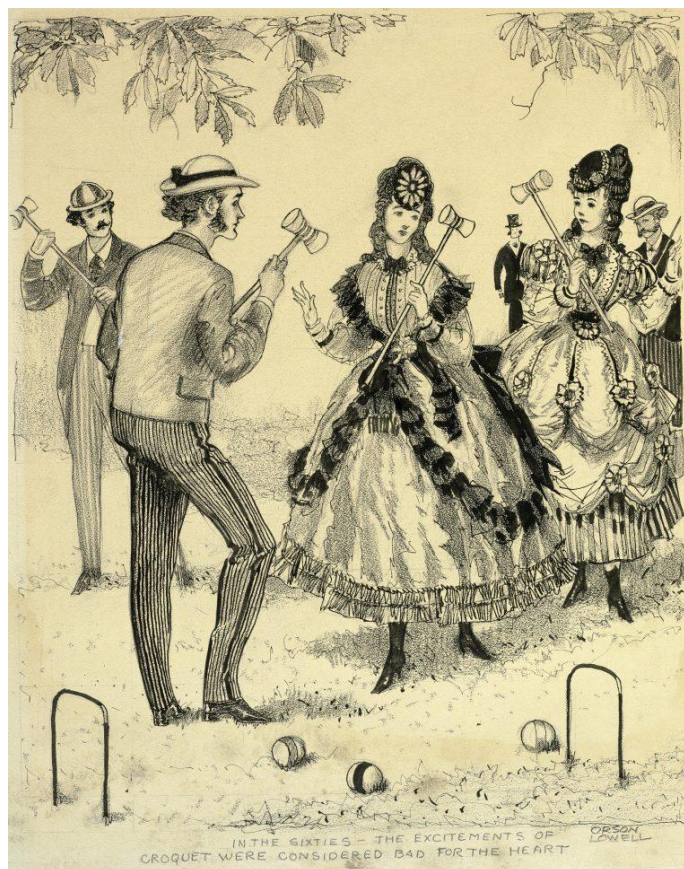


# THE EARLY HISTORY OF CROQUET IN TASMANIA

1860 TO 1925



Tony Walker

May, 2023

## **CONTENTS**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Early History of Croquet in Tasmania</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – Croquet Golf – a New Game</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Appendix 2 – Playing the Game</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Appendix 3 – Rule Changes in Croquet</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Appendix 4 – Tasmanian Croquet Champions</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Appendix 5 – Tasmanian Croquet Clubs</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>58</b>

## INTRODUCTION

For most of the nineteenth century, croquet was a fashionable English game played on the manicured lawns of the gentry.

It was a game patronised by royalty, from Queen Victoria to Princes of Monaco, and was frequently associated with courtship as it was a social pastime which could be enjoyed by male and female alike.

Like many other English customs, it was exported to Tasmania, and there were numerous private home croquet lawns around the state. Croquet parties were frequent, fashionable and popular.

The creation of the first public lawn, at the Northern Tasmanian Cricket Association grounds in Racecourse Crescent, Launceston, set off a period of rapid growth for the sport, with two clubs, Launceston and Iris, formed in 1903 and the River Club, an offshoot of the Launceston Bowling Club at the Depot grounds (later Royal Park), two years later.

The first club was formed in Hobart in 1903 when the Hobart Golf Course decided to add a croquet lawn and the Hobart Croquet Club was born. That lawn was apparently a rough affair and the game did not become popular in the south until the formation of the New Town Club in 1908.

There were also numerous country clubs by this time in towns like Longford, Campbell Town, Deloraine and Whitemore.

Several clubs were formed when bowling clubs decided to add a croquet lawn “for the ladies”. Women could not join bowling clubs at that time. In the early years the sport was dominated by women and, while men competed and occasionally prevailed, women made up the vast majority of croquet clubs’ membership. Many clubs dubbed themselves “Ladies’ Croquet Clubs” and did not accept male members.

One of the attractions for a Bowling Club to add a croquet lawn was that morning and afternoon teas for bowls events were invariably provided by “the ladies from the croquet club”.

The first State Championships were held in 1905 in Launceston. After 1912, the annual contest alternated between the north and south of the state.

In the first 25 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, no less than 36 croquet clubs are documented around Tasmania<sup>1</sup> and there were probably many more based on private lawns.

Prior to 1900, croquet had always been a game for the upper-class elites, patronised by royalty and played as it was on the lawns of great houses.

The introduction of clubs does not seem to have changed this demographic substantially – croquet was, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a genteel game for the gentry.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 5

The rise of lawn tennis had been a factor in the decline of croquet in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and this seems to be the case once again after 1920, with several documented cases of croquet lawns in sporting complexes being converted to tennis courts, as lawn tennis became the more fashionable game.

Certainly, the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century seems to have been the golden era for croquet in Tasmania from the point of view of popularity, participation and press coverage.

The game was a substantial element of the social fabric of Tasmania.



## THE EARLY HISTORY OF CROQUET IN TASMANIA – 1860 TO 1925      Tony Walker

The earliest form of croquet introduced into Tasmania was Croquet Troco or Lawn Billiards, advertised as a “very popular game” by J. Walch and Sons in Hobart in 1861<sup>2</sup>, and by J. J. Hudson in Launceston<sup>3</sup>.

Conventional croquet sets were also offered for sale and the game was an early version of today’s Association croquet. (See Appendix 1 for a full description).

The following year it seems to be gaining acceptance, as we read in the Mercury

*Whatever cynicism may have tainted our remarks hitherto, must all give way before the out-door view of the subject, and essentially before Croquet. Simple out-of-door sport, in which the sexes can combine with some equality of skill, must have a good effect in making our young ladies healthy and natural.*<sup>4</sup>



Croquet became a common and popular pursuit at fetes, picnics and other public occasions, frequently combined with archery. As it was a game where men and women could play on level terms, it quickly became associated with courtship and romance. As a Punch cartoon put it:

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<sup>2</sup> Mercury 25 Sept., 1861, p.3

<sup>3</sup> LauncestonExaminer 26 Oct., 1861, p.5

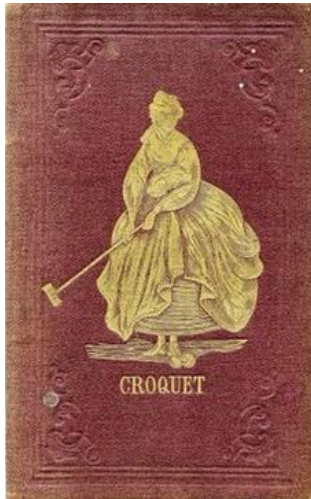
<sup>4</sup> Mercury, 4 Mar., 1862, p.3

*Young Ladies -' Going to make a flower bed there, Smithers? Why, it'll quite spoil our Croquet Ground!' Gardener-' Well, that's yer pa's orders, Miss! He'll have it laid out for 'orticulture, not for 'usbandry!*<sup>5</sup>

And, again from English Punch, with more than a touch of sarcasm:

*A new word might be introduced to express the whole art and mystery of croquet-croquetry. The objection is that people might confound it with coquetry, with which reprehensible diversion the game can have no possible connection.*<sup>6</sup>

A croquet lawn became a desirable feature of larger houses throughout Tasmania and croquet sets were imported and advertised by retailers. Locally made croquet bats and balls made of various woods, including myrtle, made by Mr Hooper of Hobart, were shown at the Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition of 1866/7.



In 1870 the All England Croquet Club at Wimbledon called a meeting of delegates from the 40 English croquet clubs to standardise the rules, which had previously varied from town to town. *The Game of Croquet, its Laws and Regulations with the New Laws of Croquet 1870* was published soon after by De la Rue and Co.

Both the Examiner<sup>7</sup> and the Mercury<sup>8</sup> ran extensive articles adapted from the English papers describing the new rules. The Mercury's description of the rule changes are reproduced in Appendix 3.

In 1871, J. Walch and Sons in Hobart were offering a variety of croquet sets of various sizes and qualities. The best of these cost £3/12s/6d and included

*35-in. handles, boxwood heads, 4½-in. x 2in., French polished, 24-in. starting pegs, 3¾-in. boxwood balls, starting posts and clips, numbered to match, strong painted arches, with extra centre arch and bell, extra mallet and drill for driving the arches, and book of rules, in strong box, with iron handles.*<sup>9</sup>

Handles were made of Canadian Rock Elm, "as decided by the Committee of Players to be the best".

The popularity of the game in Australia very much reflected its growing appeal in fashionable circles in England, including the royal family, where both Queen Victoria and her son (later King Edward VII) were keen players.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Launceston Examiner, 26 Nov., 1867 p.4

<sup>6</sup> Launceston Examiner, 23 Jul., 1867 p.3

<sup>7</sup> Launceston Examiner, 13 Oct, 1870, p.3

<sup>8</sup> Mercury 6 Feb. 1871, p.2

<sup>9</sup> Mercury 17 Oct., 1871, p.1

<sup>10</sup> Mercury, 16 Nov. 1906, p.8

Over the next 30 years in Tasmania, croquet was largely confined to picnics, fairs and croquet parties on home lawns. The game was challenged to some extent by the rising popularity of lawn tennis, as a croquet lawn could be easily adapted to tennis.

The game played was similar to today's Association Croquet, although a version called Croquet Golf was introduced in 1900 and described in the Daily Telegraph.<sup>11</sup>



The earliest photo of croquet in Tasmania is of this group at a croquet party at Bishops Court, near Fitzroy Gardens in Hobart, around 1880.

The game's popularity ebbed and flowed to the extent that the Examiner quotes the English Spectator:

*While a certain number of pastimes remain fairly constant in the hold which they exert over the affections of the British public, others are subject to considerable, or even astonishing, fluctuations. The curve of popularity, for example, described, by croquet in the last 30 years would be something like the back of a dromedary. Most people deemed it dead beyond redemption, when it was all the while cultivated by an esoteric coterie of enthusiasts, and within the last few years it has emerged from obscurity to such good purpose as to compete effectively with the very game which apparently, gave it its death-blow -lawn tennis.<sup>12</sup>*

Another early photo of croquet in Tasmania was published in the Weekly Courier on April 11, 1903, showing a Croquet party at Pontefore, the heritage listed property at 8-10 Adelaide Street, not 100 metres from the present East Launceston Croquet Club.

In 1903, at the Annual General Meeting of the Northern Tasmanian Cricket Association, it was reported that "arrangements had been made with a ladies' croquet club to grant them the



MATCH AT "PONTEFORE," APRIL 4.

<sup>11</sup> Daily Telegraph, 22 Aug., 1900, p.3. Reproduced in full at Appendix 2

<sup>12</sup> Launceston Examiner, 27 Aug., 1898, p.15



use of a piece of ground at the southern end of the enclosure for five years, free of charge, conditionally on their constructing a croquet lawn at their own expense. This has been done, and another attraction added to the association's property."<sup>13</sup> This original croquet lawn appears to have been on Racecourse Crescent, roughly where the car park for the Elphin Sports Centre is today.

The new lawn attracted favourable attention:

*There is another spot, however, that will soon vie with the bowling rinks for charm of surroundings, and with the tennis courts for charm of beauty. I refer to the croquet lawn which has been laid down at the southern end of the upper ground, and enclosed with wire fence and netting, inside which the floriculturist has been at work with excellent effect. After a sleep of something like 20 years the genus of croquet has like Rip van Winkle awakened and become the vogue.*<sup>14</sup>

The lawn had its first public showing with the opening of the new NTCA cricket pavilion on December 19, 1903, with the cricket ground, tennis courts, bowling and croquet grounds open to visitors.



The earliest photo of the croquet lawn was published in the Weekly Courier of December 26, 1903.

By this time there were two clubs using the lawn, with the Launceston Club joined by the Iris Club which began play on December 15.<sup>15</sup>

The first croquet club in Hobart opened at Sandy Bay in December, 1903, with the Mercury recording:

#### *HOBART GOLF LINKS*

*The croquet lawn is now opened, and a great many members have been enrolled. No doubt the Hobart links will be a very fashionable resort in the summer-a more ideal spot could not be found-and*

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<sup>13</sup> Daily Telegraph, 5 Oct., 1903, p.3

<sup>14</sup> Daily Telegraph, 31 Oct., 1903, p.6

<sup>15</sup> Examiner 15 Dec., 1903, p.7

*the community should thank Mr Walker, his indefatigable treasurer and committee, for providing a place where youth and beauty may meet and elderly folks may feel 'they are still in it.'*<sup>16</sup>

In 1904 the Launceston Bowling Club agreed to convert one of its old greens into a croquet lawn. Members were told that croquet was becoming a very popular game and that the Cricket Ground clubs were oversubscribed<sup>17</sup>. This was called the River Club (a Launceston Club already existing), which commenced operation the following year<sup>18</sup>.

Shortly afterwards the Mercury was reporting plans to construct a croquet lawn and tennis courts on the New Town showground in Hobart.<sup>19</sup>

By 1905, there were three clubs in Launceston – The Launceston, Iris and River Clubs and the Examiner was reporting

*CROQUET. The croquet world is very active just now. At the River Club courts a doubles handicap is in full swing, while at the Cricket Ground lawn a long-talked-of contest for supremacy between the Launceston and Iris clubs is to be decided on Saturday. The event of the croquet year, however, will be the open tournament, commencing on Wednesday next, in which both town and country players will compete. The tournament is to last for five days, The most important matches of course will be the single and double Tasmanian championships, to be played on Wednesday and Thursday. With fine weather the tournament should be a great success. No charge will be made for admission to the ground.*<sup>20</sup>

These first Tasmanian state championships were held from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 1905 at the Cricket Association lawns, with both local papers printing detailed results.

In the Singles Championship Semi Finals, Mrs Richardson (Iris) defeated Miss Rock (Launceston), and Mrs Conder (Launceston) defeated Mrs L Simson (Launceston). Mrs Conder defeated Mrs Richardson in the final to become the first Croquet Champion of Tasmania. In the Doubles final, Mrs Richardson and Miss J Burrowes (Iris) –defeated Mrs Simson and Miss E. Field (Launceston).

The Weekly Courier of March 4, 1905 published two pictures of Tasmanian Championship play.

