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# Sir Walter and Mr. Jones: Walter Hagen, Bobby Jones, and the Rise of American Golf. Chapter 9: "Completing the Cycle," 1930.

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## CHAPTER NINE

### *"Completing the Cycle," 1930*

#### 1

The Hagen-Kirkwood Pacific tour was not scheduled to begin until February 1, so Hagen spent most of January working on his golf instructional-comedy short, which included Leo Diegel, as well as Mack Sennett (who also directed) and actresses Marge Beebe and Jean Fay. He and Diegel were so busy with the film's production that they both missed their tee times in the Long Beach Open. As Golfers Magazine put it, Hagen did not "movie" fast enough to satisfy the tournament's officials. On February 1 he and Kirkwood left San Pedro, California, bound for Honolulu, then New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, China, and Japan. Just before embarking, Hagen told reporters that he would use the unprecedented tour to sharpen his game for the summer's major events; the team planned to be back in time for the U.S. Open. As the reigning British Open champion, Hagen also hoped to make a lot of money in the South Pacific.

Things did not go that well. On February 24, after several matches in Hawaii, Hagen-Kirkwood boarded the Arangi for New Zealand. En route, the ship's passengers experienced a mild outbreak of small pox, which forced a three-week quarantine and the cancellation of about half of the duo's March exhibitions. Moreover, when Hagen and Kirkwood finally reached Sydney, Australia, and began their tour in earnest, they discovered that Aussies were not much inclined to purchase tickets for mere exhibitions. That was of particular concern to Kirkwood, who reportedly had a contract with Hagen guaranteeing Sir Walter \$16,000 for the tour. Near the end of the trip, however, Hagen generously "tore up" his contract with Kirkwood and agreed to

split the receipts fifty-fifty, so that both men "barely made expenses."<sup>i</sup>

But if his first grand tour of the Pacific did not pay off as hoped, it was still an enjoyable time. On March 19 the "globe-touring" professionals won two matches in Adelaide, Australia; Hagen played well and seemed to have his game in shape. Beyond his competitive successes, he enjoyed traveling through the Fiji Islands, bartering for pearls in the Philippines, hunting kangaroo in Australia, and meeting both the Prime Minister of Australia and the Emperor of Japan. On June 8, following a three-week stay in Japan, Hagen-Kirkwood gave a private exhibition for Emperor Hirohito in Tokyo at the Shinjuku Imperial Garden links. Hagen presented the Emperor with a set of golf clubs, and the Emperor reciprocated with an engraved gold cigarette case.

Hagen fancied himself something of a golf missionary. "Golf was in its infancy in Japan at the time of our first visit," he wrote. "Our tour undoubtedly inspired many of the young professionals and amateurs to work harder at their game." In all, Sir Walter played fifty-three matches in Australia, China, and Japan and spent fifty-eight days at sea. On June 21 he and Kirkwood returned to North America aboard the Empress of Russia, arriving in Victoria, British Columbia, with a "carload of Japanese kimonos and other trinkets" for their friends.<sup>ii</sup>

Two interesting things involving Hagen had occurred while he was on tour. First, by late April Americans could "see and hear" Sir Walter in "Match Play." The "great short- feature talking comedy" was billed as a "double treat" of "good, wholesome fun [and] championship golf." Second, on May 14 Hagen's lawyers brought suit against the Rochester Red Wings baseball club. Hagen had always claimed to have lost a large sum in his attempt to purchase the team. Specifically, the suit charged that the ball club had not returned to Hagen \$8,500 of his

down-payment. The Red Wings, led by Warren Giles (whom the St. Louis Cardinals had installed as president), fought Hagen's claim, and it would take another six years to resolve the matter.<sup>iii</sup>

The timing of Hagen's action against the Red Wings suggests that he, like so many others, had felt the "hard times" and needed to play all of his financial and legal cards. It is impossible to know exactly what Hagen's motive was in suing the ball club. In fact, he did not mention the proceeding in his autobiography (except that he lost \$37,500 in the failed arrangement) and never actively involved himself in the case, opting instead to let his Rochester lawyers take care of the matter. As for his own financial situation, it is likely that Hagen was sufficiently solvent. To be sure, his Pacific tour had been economically disappointing, and by now he had probably spent the \$3,500 payment for his appearance in "Match Play"; nevertheless, for the last several years Hagen's material resources had not depended on competitive earnings or even on non-golf product endorsements, which were undoubtedly still lucrative for him, but rather on the annual subsidy he received from the L. A. Young Company's sale of Walter Hagen Ultra golf equipment.

As of 1930 the Ultra line was doing very well, endorsed and played by Horton Smith, Craig Wood, and, of course, Sir Walter himself. Like most other consumer products, golf equipment had changed significantly with the rise of mass manufacturing, and the L. A. Young Company was on the cutting edge. Most notable was the development of steel shafts, uniformly produced so that each club in a set looked and felt the same. Ultra clubs boasted "high-carbon, spring steel shafts; deep-faced, powerful heads; and scientific matching and balancing." Ultra irons had more powerful "compact blades," and the new Hagen ball insured "longer carry and absolute accuracy." Beyond that, the Ultra line included a unique concave-faced sand wedge.

Although eventually outlawed by golf's authorities because it "scooped" (or double-hit) balls out of hazards, the Hagen sand wedge was the rage for several years. Indeed, the Ultra line sold thousands of sets after 1928, providing Hagen a healthy income for the rest of his life.<sup>iv</sup>

Some traditionalists, of course, disliked the modern equipment because gone forever were the days when each club in a golfer's bag possessed its own shaft flexibility, weighting, balance, and look. In the place of Calamity Janes, Jeanie Deans, mashies, spoons, and the like came putters, drivers, five-irons, six-irons, seven-irons, three-woods, and so on. But like the "Bounding Billy," matched sets with steel shafts made the game easier, more accessible, and thus more popular. In one sense, though, the old-timers were correct; the game had changed, and the new equipment precluded much of the creative shot-making skill that golfers had to develop in the days of individualized, idiosyncratic club-design.

At any rate, the Ultra royalties helped soothe Hagen's loss of Robert Harlow as manager. By 1930 the famous Harlow-Hagen team had formally broken up, and on May 1 Harlow became the PGA's full-time Tournament Bureau Manager. The break with Harlow is difficult to analyze, except to say that it seems the split was mutual and involved no significant hard feelings. Certainly Hagen was looking to down-scale his competitive activities; moreover, the PGA desperately needed a full-time event coordinator, and Harlow was a natural to fill the position. Whatever the motivations, the Hagen-Harlow separation, along with other events, signaled the devolution of Hagen's competitive career.<sup>v</sup>

Sir Walter's seventeenth-place finish in the U.S. Open was another sign. In fact, the 1930 season did not include any flashes of Hagen brilliance comparable to his winning the British Opens in 1928 and 1929; some suggested that he had been relegated to "has-been" status, that his

vision was blurring, and that he needed glasses. Hagen called such observations "bunk."<sup>vi</sup>

Determined to come back yet again, Hagen improved to sixth place in the Canadian Open, finished fourth in the St. Paul Open, and took another sixth place at the Western Open. He made headlines in Detroit when he fired 66-67 in rounds preliminary to the Western Open. Hagen's best finish of 1930 was runner-up in the St. Louis Open (where a young "midget golfer" from Texas listed as "Bennie" Hogan withdrew). On the final day, he showed up at the first tee twenty-five minutes late, "faultlessly clad in white plus fours and shirt, and deep blue stocking and tie, [and] with the aggravating insouciance that has broken down many opponents in other golf finals." Of course, a runner-up in the St. Louis Open hardly constituted another comeback. The most visible evidence of Hagen's competitive decay was his failure even to qualify for match-play in the PGA Championship, the event which he had once owned. Still, in November he was again named captain of the 1931 Ryder Cup team.<sup>vii</sup>

As the St. Louis Post-Dispatch's coverage illustrated, while Hagen's competitive career declined, the legend of "Sir Walter" started its rise. In February 1930 Grantland Rice wrote an article about Hagen for Collier's magazine entitled "Golf's Bad Boy." Rice summarized Hagen's career from Brookline in 1913 through his most recent British Open victory, touching on such episodes as Hagen's limousine locker-room at Deal in 1920, his tardiness in 1926 for both the Cunard line's farewell luncheon and the Abe Mitchell match, his gamesmanship in PGA matches, and his supposedly showing up late one morning for a "big tournament on the west coast" wearing his "dinner clothes" from the previous evening. Hagen, the story went, played the round in his formal wear, amazing everyone by shooting a 69 and leading the field. "The Haig" had been the "stormy petrel of golf, one of the most widely praised and one of the most keenly

criticized competitors in any game." To some he was "one of the greatest fellows"; to others he had been "a goat-getter and a bum." Sir Walter, Rice believed, was simultaneously an "irresponsible playboy" and a "keen competitor." That dichotomy was "the foundation of Hagen's golf greatness." And so the legend of Sir Walter began to grow.<sup>viii</sup>

## 2

Two months after Grantland Rice stirred memories of Sir Walter, the readers of Collier's perused another article entitled "Not My Business," which reminded sports fans that golf was not really Bobby Jones's primary concern. The piece was written by Jones, and along with Grantland Rice's "Golf's Bad Boy," it reinforced the stark contrast between the decade's two greatest golfers.

