



# James Laing Melville

1866 - 1909

James Laing Melville (Jim) was born in Earlsferry on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1866. At that time probably because it was in Earlsferry Parish Rotten Row Williamsburgh was considered to be Earlsferry.

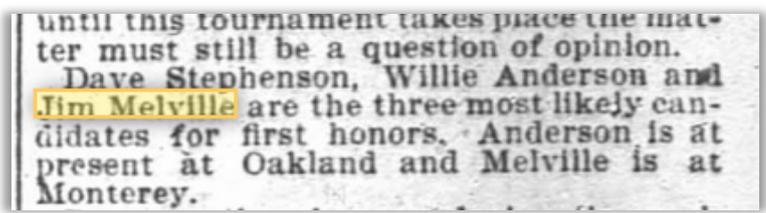
He was the youngest of eight children, having two elder brothers William and John. We believe he went to USA in 1881 at the relatively young age of 16. We do not know much about his golfing ability whilst in Earlsferry and we cannot find any reference to his exploits on Earlsferry golf course. His oldest brother William emigrated in 1873 and it may have been his stimulus that made Jim make the trip. We cannot find the actual arrival details so cannot confirm that he was destined to stay with his brother in Kansas.

	1866	March	2 <sup>nd</sup> P.M.	at Rotten Row Earlsferry	David Melville Margaret Melville John Laing	1866	March 21 <sup>st</sup>	at Williamsburgh
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He seems to have been a caddy in Earlsferry where he would learn much and he may well have done a form of apprenticeship with Forrester. In the 1885 census he is shown as living with his brother and being employed as a farmer which was his brother's profession. At the same time the census shows that the second brother John was also there. By the next census in 1890 his no longer shown as living with his brother. And whilst we cannot track him then, he next appears as pro at Monterrey in 1899 and where he apparently was an instructor.

Wm Melville	34
F E Melville	26
L E Melville	4
D D Melville	1
John Melville	31
James Melville	18

He moved to Monterey in 1899 and was instructor at Hotel del Monte. "The property extended south and southeast of the hotel and included gardens, parkland, polo grounds, a race track, and a golf course.



Originally used for hunting and other outdoor activities, the hotel's property became Pebble Beach, an unincorporated resort community, and the world-famous Pebble Beach Golf Links. The famous 17-Mile Drive was originally designed as a local excursion for visitors to the Del Monte to take in the historic sights of Monterey and Pacific Grove and the scenery of what would become Pebble Beach. The hotel became popular with the wealthy and influential of the day, and guests included Theodore Roosevelt and Ernest Hemingway, as well as many early Hollywood stars. [Wikipedia]

"In 1905 he was appointed to Sacramento Golf Club.

### LOCAL GOLFISTS HIRE INSTRUCTOR

The Sacramento Country Club has secured the services of **Jim Melville**, the famous golf instructor of the Del Monte Hotel links, to teach Sacramentans the fine points of the game. Melville is known all over the United States, both as player and instructor, ranking among the best in the country.

According to present arrangements Melville will be located at the local Country Club for about two months, and local enthusiasts feel that the standard of play on the local links will be much higher than heretofore.

That was where he died of pneumonia in 1909 said, in one obituary, to be 47. Although there is some doubt to that statement because if the Jim Melville who died in 1909 was our Jim Melville he was actually 43 years of age.

The Antique Golfers website says that in 1897 he was appointed as instructor at Oakland GC and in 1898 went to Hotel Del Monte in Monterey. It seems in these days that a pro teacher might well have a number of contemporaneous appointments at golf clubs but we need to clarify this. Furthermore, there was a migration of professional golfers to better climes during the "off" season. That is what our Jim Melville did since he was a

frequent visitor to Hawaii from San Francisco.

Two of the morning papers and one weekly sporting paper of San Francisco have contained scathing accounts of the action of Mr. Knapp of Pittsburg in declining to play with John Lawson, the northern expert, in the semi-final round of the open golf tournament at Monterey last week.

Not satisfied with saying that Mr. Knapp, who was reported to be from Los Angeles, was unsportsmanlike in his claiming a disqualification and therefore a forfeit from Lawson, they have attacked him personally, going so far as to drag his business interests into the controversy and claimed he was afraid of defeat at the hands of Lawson.

The fact of the matter is this: Section 12 of the United States golf rules says: "For stroke competition, a competitor, unless specially authorized by the green committee, shall not play with a professional under penalty of disqualification." Lawson did play the preceding round with the Monterey links' professional, **Jim Melville**, and the disqualification followed.

To Mr. Lawson's credit it must be said that he knew he was in the wrong and made no objection to the decision of the committee, but the attacks referred to were inspired from another source. If rules are made to be respected, the decision was a just one; if not, what possible excuse can there be for having a set of rules to govern tournament play?

