

# DAVID AFFLECK GIVEN

## (1.11.1875 – 7.7.1928)

There were a number of Given families in Elie and Earlsferry at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. This article concentrates on **David Affleck Given** who was born on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1875 to David Given a shoemaker and his wife Jane. His younger brother was Douglas Given (q.v.) and his birth certificate gives his address as Elie, Bonnington House, Bank Street (pictured below).



The 1901 census shows him as living with his wife Jessie at Seaside Earlsferry. It is difficult to work out where exactly he was living at this time but if the census can be trusted they were neighbours of the Mackies who at that time were in Waldeve but he was designed as golf club maker so we can probably assume he was working with George Forrester or Scott. But he was not there long before he was appointed in 1902 to the professional position and golf club maker at Irvine Bogside golf course in Ayrshire.

He had married Jessie Tarbat from Forfar in 1899. and is shown as living at Enfield Cottage in Elie. Enfield Cottage was just off Kirkpark Road and it seems it was demolished in 1970s to make way for social housing on the site.

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1899. MARRIAGES in the District of *Forfar* in the County of *Forfar*

No.	When, Where, and How Married.	Signatures of Parties. Rank or Profession, Whether Single or Widowed, and Relationship (if any).	Age.	Usual Residence.	Name, Surname, and Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	If a regular Marriage, Signatures of celebrating Minister and Witnesses. If Irregular, Date of Conviction, Decree of Absolution, or Sheriff's Warrant.	When & Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
73	1899. on the 10 <sup>th</sup> day of September at 24 East High Street Forfar	<i>David A. Given</i> <i>Golf Club Maker</i>  <i>(Bachelor)</i>	24	<i>Enfield Cottage Elie Tyneshire</i>	<i>David Given</i> <i>Postmaster</i>  <i>Jane Given</i> <i>M. J. Morrison</i>	<i>John Reid &amp; Co. Ministers of Parish of St James, Forfar</i>	1899. September 11 <sup>th</sup>  At Forfar
	After Banns, according to the Forms of the Established Church of Scotland	<i>Jessie K. Tarbat</i> <i>Domestic Servant</i>  <i>(Spinster)</i>	24	<i>24 East High Street Forfar</i>	<i>George Tarbat Tarbat</i> <i>General Labourer</i>  <i>Margaret Tarbat</i> <i>M. J. Tarbat</i>	<i>John Given</i> <i>Witness</i> <i>Mary Hunter</i> <i>Witness</i>	<i>K. H. Thomson</i> Registrar

David was an accomplished golfer having won a number of competitions at Earlsferry Thistle and playing alongside such luminaries as Isaac Mackie and Jamie Braid himself. Indeed, his confidence was such that he could afford to advertise in the local press thus:

*David A Given is prepared to play anyone resident in Earlsferry (A.H.Scott excluded) over 18 holes on Earlsferry Links for £1 over 36 holes for £5 within a fortnight of this date Elie 27<sup>th</sup> January 1898.*

There is no record of any takers, but it is of significance that he did not think he could beat A.H. Scott.

Like so many of his contemporaries there was little in the way of employment locally so he applied for ad was given the professional job at Irvine Bogside in about 1902 which would have necessitated him moving through to the west. This was a young course setup in 1887 and his employment included green keeper, clubmaker and professional as was often the case in these days. Some

knowledge therefore of course management was expected. He had already played in a number of local professional tournaments and his appointment gave him a chance to spread the word of golf to the West of Scotland. He took part in a number of money matches, competitions and exhibitions during his time at Bogside. In 1903 he is noted:

**1903**

**GOLF. PROFESSIONALS ELIE INTERESTING CONTEST.** To-day the members the Scottish section the Professional Golfers' Association are competing at Elie for the four places allocated to them in contest Sunningdale next month for £200 prizes offered the proprietors the News of the World-" The Association does not seem to have taken firm hold in Scotland, for only a dozen of the professionals turned to-day. Play started ten o'clock, which time heavy mist hung over the links, but the sun was making gallant struggle to force passage through. Considerable interest is being taken in the professionals' play, and a crowd assembled at the first tee. most of them waiting to follow Scott, the local man, who partnered Massey. The couples started in the following order: Forrester v. R. Thomson. Robert Winton f. William J. Park v. Ben Sayers. J. Duncan v. W. Auchterlonie David Given v. Andrew A, Scott v. A. Massey.' Good Play Going Out. As the day advanced the haze lifted, and brilliant weather prevailed. Golf all over for the first half of round was very good. fewer than four of the tors covered the first nine holes namely, J. Forrester, Ben Duncan, and A. Scott. Next came T. Thomson, W. Auchterlonie, and A. 37 each; A. Massey, 38; J. Park and David Given, 39 each; W. Fernie, 40; Winton, Montrose,

We should note that William (Willie) Fernie also took part in this and many other competitions in the professional arena at that time (see inset right dated May 1907).

