

JOHN DUNCAN

1861 - 1939



The Duncan family
David, Margaret, Thomas, John and Isabel

There were a number of Duncans in Earlsferry and Elie about this time. John and his brother David (q.v.) were the sons of David and Jane (otherwise) Jean Duncan and John was born in Earlsferry in 1861.

Page 5.

1861. BIRTHS in the *District of Kilconquhar* in the County of *Fife*

No.	Name and Surname.	When and Where Born.	Sex.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maternal Surname of Mother. Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
22	<i>John Duncan</i>	<i>1861 March Twenty-seventh 3rd Year</i>		<i>Mr. David Duncan Coal Miner</i> <i>Jane Duncan</i> <i>at St. Mair's Kirk</i>	<i>David Duncan</i> <i>father</i> <i>not Present</i>	<i>1861 April 12th</i> <i>at Kilconquhar</i>
		<i>Earlsferry</i>		<i>1861 November 16th</i> <i>Lochmick</i>		<i>Peter Pendergast</i> <i>Registrar</i>

His father died shortly after he was born as a result of an embankment collapsing whilst working on the railway line to Elie. He can only just have started as a labourer in the railway since his occupation at John's birth was miner.

ELIE—FATAL ACCIDENT.—On Thursday morning, last week, a serious accident happened on the railway now in course of being formed between Kilconquhar Station and Elie. While a number of hands were employed at a cutting, a portion of the earth suddenly gave way, and before one of the labourers had time to escape, he was forced against a truck, causing instantaneous death. David Duncan, the deceased, belonged to Earlsferry, and has left a widow and helpless young family, together with an aged mother, to deplore his loss. Great sympathy is felt for them, and it is earnestly hoped that something will immediately be done for their benefit.

[Edinburgh News and Literary Chronicle 22nd November 1862]

THE LATE FATAL ACCIDENT AT ARDROSS.—We are glad to learn that £20 has been raised by Messrs Grainger, the contractors, and the labourers employed on the line, for the purpose of presenting to the widow and children of **David** Duncan, whose death we lately noticed. This action is very praiseworthy, not only on the part of the contractors, but also on that of the labourers.

[Dunfermline Saturday Press 29th November 1862]

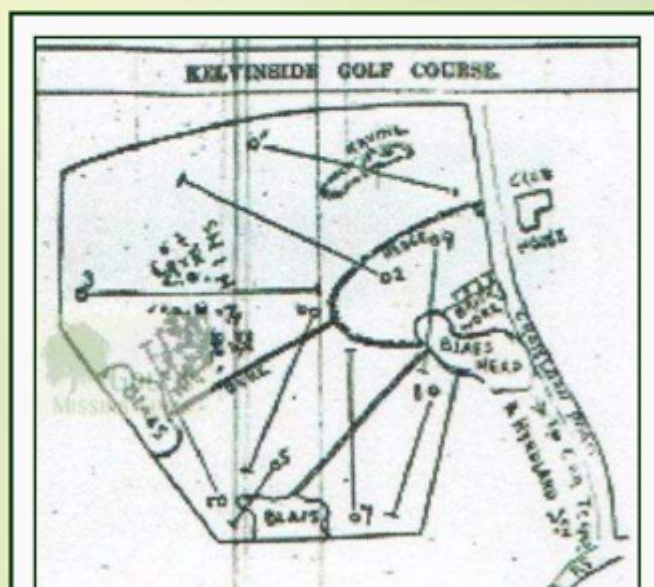
44	1862	Nov. 28	George Duncan	Killed while working at Ardross	William Duncan	1862
	David	November	Mrs. Brener	(deceased)	Brener	November 15 th
	Muncie	Thirtieth		Railway by park of the		at Kilcomshan
	Labourer	J.R. O.M.	Helen Duncan	Embarked on ship going way		at Kilcomshan
	arrived to	Langlands	M. J. Duncan			at Kilcomshan
	from Matruan	Kilcomshan				at Kilcomshan

but he had one brother called David who became professional at Northampton Golf Club.

