



## Trophies associated with the Society

### 1. Trophies linked to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St Andrews<sup>1</sup>

#### The Calcutta Cup



(originally known as the Silver Cashmere Cup) presented to the R & A by the Calcutta Golf Club (later the Royal Calcutta Golf Club).

The publication 'The Royal Calcutta Golf Club 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1829-1979' records that;

'On the 1st July 1882 the Club wrote to the Honorary Secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews asking if the R. & A. would accept a silver Cashmere Cup. A footnote indicates that the cup was to be valued at 60 guineas, and the mode of play for the cup was to be left entirely in the hands of the R. & A.'s Committee. On the 23rd August of that year a reply was received indicating that the offer had been accepted and so the work had been put in hand. On the 15th May 1883 the Honorary Secretary addressed Stuart Grace, Esq., his opposite number at St. Andrews, advising that a handsome silver challenge cup of oriental design had been despatched by overland parcel post and that he hoped it would reach safely.

Finally, on the 30th June a reply arrived from the R. & A. acknowledging receipt of the trophy and stand, and intimating that it would be awarded to the member making the second lowest aggregate score of the spring and autumn medal competitions at St. Andrews.'

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<sup>1</sup> Reproductions of the Calcutta Cup and the Royal Calcutta Millennium Plate by kind permission of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews.

The first volume of *Challenges and Champions The Royal & Ancient Golf Club 1754-1883* from the chapter titled *Golf, the Links and the Trophies in 1883* then records that:

'Barely had the regulations for the Glennie been resolved when another trophy was offered. It was reported to the committee of management on 31st July that a letter had been received from George Ormiston, the honorary secretary of the Calcutta Golf Club:

'Several of the members of this club have received so much attention from so many of the members of your club during their short stay in St Andrews, that they have signified their desire to present the Royal and Ancient Golf Club with a mark of respect for their kindness, but before sending you the proposed prize we deem it wise to ask your sanction of acceptance first. The presentation would take the form of a handsome silver Kashmir Cup, value sixty guineas, to be played for annually, the terms of which would be left entirely in the hands of your committee to be dealt with as they think best. Should you acquiesce in our proposal I shall be obliged if you would advise the word "Rufus" to the Manager of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, London, to be telegraphed to the Manager of the Bank here and the order for the prize would be put into the hands of the maker at once.'

The word "Rufus" was not communicated immediately. The letter was first put to the Annual General Meeting when the proposal was approved in principle, but it was left to the green committee to devise the regulations for the trophy. Why "Rufus" one wonders, but the secret word was duly advised. Early next year (1883) the club was informed that the cup was being made and would be despatched shortly. At the May meeting it had not arrived, but a proposal was put forward by the green committee that it should become a second prize under the same conditions as the Glennie Medal. In July a large crate arrived from Calcutta from which the cup was drawn. Its size and elegance astonished the members. It was eighteen inches high, worked in relief with sacred emblems of India and mounted on a pedestal of ebony. Its value was eighty guineas. Understandably there was a feeling that such a magnificent trophy could not be used as a second prize and the matter was remitted back to the green committee. The results of their deliberation were that it should be played for in August, by holes, off handicap, although this decision was not finally implemented until 1885.'

The second volume of *Champions and Guardians The Royal & Ancient Golf Club 1884-1939* from the chapter titled *Meetings, Medals and Handicaps* also records that:

'In 1883 the Club had received notification from the Calcutta Golf Club that they had despatched a trophy, a gift to the Club. The initial thoughts of the green committee had been that it should become a second prize to the Glennie Medal for the lowest aggregate scores at the Spring and Autumn Meetings, but, when the committee had seen the cup, they felt that it was far too elegant and valuable to use as a second prize. Their decision was that it should become the trophy for a new event to be played by holes, off handicap, in early August. This however, was not implemented until August 1885. Fifty-two members participated in the first competition for the Calcutta Cup. Handicaps ranged from 13 down to scratch with Balfour, Everard and Captain Burn amongst the five backmarkers. Allan Macfie, the winner of the Hoylake tournament three months earlier, had been allocated a handicap of 2. There was one unusual feature about the handicaps; they were taken by holes rather than by strokes, thus in the first round Leslie Balfour playing J.T. Inglis (6 handicap) started the match 6 down. Balfour worked his way through the draw, which, as at Hoylake, allowed for both contestants in a halved match to go forward to the next round. This resulted in Captain Craigie and Gilbert Mitchell Innes having to replay their semi-final, with Balfour waiting for the winner. His opponent was Captain Craigie, with an allowance of twelve, whom 'The Field' reported as "a second class player, exhibiting a steady and cautious game all through". Leslie Balfour took 48 strokes to the turn in the final. He had won five of the first eight holes, reducing the deficit to seven down, but Captain Craigie won the End

hole to be to be eight up with nine to play and two further halved holes secured the match. The explanation for Balfour's poor play was that he had "such an indifferent player for his opponent", but as 'The Field' pointed out "the result of the competition clearly demonstrates that any member of the Royal and Ancient need never despair of winning at least one medal". Thus Captain Craigie became the first winner of the Calcutta Cup.'

