

St Andrews
IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF
Old Tom Morris

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ROGER McSTRAVICK



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

I am delighted to introduce this book written by Roger McStravick. The history of golf is inextricably linked with the ancient town of St Andrews as the game has been played over the Links since 1400. As a Past Captain of the R&A, I have a deep affinity with both the town of St Andrews and its wonderful golf courses.

St Andrews is widely considered the Home of Golf and Old Tom Morris is a key character in this history. He was a true pioneer of professional golf and still holds the record of being the oldest winner of the Open Championship. Furthermore, he developed many modern green-keeping techniques and Old Tom's legacy still remains as he is responsible not only for the Old Course as it is today but over 70 other courses across the United Kingdom.

This book provides a fascinating insight into the St Andrews of Old Tom's era and enables a greater understanding of how the town itself has shaped the evolution of golf.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Gratitude in huge measure is due to my parents in Lurgan, who engaged my interest in golf history with memorabilia of Morris and Park from an early age.

And finally, to my wife Farah, Saam and Jez, simply put, thank you for your unceasing patience and encouragement.

Roger McStravick

FOREWORD

This book is a natural follow-on to *Tom Morris of St Andrews, The Colossus of Golf, 1821-1908*, authored by Malcolm and Crabtree and published in 2008. Roger McStravick has fulfilled the authors' wish to encourage further research into the historical golfing aspects of St Andrews in general and the Tom Morris family in particular, for it is only by building on studies previously undertaken that our knowledge grows.

The reader is taken on a fascinating tour of the old streets and environs of St Andrews. Not only are the great and good who occupied the grand houses of St Andrews featured, but also more particularly the more modest dwellings of the early 'professionals', caddies, club and ball makers and others who were at the forefront in driving the great worldwide golf boom of the second half of the 19th century. Much new information is revealed about many of the characters involved.

Also featured are the institutions of the Town, including The Royal and Ancient Golf Club, The St Andrews, The New and the Ladies golf clubs, as well as the University. The work contains many rare and previously unpublished 19th century photographs.

Whilst golf is the central theme of the work, the author has brought 19th century St Andrews to life, in a way that has not been done before. The book is as artistic, well designed and presented as it is informative and is a valuable and significant addition to the bibliography of St Andrews.

Tom Morris would surely have approved of it.

Angela Howe, Golf Heritage Secretary,
The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews
Peter E Crabtree, Co-author, *Tom Morris of St Andrews, The Colossus of Golf, 1821-1908*

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to
Stephen Guiseley

Like Tommy,
the greatest of them all,
he left us just too soon



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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME to this guide to St Andrews and its golfing heritage. It is a tour of the town that Old Tom knew but, as you will discover, the architecture of central St Andrews is almost identical to the town of Old Tom's era. Very little has changed. It truly is one of the most beautiful and historic towns in Great Britain. It is not hard to imagine Old Tom walking the streets to the Cross Keys Hotel or across to the 1st tee from his shop to tee the ball up for Arthur J Balfour, incumbent Captain of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews in 1894.

From Old Tom's home at 6 Pilmour Links to the house where his son Tommy's wife and newborn son passed away, now 1 Albany Place, they are all there today. As you read this book you will learn about the town and also of the life of Old Tom himself.

I hope this book will encourage you to read more about some of the great legends of the town, from Tommy Morris, who won the Open three times as a teenager and once more, aged 21, before his untimely death that shocked the Victorian world, to the good natured Freddie Tait.

The town itself has historic cobbled wynds meandering around the town centre and the large West Sands beach, which featured in the *Chariots of Fire* film.

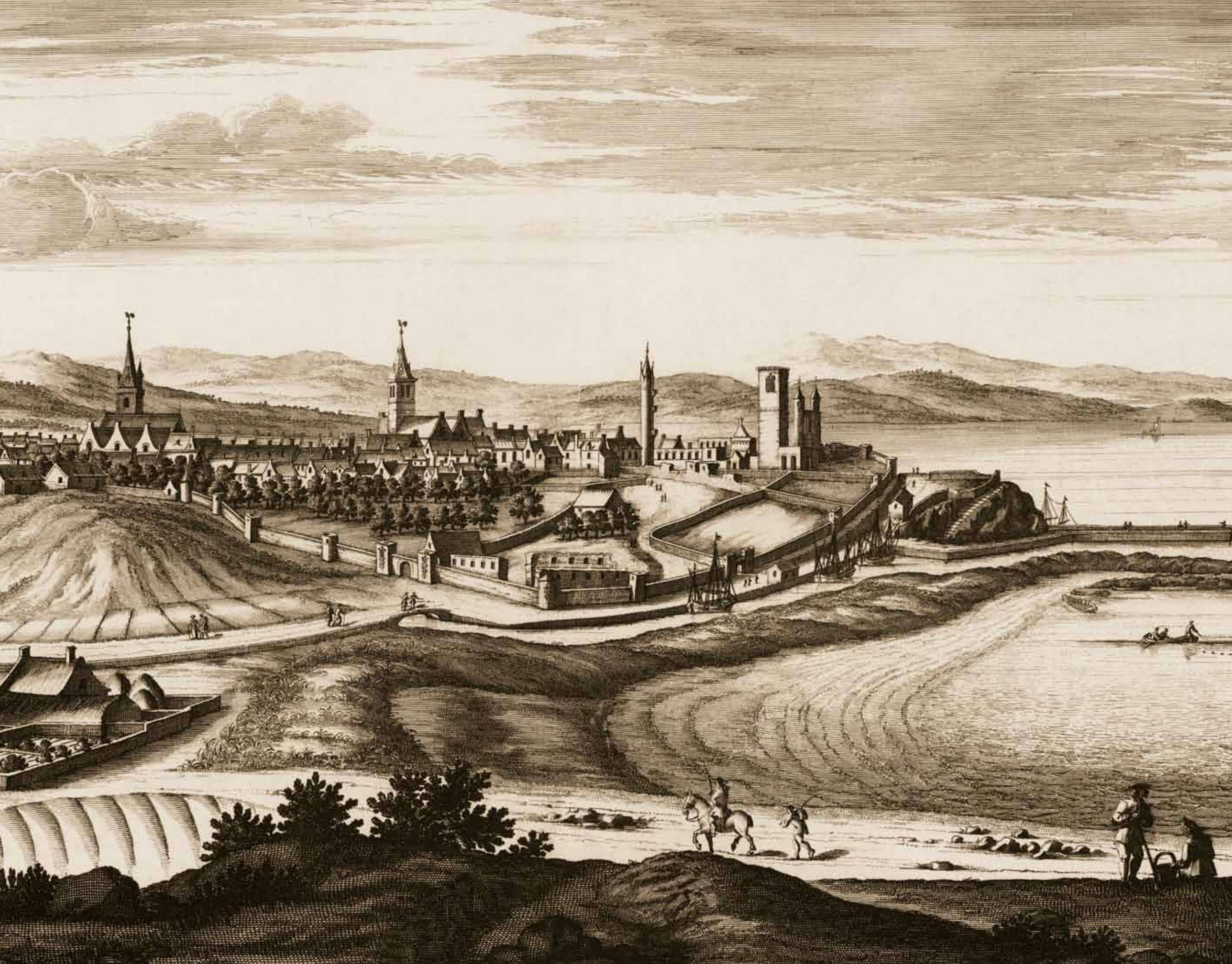
Old Tom had a rich life, filled with such highs and lows. He bore his losses with a stoicism that only added to his legendary status.

By taking you around the town and introducing you to his friends and acquaintances, I hope you will get a true measure of the man. He was by all standards the game's greatest ambassador, who gave us not only the great Old Course of St Andrews as we mostly know it today, but over 70 more, including Royal Dornoch and Lahinch. It is said locally that the greens on the New Course in St Andrews, which was funded by The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, are largely in the same position as Tom set them out in 1895.

Tom still holds the record of being the oldest man to win the Open Championship, aged 46. His son Tommy holds the record for being the youngest at 17. A man of honour and integrity, he left a legacy that still resonates throughout the world of golf today and we in golf owe him a debt of gratitude.

Tom may have been fortunate to be born in the right place at the right time but his unceasing hard work and his diplomatic prowess make him, rightly so, one of the game's greatest icons.

Old Tom Morris
At the Ladies Putting Clubhouse c1905.



HISTORY OF ST. ANDREWS

BEFORE we begin our guide around the town and into the lives of Tom Morris and his friends, let's take a brief look at the history of St Andrews. The first recorded location in the area was Muck-ross. This was a combination of two words: '*boars*', of which there were plenty living in nearby forests, and '*promontory*', on which the town stands. The boar image still features today in the Coat of Arms of the Community Council.

Legend says that on 29 October in 370AD, St Regulus, a Greek monk, arrived in the area. He had received a vision in his home city of Patras, (the original home of the relics of St Andrew of Bethsaida in Galilee) about casting off on a boat into the stormy seas, with some relics of the apostle St Andrew and being led by the winds to a far off western land. After his first vision, he declined the invitation from God. However, a second vision and a more vociferous message led St Regulus to quickly follow God's command.

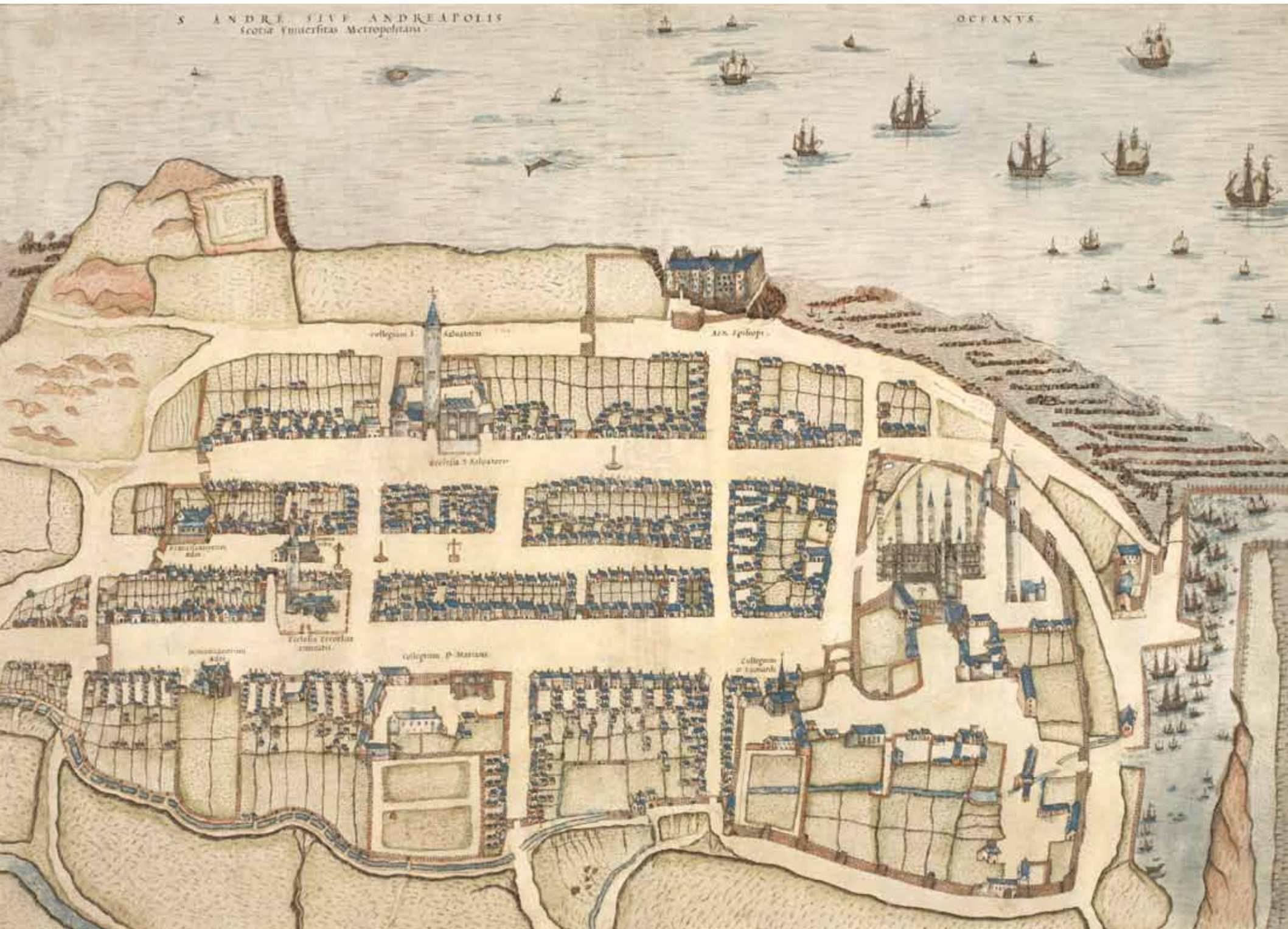
Shortly afterwards, St Regulus took to the sea with some 21 chosen companions and, after a troubled journey, their boat crashed into the bay of St Andrews. The travellers lost everything apart from the relics.

