

superb outbursts when he dubbed the ball or sliced into the rough!" His "quick nerves" and "tremendous excitement" were said to prevent him from "approximating the score he felt he ought to make." Such injustice routinely produced a "grand volcanic flow of words ... in expressing his opinion of his own bad strokes."

Frost transferred those internal eruptions to the faces of his caddies in *The Golfer's Alphabet*. They are: dubious, disdainful, engaged, bemused, stoic, thoughtful. Originally



Topped.

crammed into two-and-a-half pages in the July, 1898 issue of Harper's New Monthly Magazine, the illustrations were quite small, about an inch in size, the details barely visible.

Enlarged as a book at 9-by-8¾", the exaggerated contortions, swings and mannerisms come alive. They convey the span of a golfer's existence – solemnity and folly – today as in the 1890s. To pick a favorite is pointless, but if we must, by way of example:



Uncertain Arithmetic.

M is that Moment of agony keen
When it's one for the Match on the

Finding a copy

What's listed as a "good" used copy of *The Golfer's Alphabet* can be had for as little as \$1.30. That's for the 2002 reprint. Prices for first editions run the gamut, from about \$150 to \$1,500. One experienced collector suggested \$400 as a ballpark figure, taking into account the likely abuse suffered by the cardboard cover or from having been a childhood plaything. One copy is out there for \$3,500; it includes a letter with a Frost golfing caricature. Oddly enough, *The Golficide*, which can be read online in its entirety, is also available, only in India, new, in hardcover, for the equivalent of about \$35.

very last green.

In addition to many articles, the pair also collaborated on *The Golfer's Calendar* (1901). In it, 12 Frost "pictures" amplify verses supplied by the esteemed artist's close friend and fellow "golfiac."



John D. Rockefeller and Henry Clay Folger at Senior Golf

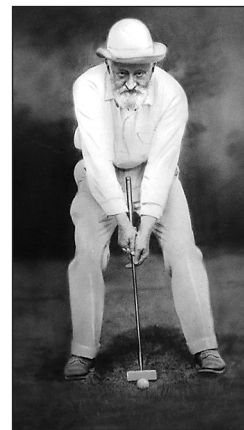
By Stephen H. Grant
GCS Member 7685

No one knows how many business deals have been clinched on the golf links. Consummate businessmen John D. Rockefeller (1839–1937) and Henry Clay Folger (1857–1930) played in order to forget their work, and to follow doctor's orders. Folger claimed his headaches disappeared due to golfing.

Standard Oil Company top executives, Rockefeller and Folger generally played Mondays at 10 a.m., often at the Apawamis

Club in Rye, N.Y. Both started at middle age. A semi-retired John D. tried to lure Folger, still working at 26 Broadway, by contacting an intermediary: "Please say to Mr. Folger, Mr. Ferris and I just played Mr. Murphy and Mr. English. We had a splendid game and beat them out of their boots." In 1922, from Ormond Beach, Fla, he addressed Folger directly: "I wish you were here. I played good golf this morning; no such golf, of course as you play, but I am practicing up, with the expectation of meeting you in the spring,

HENRY CLAY FOLGER with the croquet-style putter that he was fond of using.



PHOTO/PERMISSION OF THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY

unless you will be seduced into running down here for a short time, in which event I will try to prove to you what I now state, that I am making a little improvement." A final golfing message was penned to Folger in 1924, when Rockefeller was 85, "Looking forward to meeting you on the links at Lakewood [N.J.] next Wednesday morning."

Henry Folger played mostly in Glen Cove, Long Island at the Nassau Country Club, which he joined in 1899. He bought a house directly across the street, at the evocative address of 11 St. Andrews Lane. In 1903 he won the Adams Cup in a member handicap competition. Caddy Charles Brett later recalled that Mr. and Mrs. Folger would play nine holes every Saturday and Sunday morning before eight o'clock. Caddies liked him for his generosity; he would sign for 18 holes even when playing only nine. Weekend afternoons he would return alone for men's play of 18 holes.

In spring and summer, Henry and Emily Folger vacationed at the Homestead in Hot Springs, Va, where he played golf and she took the baths.

At 71, Folger won a prize in a senior tournament where he competed with 400 players. The *American Golfer* of Oct. 8, 1921 displayed a cover photo of Folger wielding a croquet-style Schenectady putter and exclaiming, "I've tried 'em all, and this is the best way."

The Folgers used their oil fortune to develop the finest collection of Shakespeare folios and quartos in the world. One day, Rockefeller chose the golf course to corner Folger and drive him into a cold sweat. As they were walking off the green, the titan remarked ever so softly, "Henry, I see from the papers that you just paid \$100,000 for a book." Folger swallowed hard. He abhorred publicity leveled at his book purchases, fearing a lack of discretion would translate immediately into a market price rise. Evasively, he responded with a chuckle, "Now, John! You know better than anybody else how newspapers exaggerate, especially about things like that. If you buy something for \$10,000, it becomes \$100,000 in print." After a long pause, Rockefeller declared, "Well, I'm glad to hear you say that, Henry. We – that is, my son and I and the board of directors – were disturbed. We wouldn't want



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EMILY FOLGER took shiny dimes Rockefeller had given her husband after good golf shots and set them in a silver watchband. The coins are dated 1920.

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PHOTO/COURTESY OF THE ROCKEFELLER ARCHIVE CENTER

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, left, poses with Scottish émigré touring pro Jimmy Thomson. Henry Folger also was a favorite Rockefeller golf partner. The photo dates from 1921.

to think that the president of one of our major companies would be the kind of man foolish enough to pay \$100,000 for a book!"

Rockefeller's legendary philanthropy, on a reduced scale, extended to the golf course. Emily Folger's nephew Edward J. Dimock recalled how as a child he once caught a glimpse of a pile of "Rockefeller dimes" in a top bureau drawer in the Folgers' bedroom. Dimock recounted, "It was crazy to me, Rockefeller's way of rewarding someone who did something extraordinary. Every time Uncle Henry would make a 16-foot putt or something, Mr. Rockefeller would reach into his pocket and hand him a bright shiny dime. How ironic, the richest man in the world giving out dimes for presents. It's a piece of American folklore."

Source: *Folger Shakespeare Library Archives*

Member Stephen H. Grant is a retired diplomat turned author. He is writing his second biography, that of Henry and Emily Folger. He published three history books based on his collection of vintage picture postcards of countries where he served the American government in Asia, Africa and Central America.