

James Crowley (Sen)

1861 – 1937

Name:	James Crowley
Age:	2 Mo
Estimated Birth Year:	abt 1861
Relationship:	Son
Father's Name:	James Crowley
Mother's Name:	Margaret Crowley
Gender:	Male
Where born:	Earlsferry, fifehire
Registration Number:	436
Registration district:	Kilconquhar
Civil parish:	Kilconquhar
Town:	Earlsferry
County:	Fife
Address:	23 D House
ED:	1
Household schedule number:	21
Lines:	15
Roll:	CSSCT1861_57
Household Members	Age Relationship
James Crowley	26 Head
Margaret Crowley	21 Wife
James Crowley	2 Mo Son

James Crowley (Senior) was born in January 1861 and he features in the 1861 census.

He was born in Earlsferry 1861 married Margaret Manson 27/10/1886 and then arrived in New York on 31st March 1887, which looks like his honeymoon.

1861	M. Manson	James Crowley	James Crowley	1861	1861
James Manson	Manson	father	father	James Manson	1861
Margaret Manson	M. J. Manson	not present	not present	Margaret Manson	1861
Earlsferry	Earlsferry	1861	1861	Earlsferry	1861

They both went to USA on Ethiopia.

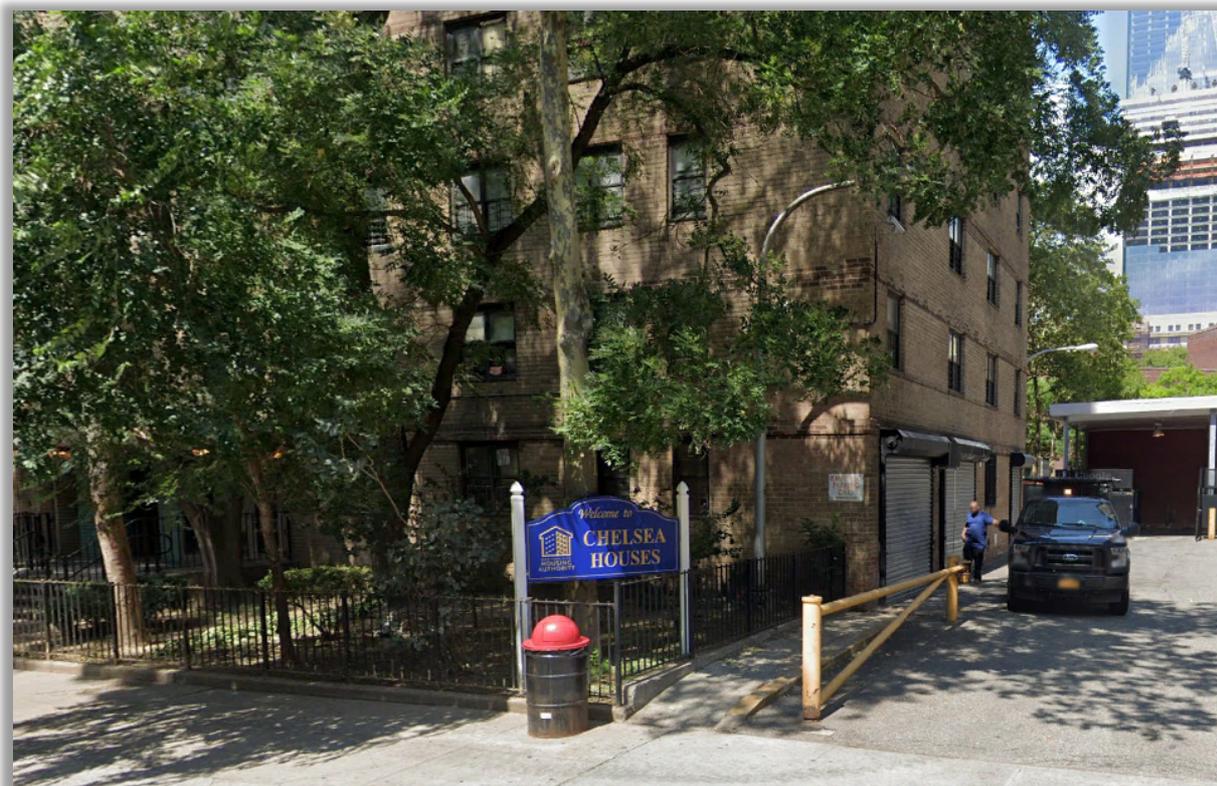
85	James Crowley	26	James
86	Mag	25	Margaret

Whilst there they had a son James Robertson born in New York 28th November 1887. We cannot find any birth certificate, but he was baptised in the Dutch reformed Church in New York.

FERRY GOLFERS FOR AMERICA.—Mr James Crowley and his son, Messrs George Pearson and Robert Peebles, are to leave Earlsferry to day, and sail in the Columbia from Glasgow to New York. All are well-known golf players and are to be engaged in the playing and teaching of golf in the United States.

We know from an announcement in the Northern Newspapers circulating in Wick that they were living at 411 West 25th Street in New York when he was born.

