

# News from the Stow Historical Society

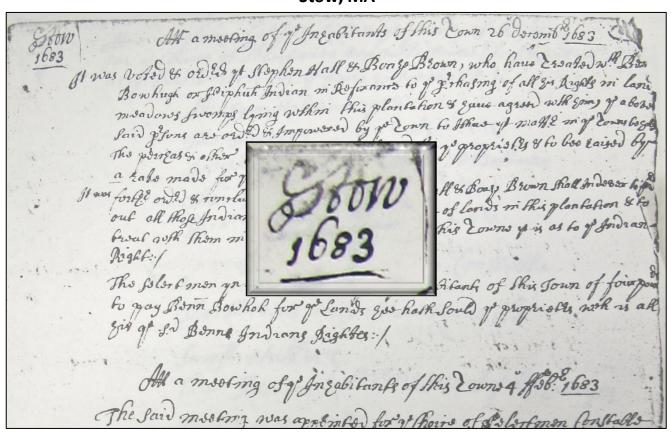
A newsletter for all friends of Stow history.

Please feel free to pass it along to others who might be interested!

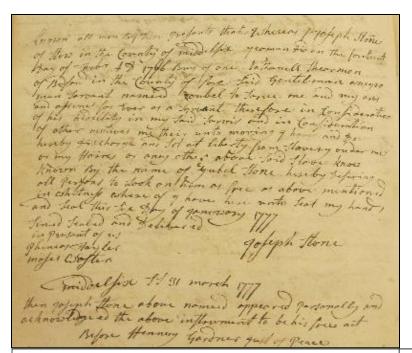
February 04, 2022

#### In this issue:

# Black History Month Robert H. Hawkins & the Creation of Mapledale C. C. in 1926 Stow, MA



Stow, Massachusetts, founded in 1683, has a rich collection of surviving historical documents. These annuals record a vivid account of the town's Puritan lineage. (1) In family histories there is occasional evidence of Black servants.



#### **Black Slave Freed in Stow**

Documentation of a Black servant/slave was written on March 31, 1777, when Stow moderator Henry Gardner, of American Revolution fame, recorded it after the March 3, 1777, Town Meeting minutes. Youbel Stone, servant of Joseph Stone was freed from slavery on January 6, 1777. Youbel had been bought in Bedford on February 14, 1766, from the Rev. Nathaniel Sherman. (1)

#### THE DOCUMENT as Written

Known all men By these presants that Whereas I Joseph Stone of Stow in the County of Middelsix yeoman did on the foreteenth Day of Febr AD 1766 Buy of one Nathanell Shearmon of Bedford in the County of fore said Gentleman a negro man sarvant named Youbel to sorve me and my ones and assines for ever as a sarvant therefore in Consideration of his Fidellity in my Said Sarvis and in Consideration of other motives me their unto moving I have and Do hereby dischorge and Set at liberty from slavery onder me or my Haires or aney other above Said Slave know known By the name of Yubel Stone herby Defining all persons to Look on him as free as above mentioned in whitness where of I have here unto Seal my hands and Seal this Six Day of Januwory 1777 Sined Sealed and Delivered

Joseph Stone

In Presant of us Phineas Tayler Moses Woster

Middelsix ss 31 march 1777

then Joseph Stone above named appeared personally and acknowledged the above instrument to be his free act

Before Hennery Gardner just of Peace

#### **THE DOCUMENT Transcribed**

Know all men by these present that whereas I Joseph Stone of Stow in the County of Middlesex, yeoman, did on the fourteenth day of February A.D. 1766 buy of one Nathanell Shearmon of Bedford in the county of foresaid gentleman, a negro man servant named Youbel to serve me and my ones and assigns forever as a servant. Therefore, in consideration of his fidelity in my said service and in consideration of other motives [by] me therein unto moving, I have and do hereby discharge and set at liberty from slavery under me or my heirs or any other above. Said slave now known by the name of Youbel Stone hereby defining all persons to look on him as free as above mentioned in witness where of I have here unto seal my hands and seal this six day of January 1777.