Mr. Knapp is a member of and has played on several Eastern links, and is, furthermore, a gentleman, playing what is supposed to be pre-eminently a gentleman's game. Under the circumstances, as he was entirely within his rights, the sneering attitude of the northern press is absurd.

OCTOBER 19, 1905

### SPORTS

#### JIM MELVILLE ARRIVES

**Jim Melville**, the professional golf player from the Hotel Del Monte, California, arrived on the Sonoma yesterday. The first thing that Mr. Melville did was to take the car, in company with Dr. High, to the Manoa Club. Melville expressed himself as highly pleased with the links and claimed that they were as good as most in California.

Melville is a middle aged man, born in Scotland. He started golf as a caddy and has followed it all his life. He has been in the United States for the last fifteen years teaching. Before starting to teach in the States Melville traveled with Willie Anderson and Alex Smith, giving exhibitions.

For the last six years Melville has taught at Del Monte where he has a fine reputation. As a teacher he is the best in the Golden State. In the last tourney held in California Melville's pupils took the first three prizes.

Melville will start to teach at once on the Manoa links. Bookings for lessons will be at the sporting goods store of Woods & Sheldon, 91 King street.

There is no doubt but what golf will now take on new life here. Dr. High had the following to say yesterday: "I went around the links yesterday with Melville and in 5 minutes I found that I knew nothing about the game. After playing three holes he had me driving a longer ball than I have ever driven. He is a wonder and will do a world of good for the game."

The second finger of Melville's right hand was smashed in the wreck of the Alameda, and he will be unable to play for a couple of weeks. This will not hinder him from teaching.

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### WRECK OF A STEAMER.

The s.s. **Alameda**, which started for Honolulu from San Francisco on Saturday morning, went ashore in the bay. As she began to settle, her 60 passengers (according to Reuter) were taken off in launches. Everybody on board was safely rescued.

He spent a number of seasons in Hawaii and seems to have been well regarded.

prize and the award for the best 18. John Black of the San Francisco golf club took second, with McDonald Smith of Claremont third. "Jim" Melville of Del Monte and J. Smith of San Rafael tied for fourth place and T. W. Bradley of the Presidio golf club sixth.

George Smith's 65 for the first 18 holes establishes a record for the Del Monte links, as also does his score of 136 for two rounds. Alex Bell and John Black made a round in 69 each in the morning, and Jim Melville went around in 69 in the afternoon. W. F. Garby of the Claremont country club turned in 147, the best score among the amateurs. The table follows:

R. Hornby	82	
G. Martin	74	77-151
W. R. Millar	77	79-156
L. Berrian	77	78-153
R. Y. Hayne	73	
R. Henderson	84	76-160
C. D. Whyte	72	
W. Welch	77	70-147
A. J. Owen	77	76-153
G. Smith	65	71-136
V. Whitney	78	78-154
W. Bradley	76	69-145
John Lawson	75	
Alex Bell	69	78
F. C. Newton	73	75
E. Martin	73	76
T. P. Mumford		

Ctrl+ / -Keyboard Shortcuts

And this certainly seems to be him and the death notices give a futher clue (right - from a Kansas newspaper).

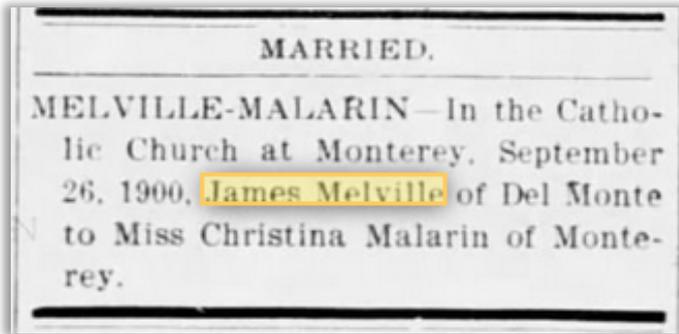
This looks much more like our Jim. He certainly had the brothers William and John who stayed in Kansas.

### Died at Sacramento

We were informed last week that Jim Melville, who is well known to many of the people of this vicinity and readers of the SUN, died at his home in Sacramento, California, on November 17th. His brothers Wm and John knew nothing about his death until last Friday when a postal card arrived from Santa Cruz, California, stating that a telegram had been received there announcing the death of Jim, but does not give the cause of his death.

He was the youngest of the Melville boys, was born in Scotland 43 years ago, and at the age of 17 years, came to America. He leaves a wife and children to mourn his loss.

He married Cristina Malarin in 1900.