In "Not My Business," Jones advised that the average American "should not choose his sport with the same care he would use in deciding what business or profession he will devote his life"; indeed, sports "should be no more than a means of obtaining diversion, recreation, and exercise." Jones did recognize the modern realities of sports as big business, however, and did not question "the right of an individual to commercialize his proficiency in sport if his happiness and well-being [would] be promoted by so doing." "If enough people [would] pay to see Walter Hagen play golf to make it profitable for him," Jones could see no difference between that and "Caruso being paid to sing or a lawyer receiving money for drafting a contract."

He recognized that some people considered him a "jackass" for "refusing to grasp the bonanza of wealth" by turning professional, while others "commended" him for "maintaining the

ideals of amateur sport." As for Jones, he admitted that "there was no temptation in professionalism until I had all but completed the college education which my father had determined I should have." He decided, though, that "night after night on Pullmans, round after round of golf played before thunderous crowds, and little possibility of enjoying home" did not appeal to him. Concluding that the option of professional sports was a live, legitimate one for youths in modern America and that the decision ultimately rested with the individual, Jones "chose to follow the law, at a safe distance, rather than golf as a profession."<sup>ix</sup>

In sum, "Not My Business" offered a fascinating look into Jones's views of professional sports, showing a thoughtful athlete whose general mind-set was rooted in tradition but shaped by modern relativism. Indeed, it is easy to see the influences that two generations--his grandfather and father--had had. Jones disliked the idea of constantly performing before large crowds and cared too much about his family to travel year 'round. For him, full-time professional sports was wrong. But by 1930 he was not so pious or openly judgmental of others. Professionalization and commercialization of sports was a fact; if Walter Hagen or anybody else wanted to capitalize on golf, so be it.

Aside from writing "Not My Business," Jones also took some time to give an interview to the noted biographer William E. Woodward for the American Magazine. Woodward's job was to "take Bobby Jones apart and see what makes him tick." He reviewed Jones's sickly childhood and extraordinary golf career. Woodward was impressed by Jones's modesty, his "tacit lowering of his own personal value." In a fit of complete candor, Jones told Woodward: "I don't know what I would have done without golf. I owe everything to it, I suppose." The confession notwithstanding, however, a few lines later Woodward hit on the old theme that Jones "plays golf



much less frequently than the average business man who has golf on the brain." He reviewed how Jones rarely practiced between November and April, which Jones affirmed. "I don't like to play in the cold, and there are cold winds here in the winter. Besides, I haven't the time. Got to take care of my law business."

February 15, 1930, must have been a mild day in Atlanta, because Jones not only played at East Lake but shot 63, tying his own record for the layout. In truth, just as "Not My Business" and the Woodward interview appeared in newsstands across the country, Jones ironically began one of his busiest golf seasons ever. As Jones later confessed, "golf was my paramount concern" in the winter of 1929-1930. He worked himself into shape during the coldest days by regularly playing a unique game called "Doug." Supposedly named after its inventor, the screen actor Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., the game was described as a cross between "indoor tennis and badminton." Woodward reported that Jones had swelled to 186 pounds after the holidays, but that by March he had trimmed down to 165, mostly because of vigorous "Doug" matches.<sup>x</sup>

A few days after his 63 at East Lake, Jones made a "last-minute decision" to enter the Savannah Open, in which he expected to receive "a tidy licking" from the professionals who had been active all winter. Actually, Jones bested most of the professionals at the Savannah Golf Club, but Horton Smith was more consistent and one shot better than the Atlantan. In a unique gesture, tournament officials presented Jones with a twelve-gauge shotgun, passing on the customary silver plate or gold watch.<sup>xi</sup>

The Savannah Open was Jones's first official winter event since the 1927 Southern Open, and his decision to enter it underscored the seriousness with which he was approaching the 1930 season. While in Savannah, Jones announced that he would also enter the upcoming inaugural

Southeastern Open at Augusta. In between those tournaments he continued to practice. In March he played a round at East Lake with Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, Commissioner of Organized Baseball. Aside from golf, the pair probably discussed the Atlanta Crackers as well as Jones's new role as "executive vice-president and legal counsel" for the recently-formed Atlanta Baseball Association. Jones also took a break from the links to join the Crackers at their spring training camp downstate in Douglas, Georgia. Photographs in Atlanta's Journal and Constitution showed Jones in batting practice and behind the plate warming-up pitchers. The workout must not have been too intense; in all of the photos, Jones is wearing a business suit and tie.<sup>xii</sup>

On March 28 Jones appeared in Augusta for the Southeastern. By tournament time he had his game in shape; he destroyed Smith and everyone else, winning the event by thirteen strokes. Bobby Cruickshank, who was also in the field, told O. B. Keeler that Jones would "go to Britain and win the amateur and the open, and then he'll come back over here and win the open and the amateur. He is playing too well to be stopped this year." Sportswriters once again spoke of Jones as a "golf machine" and looked forward to his trip abroad. Rice wrote that Jones's "game now was sounder and surer than it ever was before. He is starting better equipped in every way than he ever faced a single season before." Rice concluded that there was "at least a first class chance that this will be the best year he has ever had, and that will mean the best year any individual golfer ever had."<sup>xiii</sup>

On April 21 the Joneses were bid farewell at a banquet organized by members of East Lake and Augusta country clubs. After saying goodbye, Atlantans presented Jones with a gold chain and four-leaf clover. The evening came to a climax when Augusta officials, improving on Savannah's shotgun, moved some palms to reveal an "imposing grandfather-clock," Jones's

trophy for winning their open three weeks earlier. "Blushing modestly," Jones spoke a few words of gratitude and left three days later for New York City with his wife and the ever-present Keeler.

Following a brief stay in Washington, D.C., the Joneses arrived in New York on April 28 to make final preparations for their journey aboard the Mauretania. It was Mary Jones's first trip to Europe with her husband, and the couple planned to visit the Continent. Accompanying the golfers was Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., who simply "had" to go and watch Jones play. A handful of well-wishers saw the party off on the 30th; so while Walter Hagen barnstormed through the South Pacific, Bob Jones, Jr., set sail for England in quest of his first British Amateur Championship.<sup>xiv</sup>

### 3

The Mauretania steamed to Southampton on May 6, and from there the Joneses "motored" into London. The first official event Jones faced was the Walker Cup. Besides Captain Jones, the squad included George Von Elm, Dr. O. F. Willing, Francis Ouimet, Harrison Johnston, and newcomers Donald Moe and George Voigt. Jones believed that "England has got the strongest team she has ever put out against us for the trophy." Nonetheless, the captain had been easy on his men prior to sailing, encouraging them not to "over-golf" themselves with too much practice. The Americans had about ten days to prepare for the international competition, and team members shot warm-up rounds at Sunningdale and on-site at Royal St. George's club in Sandwich.

On May 8 Jones played in a foursome at Sunningdale with the Prince of Wales. Four days later he turned in a 75 at Sandwich and learned that he had drawn a bye into the second round of the British Amateur. On the 14th news arrived from home that Jones had been elected to the board of directors of the First National Bank of Atlanta. Now, the New York Times declared, it is Bobby Jones, "lawyer-banker-golfer."<sup>xv</sup>

By the start of the Walker Cup matches, the Americans were in good form, and so were the conditions. "The Americans always bring their own weather with them for this match," complained Bernard Darwin of the London Times. "However much we may pray, patriotically, for an icy wind, the balmiest and lightest of zephyrs arrive on the morning of the match." With the Prince of Wales looking on, the U.S. side took three of the four foursome matches. Jones-Willing easily won theirs. The Atlantan was "outdone" in only one respect, and that by the Prince, whose "plus four suit of chocolate, red, and beige checks" made Jones's "blue sweater and stockings" look "mid-Victorian."