1904



411 West 25th Street in New York as it is today.

James worked for Philadelphia Cricket and Golf Club, among other places, and we have seen a letter from that Club indicating that he had been with them for almost four years. The letter is dated 1904 and we assume therefore that he started in 1900 – where he was before that date is difficult to ascertain.

He is shown in the census of 1900 as living in Earlsferry, but it looks as if it was a rather peripatetic existence and that whilst his wife was with him to begin with she went back to Fife with James Jnr and had more children. This suggests that James Snr perhaps came back and forth across the Atlantic and it makes it even more unusual in that he is shown in the 1891 census as living in Earlsferry along with his wife.

But he had a son James Robin(ert)son born in New York on 29 November 1887. He came back to Earlsferry and had Jane (b1890), Maggie (b1892), Lily (b1894), John Christopher (b1896), Maureen (b1898) and Alfred (b1900). When in Earlsferry they lived in Links Road, but not exactly clear where, but certainly close to Forrester's workshop (called St Margaret's Cottage on the High Street actually next door to Linmara the residence of James Braid).

He died on 4th December 1937 and is buried in Kilconquhar Churchyard. Other than James Jnr, who was born in New York, all the other children were born in Earlsferry between 1890 and 1900. Yet during this time James Snr was working a golf professional in USA. He arrived in 1887 with designation as joiner so he must have managed to get some sort of work.

He began his career as a joiner (carpenter) in Elie and Earlsferry (where he was born 22.1.1861) and is still so listed in the 1901 census though recorded as a clubmaker in Links Road, Earlsferry, in a trade directory of 1893. He lived a couple of houses down from George Forrester.

Peter Georgiady (and the Olsons) write that he moved to Glasgow in 1911. Based on his youngest son's (Alfred) school record, he moved earlier. However, he is in Stevenson Drive, Glasgow, in the census of that year described as a clubmaker but he is still listed as having a business in Earlsferry, (James Crowley and Son) as late as 1921.

Presumably he ran two establishments as he was a major reseller of clubs in Glasgow in the 1920s with a shop at 54 Union Street and latterly at Gordon Street. He also had a number of properties in Earlsferry and it is highly likely that he may have been one of the early second homeowners who took up part time residence in Earlsferry during the summer months. He at one time in addition to St Margarets owned Ravenscraig (next door to 19th Hole) and a plot of land to west end of the village which he acquired from the Earlsferry House owners. He is also shown as have bid for various derelict property which often went on the market. He was one of the early 'Air BnB' people perhaps!

Like Forrester and Scott during his time as a golf clubmaker in Earlsferry he dominated the club making scene and applied for a number of patents and registered designs.

An Improvement connected with the Socketed Wooden Heads of Golf Clubs.	
Page bookmark	GB191126072 (A) - An Improvement connected with the Socketed Wooden Heads of Golf Clubs.
Inventor(s):	CROWLEY JAMES ±
Applicant(s):	CROWLEY JAMES ±
Classification:	- international: A63B53/02 - cooperative: A63B53/02 (EP, US)
Application number:	GBD191126072 19111122
Priority number(s):	GBT191126072 19111122

The Golf House Club has a good collection of Crowley golf clubs, which now are rare. James was an innovator in manufacture of golf clubs his most famous being the Eureka.



A NEW GOLF CLUB —Mr James Crowley, Earlsferry, has brought out a new Golf Club. The shaft comes right through the heel of the club, and gives all the better spring. The heads can easily be renewed, and no twine binding is required, the shaft being firmly fitted. To prevent the head from splitting up there is a pin holding it a little in front of the neck. The club, which is called the "Eureka," has been tried with most satisfactory results.

He had established a business in Earlsferry which presumably competed with Forrester and Scott but he decided in 1910-11 to move to Glasgow, where he had premises in Union Street. He also had a golf making premises at Alexandra Park in Glasgow.

1895

It looks as if he also acted as professional to a couple of clubs or even more - at that time professional teachers used to have commissions from a number of clubs and would get paid for teaching.

He died in 1937.

1901

The Glasgow Corporation Sub-Committee on Golf, at a recent meeting, reported that the superintendent submitted two complaints he had received regarding the management of the golf house at the Alexandra Park. It was submitted to River Bailie Dougan and Councillors Steele and Steven with power to make new arrangements as regards the golf house, and to re-let the workshop. There was also submitted an offer by Mr James Crowley, Elie, of £4 10s per annum for about 20 square yards of ground at the Bellshouston Park for the erection of a shop for the manufacture and sale of golf requisites, and the sub-committee resolved to recommend that the offer be accepted for one year as from Whitsunday next.

1901

The firm was dissolved in March 1933 on his retirement but the business carried on under the same name, run by his son, John Christopher Crowley (b 1895) (q.v.)

	James Crowley	1937	M. 44	James Crowley
	Golf Club	December fourth	Years	Mason
1193	(maker (Retired))	4th. 5m. P.M.		(deceased)
	(Widower of Margaret Manson)	Victoria Infirmary		Margaret Crowley,
		(Usual residence)		Ms. Bulloch
		42 Dumbarton Avenue, Glasgow)		(deceased)