

# The Late Lieut. F. G. Tait

One of the Great Golfers of All Time

THE splendid photograph of the late Lieutenant F. G. Tait, which appears in this issue, was taken from a picture hanging in the Royal Ottawa Golf Club house, kindly loaned the "Canadian Golfer" for reproduction by the Directors of that well-known club.

Lieut. Tait was a master of the irons and the photo depicts a perfect swing and follow through. The whole pose can be studied to advantage by the golfer of to-day. It is perfection.

The following appreciation by ex-Recorder R. Stanley Weir, Montreal, was especially contributed to the "Canadian Golfer" to accompany the photo. It is a fine tribute to a fine golfer:

Frederick Guthrie Tait, than whom no one has more completely captured the affectionate admiration of golfers, was the third son of Professor Tait, of Edinburgh University, and was born on the 11th January, 1870. A lieutenant in the Black Watch, he was killed, poor fellow, in February, 1900, during a reconnaissance at Koodoosberg, in the Boer War. Undoubtedly he was one of the greatest golfers of his time. In 1893, 1894, 1895, he reached the semi-finals of the amateur championship. In 1896, at Sandwich, after wonderful play, he won the blue ribbon of golf; beating in succession players like Laidlay, Ball and Hutchinson, and smothering Hilton in the finals to the tune of 8 and 7. In 1898 at Hoylake he was again champion with a 7 and 5 in the finals; and, in 1899, was again in the finals, losing out to J. Ball, Jr., by one hole after a tie. It should have been said that in 1896 he also won the St. George's Vase against the best talent of the kingdom and in the open championship at Muirfield that year

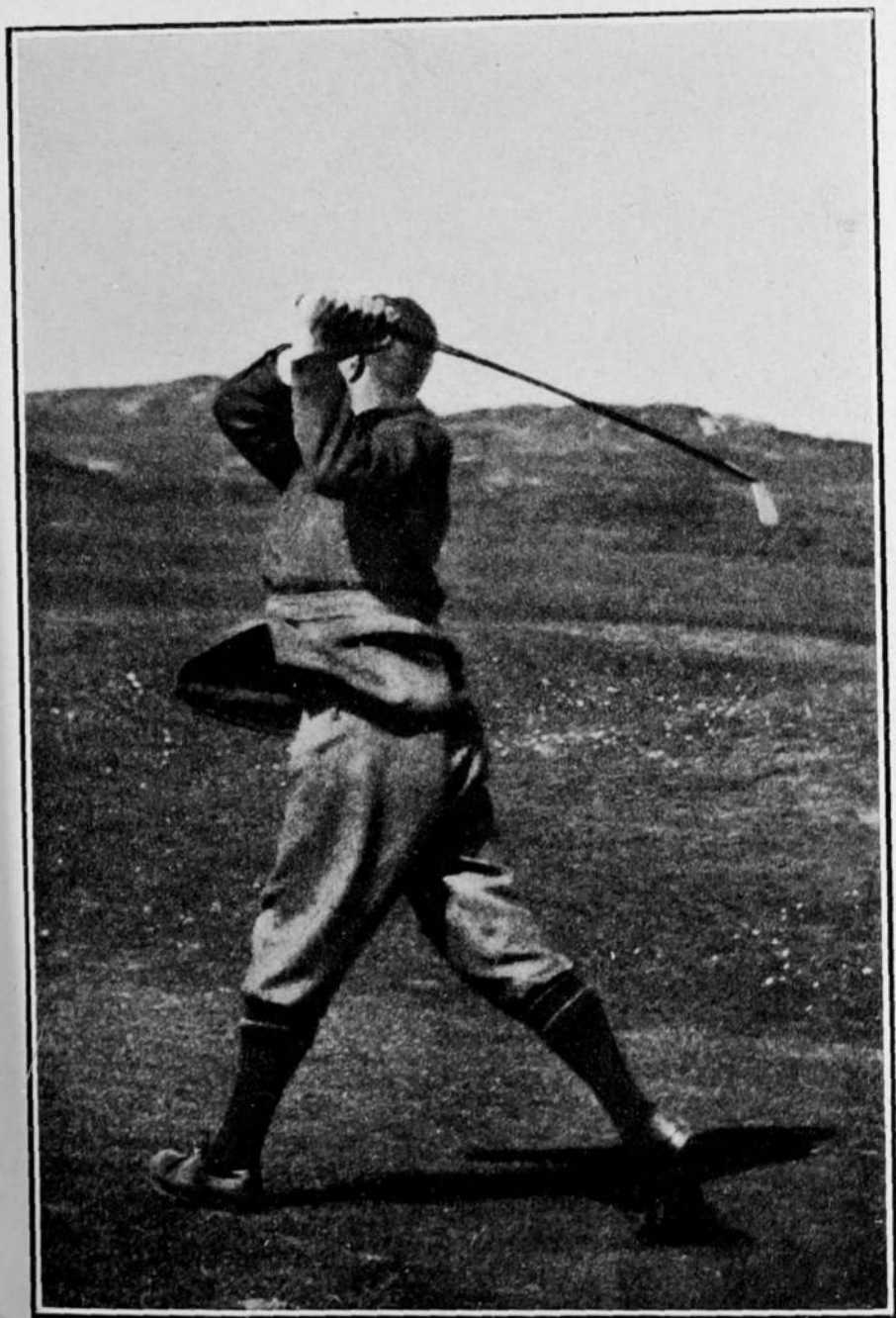
was third, no less, to Vardon and Taylor.

There is universal testimony to the grace, finish and power of Freddie Tait's play. He impressed every onlooker with the feeling that there was no lack of reserve strength; no big shot he could not achieve; no difficulty, short of the impossible, he could not surmount. Few long putts but were more likely to go down than not. He was the idol of the gallery, which was hypnotized by his fine athletic figure and thorough sportsmanship. Others might wade into a water-hazard or lift a seemingly unplayable ball out of a rabbit-scape, but in Tait such incidents were felt to reveal the actual man and no poseur.

He was the idol of Scotsmen in particular. A defeat was too painful to be talked about; a victory, cause for national jubilation. His life has been written by John L. Low in a fascinating record to which Andrew Lang prefixed a fine introductory appreciation. In the volume poor Tait, with his sunny character, his bravery and friendliness, his firm but matured opinions, his love of the bag-pipes, his terrier "Nails," his pipe, his golf, his many comrades, stands revealed as one of the unforgettable figures in the story of the royal and ancient. Mr. Low gives it as his opinion (and there is no more competent judge) that Freddie Tait was, taking him all in all, inferior to no player, amateur or professional, of this or any previous generation. And he concludes with this memorable eulogy: "A man may be a fine player but a bad golfer; even as well-born men are not always gentlemen, nor great theologians good parsons. A golfer, in the fullest sense, is a man in the first place, and a player in the second. Freddie was this true golfer."

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The "Canadian Golfer" is on sale at all leading Bookstores throughout Canada.



THE LATE LIEUT. F. G. TAIT

Amateur Champion of Great Britain 1896-1898

*(From a picture in the Royal Ottawa Golf Club House)*