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Augusta National Golf Club, envisioned by Bobby Jones in 1931, is known for its gorgeous flowers (like azaleas) which are in full bloom during "The Masters" golf tournament. The golf course was formerly the site of Berckmans' Place (and the father-and-son-owned Fruitland Nurseries). Among his many horticultural contributions, Prosper Berckmans popularized the azalea. Follow both links in this description to learn some very interesting history about "The Masters" and its hosting golf club. Image online, Ticket City.

Bobby Jones was a "marvelous" golfer. Although he played tournament golf for a relatively short time (from the 1916 U.S. Amateur, at age 14, through the 1930 Grand Slam, at age 28), he made his mark as one of golf's greatest players.

Also a lawyer, Bobby practiced law with his father, in Atlanta, after he ended his years of tournament matches. From a wealthy family, Jones was born in Atlanta in 1902. When he was 11, Bobby shot an 80 on the old course at East Lake Country Club. In a 1940 issue of the Saturday Evening Post, Grantland Rice described those early years:

Bobby was a short, rotund kid, with the face of an angel and the temper of a timber wolf. At a missed shot, his sunny smile could turn more suddenly into a black storm cloud than the Nazis can grab a country. Even at the age of 14 Bobby could not understand how anyone ever could miss any kind of golf shot.

By the 1923 U.S. Open, Bobby Jones had conquered his biggest stumbling block - himself - and had found his single best weapon - his will to win. He performed best when most people perform worst: under extreme pressure.

After he left competitive golf, Bobby Jones played only one tournament a year - the Masters. He had a particularly good reason for favoring that spring event.

It was Bobby who believed that Berckman's Place - in Augusta, Georgia - had the potential to become one of the world's most-beautiful golf courses. His vision began to take shape in 1931.

Jones not only conceptualized the new course, he worked with Dr. Alister MacKenzie to help design what became the Augusta National Golf Club. (The link takes you to an animated "course tour.")

When he retired from tournament golf, with 13 major titles, Jones held a record which lasted 40 years. His dream golf course, and the Masters tournament it annually hosts, has impacted golfers and their fans for more than 80 years.

Both Bobby Jones and Walter Hagen played the game of golf like they "played the game of life." O.B. Keeler (in his August 21, 1938 letter to Walter Hagen) made the point:

My dear Walter, it's not only to a great champion and the greatest competitor that I take the hat off my graying old bean; it's to the gentleman and the sportsman who for the span of more than a quarter of a century has been playing the game - playing the game of life as well as the game of golf...I'm congratulating these games, both of them...

It is against these two formidable champions (Jones and Hagen) that the liquor-drinking, war-weary Rannulph Junah must play the golf match of his life. And ... he isn't up to it.

At least, he doesn't *think* he is.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BOBBY-JONES-Legend-of-Bagger-Vance>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/BOBBY-JONES-Legend-of-Bagger-Vance>