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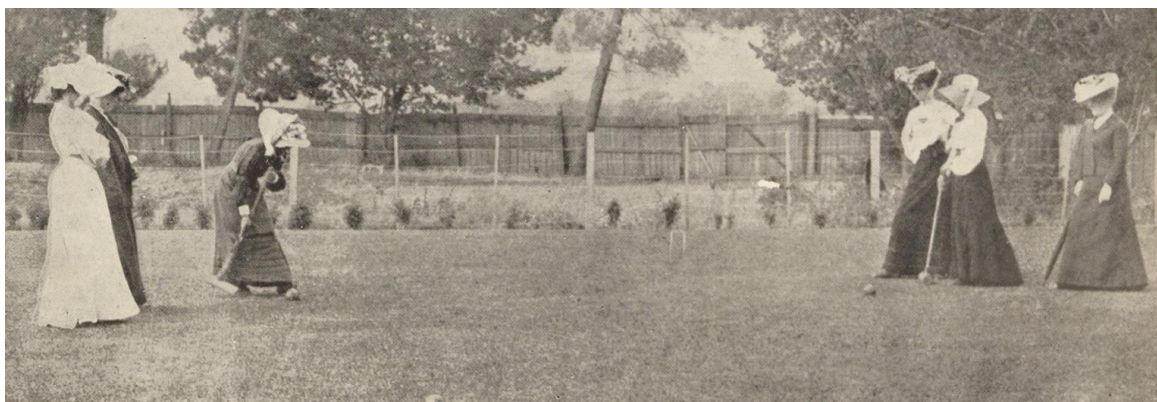
<sup>16</sup> Mercury, 23 Dec., 1903, p.6

<sup>17</sup> Daily Telegraph 3 Oct., 1904, p.1

<sup>18</sup> The new lawn was often described as “the Depot lawn”

<sup>19</sup> Mercury 28 Dec., 1904, p. 2

<sup>20</sup> Examiner, 17 Feb., 1905, p.3



With croquet now played in both Hobart<sup>21</sup> and Launceston, an inaugural north south match was arranged to coincide with the second State Championships in Launceston to be held in February, 1906.

#### **CROQUET NORTH v. SOUTH MATCH.**

*The southern team arrives from Hobart to-day to play the North v. South match which commences to-morrow. Considerable interest is felt in this event, as it is the first croquet match played between north and south. Both teams have been picked with care, and have been practising diligently, so that a close contest should ensue. The match will be played upon the Cricket Ground lawn, which will be thrown open to the public for the occasion, the lawn will also be open to all who desire to witness the playing of the second annual open Tasmanian tournament, which will commence as soon as the North and South match (which will occupy the whole of Thursday and Friday) is over. The first event will be the championship of Tasmania, which, will be played on Saturday. This, no doubt, will always cause a good deal of excitement, as naturally the northerners are anxious that it should not go south. It is at present held by Mrs Conder.<sup>22</sup>*

The Northern team had a decisive win in the north/south contest, and Miss J Burrowes (Iris) defeated last year's winner Mrs Conder (Launceston) for the Tasmanian Singles Championship. Miss Burrowes and Mrs Richardson (Iris) retained their doubles title, defeating Mrs Conder and Mrs Ernest Smith (Launceston).

<sup>21</sup> In Hobart mainly on private lawns

<sup>22</sup> Daily Telegraph 14 Feb., 1906, p.5

Both events attracted daily newspaper coverage with progressive results and the Weekly Courier of February 24, devoted a page to pictures of the inaugural north/south contest.

The Weekly Courier introduced a Croquet column by "Mallet" in February, 1905 and this provides a detailed commentary on croquet during the competition season (February to April) until March, 1909. Mallet was a colourful writer and obviously very knowledgeable about croquet. He paints a nice word picture of croquet at the time:

*The Cricket Ground lawns presented a pretty and animated scene on Saturday, when a large audience assembled to watch the playing-off of the mixed doubles. The velvet sward of the lawns and the gay flower borders surrounding them made a most becoming background to the dainty toilets of the ladies and the flannels of the men.*<sup>23</sup>

On March 25 he writes of the need for a fourth club in Launceston, the existing three being full and "having to continually reject applications." On April 8 he laments the lack of interstate competition where players could learn such techniques as the "jumping or hop shot" and the "click shot" where "the opponent's ball is sent to the extreme end of the lawn while his own ball remains where it is."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Weekly Courier, 1 Apr., 1905, p.13

<sup>24</sup> Weekly Courier, 8 Apr, 1905, p.14



**INAUGURAL NORTH V SOUTH CROQUET MATCH, 16/17 FEBRUARY, 1906**

**From the Weekly Courier, February 24, 1906**



**L. 1906 Northern Team Back Miss K Richardson, Miss L Burrowes Front Mrs Pardey, Mrs F Richardson, Miss I Collins**

**R. 1906 Southern Team Back Mrs G H Butler, Miss Leake, Front Mrs Charles Butler, Mrs Hayter**



**Miss K Richardson, Mrs Pardey, Mrs G Butler**



In 1906 there were several country clubs in action. The first country croquet club was formed in Longford.

#### CROQUET.

*An enthusiastic meeting was held in the pavilion of the Longford Tennis Club on Saturday to form a local croquet club. There were about 20 ladies and gentlemen present, and several apologies were received from others. It was decided to lease sufficient land adjoining the tennis courts for a full-sized croquet lawn.*<sup>25</sup>

This was soon followed by clubs at Whitemore, Deloraine and Campbell Town all operating in that year, and Westbury in 1908. The Examiner reported that there were two croquet clubs in Deloraine seeking to use the same lawn.<sup>26</sup> While women dominated the game, men had been part of the River Club since its inception. The Launceston and Iris Clubs did not accept male members. A Hobart competition attracted "22 entrants with several men among the number"<sup>27</sup> and, in a northern contest in December "six ladies of the Launceston club played six gentlemen belonging to the River club".<sup>28</sup> Writing in the Weekly Courier, "Mallet" remarks

*.. men are more and more keen about taking up the game, but as two out of the three clubs refuse to accept male members, they are thrown back on such unsatisfactory practice as can be found on private lawns. There would be no difficulty therefore in getting at least forty members if a fourth club were organized. It would certainly be far easier now, when the game has taken such immense hold than it was when the first club was arranged.... if a committee of men decided to start a fresh club and make a fresh lawn it would be a very easy task and would in no way interfere with the clubs already existing.*<sup>29</sup>

Croquet matches were often grand social occasions as illustrated by this article from the Daily Telegraph:

*An enjoyable time was spent at the Cricket Ground croquet lawns last Saturday afternoon, when the Iris and Launceston clubs entertained the Deloraine and Longford clubs (clubs having been recently formed at those two places), the secretaries, of the entertainment being Misses A. Miller and I. Collins. The competitions for the afternoon were a taking off and break competition. A string band discoursed sweet music, and afternoon tea was daintily served. For those wishing to look into the future a fortune teller was waiting, and a shooting gallery was also provided.*<sup>30</sup>

The 1907 the Tasmanian Championships were played in March on the Cricket Ground lawns. Miss I Collins defeated Miss Elsie Burrowes to take the Singles title, and Mrs Richardson and Miss Burrowes defeated Mrs Stackhouse and Miss Irvine in the doubles final.

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<sup>25</sup> Examiner 1 May, 1906, p.3

<sup>26</sup> Examiner, 6 Nov., 1906, p.6

<sup>27</sup> Mercury 29 May 1906, p.6

<sup>28</sup> Daily Telegraph 3 Dec., 1906, p.3

<sup>29</sup> Weekly Courier, 15 Apr., 1905, p.13

<sup>30</sup> Daily Telegraph, 20 Dec., 1906, p.6

In 1907, a new edition of the Laws of Croquet was published and J. Walch and Sons were advertising:

*CROQUET! CROQUET! THE LAWS OF CROQUET. The Official Edition, 1907; made and authorized by the Croquet Association. Sixpence.*

*SETS FOR 8 PLAYERS (in boxes), 35/-, £2/2/, £2/10/, £3/3/, £4/4/.*

*REGULATION SETS FOR 4 PLAYERS, £3/3/-, £4/4/-, £5, £5/10/-, £6/10/-*

*REGULATION MALLETS, Long Heads, 9/, 10/6, 12/6.*

*REGULATION BALLS, Sets of 4- Boxwood, 21s, 25s. Compound 25/- Excelite, 30/- .<sup>1</sup>*

In March, 1908, the first interstate matches were played on the Cricket Ground lawns in Launceston, with a four woman team arriving from Geelong on the *Loongana*. The hard fought contest went down to the final game which concluded in rather controversial circumstances:

*It seemed probable at one time that the last match would have to be drawn, owing to the darkness, in which case Tasmania would have won on the points, however, the visitors, preferring to continue the game under any circumstances, showed their superiority in the darkness by winning at close upon 8 o'clock, some time after the umpire had retired from the lawn in despair.<sup>31</sup>*

In the Weekly Courier, "Mallet" described it as a farce and a "grave error of judgement on the part of the management" as the latter part of the game was played "in such utter darkness that the hoops could not be seen."<sup>32</sup>

The Geelong visitors stayed on to compete successfully in the Tasmanian championships with Miss H. Austin (Geelong) defeating Miss K Richardson for the singles title and Miss Austin and Mrs Gatehouse defeating Miss K Richardson and Mrs Stackhouse in the doubles final. The Daily Telegraph remarked ruefully:

*A large number of people assembled at the Cricket Ground lawn yesterday to watch the playing of the finals of the single and double championships. As was anticipated, Geelong carried off both championships, to say nothing of the handicap doubles. It would have been expecting too much of human nature to ask that the win should be a popular one, but, notwithstanding, there seemed to be a general feeling that the victors had played a sporting game, and deserved their triumph.<sup>33</sup>*

The Northern championship was contested at the end of March and was won by Miss I Collins who had held the Tasmanian title before losing it to Geelong visitor Miss H Austin. Miss Collins defeated Miss K Richardson in the final.

In July, 1908 an ad appeared in the Mercury inviting ladies interested in forming a croquet club at New Town to attend a meeting.<sup>34</sup> A croquet club was formed and, after vigorous fundraising, a lawn was "levelled, sown with suitable grass seed, and fenced in" at the New Town Suburban Sports Ground, and was expected to be ready for play by November.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Examiner 4 Mar., 1908, p.2

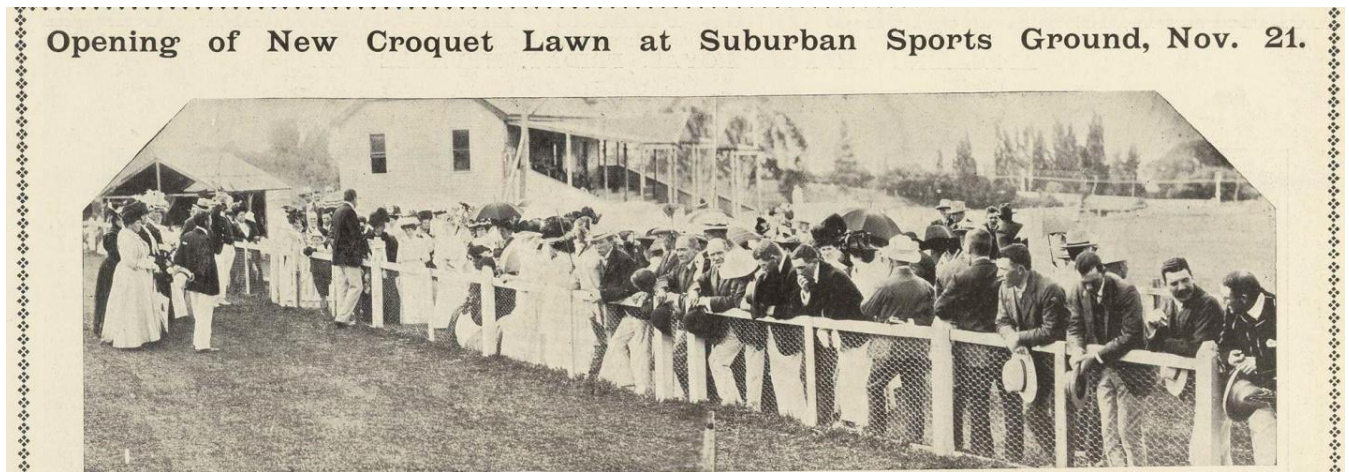
<sup>32</sup> Weekly Courier,

<sup>33</sup> Examiner 4 Mar., 1908, p.3

<sup>34</sup> Mercury 4 Jul., 1908, p.3

<sup>35</sup> Mercury 6 Oct., 1908, p.6

Both the Tasmanian Mail on November 26 and the Weekly Courier of December 6 provided a photographic record of the opening:



**Top: The official opening by the Attorney General, Mr W B Propsting**  
**Middle: First game , Mrs Propsting and members of the organizing committee**  
**Bottom: Afternoon tea, a game in progress**

The newly formed New Town club had already attracted such a large membership that it was decided that a second lawn was needed, and a number of garden fetes were held to raise the

necessary funds. It was hoped to have the second lawn ready by January.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately it was virtually now the only club in Hobart because of “that at the golf links (Hobart) having become almost defunct”.<sup>37</sup>

In September, 1908, the Sandy Bay Bowling Club reported that “Mr. Harold Watson had made a croquet lawn adjoining the green, nicely furnished with seats, large ferns, and quite picturesque, which his daughter had decided to set apart for the use of members' wives and daughters for two years.”<sup>38</sup>

The fifth annual Tasmanian championships were held at the Cricket Ground lawns in March, 1909 and the singles title went to a man for the first time, with Mr C Taylor defeating Miss N Rock. In the doubles final Mrs Pardey and Miss K Richardson defeated Miss I Collins and Mr L E Hall.

As men began to take up the game, there was some controversy that their ability to swing the mallet between their legs with their eyes directly over the ball may present an unfair advantage, as this style of swing was not possible for lady players with their voluminous skirts.

The Mercury reprinted an article from the English Outlook:

*Amongst gentlemen it seems probable that the popularity of the centre style of play as distinguished from the side stroke will continue to increase. There is a want of grace and elegance in the attitude of a man swinging a short mallet between his legs. It is certain nevertheless that the eye, being by this means brought directly over the line of aim and the swing regulated by the equal pressure of both wrists working together, the certainty of steady play is considerably increased, and mere elegance of style must yield to efficiency in execution. All the same, while ladies like Mrs. Beaton and others make such perfect use of their mallets in the side stroke, it is evident that centre play is not absolutely essential to first-class proficiency in the game.*<sup>39</sup>

Certainly croquet at this time was still dominated by women – many croquet clubs originated through bowling clubs (which did not accept female members) adding a croquet lawn “for the fairer sex”, and we can safely assume that the wives of bowlers would have been prime movers in this respect.

Although croquet was regarded as a game where both sexes could compete on an equal footing, men were still seen as having a natural advantage, as explained by “Mallet” in his Weekly Courier column.

