THE IRON STROKE

Stand rather close to the ball, which should be two inches behind a point midway between the feet, so that contact with the ball will be made while the club is yet on the down swing. A good way to remember this is to form the habit of keeping your nose always two inches ahead of the ball. The ball should be struck at as if you intended to drive it on a slight angle into the ground. While with a wooden club the ball is struck a loose wristed, somewhat upward stinging slap. With irons it is struck a firm, crisp, downward chop. The club head should meet the ball and continue on downward during the impact in such a way as to scalp off the surface grass ahead of where the ball lay but without digging into the turf. This downward glancing blow is to give a high speed back spin to the ball so that when it reaches the green it will drop down dead.

In the upswing, unlike wooden clubs, which are started away from the ball, handle foremost by loose wrists, the irons should be started away from the ball, head foremost by firm wrist action. This can be accomplished best by a firm downward resistance from the left arm against the upward pull of the right arm. The pull of the right arm forces the left wrist to bend sharply early in the upswing at a point low down in its swing arc. In the upswing, iron clubs should be swung rather straight back and straight up over the shoulder. The upper arms should be kept snugly braced against the rib frame of the body. The left arm should be rigid.

The iron stroke should be firm and decisive, the swing being more compact and the effort more concentrated.
than for a drive. This requires a firmer grip on the club and the muscles of the arms and body must be more firmly set than for a drive.

Most authors tell us not to take a full-swing stroke with irons. However, I find all the star professional players do it, and I know of no reason why we should not do the same. Why take a three-quarter swing stroke and drop the ball short in a bunker when by a full-swing stroke you can put it on the green? What is really meant is that we should play every iron shot with the shortest back swing possible. The reason for this is that the climax of a golf stroke should be at impact and too long a back swing makes this climax occur too early, with the result that muscular relaxation sets in before the ball is struck and firmness, crispness and resolution are lost.