

EAGHC - 10th Annual Meeting



Valescure – Saint-Raphaël – France – Oct. 1st & 2nd, 2015

Golf de Valescure at Saint-Raphaël

Cécilia Lyon



Golf de Valescure

2

Part 1. History of the Golf club : the myths/legends explained

Part 2. Harry Colt and Golf de Valescure



A brief history from an aerial view

3



EAGHC 10th Annual Meeting – Valescure – Saint-Raphaël GC – France – 1 & 2 October 2015



Part 1 : The myths/legends explained

4

- Myth/Legend 1. 'The founders of Valescure came over from Cannes and found a lovely place to establish a golf course'
- Myth/Legend 2 : the date 1895
- Myth/Legend 3 : the club-house is the Norwegian pavillon of the 1900 Paris World Exhibition
- Myth/Legend 4 : Lord Ashcombe was the first president.



Myth / Legend N° 1

5

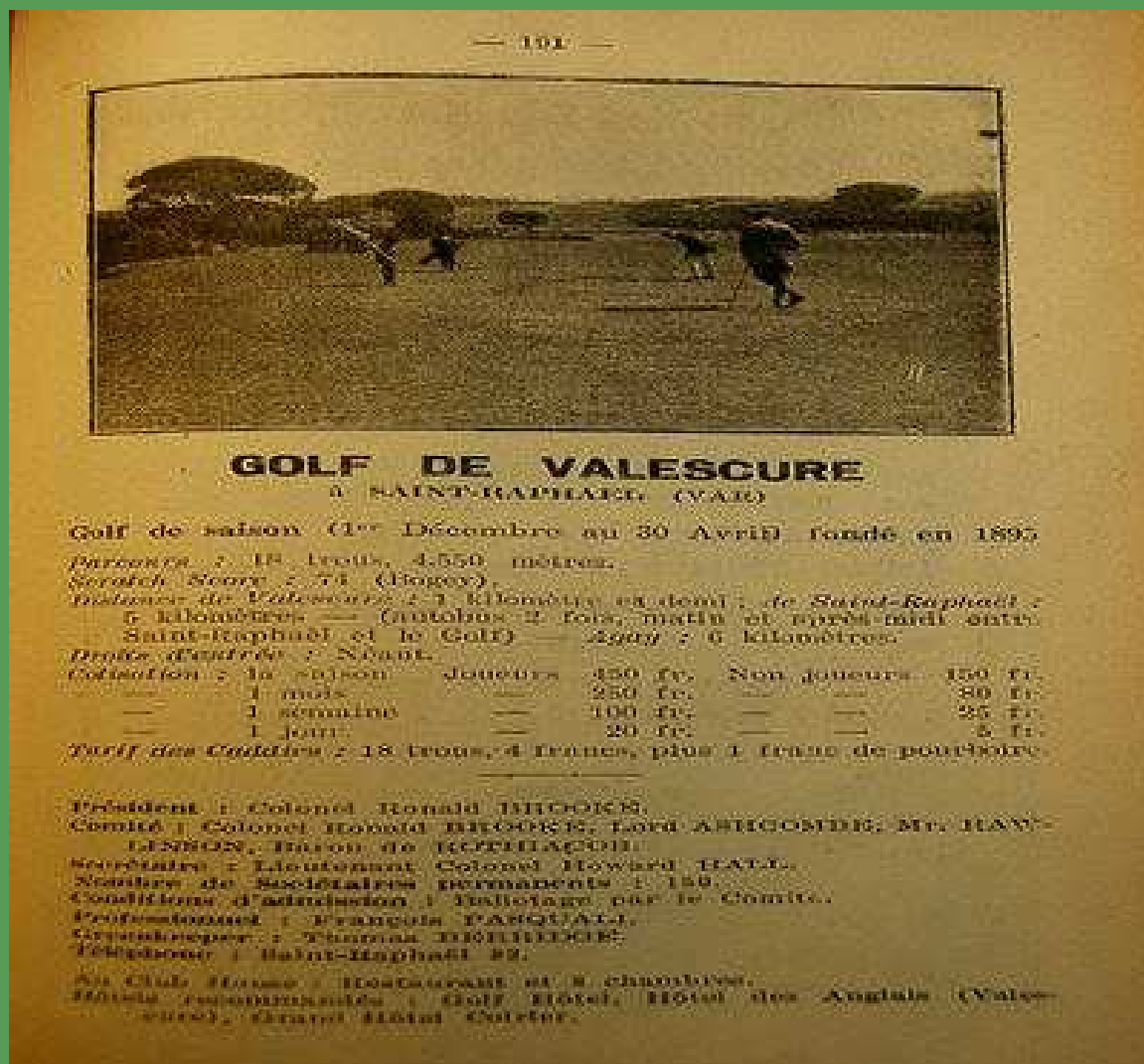
- 'The founders of the Golf Club came by horse from Cannes and found a lovely place to establish a golf course'.