The U.S. finished off the British the next day, winning seven of eight singles matches to retain the cup 10-2. Jones performed like a "well-oiled machine," trouncing rival captain Roger Wethered 9 and 8. Darwin summed it up best, admitting that the Americans "were just too good for us. At the end of the day there was nothing left to do but acknowledge the superiority of the victors and drink to the health of Miss Fishwick." (On the same day, Britain's Dianna Fishwick defeated Glenna Collett for the women's championship.) Yet Darwin also believed that there was "life in the old dog [Britain]," and that "it by no means follows that either our amateur or open championships will be won this summer by Americans."<sup>xvi</sup>

The British Amateur was scheduled to begin on Monday, May 26 at St. Andrews. During

the intervening week, Jones won the Golf Illustrated Gold Vase tournament at Sunningdale and was a guest at Sir Philip Sassoon's Trent Park estate, which included a private nine-hole layout. Jones played an informal match there with Sir Philip, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of York. On Saturday, Jones practiced at St. Andrews, but Sunday golf was still illegal in the "old gray city," so on the 25th he drove sixty miles to Gleneagles for another preliminary round.<sup>xvii</sup>

It was Jones's third attempt at the British Amateur title; in 1921 he was eliminated in the fourth round, and in 1926 he was defeated in the quarterfinals. The event was especially difficult to win because the champion had to survive nine matches, eight of them at eighteen holes. It was also the only major event which Jones had not yet won, and he was more determined than ever.

He carefully made his way through the early rounds; following his bye in the first, he slipped past his second and third round opponents. Then Cyril Tolley, "the greatest personality in British golf," battled Jones to nineteen holes in the fourth round. "A breathless crowd of 10,000" watched Jones lay Tolley a perfect stymie to win the match. When the "epic struggle" was finished, Jones confessed, "I have been very lucky. The breaks were mine." Indeed, Jones had been extraordinarily fortunate in his clash with Tolley. On three holes he had shot errantly and hit a spectator, keeping his ball from landing in desperate straits. It seemed as though Jones was destined to win the British Amateur. As Sir James Lieshman, a Scottish knight and golf enthusiast, put it: "The stars are with Jones in this tournament. His luck is fixed as the orbit of a planet. He cannot be beaten here."<sup>xviii</sup>

After an easy victory in the fifth round, Jones eliminated reigning U.S. Amateur Champion Harrison Johnston 1 up by sinking an eight-foot putt on the home hole. "I never felt more thankful in my life than when that putt dropped into the cup," said Jones. He had played

well, but three of his five matches had taxed him emotionally. George Greenwood, who covered the Johnston match for the Daily Telegraph, noticed that Jones looked "shaken [and] a little gray about the cheeks as he stepped to the eighteenth tee. He wiped the corners of his mouth with his handkerchief, pulled down his cap well over his forehead--but there was no sign of nervousness in his drive."

The next day Jones beat Englishman Eric Fiddian 4 and 3 in the seventh round and George Voigt 1 up in the semifinals. Guy Campbell thought that Fiddian was just "too overawed by the occasion to play great golf." Voigt, on the other hand, gave Jones all that he could handle. In fact, Jones was 2 down before storming back to win fourteen, halve fifteen, win sixteen, and halve seventeen with a curling twelve-foot putt. Jones, beginning to sense his fate, believed that "the putt was going to go in no matter how I hit it." Voigt needed a six-footer on the home hole to send the match to extra holes; he missed, and Jones escaped into the thirty-six-hole championship round, where he would face British favorite Roger Wethered. Jones later wrote that he fell behind Voigt early in the match because he was a bit tipsy from the glass of sherry he had consumed during the lunch break. He had "never before touched a drop of alcohol before playing a tournament round" but thought that the "experiment might steady my nerves, quiet the butterflies, or rid me of some of that tired feeling." In the end, the sherry almost rid him of the British Amateur Championship.<sup>xix</sup>

As a public course, St. Andrews did not charge admission to the matches that week, including the final. So an estimated 20,000 turned out to see if Jones could duplicate the feat of "Old Man" Travis and Jess Sweetser and become only the third American to win the British Amateur Championship. Conditions remained pleasant for the final day. The competitors

battled to a draw over the first nine, but then Jones grabbed a 4-up lead by the lunch break.

Wethered was putting poorly, and by the turn in the afternoon, the Atlantan had extended his lead to five holes. Much more relaxed in the thirty-six-hole format, Jones never let up and closed out the match 7 and 6. Six policemen ushered the champion through the mass of humanity to the clubhouse, where Mary Jones was waiting, while the brass band which had assembled at the fourteenth green to meet the champion was trampled and dispersed, so that not one note was played.<sup>xx</sup>

Thus on May 31, 1930, Jones won his tenth national championship and made history; he became the only golfer ever to win all four national titles. After accepting the trophy, Jones once again said that he had been "lucky" to win. "I never have been happier to get any cup," he added, "and I never worked so hard, nor suffered so much either." Emotionally and physically exhausted, Jones later told reporters that he needed "extensive resting and sleeping" and planned to get them on the Continent with his wife. When asked about the British Open, he replied that he planned to do his best but added, "The way I feel right now, nothing else matters much."<sup>xxi</sup>

Meanwhile, Jones fans lauded their hero. Big Bob Jones, who happened to be baby-sitting little Clara Malone and Bob III in Atlanta, simply said: "I am mighty happy and mighty proud of my boy." The Georgia Bar Association immediately cabled its congratulations to Jones. Walter Hagen did the same from Tokyo, saying that he was "highly elated that Bobby finally crashed through and rounded out a collection of crowns such as no other golfer has ever acquired."<sup>xxii</sup>

Of course, admirers could not refrain from drawing comparisons between Jones's embarrassing St. Andrews debut in 1921 and his recent victory. An editorial entitled "More Than

a Golfer" appeared in the New York Times; it argued that Jones, in evolving from a "petulant, irascible, passionate, explosive" youth to a "model of sportsmanship, poise, and self-control," represented a "splendid example of self-mastery." In addition, Jones had "kept his amateur status without taint or suspicion." He was "as much loved as a man as he [was] admired and wondered at as a golfer," because "whether in victory or defeat, he bears himself with smiling modesty and is regarded on every links of Great Britain not only a competitor but a gentleman and a friend." That, the editorial concluded, explained why "Bobby Jones" had "become an international figure."<sup>xxiii</sup>

The Joneses had about two weeks before the British Open commenced at Hoylake, England. The Atlantan was in an enviable position. In one respect the pressure was off; even if he failed to win the Open, his victory in the Amateur made the trip a success. "A big load had been lifted off my chest," Jones later wrote. So he and Mary Jones enjoyed their stay on the Continent, mostly in Paris. He played a few exhibitions to keep his timing sharp, but the order of the journey really was "extensive resting and sleeping."<sup>xxiv</sup>

By Wednesday, June 11, Bob and Mary Jones were at Hoylake. It rained that morning, but Jones still practiced at the Royal Liverpool links, located literally on the shores of the Irish Sea. He spent about an hour the next day on the driving range, hitting both woods and irons that had troubled him the day before. His session was interrupted by the legendary British professional J. H. Taylor, who "begged" a ball from Jones's supply and then asked the Atlantan to autograph it for him. On Saturday the press announced that for the first time O. B. Keeler would provide fifteen-minute transatlantic radio summaries of the Open, starting at 6:45 each evening.

Qualifying began on Monday, June 16, and the New York Times declared that "the



tournament once more is a case of 'Bobby Jones against the field.'" People were thus surprised when Jones qualified nine strokes behind the medalist, Archie Compston. Jones was also caught off guard by his twentieth-place finish; he considered Tuesday's 77 to be his worst ever in Great Britain. The circumstances of the event partially explain Jones's high score. His gallery was so large and raucous that he had to be accompanied throughout the day by an armed policeman. To be sure, Jones's galleries had always been among the biggest, but in the aftermath of his Amateur victory, they were even larger and more troublesome. An unfortunate incident at the eighth green proved how uncontrollable the crowd was. Just as Jones was about to putt, a few members of the gallery trounced across the putting surface, prompting the otherwise silent Atlantan to yell: "Please do not walk across the green," or something to that effect. He missed the twenty-footer and settled for a bogey. If not impressively, Jones had nonetheless qualified, and as Bernard Darwin pointed out, his 77 "is not a fact upon which any sensible patriot would base his hopes."

The first round of the tournament proper was played on Wednesday. It was almost like two days in one, however, because in the morning the weather remained "still, grey, and sultry, almost too still and hot for golf," then in the afternoon thunderstorms rolled in off the Irish Sea. In another stroke of luck, Jones was scheduled to play his round in the morning. Taking advantage of the conditions, he grabbed the lead with a 70. The gallery was still pesky; on several occasions Jones had to stop his take-away and calmly readdress his ball because spectators clicked their cameras during his swing.

