



James Scott

1873 -1901

James Scott on left

James Scott was the elder brother of Andrew Herd Scott (q.v.) and he was born in Kilconquhar parish on 14th June 1873. He was living in Ferry Cottage with his father David and mother.

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|----|-------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| | James | 1873 | Mr. David Scott | | 1873 |
| | Scott | James | Mason | David Scott | July 2nd |
| 20 | | Burtonville | Mathewson Scott | Father | Mr. Chalmers |
| | | S.H.M. | Mr. S. Hoard | Present | |
| | | Carlyferney | 1873 July 2nd | | Thomas Simm |
| | | Kilconquhar | Kilconquhar | | |

He seems to have been a good amateur golfer having entered amateur competitions locally when aged 12 but at some point he must have become a professional because he entered as a professional the Open Championship at Prestwick in 1893. This was a championship marred by very bad weather and James withdrew after a first round 93 which was by no means at the end of the field. He served an apprenticeship with Forrester like his younger brother but he was appointed to the professional position at Royal Sydney Golf Club in 1896 although at that time he was designed as “caretaker” the club being in its infancy. Indeed, his caretaking included discovering a fire at the Sydney club house:



“Royal Sydney’s current Clubhouse contains a wide range of facilities including bars, restaurants, function rooms, bridge rooms, billiards room, a bottle shop, sport shop, reading lounges and accommodation rooms.The second Clubhouse was built in 1897, erected on a freehold site acquired from the Cooper estate at the southern end of O’Sullivan Road (on the corner of Birriga Road), near Old South Head Road. The Clubhouse was a substantially constructed, picturesque building in the bungalow style. The building was occupied in August, 1897. A month later, at the official opening by the Governor, Lord Hampden, His Excellency

announced that Her Majesty had agreed to the prefix "Royal". The first of the Club's four fires was in September, 1899. It began in the Clubhouse pantry but was "opportunistically discovered and extinguished by the Ebsworth children" and by the Club's first professional, James Scott. From RSGC website

In what turned out to be a very short time with RSGC he acquired a name for himself as a good golfer:



Scott & Hunter 1901

Willie was described by the golf columnist, Foozler in the Sydney Mail of May 6, 1899, as being 'young and a player with an easy style much like that of the Bondi (Royal Sydney GC) Professional, James Scott'. (Scott was a brother of AH Scott, the well-known professional and clubmaker from Elie, Fife.) In July 1900 Willie played in the first professional match in New South Wales against James Scott, over 72 holes (36 at Botany and 36 at Bondi) running out as 9/8 winner. He impressed spectators with his approach play and putting, and won fourteen pounds stake money. At the completion of the match, Willie (pictured here on the right) and his fellow-Scot James Scott issued a challenge to the two Victorian professionals, Richard Taylor (Surrey Hills GC) and More of Royal Melbourne, both Hoylake men, to a match, which was declined.

But on the morning in April 1901 he and two of his friends set off from Sydney to Bondi beach for a spot of fishing - what happened is carefully chronicled:

DEATH OF A WELL KNOWN EARLSFERRY GOLFER. (By "Fader" in " The Sydney Mail" of 11th April 1902). Last week I wrote of the remarkable " record " score of 67 accomplished by the Royal Sydney professional, James Scott, of Bondi, and the player's characteristic remark that it might have been five less, as he missed that number of short putts. Poor Scott never read that paragraph. His score was made on March 30th, and on the morning of April 3rd, his

dead body wis being carried hither and yon by the ocean currents off the links. Scott went out with J. Clarke and T. Coonan, at 6 a.m., to fish from the cliff foot at Hierrivery, near the main sewer outfall. It is a popular fishing ground, reached by a stiff descent down a steep path to a rock wall, which is safe in fine weather, is sometimes 20 feet under waves in storms, and is dangerous in such a north-east swell as was rolling. This time he was clearing his line from the rocks after landing a fish, when a big wave was seen coming. All three abandoned their lines and ran higher, but Scott slipped and was washed into the sea and slowly drifted seawards. A schnapper line was thrown to him, and on the second attempt lodged on his arm, but he did not seem able to grasp it, and in about 10 minutes he disappeared about 40 yards from the cliffs. Scott was an excellent type of the Scotch professional golfer, race sui generic, unlike the professional in any other game, or the man in any other calling. He was tall, athletic, loosely knit, broad-shouldered, with speech as broad as himself, and the quiet independence of the class. He was born at Earlsferry, Fife, where his parents still reside, learnt his club making in Forrester's shop at Earlsferry, and his golf on the Ferry links, where his brother, A. H. Scott, the well-known clubmaker and player, has his headquarter. He was a good teacher and a good player, rising at times to absolute brilliancy, as on the Saturday before his death, and had the easy " classic " Scotch style. All our best men have been through his hands, and he was the first professional golfer in Sydney, and had been with the Royal Sydney since the club brought him out in 1896. His death is keenly regretted by all golfers. Besides teaching and clubmaking at Bondi, he had been to most of the surburban links, visited West Maitland and Tainworth, and assisted in laying out many of the courses. The last was the new Lindfield Club course, which he laid out in conjunction with Hunter, the S.G.C. professional, who left the other day for the United States. Scott was looking forward to the coming season as the busiest he would have had, and a week before his death showed me big trunks of balls which he had remade and seasoned, and his plentiful stock of finished and unfinished clubs. As soon as the news reached the R.S.G.C. committee they very properly postponed the important fixtures arranged for Easter Saturday and Monday. Scott was unmarried, and had no relatives nearer than Scotland. 1901

And...