Signed, sealed, and delivered.

Joseph Stone

In presence of us Phineas Taylor, Jr. Moses Worster

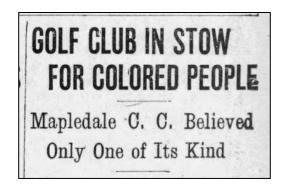
Middlesex ss 31 March 1777

Then Joseph Stone, above named, appeared personally and Acknowledged the above instrument to be his free act.

Before Henry Gardner, Justice of Peace

ss = Latin *scilicet*, meaning, that is to say, namely Stow TV's documentary of Robert H. Hawkins and Mapledale Golf Course in Stow is on YouTube:

https://voutu.be/trEzfbdZIKc.



The Boston Evening Globe, August 5, 1926 (2)

Yes, Stow's remarkable connection to Black History Month began in 1926 when the black Mapledale Country Club was established in town.

This black golf course has received meager coverage in Stow's recent history. The reality is that black golf has required resourcefulness on the part of researchers to locate early stories buried in the archives of Black newspapers such as *The Pittsburgh* (PA) *Courier, The Chicago Defender*, and *The Baltimore Afro-American*. It is a tribute to *The Boston Globe* that articles about Mapledale were published and are easily accessible.

African American Golf Clubs in the Early Development of Black Golf

MARVIN P. DAWKINS- UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI JOMILLS H. BRADDOCK, II- UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SHELBY GILBERT- FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY The history of black golf dates back to the 1890's. In academia this has been a well-documented history. One recent study was published January 2018 in *The Western Journal of Black Studies, Vol 42, No. 1, 2018.* 

These professors wrote on page 2 of their document that "the earliest African American golf clubs sought to develop golf as a sport that would be interwoven into the social fabric of black life at both elite and grassroots levels and free of barriers to enjoyment and participation for blacks, generally, but especially for the most successful African American golfers seeking to pursue the sport as a career." (3)



Detroit, MI, 1905 (4) C "Shady Rest", the Negro country club at Westfield, N. J., is one year old and has 200 members. It has a nine hole golf course.

AT "SHADY REST

Shady Rest, NJ Ca. 1922-1925 (5)

John Shippen Sr. 2<sup>nd</sup> from left, c. 1925 (6)





In 1896, 16-year-old John M. Shippen (7) became the first African American professional golfer when he played at the second U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in New York.

Shippen worked the grounds as a teenager at the golf club, before becoming a caddie and ultimately an expert golfer. Prior to the start of the tournament, some club members had been so impressed with Shippen's talent for the game that they

decided to pay his entry fee for the tournament, along with that of his close friend, Oscar Dunn, a Shinnecock Indian.

When the professional entrants threatened to boycott the event, they backed down only after USGA

president Theodore Havemeyer stated that the tournament would proceed even if only Shippen and Dunn took part.

Desegregation in golf happened very slowly. The United Golfers Association (UGA) (8) was organized by blacks in 1925 and Mapledale Country Club in Stow, Massachusetts became one of the first Black owned and operated golf courses.



# Land with buildings in Stow was bought and developed by the visionary Robert Hawkins in February 1926.



The Pittsburg Courier, a Black owned newspaper, paid tribute to Robert Hawkins. "Hawkins, who was chiefly responsible for organizing what is now known as the United Golfers Association, Inc., sponsored the first of three consecutive national golf tournaments for Negroes at Mapledale [in 1926]. As a result of this venture, he became known as the "Father of Negro Golf." (9)

The Pittsburg Courier on Saturday, February 2, 1952, page 14

Robert Hawkins was a stocky man with a round face and known for his engaging personality. His

WWI draft registration stated he lived in Montpelier, VT, was 29 years old, single, and self-employed. Asked if anyone was dependent upon him, Robert wrote "Father is solely" dependent upon him, "except he takes care of two lawns." (10)



Robert Hawkins was born in Adams, Berkshire County, MA, November 13, 1888, the son of a coachman. (11)

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At a youthful age he caddied at Forest Park Club in Adams, MA and learned the game, which is how all black golfers of this era began. In 1902 the Hawkins family moved to Burlington, VT, where Robert attended high school and caddied at Waubanakee Club, rising to caddy master.