The tee times were reversed for the second day, but that mattered little because the weather cooperated again. Still, Jones struggled to a 72. In fact, if Calamity Jane had not been

on fire that day, he would have fallen behind, but he dropped some lengthy putts and maintained a one stroke lead. "It was one of the hardest rounds I ever had to play," Jones told reporters, "and as I always have one such in a tournament, I hope it is over and done with."

So despite his lack of form and innumerable distractions, Jones was in excellent position on the final day to capture his third British Open. History was not in his favor; no one had won both British events in the same season since John Ball in 1890. Moreover, because of his erratic play of late, Jones was not confident when he teed up on Friday morning. The weather was not encouraging either; the grey sky occasionally emitted raindrops, lingering reminders of the previous night's storms. Jones carded a 74 in the morning, only good enough for second place. He found himself one shot behind Archie Compston, who, "playing like a frenzied giant," came from five shots behind, scorching Hoylake and electrifying the crowd.

In the afternoon, though, the tall Welshman shriveled. In fact, Compston followed his white-hot 68 with a chilling 82, a "pathetic come-down," wrote Darwin, "after his heroic work in the morning." Jones remained steady, posting a 75 to finish six strokes ahead of Compston. American professional Mac Smith shot 71, the lowest final round, but still finished in second place. Jones had won--or one might say Compston had lost. Either way, the Atlantan had collected both of Britain's national championships and could sail back to the U.S. in the best competitive shape of any golfer ever.<sup>xxv</sup>

Jones remained in the British Isles for another week before heading home on the 27th aboard the Europa. He spent the last days in England playing several charity matches and trying to recuperate from winning back-to-back titles. George Greenwood had observed that moments before accepting the trophy at Hoylake, the champion "flopped in a chair with his face as grey as

stone and cheeks fallen in. I never saw a man closer to the point of collapse than was 'Bobby' Jones." Later that evening, Jones told the British press that he was so exhausted from the stress and strain that he doubted he would compete in Britain ever again.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Meanwhile, the British scrambled to put Jones's feat in perspective. Golf Monthly decided that Jones's victory was more impressive than Ball's because in 1890 the Open was played at only thirty-six holes. "Bobby Jones," thought Bernard Darwin, "has no more records yet to conquer. He can retire with a quiet mind." An editorial in the Times of London declared Jones "the greatest of all living golfers," concluding "there seems to be no reason why he should not crown his career by doing in America what he has done here and thus win four of the biggest events of the game in the same season."

Back home, members of the U.S. House of Representatives listened as Georgia Congressman Robert Ramspeck proclaimed that "Bobby Jones is admired most and is loved most for his modesty and saneness and the manner in which he wears his fame." Walter Hagen, while literally stepping off the Empress of Russia in Victoria, British Columbia, again called Jones "the greatest golfer in the world," adding that no professional had a chance against him in a four-day medal test. When Big Bob Jones heard of his son's achievement, he said, "Of course, we are very happy and proud. But we got a bigger kick out of the amateur."<sup>xxvii</sup>

As for the champion, he was so tired the day he left London that he forgot his golf clubs in his hotel room. Despite a bellboy's valiant efforts, the clubs did not catch up with Jones before the Europa set sail, so they were immediately placed on the Aquitania, which brought them to New York soon after Jones's arrival on July 2. Jones was reportedly nervous about his New York reception; it was the sort of occasion that had always made him apprehensive, particularly

so in 1930 because it was to be broadcast nationally on NBC radio. When the Europa finally pulled into New York Harbor, Jones, clad in a navy-blue suit and carrying a motion-picture camera, was greeted by several hundred Atlantans and thousands of New Yorkers. Among the Atlanta contingent were R. T., Big Bob, and Clara Jones. A band played "The Star-Spangled Banner," and firecrackers exploded when Jones disembarked and entered a waiting convertible. He and Mary Jones were paraded through a "ticker-tape blizzard" down Broadway to City Hall, where less than two weeks earlier, Admiral Richard E. Byrd had been celebrated for "bringing two poles together." Jones was told that his achievement ranked with Byrd's; for ninety minutes Mayor Jimmy Walker cackled into an NBC radio microphone, saying things like, "Here you are, the greatest golfer in the world, being introduced by the worst one," while the crowd yelled "Attaboy Jimmy." Walker summed up the public's impressions when he said that the British titles would "never [again] be won by a finer sportsman or gentleman." Jones replied that he "had never experienced anything like this before," and after admitting that he really did not know what to say, concluded, "I have never been so impressed." That evening Jones and 400 of his admirers attended a banquet in his honor at the Hotel Vanderbilt.<sup>xxviii</sup>

The New York reception may have been more difficult for Jones than either the British Amateur or Open. Nonetheless, he had little time to recover, because the next afternoon he and his parents boarded the Broadway Limited for Chicago, and then Minneapolis, Minnesota, site of the U.S. Open. A prominent Atlantan, Asa Candler of the burgeoning Coca-Cola empire, offered to fly Jones to Minneapolis, but the golfer passed, figuring that he had had enough adventure for one week. Mary Jones, on the other hand, hurried south to rescue her parents from Clara Malone and Bob III. Before Bob Jones left New York, he told reporters that despite what he had said in

Britain about never returning to compete, he did not have any plans to retire from golf. When asked if he would quit after winning the summer's U.S. championships and "completing the cycle," Jones replied, "Well, I haven't won either one of them yet, nor have I given any thought to either one." Changing the subject, Jones said that he was pleased to hear that his Crackers had improved to fourth place while he was out of the country, joking that he had "cabled advice from time to time" to the club's manager. As for his golf abroad, it was "ragged," and he had been "lucky all the way through."<sup>xxix</sup>

On Saturday morning, July 5, a ragged, lucky, but somewhat rested Jones arrived in the Twin Cities. Declaring "I'm feeling fit," he joined Walter Hagen, who had just motored in from Detroit, to play his first round at the Interlachen Golf Club. The St. Paul Pioneer-Press reported that when Jones entered the clubhouse, he immediately looked to secure a locker. He inquired about the matter to Interlachen's professional, Willie Kidd, who curtly responded, "What's the name, please?" The Atlantan simply answered, "The name's Jones." According to the local paper, Kidd "stammered his apologies" and assigned the world's most famous golfer a locker. But if Willie Kidd did not recognize Jones, seventeen-year-old Donovan Dale did. A few days earlier the local youth's name had been drawn from a hat, making him Jones's caddie for the U.S. Open. Apparently quite knowledgeable about his hero, Dale assured reporters after the first practice round 72 that Jones was not "even trying" because he "doesn't want to get too hot now. It's too early."

Actually, Jones appeared to be hitting his stride. On Monday he shot 70, the lowest round of the day and a new course record. Hagen, using a full set of steel-shafted clubs for the first time in his career, looked good that day too; his blistering 32 set a record for the front nine,

although he followed it with 40. After his round, Jones chatted with Frank B. Kellogg, former U.S. Secretary of State. Kellogg wished Jones "all the luck in the world" for the coming championship, but when queried by reporters if he wanted Jones to win, Kellogg hesitated before responding, "Well, Jimmy Johnston [of St. Paul] is another fine boy." A few feet away, young Dale was receiving more attention than he may have bargained for. Besieged by the press, Dale said that Jones was "a swell guy" but that "he only spoke to me twice" to ask "Where's the water? What's your name?" Dale's man undoubtedly needed the water more than once that day; aside from Jones, the biggest story that week was the weather, which was typical in July for the "Land of 10,000 Lakes," hot and extremely humid.

Conditions were so intolerable on Tuesday that neither Jones nor Hagen practiced much. Both stars also limited their workouts on Wednesday when the temperature climbed over one-hundred degrees; Jones played only nine holes that day, commenting, "I never felt such heat since I was born." The Atlantan, along with Johnston, spent the morning fishing on Lake Minnetonka.

The other item of note on Wednesday was Hagen's wardrobe. He appeared at the first tee wearing "white flannel trousers, black and white leather golf shoes, a black belt, a white silk shirt, and a white four-in-hand tie with small dots." For the most part, it was one of Sir Walter's favorite combinations. The primary difference, though, was his choice of "slacks" over knickers, or plus-fours, which had been the fashion since the Great War and which many golfers, including Jones, still wore. Always the trend-setter, Hagen signaled another change in the golf subculture. A few of the younger entrants were even sporting "open-necked polo shirts" with their "long breeches." As for his golf, many thought that Hagen had the best chance of anyone to stop the "Atlanta golf machine," who, dopesters agreed, would have to improve upon his Hoylake

performance to win at Interlachen.