*Croquet demands a good deal of physical endurance and many women (who compete in tournaments) will admit that they find the game more exhausting, owing to its length, than its great rival, lawn tennis. Men, on the contrary, feel this comparatively little..... the average man plays some sort of games requiring skill of eye and hand from his earliest boyhood. Woman does not. Finally, and most important of all, a man, partly from training and partly from temperament, does not develop the “croquet nerve” from which so many women suffer.....the effect of anxiety over a long period*

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<sup>36</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Weekly Courier, 4 Feb., 1909, p.8

<sup>38</sup> Daily Post, 27 Jul., 1908, p.7

<sup>39</sup> Mercury 10 Jun., 1909, p.8



*upon women not trained as men are to endure and conquer it from childhood. It is annoying for the weaker sex but, it is, to my thinking, quite natural.*<sup>40 41</sup>

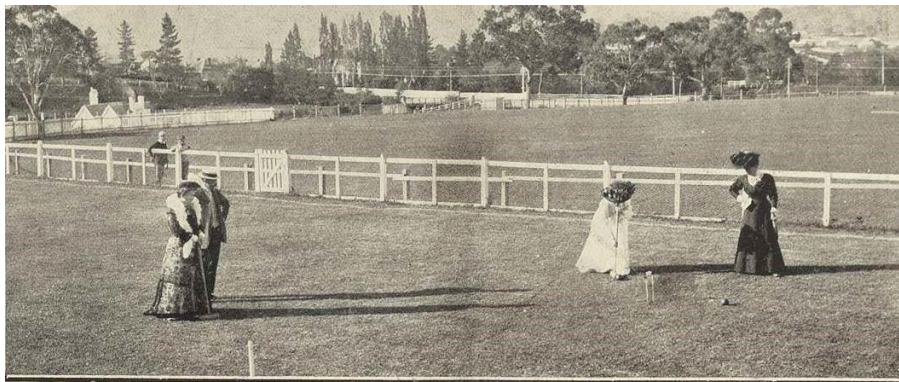
By this time, composition balls had largely taken over from wooden balls, particularly in tournament play, although they were prone to soften and not run true in very hot conditions.<sup>42</sup>

In Launceston, moves were afoot to create a bowling tennis and croquet facility in Invermay:

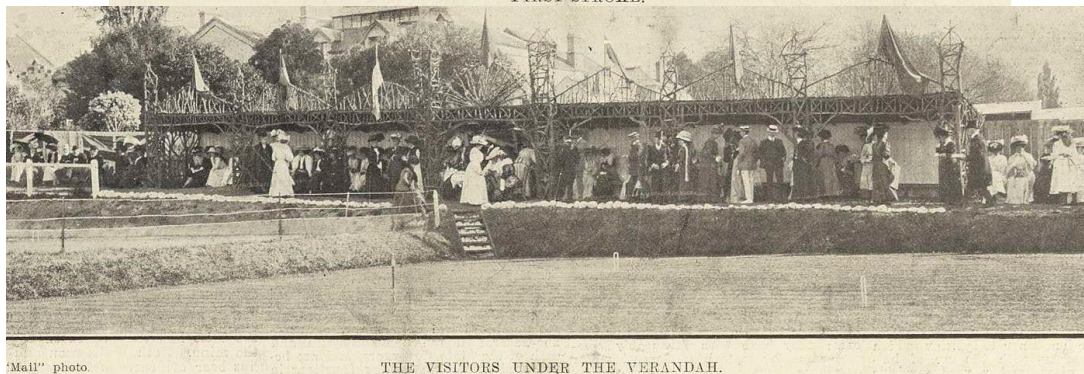
#### *INVERMAY BOWLING CLUB*

*Good progress is being made with the formation of the green for the newly formed Invermay club. The club has secured from the city council a piece of land in York Park, at the corner of Invermay road and Forster-street. The area is sufficient not only for all up-to-date green, but also for a couple of tennis courts and croquet. The tennis courts will run parallel with Invermay-road, while the croquet lawn will face on Forster-street. Adequate provision will be made for watering and draining purposes.*<sup>43</sup>

The New Town club invited Lady Barron, wife of the Governor Sir Henry Barron, to open their new lawn, pavilion and the croquet season in October, 1909.



LADY BARRON, WHO PERFORMED THE OPENING CEREMONY, PLAYING FIRST STROKE.



'Mail' photo.

THE VISITORS UNDER THE VERANDAH.

44

<sup>40</sup> Weekly Courier, 18 Feb., 1909, p.13

<sup>41</sup> There was at the time an unwritten law that two men should not play together in Open Doubles tournaments

<sup>42</sup> Mercury, 10 Jun., 1909, p.8

<sup>43</sup> Examiner, 31 Jul., 1909, p.8

<sup>44</sup> Tasmanian Mail, 16 Oct., 1909

By this time, the wife of the Attorney General, Mrs W B Propsting had become President of the Club, and membership had reached 75. Since the inception of the club in 1908 the sum of £145 had been expended, £65 of which came from fees from members, and the remainder raised by croquet and euchre tournaments, etc.<sup>45</sup>

The State Championships of 1910 were held on the New Town lawns in March. Winner of the Tasmanian Singles Championship was Mr W S Johnstone who defeated Mrs Stackhouse. In the doubles final, Mr Johnstone and Miss N Rock defeated Mrs Pardy and Miss K Richardson.<sup>46</sup>

In 1910, the Depot Grounds in Launceston (later Royal Park), were handed over to the Launceston Council and many improvements were implemented, including the expansion of the area for croquet at the Launceston Bowling Club, home lawn for the River Croquet Club.<sup>47</sup>

In December, 1910, a third club appears in Hobart, with a match between New Town and Beaulieu Clubs played at New Town, with two teams from each club. The Beaulieu Club operated on a lawn at the 1833 Beaulieu homestead in New Town, and continued to exist until at least 1915, but seems not to have engaged in inter club competition. There were probably several other private croquet lawns in Hobart as in March, 1909 the Weekly Courier correspondent reported "several members (of New Town) are contemplating making croquet lawns for the coming season."

In Launceston and surrounds there were several active clubs; Launceston, Iris, River, Campbell Town, Longford, Evandale, Deloraine and Westbury. There was also a croquet team from Boag's Brewery which was reported playing a match against Evandale at Evandale in February of 1911.<sup>48</sup>

The 1911 State Championships were held at the Cricket Ground lawns in March. In the first all male final, Mr R Gibson defeated last year's champion Mr W S Johnstone for the title and Mr Johnstone and Miss N Rock repeated their 1910 success in the doubles championship, again defeating Mrs Pardy and Miss K Richardson.<sup>49</sup>

In April 1911, another new club opened at Parattah in the Midlands with more than 40 members. Opening the new lawn Mr. S Simpson congratulated the club's founder, Mrs Knox and started the first match between the single and married ladies of the club.

The first croquet club in the north west of the state was initiated by the Burnie Bowling Club which, in June, 1911, applied for "a strip of land on the eastern end of the western park for the purpose of making a croquet lawn." This was granted at an annual rental of 10s. 6d.. The new lawn was opened in December:

*The President of the Bowling Club, in making the opening speech, stated that the lawn was an asset to the town and he trusted the members of the club would spend many pleasant hours on it.*

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<sup>45</sup> Mercury 1 Oct., 1909, p.7

<sup>46</sup> Daily Telegraph 10 Mar., 1910, p.8

<sup>47</sup> Examiner 2 Sep., 1910, p.4

<sup>48</sup> Daily Telegraph, 11 Feb., 1911, p.4

<sup>49</sup> Daily Telegraph, 20 Mar., 1911, p.6



*Afternoon tea was served after which the lawn was played on and declared to be in very good order. A commodious new building, erected by the bowlers for the use of both clubs is now completed.*

*With the inducement offered by the lawn to play croquet, it should become a very popular pastime for the ladies of Burnie.<sup>50</sup>*

At the Campbell Town club's Annual Meeting it was reported that membership had grown to more than 40 and a club house had been built at a cost of £35. The meeting thanked Miss Turnbull for the continued use of her lawn.

The New Town Club was by now well established and the Tasmanian Mail recorded the opening of their 1911 season.<sup>51</sup>



<sup>50</sup> Daily Telegraph, 22 Dec., 1911, p.6

<sup>51</sup> Tasmanian Mail, 19 Oct., 1911

At the end of 1911, a new club was formed in Launceston. The Tasmanian Croquet Club was the state's first all male club, and included among its members former state champion Mr W S Johnstone and a number of other prominent male players. The Examiner's *Mallet* commented:

*The formation of the Tasmanian Croquet Club has given the game quite a lift in the north, the result being that not only is the form of the individual players considerably improved, but a greater interest is now centred on the game.*<sup>52</sup>

The game had now reached a stage where it was felt that a Croquet Association should be formed and clubs were canvassed for their opinion. At the Tasmanian Croquet Club's first Annual meeting it was proposed that "the northern association to comprise clubs north of and including Parattah, comprising the following: - Launceston, King's Park, River, Tasmanian, Campbell Town, Longford, and Parattah. The southern association will take in all clubs south of Parattah."<sup>53</sup> The Iris club appears to have disappeared by this time.

By this time A W Birchall and Sons was advertising croquet mallets made from Tasmanian wood "much superior to imported ones" and made to any weight, together with Excellite croquet balls.<sup>54</sup>

At the 1912 State Championships held in March at the Depot (River) and Cricket Club lawns, Mr J Birchall defeated Miss Falkiner for the singles title and the doubles championship went to Mrs Stackhouse and Mr R Gibson, who defeated Mr W Johnstone and Miss N Rock in the final. The Weekly Courier (28 March, 1912) published pictorial coverage of the event. The top picture is from the Tasmanian Mail (21 March, 1912) at the Championships of Southern Tasmania held at New Town the week before the State Championships.

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<sup>52</sup> Examiner 4 Mar., 1912, p.3

<sup>53</sup> Examiner 1 Nov., 1912, p.2

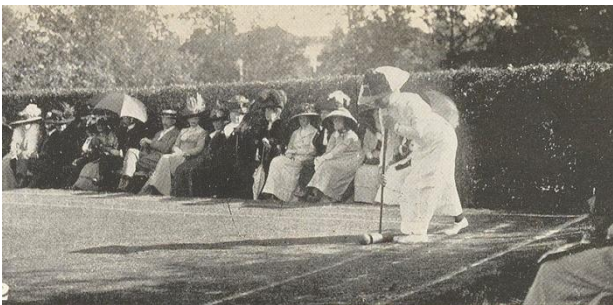
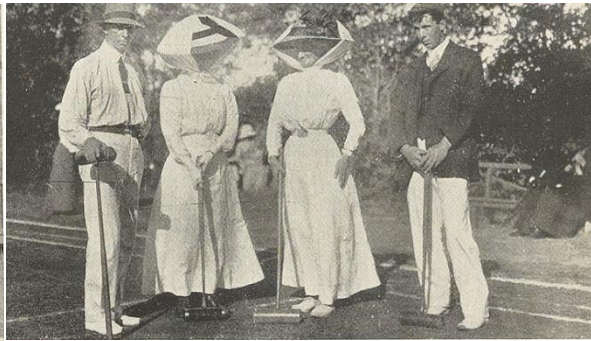
<sup>54</sup> Examiner 10 Mar., 1911, p.4



TASMANIAN SOUTHERN AND STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, 1912



GROUP OF CROQUET PLAYERS ON THE LAWN AT NEW TOWN ON THE OCCASION OF THE STATE MATCHES.



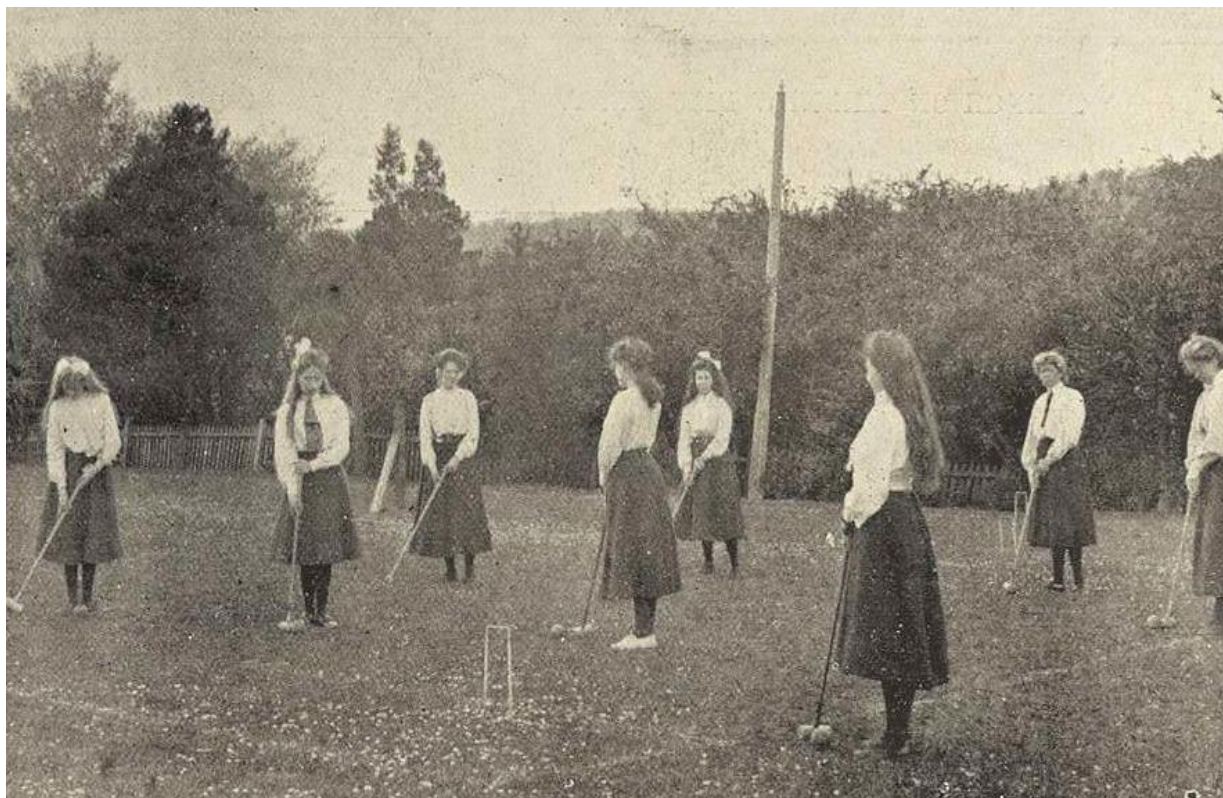
**Top: Singles finalists Mr J Birchall and Miss K Falkiner; Doubles finalists Mr W S Johnstone, Miss N Rock, Mrs Stackhouse and Mr Rod Gibson.**

**Bottom: Spectators watching the play; Miss Rock plays a stroke.**

The game seems to have had a much younger player profile than today and was played in many girls' schools including Launceston's Broadland House. There is mention of several country schools with



their own croquet lawn. The photo from the *Tasmanian Mail*, May 29, 1909 shows play at the Wahroonga Girls' School in Hobart.