After high school graduation in 1907, he turned to golf clubhouse work for a livelihood. In this work he elevated himself to the position of steward of some of the finest country clubs in Vermont.





In the1920's Robert Hawkins went on to became general manager of Sandy Burr Country Club in Wayland MA, the first black person to reach that position in New England. At Sandy Burr, he got the idea of owning his own country club for Blacks.

(13)

In 1926, Hawkins bought the Dr. John W. Randall Estate in Stow for \$10,000 from George J. Wilson. The deed stated it contained 160 acres. There was a large twentyroom mansion and was about twenty-five miles outside of Boston, which made it a destination spot. On this estate he built a nine-hole golf course and provided facilities for horseback riding, tennis and winter sports, and the place became known as Mapledale Country Club.



The deed at the South Middlesex Registry of Deeds in Cambridge, MA described this property in detail. (14)

first mentioned. Subject to a mortgage of Ten Thousand Dollars and no other incumbrances. The conveyance herein, includes all livestock, poultry, crops, hay in barns, furniture, wagons, farming implements and etc, now located on and used in connection with the farm herein conveyed known as the Randall farm, (Excepting and reserving therefrom one range and machine and furniture and furnishings being property of one Ray L. Brooks) WITNESS my hand and seal this 27th day of February 1926. George J. Wilson (seal) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS. Suffolk, ss. Boston; February 27, 1926. Then personally appeared the above named George J. Wilson and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be his free act and deed, before me, Margaret R. McMullen, Notary Public. My commission expires June 3, 1932.

Middlesex ss. Feb. 27, 1926. 11h.31m. A.M. Rec'd & Recorded.

Two black Washington, D.C. doctors, Dr. George Adams and Dr. Albert Harris, who enjoyed golfing in New England, lent their assistance in the organization of the first three Negro National Open Championships to be held at Mapledale in 1926, 1927, and 1928.

Mapledale was a 9-hole course in August 1926. Ralph Thomas, professional at Sandy Burr, Newton, laid out the links for additional nine holes to be started in the spring of 1927.

The August 5, 1926, a correspondent *The Boston Evening Globe* wrote that "The main building at Mapledale is of the colonial type.

"There were 18 rooms in the structure, and it is being rapidly transformed into a home fitted modernly. There is at present to be completed the large dancing room and some minor



(1)

details in lighting and plumbing. Also, the men's locker room, in a separate building, will not be ready for probably another week.

"There are rooms where the people may spend a day, a week or weeks, during vacation periods, where they may have practically all the enjoyments of other real golf and country clubs, and at very reasonable rates. The maximum fee for membership in \$25 and the minimum is \$15.

"When the proposition is in full swing there will be in addition to golf, tennis, trap and gallery shooting, croquet, quoits, and horseback riding for Summer sports, as well as the Winter enjoyments, for Mapledale will be an all-year-round proposition."

# GOLF CLUB IN STOW FOR COLORED PEOPLE

Mapledale C. C. Believed Only One of Its Kind

A golf and country club exclusively for colored people is the most recent addition to the Bay State's quota of clubs.

This organization, which is known as the Mapledale Country Club, is situated in Stow, and as near as can be recalled is the only one of its kind in the country.

The Mapledale Club is the creation of Robery H. Hawkins, who for many years has been connected with the administration of country clubs in this vicinity. Hawkins at the present time is connected with the Sandy Burr G. C. of Wayland, but is expected to leave the latter organization the middle of this month to devote all his efforts toward the development of this new and unique club.