The country's ever-developing media were certainly determined to improve upon their Hoylake showing. In fact, not only would NBC radio again carry O. B. Keeler for a fifteen-minute summary each evening, but the Columbia Broadcasting System planned to break new ground on Saturday with a live broadcast from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Columbia selected Ted Husing to be its roving reporter; he would cover the leaders, wearing a backpack that included "a portable thirty-pound transmitting apparatus," while his "caddie" would follow with an antenna. U.S. Open golf coverage had come a long way since Ouimet fired the "shots heard 'round the world" at Brookline in 1913.<sup>xxx</sup>

On Thursday, July 10, the tournament began. There were no surprises the first day. Mac Smith and Tommy Armour took the lead with 70s; Jones came next at 71, and Hagen was in a group at 72. Caddie Dale, who by then had contracted for an Associated Press column syndicated under his name, wrote, "We started pretty well on Thursday--I mean Bobby Jones did." Dale claimed that his man's only weakness was putting. Because of the heat, the round was actually an ordeal for everyone. One reporter noted that when he finished his round, Jones looked as though he "had been dipped in one of the ponds on the course." Chick Evans nearly quit because of dizziness, and a Red Cross doctor treated ten spectators for heat prostration. Hagen was so bothered by the conditions that he pledged to wear a "huge straw hat" the next day; Grantland Rice, who began referring to the tournament in his columns as "Dante's Inferno," wrote that "the gallery of 10,000 was in casual water from start to finish." Still, the fact that 10,000, a record number for the first day of a U.S. Open, turned out in such weather was a testament to Jones's drawing power. The St. Paul Pioneer-Press proudly reported that cars from

Montana, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Wisconsin, and Illinois, filled the club's parking lots.<sup>xxx</sup>

The mercury slipped into the low nineties on Friday, so the weather was not such an issue in the second round. Horton Smith's 70 dominated the headlines and put him in the lead, two shots ahead of Jones. Hagen, meanwhile, dropped into ninth place. The most interesting thing about Jones's round and, as it turned out, the most discussed of the event, was his second shot to the par-five ninth. The hole was reachable in two but required a competitor to hit his second shot some two-hundred yards over a pond. Jones hit his drive in good position and decided to go for the green. During his take-away, however, he was distracted by a little girl moving in his peripheral vision. He followed through with the stroke anyway, half-topping the ball so that it knuckled along the surface of the pond. About forty yards from land the ball skipped once and then twice along the water, deflecting up onto the fairway in front of the green. Jones chipped to the hole and dropped his putt, scoring a birdie and finishing two shots behind Smith rather than four or five.

That evening most sportswriters made some reference to the pond's lily pads. Many observers believed that the plants had kept Jones's ball from submerging. Hagen, no mean expert on such freakish strokes, told Grantland Rice: "He never topped the shot, or it would never have crossed the water. He caught it with an overspin, half smothered, and when you do that, water is the same as concrete or rubber. It wasn't as bad as the gallery thought it was. But it wasn't the type of shot that Bobby usually plays." In his column, caddie Dale said that the shot reminded him of "skipping a rock down the creek." Jones used the same metaphor in Golf Is My Game, describing the shot as "a considerable stroke of luck" and claiming that "no lily pad was involved." When asked about the lily pad break years later, Jones called it "poppycock," adding,



"I never like to spoil a good story, but I don't remember seeing any lily pads on that pond."

Nonetheless, the "Lily Pad Shot" would become possibly the most famous stroke of his season.<sup>xxxii</sup>

Saturday, July 12, was another hot day. Jones's morning round matched the conditions; he blistered the layout with a 68 to grab a five-shot lead. The mark was a personal best for the event, and he did it in spite of making bogeys on the final two holes! No one could keep up with him, especially Hagen, who three-putted the ninth green from four feet while blowing up to a 76-80-303.

Jones stumbled in the final round too, however, even encountering some controversy on the monstrous 262-yard par-three seventeenth hole. He began by badly slicing his tee shot with a crosswind, and his ball crashed into some trees to the right of the green before dropping into a marsh. Literally hundreds of spectators joined Jones in a search, but no one found the ball, which had likely been trampled under foot. USGA Secretary Prescott S. Bush was following Jones and ruled that he should take a one-stroke penalty and drop another ball in the fairway. Jones did that, took three more strokes to get down, and finished with his third double-bogey five of the afternoon.

The errors opened the door for the surging Mac Smith, and Jones knew that he needed a strong finish. He maintained his composure on the final hole, hitting the green in regulation but leaving his ball some forty feet from the cup. Jones later wrote that he was "quivering in every muscle" as he set up over his ball. Calamity Jane was steady, though; he drained his birdie putt and again extinguished Smith's hopes of a comeback. Jones's final round 75 gave him a 287 total, two shots better than Smith, sixteen better than Hagen, and only one more than Chick

Evans's Open record, set at Minnikhada in 1916.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

No one said much that evening, but later some suggested that Jones's lost ball on the seventeenth should have brought a two-stroke penalty and that Secretary Bush had been too easy on him. Bush had deferred to a local rule that defined the swampy marsh as "a parallel water hazard." Had Jones triple-bogeyed, the pressure on eighteen would have been even greater and things might have turned out differently. On the other hand, Jones might just as easily have gotten down in two from the fairway instead of three and still taken a five. In any case, winning by two strokes did a lot to muffle the criticism of Bush's ruling; in the end, one stroke did not seem to matter much. Still, it was the sort of incident that lent some credibility to the occasional charges that Jones was pampered, and even favored by golf's authorities.

Few in the 14,000-person gallery contemplated the difference between USGA and local rules and its potential effect on the outcome of the tournament. Some may have felt sorry for old Mac Smith, who in 1910 had lost the title in a playoff, but the moment that Calamity Jane dealt the final blow, cheers, hats, and all sorts of other things went into the air. Thousands of fans congregated near the clubhouse for the trophy presentation to hear USGA President Findlay Douglas introduce Jones as "the man who is being watched by the whole world." Jones gave one of his "characteristic" little speeches, thanking everyone and concluding, "I was just a little lucky, that's all." Donovan Dale, in his last installment for the AP, wrote, "Right now I'll predict that he wins the National Amateur this year." As usual, Grantland Rice summed it up best: "Last Stop--Merion."<sup>xxxiv</sup>

## 4

Within hours of accepting the trophy, Jones, his parents, and Keeler were on a train bound for Atlanta, where the temperature was one-hundred and three degrees. Mary, Clara Malone, and Bob Jones III had listened to the radio coverage of the tournament and were anxious to greet the champion. Despite the oppressive heat, other Atlantans were determined to give their hero a proper welcome, too. Some 20,000 had turned out to see him return from his 1926 "Double"; 60,000 showed up to honor Charles Lindbergh the following year, and in 1928 the Georgia Tech football team was greeted by 75,000 screaming southerners after returning Rose Bowl champions. The Atlanta Constitution predicted that all of those welcomes would "pale into insignificance" next to Jones's reception on Monday morning.

Organizers decided that it was not such a good idea to have Jones enter the city as usual. Instead, he would get off his special train car near Chattahoochee, a few miles north of Atlanta, and motor to the starting point of the parade. Each step of the way Jones would be escorted by a fleet of small aircraft with pilots waving in Lindbergh style at the throngs below. The entire Jones family was to be paraded down Peachtree, Whitehall, and Mitchell Streets to City Hall. Preceding them would be no less than twenty various groups, including the 122nd Infantry, the Chamber of Commerce, a motorcycle police escort, the Georgia Tech alumni, the Woman's Club, the American Legion, the Crackers, the Boy Scouts, and caddies with signs reading "Welcome Home Mr. Bobby. You Sho' Brought Back the Bacon."<sup>xxxv</sup>

Things went remarkably well, and it really was the Bobby Jones parade to end all Bobby Jones parades. Armistice Day, wrote one experienced reporter, was the only other celebration

even comparable. The Constitution was right; an estimated 125,000 (about half of the city's population) lined the parade route, cheering their "Bobby," who sat on the rollback top of his chauffeured convertible and smiled back at them. The confetti was so thick that it appeared to be "snowing along Peachtree Street." At City Hall Mayor I. N. Ragsdale assured Atlantans that the welcome was "greater than [in] New York." Jones confirmed that observation, accepted a gold key to the city, and told his fellow citizens, "This is the proudest moment in my life [and] I shall never forget it." In complete honesty, Jones added: "I am always a little backward about expressing myself. If I had known of this celebration when I came back to New York, I might have cut out going to Minnesota and slipped back home unnoticed." Those who could hear him cheered all the louder, almost feeding upon his bashful modesty, and those who could not hear him mindlessly cheered along anyway. "I just want to say you don't think any more of me than I do of you," Jones concluded. Then he, Big Bob, and R. T. Jones posed for a three-generation photograph. In a kind of postlude, all of the bands on hand joined in playing the "Star-Spangled Banner" while the crowd slowly dispersed in mid-afternoon.

