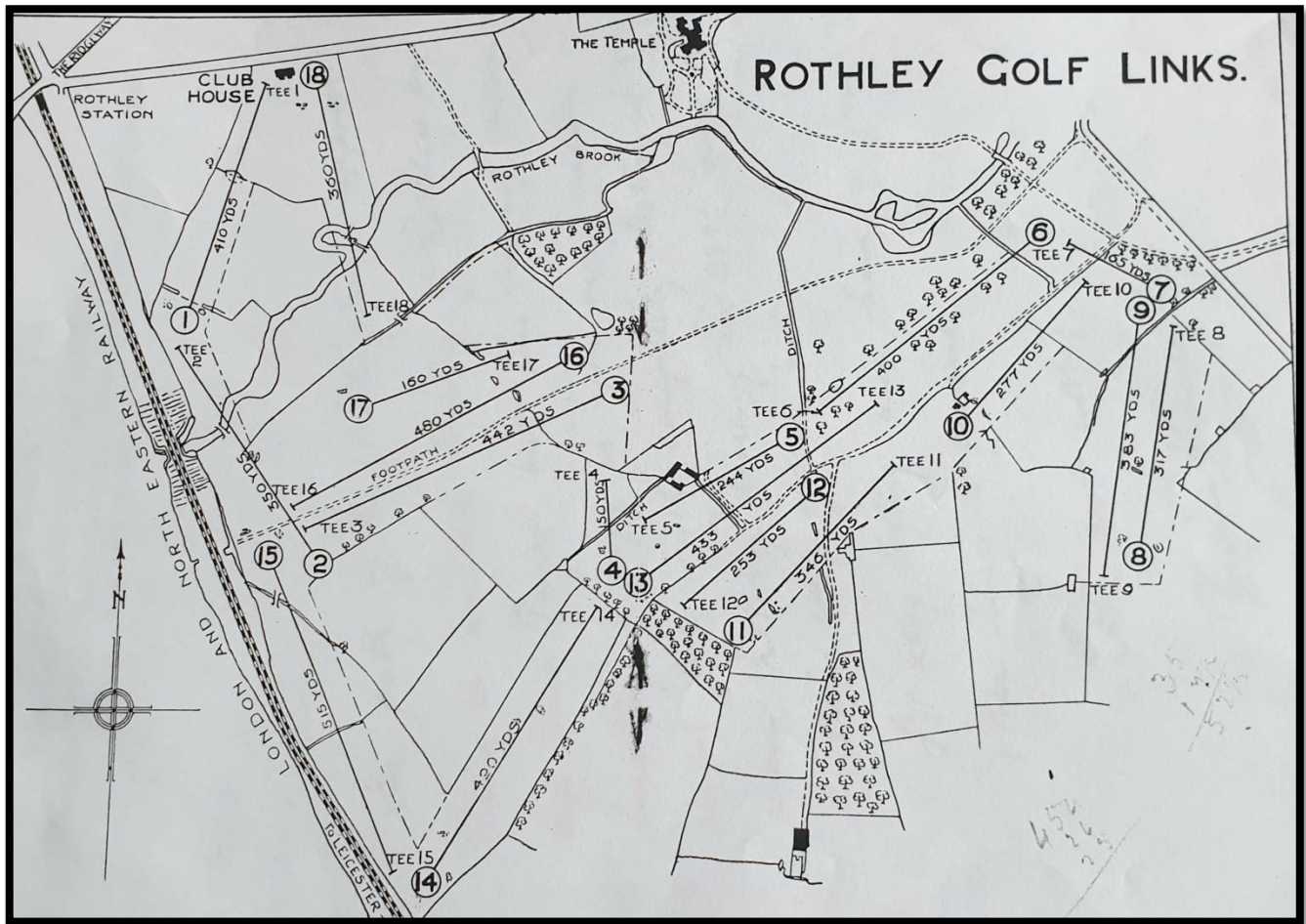


The Evolution of the Golf Course – 1910 to 1975



- In the winter of 1910/1911 40 men under the direction of Tom Williamson constructed the first 12 holes of the course. By May 1911 the 12 holes were finished and ready for play
- In the winter of 1912/1913 an extensive bunkering scheme, new tees, filling in of ditches and additional drainage was carried out
- 18 holes were completed, ready for play by March 1913. The course measured 6000 yards, which in those days would be considered quite a long course
- The main method of grass cutting at the time involved between 300 and 500 sheep. Grazing rights and the hay concession was sold every year until 1926 when horse drawn machines were purchased for the purpose.
- In the early days of the club's existence golf balls were very expensive (one ball cost the same as an hour's lesson with James Sorley, the club's first professional), various schemes were devised to rescue balls from the river on the 2nd and 18th holes. Everything was tried including a low fence, wire mesh in the river and even the employment of boys at weekends for 5 shillings per day to fish the balls out. The boys were eventually dismissed in 1915.
- There was obviously a thriving "black market" in second hand balls with the members regularly being reminded not to buy used balls from the caddies or green staff. There was a notice in the clubhouse stating "Members must loyally assist the Council in their efforts to prevent this objectionable practice"
- The route of the golf course is still remarkably similar to the original layout. There were ditches across the 2nd, 3rd, 13th and 15th holes which have been subsequently filled in