Myth / Legend N° 2 : The date of creation of Golf de Valescure : 1895 ? 1899 ? 1900?

6

○ 1895 :



Myth / Legend 2: The date

7

○ 1900



Myth / Legend 2

8

○ 1899



EAGHC 10th Annual Meeting – Valescure – Saint-Raphaël GC – France – 1 & 2 October 2015



- 'To research the foundation of your club, you should look to confirm the following events :
 - The first committee meeting
 - The acquisition of land for the course
 - The construction and opening of the course
 - The building and opening of the clubhouse'



Myth / Legend N° 3 : origin of the clubhouse

10

'The clubhouse is the Norwegian Pavilion of the 1900 Paris World Exhibition, which had been dismantled after the exhibition, transported to and re-assembled at Valescure.'



Myth / Legend N° 3 : origin of the clubhouse

11

The clubhouse is a creation of the company Bolton and Paul and was assembled in Valescure under the supervision of an engineer of the Norwich company.

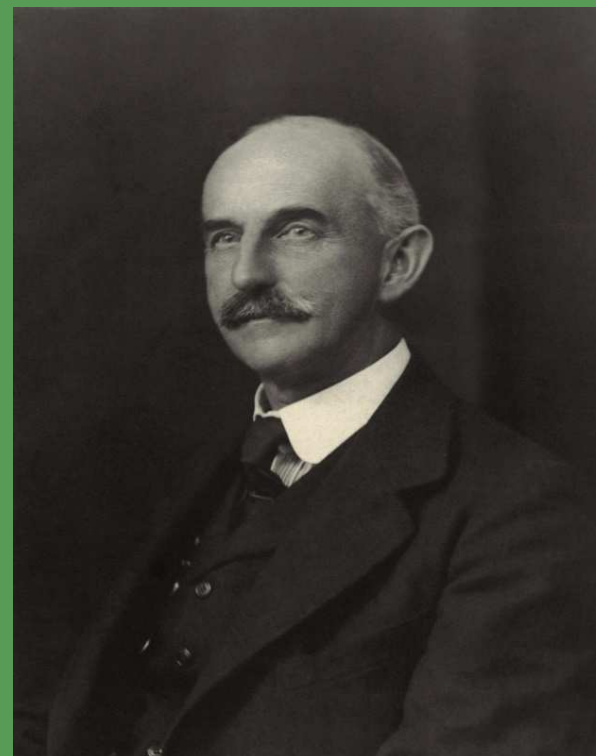
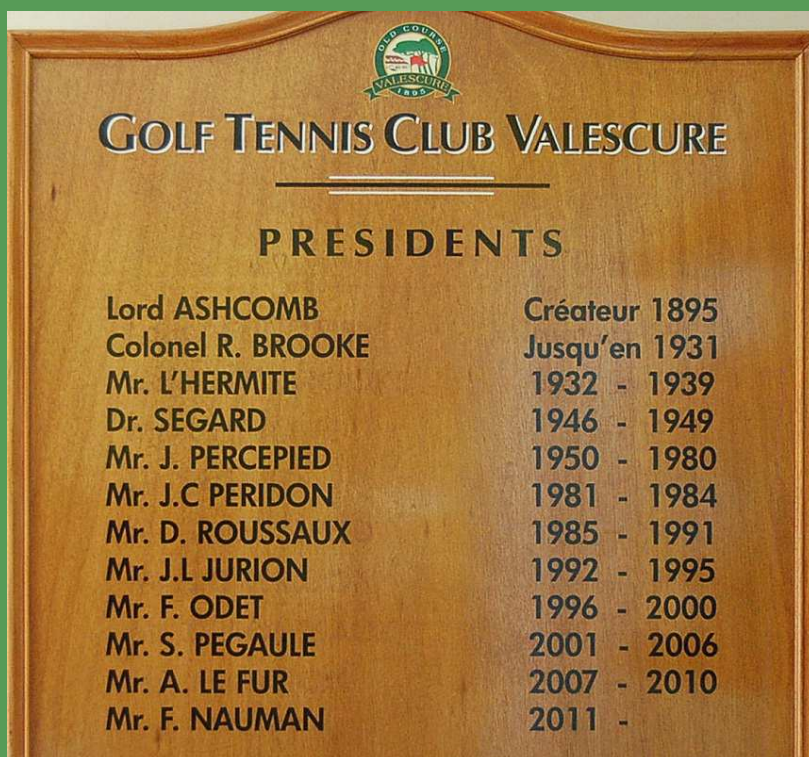