The season openings at each club were very special occasions and frequently covered by the illustrated journals.

A large crowd attended the opening of the Burnie Croquet Club season in October, 1912.<sup>55</sup>



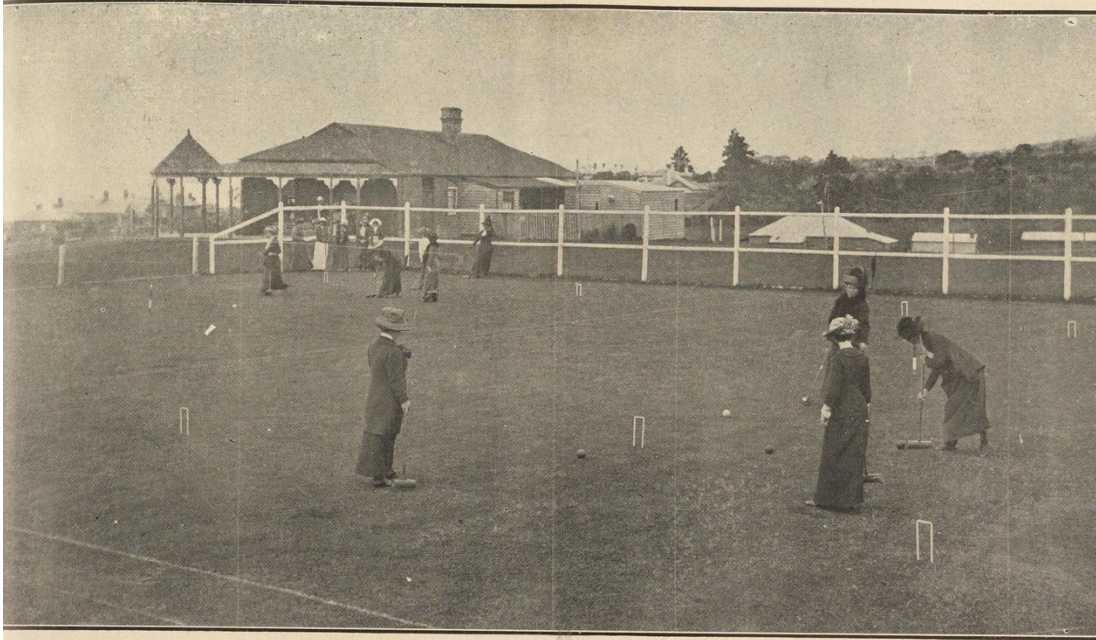
THE OPENING OF THE CROQUET AND BOWLING SEASON AT BURNIE.

<sup>55</sup> *Tasmanian Mail* 31 Oct., 1912



And the Sandy Bay Club's opening

Opening of the Croquet Season at Sandy Bay.



PLAYERS ON THE LAWN.



photo.

SOME OF THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.

56

<sup>56</sup> Tasmanian Mail, 31 Oct., 1912.



In December, 1912, a Northern Tasmanian Croquet Association was formed, with the member clubs Launceston, River, Tasmanian, Longford and Campbell Town, and with each club to play two matches against each other club during the season.<sup>57</sup> Before the season started the Elphin Club was added to the competition, playing their first match against Launceston on December 12.<sup>58</sup> They finished the season second overall from Campbell Town. A Southern Tasmanian Croquet Association was also formed and it was agreed that the State Championships would be played in the north and south on alternative years. There would also be a Southern and a Northern Tasmanian Championship played each year.

The Balfour and Wesley Croquet and Tennis Club was formed at the end of 1912, with “fine new courts” on grounds adjoining the Methodist Church in Balfour Street.<sup>59</sup> They were officially opened on December 21 by the Rev. H Wilkinson.

Because of the large number of entries, the ninth annual State Championships were played on both the Launceston and River Club lawns. The 1913 singles title was won by Mr Rod Gibson, defeating Mr H W Lee in the final. Mr Gibson and Mrs Stackhouse retained their doubles title, beating Miss Holman and Mr H W Lee. As more men were playing the game, it was decided to institute an annual Ladies’ Championship, with the inaugural title won by Miss E Burrowes



**Mr Rod Gibson, Mrs Stackhouse, Miss Burrowes, Miss Holyman, Miss Rock and Mr H W Lee.**

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<sup>57</sup> Examiner, 9 Dec., 1912, p.3

<sup>58</sup> Examiner, 16 Dec., 1913, p.3

<sup>59</sup> Examiner, 23 Dec., 1912, p.3



## 1913 TASMANIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN LAUNCESTON



**Top: Mr H W Lee and Mr Rod Gibson, Mrs Stackhouse (Winner Ladies Singles Championship), Miss Burrowes.**

**Bottom: Miss Rock; spectators at the Cricket Ground lawns**

For the first time, at the end of the season, the winners of the Northern and Southern pennant competitions played each other for the state club championship. The northern premiers Campbell Town, played New Town at the New Town lawns and prevailed, six matches to one.



In May of 1913, the South Launceston Bowling Club approached the City Council for permission to build bowling and croquet greens and tennis courts on Corporation land in Balfour Street. Permission was granted on the same basis as the Invermay Bowling Club' occupation of part of York Park.<sup>60</sup>

The Royal Park Croquet Club existed in May, 1913, and is acknowledged as a source of a donation.<sup>61</sup> In July, the South Esk flood "invaded the croquet lawn at Royal Park".<sup>62</sup> In the Annual Report of the Launceston Bowling Club in September 1913, it is reported that two clubs are sharing the croquet lawn, so clearly these were the River and Royal Park clubs.

In July the Cataract Croquet Club was formed, with 20 members. They resolved to ask the South Launceston Bowling Club for use of their Balfour Street lawn three days a week.

In October, 1913 the usual season opening celebrations were held around the state, with the Weekly Courier illustrating the opening of the season in Burnie.



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<sup>60</sup> The Invermay Bowling Club had opened at York Park, but the croquet lawn was not yet constructed.

<sup>61</sup> Examiner, 15 May, 1913, p.4

<sup>62</sup> Daily Telegraph, 8 Aug., 1913, p.3

<sup>63</sup> Weekly Courier, 23 Oct., 1913.

The South Launceston Bowling Club opened its new Balfour Street greens in October, but regretted that the croquet lawn was not yet ready, as *“unforeseen difficulties arose, especially In connection with obtaining suitable soil, which caused a regrettable delay. Two croquet clubs have been formed, but play will not be possible until the end of November. However, when the lawn is open it will be found to be one of the best in Tasmania, having been properly laid down, careful attention having been given to drainage and levelling. When completed, and a ladies' pavilion erected and flower beds properly laid out around the green, the recent unsightly dust heap will become a, beautiful pleasure resort for the public, as well as those who will indulge in the games.”*<sup>64</sup>

Croquet had also found its way to Scottsdale, as the annual report of the Scottsdale Tennis Club mentions a croquet lawn and a second lawn “coming along well”.<sup>65</sup>

Golf croquet had been first mentioned in 1912 with the Campbell Town Club including golf croquet in their annual tournament<sup>66</sup> and towards the end of 1913 we see the Hobart Golf Club awarding prizes for “stroke croquet” and “golf croquet” in a competition on their lawn.<sup>67</sup> It is also mentioned at Parattah Croquet Club, where Mrs Harcourt came up from Hobart to give instruction in “golf croquet and stroke croquet,”<sup>68</sup> and the New Town Club where, at the season opening “golf croquet was played by almost everyone present.”<sup>69</sup>

Five clubs competed in the northern pennant season; Launceston (A and B), River, Elphin (A and B), Longford and Campbell Town. Hobart and New Town competed in the South of the state.

In December the new lawn at South Launceston was nearing completion:

*the croquet lawn in connection with the South Launceston Bowling Club in Balfour-street is now an accomplished fact, and it has been decided that it will be ready for play on Saturday, the 20th inst. Two new croquet clubs-the Cataract and Balfour have been formed, and arrangements have been made for a combined opening day on the date mentioned. The clubs have been granted permission to play on three days a week each, with alternate Saturdays, and although somewhat late in starting, there is every prospect of the new clubs, which have good memberships, having a successful season. A contract has been let for a ladies' pavilion, and a start has been made with the work, which it is expected will be completed by the opening day.*<sup>70</sup>

The new lawn was officially opened by Mrs Collins, wife of the Hon George Collins MLC, on Saturday, December 20, before a large crowd. The Weekly Courier of January 1, 1914 recorded the event.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Examiner 24 Oct., 1913, p.2

<sup>65</sup> Examiner 15 Nov., 1913, p.5

<sup>66</sup> Examiner, 15 Apr., 1912, p.3

<sup>67</sup> Mercury 25 Nov., 1913, p.6

<sup>68</sup> Examiner 10 Dec., 1913, p.6

<sup>69</sup> Mercury, 5 Oct., 1914, p.3

<sup>70</sup> Examiner, 5 Dec., 1913, p.2





**OPENING OF THE SOUTH LAUNCESTON LAWN, BALFOUR STREET, DECEMBER 20, 1913**



**Top: Hon. George Collins MLC addressing the crowd. Middle: The first game; Mrs Collins plays the first ball. Bottom: Afternoon tea; The Mayor of Launceston, Ald. Richard Gee addresses the assemblage.**

The 1914 Southern and Northern championships were decided in March and the State Championships began on the New Town lawns on April 11, the first to be conducted by the Southern



Tasmanian Croquet Association. Mr Rod Gibson again won the singles title, defeating Mrs A B Howell in the final. Mr Rod Gibson and Mrs Pardey were successful in the doubles final, beating Mrs Howell and Mrs W O'Brien. Miss Holyman defeated Mrs Pardey for the Ladies' Championship.

Following the Championships the Northern team had an emphatic victory over the Southern team.



**Northern team: Back: Miss Collins, Mrs Stackhouse and Miss Burrowes.**

**Front: Miss Holyman, Ladies Champion, Mr Rod Gibson, Open Champion**

**Southern team: uncaptured<sup>72</sup>**

By September of 1914, the Invermay Bowling Club had their croquet lawn laid down on the Forster Street frontage, adding yet another croquet facility to Launceston's growing list. On Saturday, October 3, to the accompaniment of the Railway Band, the Mayor of Launceston, Mr R Gee, opened the new croquet and tennis courts. A croquet club had already been formed and Miss Holyman played the first shot on the new lawn.<sup>73</sup> At the same time in Hobart, the Derwent Bowling Club was opened, with the intention to add a croquet lawn "with the object of encouraging the attendance of the fair sex".<sup>74</sup>

In February 1915, a meeting was held and endorsed a motion for the formation of a bowling club at East Launceston, with a croquet lawn "either on the Windmill Hill or similar site."<sup>75</sup> The City Council approved the site on the corner of High and Adelaide Streets in March.

Royal Park had added a new croquet pavilion for the use of the Royal Park and River Club members, and the Weekly Courier of March 4, 1915 gave the occasion extensive coverage.

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<sup>72</sup> Tasmanian Mail 23 Apr., 1914

<sup>73</sup> Examiner, 6 Oct., 1914, p.3

<sup>74</sup> Daily Post, 12 Oct., 1914, p.14

<sup>75</sup> Examiner, 24 Feb., 1915, p.2

## OPENING OF THE NEW PAVILION AT ROYAL PARK, MARCH, 1915



**Top: The Hon. G T Collins performing the opening ceremony.**

**Bottom: Miss Ila Collins and Mrs E V Stackhouse; Mr J Birchall lines up a hoop; Mr R Whitton, Secretary of Royal Park Club and Mr J Birchall, Secretary of the River Club.**

The northern and southern championships were played in March, and the 1915 State Championships in April attracted such a large entry that it needed to be played over three lawns; Invermay, Royal Park and the Cricket Ground.



Mr Rod Gibson from the Campbell Town Club took out his fourth Tasmanian Singles Championship, defeating Mr F B Jackson, with Miss Holyman and Miss Burrowes winning the Doubles title against Mr Gibson and Mrs Stackhouse. Miss Holyman again won the Ladies Singles Championship.<sup>76</sup>

Throughout the First World War, Tasmania's croquet clubs were active in the war effort, arranging many fetes, concerts and fundraising stalls for the Belgian Relief Fund, Red Cross, Wounded and Invalided Soldiers and many other good causes. An example was Australia Day, 1915, when the ladies of the seven Launceston croquet clubs<sup>77</sup> united to contribute to a market day more than £100 of the £1000 total for wounded soldiers.<sup>78</sup> The Burnie Croquet Club was particularly active in the war effort sending off to the front in one 12 month period "352 pairs of socks, 199 suits pyjamas, 58 flannel shirts, 50 pairs flannel underpants, 26 knitted scarves, 32 pairs of mittens and 72 tins of cigarettes."<sup>79</sup>

Croquet was also being used as therapy for wounded soldiers, as outlined in the Mercury's London Letter:

*Croquet is the great game now. Many of the Australians were wounded about the hands and arms, and as their wounds heal there is a tendency for stiffness to occur. The gripping and swinging of a croquet mallet have been found to do great good to this stiffness, so the game is a medicine as well as a sport.*<sup>80</sup>



Croquet was also regarded as therapy for other patients, and croquet lawns were opened at several convalescent hospitals like this one at the Consumptives' Sanitorium in New Town.

