



North Shore Golf Clubs



Northwestern, County Controlled Golf Course

Public Links in Preserve Is Popular

Charles Speed Who Built
the Club Laments Action
Which Took It Away
From Him

This is the last article of a series describing the fine golf clubs of the north shore. It tells of how the County took over the Northwestern course in the Forest Preserve.

By RAY C. PEARSON

JUST one more story of golf success on the north shore is tabulated when one writes of Northwestern, that course which winds through the scenic Forest Preserve of Glenview. Northwestern is the property of the Cook County Board which seems to function very well in its control of golf, but the County hasn't always run this public golfing playground and the tale of how only a few years ago this club got going and prospered makes interesting reading. That, however, will be saved until later—after we have written something about the Northwestern of the present.

Everyone this writer has talked with imparts the information that this Forest Preserve course is a natural golf course and that means a whole lot. The wooded land, the creeks—natural hazards—make it just that. Northwestern's popularity is attested by the fact that on Saturdays and Sundays as many as four hundred and fifty golfers step up to the box office and buy tickets. On week days too, we are told the "attendance" has been very satisfactory.

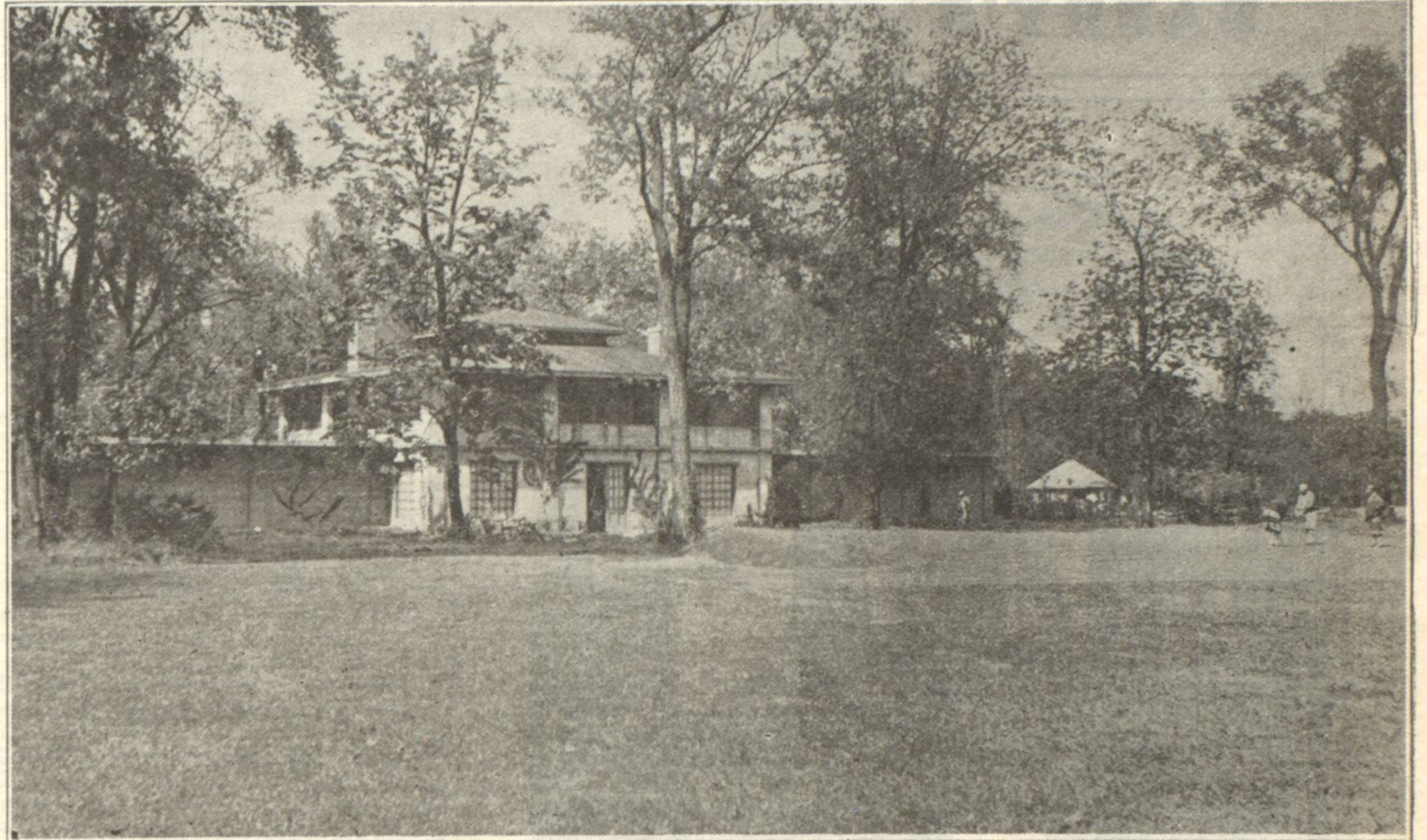
Work on Improvements

