

The Golf Chronicles

Golf Stories from the Pennsylvania Heartland

Byron Nelson
Reading CC Pro
1937-39



Number 109 • December 31, 2023

A Golfing Life

Edith Quier came from a golfing and newspapering family. Her grandfather, Jesse G. Hawley, founded the *Reading Eagle*. Her brother, Hawley, was the publisher of the *Reading Eagle* and *Reading Times* and founder of Moselem Springs Golf Club.

She married Harrison F. Flippin on June 12, 1937. Two of her children, James C. and William S., were Reading Eagle Company executives. Her daughter, Lucy Lee Flippin, was an accomplished film and television actor.

For more than a decade, the Flippins lived in Ardmore, adjacent to the first hole at Merion Golf Club's east course. She was at times a member at Berkshire, Huntingdon Valley, Merion and Moselem Springs

In addition to competing with golf royalty, Miss Quier also flirted with literary greatness. Writing in her book *The Genteel John O'Hara* (Peter Lang, AG, International Academic Publishers), Pamela C. MacArthur reports that O'Hara, a Pottsville native who became a bestselling author in his 20s, with *Appointment in Samarra* and *Butterfield 8*, met Miss Quier at the Raja Temple in Reading at a dance in December 1927.

O'Hara was quite taken with Miss Quier and even confessed to friends that he fell in love that night. Although Miss Quier invited him to a dance at her house, the romance did not flourish. A crestfallen O'Hara confided in a letter to a friend that he had dreamed of working in New York and "...calling her up once a week or so and saving my pennies for visits to Reading!"

Edith Encounters the Great RTJ

Edith Quier found herself in the company of greatness on July 5, 1931. Playing at the Carmago Club in Cincinnati, she teamed with Watts Gunn in a fourball match against Marion Bennett, New Britain, Conn., and Mr. Robert T. Jones himself.

Jones was just one year removed from his glorious grand slam. Although he retired from competitive golf, Bobby was still very much the games biggest draw, as evidenced by the crowd of 3,500 who came out to witness the charity match.

The Jones-Bennett team edged the Gunn-Quier duo, 1 up.

Jones shot 36, one over par, on the front nine. His 39 coming home included a double-bogey on 13 and a three-putt bogey from 20 feet on 16. Miss Quier impressed the gallery and Lou Smith, the Cincinnati Enquirer sports writer, with her play. Edith's 41-39—80 was just one stroke off the women's course record.

Vividly colored umbrellas added splashes of cheer to the match played in a gloomy gray rain.

Here's the description of Edith's play on the par 5 17th hole.

"She electrified the gallery by winning the long seventeenth with a birdie four. She played this hole like a Glenna Collett and Joyce Wethered rolled into one. She banged out a long drive, followed this up with a fine brassie from a rather bad lie. Her iron shot stopped about 15 feet short of the cup and after taking one or two squints of the line, knocked it in for the greatest birdie of the day.

"It was Miss Quier's sensational play that kept her and Watts Gunn in the match."

Watts Gunn and Jones were friends. Both attended Georgia Tech and both were members of East Lake Golf club in Atlanta. The two met in the final match for the U.S. amateur championship in 1925 at Oakmont country Club, the only time two players from the same club ever met for the U.S. Amateur crown. Jones won the 36-hole match, 8 and 7. In 1927, Gunn won the national intercollegiate golf championship.

Elsewhere in the Enquirer, Miss Quier was described as "...wearing a white skirt and pale slip-over sweater of flesh tint, most becoming for her fair hair." Of Miss Bennett, the writer observed that "...she is as dark as Miss Quier is blond, being gowned in a white skirt and sweater of white, her dark tresses bound by a beret of the same material."

Miss Bennett and Miss Quier were members of the international team that played the British team in a 1930 challenge match in England. They also played in the 1930 British amateur. Miss Bennett lost her first-round match, while Miss Quier bowed out in the second round.