It is said that the relics, encased in a Morbrac, – a Celtic box – included an arm bone, three fingers of the right hand and three toes or possibly a tooth, kneecap, an upper arm-bone and three fingers from the Saint's right hand.¹ James Haldenstone, Prior of St Andrews (1418-1448) in *Copiale Prioratus Sanctiandree* said that they were 'the right humerus, three finger bones of the right hand, the right knee-cap, one tooth and a bone from the saint's head'.²

Whatever they were, St Andrews became a town of holy pilgrimage for many centuries thereafter, with the Morbrac being carried along the earliest forms of what would ultimately be South Street then back along North Street, with great fanfare followed by clergy, scholars and masters.

When St Regulus arrived, he received a cordial welcome from Hergust, the Pictish King, who soon became Christian and gave lands to St Regulus and his fellow travellers and allowed them to flourish peacefully.

St Andrews
The prospect of the town of St Andrews, 1693.



Muckcross was changed to Kil-ry-mont, a derivation of Kil-rule, to reflect that this was the domain of StRegulus. The well-known StAndrews name StRule, after which the historic ladies club in town is called, is merely a shortened version of StRegulus.

There are numerous stories about the naming of the site of StRegulus’ Church, where the cathedral stands today, including one that the area was called Cennrígmonaid. This old Irish word means ‘the church on the king’s mount’ and was supposedly dedicated to the memory of Túathalán, Abbot of Cennrígmonaid.

Even at this very early era, the area had a strong penchant for religious fervour. It was a foreboding of the difficult years to come.

The Naming of StAndrews

The Pictish King, Hungus, was returning to Kilrymont around the 9th century, after a victorious war over his rival the Prince of Northumberland. However, after ransacking Northumberland’s lands, Hungus’ army found itself outnumbered and surrounded by Northumberland’s army. Hungus, fearing annihilation, said a prayer to StAndrew and, in a vision of the apostle, vowed to give a tenth of his lands to the apostle and to donate all the land of Kilrymont to God and thereby also freeing all inhabitants of taxes. He spoke of his bargain with StAndrew to his men and, with newfound valour (and possibly an overwhelming desire to move to tax-free Kilyrmont), they were able to once again beat Northumberland’s army.

The 1580 map of StAndrews by John Geddy

At this time, StAndrews was still a revered holy city. Both the Cathedral and Castle look very much intact. Notice also the large archways on the Scores, North Street, Market Street and South Street. The only surviving one today is the West Port arch on South Street. On Market Street today, close to the Melville Fountain, you will see a red cross on the cobbled road. This is where many souls were executed and town proclamations made. More details on this in the Market Street section.

On returning to Kilrymont, Hungus took a piece of turf that he had removed from the battlefield and laid it upon the altar at the StRule church. From that day, the town has been known as StAndrews.

Middle Ages Syndrome

By the Middle Ages, the town had become a flourishing European centre of pilgrimage to the relics of StAndrew. Christians would travel from Edinburgh to Fife, over the hills, on foot. The beautiful clear air and holy ambiance of the town led many to believe that the waters surrounding the town had healing properties.

However, the town fell into decay after the violent Scottish Reformation struggles and the Wars of the Three Kingdoms between 1639 and 1651. These events led to the ultimate desecration and neglect of what was once a beautiful cathedral and given it the principal three-street layout we have today.

The Reformation was a time of hideous violence and cruelty in StAndrews. Martyrs of faith were burnt at the stake for purported heresy including Henry Forest (1533), who was burnt on the north side of the Cathedral so that the people in distant Forfarshire could see the flames of his bloody corpse burning as a deadly deterrent!

These martyrs of the Reformation are commemorated in the Martyrs Monument at the western end of the Scores, overlooking the sea. In 2013, a local voluntary committee, chaired by Mr Ray Pead, formed from an initiative of the StAndrews Partnership, raised in excess of £150,000 to restore the weather ravaged monument and to return it to something like its original condition.

A Town Re-born

Golf came to StAndrews around the mid-1400s but when the Cathedral fell, the sport had not yet taken off. There followed several centuries of the then city declining. However, Provost Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair (1786-1861), from the 1830s, radically upgraded this failing city to the StAndrews we know today. He simply took a run-down town, with grass growing on the streets and the putrid Ladyhead area at the east end of North Street, and transformed it with beautiful architecture. Thanks to his passion and herculean efforts, he offered a new dawn for this once great city.

Later, when we come to StLeonards House, where Playfair lived, we will find out more about his work that transformed and effectively saved StAndrews.



CHAPTER ONE

Pilmour Links

1

The Life of Old Tom Morris

OLD TOM MORRIS grew up in the poorest part of St Andrews. His parents' home in 1841, pictured here, was in the busy Fishergate area at the east end of North Street. From humble beginnings, he would live an extraordinary life that would see him become the best and most respected golfer in the world.

Few could match, never mind beat, the score of 79 that he and Allan Robertson both shot on the more difficult clockwise routing of the St Andrews Links around 1858. Even when Freddie Tait was winning matches against the likes of Open Champion Willie Auchterlonie in 1896, his scores were 82 and 85. Tom had undoubtedly a sublime talent.

With his gentle character, Tom mixed with artisans and Royalty with ease. However, he would feel more pain that any one man should in several lifetimes.

North Street

In the 1841 census, John Morris' family and his son Tom Morris, then 20, lived together at the east end of North Street and not in the west as previously thought. Their house is the second one from the left.

Old Tom outlived all his family. Although the agony of that loss would be hard enough, it would be the circumstances of Tommy's death, in the midst of his prime, that would haunt his days.

Tom proudly kept a scrapbook of his own achievements and those of his sons. The last entries into the scrapbook were in 1875 when Tommy died. In later years, he would take solace in friendships with the likes of the young Freddie Tait (1870-1900), who, like Tommy, was a beautiful golfer to watch.

The Greatest Golfing Clan of All

Tom's father, John, was a weaver and a letter carrier, who would work on his small loom from his cottage on North Street.¹ In 1820, the year before Tom was born, the town's post office was at 69 South Street. On the weekends, like all artisans, John would play golf.

Tom's family had a history of being caddies on the St Andrews Links but if we look at the history of the Morris family, a remarkable fact appears. The Robertsons, the Andersons and the Morrises were all legends in golf with numerous course records, Open Championships, grand matches, shops at different times on the Links yards from each other, keepers and improvers of the St Andrews ancient links and much more. They have so many shared experiences and history.

For several hundred years, they have been known in StAndrews as the most prevalent and illustrious of golfing families, but if we go further back to the marriage of David Anderson (born c1660) who married Margaret Fisher (born c1660) in StAndrews on 2 December 1680, all three clans are related.² Anderson and Fisher, the King and Queen of the clans if you will, had one daughter and six sons. The Morris clan comes from their son Patrick, who was born in 1684. The Robertsons and the Andersons come from their son David, who was born two years later in 1686.³

Whether Allan Robertson, Tom Morris or Daw Anderson saw each other as distant cousins we will never know, but it is astounding that we owe so much of our golf history to this particular couple from the 17th century.

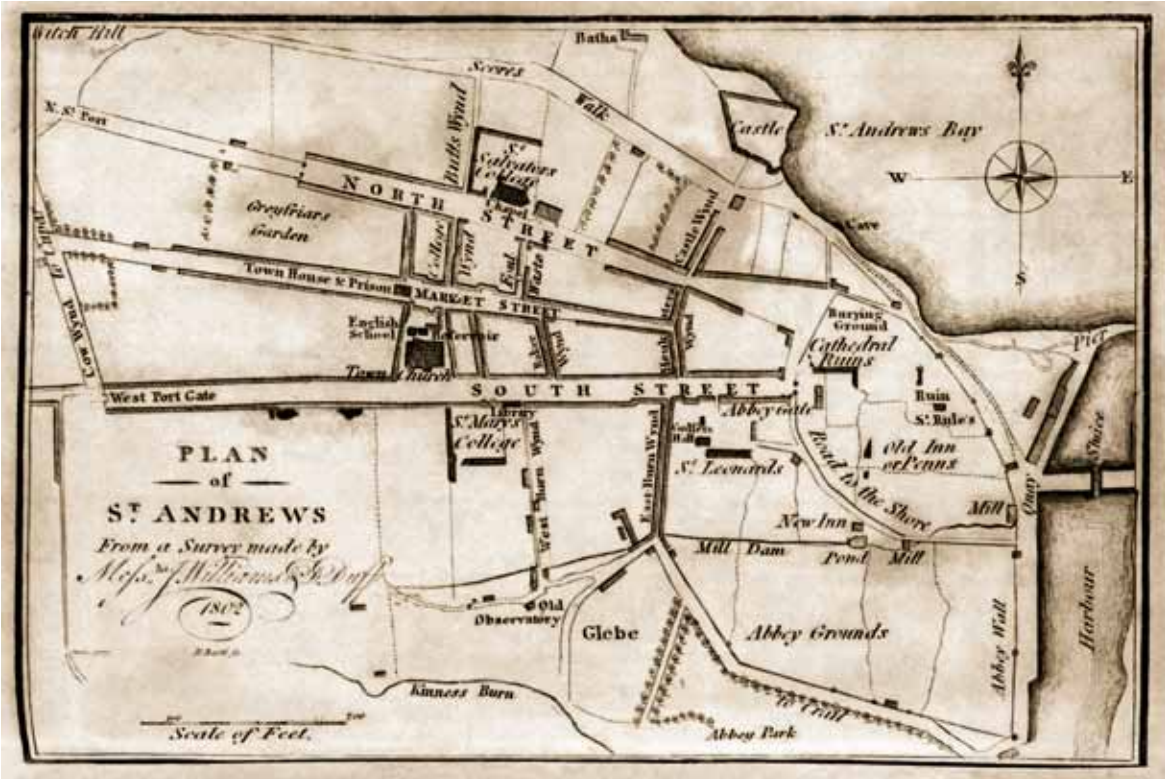
Tom the Boy

Old Tom was born into a working class family in StAndrews on 16 June 1821. The town was decaying. The former grandeur of medieval StAndrews, when pilgrims from all over Europe would flock to see the relics of StAndrew at the majestic StAndrews Cathedral or take a dip in the healing Fife waters, was replaced with run-down buildings and squalor on the streets. Even the University was struggling.

The course was free to play for everyone as it had historically been on public land. Successive owners would maintain the rights for golfers. As an aside, it was this policy to keep golf free on common ground which would grow the game in Scotland amongst all classes, whereas in England it was the sport for the privileged few, on private land and estates and deemed an exclusive elitist sport.

Plan of StAndrews, 1802 (top)
From a survey made by Messrs J Williams & D Duff, 1802, from Rev. James Grierson's *Delineations of StAndrews* (Edinburgh, 1807).

Ladyhead, North Street
Fisherwives at the east end of North Street in the 1880s.