Just what this popularity means now and for the future will interest those who play Northwestern. The fees are to be used to make a better course. For instance we hear that a new sixteenth hole is just being finished to take the place of the one played for the last four years. It will be a fine "shot" of 140 yards.

The seventeenth also is to be changed to make a straight shooting hole of 410 yards. The present fourteenth, a sharp dog-leg, is to be removed in the general plans for improvement.

"There'll be a greatly improved Northwestern when this work is finished for play next season," one official says.

"Chick" Evans, who knows his niblick as he often has proved and who recently was runner-up to the famous Bobby Jones at Minnekadha, is the controlling force at Northwestern. Evans has the title of County Golf architect. But the active person at



THE PICTURES: The Northwestern clubhouse in Glenview Forest Preserve (top); at the eleventh, a water hole (below).

Northwestern is Ted Long who is the greens keeper.

Reuter Is Professional

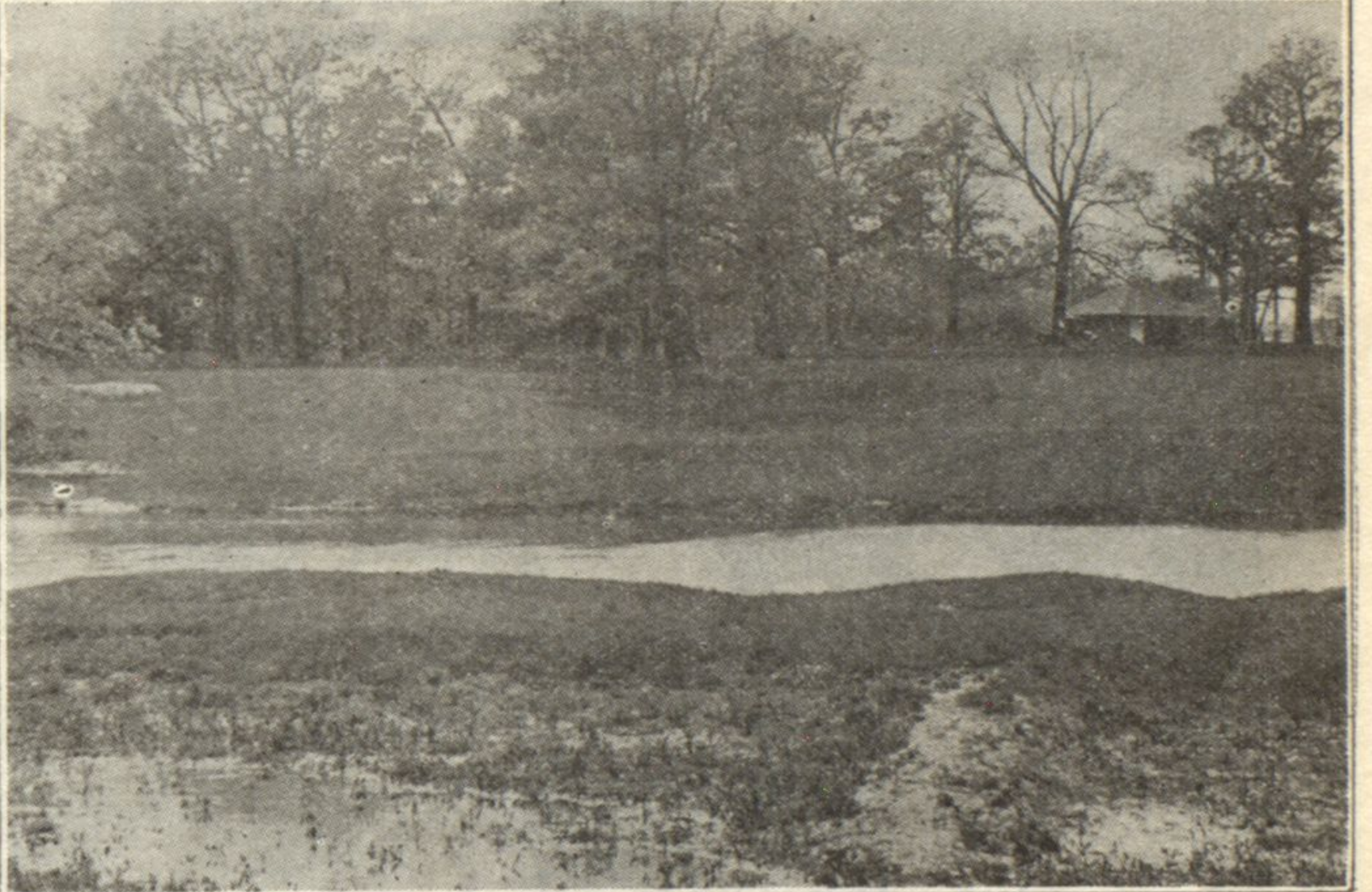
John Reuter, Jr., is the professional. Reuter is a fine golfer. He plays in nearly all of the big tournaments and when we saw him yesterday he was ripping off a few fancy drives down the fairway in preparation for the Western open to be held shortly at Olympia Field. Reuter says that many fine players shoot the county course, and I am told that Richard Hughes and Mrs. J. Milligan are the club champions. Incidentally he calls attention to the fact that Mrs. Zech shot an 86 a few days ago, which is dandy shooting at Northwestern, a 73 par for men, the present yardage being 6,460.