<sup>76</sup> Mercury, 15 Apr., 1915, p.3

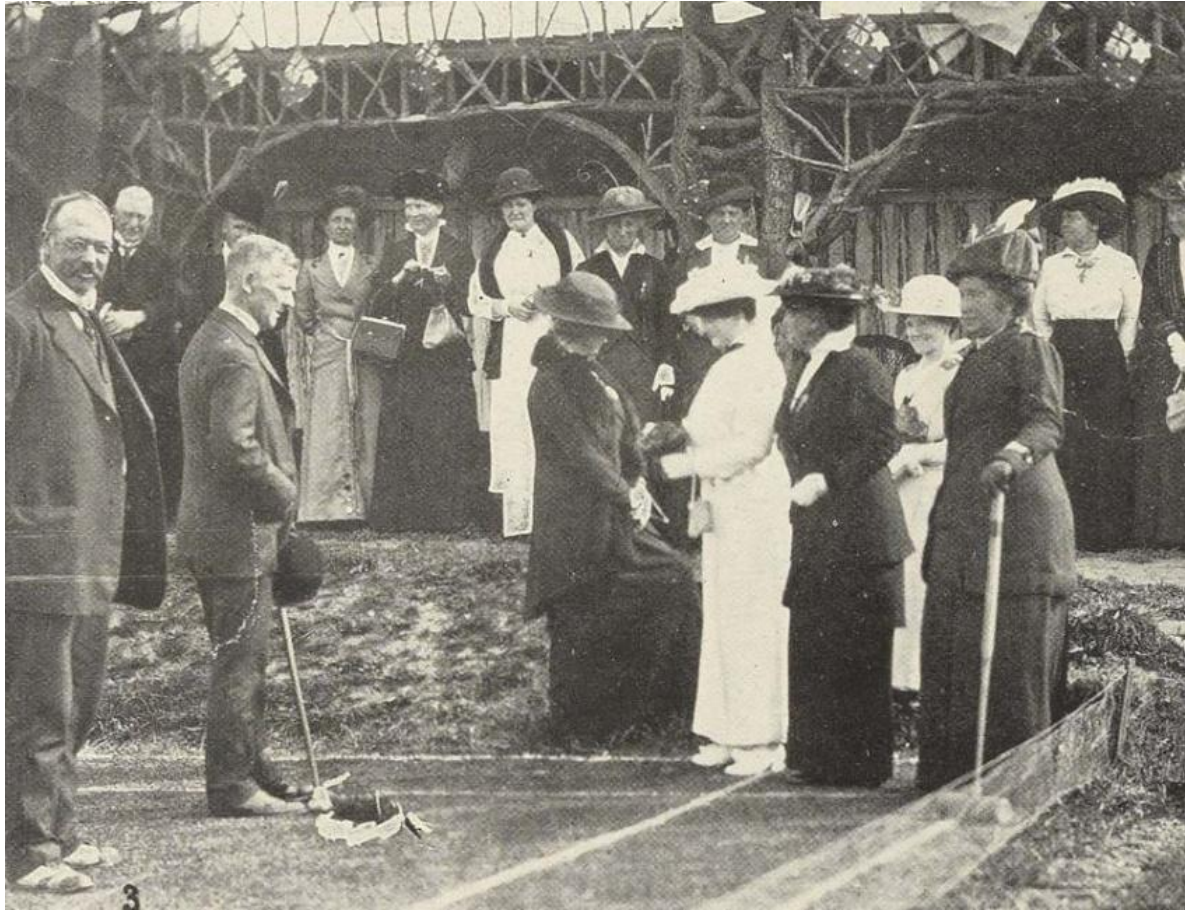
<sup>77</sup> Launceston, River, Royal Park, Invermay, Cataract, Balfour and Elphin.

<sup>78</sup> Examiner, 31 Jul., 1915, p.8

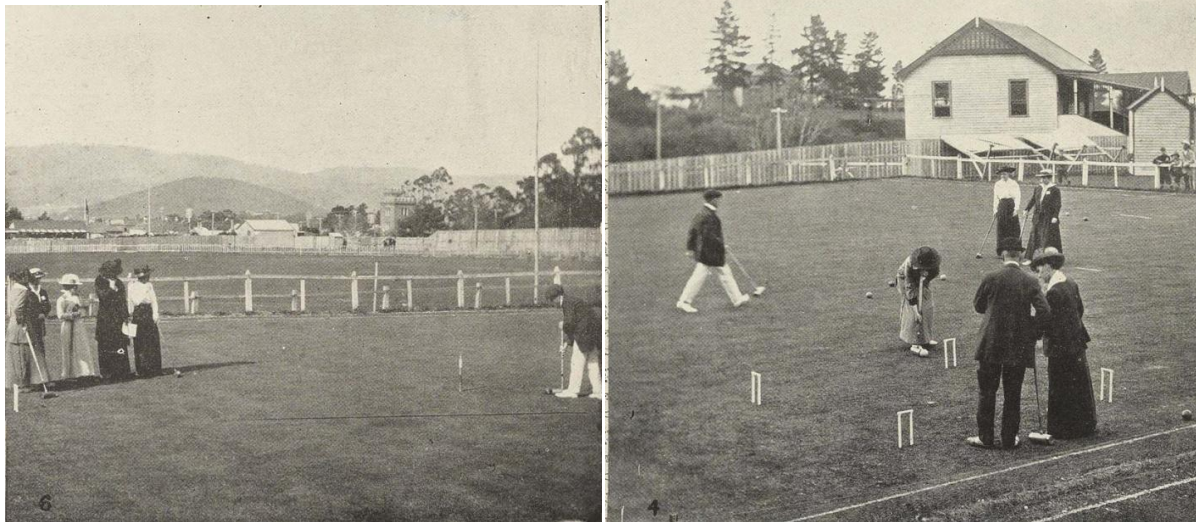
<sup>79</sup> North West Advocate, 7 Jun., 1917, p.4

<sup>80</sup> Mercury, 19 Aug., 1915, p.3

Most Tasmanian clubs celebrated the start of the season in October each year and some of these occasions were photographically recorded by the Weekly Times or Tasmanian Mail.



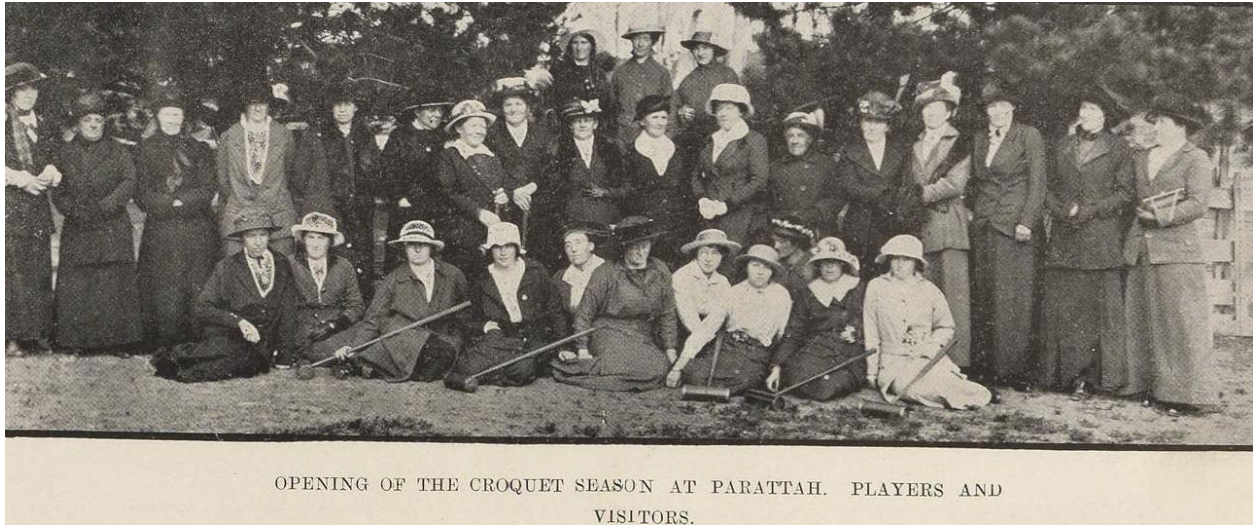
The Hon. Tetley Gant MLC declares the season open at the New Town Club.<sup>81</sup>



Opening day 1915 at the New Town Club

<sup>81</sup> Tasmanian Mail, 14 Oct., 1915





OPENING OF THE CROQUET SEASON AT PARATTAH. PLAYERS AND VISITORS.

**Players and visitors on opening day at Parattah<sup>82</sup>**

Burnie had to this point been the only club on the north west coast, but in December 1915, there is mention of a match between Burnie and the Stowport Club “on Mr T Rutherford’s lawn” at Redlands.<sup>83</sup> A return match was played in 1921. There may have been many more of these small clubs throughout Tasmania based on private lawns. An example is the Oakleigh Club, based at “Oakleigh” in Burnie.<sup>84</sup>

Another Launceston club mentioned only once was the North Esk Club, which played a match against Balfour Club in March, 1916.<sup>85</sup>

In February, 1916, the Hobart Croquet Club, formed in 1903, was renamed the Sandy Bay Croquet Club, with 25 members enrolled.<sup>86</sup> The Hobart Club had been playing on the Hobart Golf Course lawn since 1907, sharing the lawn with the tennis club, but had been described by “Mallet” in the Weekly Courier as “almost defunct” in 1909.<sup>87</sup> The Hobart Golf Club had decided to move to Rosny, so the new home for what was now the Sandy Bay Croquet Club was to be the croquet lawn at the Beach House in Long Point, Sandy Bay. The Hobart Council had announced their intention to develop municipal sports ground, including a croquet lawn, at Long Point, and no doubt this was seen as a future home for the Club.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Tasmanian Mail, 28 Oct., 1915

<sup>83</sup> North West Advocate and Emu Bay Times, 15 Dec., 1915, p.2

<sup>84</sup> Examiner 10 Feb., 1916, p.6

<sup>85</sup> Examiner 1 Mar., 1916, p.3

<sup>86</sup> Mercury, 24 Feb., 1916, p.6

<sup>87</sup> Weekly Courier, 4 Feb., 1909, p.8

<sup>88</sup> Nielsen, F and McCulloch P; Teapots and Traditions – a History of the Sandy Bay Croquet Club, p.7



**The croquet lawn at the Beach House, Long Point, Sandy Bay**

There seem to have been only four northern teams competing in the pennant competition in this season; Launceston, Elphin, Campbell Town and Longford, with Elphin winning the pennant. The established pattern by now was for the Northern and Southern Croquet Championships to be played in March, followed by the Tasmanian Championships in April, alternating between the north and south of the state. In 1916, the Southern Tasmanian Croquet Association was the host, with the competition based at New Town.

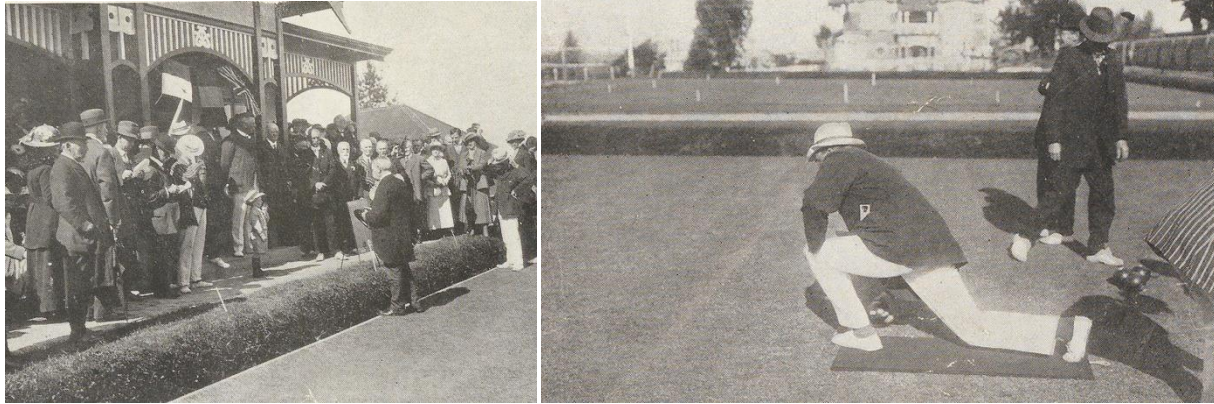
The croquet lawn at the Launceston Bowling Club, home to the River and Royal Park Clubs, had to be relocated “owing to the reclamation of the surrounding park” and needed to be “raised and rebuilt”. Members were called on for donations and the new lawn was ready for play in the 1916/17 season.<sup>89</sup> All Intending members were invited to attend for a meeting “to form two clubs” on December 16.<sup>90</sup>

The opening of the East Launceston Bowling, Croquet and Tennis Club, originally scheduled for November 4 but postponed because of rain, took place on November 15. The new lawns and tennis courts on Windmill Hill were opened by the Club President Mr P O Fysh and the Mayor of Ald. P Hart, who remarked that even in war time people needed healthy recreation.

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<sup>89</sup> Examiner, 29 Sep., 1916, p.2

<sup>90</sup> Examiner 15 Dec., 1916, p.2



**The Mayor Alderman P Hart addresses the crowd at the East Launceston opening; The East Launceston croquet lawn visible looking East towards High Street from the bowling green.**

A spirited Launceston pennant competition in 1917 saw nine teams competing in A and B Divisions; three from Elphin, two each from East Launceston and Balfour, as well as Launceston and South Launceston. East Launceston were leaders in the pennant in their first year, but the competition was abandoned as uncompleted. At the start of the 1917/1918 season East Launceston A and B divided into two separate clubs, Blue and Gold.

The 1918 state championships held at the New Town Club attracted a number of interstate players for the first time and they dominated the results. The Tasmanian Singles Championship was won by Mrs J W Stranger of Victoria, defeating fellow Victorian Miss Bleasby, while the NSW pairing of Mrs Holdsworth and Mr G H Gordon defeated Mrs Fraser and Miss Burrowes of Launceston for the Doubles Championship. A North versus South contest followed, won by the North four matches to three. The Mercury considered the tournament a great success;

*This match brought to a conclusion what has been pronounced on all sides the most successful croquet tournament held in Hobart. The presence of expert players from the mainland, and a strong team from the north, greatly heightened the importance of the competitions. The large attendance of spectators and players at this tournament showed that greater interest is now being taken in the game here than formerly, and that its popularity is on the increase.<sup>91</sup>*

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<sup>91</sup> Mercury, 27 Feb., 1917, p.6



**1918 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS AT NEW TOWN**



**Top:  
Competitors in  
the 1918 State  
Championships  
held at New  
Town**

**Left: Winner of  
the Tasmanian  
Singles title**

**1918, Mrs J W Stranger of Victoria, with runner up Mrs Bleasby from  
Victoria.**



**Above: NSW team of Mr G H Gordon and Mrs Holdsworth, winners of  
the Doubles Championship, with runners up Mrs Fraser and Miss  
Burrowes from Launceston.**



Elphin won the Northern pennant competition, while East Launceston Blue won the B Grade pennant. Mrs Fraser won both the Singles Championship of Northern Tasmania and the Ladies Singles Championship, with Mrs Pardey and Miss Stewart taking the Northern Doubles title.