We are not sure where in Earlsferry they lived but it looks very much as if after his father died the family that is mother Jane (Jean) and his siblings George and David lived at 12 Liberty. Clearly, he must have moved to Glasgow

The professional from 1898 to 1901 was John Duncan.

From the Nottingham Journal Tuesday 5th February 1901 – "Is the game of golf losing its attractiveness for Scottish lovers of sport? At all events, we read that it had been decided to wind up the Kelvin-side Club, an organisation which, we learn from the last issue of "Golfing Annual," was instituted in 1893 possessed a course of nine-holes at Crossloan Road, Kelvin-side, and had a membership of 250."



He appears again in the 1901 census as living in Church Street in Maryhill in Glasgow and his profession is stated to be golf club maker which ties in with the demise of Kelvin-side Golf Club. By that time, he had married Margaret Hutson from Rothesay Isle of Bute in 1898

840	1898	(Signed)	128	David Duncan	(Signed)	1898
	on the Perthshire	John Duncan	Main	Coal Miner	D. J. Findlay	October 5 th
	day of September	Golf Clubmaker	Street	(deceased) and	Pastor	
	At 52 Montgomerie	(Bachelor)	Hayhill	John Duncan	St George's	
	Stirling			M. S. Westwater	Taberna	At Darnley
	(Signed)		52	Thomas Hutson	(Signed)	
	After Publication	Haggie Hutson	Montgomerie	Public Works	James Hutson	
	according to the	Domestic Servant	Stirling	(deceased) and	William	High Church
	Form of the	(Spinster)	Edinburgh	Isabella Hutson	Isabella Hutson	Register
	Christian		Glasgow	M. S. Bannockburn	William	
				(deceased)		

1901 then John became professional at Stirling Golf Club. He had three children with Margaret, Isobel Carruthers Duncan, who married Alexander Murray the procurator Fiscal in Stirling in 1931, and her twin David William Duncan, who died in 1962 but had married Florence Huggard in Ireland in 1940. They had a later child Thomas Hutson Duncan in 1904 (see later):

"In 1901 John Duncan became the Club Professional; he worked at the Club for 34 years, asking for permission to retire at the age of 74. To this day the John Duncan Trophy, commissioned by the Club in his memory, is played for." [from Stirling Golf Club's website.]

He remained there for 39 years and saw the development of Stirling Golf Club into a tour de force of Scottish Golf.

JOHN DUNCAN TROPHY: This competition, instituted to mark the retiral of Mr John Duncan, late professional to the club, took place on Saturday. There was a big entry, and some remarkable scores were returned. The course was still wet, but play was less exhausting than it had been for few days. A somewhat strong westerly wind blew, and it was somewhat chilly, at least it felt so after the intense heat. [June 1939]

Not long after he retired, he died after a long illness:

OBITUARY MR. JOHN DUNCAN. A native of Earlsferry, on the line of Fife, which has given golf the world, Mr Duncan was in his year. He came to Stirling about thirty-nine years ago and had been professional for over thirty-nine years on the King's Park course. He had been for many years an elder St. George's Church. St. Ninians. He is survived by his widow, family of two sons and one daughter

*Golfers in Stirling and Scotland will learn with regret of the death of genial John Duncan, ex-professional of Stirling Golf Club, took place at his home. Kinraig**Bannockburn Road, St. Ninians on Tuesday, after a long illness. Mr Duncan probably initiated men and women into the mystery the wee gutty ba' than any British professional. On 2nd 1934, the high regard in which Duncan was held by the golfers in Stirling was revealed when he made the recipient of a joint presentation from the members of the Stirling Club, Stirling Victoria Club and Stirling Ladies' Club, when he received a cheque for £200 a shooting stick and life membership of the Stirling Club. John retired the following March, and succeeded by one of his pupils, Archie Young. The late Mr Whyte, solicitor, Stirling, then an ex-captain of the club, said that with Mr Duncan the club had reached a highest point of success in membership and finance. Mr Duncan was not an ordinary golf professional some people might consider him. In the old Scots way of speaking, a character, but they considered him much more than that —he was a regular "institution" in their view and his workshop was a little parliament of its own.*

*[** no surprise that he names his house after his homeland.]*

But his family carry on, with his son inheriting the house and at the same time becoming a local councillor.