Tom would have been immediately immersed in the world of golf in StAndrews. Of his youth Tom said, “*StAndrews bairns are born wi’ web feet an’ wi’ a golf-club in their hands. I wad be driving the chuckie stanes wi’ a bit stick about as sune’s I could walk.*”⁴ The pageant and pomp of the wealthy gentleman of the Society of StAndrews Golfers, founded in 1754, later to become The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of StAndrews in 1834, would have only aroused the excitable curiosity of a young boy, keen to play the long form of golf.

Living a mere few hundred yards from the Links must have made the course a magnet for the boys of the town, including Tom. Their golf with broken hickories, striking old corks hammered with nails, would have been fun but not the grand game the gentlemen played on the links.

Growing up in StAndrews

Old Tom started to play around the age of six. It was in his blood. His father John played and, as explained, he was a distant relative to Allan Robertson’s father, David (1775-1836), who had sold feathery balls in StAndrews for at least three generations by 1821. Tom’s grandfather, John Morris (b1752), was also very much involved in the sport and was called upon to testify during the 1805 Rabbit Wars court case that took place in the Edinburgh Court of Session.⁵ In his statement taken in StAndrews, John said that he had been working as a caddie for 30 years.

Tom had very little schooling, with classes taking place in what is StAndrews Library today and perhaps the new Madras College, which opened in 1833, when Tom was 12 years old. According to long time friend and author of the first Old Tom biography, Reverend Tulloch, Tom had some schooling at Madras.⁶ More on this later.



From many writers including Tulloch, we learn that it was old Sandy Herd, a future keeper of the StAndrews green (c1855), who asked Tom, as a young teenager, why he hadn’t asked the feathery ballmaker Allan Robertson for an apprenticeship. Until that point, Tom was very likely to have been destined to become a weaver like his father. After a short discussion around the mid-1830s with Robertson, Tom started to work in the workshop at Sandyhill, at the corner of The Links, by the 18th hole of the Old Course.

One point of note is that Allan’s father, David, owned the house at the corner of the Links that we connect to Allan. He was a well-known gifted player with a statesman-like character. Allan was just five years older than Tom. In 1836, for example, Allan was only 20, so they may well have both been apprentices at this stage. Given that Davie, as he was known, died in 1836, this may have been the time when Tom joined Allan, who would have been under considerable pressure to make the family business a success.

Madras College
Madras College was a symbol of the growing confidence of StAndrews once more. The streets were being cleaned, new beautiful housing was being built for the middle classes and in 1833 it had a first class college, based on the Madras education method. It was simply a town re-born.

We will delve more into the life of Davie later, but suffice it to say for now that if Tom started to work with Allan before 1836, they would have done so in the house of Davie Robertson.

The process for making featheries was arduous. Damp feathers were packed tightly into a small hand-sewn leather ball. At best they could make six a day between them. There is a helpful note in the book *Golfiana Miscellanea* that details the number of featheries Allan made in his shop.⁷ In 1840, 1,021 balls were made. Then in 1841, he made 1,392 and in 1844, 2,456 were made. As we will see later, this massive increase in the sale of balls no doubt allowed him to take on more staff, such as Daw Anderson.



The Invincible Team

Allan would probably have been aware of Tom's gift on the Links and in time they became a formidable team. The foursomes game with alternate shots was the most common form of the sport at that time.

The grand matches between the best golfers of the day raised the curiosity of the gambling classes, both elite and general populace, who would back 'their' man and give him a percentage of the winnings. It has been said that this would equate to 10% but it would probably have been less formal than that. The golfers were to the gamblers another form of entertainment akin to boxers or racehorses. An out-of-form golfer soon learned how loyal his backers could be.

In one match in 1849, between Morris and Robertson and the great Dunn twin brothers of Musselburgh, the stake was a staggering £400.⁸ They played 36 holes on Musselburgh, St Andrews and North Berwick. Local legend says that Morris and Robertson were never beaten from 1842 until Allan's untimely death in 1859. If so, they were indeed worthy of the 'invincibles' title.

The Links

When Daw and Jamie Anderson left 9 The Links c1882, the property was taken over in 1884 by The Trustees of the St Andrews Working Men's Coffee House and became The Links Restaurant. Its sign can be seen in the photograph above.

However, the heavy loss on day one of the match at the Musselburgh course, by 13 holes with 12 to play, perhaps tells another more human story. The St Andrews team eventually was victorious, winning at St Andrews and on the final day at North Berwick, coming from four down with only eight to play.⁹ They were without doubt a formidable team.

The pair sadly fell out over Tom's use of a gutta percha ball in 1848. This was seen by Allan, then aged 32, as disloyal as his business relied on the use of featheries. Old Tom told the story himself in Tulloch's book. *"Allan couldna abide the sight of the new ball at first. One day I was out playing with Mr Campbell of Saddell, and I got stint of balls. Mr Campbell gave me a gutta to try. Coming in, we met Allan, and somebody told him that I was playin' a grand game with one of the new balls. Allan said nothing at the time, but I saw he didna like it, and when we met in the shop we had some words about it; and this led to our parting company, and I took to making balls on my ain account."*¹⁰



Allan Robertson

Allan may have started out as a mentor to Tom but, with only five years between them, their relationship became more akin to brothers, as Robertson's own scrapbook of clippings about Tom proudly reveal.

Nevertheless, they continued to play as a team. Allan Robertson was canny. He knew who the second best player in St Andrews was. Also, as a later chapter will relate, Robertson's personal scrapbook is filled with Morris' victories, showing just how proud Allan was of his protégé.

Family Man

Tom was married to Nancy Agnes Bayne (1818-1876) on 21 June 1844, in the St Mary's Kirk on Market Street, St Andrews by Reverend Ferrie, from the Parish of Kilconquhar. Nancy had worked as a maid in the grand house of Captain Broughton at 91 North Street.¹¹ The Broughtons would eventually move to 5 Playfair Terrace, long after Nancy had left.

Interestingly, and possibly a factor in their courtship, Old Tom in the 1830s lived not too far away from Broughton's residence at 91 North Street. As a teenager, Tom may have seen Nancy going to and from her work.

Reverend Ferrie was also the Chaplain to the Society of St Andrews Golfers and The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. As Dr Ferrie, he also held the Chair of Civil History at St Andrews University for 18 years. Life would take a difficult turn for Ferrie.¹² In 1846, his wife, the daughter of Professor McCormick of St Andrews University, died. In 1847, his military son and daughter-in-law were drowned in the Ganges. By 1850, to add to Ferrie's woes, he and his son William were declared bankrupt.

There is very little evidence of where Tom and Nancy lived for the next few years but in the 1851 census they were living at 4 Pilmour Links, which would eventually become the first shop for D&W Auchterlonie.

Nancy and Tom had five children. Their first son, Thomas, was born on 15 May 1846 but died just before his 4th birthday on 17 April 1850. Their second son, Tommy, born in 1851, would go on to be one of the legends of the game. Elizabeth, known as Lizzie, was born in 1853. It is through her lineage that all the living Morris relatives today descend. They also had James Ogilvy Fairlie Morris in 1856, named after Old Tom's good friend and backer. Known by his friends as Jof, he was a good golfer in his own right, holding the course record of 77 at St Andrews with Tommy. John, their last child, was born in 1859, sadly with disabled legs, and would spend all his life in a wheelchair, unable to walk.

At 7 The Links, above Tom's shop, Mrs Walker, great granddaughter of Tom Morris, confirmed that behind the wallpaper in the hallway there are still scrapes on the wall today where John's wheelchair brushed against them. Tom would live to see them all pass away before him.



Tom's family

Tom with his grandchildren, c1905. Clockwise from top left: (Elizabeth) Gray Hunter, (William) Bruce Hunter, Agnes (Bayne) Hunter and Jamesina Hunter.

Tom's Living Room

This photo, taken in the mid-1900s, gives us a rare glimpse inside Tom's house. His relations still reside there today where, low on some walls, there are still scrape marks from Tom's son John's wheelchair.



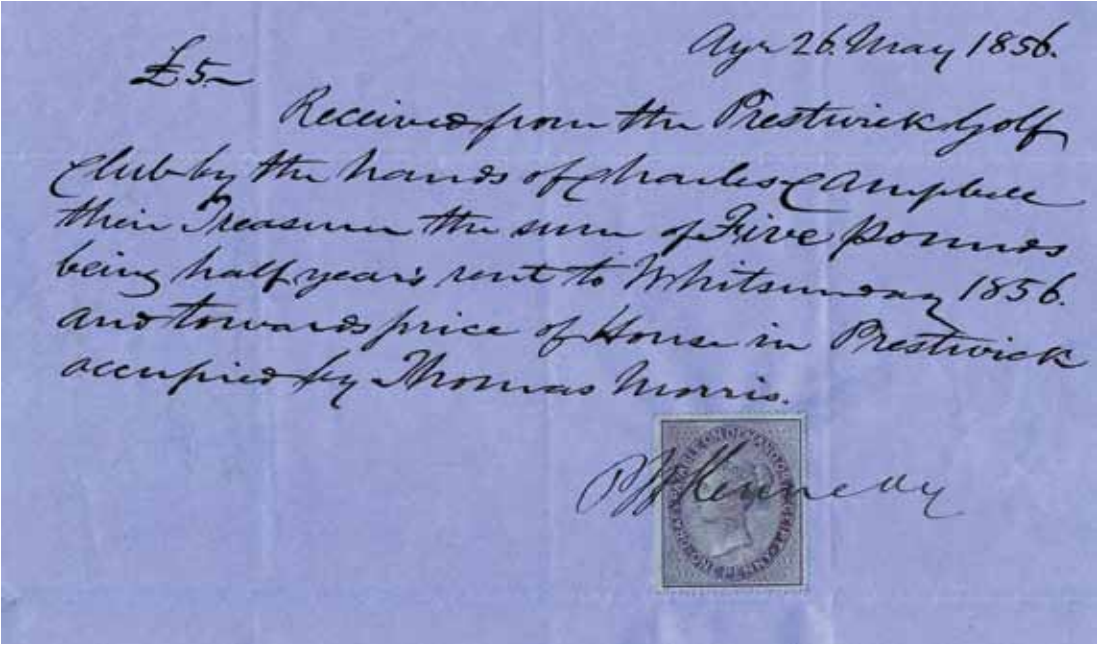
Tom’s First Shop

To date, there has always been a gap in Tom’s history from 1848 until he left for Prestwick in 1851. Thanks to evidence found in the University of St Andrews Special Collections Department, we are able to fill in a little of what happened next.

Around the time of what we now know as the Road Wars in the 1870s, legal precognition statements were taken from the great and the good of the day, including John Whyte Melville and Stuart Grace. In each statement the individual talked a little about their own background in St Andrews and some early memories of the Links and how they evolved.

In Tom’s own statement, he said that after he left Allan’s, he built his own shop on the Links. This shop was based where 15 The Links is today, about 50 yards from his future shop that is so well known today. Many other statements at the time verify both the shop and its location.

In the shop, Tom made clubs and sold golf balls. In photographs from the time, we can see the little white brick building and it was there that Tom owned his first golf business. More detail on this later in the book, as we pass the site of the shop.



Prestwick Bound

Major James Ogilvy Fairlie of Coodham near Prestwick (1809-1870) was Old Tom’s backer in matches and also his playing partner of choice. In 1851, he offered Tom a post as Keeper of the Green in Prestwick, where golf had been played sporadically across the wild linksland to ad-hoc holes. The timing was perfect in many ways.

Tom moved with his wife Nancy and their new-born son Tommy to Prestwick. The little two-roomed house was aptly called Golf House. In the front room, the gentlemen golfers stored their clubs, bought feathery golf balls and arranged matches. In the back room were two small beds. Although Tom eventually took to the area, his initial thoughts were that he had made a mistake. It was very quiet compared to the bustle and energy of golfers around the 1st tee of St Andrews.

However, over time, this feeling dissipated and when he eventually left to return to St Andrews in 1864 he had nothing but outstanding things to say and happy memories to take from Prestwick.