A WELL-KNOWN GOLF PLAYER DROWNED.

WASHED OFF THE ROCKS NEAR
BEN BUCKLER.

A MELANCHOLY INCIDENT.

Shortly after 8 o'clock yesterday morning Mr. James Scott, the professional of the Royal Sydney club, was washed off the rocks at Merriverry, near Ben Buckler, and was drowned. He left home about 6 o'clock yesterday morning, in company with Mr. J. Clarke and Mr. T. Coonan, and proceeded to Merriverry for the purpose of fishing. The spot they selected is a difficult one to reach, and intending fishermen have to climb down a steep path. At the bottom there is a rock wall, close to where the sewer runs into the sea. After they had been fishing for some time a large wave was seen rolling towards the rocks, and the men immediately left their lines and ran to a higher rock. Mr. Scott, in running, slipped and fell, and was washed into the surf. His companions could see him struggling, and one of them threw a snapper line to him, but he failed to seize it. The line was quickly hauled up and thrown again, and that time it lodged on his arm, but he could not grasp it. For fully 10 minutes his companions could see him drifting out to sea, and when about 40 yards from the rock he suddenly disappeared.

The police were shortly afterwards informed, and Constable Roache, of Waverley, proceeded to the scene of the accident, but was unable to recover the body. It is unlikely that the body will be recovered, as the place is infested with sharks.

The rock from which the unfortunate man was washed is a favourite fishing spot, and is considered safe in fine weather, though in rough weather seas have been known to dash over it up to a distance of 20ft. During a north-easterly gale, as there was yesterday, the rock is considered unsafe.

Within a short distance of the rock are three islets, the outer one bearing a strong resemblance to a heap of basaltic mud. The water between the fishing rock and the islet runs from about 20ft. to 40ft. in depth, and it would take a considerable roll to make the water break on the edge of the rock. Should a person be washed off it would be very difficult even for a strong swimmer to regain the rocks, owing to the heavy undertow and the curious circular currents running at the spot. The only chance of safety would be for the person washed off to swim round to one of the islets, where a grasp might be obtained and a footing secured. Even then it would probably be some hours before he could get off the islet to the shore.

Mr. Scott was born at Earlsferry, Elie, Scotland, and learnt club-making at Forraetier's shop and golf on the Elie links. He came to Sydney as professional to the Royal Sydney Golf Club in 1896, and was so engaged up to the time of his death. He rendered assistance to various other clubs, both suburban and country, in laying out links. He was a good player, at times brilliant, as witness his performance of going round the Bondi links in the record of 67 as late as Saturday last. As a teacher he was successful in imparting his knowledge, and he was a good clubmaker. His loss will be greatly felt by his club.

Matches set down for Saturday and Monday have been postponed out of respect to the memory of the Royal Sydney professional.



Ben Buckler



Miscellaneous Information.

Waverley.—At about 8 a.m. the 3rd instant, a man named James Scott (26), a native of Scotland, unmarried, lately residing at the "Royal Sydney Golf Club," North Bondi, where he was employed as caretaker, was washed off the rocks into the ocean and drowned, whilst fishing, near Ben Buckler. Andrew Barnes, who was fishing about 10 yards from Scott, witnessed the occurrence. Body not yet recovered.

ROYAL SYDNEY GOLF CLUB.

The annual meeting of the Royal Sydney Golf Club was held last night at the Oxford Hotel. The chair was occupied by Mr. E. P. Simpson. The annual report congratulated the club on the progress maintained during the year and on the prospects for the coming season. The number of active members during last year was 102; non-playing, 12; supernumerary, 20; country members, 8; new members, 40; associate members, 45; and supernumerary, 7. Reference was made to the death of Mrs. Eberworth, who had charge of the club-house. The links at present were in splendid condition; the tees had been enlarged, so that no inconvenience was caused by top-dressing or laying up of a tee; the greens had in many cases also been enlarged, and the approaches were better than they had ever been; the old 15th hole, known as "the Sahara," had been abandoned, and the new hole, the 17th, was played with great improvement to the links, which would be further improved by the lengthening of the 10th and 18th holes, a matter of only a few months. The championship of club was won by Mr. E. P. Simpson, who thus held for the year the Concord Cup, presented by Miss Walker. The Hampden Cup, and with it the championship of New South Wales, was won by Mr. E. J. B. Macarthur. The thanks of the club were accorded to Messrs. E. Simpson, G. E. Fairfax, and H. Macneil for trophies and prizes presented during the year. The death of James Scott, the club's professional, who was unfortunately drowned last month whilst fishing from the rocks at Bondi, was regretted. A letter of condolence was sent to his family from the committee, on behalf of the club. Players had now

A sad end to what might have been a promising career.