

Valuable Book Group, LLC
Specialists in Rare and Antiquarian Golf Books
Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

Jerome Travers and Walter Travis

Have you ever watched coverage of the PGA tour and gotten confused between the two Australian professionals, Robert Allenby and Robert Appleby. Or, heaven forbid, bet on the wrong one!

We have found that it is much the same with Jerome Travers and Walter Travis, who both lived in the same era and authored now-famous golf books. They did in fact compete head-to-head often, most famously at the 1907 U.S. Amateur at Garden City. Over a fourteen year period between 1900 and 1913 either Travers or Travis won the U.S. Amateur seven times.



Walter Travis



Jerome Travers

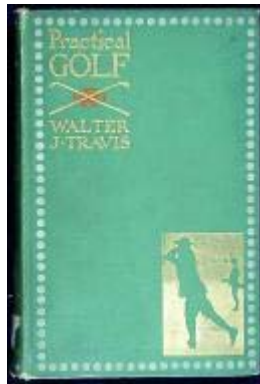
Hopefully we can clear up some of the confusion regarding their books so you can be sure to tell them apart in the future.

Walter J. Travis

Walter J. Travis was born in Australia and emigrated to the United States when he was 24. Walter's home course was Garden City on Long Island. If you ever get the chance to visit Garden City, we encourage you to do so since today the clubhouse remains a shrine to this important figure in American golf. Travis didn't take up the game of golf until age 35 and thus the press referred to him as "The Old Man". Travis had many talents besides playing golf. He was the founder of *The American Golfer*, an early U.S. golf magazine. He was also an architect, having designed one of the courses at Westchester Country Club and Equinox in Vermont. Walter J. Travis won the U.S. Amateur title three times and the British Amateur once.

Travis was considered a star in his day. In an interesting historical note, after Travis won the British Amateur at Royal St. George's, they subsequently banned the putter he used – the Schenectady.

Walter is most famously known for his book *Practical Golf*, first published in 1901 by Harper & Brothers, with later editions published in 1902, 1903 and 1909. The book is an instructional book. A first edition has a publication date of May 1901 on the copyright page. The front cover, seen below is lettered and illustrated in gilt.

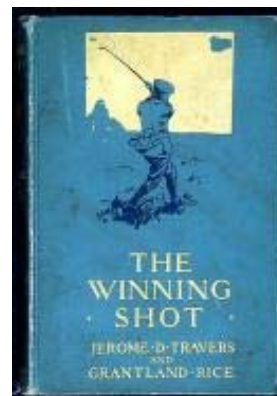
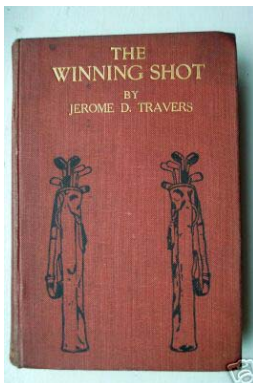


Travis also was the co-author with Jack White of *The Art of Putting*, published in 1904 by Macmillan in London. This 34 page softcover book is quite rare.

Jerome D. Travers

Jerome D. Travers won four U.S. Amateur titles and the U.S. Open in 1915 at Baltusrol. Travers was born into an affluent New York family and lived a long life, dying in 1951.

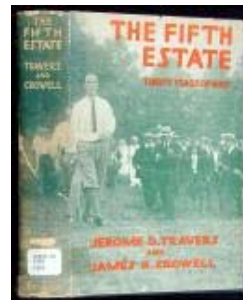
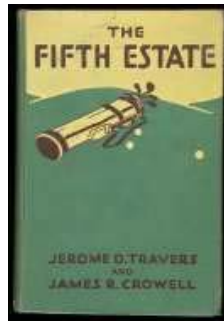
Travers was the co-author with Grantland Rice of *The Winning Shot*. The book is about Travers early career. The U.K. first edition was published in 1915 with orange cloth, gilt lettering, and black illustrations and was published by T. Werner Laurie, London and is 258 pages. An image of the cover is seen below left.



The U.S. edition of the same book was published with green and yellow covers and is also 258 pages. This edition was published by Doubleday, Garden City. An image of this cover is seen above right.

Travers' Golf Book was published in 1913 by Macmillan, New York. There were two printings done in 1913, so be careful to look for the 2nd printing notice if you are interested in buying a first edition. The book has an elaborately gilded cover with a picture of Jerome swinging the club.

The book that represents Travers best writing is *The Fifth Estate: Thirty Years of Golf*, published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1926. The book is co-authored by James R. Crowell. It is an amusing tale of his golfing exploits and gives great insight into early golf in the United States. The book was published with a dust jacket, which is only rarely present. Seen below are images of the book with (right) and without the jacket (left).



In an interesting twist, *The Fifth Estate* includes a full chapter on Walter Travis titled “The Reign of the Old Man”. The book includes several black and white photographs including early photos of Pine Valley, Baltusrol and pictures of a young Bobby Jones as well as Harry Vardon and Ted Ray. Travers had no shortage of strong opinions. He states in the book that Pine Valley was the finest course he had every played. He also offered a list of the greatest golfers of all time, which he listed as:

1. Bobby Jones
2. Harry Vardon
3. Walter Hagen
4. J.H. Taylor
5. James Braid
6. Macdonald Smith

The two pictures at the beginning of this newsletter were both taken from *The Fifth Estate*.

A rare Travers piece is his work titled *Putting Lessons*, produced in 1924. It is very rare and is hand typed on lined paper. It is not know how many of these were produced, but it is believed that very few were.