With the course changed next year the present yardage and par will go into the discard.

Speed Builds Course

Now for something about Northwestern's entry into north shore golf. That dates back to one day in 1922 when Charles Speed, an aggressive Evanston man who finds time for golf despite numerous and important business affairs, decided that a golf course in the Forest Preserve would be a fine thing. Mr. Speed was so sure of it that he went to the County board and told the board members what he wanted to do.

The plan met with the approval of the board. But who was to build the golf course? Mr. Speed said that would be taken care of. His first thought was to get together a band of men to finance the project, but that idea flivvered out for he discovered it a difficult task to find men who could "see" the future and who would put up their money. But Speed saw the



future, saw it so well that he quickly gave up the plan of enlisting others in the project and played a lone hand. He put up \$58,000 and built Northwestern.

Course Built in Year

But it should be mentioned here that when it came to signing the contract the County board inserted some hard and fast clauses in the papers. Briefly stated Speed had to get back the money he had invested within six years or be the loser. In other words if Speed failed to make the course the success he visualized, it would revert to the County. But that wasn't all. The contract specifically stated that Speed must have it ready for play within one year or the club would go to the County.

Lots of men would have thrown up the sponge when facing those exactions, but not Speed, who quickly proved his name was not a misnomer. He bucked the game, had the course ready for play within a year and now listen to this—he made the course pay for itself in three years plus five per-

cent. That means that the course was finished in 1923.

Netted \$26,000 last year

"Northwestern netted \$26,000 in 1926," said Mr. Speed. "So you see how popular the course was. It would have netted \$30,000 this year if I could have gone along with it."

That brings us up to a subject which has given Mr. Speed many unpleasant thoughts. The County stepped in last March and took the course away from the man who had built it. He says it was a cold kickout. But is Speed angry? Does he bear malice? Not a bit. He sat at his desk yesterday and spoke thusly:

"They hurt my feelings when they took the course away from me. My work out there was not finished. I wanted to finish it and make Northwestern one of the finest golf courses on the north shore. It would have been the only championship public course in the County. But the County spoiled those plans for me."

Then Mr. Speed continued pride—
(Continued on Page 38)