

Valuable Book Group, LLC
Specialists in Rare and Antiquarian Golf Books
Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

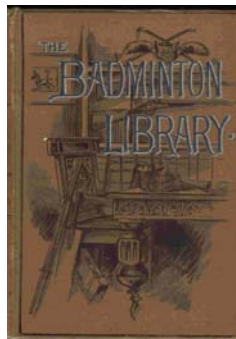
Golf: The Badminton Library by Horace Hutchinson

In this issue we review *Golf* by Horace Hutchinson written in 1890. The book was published by Longmans, Green in London as part of a larger series dedicated to sports and sporting related topics. The series is called *The Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes*. The series was published over thirty three unique titles between 1885 and 1902. The *Golf* title remains the most sought after of all the books in the series.

First, we think it's worth mentioning the odd title. Many people are confused because the word badminton is in the title. They often assume that the series is about the game played with a racket and a shuttlecock. It is not. The series takes its name from the Badminton estate in Gloucestershire in England. The editor for the entire series of the books was the Duke of Beaufort whose family home was (and still is) the Badminton estate. The game of badminton was actually invented on the estate in 1873 but has nothing to do with this series.

The volume on golf was written by Horace Hutchinson. Hutchinson was one of the best sports writers and editors of his era. Oxford educated, he was the first *Golf* magazine editor and a columnist for *London Country Life*. A great golfer in his own right he won the British Amateur Golf Championship in 1886 and 1887. He was a prolific writer of golf books. He was a close friend of the British Prime Minister A.J. Balfour and a friend of Old Tom Morris. In 1908, he was subsequently elected captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews. He is also famous for one of our favorite golf one liners: "If profanity had an influence on the flight of the ball, the game of golf would be played far better than it is."

The book was published in three distinct formats with the first edition being published in 1890. The standard trade edition is the most ubiquitous of the editions. It is Octavo in size meaning roughly 7 ½ inches by 5 ½ inches. It is hardcover with a brown pictorial cloth and black lettering with an illustrated cover as seen below.



The book was also published in a deluxe format. This binding is half-blue morocco with gilt titles to the spine and orange cloth boards. The Duke of Beaufort's coat of arms adorns the cover. This book is also Octavo in size and is in all other respects the same as the standard trade edition. Finally, the book was published in a large paper edition which was limited to 250 copies. This book is Quarto in size or roughly 9 ¾ by 8 inches. The large paper edition was printed on much higher quality paper and the illustrations and pictures are much sharper in quality as a result. Due to the way the illustrations are laid out the large paper edition contains 495 pages whereas the standard trade edition and deluxe editions contain only 463 pages. The large paper edition and deluxe cover are illustrated below.



Hutchinson published over fifteen golf related titles during his lifetime. We find it remarkable that given that the book is over one hundred years old, much of what Hutchinson wrote is still relevant today. For example, his chapters on *Hints on Match and Medal Play* and *On Nerve and Training* are still worth reading for their insight into the game. The book contains chapters on the history of the game and also reviews some famous golf courses in the British Isles. The book proved so popular that it was issued in eight additional editions. These are:

2 nd edition	June 1890
3 rd edition	February 1892
4 th edition	December 1893
5 th edition	January 1895
6 th edition	April 1898
6 th edition (cheaper re-issue)	July 1901
7 th edition	April 1902
8 th edition	March 1911

The way Longmans, Green issued the books creates some confusion regarding the edition numbers. Generally they issued new editions when there was sufficient demand for a new volume or when their stock ran down. However, in July 1901 they re-issued the entire series in a cheaper re-issue. There were no editorial changes to the book, they were simply re-issued at a cheaper price. The quality of the binding and paper were the same as the other editions. It is also important to note that the large paper format was only issued once in 1890 and did not have subsequent editions. The deluxe format was often issued in tandem with the standard trade editions indicated above, but not in all cases.

When purchasing or collecting these volumes it is important to make sure you are getting the correct edition. Since the first and second editions were both published in 1890, pay close attention to make sure you are getting the desired edition. Longmans, Green custom was to print the edition number on the title page in all but the first editions. Thus, in the absence of the 1890 volume stating "Second Edition" it is a first.

The first, second and third editions have the same editorial content. The book was revised in 1893 and then again in 1895 to keep up with changes in the game. The last editorial changes were made in 1902 which is the first time the Haskell Ball is mentioned.

The most sought after title of the *Golf* editions by collectors are the first editions, with the large paper version being the most prized. In terms of volume scarcity, the edition published in 1911 was issued in only 500 copies and is therefore relatively difficult to come by. Lastly, the last two editions (1902 and 1911) were issued with dust jackets. The dust jackets are extremely rare. They are "Amazon Orange" in color and they mirror the design illustration on the front of the standard trade edition.

There are also editions of the book that were co-published by Little, Brown in Boston jointly with Longmans, Green. These were for distribution in the American market. They were published only in 1890. In general, U.S. editions of books first published in the U.K. are generally of lesser value than the original U.K. edition. However, the edition co-published with Little, Brown in the United States is collectable since arguably it represents the first time a book was published in the U.S. on the game of golf. James P. Lee's *Golf in America* is generally believed to be the first golf book published in the U.S., published in 1895. However, it can be argued that the Little, Brown editions of the *Badminton Golf* title published in Boston in 1890 technically represents the first golf book published in the U.S. There is not universal agreement on this point but there are a variety of collectors who view items in different ways.

What cannot be disputed, however, is the quality of these books. We soundly agree with the patriarch of golf book collecting, Joseph Murdoch, who refers to the *Badminton Library's Golf* book as "one of the great books of the sport and deserves an honored spot in every golf library."

The *Badminton Library Golf* book was also printed in a facsimile reprint edition in 1987 by Ashford Press. For a collector who finds the several hundred dollars it typically costs for one of the original volumes too pricey, this newer edition is a good alternative.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or receive a copy of our catalog please contact us at valuable-book@comcast.net. Thank you for you continued support.