In 1903 he had a son Leonard George who was born in Rose Cottage in Earlsferry on 6<sup>th</sup> December. It is likely that by that time he was already established in Irvine, but a home birth was obviously preferred. The Rose Cottage referred to here could either have been the Rose Cottage close to Chapel Green or the Rose Cottage which is still in Earlsferry High Street. The latter was the

**AN interesting four-ball match was played off over Bogside Links yesterday evening between David Given, the Club professional, and Douglas Given, his brother, and Messrs John Shannon and Robert Carson, of Troon. The Troon men won by 3 up and 2 to play. Scores of the best ball on each side were:—**

<b>Carson and Shannon—</b>	
Out ...	5 5 3 4 5 4 3 2 4 = 35
In ...	5 4 3 3 2 5 4 4 4 = 34 — 69
<b>Given Brothers—</b>	
Out ...	5 4 3 5 4 4 4 3 5 = 37
In ...	5 4 3 3 3 5 4 4 4 = 35 — 72

24	Leonard George - Fairbat Given	1902. December Sixth 11 h. am. A.M. Rose Cottage, Earlsferry, Elie.	M. David Affleck Given Golf Club Maker	David C. Given Father	1902. December 20 <sup>th</sup> at Elie. Robert Crombie Registrar.
			Jessie Michael Given M.S. Fairbat		
			1899, September 8 <sup>th</sup> Fairbat		
				Robert Crombie Registrar.	

home of the Pearson family with whom the Givens seemed to be friendly and indeed in the 1901 census his next door neighbour is said to have been George Pearson a fellow golf club maker and subsequently professional (q.v.)

1901

64	Sea side	1	326	John Alcockie	Head	Man	38	Mason	Worker	Highland Park		5
				Elizabeth Mackie	Wife	Woman	39			Highland Park		
				William Mackie	Brother	S.	31	Mason	Worker	Highland Park		
				John Alcockie	Son	S.	22		Worker	Highland Park		
				James Alcockie	Son		13	Scholar		Highland Park		
68	5 <sup>th</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	1	326	David Givens	Head	Man	25	Golf Clubmaker	Worker	Highland Park		2
				Jessie Givens	Wife	Woman	29			Highland Park		
				Jessie Hastings	Niece		8			Highland Park		
69		1		George Pearson	Head	Man	30	Golf Clubmaker	Worker	Highland Park		2
				Emily Pearson	Wife	Woman	36			Highland Park		
				Jessie Pearson	Daughter		6			Highland Park		

He had moved with his family to Irvine by 1905 and is shown as living at 5 High Street Irvine and seems to have moved to Troon by 1911 and there is some evidence that he was professional at Barassie but we are certain that his brother was professional there although David may have succeeded him. He is shown as living at Wellbeck Crescent in Troon.

19				John Livingston	Head	Man	27			Number 09		
20				James A. Buchanan	Head	Man	26			Life 13 King's Cross		
21	1.5	4.6	do	David Givens	Head	Man	22			Life 13 King's Cross		
22				James do	Son	Man	13			Age 14 do		
23				William do	Son	Man	9			Age 13 do		
24	1.5	2	do	William Manning	Head	Man	20			Age 13 do		
25				William do	Wife	Woman	14			Age 13 do		
26				Richard do	Son	Man	2			Age 13 do		
27				William do	Son	Man	5			Age 13 do		
28				James do	Son	Man	1			Age 13 do		

The following year however tragedy struck when his wife died of cancer. And interestingly her death certificate shows her usual residence as Golf Club House Troon.

No.	Name and Surname. Rank or Profession, and whether Single, Married, or Widowed.	When and Where Died.	Sex.	Age.	Name, Birthname, & Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Birthname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Disease, and Medical Attendant by whom certified.	Signature & Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Death occurred.	When and where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
678	Jessie Wickham Givens Married David Givens Golf Club Maker	1912, November Eighteenth 5h 45m P.M. Royal Cancer Hospital Glasgow Residence Golf Club House Troon	F.	40 Years	George Porter Barbalt General Labourer (deceased) Margaret Barbalt Sub. Cant. (deceased)	Carcinoma of Uterus  As Cert. by Roy F. Young M.B. A.C.	David Givens Widower Golf Club House Troon	1912, November 10 <sup>th</sup> At Glasgow. Alexander Dewar Registrar.