Myth / Legend N° 4 : 'Lord Ashcombe was the founder and first president of Valescure'

12

Lord Ashcombe (1867-1947)

Human memory versus documented archives



PART 2 : HARRY COLT (1869 -1951) AND GOLF DE VALESCURE

13

- Cambridge – law
- Hastings : solicitor
- Rye
- Sunningdale
- 1907-1908 : beginning of his career as golf course architect
- 1909 : Swinley Forest... and ... Valescure



Colt in France

14

- Sources : Fred Hawtree, various English publications (books and magazines) local French newspapers, books and websites of French golf clubs. All details of sources in my book.
- Type of work done : original design, remodelling, extension



Colt : worked on 17 golf courses in France

15

- 1908 : La Napoule, Le Touquet La Forêt, Biarritz
- 1909 : Valescure
- 1910 : Hendaye and Cabourg
- 1913 : Saint-Cloud (Vert)
- 1920 : Saint-Germain
- 1922 : Granville
- 1923 : Cannes-Mougins
- 1925 : Ormesson



- 1927 : Golf Bordelais
- 1928 : Chantaco
- 1928 : Vittel
- 1930 : Le Touquet La Mer
- 1930 : Hossegor
- 1931 : Saint-Cloud (Jaune)
- Note that the above lists include golf courses designed in collaboration with or by his partner Morrison. Note that some courses have since been remodeled and only few traces are left of Colt's original design



Colt and Valescure : remodeling of the existing 9-hole course and extension to 18 holes



- Colt came to Valescure in September 1909, commissioned by the then president, Amédée de Guerville.
- Implemented 12 holes and declared that Valescure would be soon equal to some of the best *inland* courses of England (makes comparisons with Sunningdale).
- Came back in February 1910 to complete the implementation of the 18 holes (coincided with the opening of the new clubhouse)



Description of Colt's first 12 holes

18

Riviera Golf.

15

good drive and approach, the green being some 290 yards away and guarded by a brook and the wood.

For the Second the tee is placed high up in the wood behind the first green and a good drive is required to clear a brook properly. The ball then rests on some beautiful natural turf and the green is placed rather round the corner, almost a dog-leg hole, length about 260 yards.

Then follows a short hole, about an iron shot unless there be a following wind. Length 137 yards.

The Fourth is a long hole, bogey 5, and is a very sporting hole, as is the next, not quite so long, but a stiffish climb after the second shot, lengths 320 each.

The Sixth is about a brassie over a ravine of 200 yards, and at the seventh, of 375 yards, a good drive and brassie may land the scratch player on the green, but three good shots will usually be required, especially if the wind be a bit contrary. The green for this hole is beautifully situated.

Then follow two shortish holes of 125 and 170 yards, a mashie and a cleek.

