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Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

World Renowned Writers on Golf - Ian Fleming First Editions

Ian Fleming, creator of James Bond's 007 character is one of the most famous writers of the 20th century. Fleming's novels have sold over 100 million copies worldwide.ⁱ *Goldfinger* is the seventh book in Fleming's Bond series. Fleming worked in Britain's naval intelligence service during the World War II and was a member of both the Royal St. George's Golf Club in Sandwich, Kent and Huntercombe Golf Club. Huntercombe is an inland course in Oxfordshire designed by Willie Park Jr., the same designer as Sunningdale (Old). The plot of the villain in the book, Auric Goldfinger, is to seize all the gold in Ft. Knox. The book has three chapters devoted to golf where Goldfinger plays a match against Bond set at Royal St. Mark's golf course in Sandwich, which is a fictional stand-in for Royal St. George's.

Fleming tells us that Bond played his golf "on courses around London - Huntercombe, Swinley, Sunningdale, the Berkshire."ⁱⁱ

Goldfinger was first published in 1959 by Jonathan Cape, London. The cover is black cloth with gilt lettering. The dust jacket contains an image of a skull with a red rose in its teeth and is illustrated below. First editions can be identified if the verso of the title page states "First Published 1959." There were 24,000 copies of the first edition printed.ⁱⁱⁱ



One of the issues to watch out for on such a famous book is the switching of jackets. We would be cautious of any first edition of the book with a dust jacket, since many reprints were printed with a facsimile dust jacket and you have to verify that a later jacket was not put on a first edition. Given the value of the books, there is a big incentive to do this, so be cautious. A true first edition dust jacket has a price of 15s (15 shillings).^{iv}

Goldfinger was reprinted many, many times by several different publishers in both hard and softcover editions. The first American edition was published by MacMillan in 1959. The dust jacket price is \$3. This edition is identical to the U.K. first edition with the exception of the Macmillan logo replacing the Cape logo on the spine. Cape printed the U.S. edition for MacMillan and they produced 7,500 copies.^v

First editions of *Goldfinger* with the dust jacket come up for auction several times each year, including at the big auction houses and generally sell for between \$1,000 and \$1,200 or more. Copies signed by Fleming sell at many multiples of these numbers. One of the most famous copies of the book is a copy signed by Ian Fleming inscribed to golf writer and fellow Huntercombe member Henry Longhurst. This particular book is priced in the stratosphere. Generally, the first American edition sells for between \$600 and \$800 with the jacket.

The movie production of *Goldfinger* features Sean Connery as James Bond. Connery is an avid golfer himself (and in our view was easily the best of all the characters that played Bond). The scenes in the movie were not actually filmed at Royal St. George's but rather at the Stoke Park Club (Stoke Poges). After catching Goldfinger cheating, Bond switches balls on his opponent during the match. Realizing that Bond is attempting to interfere in his affairs, Goldfinger motions to Oddjob, his deadly Korean manservant and caddie, to sever the head of a nearby statue with his steel-rimmed bowler. Bond is suitably impressed, but wonders what the club secretary will have to say. Goldfinger explains smugly, "Oh nothing Mister Bond - I own the club!"^{vi} Both Bond and Goldfinger state their handicaps as nine.

The Lilly Library at the University of Indiana has the original manuscripts from all of Ian Fleming's works. Apparently, the golf match between Bond and Goldfinger was inserted into the story as an afterthought since Fleming hand wrote them into the typed manuscript.

Fleming died from a heart attack which struck him while at Royal St. George's in 1964. When our time comes, we can think of only two ways we'd like to go. One is like Fleming: we'll leave the other to your imagination.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or receive a copy of our catalog please contact us at valuablebook@gmail.com. Thank you for your continued support.

ⁱ Ian Fleming Publications, Ltd.

ⁱⁱ *Golf International* 007 issue, Sep/Oct 1998

ⁱⁱⁱ goldeneyebooks.com

^{iv} Proof copies of the U.K. edition are bound in a green-yellow wrapper with the Cape logo printed in white. From *Ian Fleming's James Bond* by Otto Penzler, 1999.

^v Ibid. Penzler.

^{vi} From the Stoke Park Club