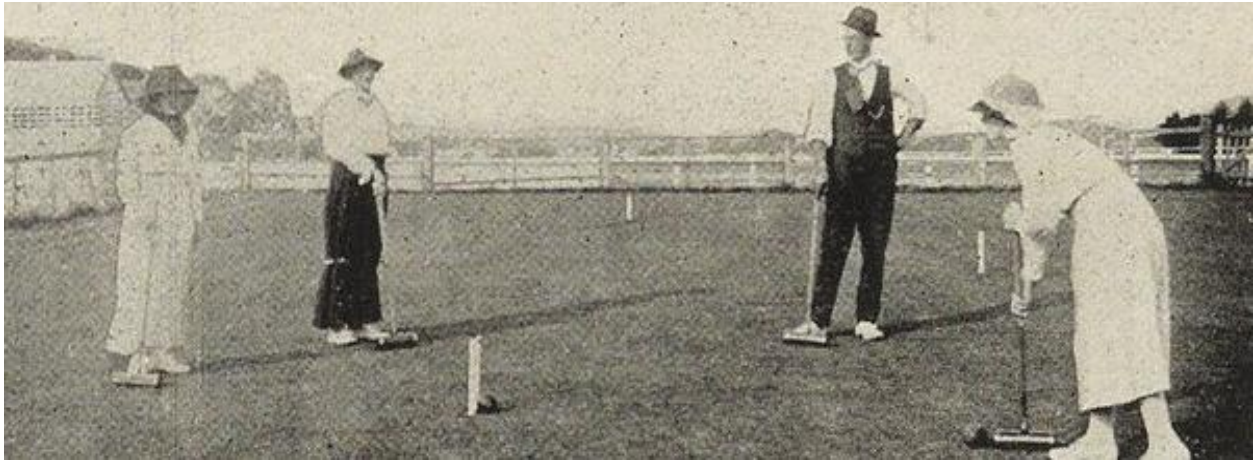
The 1918/19 season opened with the Launceston and Balfour Clubs based at South Launceston, the Royal Park and River Clubs at Royal Park, East Launceston “Blues” and “Whites” at East Launceston, plus the Elphin and Invermay Clubs, making eight in all. There were also numerous country clubs – the Mercury records a match between the Parattah and Oatlands Croquet Clubs<sup>92</sup> and there were no doubt many more. We see the first mention of a Latrobe club, with a meeting of ladies interested in playing on a new lawn to be built adjoining the newly established bowling club.<sup>93</sup> A club was formed at a meeting on Friday, May 2, 1919, but in February 1921 the members were still looking for a croquet ground.<sup>94</sup>

With the war over, croquet was playing a part in the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers, with a lawn specially constructed at the Roseneath Hospital:

*The lawn, which is in excellent order, was officially opened yesterday, when the soldiers provided afternoon tea for a large party, including many croquet enthusiasts. Mrs. Watt instructed the soldiers, many of whom are crippled, in the intricacies of golf croquet, and found some apt pupils. The members of the Sandy Bay Club, assisted by the New Town Club, supplied the croquet sets.*<sup>95</sup>

Later in the year croquet lawns were opened at the Hornsey Base Hospital in Launceston and Ellesmere Convalescent Hospital at Jericho.

The Southern Tasmanian Championships preceded the statewide competition in February and was extensively covered by the Tasmanian Mail.



**Mrs Palfreyman and Mrs O'Brien play Mr J H Howell and Miss O'Brien**

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<sup>92</sup> Mercury, 22 Nov., 1918, p.8

<sup>93</sup> North West Advocate, 4 Dec., 1918, p.2

<sup>94</sup> Examiner, 23 Feb., 1921, p.3

<sup>95</sup> Mercury, 13 Dec., 1918, p.5



**Top: Mrs O'Brien; Mrs F H Oldham**

**Bottom: Spectators at New Town; Mr J H Howell and Mrs Palfreyman.** <sup>96</sup>

Mr A B Howell defeated Mrs O'Brien in the singles and Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Palfreyman were obliged to forfeit to Mr and Mrs Howell in the doubles, due to an indisposition.

In the Tasmanian Championships, Mr F B Jackson defeated Mrs Pardey in the singles final, and Mrs Fraser and Miss Burrowes won the doubles title, defeating Mrs Pardey and Miss Stewart in the final. Mrs Southon won the Ladies Championship of Tasmania. Photos from Weekly Times, March 27, 1919.

**Mrs Southon, Ladies Champion of Tasmania 1919**

**Mr F B Jackson Open Singles Champion of Tasmania 1919**



<sup>96</sup> Tasmanian Mail, 13 Feb., 1919





**Back: Mrs Southon, Mr A B Howell**

**Front: Mrs Fraser, Mr Jackson, Mrs E M King**

At Sandy Bay, two new lawns were ready for use at the Long Point recreation ground in September – one leased and one for public use. The Sandy Bay Croquet Club was offered both but chose to lease only one at a rental of £36 per year.<sup>97</sup> In the north a venue was lost as the Cricket Ground lawn was converted to tennis courts after 16 years of croquet.

The croquet season got under way in October, with the Weekly Courier covering the South Launceston opening ceremony performed by the Mayor of Launceston, Alderman G. Shields..



<sup>97</sup> Nielsen, F and McCulloch P; Teapots and Traditions – a History of the Sandy Bay Croquet Club, p.11





In 1920, Tasmania had a visit from Mr (later Sir) MacPherson Robertson, founder of MacRobertson Chocolates. He arrived on March 13 on the Rotomahana at the invitation of the croquet clubs of Tasmania.<sup>98</sup>

He took part in the Handicap Tournament conducted on the East Launceston and South Launceston lawns from March 15 to 22 and was a losing finalist in the Handicap doubles.<sup>99</sup>

Robertson was a keen croquet player and vigorously promoted the sport, which he believed taught young people self discipline, risk management and other attributes necessary for business success.

In 1925 he took a four man Australian team to England and the MacRobertson Shield competition he initiated has continued for almost 100 years.

The Northern pennant in the 1919/1920 season was reduced to three teams with East Launceston Blues winning over East Launceston Gold and South Launceston.

A new club was formed in Hobart based at the croquet lawn of the Wahrenonga school. The Holebrook Croquet Club was opened on Saturday, October 29, with a membership of 59 men and women:

<sup>98</sup> Examiner, 15 Mar., 1920, p.6

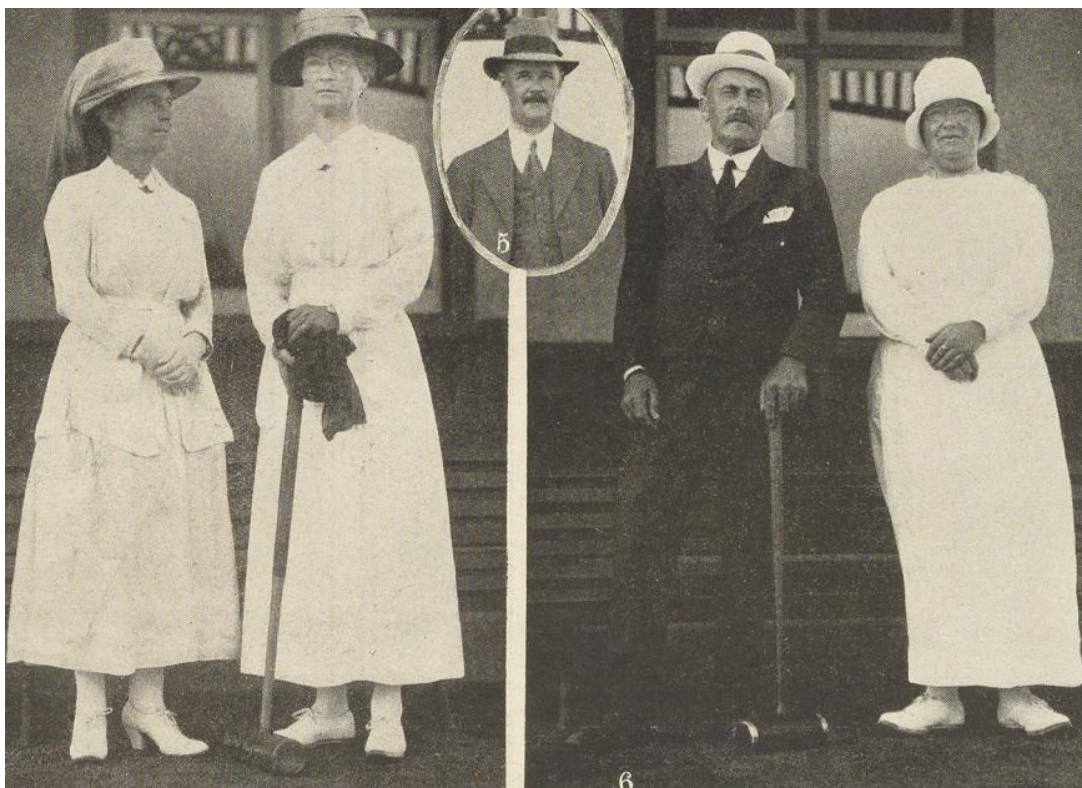
<sup>99</sup> Examiner, 22 Mar., 1920, p.3



*The lawn, situated at Wahroonga, is a full sized one, with a shelter and seats for onlookers and players. It supplies a long-felt want, and promises to have a largely increased membership in the near future.*<sup>100</sup>

In 1920, the British Croquet Association presented the Croquet Council of Tasmania with gold and silver medals to be contested between northern and southern players at the Tasmanian Championships to be held in Launceston. Players from East Launceston Gold, East Launceston Blues and South Launceston competed for the right to represent the north in the gold medal, with the honour going to Mr Jackson from East Launceston Blues. Miss F Wright, also from East Launceston Blues would play for the north in the silver medal. In the Southern Tasmanian tournament Mrs A T Palfreyman won the right to represent the South in the gold medal and Mrs C Allenby in the silver medal.

The Tasmanian Championships started on February 9 on the East Launceston and South Launceston lawns, with 111 entries including a number from Victoria. Melbourne player Miss A L Evans won the Open Championship of Tasmania, defeating Miss I Wright in the final. Mr R Whitton and Mrs Foubister won the Doubles Championship. The British Croquet Association Gold Medal was won by Northern representative Mr F B Jackson, and the Silver Medal by Mrs Allenby from Hobart.

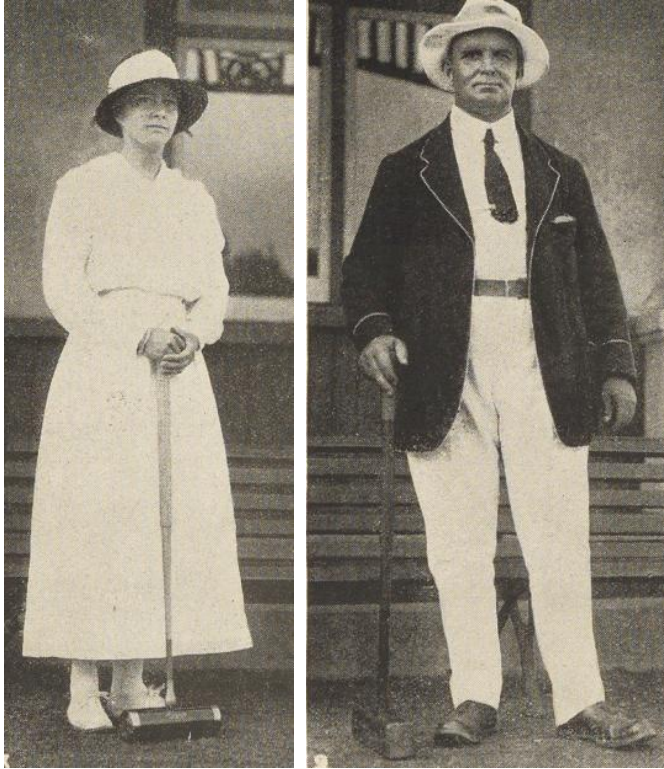


The Weekly Courier of March 3 photographed the winners.

**Miss A L Evans, winner Open Championship and Miss J A Evans; Mr J W Southon (inset), Secretary of the Northern Tasmanian Croquet Association; Mr R Whitton and Mrs Foubister, Doubles Champions of Tasmania.**

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<sup>100</sup> Critic, 5 Nov., 1920, p.3



**Miss I Wright, runner up in the Open Championship and Gold Medal winner Mr F B Jackson.**

In August 1921 a croquet club was formed at Wynyard, having made a financial arrangement with the Bowling Club for the preparation of a lawn . With lawns also being prepared at Ulverstone and Latrobe for the coming season, croquet was looking healthy on the north west coast, where up to this time there had only been the Burnie Club and a small club at Stowport. The Wynyard Croquet lawn was officially opened on Saturday January 7, 1922, by the Warden of Wynyard Mr J Tabor, with the first ball struck by Mrs F E Windsor. Informal golf croquet matches were played between

Burnie and Wynyard Croquet Club members.<sup>101</sup> Play also began on the Latrobe lawn in January, 1922.<sup>102</sup>

In Hobart the Sandy Bay Club had been leasing one of the two lawns built by the Hobart Council at Long Beach. The Club now offered to lease the second lawn, which had previously been for public use at an annual rental of £75 for both lawns, but it seems that the offer was not taken up.<sup>103</sup>

By this time in Launceston, the Invermay croquet lawn in Forster Street was closed and to be converted to tennis courts and the only lawns, all attached to bowling clubs, were at Royal Park, shared between Royal Park and Riverside Clubs<sup>104</sup>, the South Launceston lawn where the South Launceston Club was based and the two East Launceston lawns, home of East Launceston Gold and Blue Clubs. If the Elphin Club still existed it was no longer engaging in competition.

The 1921/1922 Pennant Season entrants were: A Grade; South Launceston 1 and 2, East Launceston Gold 1 and 2, and East Launceston Blue. In B Grade, there were six teams: Riverside 1 and 2, East Launceston Blue 1 and 2 and South Launceston 1 and 2. Winners were East Gold (A Grade) and South No 1 (B Grade)

<sup>101</sup> Advocate, 9 Jan., 1922, p.4

<sup>102</sup> Advocate, 30 Jan., 1922, p.5

<sup>103</sup> Mercury, 1 Nov., 1921, p.8

<sup>104</sup> In 1921 the River Club had changed its name to Riverside



## OPENING DAY SOUTH LAUNCESTON, 1922



Opening of the South Launceston Croquet season, November, 1922<sup>105</sup>



L: Mr F B (Ben) Jackson receiving his British Croquet Association Gold Medal from Mr James Wright, President of the East Launceston Bowling Club, R: Committee of the South Launceston Croquet Club.<sup>106</sup>

The British Croquet Association Gold and Silver medals were again to be a feature of State Championships and three Launceston clubs nominated their top player to compete for the honour. The contestants were Mrs Foubister (South Launceston), Miss Stewart (East Launceston Gold) and Mr J W Southon (East Launceston Blue), with Mr Southon prevailing.

<sup>105</sup> Weekly Courier, 24 Nov., 1921

<sup>106</sup> Weekly Courier, 3 Nov., 1921



TASMANIAN STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, NEW TOWN, MARCH, 1922



Top: Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Palfreyman; Mr F B Jackson; Mr A B Howell, Secretary of the Southern Tasmanian Croquet Association and Mrs H B Howell, Secretary of New Town Club.