Today the Calcutta Cup is played for each year at the R & A as the premier Foursomes competition.



### The Royal Calcutta Millennium Plate.

The Royal Calcutta Millennium Plate was presented to the R & A in 2000 by the Royal Calcutta Golf Club and is played for each year by the 1st round losers competing in the premier Singles Matchplay competition, the Queen Victoria Jubilee Vase.

## 2. The Royal Blackheath Golf Club

### The Calcutta Cup



Extracts from 'Four Hundred Years of the Blackheath Goffer' records that, 'the (club's) minutes of 12th June 1830 record 'the formation of a Golf Club at Dum Dum, a north- eastern suburb of Calcutta, and it was christened as the Dum Dum Golf Club'. The first official newspaper report of its existence was

recorded on 23rd December 1830 when the Oriental Sporting Magazine stated; 'We have much pleasure in publishing the list of subscribers to the Dum Dum Golf Club and congratulate them on the prospect of seeing the noble and gentleman-like game established in Bengal'.

'Prosperity to it' was the toast proposed from Blackheath and the Secretary was requested to forward the Captain of this new club a copy of the Rules of Blackheath Golf Club'.

Some time later, the minutes of 12th October 1833 record the Club's delight at the visit of Major H L Playfair of the Dum Dum Golf Club to Blackheath. He is described as, the founder of Golf in the East Indies' and the members drank to him and the Dum Dum Golf Club 'with all the honours'. In his response the Major related, 'that when he left India the number of Golfers throughout the vast territory exceeded 1,100' – almost certainly post-prandial hyperbole'. In due course the Dum Dum Golf Club became the Calcutta Golf Club.

The '400 Years of the Blackheath Goffer' goes on to record that, 'In a letter to the Club dated 11th December 1873, the Secretary of the Calcutta Golf Club records with thanks the arrival of a 'handsome Gold Medal presented by the Royal Blackheath Golf Club'. In a letter dated 17th November 1875 the ex-Secretary of the Calcutta Golf Club, Mr James Dods, then living in England, records the arrival of, 'the long promised Silver Cup, the Calcutta Cup, ordered two years previously by Dods for presentation to Blackheath; an earlier one had been rejected by the donor as not being up to scratch. The cup is reputedly fashioned out of the same hoard of silver rupees from which the later England-Scotland rugby trophy was made, first competed for in 1879'.

The Calcutta Cup was first competed for on Tuesday 21st July 1875 and won by Walter Henry Richardson with a score of 141 (gross) 131 (net).

### 3. **Calcutta Golf Society**

#### **Burmah Cup**



See "History of the Society" for the background to this cup which is awarded to the Society member with the lowest scratch score at our Spring Meeting.

## Margrett Bowl



See “History of the Society” for the background to this cup awarded to the winners of the Society match against Walton Heathens.

## Fred Fidler Trophy



The origin of the Society’s match against Royal Lytham & St Annes began when Fred Fidler and two Calcutta Golf Society members, Mike Alderson and Mike Hussey, who were all long time friends, played regularly together in Oxfordshire.

Fred retired and moved to Lytham where, having been a country member, he converted to becoming a full time member of Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club. His golf games with the 2 Mikes continued and, over time, an idea was conceived to hold an informal friendly match between our Society and Royal Lytham members. These matches were very successful and Fred was able to use his good offices with the Club to transition the informal match into a regular organised Club fixture.

It was in acknowledgement of this that, on his death in 2022, our Society wanted formally to recognise his efforts in the creation of this prestigious fixture in our calendar. With the agreement of the Club, we commissioned the Fred Fidler Trophy which is awarded at the end of our annual match. The trophy carries the words “Honourable Draw”, words that Fred himself always used to describe the result of the match. He felt that the result itself was secondary to the friendship that the fixture had generated.

## Puja Trophy



This Cup was originally won by Angus Paterson, a Scotsman born in Inverness in 1865, who moved to Calcutta where he worked as a merchant. He was a member of the Calcutta Golf Club and it was there in 1910 that he won this Cup which bears the following inscription:

“Calcutta Golf Club Ltd. Puja Handicap. Won by A.S. Paterson. October 1910.”

The Cup is a fine example of Calcutta silver much in vogue at the time with a repoussé scene of rural life.

This cup (and the Paterson Cup, see below) was donated to our Society in 2023 by Angus’ great niece who had come upon the cups by chance in her attic!

The Society Committee decided that the Cup should be called the Puja Trophy and it is awarded to the winning team at the Society’s biennial Charity Day.

## Paterson Cup



For more background on Angus Paterson, please see the narrative under “Puja Trophy” above.

As well as being a member of the Calcutta Golf Club, Angus was also a member of the Calcutta Light Horse Cavalry Regiment, a regiment in the British Indian Army.

It was in this guise, as Trooper A.S. Paterson, that he won this silver cup, the Calcutta Light Horse Annual Handicap in 1891.

As with the Puja Trophy, the cup was kindly given to our Society by Angus Paterson’s great niece in 2023.

It is awarded to the winning pair at the Society’s Summer Meeting.