1941

THE STIRLING OUR NEW COUNCILLOR Mr David W. Duncan, Kincaig, Bannockburn Road, St. Ninians, who was co-opted as a member of Stirling Town Council on Thursday night to succeed the late Councillor Robert Jenkins, St. Ninians, was born in Glasgow but has resided in Stirling since he was two years old. After leaving Stirling High School, he was in succession on the staffs of Messrs Hill & Whyte, solicitors, Stirling, and Messrs T. & J. Muirhead, solicitors, Stirling, and later was first assistant in the town clerk's office and depute clerk of the police court. Thereafter he served on the accountancy and income tax department of Messrs Moncrieff, Warren, Paterson & Co., wilters, Glasgow, for over three years. In 1924 he joined the staff of Messrs Mac Watt & Haig, solicitors, Alloa, as managing clerk, which position he still holds.

Mr Duncan has always been closely identified with golf, being the eldest son of Mr John Duncan, the former Stirling club professional. For many years he was secretary of the Victoria club and took a leading part in competitions and club matches. He is also an original member of the County Golf Union, having for a time been president, and he is now an honorary president. It was with more than just a passing feeling of regret that I learned of the death of Mr John Duncan, the late professional to Stirling Golf Club.

Since 1900, when he came to Stirling, Mr Duncan was the live wire in golfing circles, and he supplied the energy and inspiration to many of us who took up the game in these early days. Apart from the game being his calling in life, he had golf at his fingertips, and a fully stocked mind of golfing lore. In those early days when things went wrong in my game, I used to declare I would give it up. "Give it up?" he said. "Man, ye're a born golfer." Whether he believed this or not it is hard to say, but one purpose it served, it acted as a spur to urge me on to justify, if possible, his opinion, and it helped to weather the depressing days when everything went wrong in the game, from drive to putt.

Golf then did not claim the huge following it has to-day, and very few of the artisan classes were to be found in the ranks of local golfers. Mr Duncan's hearty greeting at the first tee, his critical analysis of one's play, and his spontaneous approbation for good shots were to us those days a real tonic. To the younger generation, Mr Duncan was better-known as a teacher of golf than as a player, but thirty years ago he was creeping regularly round the course in the very low 70's, and sometimes breaking that. As a player, he made but few mistakes, and, day after day for long period of years, few, if any, players in the park could hope to beat him in a level match.

What interest I take in the game is due to the help and inspiration received from my departed friend. As a man, apart from golf, Duncan was not a usual type. I do not like the terms "a character" or "an institution." He was much more than that. It might be said of him, as was said of old patriarch, "he was perfect and upright, fearing God and eschewing evil." The "back-shop" of the clubhouse was, to many, the real nineteenth hole. Here mental and spiritual balm was lavishly supplied by the prof. I did not always agree with him, but that did not prevent the discussion from having a salutary effect. In losing such a professional, Stirling club lost one who really dignified his position. Heaven is a' that men can dream, And a' that honest he'rts can wish, It maun provide some golfing links. Where John can play frae morn tae nicht. He'll offer back his gowden croon, And in its place driver seek, And, bashfu' like, his harp lay doon, And ask a putter and a cleek.

His youngest son following the family tradition.

He left for America in 1925 and arrived in New York designed as a golf club maker. He seems to have taken up in Ohio and went back to Scotland to return to America in 1926.

Tom H. Duncan, son of Mr John Duncan, professional to Stirling Golf Club, has been appointed professional with the Silver Lake Club at Akoon, Ohio, U.S.A., and he leaves at the week-end to take over his new post. Duncan, who has assisted his father for six years, is 21 years of age, and during a visit to America last summer, he performed the duties as assistant professional at Silver Lake Club for six months.

[1932]

Tom Duncan, New Breathnach Pro, Learns His Golf In Shadows Of Historic Old St. Andrews

By C. W. HOWARD

THE Duncan boys—Tommy, Jimmy, George, Jock and the rest of the clan—are known far and wide wherever golf is played as sharpshooters who fear no man in combat and who are worthy, every mother's son of 'em, of any man's putter.