NAME:	Myrtle Christine Chavoya
SOCIAL SECURITY #:	558140802
GENDER:	Female
BIRTH DATE:	24 Jul 1903
BIRTH PLACE:	California
DEATH DATE:	5 Feb 1982
DEATH PLACE:	Monterey
MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME:	Malarin
FATHER'S SURNAME:	Melville

This lady had a very interesting back story. She was the granddaughter of Juan Malarin, who was one of the last 'Fortyniners' in the Californian gold rush. He had a

Marrano	Son	M	W	37	8		California	Cal
Melville Christina	Daughter	F	W	35	11	3 1	California	Cal
Myrtle	Grand Daughter	F	W	6	8		California	Cal
Malarin Carrie	Daughter	F	W	34	8		California	Cal
Louisa	Daughter	F	W	33	8		California	Cal
Bernie	Son	M	W	32	8		California	Cal
Rosa	Daughter	F	W	28	8		California	Cal
Rudolph	Son	M	W	25	8		California	Cal

large ranch establishment and land holdings, all in his wife's name!! He owned considerable interest in banking and Railroads and was a descendent of the Mexican Royal Family that once ruled California. Jim and she had one child, Myrtle, who died in 1982. Christina remarried and lived her whole life in Monterey.

His death was also announced in the East of Fife newspapers but merely as the youngest son of the late David Melville Earlsferry.

**WELL-KNOWN GOLF INSTRUCTOR  
DIES AFTER BRIEF ILLNESS  
AT SISTERS' HOSPITAL.**

James Melville, known to practically all golf players on the Pacific Coast, and well known to dozens of them from Eastern States, and even from Europe, died this morning at the Sisters' Hospital after a short illness of pneumonia.

Melville has been golf instructor at the Del Monte links for a number of years, and "Jim" counted a friend wherever he knew an acquaintance.

He was a splendid man in his business, well liked and well appreciated as an instructor. He was just, thoroughly independent, and despised shams of every character. Many a tale is told upon the golf links at Del Monte as to how "Jim" had sat upon some swell snob from the East or from Europe, who thought he could do about as he pleased there because of his money or his influence; more than once "Jim" has refused to give instructions to people of this character, and has delighted in turning them down and instructing others of comparatively meager purse.

His general good nature and sterling independence, combined with his excellent qualities as instructor, made him popular everywhere. To women and to men alike—to the richest as well as to the poorer—he was known everywhere familiarly as "Jim."

Melville had been in Sacramento at the Country Club for about two months giving instructions, and was about to go back next Sunday to take his place again at Del Monte. He was on the links every day and did not go to the Sisters' Hospital until some time Friday; in fact, he had given a lesson Friday morning. He complained of a bad cold, but it was found that he had a very severe case of pneumonia—in fact, he must have had pneumonia for at least a couple of days before he was taken to the hospital.

Melville was 47 years of age and a native of Scotland, where, as caddy, he first learned the game. He leaves a wife and an infant daughter.

The body will be sent to Monterey to-morrow, where the funeral will take place.

1908

Robert Johnstone, open champion of the Pacific Coast, will play in the tournament for professionals at Burlingame on Thanksgiving day, but Alexander Bell, who has hurt his arm, will not take part. "Jim" Melville and Harry Rawlins may come up from Del Monte. George Smith of Oakland, with F. J. Reilly of the Burlingame Country Club, will take part.

Hawaii 1907

here. Jim Melville of Delmonte was the first to visit here and he did the game much good.

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San Francisco 1901

**SMITH WINS GOLF MATCH.**

Crack Amateurs Saw Him Defeat Melville in Professionals' Game.

DEL MONTE, February 25.—Interest is great here in golf that is being played by professionals, Willie Smith and David Bell and Del Monte's expert "Jim" Melville, and crack amateurs, who came here for the amateur contest of Friday and Saturday are remaining to watch the matches of champions. The links have dried off and to-day were in fine condition, and the players were seen at their best. The match to-day was between Melville and Smith, the latter winning.

Hawaii 1905

**Sportlets.**

It is said that **Jim Melville** may lay out the golf course for the new Country Club.

♦ ♦ ♦

1906

**MELVILLE SAILS**

**Jim Melville**, the golf professional, who has been in Honolulu the past two months, sailed on the Alameda yesterday for San Francisco. Although his stay was short Melville did much to improve golf in the Islands and all who have taken his instructions have shown the benefits in their play. During the very infancy of the game Melville has had a chance to start aspiring golfers along the right lines and there is no reason why crack players should not develop.

Interest in golf is growing and there is now talk of establishing a fourth course on this Island. This added interest is mostly due to Melville's influence.

It is expected that work will begin on the course at Kapiolani Park in the near future.

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**Old Golfer Ill.**

SACRAMENTO, Nov. 14.—[Exclusive Dispatch.] James Melville, golf instructor at Del Monte, who has been here for some weeks giving instructions in golf at the Sacramento Country Club, is lying very ill with pneumonia at the Sister's Hospital. **"Jim" Melville** is known to all golf players on the coast.

**DIED.**

**MELVILLE.**—At California, on 17th November, **James Melville**, son of the late David Melville, Karlsferry.