Jones was certainly happy to be home. He had not been in his house on Northside Drive since the last week of April, nearly three months earlier. Jones was intentionally vague about his plans for the immediate future, but it was reported that he escaped to the hills of North Carolina for a vacation with his wife and children. Jones did say that the golf clubs would be ignored for a while; nevertheless, he played his first round after the U.S. Open the following Saturday, and through the rest of July and August, Jones, along with his father and friends, shot regular practice rounds at East Lake; Sapeolo Island, South Carolina; and the Highland Country Club in North Carolina.

Try as he might to focus on law, his family, the First National Bank of Atlanta, or even the Crackers, Jones had a hard time finding a diversion from golf. Although not a particularly religious man, he often spoke of fate, purpose, and design. In fact, by then his beliefs were almost deterministic; Jones seemed to feel that it was his destiny to win at Merion in 1930, just as it had been his fate to lose there in 1916. All of that seemed to be reaffirmed in the months before Merion, when on three occasions Jones literally brushed close to death. In the fall of 1929, during a practice round at East Lake, a violent thunderstorm erupted; lightening struck the course as Jones's group scrambled to safety. A bolt hit the clubhouse chimney, blasting rocks over three-hundred yards, some of which showered down on Jones, ripping his shirt and barely missing his head. Then, during the trip between Minneapolis and Chicago following the U.S. Open, Jones's train narrowly avoided a serious accident. Finally, just weeks before the U.S. Amateur, while Jones was walking in downtown Atlanta, a car ran off the street and crashed into a building within feet of him. Not surprisingly, Jones traveled to Merion with a purpose.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Yet Jones's entire career, beyond his "near-death" experiences, explains his sense of mission in the fall of 1930: "Going public" at Merion in 1916, winning his first U.S. Amateur title there in 1924, and returning to Merion with an opportunity to make history in 1930; debuting in humiliating fashion at St. Andrews, the sport's mecca, in 1921 before winning the British Open there in 1927, and going on to capture his only British Amateur title there in 1930; winning no national tournaments for seven years and then amassing twelve in eight seasons; beginning his career with the image of a spoiled, cocky, temperamental child and ending it with an image of a dutiful, modest, controlled gentleman. Indeed, it would be fitting for Jones to win at Merion and "complete the cycle" in 1930; he had been completing cycles all of his golfing life.

So, almost as a pilgrim, Jones left for the Merion Cricket Club on Monday, September 16, while still recovering from what doctors considered a mild attack of appendicitis the day before. Jones rested on the train as it carried him first to Washington and then to Philadelphia. He stopped long enough in the nation's capital to play a benefit match on Tuesday and to visit the White House, where he met the unfortunate President Herbert Hoover, who undoubtedly wished Jones better luck than his own.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

By Wednesday afternoon, Jones was at Merion. That evening all across the country sportswriters began their coverage something like this: "Fourteen years ago this month a clear-eyed, tousle-haired school boy with a soft drawling voice, that left no doubt as to what section of the country he was native, arrived in the city of Brotherly Love and boldly inquired the locality of the Merion Cricket Club. . . ." Grantland Rice entitled his article in the American Golfer "From Merion to Merion," recalling how he and Jones had eaten breakfast together before the famous Jones-Byers club-throwing contest.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Jones was not the only one who sensed destiny in the breeze at Merion. His every stroke was analyzed that week as he made the final adjustments in his game. The headlines were generally like that on Thursday, "Jones Turns in 73," or, on Friday, "Jones Cards a 78." It was all Jones, Jones, Jones. The spotlight had never been brighter or the hopes and expectations to win higher. Maybe that was the reason Mary Jones did not accompany her husband on the final leg of his golf journey; at any rate, it was appropriate that Jones could look instead to his father, who back in 1914, on the fourteenth green at East Lake, had hugged his excited Little Bob when he shot his first 80. And besides his father, Jones could always turn to O. B. Keeler for encouragement and support. To get some semblance of peace, the Atlantan traveled to South

Jersey on Friday for a practice round at Pine Valley (where he had given an exhibition following the 1916 Amateur) and then took in a ball game, watching the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Phillies at the Baker Bowl in Philadelphia.<sup>xxxix</sup>

On Monday and Tuesday, Jones won the qualifying medal for the fifth time and impressively tied the tournament record with a 69-73. Even Mother Nature showed up beautifully, and the conditions brought out "mighty galleries." The Philadelphia Inquirer put Monday's at 5,000 and Tuesday's at 10,000, where the estimates hovered until championship Saturday. Tuesday's crowd seemed to get to Jones, who had to be escorted over the course all week by a Marine guard. Philadelphians learned, according to Stan Baumgartner, that "Bobby Jones is human after all! He breathes, he smiles, he frowns, and he perspires." At one point in his round he also "glared" toward someone in the gallery who clapped at the wrong time. To Baumgartner and most other observers, though, such displays were understandable.

Despite playing a bit inconsistent on Wednesday, Jones crushed both Ross Summerville, the reigning Canadian Amateur champion, and Fred Hoblitzel over eighteen holes. Since his loss to Goodman at Pebble Beach a year earlier, Jones had won nine straight eighteen-hole affairs. The next day he beat Fay Coleman 6 and 5 in his first thirty-six-hole test, and in Friday's semifinal Jones faced his old friend and competitor Jess Sweetser. It was not much of a match; Jones trounced him 9 and 8. Meanwhile, in the other semifinal Gene Homans eliminated nineteen-year-old Charlie Seaver (father of the future baseball Hall of Famer Tom Seaver.)

An estimated 18,000 turned out on Saturday, September 27, in anticipation of witnessing golf history. They were not disappointed. "There was never a time that Jones was not in command of the situation," Perry Lewis wrote. The Atlantan won the first hole and never trailed,

going 7 up by the lunch break and eventually knocking out Homans 8 and 7. Within minutes telegrams from around the country began pouring in, including one from his associates at the First National Bank and another from R. T., sending his grandson the "entire family's sincere congratulations."

Jones had done it; he had finished what one sportswriter called the "impregnable quadrilateral." Later, of course, the feat would be universally known as the "Grand Slam," but few journalists actually used that term in the fall of 1930; most did not know what to call it, and some wrote simply that Jones "completed the cycle." Whatever it was called, Jones had become the first (and only) golfer to win four major championships in one season. Moreover, his total of thirteen major crowns surpassed everyone else's (unless one counted Hagen's Western titles as "majors"). Yet, it was all somewhat anticlimactic. The victories seemed to come easily; he was never really pressed, the final was a blow-out, and in the end he did seem predestined to win. The Philadelphia Inquirer noted that even Atlantans were "calm" about the victory and, per Jones's request, made no special fuss when he returned home the following week.<sup>xi</sup>

The only question left was whether Jones was destined to win more titles or to retire. While accepting the trophy, he had said that he expected to continue to play golf, although he could not predict when or where and added that he might play one more year and then quit. In the locker room minutes later, however, Jones told Jimmy Johnston that he was "through" because "the strain of golf is wrecking my health, stunting me in my business ambitions, and I am sick of it all." The reported confession to Johnston proved accurate, and it certainly did not come as a shock to Keeler; for several years Jones had intimated that deep down he wanted to retire, but the time had never been right.<sup>xli</sup>



In the fall of 1930 it could not have been more right, so on November 17 the twenty-eight-year-old Jones officially announced that he would retire from competitive golf. "I certainly shall never become a professional golfer," he said near the end of a lengthy statement. Yet he also renounced his amateur status, reporting that he had recently signed a contract to do twelve golf film "shorts" with Warner Brothers Pictures. (A few months earlier, Jones had allowed his swing to be filmed for free in an educational project sponsored by the Professional Golfers' Association.) His deal signed on November 13 with Warner Brothers paid him a lot of money and included an option for six additional films. Exact figures were not published, but estimates ranged between \$100,000 and \$500,000. The Atlanta Constitution reported that "reliable" sources put the amount at \$250,000, which may have been a bit conservative because Jones received \$120,000 up front, plus a percentage of the gross.<sup>xlii</sup>