Take Tommy, for instance, who becomes professional within a few weeks at Breathnach Country club. There is a broth of a lad, for fair. Mild disposition, not too tall, nor pudgy, either; a burr under his tongue the size of a tuppence, and the ruggedness of St. Andrew's, Fife and Glasgow as his background.

Tommy Duncan is known to more people as Jimmy Duncan, than by his own monicker. But that's a natural error, it seems. Tommy and Jimmy Duncan were close associates, and when Jimmy died three years ago, the name Jimmy stuck to Tommy, for no reason at all, and so he's called Jimmy.

But Tom Duncan is his name, and



Tom Duncan

he prefers to be called Tom, too, because he's Tommy to the wee wife.

It was six years ago that Tommy Duncan came to America from the hinterland about St. Andrew's. Like all Scotsmen thereabout, he had taken his golf seriously from the days when he was first permitted on the courses which abound in that district.

Later on Tommy became a professional. He served his apprenticeship at the bench, joined the British P. G. A., and the Professionals' Union, and otherwise embarked on the career that has been a career for Duncans since the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.

After coming to America, Tommy was at Silver Lake Country club, at Akron Municipal, at Riverside, south of town, and helped lay out Loyal Oak.

At Breathnach, where George R. Greenleaf, the operator, will have 18 holes in play, Duncan expects to get his game in shape again for some of the jousting that is so popular hereabouts, and he should prove a welcome addition to the ranks in the pro-amateurs, the opens

and whatnot, where he is eligible.

Breathnach will be ready for the public, Greenleaf says, just as soon as some necessary rolling, minor repairs and the like are attended to, and that will follow a break in the weather this spring.

He seems to have lost interest in golf

Thomas Hutson Duncan, who celebrates his 47th birthday anniversary today, was a golf pro for many years, and the son of a golf pro, and yet this year he has played only four matches.

He could never have foreseen this in earlier years, he says, because golf seemed to be in his blood, but he has lost a great deal of interest in the game.

Duncan is in the testing department, processing division, of B. F. Goodrich.

He came to Akron as a pro at the old Silver Lake Country Club in 1925, when its course had only nine holes. He was born in Stirling, Scotland, 25 miles east of Glasgow, and locale of Sir Walter Scott's celebrated "The Lady of the Lake." His middle name, incidentally, comes from his mother's side, and is traced directly to the great writer.

DUNCAN'S FATHER was pro at the Stirling Golf Club for 34 years and young Thomas had his introduction to the game when he was 5, with a full set of child's clubs his father had fashioned.

When he was through high school, he became assistant pro and then came to the Silver Lake post upon the recommendation of Jimmy Duncan, the first pro there, who was not a relative but whose wife had been born in Stirling and knew young Tommy and his family.

While at Silver Lake for one year, Duncan put together two 33s on the same afternoon for a 66 which stood as the course record during its life as a nine-hole links. He also was the second pro at Good Park, the municipal course, and held the same post at Breathnach, Mayfair and Braeburn.

He joined Goodrich 15 years ago, starting at Plant 4, and has been a foreman for nine years.



THOMAS HUTSON DUNCAN
.....47 today

DUNCAN, HIS wife, and 16-year-old son, Jack, who shows some interest in golf, live at 761 Elma av. He is a member of the B. F. Goodrich Foreman's Club and the Eagles Club. At one time, he had a valuable collection of golf clubs and club heads. Among the most valuable were two believed to have been the first on which the maker stamped his name, more than 100 years old.

The maker, Duncan recalls, was Hugh Philp, a celebrated Scottish pro. Duncan also has pleasant recollections of the many times he toured the famed St. Andrew's course, only 40 miles from his boyhood home.

The man who cannot laugh is not only fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils, but his whole life is already a treason and stratagem.

—Thomas Carlyle

[1951]

In September 1959 he seems to have emigrated to Brazil and one wonders if he met up with ex pats there (see Alex Philp) and was given an entry visa.