Although Tom had helped Allan Robertson set out ten holes at Carnoustie, the Prestwick course was his first full layout by himself.

Prestwick rent receipt

Tom paid £5 for six months rent of his little two-room property in Prestwick.

James Ogilvy Fairlie of Coodham 1809-1870

Tom’s good friend and supporter.

He duly set up 12 holes, including an eyewatering 578-yard opening hole. The golf club history provides a good guide to the original design. *‘A stone cairn to the west of the clubhouse, marks the first tee of the original 12 hole course, on which the first Open was played. The 1st hole measured 578 yards to what is now the 16th green, where in 1870 Tommy Morris holed out in three strokes using hickory shafts and a guttie golf ball. Six of the original greens are still played on today.’* It is moving to think that Tommy played on those six greens.

When it opened, the course was received with plaudits and praise in the press and publications like the *Badminton Journal*.

It was here at Prestwick that Tom learned the skill of laying out a golf course and the maintenance of greens, including top dressing with sand, and it was also where young Tommy started to whack his first golf balls with a cut-down golf club. Old Tom gave the course a real sense of theatre by naming the course’s bunkers and features, with grand names like Pandemonium and the Cardinal’s Nob (another word for nose).

27th June 1856. Between J. Morris & J. Park
at St Andrews the 12th hole of the 1st course.
PRESTWICK GOLF CLUB.

Mr. Morris			Mr. Park		
1st	7	5	1st	7	6
2nd	7	6	2nd	5	5
3rd	4	3	3rd	5	3
4th	6	7	4th	6	5
5th	4	3	5th	5	5
6th	4	3	6th	4	5
7th	4	4	7th	3	3
8th	3	4	8th	4	4
9th	5	5	9th	7	5
10th	4	5	10th	3	3
11th	3	2	11th	3	4
12th	5	6	12th	6	6
Total 56 59 3			59 54 54		

Morris		Park	
1st Round - Sum	36	38	
2nd Round - Sum	39	34	
3rd Round - Sum	37	34	
Total 112		106	

1856 scorecard

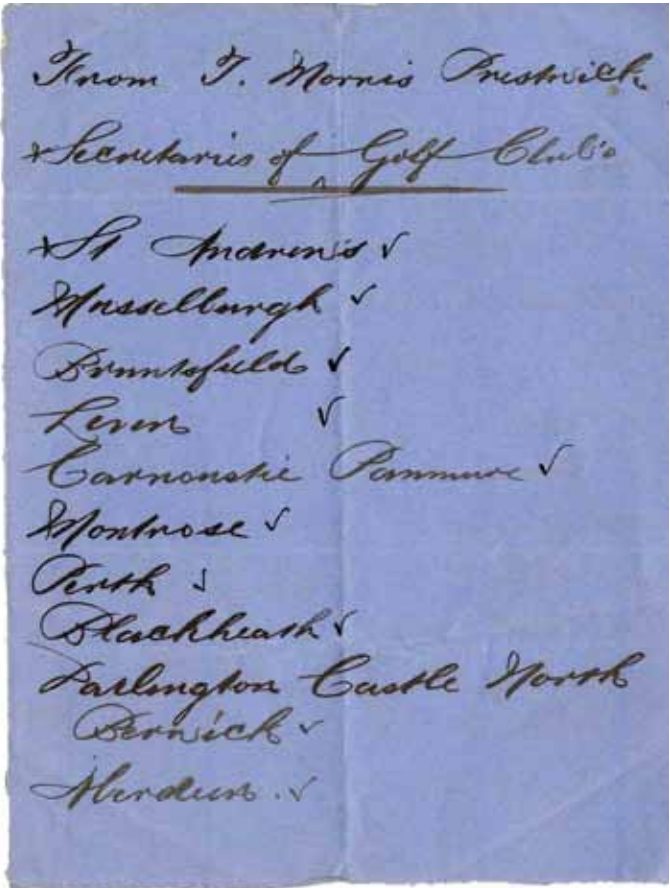
This is just one of the many games with Morris and Park. Although Robertson was still alive at this time, he simply refused to play Park. Over the years and the many matches between Morris and Park, the honours were duly shared equally.

Prestwick 1860 letter (right)

This is the original list of 11 golf clubs who would be approached to supply players for what would be the very first Open in 1860.

Championship Belt

Between 1860 and 1870, this was the prize for the Champion Golfer of the Year.



The Open Championship

In 1859, came the shock news from St Andrews that Allan had died of jaundice. Allan Robertson’s untimely death at the age of 43 left a gaping hole at the top of golf. Who would be the new Champion Golfer of Scotland?

In May 1860, Major James Ogilvy Fairlie and Earl of Eglinton decided to hold a tournament on the Prestwick course. The golfers would play for a Challenge Belt made of red Moroccan leather and a silver buckle depicting a golf scene. In order to avoid any unpleasant and uncouth individuals, they sent a letter to 11 established golf clubs inviting them to send their best caddies. Fairlie’s note said, *‘It is understood that they must be known and respectable caddies. Professional Players not being Keepers of Links are to produce a certificate of respectability from the Treasurer of the Golf Club to which they are attached.’*

Professional golfers had a terrible reputation. This letter they hoped would keep away any miscreant individuals. Only six turned up to Prestwick and were joined by locals, Tom Morris and Charlie Hunter, making eight in total for the very first Open.

The money backers had Tom as favourite but the winner of the first Open Championship was a certain Willie Park of Musselburgh.¹³

Tom and Willie would have many battles over the years with honours shared. They both won the Open four times each. In fact, from 1860 to 1872, between them and Tommy, they won the Championship ten times, with no event being held in 1871, as Tommy had won the Belt outright the previous year. Such was their dominance of the game.

If Tom had one flaw in his typically steady game, it was his putting. He joked how Tommy would tease him, *“Gin the hole was a yaird nearer him, my fawther wad be a guid putter.”*¹⁴ Mr Wolfe Murray famously sent a letter to ‘The Misser of Short Putts, Prestwick’, which the postman duly took straight to Tom!



Willie Park
Willie was a hugely exciting golfer. He captivated the imagination of the press and the gambling classes. This photo, taken of Willie in his prime c1860, captures a man of ambition, who may have created a few ruffles on the way, but undoubtedly brought huge excitement to the grand matches.

Grand Matches

Tom made a good living from golf. More than just the sales in his shops at Prestwick, St Andrews and later Manchester, it was his grand matches that made a considerable impact on the life and welfare of his family.

The grand matches were golf marathons that would be highlighted and hyped up in the press by the gambling elite, in order to drive betting one way or another. Willie Park's backers were very skilled at this. The rivalry between Musselburgh men and the St Andrews was fierce, drawing thousands to their games.

A grand match between Morris and Park was not 36 holes but 36 holes a day at Musselburgh, Prestwick, North Berwick and St Andrews. The atmosphere was electric. In St Andrews, the crowds would be cheering for Tom. In Musselburgh, Willie had his own following. These were boisterous games. Sometimes too boisterous.

In contrast to the much-hyped perception of the Morris and Park rivalry, they actually also played together as partners many times, although legend says that they rarely won as a team.

“I like it best, when I play against Old Tom.”

Willie Park Snr

6 Pilmour Links

After 13 years in Prestwick, Tom was invited back to St Andrews by the R&A in 1864 to become Keeper of the Green and was duly given £50 per annum plus, as golf historian David Joy often calls them, the tools of his trade – a bucket, a spade and a wheelbarrow.

Tom bought the 6 Pilmour Links house in 1866, thanks to a loan of £400 from Provost Walter Thomas Milton, secured with a £100 life insurance policy payable upon his death.¹⁵ Milton, in the 1861 census, lived at 1 South Street, St Andrews and was the Chairman of The St Andrews Burns Club (founded 25 January 1869).

Back on the Links, when Tom returned to St Andrews, the course was played with nine holes out and coming back again to the same busy small greens for the back nine.

In the early 1870s, Tom was able to expand the course by clearing away acres of whin. It was tough work by hand.

The march stones on the 4th hole today mark the original course boundary as set out in 1821, when the new owner Cheape had the land surveyed. It really gives you a sense of how narrow the course was.

As historian David Hamilton related in conversation, *“Tom massively increased the greens sideways giving them their unique lozenge shape”*.

Tom also re-banked the Swilcan Burn and created the new 1st hole green. It has been said that this was supposed to be the new 17th green, making it a straight hole, but there is no evidence of this at present.

Until Tom made that new 1st green, the golf course had been played clockwise. In other words, from the earliest of days, you played roughly from the same place as today's 1st tee, perhaps about 80 yards further forward, to the 17th green. In front of you were the large Halker's bunker, the Swilcan Burn and the Road Hole bunker, which was facing towards the eventual R&A clubhouse. That was a very tough opening hole compared to today's relatively benign beginning.

Tom also rebuilt the 18th green, finding the bodies and bones of cholera victims underneath the soil in the process. The tale of the bones came from Andra Kirkaldy in the brilliant and quite funny, *Fifty Years of Golf*, where he says, *‘I told Mr Blackwell that my father, an old Crimean veteran, worked as a labourer in the making of this green. The workmen came upon a quantity of human bones and skulls in the banked-up right hand corner, opposite Forgan's shop. “And what have you to say about that?” asked Mr Blackwell. “Just this, Mr Blackwell,” I said. “Mair than ba's hav' lain deid here.”’*¹⁶

The completed 18th green was said to be Tom's proudest piece of work.



Old Course, 18th green

This photograph shows the 18th green positioned some distance in front of where the green is today. This may have just been an anomaly as by this time in the 1880s, Tom has already created the large 18th green, as can be seen in the background.

Old Course, 1st green

Photographed c1880, this captures exactly why St Andrews is so special. The new 1st green looks exactly as it does today. A noticeable difference is the length of the grass on the putting green. One really has to appreciate just how good the 19th century golfers were with rough uneven greens, un-raked bunkers and hickory clubs.





Comparing the course in 1860 to the new expanded layout in 1875, the course practically doubled in size. Although Tom was the driving force behind all the changes and the modernising of the course, it should be said that he did so under the guidance and support of the R&A. Without their financial backing at this crucial stage, we would not be able to enjoy the Old or New Courses as we do so today.

End of an Era

Tom's golfing career by the late 1870s was past its peak but he was firmly established as the go-to person for any ruling and he was always the official starter for many major events. He was seen as a just and fair man of exemplary character.

As the star of St Andrews shone brighter and brighter, Musselburgh's dimmed. This also reflected the careers of Tom and Willie.

In St Andrews and the world of golf, Tom was heralded and he played golf with Royals and noblemen. Park was left to play a game wherever he could get a match in the cradle of golf, Musselburgh. He deserved better. Even Tom recognised this.

“There is no disguising the fact that William Park was as good a golfer as ever lifted a club. He was a splendid driver and a splendid putter. I’ve been neether.”

Old Tom Morris

In his final years, Tom would endure the loss of all his family including his wife and children. Even in his 80s, he was still active playing golf and walking the St Andrews course with his grandchildren's dog, Silver.

Tom lived a long and prosperous life, achieving what was unheard of in Victorian Britain – a movement from working to middle class.

“I’ve played gowf close on eighty years, and that’s longer than most folk get living. I began on the links doon there as soon as I could handle a club, and I have been doing little else ever since.”

Old Tom Morris

Old Tom was in The New Golf Club on Sunday 25 May 1908, relaxing, probably after Sunday service at Holy Trinity Church. He was the very first Honorary Life Member of the Club and enjoyed that privilege on a daily basis.

Being a Sunday, he was not drinking his favourite Black Strap drink, which was stout beer and soda. Old Tom liked to also have three whiskies along with his glass of Black Strap and if the conversation was convivial, he could be convinced to have a few more.¹⁷

This was not one of those days however. This was a holy day which, in the Victorian era, was sacrosanct, especially for a church elder. After one service by the Reverend A K H Boyd, as the Reverend was coming out of the vestry, Tom jokingly said *‘Ah doctor! Ye missed nae putts the day!’*¹⁸ The church, needless to say, was at the very heart of Tom's life.