Media Stream

Bobby Jones and Augusta National Golf Club

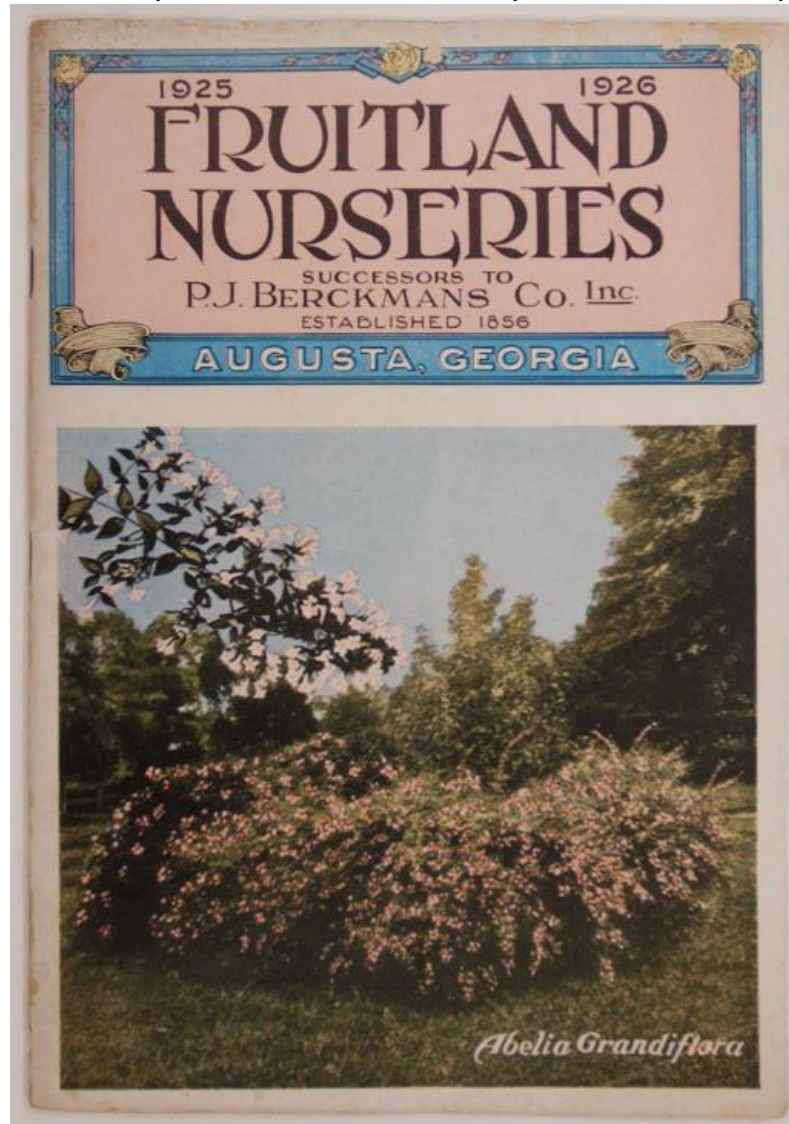
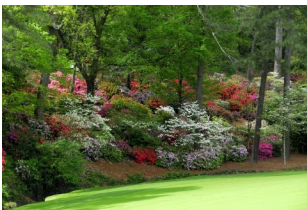
When Bobby Jones envisioned that Berckmans' Place (near Augusta, Georgia) could be transformed from a horticultural paradise into a golf paradise, he was right. The land was perfectly suited to become a golf course.

But ... what was it like before the world's best golfers came to visit? Charles Price tells us the history in *A Golf Story* (split into paragraphs here for easier reading):

In 1857, a Belgian baron named Louis Mathieu Edouard Berckmans, who was an amateur horticulturist, purchased nearly four hundred acres on the western border of Augusta, Georgia, that had one been an indigo plantation [owned by Dennis Redmond], indigo having been one of the South's chief exports, along with cotton and rice, until the Civil War.

The plantation was said to have been the site where General James Edward Oglethorpe had sat about a cheery fire of pine knots and smoked the pipe of peace with the Cherokee Indians, thereby opening the way for Georgia to become a colony and, eventually, a state.

Berckmans's son, Prosper Julius Alphonse, was also a horticulturist, and a professional one at that, as well as an agronomist. Forming a partnership under the trade name of Fruitlands Nurseries, the two Berckmanses started what may have been the first commercial nursery in the South. It was certainly the largest.



A catalog they issued a few years after opening the nursery listed thirteen hundred varieties of pear and nine hundred varieties of apple. Additionally, they imported a number of trees and plants from all over the world, the progeny of which, nurtured at Fruitlands, ended up decorating the exterior of some of the South's grandest homes and plantations for the next half century.

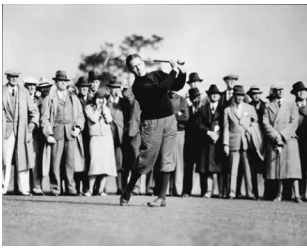
Chief among their decorative plants was the azalea, which Prosper Berckmans popularized and which remains to this day the floral signature of everything below Mason and Dixon's Line. (A Golf Story, by Charles Price, at page 64.)

The azalea, even still, remains the "floral signature" on the former Berckmans' property. Today that land is known as the Augusta National Golf Club, host of the annual Masters Golf Tournament.

Click on the image for a much-better view.

Image of flowering plants, including azaleas, at Augusta National Golf Club. Online, courtesy Ticket City.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Bobby-Jones-and-Augusta-National-Golf-Club0>



1930 Grand Slam

Image online, Library of Congress.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/1930-Grand-Slam0>



Bobby Jones with his Father

Image online, historical golf photos.

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Bobby Jones

Image online, historical golf photos.

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Jones and Hagen

Image online, historical golf photos.

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Alister MacKenzie - Course Designer, Augusta National

Image of Dr. Alister MacKenzie, online courtesy Lilley Brook Golf Club (in the UK).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Alister-MacKenzie-Course-Designer-Augusta-National>