Map of the course 1929 = Total Length 6105 yards

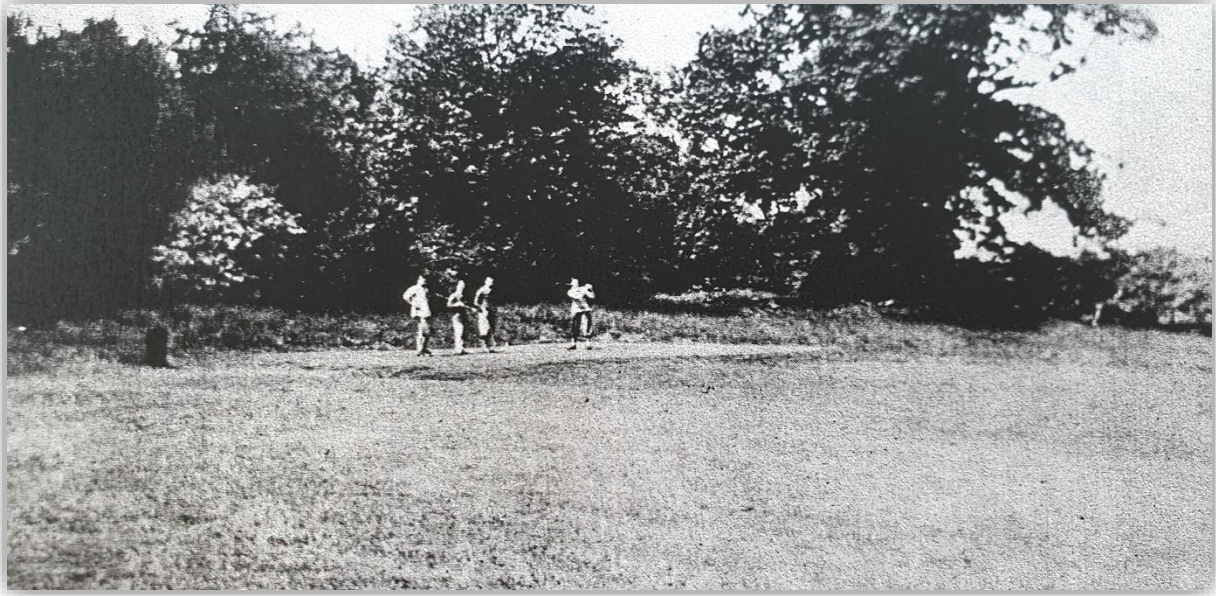


Pictures from the 1929 Golf Club Brochure

1st Hole



12th Hole – 253 yards



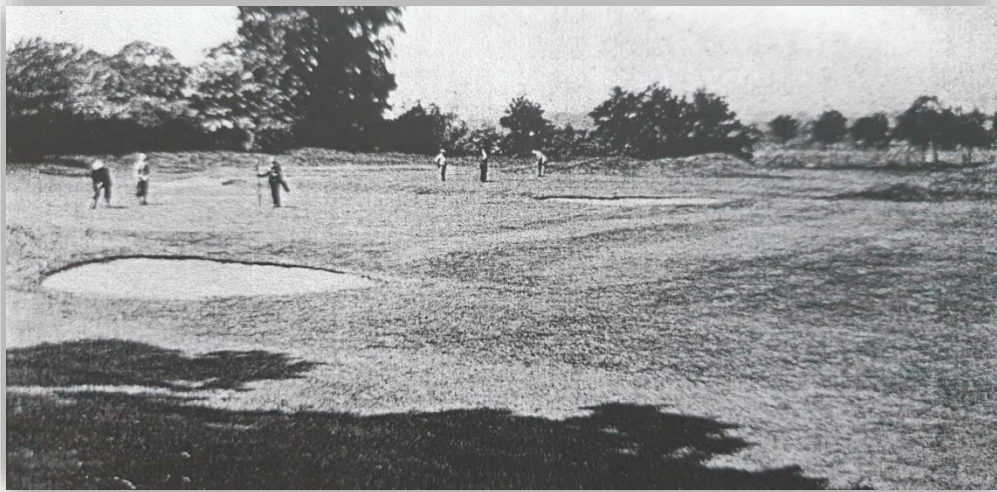
Originally the 12th hole was a short par 4, slight dog leg left to right. The tee was next to the ditch, very close to the location of the cabin today. In 1972 the hole was shortened to a par 3.

16th Hole – 480 yards



This hole was originally a par 5 played from approximately where the 16th tee is now to a green very close to the boundary hedge. By 1937 the hole had been shortened to the present day length.

4th and 13th greens



13th Tee



13th Approach



Rothley Park Golf Course 1937 – Length 6142 yards

- Still no mention of the length of the course from the Ladies Tees
- Main changes from 1929, the 16th had been shortened by 104 yards but the 9th had been lengthened by 72 yards

Pictures from the 1937 Golf Club Brochure



2nd Hole



Practice Ground

- In 1936 the area between the 1st and 18th fairways was first used as a practice ground
- In May 1953, an area to the left of the 2nd tee was acquired in order to increase the size of the practice ground

4th Hole



4th and 13th Greens



9th Green



1940 - 1950

- At the outbreak of the war the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th holes were requisitioned for food production
- The 8th and 9th holes were sublet to a farmer until December 1946
- Jack Seager, professional, head greenkeeper and caddie master was also in charge of agricultural production
- In 1941 there were 41 men and 4 lady members in the armed forces
- In 1944 it was agreed that some of the revenue from the sale of crops should be paid to Jack Seager in recognition of his efforts to keep the course (13 holes) in such good condition
