

PRESENTATION SPEECH  
ROYAL DORNOCH GOLF VILLAGE  
AND  
THE COUNTRY CLUB OF NORTH CAROLINA

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1972

Mr. President, members of the Country Club and citizens of the Royal Dornoch Golf Village, North Carolina, I come to you today as the envoy of The Royal Burgh of Dornoch, envoy also of the Royal Golf Club of Dornoch, historic centre of law, religion and education in the County of Sutherland in the far North of Scotland.

The Provost, the Town Council and the citizens of Dornoch along with the Captain, the Committee and the members of the Royal Dornoch Golf Club in that ancient town across the Ocean greet you all and with this greeting extend to you the hand of fellowship and kinship. As symbol of this fellowship, I, on behalf of the Burgh and the Golf Club, now present to you the Coat of Arms of Dornoch, in replica along with the accompanying interpretation of the same. Also this illuminated message from the Golf Club as tokens of our interest in a common heritage and devotion to the Royal and Ancient Game of Golf.

In adopting the name of historic Dornoch here in North Carolina, you commemorate and honour the name and achievements of Donald Ross, Dornoch golfer and American citizen. We in Old Dornoch, Scotland share with you in this commemoration and honour of Donald Ross. His very name stands for golf as it stands also for



his native Highland town, Dornoch, in the County of Sutherland, Scotland across the Ocean.

Sutherland County - "Suderland," the "south land" to the Viking Northmen of a thousand years ago - is wild and rocky on the west and north coasts where it is exposed to the waves and occasional wrath of the Atlantic Ocean; it slopes gently towards the southeast where, in aeons of time, the North Sea and the southeast winds have built up undulating savannahs of fine turf with headlands, promontories and hillocks in great variety. Thus favoured by the forces of nature, this southeast part of the County invited human habitation from very early times. Law, religion and education became established there. The Cathedral was completed by 1245 A. D.; the "Dornoch Castle" of today was the "Bishop's Palace" of seven hundred years ago. As early as 1610 golf was played on the Dornoch Links and the old town was honoured by the grant of his royal charter in 1628 by Charles the First, the second Stuart King of the United Kingdom.

Dornoch and County golfers instituted the Dornoch Golf Club in 1877; one of the earliest of golf clubs. In 1886 the St. Andrews veteran Open Champion, "Old Tom Morris" was brought to the northern links to plan the eighteen holes golf course. Delighted with the terrain, especially with the numerous hillocks - the Dornoch plateau greens of today - Old Tom made the golfing plan which is basic to this day for Royal Dornoch.



The House of Sutherland, Earls and later Dukes, favoured Dornoch through centuries; restored the Cathedral from a ruined state in 1820 so that today it is still the distinguished place of worship; historic members of the Sutherland family are buried there. Early in the present century, when visiting Dunrobin Castle, ancestral home of the Earle of Sutherland, King Edward VII conferred the prestige of the Royal title upon the Golf Club. Since that time it has been The Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

Andrew Carnegie, Scot-American steel magnate, of Pittsburgh, United States of America, and of Skibo Castle, Dornoch, was always a generous patron of Dornoch Golf. Ever since it was donated in 1900, the splendid silver "Carnegie Shield", the Club's most coveted Match-play trophy, has had nation-wide appeal each August for ambitious, low-handicap golfers; some famous names are inscribed upon it.

In the realm of golf, Dornoch - population one thousand - has sent overseas, especially to America, quite a number of golfers who have prospered as golf teachers and players in the New World. Among these the first in time to carry the skill and the disciplines of Dornoch golf to America was Donald Ross. His name remains the outstanding Highland Scottish name in golfing achievement. During his lifetime, he planned and built over five hundred golf courses in The United States and Canada.



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Here I venture to mention a few among the many names of those who, in the past hundred years, have been linked creatively with the development of Dornoch golf - both Club and Course: Chief Constable (County) A. M. McHardy, a leading founding member in 1877; "Old Tom Morris", golf architect; Rev. Dr. Donald Grant, Minister of the Cathedral and about 1905, captain of the Golf Club; A. J. Ryle, R.A. (London Artist), a great captain of the Club before World War One, and, co-operating ably with Captain Ryle, the local businessman, John Sutherland, golfer, student of greenkeeping, golf writer and legislator, who served the Dornoch Golf Club as Secretary for over fifty years.

I never forget the notable fact of geography, that Dornoch is about one thousand miles nearer the North Pole than the new Dornoch in North Carolina. Fifty-eight degrees north of the equator, Dornoch is on the latitude of Labrador and Hudson Bay. In Dornoch, we play golf all year round on the most northerly first class golf course in the world. As a school boy I have played golf on each and every day of the year, on fine grassy terrain, during the short days of winter and the long days of summer. Often I have played by daylight after 11:00 near midnight. Unique golfing features indeed, affording unique pleasure!

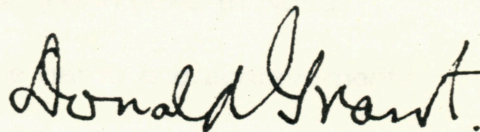
Finally, Mr. President and friends, in making this presentation



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to you here today, under southern skies and among pinewoods reminding me of my native land, I call up one more factor in our common heritage which from now on we can consciously share, namely the Gulf Stream. The Gulf Stream is not only a terrestrial factor, an ocean current; it is a cosmic element, linked with and created by the system of sun, moon and stars circling in their courses, creative, life-giving. Moving out from the Caribbean, the Gulf Stream swings across the Ocean; it washes the wild west coast of Scotland and more gently laves the North Sea shores, maintaining there a climate which gives us, under far northern skies, pleasant living, winter and summer. For all this we thank the Creator.

On behalf of Old Dornoch, Royal Burgh and Royal Golf Club, I have deep pleasure in presenting to you, Mr. President, golfers and citizens all, for the Country Club of North Carolina and Royal Dornoch Golf Village here, this fraternal message from the Golf Club and this Coat of Arms from the ancient and Royal Burgh of Dornoch, town and people, as symbol of our fellowship and kinship. Mr. President, I give you my hand in brotherly greeting and invoke the blessing of Almighty God upon us all.



Donald Grant

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