The New Golf Club

Photographed in 1952, fifty years after the clubhouse lounge was constructed in the back garden of 3 Gibson Place and The New Golf Club officially opened in July 1902.

At around 4 o'clock in the New Club, Tom went to use the lavatory. To the right of the corridor was the lavatory door. To the left, steep steps down to the cellar. Tom, now 86, accidentally opened the wrong door and was found unconscious at the foot of the stairs. He had badly fractured his skull at the base and was pronounced dead a short while later at the Cottage Hospital.

His death was announced in every national newspaper. Page-long eulogies were written, including in *The Times*. The press wrote about his immense contribution to the game and his good character.

Prime Ministers and noblemen also took part in what was practically seen as a period of national mourning. His funeral would have been worthy of a Royal, with wreaths arriving from all over the world – places where Tom had helped, supported and influenced the growth of the game.



The funeral cortège took up the whole of South Street and was headed by his grandsons. Tom would have been very proud that six professional golfers, namely Andra Kirkaldy, Willie and David Auchterlonie, Jack Burns and Willie Crawford, led his coffin. The great Ben Sayers walked immediately behind them. As Kirkaldy recalled, ‘*Shop keepers shut their shops and every house had drawn blinds. The coffin was followed by Professors of the University, members of the Royal and Ancient and of other clubs far and near. Old caddies came too. I helped to carry the coffin from the Cathedral gates to the grave. The Earl of Stair, who was Captain that year, was one of the pall-bearers. Flags flew at half-mast. The greens were deserted. Not a golf ball was struck on the links that day except in the very early morning*’.¹⁹

Tom was no doubt a kindly and well-liked soul. Kirkaldy said of Old Tom, ‘*There was never a gentler man than Old Tom Morris. He was a kind old man, and would always put his hand in his pocket to help any poor person. He was a good friend to all the caddies in hard times, when there was little caddying to be done. Many a five shillings he gave them; and would say to them, “Now, gang awa and get meat. Don’t drink the little I’ve been able to gi’e ye*’.”²⁰



Old Tom’s cortège
“... *Shop keepers shut their shops and every house had drawn blinds. The coffin was followed by Professors of the University, members of The Royal and Ancient and of other clubs far and near. Old caddies came too* ...”

For all his Open wins, setting out of new courses, playing golf with Royalty and prime ministers, spreading golf around the world, it was of his son Tommy that he was most proud. Now, in 1908, they both lay in rest.

It was the end of a truly golden era for golf but a time that was hugely successful, largely thanks to Tom Morris.

He was not alone in making this era truly special. The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair, Hugh Philp, Allan Robertson and several others played leading roles but we also have to turn to Old Tom, who for over 40 years, guided the St Andrews Links and the game of golf like no other.

Not a myth or a tale, simply a man who was born in a weaver’s cottage on North Street and who, as one of golf’s greatest ambassadors, deservedly earned the title, the Grand Old Man of Golf.

5 Pilmour Links

Robert Forgan

Next door to Tom was Robert Forgan. Simply put, Forgan was, at one time, the most successful clubmaker in the world. Related to the finest and most collectable of clubmakers, Hugh Philp, through his marriage to the daughter of James Berwick, Philp’s brother-in-law, Forgan learned his trade in Philp’s workshop at the site of where the Old Tom Morris shop is today at 8 The Links, which Philp moved into around 1832.

Born in 1824, Forgan joined Philp in 1852. Philp was said to have been a master craftsman renowned for making cabinets, as was evident by the decision of Mr Cheape to give Philp the contract to do the woodwork in his new home at Strathtyrum.

Philp, curiously, originally saw making golf clubs as a mere sideline to his joinery and also house painting business based on Argyle Street.²¹ Given the lack of experts in club making, golfers would tend to gravitate to him to fix their wooden clubs.

Philp’s life changed direction in 1819, when the Society of St Andrews Golfers made him their official clubmaker. This one decision by the future Royal and Ancient Golf Club transformed his business and created prosperity and work for many in the town for several generations.

In 1832, Philp moved from his workshop, which was taken over by the revived St Andrews Archery Club, and moved across to carter Willie Fairful’s old shed at the end of 6 Pilmour Links gardens. This shed would one day be the Old Tom Morris shop that is still there today.

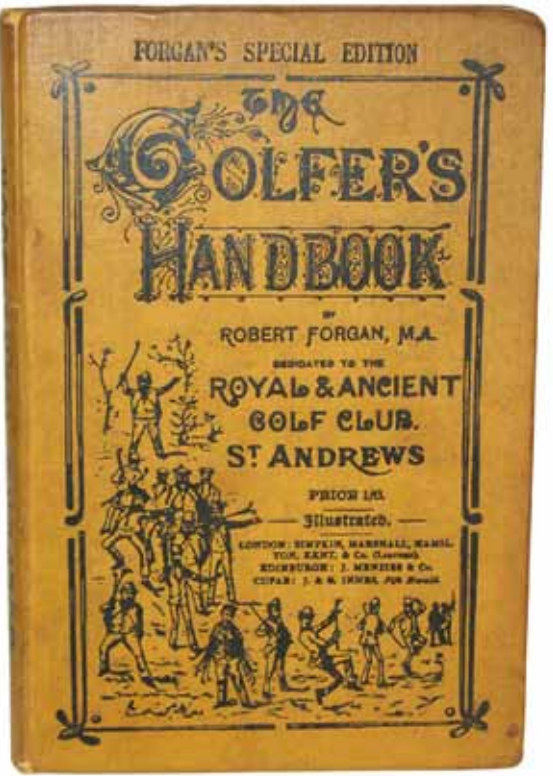
The Golfer’s Handbook by Robert Forgan MA
The Golfer’s Handbook was written by Robert Forgan Jnr (1860-1940) in 1881, the year he graduated from the University of St Andrews with an MA (1st Class Hons) in Classics. Although a keen golfer, he was destined for a career in the Church. He was ordained to St George’s Free Church, Montrose in 1886 and eventually moved to Gilcomston Free Church, Aberdeen in 1902. In 1933, when he was living in retirement at 5 Hermitage Terrace, Edinburgh, he wrote an article for Madras College, which was celebrating its centenary. Rev. Forgan fondly shared both his and his father’s memories of the school, saying that his father was ‘among the earliest pupils of the College’.

Forging Ahead

When Forgan joined Philp in 1852, it was a thriving established business. Philp had been using thorn, apple and pear wood for club heads and ash for shafts but Forgan soon changed that.²² He started using hickory wood, which he dried alongside the fairway of the 17th hole in black sheds. ‘In each of the Black Sheds (since recreated on their original site as a formidable obstacle within the Road Hole), there were rectangular stacks of square-cut shafts, each containing as many as 8,000 rods apiece. After 12 months of seasoning they were deemed ready to be rounded off by hand and offered for sale.’²³

When Philp passed away in 1856, Forgan bought the business and set up in the same premises at 8 The Links.

Forgan did so well that he took on a young future 3-times Open winner, Jamie Anderson, as apprentice. Over time, the number of workers in his shop on the Links would reach 50. It was a hugely successful business making clubs and balls.



“*The shop was like a joiner’s shop in the country. There was no attempt at any ornamentation. There were no boxes for gentlemen to keep their clubs. All who left their clubs in the shop just put them on spars between the couples above our head.*”

James Forgan 1908 (brother to Robert)

Changing Times

From 1856, the valuation rolls show that Forgan rented both the house at 5 Pilmour Links from the Skinner family and the workshop at the end of the garden at 6 Pilmour Links from Hugh Philp’s widow.

When Mrs Philp sold 6 Pilmour Links including the workshop to Richard Batholomew Child in 1861, so that Child’s son-in-law could open a golf shop, Forgan had to quickly find alternative shop premises, and so started to use the sheds at the end of his own garden, albeit owned by the Skinners, at 5 Pilmour Links.

A Time of Growth

In 1876, Forgan became a property owner when he acquired the property that was half of Allan Robertson’s Sandyhill house and garden. This had previously been owned by James Wilson who lived there from 1865. After Wilson’s death in 1866, his widow remained there for ten years before selling to Forgan. George Honeyman had by then already taken over the other half of the property at Sandyhill in 1864 to create the Honeyman Hotel. That portion of the property was known as Allan Villa as early as 1879.



Horace G Hutchinson
2-times Amateur Champion (1886 and 1887)
Horace Hutchinson teeing off. In 1908, he became
Captain of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club.

Forgan’s business was expanding. This purchase gave him both the existing shop facing the links and now Wilson’s old house and two sheds next to it. These two sheds had enjoyed the most basic of modifications. Forgan rented out one to the Rifle Volunteers, which they used for storing armoury until he made changes to the buildings. From 1885 to 1887, they briefly used a shed alongside Forgan’s in the rented Skinner garden.

In 1887, Forgan bought the house and shop to the west of Old Tom’s shop at 9 The Links, previously owned by his one-time apprentice Jamie Anderson, who was by now struggling with alcohol. Suddenly, Tom was surrounded by Forgan, both to the east as far as Allan Villa and now immediately to the west. However, Forgan did not use the shop part of 9 The Links to sell golf clubs. He rented that part of the property to Robert Smart, a confectioner, until 1888. Forgan merely lived upstairs in the accommodation above.

As an aside, there is a lovely written note by Henrietta (Hettie) Rusack about Smart in her private notes on the family history. She said, *‘Smart’s sweet shop was a favourite spot to which those of us who were fortunate possessors of pennies made our way. Miss Auchterlonie, a pretty woman, slightly deaf, gave us out our pennyworths, while Mrs Smart, a stately figure in lace cap, entertained the numerous lady customers. I wonder if anyone remembers the ‘clack’ days when, for a halfpenny, one got a long paper-covered stalk of the most delicious toffee? Alas, ‘Smart’s is gone, as are so many of our much-loved shops’.*

Returning back to The Links and Forgan purchasing property on both sides of Old Tom, in a world of competing clubmakers, this must have been an intimidating prospect for Old Tom who was, at that time, doing very well himself, but clearly did not have the ambitions to overly expand. Forgan would ultimately pass this house at 9 The Links, known locally today as the White House, to his son Thomas who, in turn, would pass it to his own heirs.

In 1894, Forgan bought the entire 5 Pilmour Links house and associated land from the Skinner family.

It was the purchase of the property in Allan’s old garden in 1876 and the consolidation of the Skinner land in 1894 that would ultimately lead to the creation of the more familiar Forgan factory that is today owned by the R&A but used, downstairs, by the St Andrews Links Trust as a clothes retail shop.

The beams in the large function room upstairs in the R&A premises, although modern, look identical to those of the busy, dusty workshop and it was when the building was being renovated that the planning authorities insisted the beams be retained.

By Royal Command

Forgan’s business was also helped by Royal support. In 1863, he was commissioned by the R&A to create a set of clubs for the Prince of Wales who had been elected Captain of the Club.

The Prince was, by all accounts, so delighted with the clubs presented to him that Forgan was allowed to have the Prince’s crest of three plumed feathers on his driver woods.

Forgan bought a cottage at 45 Kinnessburn Road in 1894 and it is said locally that he lived there until his death in 1900.

In 1902, two years after his death, the Forgan workshop on the Links would proudly display the title ‘Golf Clubmakers to His Majesty King Edward’. The three feathers symbol would be replaced with a more striking crown. These clubs today, with the Royal feathers and crown, are highly collectable.



The Forgan family, taken c1897
Back row, left to right, Rev. John (b1849), David (1862-1931), Wilhemina (1857-1949) and Thomas (1853-1906).
Front row, left to right, Rev. Robert Jnr (1860-1940), Mrs Elizabeth Berwick Forgan (1826-1900), Robert Snr (1824-1900) and James (1852-1924).