Bottom: Gold Medal winner, Mrs A L Butler, Northern Team; Mr R Whitton, Mrs and Mr A B Howell, Mrs Foubisher and Mr F B Jackson.



The Tasmanian Championships were held on the New Town lawns in March, 1922. Mrs A L Butler defeated Mr A B Howell for the Open Singles Championship and also won the British Association Gold Medal. In the doubles final Mrs Foubisher and Mr R Whitton prevailed over Mr and Mrs J W Southon.

With north west clubs now at Burnie, Wynyard and Latrobe, the Devonport Bowling Club announced they had paid £350 to acquire land for a large bowling, tennis and croquet centre on the Levy Estate, bounded by Fenton, Oldaker and Parker Streets Street.<sup>107</sup> In April, 1924, the Council agreed to borrow £2000 for the project.<sup>108</sup> The croquet lawn was not finished until 1926, when the Devonport Croquet Club was formed.<sup>109</sup> There were also plans for a club and a new lawn in Ulverstone.<sup>110</sup> Shortly after, there was a meeting to form a bowling and croquet club in Smithton.<sup>111</sup>

The Holebrook Club in Hobart approached the City Council to construct a croquet lawn on the South Hobart Recreation Ground, offering to pay an annual rental of £40.<sup>112</sup> In May, 1923 the City Council announced its intention to construct two croquet lawns on the Reserve. The 1922/1923 season sees pennant play in Hobart, with New Town, Sandy Bay and Holebrook competing.

It was Launceston's turn to host the State Championships, played on the East Launceston and South Launceston lawns in March, 1923. Mrs W W O'Brien defeated Mrs Pardey in the Tasmanian Open Singles Championship, and Mrs Foubister and Mr R Whitton won the Tasmanian Doubles title for the third successive year, defeating Miss Boland and Mrs J W Southon in the final. The Northern representative Mr C Bramich prevailed over Hobart player Mrs Taylor to win the British Croquet Association Gold Medal.

The East Launceston Club petitioned the Launceston City Council for more of the parkland to create a second lawn, as the present lawn could not accommodate the number of people seeking to play. This was approved in August, with additional land granted on the High Street side. Alderman Ockerby objected saying that it was a "select few who wanted a croquet lawn on the reserve and "it was an attempt to filch portions of public reserves from the common people" but to no avail.<sup>113 114</sup>

The Hobart Council also agreed to erect a pavilion for the croquet and tennis players on the South Hobart reserve at a cost of £307.<sup>115</sup>

On the North West coast the Latrobe Bowling Club decided to convert the croquet lawn into a practice bowling green "as this has not been patronised by the ladies to any extent,"<sup>116</sup> however, in December, faced with extinction, the Croquet Club was revived with the wife of the Warden, Mrs V Rockcliff as President.

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<sup>107</sup> Advocate 13 Jul., 1922, p.4

<sup>108</sup> Daily Telegraph 15 Apr., 1924, p.2

<sup>109</sup> Advocate, 8 Oct., 1926, p.4

<sup>110</sup> Northern Standard, 3 Feb., 1923, p.7

<sup>111</sup> Circular Head Chronicle 21 Feb., 1923, p.5

<sup>112</sup> Mercury, 19 Sep., 1922, p.3

<sup>113</sup> Daily Telegraph, 7 Aug., 1923, p.4

<sup>114</sup> The second lawn was in fact not built until 1938

<sup>115</sup> Mercury, 7 Aug., 1923, p.6

<sup>116</sup> Advocate, 23 Aug., 1923, p.4

TASMANIAN STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, LAUNCESTON, MARCH, 1923



**Top: Competitors in the 1923 State Championships in Launceston**

**Inset: Mr C Bramich- winner of the Gold Medal**

**Bottom: Mr and Mrs J W Stranger of Melbourne and Open Singles Champion Mrs W W O'Brien; Dr Pardey presents Mr Bramich with the Silver Medal he won in Hobart in 1922.**



An interesting piece in the Daily Telegraph gives us an insight into how the Launceston inter-club pennant tournaments may have been run.

*For some years past Launceston croquet, players have been at a great disadvantage in not having two full size lawns at one ground. All pennants here are played on half size lawns, while tournaments and English medal matches by law have to be contested on full size greens. Hobart and inter-State clubs have full size lawns, and thus it will be seen what a handicap Launceston players are under when playing tournaments. A movement has been started to overcome this difficulty.*<sup>117</sup>

This suggests that, up to this time, Launceston pennant matches were played on half courts to enable a match to be completed in a day.

The Parattah Croquet Club was by now disbanded and the lawn turned over to the Tennis Club.<sup>118</sup>

In the 1923/1924 Northern Pennant, only three teams competed, with East Launceston Blue winning from East Launceston Gold and South Launceston.

On March 3, 1924, a contingent of the North's leading players left for Hobart to compete in the Tasmanian Championships, amongst them Mesdames Pardey, Valentine, Foubister and Raymond, Misses Boland and Stewart and Messrs. Whitton and Bramich.<sup>119</sup>

The State tournament was held this year at New Town, which by now had three full size lawns. Mrs O'Brien defeated Mrs Foubisher for the Croquet Association of England Gold Medal. Mrs Foubisher was also a finalist in the Open Singles, losing to Mrs Palfreyman. Northern visitors Miss Boland and Mr C Bramich took the Doubles Championship, beating Mrs O'Brien and Mr Howell in the final. In the Ladies Championship, Mrs Palfreyman prevailed over her New Town club mate Mrs G H Bailey.

In October, 1924, the City Council opened two new lawns constructed at the South Hobart Recreation Ground for the South Hobart Croquet Club. The Mayor of Hobart Ald. J Soundy played the first stroke.

The State Championships returned to Launceston in 1925, played on the East Launceston and South Launceston lawns. Mr C Bramich defeated Mrs Fraser in the Open Championship and also took the Gold Medal. Mrs Bailey and Mrs Palfreyman defeated Mrs Foubister and Mr R Whitton in the Open Doubles, and Miss Stewart won the Ladies Championship, beating Mrs Palfreyman in the final.

By this time, croquet was firmly established as a sport and a substantial part of the social and sporting fabric of Tasmania.

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<sup>117</sup> Daily Telegraph, 26 Sep., 1923, p.4

<sup>118</sup> Mercury, 25 Dec. 1923, p.2

<sup>119</sup> Examiner, 3 Mar., 1924, p.3

**CROQUET-GOLF— A NEW GAME**

A new game has been invented. It is a sort of hybrid pastime, a combination of golf and croquet. Those who have tried it declare that it possesses practically all the good points of both games, with few of the disadvantages of either and it is certain to grow in favour with players of both sexes.

Croquet-golf was devised and developed by a naval officer, Lieut. Henry Macrae. One of the features of the game that will appeal to many is the fact that it may be played on a smaller field than the usual golf course demands. All the strokes, drives and putts that are employed in regulation 18-hole golf can be used with effect in this new game, while the delicate and accurate shots that are necessary in both golf and croquet are developed by an equally fine point, at this style of play.

The outfit is very simple, consisting of a number of balls and stick. The latter is a combination of a golf club and croquet mallet having a long handle; though shorter than a polo stick. The head is equipped with a driver at one end and is bevelled at the other, so that a good lofted is provided for lifting the ball.

The course on any field or land depends upon the lie of the land, the shape as well as the area being considered. The course is marked first with wickets, similar to those used in croquet, and second by numbered flags. No account is taken of the actual distances between the wickets, it being better to have them vary in this respect, so as to afford a course calling for long and short drives.

The spot or tree is usually selected at a point near the centre of the grounds and the wickets made to face to that point, so that all shots made through the arches must be toward the centre. The balls used are of wood, two and three-quarter inches in diameter, light and tough, the object being to get force and speed without great momentum, with a certainty that they will float. In scoring the players may count either strokes or wickets. In case the former method is followed, the player completing the course in the least number wins. Most of the rules of golf have been adopted for this game, with a few additional ones made necessary by the differences in play.

All the preparation that is necessary in croquet golf is to level off the lawn at the starting point and in the immediate vicinity of each wicket. The more natural obstructions there are, such as bushes, hills and hollows, the better, as they call forth special skill in lofting and driving. Only one club is necessary, and no caddies are required.



## APPENDIX 2

## PLAYING THE GAME

*From Elliott, Alfred; The Playground and the Parlour, a Handbook of Boys' Sports, Games and Amusements, T. Nelson and Sons, London, 1868, pp. 94-99.*

The turning sticks are ornamented with rings of colour in the following order, beginning from the top: blue, pink, black, yellow, brown, orange, green and red. Each player chooses a colour and takes a mallet, a ball and a clip to correspond. The order of the colours gives the order in which the players play; and as, if there are two parties, those on each side play alternately, it follows that, in a game of eight, the dark balls – blue, black, brown, green – will be opposed to the light – pink, yellow, orange, red. The use of the clips is to show the last ring through which the player has passed, though some players prefer to show the *next* ring through which they *have* to pass; in either case, they register the progress of the game and prevent any dispute arising between the combatants. They are simply hung upon the hoops and moved forward or backward as the players move.

The object of the game is to drive your ball in succession through all the hoops, in the direction indicated by the dotted lines on the diagram and to strike the two posts. The player who succeeds in accomplishing this performance and returning to the starting post, wins; and the side, all whose members first achieve the same feat, is the winning side.

This seems simple enough – on paper – but is by no means so simple in reality. Much judgment, foresight and tact are required to make a skilful player. For the game is complicated by a privilege which is the real and true *croquet*. If a player hit with his ball an opponent's, he is permitted to place his ball against the one he has struck, and planting his foot upon his own ball, he strikes it with his mallet in such wise as to drive the hostile ball out of its course and in any direction, he may consider most beneficial for himself or his side. This is *croquet*. But he may also *croquet* a partner's ball and, in that case, may send it forward through one or more hoops, to the great advantage of his fellow player. Only the reader must remember, no player can *croquet* or be *croqueted* until he has passed through the first hoop. It is this act of *croquet* which makes all the interest and difficulty of the game.

Now, there is either a "tight" *croquet* or a "loose" *croquet*. In the former, the striker fixes his foot firmly on the ball; in the latter, he strikes without using his foot.



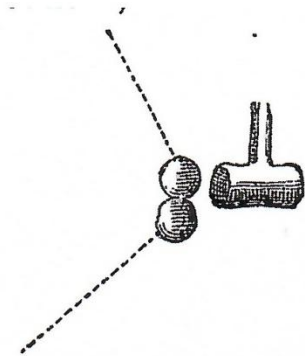
LOOSE CROQUET.

"Loose *croquet*" is susceptible of certain variations. The two balls may be placed directly behind one another, in such a manner that they and the long axis of the head of the mallet shall be in the same straight line when the player takes his stroke. A quick, sharp blow, under

these circumstances, will drive the *croqueted* ball forward, while leaving the player's almost stationary.

If the player wishes to keep his own ball perfectly still and yet not to play "tight croquet", he has only to strike the said ball below the centre; which mode of play is known as "dead croquet".

Again, he may play "rolling croquet"; that is, he places the balls directly behind each other, as before; but in striking, he allows the mallet to follow the balls, causing the two balls to roll on together. This method is often very useful in helping forward a fellow player. There is also "splitting croquet", in which the balls are placed at an angle to the mallet's head and, therefore, when struck, fly in opposite directions, or "split".



**SPLITTING CROQUET.**  
Showing the direction which  
the balls will take.

A splitting croquet may be taken with as little movement as possible of the croqueted ball. Some law makers do not require any disturbance of the second ball, so that the two touch; and hence, this mode of splitting croquet is called "taking two off". We think that in all cases it is best not to insist on the movement.

*Croquet* must not be confused, as it too often is, with *Roquet*. "Roquet" is the act of driving the player's ball, by a blow of his mallet, against another ball. It is the act of 'roquet' that entitles you to the privilege of "croqueting" the ball so struck.

Let us now mark the progress of the game.

"Blue" – the holder of the blue mallet and ball – begins by placing his ball twelve inches, or a mallet's length from the starting post and endeavouring, with a sharp, straight stroke delivered against the centre of the ball, to impel it through the first hoop. If he succeeds, he does on playing; passes the second hoop and then through the third. Perhaps he fails in clearing the third hoop, in which case, he is said to be "wired" and has to pause until his turn comes round. [A ball is "in play" as soon as it has cleared the first hoop. It continues to be "in play" until it makes a *roquet*, when it is said to be "in hand". A ball "in hand" must take croquet, after which it is again "in play". Other definitions we shall give hereafter.]

Blue being brought to a stand for a while, Pink plays and, having gone through the second hoop, roquets Blue's ball, which he afterwards croquets, driving it, perhaps, to the other end of the ground, so as to delay Blue's chances of getting into the game. He then clears hoops 3, 4 and 5 but fails to clear the sixth hoop. Black then comes on the field and, in their respective turns, the other players mingle in the fray, until the fun becomes "fast and furious", and great judgment is required to avoid an unluck croquet or to make a successful hit. If two or three balls lie close together and the player roquets one of them, he may, after croqueting it, proceed to croquet the others, evidently to the great benefit of his own side and to the serious detriment of his opponents.

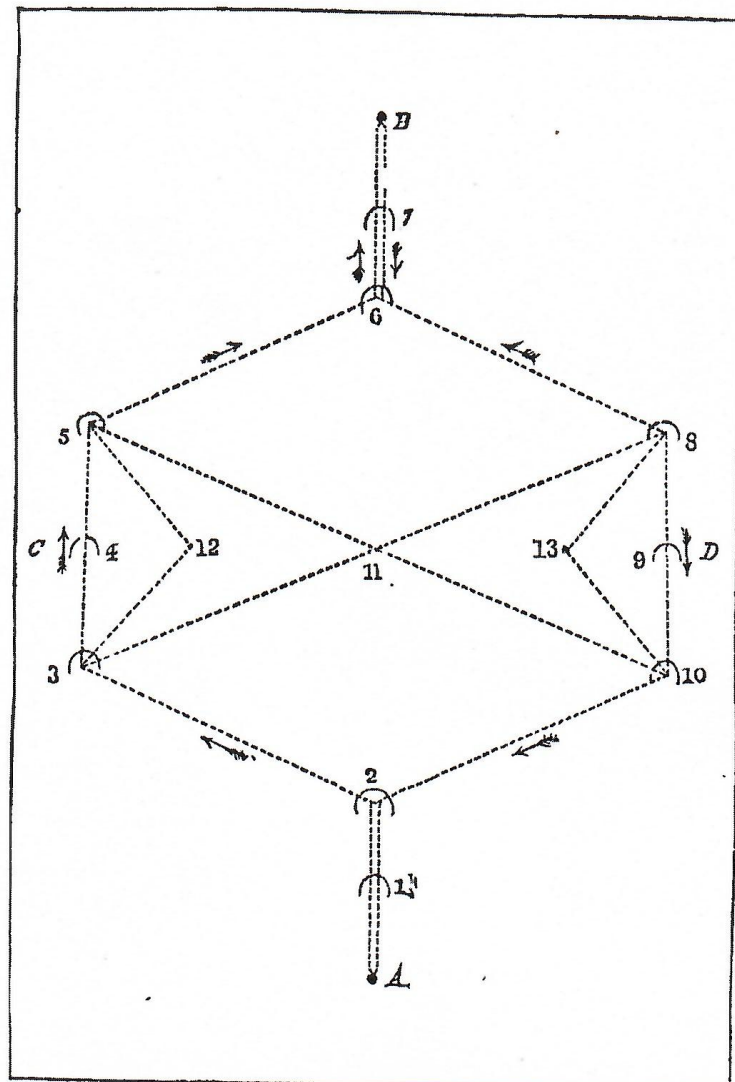


After clearing hoops 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, the players are required to strike the turning post to be "in play", but compel him to pause there until his turn again comes round. We hold this, however, to be an unfair and absurd innovation and consider that it is but a point in the game, like passing a hoop and that the player is fully entitled to continue his homeward progress.