- In January 1945 Jack Seager suggested drawing up a plan to redesign the course by swapping the part of the golf course under cultivation for an equivalent parcel of land on the "Rothley Temple" side of the course. The temple estates initially seemed keen on this idea but by the middle of the year they had rejected it
- In 1945 the annual rent for the golf course was £400 while the full playing subscription for gentlemen was 5 guineas and ladies 3 guineas
- Early in 1946 work started on the reconstruction of the 6th, 7th and 10th holes, approval was granted to use German prisoners of war to assist (there were still 400,000 German prisoners of war in Britain in September 1946)
- The 8th and 9th holes were reseeded in the spring of 1947, still placing on the 6th and 8th holes during the summer
- By April 1948 the 8th and 9th holes had been reseeded and the greens re turfed. The holes were officially opened on Captain's Day, June 26th. Compensation of £1,300 (£40,000 at today's values) was eventually awarded from the Government in 1952, for the use of the five holes
- The 8th and 9th holes were closed for the winter of 1948/49 because of their poor condition
- In 1949 the present practice putting green was installed and several bridges around the course had to be widened to accommodate the introduction of "trailer caddies" (caddy cars) available for hire from Jack Seager
- In 1949 problems with unauthorised visitors, e.g. cows, sheep. Horse riders were a perennial problem regularly encroaching on the 13th and 14th fairway
- 1949, John Cheatle and Roger Christian join the golf club. Much more about these gentlemen in future episodes
- In 1950 W.C.Hill was awarded £50 in recognition of 40 years service as a greenkeeper. He would go on to achieve 44 years of service