Six years later, in 1960, Forgan opened a golf museum to illustrate the company’s history with a collection of clubs and equipment from the business.²⁵

In 1962, in a competitive market that was being flooded with clubs from America, Spalding eventually took over the Forgan business. In 1963, however, the final 41 workers, men and women, were paid off and the factory shut for the last time. The Spalding business was relocated in Northern Ireland. To add insult to injury, the rare museum items were given to the Corporation of Dundee.²⁶

The Greatest

Forgan was undoubtedly the most successful club making firm in St Andrews. Even today there are people in the town who talk about the company. Jimmy Black, who works in the Auchterlonie shop, is in his seventies and still plays off 6. He talks fondly about how, if you didn’t have a trade like painter or plumber, you then tried to get a job in Forgan’s.

It was the end of a glorious era that started so humbly with a mere local gifted joiner, Hugh Philp, being made the official clubmaker for the Society of St Andrews Golfers.



4 Pilmour Links
Tom's marital home would eventually be demolished and re-built in 1901. The lower levels would be taken over by D&W Auchterlonie.

4 Pilmour Links

Tom's marital home

It was in this house that Tom and his wife Nancy lived in 1851. He was a mere 29 and she 32 in that year.

This must have been a place of great joy for them as it was whilst living here that the great Tommy was born. Less than a year later, the three would be bound for Prestwick, leaving a world they knew and loved so well for something quite unknown. It would be a good 13 years before they would return to live in St Andrews again.

They shared the accommodation at 4 Pilmour Links with Nancy's sister, Margaret Bayne, who was a domestic servant like Tom's brother George.

In 1851, Hugh Philp was living at 6 Pilmour Links. By 1866, the Morrises were back in St Andrews and living there, with Robert Forgan at number 5 Pilmour Links.

It was a small world but those in golf knew where the best business premises were and Morris, Philp and his heir, Forgan, maybe understood that they had the best business locations at a time when the game was expanding beyond recognition in comparison to even the St Andrews of the 1830s.

Tommy Morris' birth register
Born on 20 April 1851,
Tommy was baptised on
10 May by Rev. Dr Craig.

2 Pilmour Links

Janet Morris 1809-1889

Tom's sister Janet lived here with her husband, Peter Marshall (gardener), until his death on 14 February 1877, when she moved to 44 North Street to continue working as a laundress. Janet died on 22 October 1889, aged 82, at 36 North Street.

9 Pilmour Links

StRegulus Ladies Golf Club

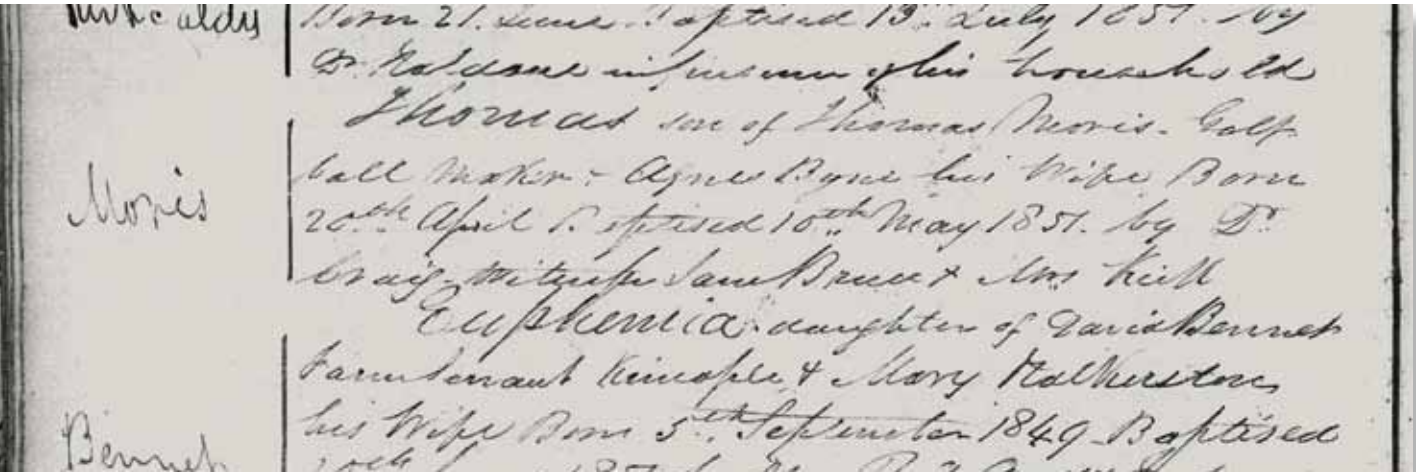
The StRegulus Ladies Golf Club was formed in 1913, five years after Old Tom's death, when 25 ex-pupils of Madras College created the Madras Ladies Golf Club for ex-pupils of Madras College and a few of their friends.

In 1919, they were re-named StRegulus Ladies Golf Club. Given that they had been holding meetings outside Old Tom's shop, by the 18th green, they decided to find suitable premises for the club.

They would move several times over the next 20 years but in 1949 they purchased 9 Pilmour Links and, in 2000, they refurbished the building as we know it today. They hold regular competitions and are run very successfully as a thriving club in St Andrews.



Old Tom Morris' shop in Links Place
StRegulus Golf Club had been holding meetings outside Tom's shop before finding suitable premises.





CHAPTER TWO

Golf Place

2

IT WAS AROUND 1820 that the first buildings on Golf Place were built. Early maps show just a small number of houses here initially, but consistently growing through the 1820s and 1830s.

The Dunvegan Hotel

It would be remiss to write a book on St Andrews historic golfing spots and not mention The Dunvegan Hotel at the corner of Golf Place and Pilmour Place. Admittedly the hotel was not open when Old Tom was alive but the one thing that resonates with Old Tom is the very embodiment of the atmosphere with which Tommy, Tom, Robertson, the Andersons, Straths and Herds would have been all too familiar.¹

Golf Place

Steeped in history, Golf Place has had golf shops and homes to many Open Champions, such as Tom Morris and Willie Auchterlonie. Almost every building has a story to tell, be it the house of Mr Alfred Le Maitre, headmaster of St Salvator's School (now Scores Hotel), at 9 Golf Place or the shop where Jamie Anderson's son, James, ran Anderson & Blyth at 8 Golf Place. Long after Jamie died, the advertising for Anderson & Blyth would have you believe it was Jamie's own company. This is worth noting as, although Jamie died in the poorhouse and lies in an unmarked grave, his family were still very proud of him.

The venue is a mecca for visiting golfers and thrives in a boisterous atmosphere, where golfers line up matches for the week ahead, share stories about their golfing exploits and sup with caddies of the town. Non-golfing visitors also go there to enjoy food after the golf.

David Joy, historian, artist, author and actor whose portrayal of Old Tom Morris is much loved, is often to be found at the corner of the bar with locals Willie Tait (grand nephew of Freddie Tait), Andy Campbell, Murray Tait (brother of Willie), Gordon, one of the R&A hall porters, Andy Brown, Peter Thomson (the local plumber, not the Open winner), Bruce and Alan, legendary caddies and Jack and Sheena, the owners.

With golf photos on every inch of the walls and a permanent exhibition by David Joy, The Dunvegan Hotel is a veritable time capsule back to the boisterous ambience of the bars of Old Tom's era and thoroughly recommended for any golfer visiting St Andrews.

1 Golf Place

If the Dunvegan is the modern equivalent of the atmosphere that the golfers from Old Tom’s day would enjoy, then it is number 1 Golf Place (adjacent to The Dunvegan), or The Golf Inn as it was then called, where they would actually meet and dine in the 1800s.

This inn would very probably have been frequented by all of the stalwarts of that era including Old Tom, Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair, Davie Strath, Jamie Anderson and Tom’s sons, Tommy and James Ogilvy Fairlie Morris, or Jof as he was known.

Golf Place
The most lucrative places to have a shop in St Andrews were Golf Place, The Links or Pilmour Links.

In 1868, it was here that the St Andrews Rose Golf Club was formed. This club was made up of the educated young men of the town including Tommy Morris. They were, up to that point, not old enough to be allowed into the respectable Thistle Club but yet not overly keen to be frequenting with the caddies in the Mechanics Golf Club.

When news of Tommy’s third Open win came through from Prestwick, which also confirmed that he had won the Championship Belt outright, The Golf Inn was the place to be. It heaved with everyone who was anyone on the Links. What a magical atmosphere that must have been.²

On that evening, toasts were made to Tommy and to Old Tom too, who both replied with much warmth and good humour. Tommy said he would have won it earlier but his friends made him work hard for it. Tom said that he himself nearly did the feat in 1863 but the Cardinal’s Bunker at Prestwick saw the end to that.

The Belt was passed around for people to try on. That was probably one of the most enjoyable nights in Tom’s long life and it happened at 1 Golf Place.

When Lizzie Morris, Tom’s Daughter, married James Hunter at the Holy Trinity Church on 25 February 1875, the celebratory dinner was at the Golf Inn.³ Owned by George Leslie, the Golf Inn was essentially one of the most popular places for the Morris family to drink and eat with good friends and family.



2-4 Golf Place

The Auchterlonie Family

Across from 1 Golf Place, the Auchterlonies shop today is part of any golf visitor’s must-do experiences, especially the hickory section at the back of the shop.

The Auchterlonie family is one of the greatest golfing dynasties in St Andrews. Not only do they have Open and US Open Champions and two honorary R&A professionals but they also have had their name over working golf shops in St Andrews from the late 1800s until today.

Willie Auchterlonie was born in 1872. Growing up in St Andrews, Willie worked as a caddie and learned his club making skills working for Robert Forgan. Old Tom had by then returned to St Andrews as both Open Champion and a household name.

Willie won the Open Championship in 1893 and is still the second youngest player to ever win the title, aged 21. It was his brother David who had a keen eye for business though and who ran a successful golf club and ball making company with Andrew Crosthwaite at 146 North Street. Their clubs were made by Robert Condie, as can be seen by the distinctive fern mark.



After Willie's Open win in 1893, he set up business with David and together they opened D&W Auchterlonie at 4 Pilmour Links around 1894. They also had a store on Union Street. The Auchterlonies had a great reputation for quality club making and for leading several innovations in equipment, including a weighted bar in the middle of the back of putters.⁴

Like Allan Robertson, Willie was not so keen on golf ball changes, thinking it would diminish the game.

“The Americans have spoiled the game. That devilish rubber ball just goes too far. The game will never be right again till they come back to the solid ball. When you played with a guttie, the ball said ‘Hit me true and true I’ll fly’. But the rubber core, you can hit a dunt anyhow and it’ll fly. A half hit shot is a half hit shot. With a rubber core, it could go in the hole.”

Willie Auchterlonie⁵



Business however came first and the Auchterlonie Flyer rubber ball sold very well. In time, David and Willie would part company, with David heading off to the Czech Spa of Carlsbad in 1912 as professional. Willie went on to be the Honorary Professional of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews until his death in 1963. He also supervised the extension to the Jubilee Golf Course after World War II.

D&W Auchterlonie, Golf Club Specialists (above)
With 30 staff, D&W Auchterlonie was a hugely successful commercial enterprise.

Laurie Auchterlonie, US Open Champion (top right)
The first man to ever break 80 on all four rounds in the US Open by shooting 78-78-74-77 for a total of 307.

Laurie Auchterlonie (right)
8 December 1867 - 20 January 1948

D&W Auchterlonie, Golf Club & Ball Makers (opposite)
David Auchterlonie, with dark overall, alongside D&W Auchterlonie staff outside 11 Union Street, St Andrews premises.

Willie Auchterlonie, Open Champion 1893 (opposite, top left)
Cigarette card showing Willie, but with his surname misspelt.





In 1906, a good 57 years before his death, Willie reminisced about his life in golf.

“I have played golf all my life, practically from my earliest recollection, still I must say that I have always done so entirely from devotion to and love of the game, and that I have never looked upon golf, in itself, as a means of livelihood; but rather I preferred to turn my attention in this matter towards the making of clubs, in which I have always taken the greatest interest and pleasure.”

Willie Auchterlonie



Willie Auchterlonie (top left) Enjoying a regular walk on the Links, 1947.