As soon as he has reached the starting point, a player becomes what is technically called a *Rover*, and earns the liberty of roving about the ground to attach his foes and assist his friends. He is not allowed, however, to croquet the same ball twice in one turn and his privileges are otherwise restricted defined by laws which we shall shortly explain.

When all the players on one side have passed through all the hoops and struck the two posts, the victory is theirs and the game finished.

The plan of the original game is as follows:



## APPENDIX 3

*From The Mercury 6/2/1871 p.2*

### RULE CHANGES IN CROQUET.

*(From Chambers' Journal.)*

Croquet, after suffering much from the jealousy of rival implement makers, rival law-makers, and rival players, has at last assumed a definite shape. Last year, there was a loudly expressed complaint that croquet had no settled laws, each town had its own rules, and this was a great drawback to the game. To meet this difficulty, a conference was called, consisting of delegates from all known croquet clubs (about forty in number), and after much deliberation, the conference settled the rules, which are now published (by De la Rue and Co.), and are binding in all match and club play. Supplementary to these and affecting principally the management of prize meetings, which were not legislated for by the conference, are the bye laws of the All-England Croquet Club (Horace Cox, Strand). At the tournament on the All-England Club Ground at Wimbledon, in June last, those laws and bye-laws were thoroughly tested, and the proof of their answering their purpose is, that this, while it was the largest, was at the same time the most successful prize meeting ever held.

Taking those, then, as the standard rules, we will proceed to discuss the more important of them. The proper size for a croquet ground has been variously estimated at from one hundred yards by sixty yards to thirty yards by twenty-five yards. Of course, any of these sizes will do, just as billiards might be played on a table fourteen foot long, or on a miniature table. But for matches, a regular size was required, and the site determined on by the All-England Club is forty yards by thirty yards. Thus a precedent is set, and all persons who can command a ground of such size, would do well to fix its boundaries at that area. Practical experience has shown it to be sufficiently large for the full development of the game, and yet not too extensive for lady players.

The boundaries of the ground should be accurately defined before play begins as there are several cases affecting the position of the balls when sent near to or beyond the boundary. To define the boundary in the absence of a path or trench, a thin white window cord, pegged into the ground with wooden pegs, is found the most serviceable. The most important of the laws affecting the boundary is what is called the dead boundary law, now commonly adopted in match-play. It comes to this if, when taking croquet, a ball is sent off the ground, the player loses the remainder of his turn. The object of the rule is to prevent the old coarse stroke, which enabled players to go any pace, without regard to strength, after balls lying safe at the further extremity of the ground with the dead boundary law, the player going after balls at a distance is compelled to judge the strength. If he plays too hard, and goes off, he loses his turn, if he does not play hard enough, he does not get a certain shot. This is as it should be, as it will appear on a moment's consideration of the parallel case of playing for a hoop after a roquet. If played too hard, the hoop cannot be made, if too gently, an uncertain shot is left. The dead boundary is sound in principle, and is a great improvement to the game, as it gives the player who is out of the break a better chance of getting in than under the old rule.



The implements used in the game are balls, hoops, pegs, mallets, and clips. These have undergone such modifications in the last two or three seasons as almost to have revolutionised the game. We again take as the standard the All-England Club dimensions, as laid down in their book of rules. The balls should be of well-seasoned boxwood, in diameter three and five-eighth inches, marked so as to enable the players to distinguish them. The best way of marking the balls has long been a matter of dispute. Rings of paint are sometimes employed, but it is now generally admitted that the best plan is to colour the balls all over, as is done with pool balls.

The hoops are now made of half-inch wrought iron, square at the top, and painted white. The old-fashioned slender hoops are not good, and are soon knocked out of shape. Some players prefer the hoops painted a grey blue, but white is more general. The hoop, when fixed should stand at least twelve inches out of the ground as to the width of the hoop, that varies with individual taste. Twelve or fourteen inches was the original width, now, hoops are used as small as four and a half inches and four inches, though unusual, may be seen occasionally. So small a hoop is not recommended except for very superior players on a very good lawn. Six inches is the maximum size permitted by the All-England Club, and this seems a good width for the ordinary run of players. Hoops are cheap enough, and it is easy to have two sets of different sizes. It should be observed that the hoops are liable to spread a little when fixed in the ground. They require to be occasionally removed and pinched in.

The setting of the hoops has long been one of the variable points, every one being at liberty to adopt any mode of setting, which is about as sensible as though, in ordering a billiard table, each purchaser was to order the pockets to be put where it suited his fancy. The All-England setting, as shown in their bye-laws, is mostly used at prize meetings. The principles involved in this setting are, not to have any peg or hoop less than eight yards from the boundary, and to compel players to run the middle hoop four times, so that, if a breakdown occurs at that hoop, a shot is left within reasonable distance, and one which may be taken with impunity, as it will seldom leave the ball played last in the next play this game.

The pegs should be made of ash, and should measure one inch and a half in diameter. The colours of the balls should be painted on the pegs. The latest improvement is a small transverse branch piercing the top of the peg, to which the clips can be attached.

There is no restriction as to the size, shape, weight, number of materials of the mallets that may be used. All kinds of fancy mallets are in vogue, but the one generally played with has a cylindrical head of box about nine inches long, three inches in diameter, with an ash handle, about three foot long and octagonal in the grasp, weight about two and three quarter to three pounds. There are various modifications of this mallet, such as checkered handles (a recent improvement), a small slice taken off the bottom, to steady it on the ground, and so forth. The mallet is manufactured by Mr Bunce, of Holland Street, Blackfriars, and is known as the "Cavendish" mallet. At the All-England prize meeting of 1870 for which all the most noted players of the day put down their names, with two exceptions all the mallets were of the pattern just described, and all the winners of prizes played with those mallets.

Clips are essential in match-play, though, for ordinary practice, there is rarely any occasion for them. The clips favored by the best players are made somewhat after the fashion of an American clothes-peg. The advantage they have over the old tin clips is that they can be readily be removed and refixed.

The four-ball game is now universally played in matches. If more than four want to play in practice, and there is only one lawn, this can easily be managed by having two games of four, both going on at the same time, one set starting from each end of the lawn. There is a little inconvenience in sometimes finding a ball belonging to the other set in the way, the ball, however, must be taken up for a moment, and then replaced. It is better to submit to this than to play an interminable six or eight game, which drags its slow length along for hours, and amuses nobody.

The most important modifications in the conduct of the game, settled by the conference laws, are as follows. At starting the players ball is to be placed one foot from the first hoop, and opposite its centre instead of a mallet's length, as formerly. The object is to make the first hoop a moral certainty and so to bring all the balls into play at once. If the first hoop is missed, the ball is not taken up, but remains where it lies, and is liable to be made use of by the other balls whether they have to run the first hoop or not. This is sound. It places the player of the first stroke of his first turn in precisely the same relation to all the balls as he is in at the commencement of all subsequent turns. Thus, during the game, a player may, at his first stroke play for a hoop or roquet. Formerly he was obliged to run the first hoop before playing a roquet, but now he may play for a roquet at the commencement of his first turn, and before running a hoop.

Tight croquet is abolished. This unscientific stroke had long been abandoned by agreement by the host players, and now its rejection is confirmed by the conference laws. Pegging out an adversary is retained. This has always been a sore point, especially with lady players but now that, by a decisive vote of the conference, it has been pronounced to be the proper game I presume no player of any pretensions will object to it. It is certainly annoying when about to go out, to have all one's plans spoilt by perhaps a lucky long shot, but this is part of the chances of war, and the possibility of its occurrence sustains to the end the interest of the player who is behind in the game.

The first important meeting held under the new laws was that of the All-England Club before mentioned, on their new and splendid ground, at Wimbledon. This club, which is the most important and influential in existence, was formed two years ago. A plot of ground close to the Wimbledon Station (easily accessible from town) has been taken and leveled. A pavilion has been built, and all the implements and other necessities provided, the committee having subscribed the requisite funds free of interest. The ground covers four acres, and contains twelve practice grounds of full size. It may be pronounced the finest practice ground in the kingdom.

The weather has been very much against getting new-laid turf in order this season, and consequently the grounds are at present rather lumpy, but by next season they will be in excellent match order. The club already numbers about two hundred members, including many fine players the subscription is a guinea, members being balloted for, as at other clubs. The ground was thrown open for practice in June last, and the annual prize meeting was held at the end of the month. An attractive program was issued and prizes, the aggregate value of about ninety pounds, being contended for. The great event of the



meeting, however, was the contest for the championship and a silver cup, value fifty guineas, open to all comers. The entrance money for this was a guinea. Twenty-four competitors appeared, including all the most noted players of the day. After much fine play, extending over four days the cup eventually fell to Mr Pool, who has before won several prizes open to all comers. Mr Pool is therefore champion for 1870, but in order to retain that honour next year he will have to play the winner of the all-comers' contest at Wimbledon.

## APPENDIX 4

TASMANIAN CROQUET CHAMPIONS 1905-1925					
Year	Singles Champion	Runner up	Doubles Champions	Runners up	Ladies Champion
1905	Mrs Conder	Mrs Richardson	Mrs Richardson Miss L Burrowes	Mrs Simson Miss E Field	
1906	Miss L Burrowes	Mrs Conder	Mrs Richardson Miss L Burrowes	Mrs Conder Mrs E Smith	
1907	Miss I Collins	Miss L Burrowes	Mrs Richardson Miss L Burrowes	Mrs Stackhouse Miss Irvine	
1908	Miss H Austin	Miss K Richardson	Miss H Austin Mrs Gatehouse	Miss K Richardson Mrs Stackhouse	
1909	Mr C Taylor	Miss N Rock	Mrs Pardey Miss K Richardson	Miss I Collins Mr L E Hall	
1910	Mr W S Johnstone	Mrs Stackhouse	Mr W S Johnstone Miss N Rock	Mrs Pardey Miss K Richardson	
1911	Mr Rod Gibson	Mr W S Johnstone	Mr W S Johnstone Miss N Rock	Mrs Pardey Miss K Richardson	
1912	Mr J Birchall	Miss Falconer	Mrs Stackhouse Mr Rod Gibson	Mr W S Johnstone Miss N Rock	
1913	Mr Rod Gibson	Mr H W Lee	Mrs Stackhouse Mr Rod Gibson	Miss Holyman Mr H W Lee	Miss Burrowes
1914	Mr Rod Gibson	Mrs A B Howell	Mrs W O Wise Mr C R Davies	Mr Rod Gibson Mrs Stackhouse	Miss Holyman
1915	Mr Rod Gibson	Mr F E Jackson	Miss Holyman Miss Burrowes	Mr Rod Gibson Mrs Stackhouse	Miss Holyman
1916	Mrs Howell	Mrs Palfreyman	Mr A B Howell Mrs A B Howell	Mrs Shann Mrs Valentine	Mrs Bailey
1917	Mr F B Jackson	Miss E Burrowes	Mr J A Birchall Miss Fraser	Mrs Pardey Miss Stewart	Miss Burrowes
1918	Mrs J W Stranger (Vic)	Miss Bleazby (Vic)	Mrs Holdsworth Mr G H Gordon (NSW)	Mrs Fraser Miss Burrowes	Mrs Fraser
1919	Mr F P Jackson	Mrs Pardey	Mrs Fraser Miss Burrowes	Mrs Pardey Miss Stewart	Mrs Southon
1920	Mrs J Foubister	Mrs Palfreyman	Mrs J Foubister Mrs J W Southon	Mrs G W Valentine Miss Stewart	Mrs Palfreyman
1921	Miss A L Evans (Vic)	Miss I Wright	Mrs Foubister Mr R Whitton	Mrs Bailey Mrs Watt	Miss A L Evans
1922	Mrs A L Butler	Mr A B Howell	Mrs Foubister Mr R Whitton	Mr J W Southon Mrs J W Southon	Mrs Palfreyman
1923	Mrs W W O'Brien	Mrs Pardey	Mrs Foubister Mr R Whitton	Miss Boland Mrs J W Southon	Mrs W W O'Brien
1924	Mrs Palfreyman	Mrs Foubister	Miss Boland Mr C W Bramich	Mrs O'Brien Mr A B Howell	Mrs Palfreyman
1925	Mr C Bramich	Mrs Fraser	Mrs Bailey Mrs Palfreyman	Mrs Foubister Mr R Whitton	Miss Stewart



## APPENDIX 5

## TASMANIAN CROQUET CLUBS

(Listed in order of first mention)

1903	Launceston	1916	Sandy Bay
1903	Iris	1916	East Launceston
1903	Hobart	1917	East Launceston (split into two clubs- Blue and Gold)
1905	River (later Riverside)	1918	Queenborough
1905	Deloraine	1918	Oatlands
1906	Whitemore	1919	Latrobe
1906	Campbell Town	1919	South Launceston
1908	New Town	1920	Tamar
1908	Longford	1921	Wynyard
1910	Beaulieu	1921	Ulverstone
1911	Parattah	1922	Holebrook
1911	Tasmanian	1924	South Hobart
1912	High Street	1926	Devonport
1912	Balfour		
1913	Elphin		
1913	Royal Park		
1913	Cataract		
1913	Burnie		
1914	Invermay		
1915	Stowport		
1916	Oakleigh		
1916	North Esk		
1916	Chudleigh		

NB: There are many more mentions of croquet lawns in towns around the state and this list of clubs is probably conservative

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