Rothley Park Golf Club 1950 – Length 6062 yards

6th Green



14th Green



The influence of Course Architects at Rothley Park – 1910 to 1975



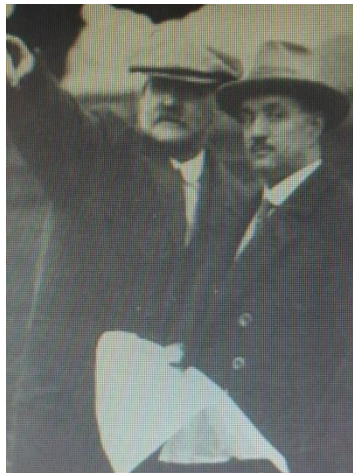
In 1909 Tom Williamson was appointed by Frederick Merrittens to design and construct 12 and then ultimately 18 holes at Rothley Park (See the 2nd Episode on the club website for full details).

He was professional and head greenkeeper at Notts Golf Club for 54 years until his death in 1950.

Known as the “Father of Midlands Golf”, by 1919 he had designed or made recommendations for every course within a 50 miles radius of Notts Golf Club.



In 1921 the club invited one of the foremost course architects of the time, Harry Colt, to suggest some “improvements to the course”. His tender for £500 was duly accepted and the work was carried out. Unfortunately no details of the plans can be found, however it is clear from the Council Minutes that there was quite a furore over the cost of the project. A Special General Meeting was called and although the meeting accepted the cost, the Council was admonished for spending such a large sum of money without consulting the members.



In 1929, Architects, Taylor (the who is opening 1912) were to produce a redesign of The new have yards from Although

planning took place and a very was prepared, the work was undertaken.



Course Hawtree & same J.H.Taylor pictured at the ceremony in commissioned far reaching the golf course. course would measured 6,329 the back tees. extensive detailed design never



In 1971 course architects, Cotton, Pennink & Lawrie were appointed to design the extensions to the par 3 17th and par 4 18th holes.

In February 1971 Donald Steel (pictured left) visited the club to show the designs to the council.

Donald Steel – Designed or was involved in the design of over 500 courses around the world. He was also an eminent golf journalist as golf correspondent of the Daily Telegraph. A very good golfer, he qualified as an amateur for the Open at St. Andrews in 1970. He founded his own design company in 1987 and employed as “apprentices”, Tom McKenzie and Martin Ebert who eventually took over the

company and now run McKenzie & Ebert which is the design company the club has used for recent course improvements. McKenzie & Ebert advise on many of the highly ranked courses in the world including seven of the ten British Open Venues.

17th green and 18th hole in 1950



As mentioned earlier, the present course routing has remained virtually unchanged for over 100 years save for the extension of the 17th and 18th holes. The 17th hole was a heavily bunkered par 3 of 165 yards (still no mention of the yardage from the Ladies Tee) and the 18th was a 346 yard par 4, played off our present winter 18th hole with the tee on the brook side of the ditch.

- As can be seen in the picture above, the area which now comprises the second half of the 17th hole and the first 200 yards of the 18th hole was leased to the farmer who returned it early in 1971
- In November 1971 work started on the new 17th green, a number of trees were removed to allow the creation of the new 17th and 18th fairways
- In March 1972, 50 conifers (paid for by the under 35 section) were planted on the corner of the dogleg on the 17th hole
- By the summer of 1972 the new holes were ready for play, adding some 300 yards to the length of the course