Willie Auchterlonie with Bobby Jones and Gary Player
Here we see Mr Henry Turcan (opposite, top) playing in as Captain of the R&A in 1959. As Honorary Professional to The Royal and Ancient Golf Club, Willie was also the Honorary Starter. He is seen here with Bobby Jones (above) in 1936 and with Gary Player (left) at the Centenary Dinner in 1960. Willie famously teed the ball up very high. When it came to the morning in September 1956 when Dr Harold Gardiner-Hill was to play in as Captain of the Club, Willie was due to tee the ball up for the incumbent Captain, as traditon dictates. Harold said to Willie, “Not one of those bottle things, Willie” meaning, don’t tee the ball up high. However, Willie went to the other extreme and teed the ball extremely low. Whilst a very good golfer, the end result was not kind to Dr Gardiner-Hill but it was a misfortune that would not be repeated twice. When Dr Gardiner-Hill’s son, Peter, was due to play himself in as Captain in 1982, Laurie Auchterlonie, son of Willie, was then the Honorary Professional. On the day, Laurie was sadly ill and Peter teed up his own ball and hit, by all accounts, a thoroughly acceptable drive.



22

ADVERTISEMENTS.

D. & W. AUCHTERLONIE
THE PREMIER CLUBMAKERS

SPECIALTIES:-				
Patent Balance Putter.	-	-	-	7/6
“ Approach Cleek.	-	-	-	6/6
“ Putting Cleek.	-	-	-	6/6
“ Push-shot Iron	-	-	-	6/6

ST. ANDREWS, N.B.

A few reasons why Auchterlonie Clubs are so popular:-

They have stood the test for many years. They are perfectly made.

They excel in every department. They do not cost more than other clubs.

It was a statement that all the six brothers could agree upon. When Willie died in 1963, his son Laurie, nephew to the US Open Champion Laurie Auchterlonie, took over the role as Honorary R&A Professional. He shared the family skill in club making and back in 1956 made a putter for the American President Eisenhower, who was a keen golfer and skilled painter. The portrait of 1913 US Open Champion Francis Ouimet that hangs in the R&A clubhouse was painted by Eisenhower himself. It is a copy of the original.

Laurie was an expert on early clubs. He died in 1988, bringing to an end one of the longest and most honourable dynasties in St Andrews.

The family record is one to be proud of and few families could ever claim to have such an impact on the game worldwide.

D&W Auchterlonie advertisement
Advertisement in the *St Andrews Citizen* c1896.

Laurie Auchterlonie with President Eisenhower (left)
Here Laurie can be seen on 9 October 1946 with President Eisenhower and Roger Wethered. A note was published in the press saying that people were allowed to watch the President on the 1st and 18th holes but were requested kindly not to follow him on the other holes. On the day, Eisenhower decided not to tee off on the 1st and started his play at the 2nd.

8 Golf Place

Old Tom’s Second Shop

When Old Tom came back from Prestwick, he took over a small shop and house at 8 Golf Place. He stayed there for two years, after which he moved into the grander 6 Pilmour Links in 1866, when he also took over George Daniel Brown’s golf shop, the one we know today as the Old Tom Morris shop at 8 The Links.

Anderson & Blyth

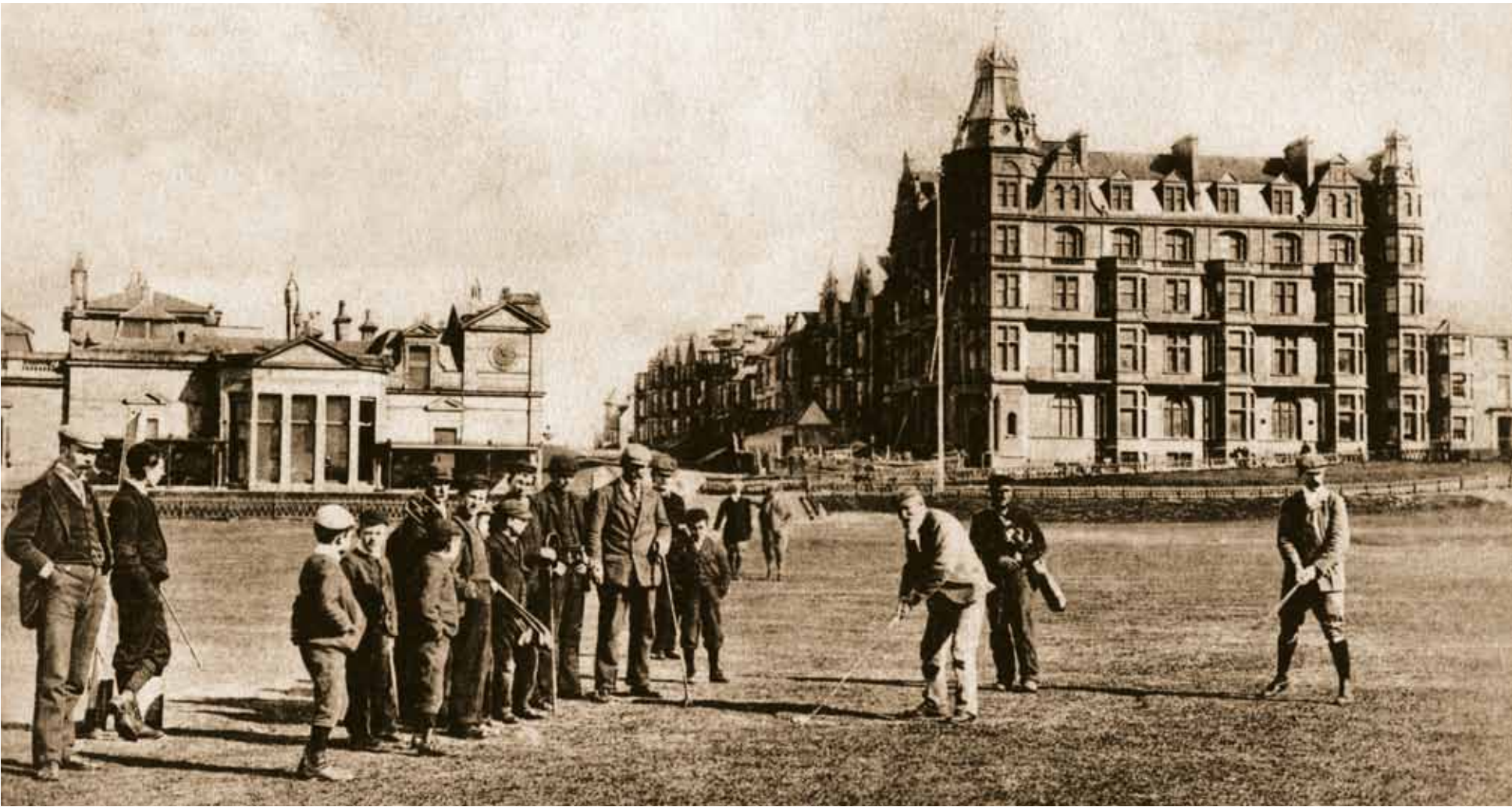
Anderson & Blyth was a joint venture at 8 Golf Place in 1908 with James Anderson, son of thrice Open Champion Jamie, and David Blyth. Like almost all the clubmakers in St Andrews, who set up on their own, they both learned their trade with Forgan.

The partners invested £50 capital in the venture. They further got an overdraft of £300 from the British Linen Bank. Norman Hunter agreed to be the guarantor for the loan. With the funds they purchased the property out right for £900 and gave the then tenant £50 to vacate the premises. They then borrowed another £950, with the building used as security. It was said at the bankruptcy hearing in Cupar in 1915 that the business did well initially but then Mr Blyth died in February 1913. Anderson made a go of running the business alone, but the war was said to have severely hampered his efforts. The struggling finances of the business were said to have directly affected Mr Blyth’s health. At the time of the hearing, the company had £264 14s 1d in assets but liabilities of £607 14s 5d.

Today, 8 Golf Place is occupied by the St Andrews Golf Company, who appropriately specialise in golf history artwork, clubs and artefacts. It is one of the most enjoyable shops to visit in St Andrews.

8 Golf Place, Old Tom’s second shop

Seen here in the 1930s, the shop that Tom used when he returned to St Andrews from Prestwick is the darker looking shop that the ladies in white are passing.



10 Golf Place

Bob Kirk Snr

Bob Kirk Snr was Old Tom’s caddie and lifelong friend. When Tom and his wife moved into 4 Pilmour Links when they were married, Bob Kirk Snr lived next door at number 5. By 1861 Kirk Snr was living at 1 Pilmour Links. In 1864, when Tom came back to St Andrews, Kirk Snr was once again living next door at 10 Golf Place.

Kirk was a good golfer in his own right, playing in eight Opens. His best finish was in 1870 when he came second to Tommy Morris at Prestwick.

When Bob’s son, Bob Jnr, returned from working as a professional at Blackheath, it was Tom who employed him in his shop alongside Bob Martin, rather than Bob’s own father who was making a living as a ballmaker.

Tom played many foursomes matches with Bob Kirk Jnr, including some for high stakes but it was the dynamic between Jamie Anderson, Davie Strath and young Bob Kirk that really propelled Tommy to greatness. It was said that the excitement of these matches inspired a visiting Charles Blair Macdonald to try to play on the site of Camp Douglas from the Civil War when he returned to Chicago in 1876.

Following a short period of illness, Bob Kirk Jnr died in his sleep at 4 Pilmour Links, aged 41, in 1886, just five years before Bob Snr died in 1891.

Old Tom on the 1st tee

Note how far ahead the tee is. Early maps of the course place the 1st tee at a similar position, but just on the 18th fairway and not on the flat reclaimed land where Tom is playing from in this photo c1901.

For his good friend to lose his own son must have been very difficult for Old Tom to watch. They had been friends and neighbours at the most pertinent times in Tom’s life and this is reflected in the fact that Tom took on Bob Jnr in 1866 when his business did not necessarily need an extra workman on its payroll. This loyalty was not lost on Kirk Jnr who stayed with Morris right up until his premature death.

The Evolution of Hamilton Grand

One of golfing world’s most iconic buildings, Hamilton Grand in St Andrews, re-opened its doors to the public in 2013 after decades of decline. The well-known red sandstone structure has provided the backdrop to some of the most famous moments in golf, including Seve’s great birdie putt in 1984 to win the Open Championship and Arthur James Balfour, later 1st Earl of Balfour (1922) and Prime Minister, playing in as R&A Captain in 1894.

The site of Hamilton Grand has had various incarnations, from being the location for Hugh Philp’s workshop, the Union Club, the Grand Hotel, which was the residence of choice for visiting Royalty and Hollywood stars in the early 20th century, to a University of St Andrews Hall of Residence in recent years. The building has a remarkable history including association with some of the most iconic names from the golden age of the game.

The following detail comes not only from private research but also the unpublished works of Dr David Malcolm and Professor Emeritus David M Walker.

Hugh Philp – Golf’s Greatest Craftsman

Hugh Philp’s clubs are seen today as works of art. They are elegantly beautiful and hugely sought after by collectors. Golf, however was not Philp’s chosen career path and it was simply due to his sheer talent as a master craftsman that the golf world came to him.

Philp was born at Cameron Bridge in 1786. This was a tumultuous time around the world. In America, General Benjamin Logan was attacking several Shawnee towns. France was struggling with massive debts and hunger on a national scale. The murderous French Revolution was looming.

Philp was a carpenter by trade. His business on Argyle Street was purely for this purpose but it would also include other general trades such as house painting. It was a solid trade and he must have had a good reputation to be given the work at Mr Cheape’s grand house at Strathtyrum.⁶

At this time, Allan Robertson’s grandfather and father would have been working as ball makers in town, but neither were clubmakers. Due to his dexterity with wood, it was natural that golfers would gravitate to Philp if they had problems with their clubs. Philp saw this work as a mere sideline compared to the larger household projects. This would change.