It seems strange that this would have been her normal residence unless by that time David was actually employed as a golf club maker at Troon. Which brings us back to Willie Fernie who was the head professional golfer at Troon at that time and with whom David was friendly.

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1914. DEATHS in the PARISH of LARBERT in the COUNTY of STIRLING

No.	Name and Surname, Rank or Profession, and whether Single, Married, or Widowed	When and Where Died.	Sex.	Age.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Maiden surname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Disease, and Medical Attendant by whom certified.	Signature & Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if not of the Town in which the Death occurred.	When and where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
37	David George Gibson Gibson (Single)	1914, February Thistlehill 22, 5 m. P.M. Institution, Larbert Usual residence The Wood Temple Hill Troon.	M	11 years	David Alfred Givin Ross Elsie Murray James Michael Givin M. J. Givart. (Deceased)	Tuberculosis of lungs, 7 months Ascert. by R. D. Blackden M.D.	R. C. Givin Junc. 21 Market Street Galauchies	1914, February 11 <sup>th</sup> At Glasgow M. J. Givart. Registrar.

Further tragedy was not far away when his son Leonard died aged 11 of tuberculosis in 1914. His address on that certificate is shown as Templehill in Troon which suggests he was living with his father there after his mother's death.

Where he went after his son's death remains unclear until his death in 1928 in Kinghorn. That death certificate shows him as a golf club maker. Normally if it was a former golf club maker it would say so - we can assume he was employed. There was a large manufacturing plant of golf clubs in Kinghorn and Wm Gibson's golf clubs were being produced there at a commercial rate.

No. 21/123 Dec. 209 of Gov. Gen. and 2 papers 15 <sup>th</sup> August 1928	29	David Alfred GIVEN	1928, July Twentieth	M	52 years	David Givin Postman (deceased)	Myocardial degeneration	R. C. Givin brother	1928, July 30 <sup>th</sup> At Kinghorn	
		Golf Club maker	8 A.M. AM 28			James Givin M.D. Morrison (deceased)	as certified by A. McCracken M.B. Ch.B.	Enfield Elie	Jan. 1. Mackintosh Asst. Registrar	
		Widower of Jessie Parker	High Street, Kinghorn			John Steele a carpenter of	who saw body after death		R. C. Givin	
		Morgan	1928.	M	63				At Kinghorn	1928.

Another item of significance from this death certificate is the correction at the side. This refers to the fact that there was some doubt about his death and investigations took place. A month later it was confirmed that he died of natural causes but the certificate says he was found at 28 High Street Kinghorn which was his home.

**WELL-KNOWN KINGHORN  
MAN DEAD.**

**Formerly Golf Professional at  
Troon.**

The death has taken place very suddenly at Kinghorn of David Givens, professional golfer, and model head golf club maker with William Gibson & Co., Kinghorn.

Givens was well-known in the golf trade as an expert tradesman. For several years he was a professional at Troon, and St Cloud, France.

A native of Elie, deceased was 52 years of age.

**DEATH OF WELL-KNOWN FIFE  
GOLFER.**

A well-known Fife golfer and clubmaker, David Givens, has died at his residence, High Street, Kinghorn. He was employed with Messrs Wm. Gibson & Co., Castlerigg Works.

He was for some time professional to the Barassie Club, Kilmarnock, and afterwards with the St Cloud Club, Paris. Deceased was 52 years of age, and a native of Elie.

Putting both of these small obituaries together we can, I think, trace him firstly at Bogside and then perhaps at Barassie but certainly by 1911 he was at Troon. The introduction of St. Cloud in Paris is interesting because a number of professionals would spend their summer in Scotland at their club and then have a winter job on the continent. However mostly these jobs were in the warmer southern climes in the winter so his sojourns to Paris may have been latterly. Wm Gibson & Co was a large manufacturer of golf clubs in Kinghorn for many years – it came later on the scene than Forrester or Scott and initially their expertise was in the forging of metal cleeks and mashies before moving on to the whole set of golf clubs.

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Researched and compiled by Graham Johnston.

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