Mapledale is a nine-hole layout, and forms but a part of the 190 acres in the property, which gives plenty of room for further development of the course. Ralph Thomas, professional at Sandy Burr, laid out the links, and he has already drawn plans for additional nine, to be started next Spring. The present nine-hole course was opened for play early this season, and while temporary greens have been used so far, the permanent putting surfaces, it is expected, will be playable within a fortnight.

Stow's new club, it is proposed will be the scene of the first colored open

Stow's new club, it is proposed will be the scene of the first colored open golf championship held in the United States. Labor Day is the tentative date set for the event, and the officials have announced that already entries have been received from points as far distant as Chicago and Washington. Prize money to the sum of \$300 has been raised for the contestants to play for.

The main building at Mapledale is of the colonial type.

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Mapledale's 1926 Labor Day Negro National Open Championship featured 35 players including the renowned **Walter Speedy**, Chicago's first champion black golfer, who had begun the movement to organize golf clubs for African American players for social contacts and interactions and for the safety in numbers. He was a prominent black spokesperson for Mapledale's early success.

Chicago's first champion black golfer, Walter Speedy, in 1915 (15)

The Mapledale's 1927 Labor Day tournament featured Chicago's **Robert Ball** (16),





Washington, D.C,'s John Shippen, Sr. (7) and Jr., and Stow's Robert Hawkins among many from around the country.

## ROBERT BALL OF CHICAGO LEADING COLORED GOLFERS

STOW, Sept 4—In the first round in the colored open golf championship of the United States on the course of the Mapledale Country Club today, Robert Ball of Chicago, Cook County cnampion, led the field, scoring 150, Harry Jackson, of Washington, D C, present holder of the cup, scoring 162.

Twenty-five golfers from all parts of the United States competed for custody of the championship cup for one year, championship medal and \$300 in cash. Play will be resumed tomorrow. Tonight the association held a business meeting and visiting players were tendered dinner by the Maplewood Club. Tomorrow evening at a ball, the prizes will be awarded by Hon William A. Heathman, Providence, R I,

The tournament is conducted under direction of B. C. Gordon, association president, of Newark, N J.

These 15 qualified today for the unal competition—Robert Ball, 75—75—150; Clifford Edmunds, Chicago, 76—80—158; J. Shippen Sr, Washington, 79—79—158; Landry Taylor, Norfolk, Va., 76—85—161; Howard Anderson, New Jersey, 78—84—162; Harry Jackson, Washington, 84—78—162.

Porter Washington, Chicago, 76-86—162; George Aarons, New York, 79-85—164; Elmer Stout, New Jersey, 81-78-165; J. Shippen Jr, Washington, 80-89-169; Robert Petty, Pinehurs, N. C., 85-85-170; Bertram Æarker, Washington, Chicago, 86-86-172.
R. H. Hawkins, Boston, 86-88-174;

B. R. Coombs, Pocassett, 82-94-176; Lawrence Frierson, Chicago, 90-92-182.

> The Boston Daily Globe, September 5, 1927 (17)

This was a 72-hole tournament, 36 holes on Sunday and 36 holes on Monday.

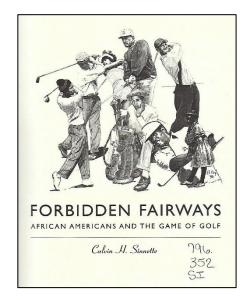
The tournament culminated with a ball, the evening of September 5, 1927.

## **NEGRO GOLFERS TO MEET PROS SEPT 2** Interesting Tilt Carded at Mapledale C. C. The Boston Evening Globe,

August 23, 1928 (18)

Mapledale's 1928 Labor Day Negro National Open Championship featured *Meet the Pros.* "This 18-hole exhibition match would be George Aulback, N.E.P.G.A. champion and Jack Curley, Stoney Brae pro [from Newton] against Robert P. Ball, the national, colored open champion and Porter W. Washington, pro at Mapledale." "This would be the first time in the history of golf that local fans would have had an opportunity to see two of New England's finest golfers matched against two crack negro players."

