



A. J. Hood (left) and Alex Ross snapped last night at the Detroit Golf Club by a News staff photographer. Hood is the only surviving member of a committee of three who hired Ross as pro 30 years ago. In a tribute to Ross, Hood stressed the friendship that had grown out of their long relationship.

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## A Letter and a Poem 1945

By HARRY LEDUC

They came last night not to bury Alex Ross but to praise him, and they did—Nathaniel Reese, the chairman, Mayor Jeffries, Judge James Chenot, Judge Arthur Lacy, A. J. Hood, Dr. W. W. McGregor and several others.

Ross, 65 years old, was retiring as pro after 30 years of service (come next March) at the Detroit Golf Club. To memorialize the severance there were cocktails, a dinner, bagpipes, kilt-clad dancing lassies, an emulator of Harry Lauder, Harry MacDonald leading such songs as Annie Laurie, Flow Gently Sweet Afton and Comin' Thro' the Rye—and touching speeches to which some 150 silver-haired or thin-thatched men of the 900 who constitute the club's membership listened with rapt attention.

### GIFTS GIVEN HIM

Limaxing the night was the announcement of a gift of \$3,500 in bonds to the U. S. Open champion of 1907, and a life membership.

Only one man was present who was capable of taking down all the excellent encomium heaped on the head of the person who was born in Dornoch, Scotland, and who came to this country in 1900. That was Bert Connolly, champion court stenographer of America, but Bert,

a veteran member, was there to worship, not to work.

The night, however, evolved two things that served to tell the story of the occasion. One was a letter from Alex's brother, the famous course-designer, Donald Ross, now 72 years old and pro at Pinehurst. The other was a poem by Eddie Guest.

### HIS BROTHER'S TRIBUTE

Donald Ross was invited, all expenses paid, but health prevented his acceptance so he wrote his regrets and added:

"I should very much like to be present. There are many stories I could tell, particularly of Alex's golfing career in this country. Being the older brother it was left to me to order him about occasionally and, as you would expect, he generally told me to mind my own business . . .

"Alex is a loyal friend and a beloved brother. He has a heart of gold and is full of kindly sentiment but he has a hard time showing it, which is characteristic of the Scotch . . .

"Alex had a full part in the early development of golf in America. He was a great player, a lover of golf and he believed in its finest traditions. He was a good loser as well as a modest winner."

Mayor Jeffries, who was practically the juvenile among those  
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## Ross

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present, read the brother's letter. He did it understandingly and fervently, but with no more fervor than Judge Lacy read the Guest poem, which Guest titled simply "Alex Ross."

The poem:

Thirty years' service now comes, to a close!

How shall we honor this finest of pro's?

Never the work of him sordid or mean,

Never the touch of his fingers unclean!

Thirty years' service! And always the same!

Giving his best—for the love of the game.

Friend of us all—the good player or dub.

Friend from the first to the close of our club.

Never a whisper that games which he played

Were merely for money he knew could be made.

Never a hint that would blemish his fame—

Always he played for the love of the game.

Thirty years with us! And we who are old

Remember that never his favor was sold.

True as God makes us, he squared to the test

By giving to all he encountered his best.

Honor him now? Through the years we discuss,

This is the straight of it—he honored us!

Thirty years' service! And all of them fine!

What, for this record, should be the last line?

Come, let us say it before the night's end,

Proud are we all to have had him for friend,

Proud are we all now to honor his name—

He who served only the good of the game.

The poem, tastefully scrolled, will be framed and hung in the DGC locker room.

### ONLY TO PRAISE HIM

Not a word was said about who may succeed Ross as the club's pro. They came last night, did the Old Guard, neither to bury Alex Ross nor to name his successor, but to praise him.

And they did.

How much the 150 out of a 900 membership will have to say about the one who succeeds him remains a matter of conjecture.