The Tenth tee is on the top of a hill, whence a superb view of the whole country is obtained, and the green lies some 225 yards away down in the hollow.



The Eleventh is a fine test of golf and a bogey five, length 350 yards.

The Twelfth is about 285 yards and the green lies by the club house.

The bunkers are for the most part natural : water courses, scrub and the like. There is nothing unfair about any of them, though naturally they all exact their penalty more or less severe.

The greens are for the most part large, and though at present it is found necessary to sow each year, it is hoped that in time permanent greens will be obtained.

The course offers an attractive change to the coast links of the Riviera, most of which must from their situation plead guilty to the impeachment of being flat and to that extent uninteresting. Naturally from its altitude the air is always fresh and invigorating whilst the mountains protect it from the colder winds ; and the umbrella pines, a feature of the links, afford convenient shade.

The total length of the course, at present of twelve holes, is 3,060 yards.



What about the last 6 holes ?

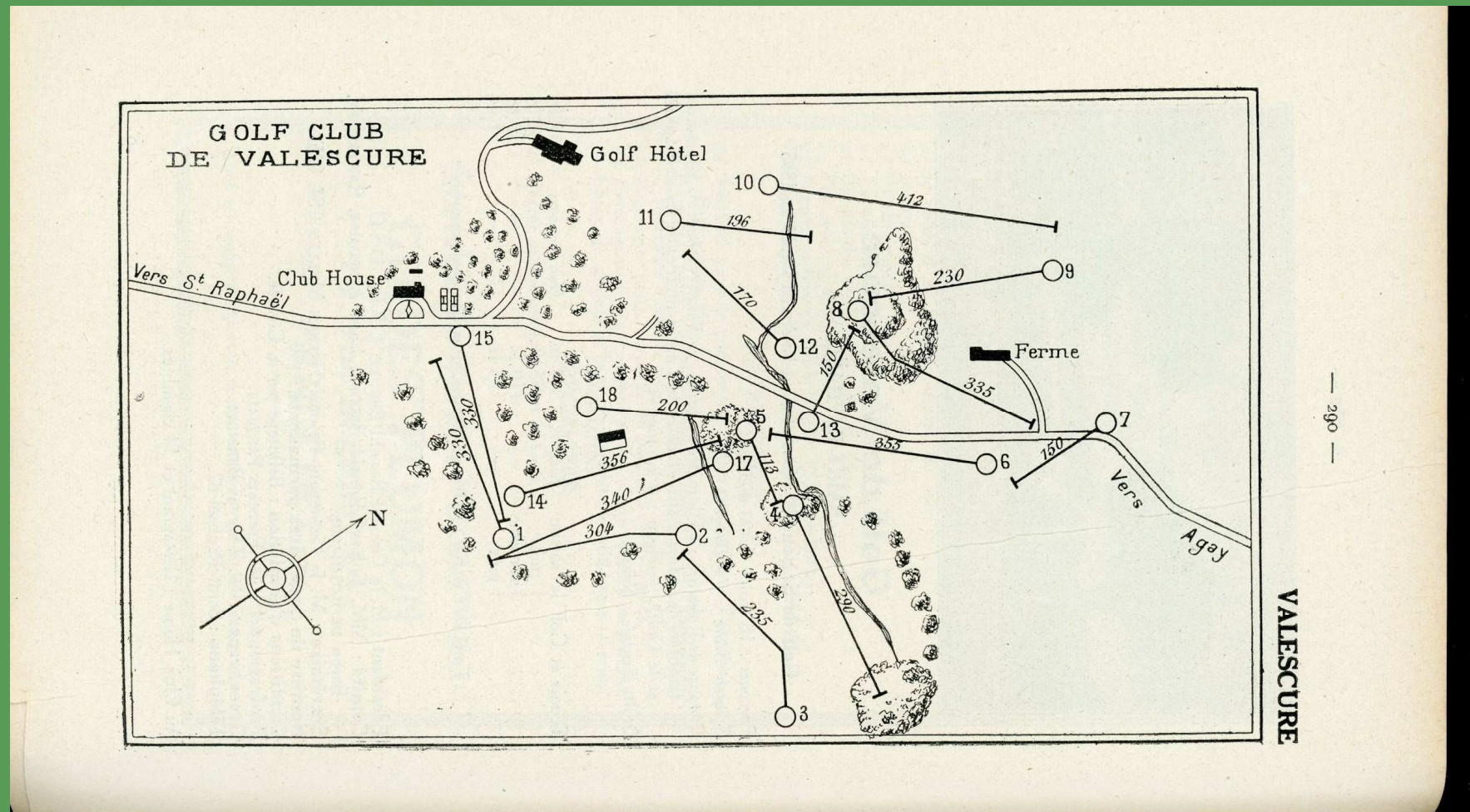
20

According to Saint-Raphaël Journal : 18 holes in
February 1912



Plan of Golf de Valescure in 1926

21



One question to the audience

22

Photo 1914 : Sewell, Colonel Brooke and Fowler



Can you help ?

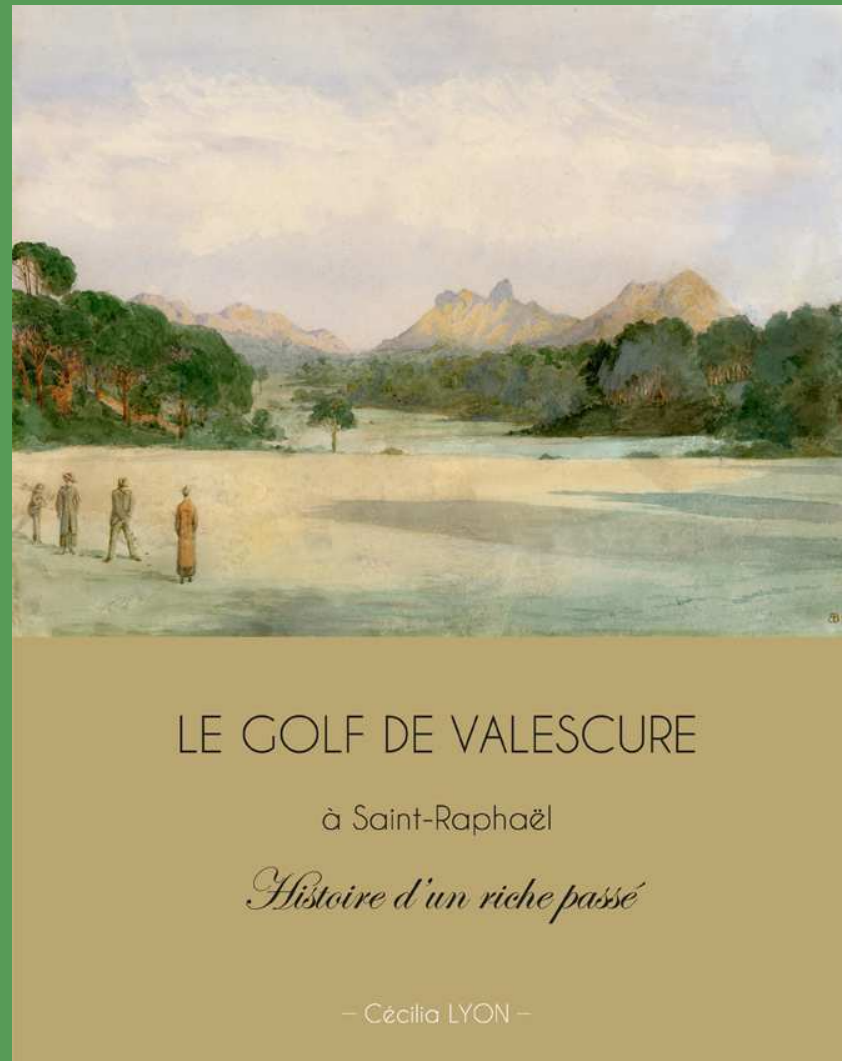
23

- 1914 : Fowler and Colonel Brooke on 5th hole



Thank you for your attention

24



EAGHC 10th Annual Meeting – Valescure – Saint-Raphaël GC – France – 1 & 2 October 2015



Thank you for your attention