Further information about this 1928 tournament was located on page 62 of Calvin H. Sinnette's book, Forbidden Fairways African Americans and the Game of Golf. (19) Here he wrote, "A total of \$300 in prize money was awarded, and the top professional received \$100. At the conclusion of the event there was an elaborate program/dinner dance, and prizes awarded for the longest drive, best dressed golfer, and the owner of the "best looking set of clubs.""



Mapledale's Porter Washington led the field of "colored golfers" in the 1928 semifinals. This would be the final tournament held at Mapledale. (20)

## PORTER WASHINGTON LEADS FIELD OF COLORED GOLFERS

STOWE, Sept 2-Porter Washington, Mapledale pro, turned in the lowest card, a 66, in the semifinals of United States colored open golf championship tournament held at Mapledale Country Club here today. Robert Ball, of Chicago, 1927 titlist, placed second with 73. In getting the 66, Washington equalled the course par the first time ever accomplished. The scores turned in, open:

Robert Hawkin's vision, for which he had spent \$25,000 in personal savings and borrowed over \$5,000 ended with the Depression and lack of black support for Mapledale. On October 3, 1931, *The Boston Globe* listed those in "Business Troubles." Included was Robert H. Hawkins.

Robert H. Hawkins, laborer, Stow, has filed a petition in bankruptcy. Liabilities \$8401; no assets. (21)



The South Middlesex Registry of Deeds in Cambridge, Massachusetts, recorded 26 deeds between February 27, 1926 and October 6, 1930 where Robert Hawkins had used private investors to fund his payments and improve the property.

Photo (22)

# The Stow Enterprise

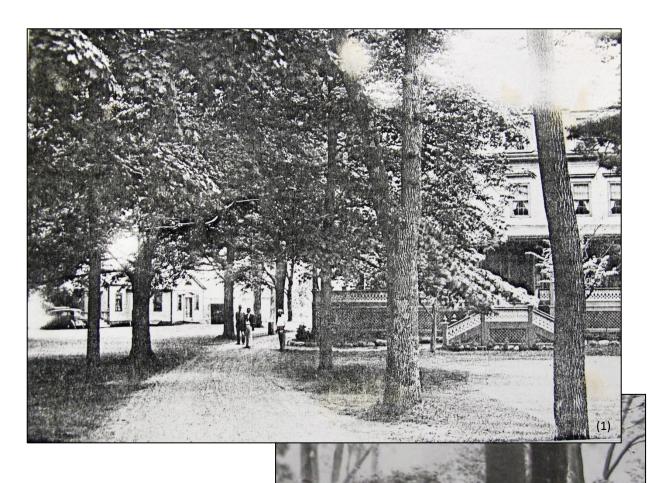
On October 6, 1930, there was a foreclosure Public Auction where Cecilia D. Mayr bought the property for \$5,000. It had been advertised in the *Stow-News Enterprise* on the 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> of September. (23)

107. The conveyance herein includes all live stock, which now consists of two horses, four cows and two calves, all poultry, crops, hay in barn wagons and all farming implements now located and used in connection wit the premises herein conveyed; all furnaces, heaters, ranges, mantels, gas and electric fixtures, screens, screen doors, awnings and all other fixtures of whatever nature and kind at present contained in said building or buildings and hereafter placed therein prior to the full payment and discharge of this mortgage; including also all furniture, linen and furnishing, dishes, (excepting and reserving therefrom one piano, one radio set, all bed linen which belong to my wife) subject, however to any personal property lease which may be held by Hopkins Furniture Company on household furniture and lease held by Oliver Briggs on pool table. Terms

This 4-page deed included all live stock, which consisted of two horses, four cows and two calves, all poultry, crops, hay in barns, wagons, and all farming implements; all furnaces, heaters, ranges, mantels, gas and electric fixtures, screens, screen doors, awnings; all furniture, linen, furnishings, dishes, ("excepting and reserving one piano, one radio set, and all bed linen which belong to my wife") subject, however, to any personal property lease which may be held by Hopkins Furniture Company on household furniture and lease held by Oliver Briggs on pool table.

