

# THE ROYAL LIVERPOOL GOLF CLUB

## A Great Tradition

By GUY B. FARRAR



**JOHN BALL:** *Open and Amateur Champion of 1890, taken in the year of his triumph.*

**A** HISTORY of Hoylake in 600 words!

More than half a century of historic golfing events! A picture crowded with world-famous golfers, with the beginnings of national championships and international contests, with the expansion of the Clubhouse from one room at the Royal Hotel to its present commodious size, and the continual improvement of the links from those original nine holes on the rabbit-infested racecourse of 1869.

In the centre of the canvas are John Ball and Harold Hilton, the greatest of British amateurs, winners of everything the game had to offer, and both pure products of Hoylake golf.

John with a style the envy and delight of all beholders—a style which won amateur championships over a period of 25 years.

Harold, the master shot player, the man who played difficult strokes for the pure joy of their successful accomplishment, the golfer with a whirlwind swing kept under perfect control by a master mind who delighted in unorthodox methods.

### SOME FAMOUS MEN.

Behind them stand Charles Hutchings, a grandfather who won the Amateur Championship; Jack Graham, whose genius never reaped its just reward; Charles Edward Dick, for many years a pillar of the Scottish National side; Froes Ellison, twice winner of the English championship; and, in the background, John Dun, the first of the Hoylake champions.

Other great names are there, members of the Royal Liverpool, but with closer associations at other famous clubs—A. F. Macfie, the first of the Amateur Champions; Horace Hutchinson, Captain in 1899; John Laidley;

Cyril Tolley, and the great Bobbie Jones himself.

Of the officials, perhaps Thomas Owen Potter, honorary secretary from 1882 to 1894, and inaugurator of the British Amateur Championship, is the most famous—a genial despot with a taste for claret and a grim determination to have his own way. Harold Janion (Jane), the organiser of many Hoylake championships and a power in the councils of the game, and dear old Jack Morris, faithful servant and valued friend for over 50 years.

In the remote past are grouped Muir Dowie, the first captain and founder of the Club; Colonel Kinnaird, whose influence made it "Royal"; and old John Ball, the Champion's father, who became a scratch golfer in 18 months, eventually winning a championship medal.

The old course has been the battle-ground

at Hoylake, or 1913 with John Henry Taylor defying a Hoylake gale? Hagen's lion-hearted finish in 1924, Bobbie Jones's triumph in 1930, or Alfred Padgham sinking a long putt on the last green—so typical of him—in this year of grace, 1936?

In all these sixty-seven years of change and advancement two things have remained changeless and unchanging.

First, the difficulty of contending with a Hoylake wind, the west wind that sweeps over the Dee Estuary making every shot so desperately difficult to play; and, secondly, those Hoylake shrimps whose popularity increases with the passing of years.

When the history of golf comes to be written, the pioneer work of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, the deeds of its world-famous golfers, and the many exciting and historic matches played on its links, will occupy many pages.



**THE FIRST TRIUMVIRATE:** *Ball, Hutchinson and Laidley (putting), all members of the Royal Liverpool Club in its early days.*

of so many historic matches that one hardly knows which to choose to fill our picture.

Shall it be in the early 'seventies, when young Tom Morris won the first professional tournament organised by the Club; or the end of the first Amateur Championship, when A. F. Macfie was carried shoulder high into the Royal Hotel, then the Clubhouse.

Can those compare with John Ball's first Hoylake triumph in the Amateur Championship of 1890, or his last but one in 1910, exactly 20 years later—golden years for Hoylake golf.

Shall we include an Open Championship? Hilton's in 1897, the first time it was played



**HAROLD HILTON:** *Shot player par excellence, winner of the first Amateur Championship held at Hoylake, in 1897.*