

# Green Section Award to Valentine



*Richard Valentine beams approval after presentation of Green Section Award to his father at USGA Green Section Educational Program.*

Ask Joseph Valentine the chief function of a golf course superintendent and he'll say: "Providing year-'round playing conditions has been my life's work. That's the biggest contribution any superintendent can make to the game."

In naming Mr. Valentine the 1964 Green Section Award Winner, the United States Golf Association repaid him in part for the extent of his contribution during his 50 years as superintendent of the Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, Pa.

Joseph Valentine, now 77, retired in 1961 after an association of 54 years with Merion. It began in 1907 when he became a gardener's assistant. Named greenkeeper in 1911, he embarked on a career that took him to national leadership in golf course work. During his tenure he was one

of the first superintendents to switch from horse-drawn to tractor-operated mowers; a pioneer in the use of new chemicals and fertilizers; the discoverer of what has come to be known as Merion bluegrass; and, above all, a campaigner to keep his course in good playing condition throughout the year, even in the winter.

## First Superintendent Honored

The first superintendent to win the Green Section Award "for distinguished service to golf through work with turfgrass," Mr. Valentine came to the United States as a lad of 20 with funds provided by a friend in America. His early preparations in his native Italy were for the priesthood.

Mr. Valentine has been active in many organizations outside golf—a member of the Order of Brotherly Love, the Knights of Columbus, George Washington Society, and the Italian-American Citizens' League. He was chairman of his local draft board from its inception. During World War II, he drafted two of his three sons. One of his sons, Richard, succeeded him as superintendent at Merion in 1961.

The presentation of the award, the replica of a permanent plaque that hangs in "Golf House," USGA headquarters in New York City, was made at the Green Section Educational Program in New York, January 24, by John M. Winters, Jr., retiring USGA President.

Mr. Valentine is the fourth recipient of the award. The first, in 1961, went to Dr. John Monteith, Jr., of Colorado Springs, Colo. Prof. Lawrence S. Dickinson, of Amherst, Mass., was the 1962 winner and last year's recipient was O. J. Noer, of Milwaukee, Wis.