On November 14, 1930, Cecilia D. Mayr sold the property to Grace P. Sweeter who sold it to Charles M Cox on November 15, 1930. Here began the era of Stow Acres Country Club.

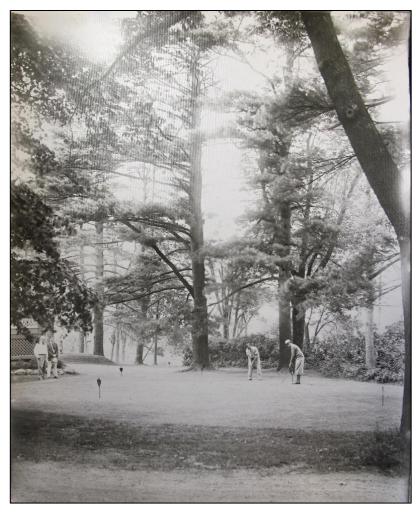
# Stow Acres Country Club photos from the early 1930's archived in the Stow Town Vault



(1)



(1)



(1)



On August 20, 1941, *The Boston Globe's* correspondent attended the16<sup>th</sup> annual Negro National Golf Tournament played at Ponkapoag Golf Course in Canton, MA. For many of 150 players from across the United States, who crowded into the clubhouse, this day's driving rainstorm was their first experience of New England weather.

# Mirth Prevails at Negro Tourney Despite Deluge

DAILY BOOST-To Teddy Williams for slamming three homers in yesterday's doubleheaders.

#### By HAROLD KAESE

In place of confusion, mirth reigned—but confusion ran a good second! They had started in the rain, most of them, but it was the rain that forced them off the course and brought about cancelation of the first day's play in the 16th Negro national golf tournament at Ponkapoag yesterday.



### A Tribute to Robert Hawkins August 20, 1941

## Y Y Y Porter Washington Under in 14 Holes

Porter Washington, the local Negro pro who played in the first championship at Stow in 1926, and who was one under par for 14 holes yesterday, was in the room. So was Walter Speedy of Chicago, who helped start this tournament.

"It was Bob Hawkins' idea," he admitted. "He kept writing me in Chicago about a tournament, and finally I agreed to bring some players to Mapledale from my club in Chicago. Seven came with me, and there were 31 players in all at Mapledale in 1926."

That 1926 tournament paved the way for the organization of the U. G. A. in 1930, and now the U. G. A. is the leading sponsor of Negro golf in the country, although it has some competitors. There are 16 affiliated clubs, one of them the Bay State Golf Club, and another which will represent seven Mid-West cities is expected to join momentarily.

The Boston Globe, August 20, 1941 (24)

**Porter Washington, Mapledale's former pro** and **Chicago's Walter Speedy** were among those in the clubhouse.

"It was Bob Hawkins' idea," Walter Speedy admitted. "He kept writing me in Chicago about a tournament, and finally I agreed to bring some players to Mapledale from my club in Chicago. Seven came with me, and there were 31 players in all at Mapledale in 1926."

