

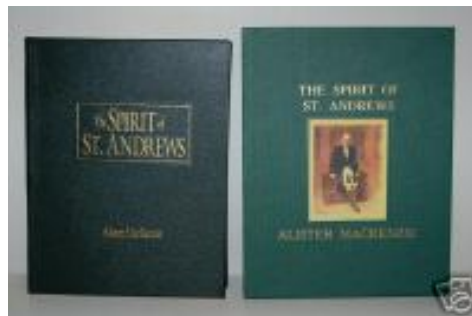
Valuable Book Group, LLC
Specialists in Rare and Antiquarian Golf Books
Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

The Spirit of St. Andrews by Dr. Alister MacKenzie

What do Ben Crenshaw and Gary Player have in common? Aside from having won the Masters multiple times each, when we asked each of them what golf books have had the most influence on them they both mentioned *The Spirit of St. Andrews* by Dr. Alister MacKenzie. Sometimes we're a little slow on the uptake, but this caught our attention and it's now time to give this great book its due.

In 1946 Muhammed edh-Dhib stumbled upon the Dead Sea Scrolls in a cave in the Middle East. The scrolls were placed there thousands of years before and the discovery was quite historic. The golfing equivalent of finding the Dead Sea Scrolls? How about Raymond Haddock, an insurance agent from Boulder, Colorado finding a manuscript from a book written by Alister MacKenzie but lost for over 60 years. Well, that's what happened. There it was, sitting in the bottom drawer of an old desk. Admittedly, it wasn't just any desk. Haddock is the grandson of MacKenzie's second wife Hilda. Haddock's father transcribed the book for Alister MacKenzie in the early 1930s soon after traveling from the UK to join his mother Hilda and Alister at Pasatiempo, where they were living.

Haddock discovered the carbon typescript (typed on carbon paper) in a desk he inherited from his father, who had an office at Pasatiempo Golf Club in Santa Cruz, California. Mackenzie designed Pasatiempo and used to live off the sixth fairway, and when he died he asked that his ashes be spread over the course.



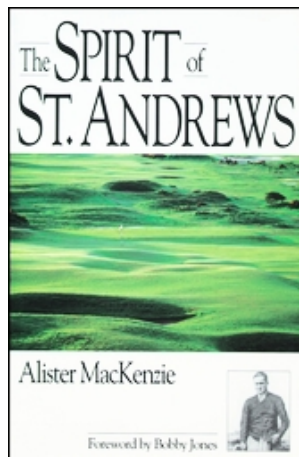
The leather bound, slipcased limited edition

The details of the story as told in a *Sports Illustrated* article on the discovery, published in March 1995. Haddock says, "I stumbled upon it. I came across a package of pages which I had understood to be notes for a book on camouflage that MacKenzie had been working on when he died." Instead, the package contained seven chapters of the great man declaiming on golf courses and golf—some of it echoing his classic 1920 volume, *Golf Architecture*, his only other book, but much of it fresh, including a delirious final chapter in which the

former British Army surgeon and Boer War veteran rails against "Bolshevism" and prescribes golf as the tonic for world peace.”

There were two versions of the book published in 1995 by Sleeping Bear Press: a leather bound limited edition of 1,500 which was produced with a clamshell case (Donovan & Jerris M3010). This version of the book has 324 pages and includes a lot of what would be considered technical, ie, advice for greenskeepers and architects. The standard trade edition (Donovan & Jerris M2980) does not contain these passages and is considerably shorter at 268 pages. The limited edition is larger (8 ½ x 11 inches) than the standard trade edition (6 x 9 inches). Bobby Jones wrote the foreword for the book, also during the 1930s, and this was also the first time this text was published as well.

The book is full of Mackenzie wisdom. I have always wondered where the oft repeated truism about Pine Valley was started and Mackenzie gives some insight, “Walter Travis was the best player of his day, yet he could not break 100 at Pine Valley.” He also devotes considerable space to the many armchair architects among us and understands that we all have a strong point of view. Speaking of the average golfer praising or criticizing a hole, “When he plays it successfully, it is everything that is good, and when he plays it unsuccessfully, it is everything that is bad.”



The standard trade edition

He was also not shy about taking on his fellow architects. About the James Braid designed Kings course at Gleneagles he had this to say, “It is almost devoid of strategy, interest, excitement and thrills.” And in case you missed his original point, “There is no heated discussions as to the unfairness of the holes because there is nothing to discuss.”

The book does feel like it was written in a different era, one dominated by match play, which will hopefully someday return so we can all play faster. “Nine out of ten games on most good courses are played in matches and not for medals. The true test of a hole, then, is its value in match play.”

It is no wonder so many learned people in the sport admire the book, as it contains much wisdom from one of the greatest golf course architects who ever lived.