Years later, Chick Evans again manifested his jealousy of Jones by charging that the Atlantan had accepted money from Warner Brothers prior to his victory at Merion. Jones, who had carefully protected his status throughout his career, vehemently denied Evans's claim. Rumors about the movie deal did circulate at Merion, and at one point Jones was even asked about the impending deal. The published story, though, was that Jones would be offered a huge contract after the tournament. When queried about it in Philadelphia, Jones replied, "I haven't got the offer, but I'm not turning down \$200,000 contracts if they do come along." In Golf Is My Game, Jones disclosed that he had been approached at Merion "about doing a series of motion pictures on golf, but I declined even to discuss the subject." Beyond that, there is no reason to believe that Jones made any agreement, much less accepted money from Warner Brothers before November 13 and thus no reason to believe Evans's allegations. In truth, Evans never produced a

shred of evidence to substantiate his charge.<sup>xliii</sup>

But if that allegation was false, Evans, like George Von Elm and many others remained frustrated over the hypocrisy that seemed to permeate Merion. Dollar signs were everywhere but accessible to only a few. Von Elm made his own announcement of turning professional immediately after the tournament (possibly in an effort to steal some of Jones's thunder), saying that it had cost him \$10,000 annually to play as an amateur and have the "'Mr.' stuck before his name." He further characterized the Merion event as "show business in a big way." The USGA, Von Elm accurately pointed out, had made more than \$55,000 off the gate at Merion but had paid the players nothing. Other observers were bothered by the hundreds of thousands of dollars gambled on Jones and his fellow amateurs.<sup>xliv</sup>

As for Von Elm, what Walter Hagen and others had realized long ago seemed finally to dawn upon him: Amateur sports were expensive, exploitative, and completely impractical--unless your name was "Bobby Jones." For him, there was an unprecedented pot of gold at the end of the journey. Indeed, what really grated on Von Elm, Evans, and many other amateurs and professionals who were wise enough to hold their tongues, was the fact that Jones was not only a more accomplished golfer than they but also a so-called "simon-pure amateur" who had nonetheless profited along the way. The London Observer once noted that for years many professionals had considered Jones the "best paid professional," mostly because of the money he made from syndicated writings. By 1930 George Trevor estimated that the figure was no less than \$25,000. To be sure, Jones had exercised impressive loyalty and discipline in passing on a \$50,000 home, but that only turned into a quarter-million-dollar Hollywood contract. Yet, less than a week after his win at Merion, Jones told a reporter from the Daily Princetonian that

professionalism was a healthy thing for golf, adding: "Without [it] men would not have the opportunity to make an honest living at golf, and in their stead there would be a great many 'crooks' falsely pretending to be amateurs."<sup>xliv</sup>

While some scratched their heads at that comment, few seemed to begrudge Jones's commercializing on his amateurism; to the contrary, he did it all, even the film contract, while garnering the deepest respect of the USGA and the public. To Jones's few jealous detractors, it was an extremely irritating irony, but to his more numerous admirers, it was easily reconciled and justified. Most fans agreed with Golf Monthly that "only a fool would have turned down such a [film] offer because of a sentimental regard for the status of amateurism."<sup>xlvi</sup>

In fact, immediately after Jones read his retirement statement, in which he frankly admitted that money had been a determining factor in his decision, the accolades poured in one last time. A New York Times editorial, entitled "Bobby Holes Out," noted that "there was a pretty general feeling expressed" that Jones had done the right thing. Although the Times doubted "whether these new pictures of him in action will add much," the paper summed up Jones's action favorably: "With dignity he quits the memorable scene upon which he nothing common did or mean." W. O. McGeehan of the New York Herald-Tribune called Jones the "Champion of Champions."<sup>xlvii</sup>

The British went even further with their encomiums. Jones's "personal charm and modesty in triumph are assets making him an invaluable traveling advertisement of the finer and rarer qualities of the human race," concluded the London News-Chronicle. The Times of London compared Jones to none other than the father of his country. Like President George Washington, "Mr. Jones . . . having finished the work assigned to [him]" can "retire with the blessings of his

fellow-citizens." "There has been no player, professional or amateur, including the illustrious Walter Hagen, who has been able to hold a candle to [Mr. Jones] in the years since the war," the Times declared, "[and] his decision to make a film cannot be criticized." The London Observer simply thought it best that Jones retire with "dignity" while at the "zenith of power."<sup>xlvi</sup>

Reaction was much the same from various quarters within the sport. Former outstanding American amateur Jerry Travers called Jones's move "wise" because he had "won everything there is to win." Golfers Magazine credited Jones with doing "much to popularize golf" and emphasized the financial security that the film contract would at long last bring to his family. Generally, the reaction from golf was one of understanding, yet sadness at the thought of not seeing Jones compete in the open championships. The USGA, some writers pointed out, would be particularly sorry to see gate receipts fall, as everyone expected they would. Opportunistic voices from within the PGA suggested that Jones could now enter its match-play tournament and defeat the Hagens, Diegels, and Smiths, as he had the Von Elms, Sweetser, and Ouimet.<sup>xli</sup>

At least one observer believed that Jones would return to competitive golf. Walter Hagen told Joe Williams of the New York Telegram: "Jones is fed up on the game right now, [but he] will be back. And the crowds will be bigger than ever," he added, citing the example of boxer Jim Jeffries's 1910 comeback to fight Jack Johnson. Hagen said that if he was wrong, he still considered the Atlantan "the perfect example of what a real sportsman ought to be, one of the grandest fellows any sport knew, [and] a swell fellow [as] I call him. Everybody calls him that." What did Hagen think about Jones's cashing in and signing with Warner Brothers? "What's wrong with it? Why shouldn't he market [his golf style]? Well, I think Jones is just as much an

amateur, in the sense that it is ethically interpreted, as he ever was." Sir Walter believed that it would be an "outrage" for golf's authorities to "professionalize" Jones because of the instructional films. "I don't claim to be a deep thinker, a moralist, or a distinctionist," Hagen concluded, "but it seems to me that if there is to be a caste system in sports, it ought to be founded on something higher than dollars and cents. Somewhere the matter of character ought to come in for consideration."<sup>1</sup>

Despite Sir Walter's prophecy and rare venture into the realm of ethics, Bobby Jones did not make a comeback (except for his annual efforts in the Masters), nor did he compete again as a "simon-pure" amateur. The reign of Emperor Jones was over, and although Sir Walter did not seem ready to admit it, his time had passed too. The lives and public images of Sir Walter and Mr. Jones were to be as different in the years ahead as they had been in the Golden Twenties. The "Dixie Wonder" from East Lake would finish his life in ill-health as the sport's paragon, while the handsome professional from Rochester did what most public figures do, particularly professional athletes: refuse to let go and then, when forced to, step aside and revel in the memories of glory days gone by.

## Notes--Chapter Nine

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- i. Margaret Bell, "Short Putts," Golfers Magazine, 57 (February 1930), 33; P. C. Pulver, "Australian Tour for Hagen," Professional Golfer of America, 10, (October 1929), 5; Margaret Bell, "Short Putts," Golfers Magazine, 56 (November 1929), 31; *ibid.*, (December 1929), 25; "Editorial Comment," Professional Golfer of America, 11 (November 1930), 19; New York Times, January 13, 1930, 17; January 24, 1930, 29; February 25, 1930, 33; March 2, 1930, XI, 4.
  - ii. Seattle Times, June 22, 1930; St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 10, 1930; Walter Hagen and Margaret Seaton Heck, The Walter Hagen Story, (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1956), 243-49; New York Times, March 20, 1930, 22; May 31, 1930, 8.
  - iii. See "Match Play" advertisement in Golf Illustrated, 57 (April 1930), 61, and "Golf Champions Take to the Screen," American Golfer, 33 (April 1930), 37; Walter Hagen

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vs. Rochester Red Wing Baseball Club, January 10, 1936, State Supreme Court, Monroe County, New York; Hagen and Heck, Walter Hagen Story, 259.

iv. See advertisements in American Golfer, 33 (May 1930), 5; (July 1930), 57; (June 1930), 51; Golfdom, 4 (January 1930); (April 1930), 45; Janet Seagle, The Clubmakers (Far Hills, N.J.: United States Golf Association, 1984), 73, 123.

v. "Bob Harlow, Tournament Bureau Manager," Professional Golfer of America, 11 (November 1930), 7; Herbert Graffis, The PGA: The Official History of the Professional Golfers' Association of America (N.Y.: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975), 148-51.

vi. Seattle Times, June 22, 1930.

vii. Detroit News, August 20-24, 1930; St. Louis Post-Dispatch, September 19-22, 1930; Hamilton Spectator (Ontario), July 28, 1930.

viii. Grantland Rice, "Golf's Bad Boy," Collier's, 85 (15 February 1930), 18.

ix. Bobby Jones, "Not My Business," Collier's, 85 (26 April 1930), 15.

x. William E. Woodward, "What Makes Him Click?" American Magazine, 109, (April 1930), 36-8; Atlanta Constitution, February 19, 1930; Richard Gordin, "Robert Tyre Jones, Jr.: His Life and Contributions to Golf," (Ph.D. dissertation: Ohio State University, 1967), 113.

xi. Savannah Morning-News, February 20-22, 1930; Atlanta Constitution, February 19-23, 1930; Robert Tyre Jones, Jr., Golf Is My Game, (N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1960), 108.