# Black History Month February 2022 Mapledale Country Club, Stow, Massachusetts Credits

- 1. **Primary documents** and **photos** located in the **Town of Stow vault**, accessed by Stow's Ancient Documents Committee. Accessed in January 2015.
- 2. "Golf Club in Stow for Colored People." *The Boston Evening Globe*, 05 August 1926, vol, OX, no. 36, page 13. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 3. "African American Golf Club in the Early Development of Black Golf." The Western Journal of Black Studies, Vol 42, No. 1, 2018.

  https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349574016 African American Golf Clubs in the Early Development of Black Golf. Accessed August 27, 2015.
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- Shady Rest Country Club, Westfield, NJ, ca. 1922-1925.
   <a href="http://www.blackhistoryheroes.com/2015/02/charlie-sifford-and-history-of-african.html">http://www.blackhistoryheroes.com/2015/02/charlie-sifford-and-history-of-african.html</a>. Accessed January 27, 2022.
- 6. **John Shippen, Sr., 2**<sup>nd</sup> from the left, ca. 1925 <a href="https://wach.com/sports/content/watchjohn-shippen-the-man-who-broke-the-color-barrier-at-the-1896-us-open">https://wach.com/sports/content/watchjohn-shippen-the-man-who-broke-the-color-barrier-at-the-1896-us-open</a>. Accessed January 27, 2022.
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- 9. **Robert Hawkins, "Father of Negro Golf."** *The Pittsburg Courier* on Saturday, February 2, 1952, page 14. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 10. **Robert Hawkins WWI Draft Registration**. <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/24202766:6482?tid=&pid=&queryId=159df6884b751e7db9508e6ef21506a1&\_phsrc=db\_G75&\_phstart=successSource">successSource</a>. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 11. **Robert Hawkins 1888 Birth Record**. <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1248181:5062?tid=&pid=&queryId=159df6884b751e7db9508e6ef21506a1&\_phsrc=dbG76&phstart=successSource">https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1248181:5062?tid=&pid=&queryId=159df6884b751e7db9508e6ef21506a1&\_phsrc=dbG76&phstart=successSource</a>. Accessed August 27, 2015.
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- 13. Sandy Burr Country Club, Wayland, MA. <a href="https://sandyburr.com/">https://sandyburr.com/</a>. Accessed January 27, 2022.

- 14. **South Middlesex Registry of Deeds**, George J. Wilson to Robert H. Harrison, February 27, 1926, Book 04943, Page 107. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 15. Walter Speedy, 1915. Chicago Defender, <a href="https://jpgachicago.com/jpgc/">https://jpgachicago.com/jpgc/</a>. Accessed January 27, 2022.
- 16. **Robert P. Ball.** <a href="https://africanamericangolfersdigest.com/honoring-black-golf-pioneers-and-trailblazers-throughout-black-history-month-robert-pat-ball-class-of-2015/">https://africanamericangolfersdigest.com/honoring-black-golf-pioneers-and-trailblazers-throughout-black-history-month-robert-pat-ball-class-of-2015/</a>. Accessed January 27, 2022.
- 17. "Robert Ball of Chicago Leading Colored Golfers." *The Boston Daily Globe*, 05 September 1927, vol. CXII, no. 42, page 8. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 18. "Negro Golfers to Meet Pros Sept 2." *The Boston Evening Globe*, 23 August 1928, vol. CXIV, no. 54, page 19. Accessed August 27, 2015.
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- 21. "Business Troubles." The Boston Globe, 03 October 1931, page 8, vol CXX, no. 95. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 22. **South Middlesex Registry of Deeds**, Cambridge, MA photo. Photo: cmh2315fl via Flickr. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 23. **South Middlesex Registry of Deeds**, Robert H. Hawkins to Cecilia D, Mayr, October 6, 1930, Book 05513, Page 491. Accessed August 27, 2015.
- 24. Kaese, Harold. "Mirth Prevails at Negro Tourney Despite Deluge." *The Boston Daily Globe*, 20 August 1941, vol. CXL, no. 51, page 22. Accessed August 27, 2015.

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- 33. "Golf for Everyone, African Americans in Golf." <a href="http://www.golforeveryone.com/AfricanAmericans.html">http://www.golforeveryone.com/AfricanAmericans.html</a>. Accessed January 27, 2022.