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Newsletter and Book Review for the Serious Collector

Golf Books about Caddies

There have been over seventy-five books published about caddies, with a rich history of well-known authors writing about them: Horace Hutchinson, Tom Bendelow, Chick Evans and Henry Longhurst among them. Old Tom Morris was a caddie before he won the Open Championship as were Walter Hagen, Ben Hogan, and Gene Sarazen. One of the simple pleasures of the game is playing on a fine day with a good caddie. While no one reminisces about their golf cart, we all have a good caddie story.

Books about caddies fall into five rough categories, outlined below:

1. Works of Fiction

The first book about caddies was a work of fiction written by two-time British Amateur and Oxford educated Horace Hutchinson. The book was *Bert Edward, The Golf Caddie*, published by John Murray in 1903 (D & J H28150). The book is about a caddie that becomes Open Champion.

It's fair to say that *Uncle Jed, Caddie Master* written Joe Chronicles in 1934 (D & J C12100) wouldn't be published today. It is written from the point of view of a Southern caddie, Jedediah Friend, in an African American dialect. An example, "Evenin' Mistah William-son, even' sah-yessah, yessah, yo' caddies is ready, sah. Nosah, yo' Missus ain' heah yit, but she sen' wo'd dat she on de way in de machine."

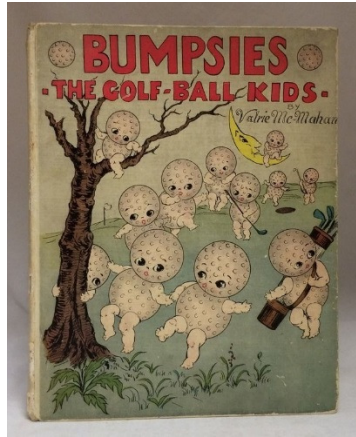
In the modern era, *Riverbank Tweed and Roadmap Jenkins: Tales from the Caddie Yard* by Bo Links is the best of the lot.

2. Caddie Instruction Manuals

Between the publication of Bert Edward in 1903 and 1960 the majority of books published (roughly 30) were instruction manuals for caddies to help them learn the trade and proper etiquette. Most were short and softcover.

3. Children's books and poetry

With Club and Caddie, Verses And Parodies by E. M. Griffiths with a few by M. G., B. G. and L. C. H. G., was the earliest book of poetry devoted to caddies, with the verses in iambic pentameters. (D & J G39010). In the children's section *Bumps: The Golf Ball Kid And Little Caddies* by Valerie McMahan, published in 1929 (D & J M24340), is the most collectible and has beautiful illustrations; it tells the story of Freckles the caddie.



4. Books written by caddies for tour pros

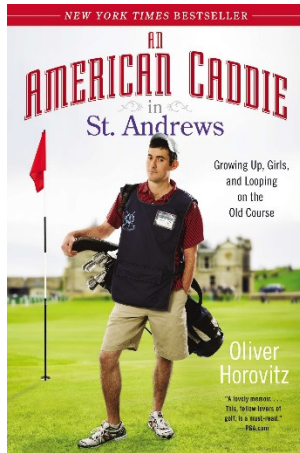
Several caddies that played for major champions have written books or have had books written about them, including those who carried for Seve Ballesteros, Sandy Lyle, Jack Nicklaus, Tiger Woods and Ben Hogan. Generally they are a forgettable category.

5. Modern books about caddies and caddying

In case you think books about caddies is an unfruitful area to pursue, not so, especially recent books. Two of the best books about caddying have been written in the last decade: Tripp Bowden's *Freddie & Me: Life Lessons from Freddie Bennett, Augusta National's Legendary Caddy Master* and *An American Caddie in St. Andrews* by Oliver Horovitz.

Freddie & Me, written by an Augusta caddie is inspirational, well-written and gives a good inside look behind the scenes of the tight-lipped club and honors the amazing Augusta caddy master Freddie Bennett.

An American Caddie in St. Andrews is a delightful story of how Horovitz comes of age, bouncing back and forth between caddying at St. Andrews and getting his degree at Harvard. First and foremost, the book is a love story at multiple levels (and not in a formulaic or expected way). For such a young lad, this kid can write, his prose is fast moving, funny, poignant and insightful. Not only does he give interesting insights into the lifestyle challenges of making a living as a caddie, but he also captures the essence of the Scottish people very well. It is a very satisfying read and I recommended if you haven't read it yet.



Whose Your Caddie by Rick Reilly is skippable; its humor falls flat and is a bit tedious and dated. If you have a particular interest in the history of caddies at St. Andrews, then a *Wee Nip at the 19th Hole* is recommended.

I always try to take a caddie when I can and make it a point to tip well because they generally have a need for the cash since cigarettes and booze are expensive pursuits.

-- John Sabino