xii. Atlanta Journal, March 10, March 16, 1930; Atlanta Constitution, March 16, 1930; O. B. Keeler, "Golf Gossip," American Golfer, 33 (April 1930), 23.

xiii. Atlanta Constitution, March 31-April 2, 1930; O. B. Keeler, "Golf Gossip," American Golfer, 33 (May 1930), 42; Grantland Rice, "Bobby Jones at the Peak," American Golfer, 33 (May 1930), 19 and "Keeping up with Jones," Collier's, 85 (24 May 1930), 22; Keeler, "The Battle at Hoylake," American Golfer, 33 (August 1930), 54.

xiv. Atlanta Constitution, April 22, April 25, 1930; New York Times, April 30, 1930, 21; May 1, 1930, 24; May 7, 1930, 35.

xv. New York Times, May 14, 1930, 19.

xvi. London Times, May 6-17, 1930; New York Times, May 16, 1930, 26

xvii. London Times, May 20, 1930; New York Times, May 19, 1930, 25; May 20, 1930, 34; May 25, 1930, XI, 8; May 26, 1930, 17.

xviii. In the second round, Jones defeated Sid Roper 3 and 2, and in the third round, he eliminated Cowan Shankland, 5 and 3. London Times, May 29, 1930; New York Times, May 29, 1930, 15; "Behind the Scenes," Golf Monthly, 20 (June 1930), 18; O. B. Keeler, "Bobby Jones Completes the Cycle," American Golfer, 33 (July 1930), 12; Letter to Cyril Tolley, October 20, 1958, roll 5, RTJ; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 108.

xix. Jones crushed Britisher G. O. Watt 7 and 6 in the fifth round. New York Times, May 30, 1930, 14. May 31, 1930, 7; London Times, May 30, 1930; George Voigt, "The British Amateur," Golf Journal, 25 (March 1972), 12-3; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 128-9; Gordin, "Robert Tyre Jones, Jr.," 125; Richard Miller, Triumphant Journey: The Saga of Bobby Jones and the Grand Slam of Golf (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980), 97-108.

xx. London Observer, June 1, 1930; London Times, June 2, 1930; Francis Ouimet, A Game of Golf: A Book of Reminiscence (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932), 212-30.

xxi. "Bobby Jones on His Victory," Golf Monthly, 20 (June 1930), 29; Herbert W. Wind, "The Grand Slam," in Robert Trent Jones, ed., Great Golf Stories, (N.Y.: Galahad Books, 1987), 118-26; New York Times, June 1, 1930, X, 4; "Mr. 'Bobby' Jones Wins the British Amateur," Golf Illustrated, 33 (July 1930), 16.

xxii. "Tribute to Jones," Professional Golfer of America, 11 (April 1931), 23.

xxiii. New York Times, June 2, 1930, 17; June 7, 1930.

xxiv. Jones, Golf Is My Game, 133.

xxv. For 1930 British Open, see London Times, June 18-21, 1930; New York Times, June 12, 1930, 19; June 18, 1930, 19; June 20, 1930, 26; "Incidents of the Open Championship," Golf Monthly, 20 (July 1930), 40; John G. Anderson, "British Golf, and American," American Golfer, 33 (September 1930), 62; Keeler, "The Battle at Hoylake," 56; Geoffrey Cousins and Tom Scott, A Century of Opens (London: Frederick Muller, 1971), 102-4; Miller, Triumphant Journey, 108-14.

xxvi. George Greenwood, "Mr. 'Bobby' Jones' Double Event," Golf Illustrated, 33 (August 1930), 54; New York Times, June 21, 1930, 12.

xxvii. Golf Monthly, 20 (July 1930), 60; New York Times, June 22, 1930, X, 1; June 28, 1930, 10.



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xxviii. New York Times, June 28, 1930, 10; June 30, 1930, 15; July 3, 1930, 1; New York World, July 3, 1930; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 143.

xxix. New York Times, June 28, 1930, 10; St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 4, 1930.

xxx. For pre-tournament coverage of the 1930 U.S. Open, I relied upon: St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 7-10, 1930; New York Times, June 27, 1930, 18; July 6, 1930, X, 5; July 8, 1930, 20; July 10, 1930, 21; Grantland Rice, "The Open Classic at Interlachen," American Golfer, 33 (July 1930), 27.

xxxi. St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 11, 13, 1930; New York Times, July 11, 1930, 13.

xxxii. St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 12, 1930; New York Times, September 18, 1950, 28; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 147; Letter to L. W. Robert, Jr., June 26, 1970, RTJ; Joe Turnesa, "The U.S. Open," Golf Journal, 25 (March 1972), 14; New York Times, September 5, 1955, 15.

xxxiii. Poor Mac Smith, as he had done in the British Open, posted the lowest final round of the event, a 70. St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 13, 1930; Chicago Tribune, July 13, 1930; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 152; O. B. Keeler, "Jones Writes More History," American Golfer, 33 (August 1930), 14; Lincoln Werden, "The U.S. Open at Interlachen," Golf Illustrated, 33 (August 1930), 12.

xxxiv. George Trevor, "A Very Human Golf Machine," Outlook and Independent, 155 (30 July 1930), 502; St. Paul Pioneer-Press, July 13, 1930; Grantland Rice, "Last Stop--Merion," American Golfer, 33 (August 1930), 11.

xxxv. For coverage of Jones's grand reception, I used the following material: Atlanta Constitution, July 15, 1930; "The Coronation of Emperor Jones," Literary Digest, 106 (2 August 1930), 32; New York Times, July 15, 1930, 17.

xxxvi. "Flyer Stops Train Before Flaming Span," newsclipping in BJB; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 154; Jones places the deadly East Lake storm in the summer of 1930, but it appears he related the same story to Paul Gallico in October 1929, so he must have recalled the date incorrectly in Golf Is My Game. See Paul Gallico, "Jones of Jonesville, Georgia," Liberty (26 October 1929), 52.

xxxvii. Atlanta Constitution, September 15-16, 1930; Philadelphia Inquirer, September 17, 1930.

xxxviii. Grantland Rice, "Ace of Clubs," Collier's, 86 (27 September 1930), 15; "From Merion to Merion," American Golfer, 33 (September 1930), 13.

xxxix. New York Times, September 18, 1930, 36; September 19, 1930, 30; Philadelphia

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Inquirer, September 20, 1930; Jess Sweetser, "The U.S. Amateur," Golf Journal, 25 (March 1972), 16.

xl. For coverage of the 1930 U.S. Amateur, see Philadelphia Inquirer, September 24-28, 1930; Atlanta Constitution, September 29, 1930; New York Times, September 26, 1930, 18; New York Herald-Tribune, September 28, 1930; "The U.S. Amateur Championship," Golf Illustrated, 34 (November 1930), 10; Grantland Rice, "Untrod Ground," American Golfer, 34 (November 1930), 7; Warren Brown, "That One Man Quartet," Golfers Magazine, 58 (November 1930), 21.

xli. Philadelphia Inquirer, September 28, 1930; New York Times, September 28, 1930, X, 1; "And Now Bobby Jones Plans to Golf for Pleasure," Literary Digest, 107, (11 October 1930), 42; Keeler, "Jones Writes More History," 14 and "Speaking of Retiring," American Golfer, 34 (November 1930), 12.

xlii. Atlanta Constitution, November 18, 1930; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 173; New York Herald-Tribune, November 18, 1930; George Sargent, "Sargent Explains Movie Innovation," Professional Golfer of America, 11 (October 1930), 12; Francis J. Powers, "Bobby Jones Retires From Competitive Golf," Golfers Magazine, 58 (December 1930), 7; Sidney Matthew, The Life and Times of Bobby Jones (Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, 1995), 200.

xliii. Philadelphia Inquirer, September 23, 1930; Jones, Golf Is My Game, 171-2.

xliv. Philadelphia Inquirer, September 30, 1930; Atlanta Constitution, September 28-30, 1930; New York Times, September 28, 1930, X, 1; September 30, 1930, 31.

xlv. London Observer, November 23, 1930; New York Times, October 1, 1930, 33; George Trevor, "'The Rest' versus Jones," Outlook and Independent, 155 (16 July 1930), 420.

xlvi. "Amateur or Professional?" Golf Monthly, 20 (December 1930), 17.

xlvi. New York Times, November 18, 1930, 24; New York Herald-Tribune, September 28, 1930.

xlviii. London Times, November 18-19, 1930; London Observer, November 23, 1930.

xlix. Francis J. Powers, "Bobby Jones Retires from Competitive Golf," Golfers Magazine, 58 (December 1930), 7; New York Times, November 19, 1930.

I. "Will Bobby Jones Come Back?" Literary Digest, 107 (6 December 1930), 43-8.