Foto lista, expedida em duas vias, será entregue à Polícia Marítima e à Imigração nos pontos de embarque.

Nome completo: **Thomas Euston Duncan**
 Admissão em território nacional, em caráter: **Permanente**

Nas terras do ar: **9°** **1957** **1945**
 Lugar e data de nascimento: **Beckley, W. Va.**
 Nacionalidade: **Americana** **8-7-1904**
 Filiação (nome do Pai e da Mãe): **John e Margaret**
 Profissão: **Engenheiro**
 Residência no país de origem: **Altoon, Ohio**
 Estado: **Ohio** **ALTOON**

FILHOS: _____
 DEPENDENTES: _____
 DELIRIANTES: _____

Expediente no 1652878 expedido pelas autoridades do **Departo de Estado de Washington** em data **19 Junho 1959** --
 Visto sob nº **2365** --
 EMBAIXADA DO PORTUGAL: _____
Thomas H. Duncan
 20018 - Rua da República 141 - 1.º andar - 1000 Lisboa - Portugal

Consulado Geral de Brasil em NOVA YORK
 A **16 de setembro de 59**
 100000000
Dr. E. de Andrade
 Rio de Janeiro

NEW GOLF PRO HERE

An eight-pound son, born Monday at City hospital to Mrs. Tommy Duncan, wife of the former golf professional at Breathnach and Airport courses, has been named John Robert Duncan after his grandfather who recently retired as golf pro at Stirling Golf club in Stirling, Scotland. Both the new boy and Mrs. Duncan are getting along nicely.

Once 'Foreman' On Links

BACK IN 1925 a young fellow came to town direct from his native Scotland to make his way as a golf professional. For many years he practiced his profession but today he is almost unknown to a new generation of linksmen as he puts in his time at the Goodrich Control Test Lab as foreman.

Tom Duncan, born in Stirling which at that time was Scotland's capital, can sit by the hour and spin yarns about the game which it is generally thought, had its

beginning in Tom's native Scotland.

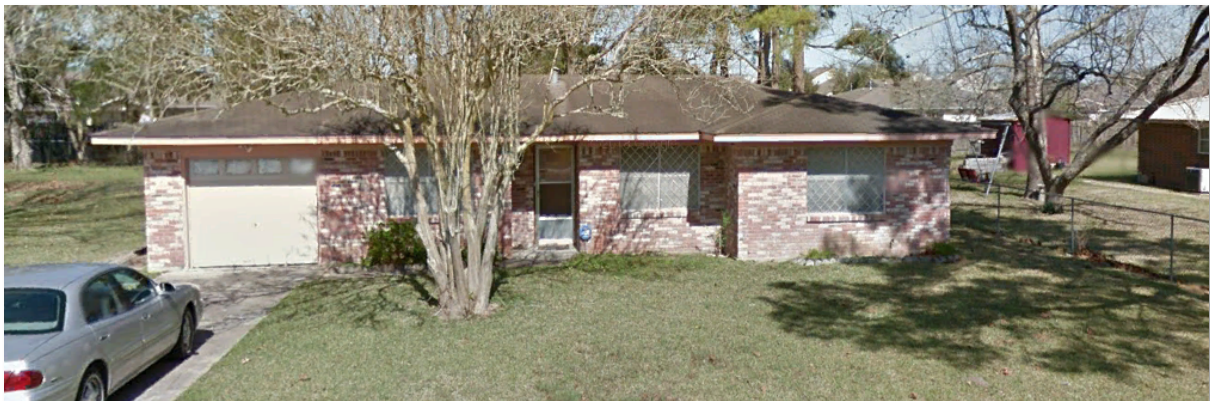
At the age of 11, Duncan won the title of Boy Champion of Scotland. The tournament in which he won the title was a handicap affair and though Tom had no handicap he won the championship from the others who did.

Tom's early days were spent around golf courses. In fact he grew up in Fife County where his father was the pro at the local

See LINKS, Page 5-C.

1936

We do not know when he came back to USA but he died in 1989 in Bay City Texas and we believe he lived at 1909 Willow Street Bay City Texas.



Researched and compiled by Graham Johnston