In 1812, the members of the Society of St Andrews Golfers encouraged Philp to set up business close to the Links. They also undertook to countenance and support him.⁷ Philp duly set up in the corner cottage where Hamilton Grand is today. It would not be a decision he would regret.

The Magician

Philp had a way with wood that was beyond the work of your average carpenter. Where the clubs in the mid to late 1700s were rather basic, Philp’s were beautiful to the eye.

“Philp, in the olden times was in wont of spending half a day agreeably putting finishing touches to a club after it had been handed over by his workmen completed.”

The Golfer 1894

Hamilton Grand
In this early 20th century photograph, an old ladies bathing hut is used for the Starters Box. Notice the wheels that allowed it to be moved as needed.



Word of his skill spread and he quickly evolved from a man who repaired clubs to one who made majestic long nose pieces himself.

“The wooden clubs in use by our ancestors of the time of the St Andrews museum would have been of a stubborn, stout, inflexible nature, bull-dog headed. Then arose a great master club-maker, one Hugh Philp by name, who wondrously refined golf-club nature. Slim and elegant, yet as we of these days would say, of but insufficient power, are the specimens of his art which have descended to us.”

Horace G Hutchinson

In 1819, Philp was appointed the official clubmaker to the Society of St Andrews Golfers. In the early 1830s, he took over Fairful’s old cart shed on the Links. These old sheds would be modified over the years and would eventually become the Old Tom Morris shop that is there today.

Philp took on James Wilson as an apprentice in this workshop on the Links in 1845. Wilson stayed with him until 1852, when he set up his own business in Old Tom’s first shop where 15 The Links stands today.

Given that Philp was the only clubmaker in town, one can imagine a shop filled with golfers keen to try his latest clubs. The glory given to Philp’s clubs is not a rose-tinted view. Even in his own era, he was heralded as the Champion Clubmaker.

“It is questionable, if any other, whether before or since his time has shaped and set a club better than he did.”

H Thomas Peter 1890.⁸



Driving Putter made by Hugh Philp in the late 1840s
Philp had a gift and a skill with wood. Even in his own era, Philp was heralded as the Champion Clubmaker.

When players brought their clubs back to Philp to complain of rotten wood, Philp would typically reply, *“You’ll hae lost yer match?”* Such was his own belief in his clubs. When one man complained that his club had broken after hitting a ball with lead in the middle to give it a true roll, Philp said, *“Hoo the devil can a mak’ clubs to stand against lead?”*⁹

“This genius made such beautiful and perfect wooden putters that he has come to be regarded as the Amati or Stradivarius of Golf and a genuine ‘Philp’ today is worth much gold.”

Golf Illustrated 1900

Philp was a true St Andrews character. His sometimes cheeky, jovial and occasionally caustic persona could be equally applied to Allan Robertson himself. Morris was a different character altogether and it could be said that it was Morris’ own consistently good, level-headed nature that took him from clubmaker to his legendary status as the Grand Old Man of Golf.

Philp died in 1856, aged 74, leaving not only a profound and artistic legacy but also a business that would grow and grow under Forgan, so that it became one of the town’s biggest employers. His clubs were so popular that it even created a burgeoning trade in counterfeiting Philp clubs.

He was by all standards a gifted man and the desire for an original Philp club is today possibly even stronger than it ever was.

Union Club House

Hard as it may be to believe, but in the very earliest days of the Society of St Andrews Golfers, they had no official premises. During that period it was in the taverns and inns of St Andrews that games were organised, stories of matches regaled and where dinners and meetings were held.

In an 1802 map of the town, a Golfer’s Hall is located where South Street meets East Burn Wynd. As Peter Lewis notes in *Art and Architecture of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club*, this could possibly be the furthest point from the golf course in the town. According to Rev. James Grierson in his 1807 book, *Delineations of St Andrews*, Golfer’s-Hall, as he called it, was formerly the library of St Leonards College, but the buildings were sold off in 1748 after the college amalgamated with St Salvator’s.

*‘The ground storey of the building, in which the golfer’s-hall now is, was formerly the common schools of the college.’*¹⁰

The Society of St Andrews Golfers had agreed in May 1776 that members should meet fortnightly for golf and dinner. The Cross Keys Hotel on Market Street, the Black Bull Inn at the end of South Street (where the hardware store is today), Glass’ Inn, owned by Bailie Glass, which was a few doors up towards the Cathedral at 5 South Street, or the Golf Inn on Golf Place were the most popular haunts at different times over this era. Lewis also notes that Grand Balls were held in Golf House from 1810-1817.

Golfer’s Hall, St Andrews 1802

A detail of Messrs Williams & Duff map of 1802 showing the Golfer’s Hall on East Burn Wynd, just off South Street.

The Union Club House

This well known image of the Club, with Playfair standing at the door, was the first official and dedicated golf club house in St Andrews. The military set up of the Club would be emulated by every golf club thereafter.





St Andrews Archery Revival

Hugh Lyon Playfair came back to St Andrews with much ambition. Like many high-ranking officers in the British Army, he had made his fortune in India. He had just retired after 30 years in the Honourable East India Company's Bengal Army, in 1832, when he arrived back home to St Andrews in his late 40s.

His father, Rev. James Playfair DD FRS (1738-1819), had graduated from St Andrews University in 1779 with a Doctor of Divinity. In 1800, he became the Principal of the United College of St Salvator and St Leonard in the University and minister of the St Leonards parish congregation, which had been housed in St Salvator's chapel since 1761.¹¹

Quadrangle, United College of St Salvator and St Leonard (above)

Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair 1860 (left)

On 15 November 1833 in St Andrews, 30 gentlemen, with aspirations to bring back the noble sport of archery, formed an archers society. Playfair was their choice for first Captain. They took over the premises recently vacated by Hugh Philp, where Hamilton Grand is today, which had three rooms, creating a clubhouse of sorts.

Archery as a sport was given a boost in Scotland by the appointment of the Royal Company of Archers as the King's Bodyguard for Scotland, when King George IV paid a visit to Edinburgh in 1822. It was said that one reason for the sport's growing popularity at that time was because men and women could compete as equals together. Novels from the era such as *The Inheritance* (1824) by Susan Ferrier allude to this socially accepted pastime.

In *Archery Medals of St Andrews and Aberdeen* (1894), Alexander J S Brook noted that in 1833, in St Andrews, 'A club was formed, the ground was again enclosed and butts erected, and the pastime was carried on with all the enthusiasm of by-gone days. The club had a membership of about seventy, and appeared to have considerable vitality; but it expired about 1838, evidently unable to survive the founding of the St Andrews Literary and Philosophical Society by Sir David Brewster.'¹² The club's members were a mix of professors and amateur archers.¹³

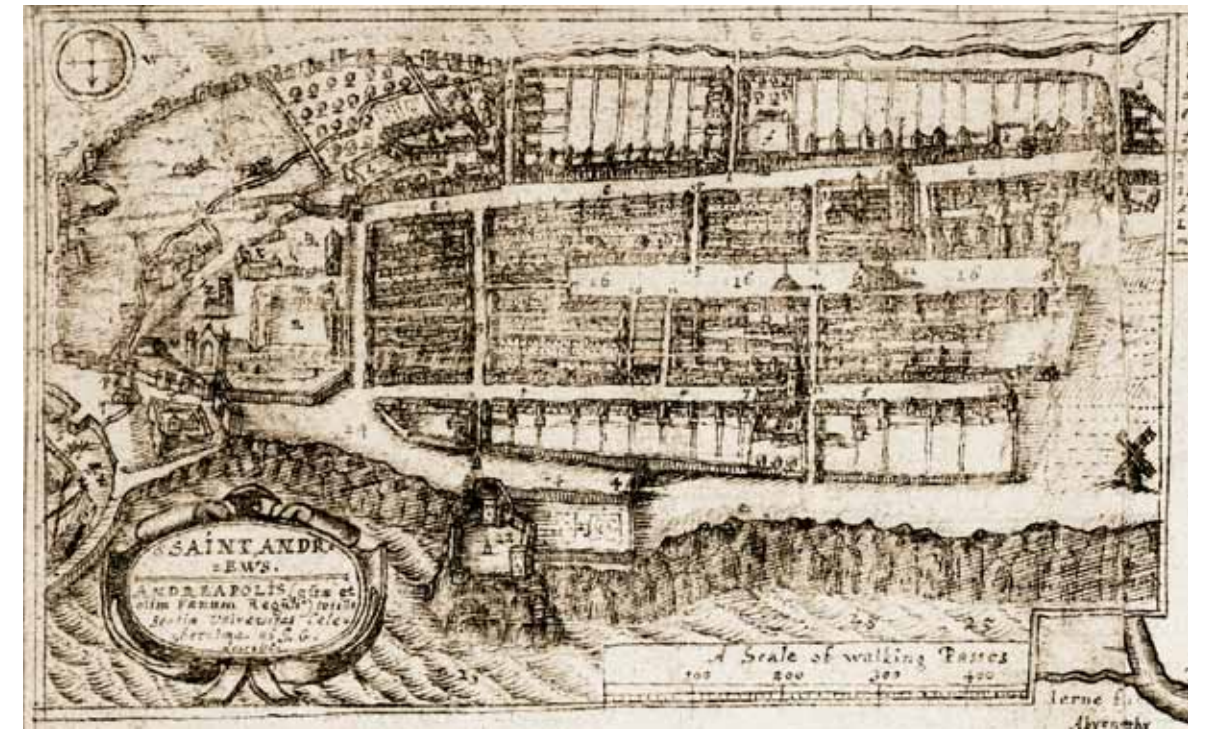
The archery club's demise may be related in part to the death of the silver arrow champion, Dr Jackson, who was one of the few men in town with a passion for archery.¹⁴

St Andrews, however, has a long connection with archery. In his 1840 book, *History of the County of Fife, From The Earliest Period to the Present Time*, John M Leighton, when discussing archery in St Andrews revealed, 'That it was practised among the students at an early period, is proved by a passage in Mr J Melville's diary, where he mentions a riot, created in 1592 among the town's people, which was with difficulty quelled, in consequence of Mr John Caldcleuch, a master in theology, having missed the butts, while engaged in this amusement, and accidentally hurt an old man who was passing down one of the wynds.'¹⁵

Charles Rogers adds a little detail about the archery riot, which he also dates as 1592, saying that an honest maltman of the town received it in the neck, who, whilst not seriously injured, alerted the authorities. They in turn encouraged the populace to go en-masse to St Mary's College and were set to burn the building down. Rogers noted, 'It was not until after much judicious prudent management that the outrage could be quelled'.¹⁶

Early Map of St Andrews (top)
Part of the larger map by James Gordon, titled *FYFF Shyre MDCXLIII*, 1642.

Archery practice (right)
Archery was an acceptable sport for ladies in the 1800s. It was also a sport where they could compete against the men.



The First Golf Clubhouse in St Andrews

Leighton adds a little more background to archery in the town from which we can see a strong correlation between archery and golf, saying, ‘In 1618, a club, St Andrews Archery Club, appears to have been formed, and a silver arrow procured as a prize to be held by the successful competitor, who was to affix a medal to it containing his name and the year of competition. The first medal is dated 1618, and the competition seems to have been regularly carried on till 1628, when it was discontinued for some years, probably in consequence of the civil commotions with which the kingdom was disturbed. In 1675, however, it appears to have been resumed, when it was regularly continued till 1707, by which time a series of 39 medals had been appended to the arrow. In 1710, a new arrow was procured, and continued to be competed for till 1751, when the series of medals stops. To this second arrow, 30 medals are appended. The first arrow, together with its medals, weighs 166 ounces of silver; the second, with its medals, 55 ounces, 4 drachms. They are both preserved in the United College. In 1833, a new club was instituted and a new arrow provided, which is competed for on the first Wednesday of August, the successful candidate having the privilege of appending a medal with his name and of retaining it till it is taken from him by a more successful rival. They also meet annually on St Andrews day. The club consists of about 70 members’.¹⁷

Howie suggests in his book on the town that archery stopped circa 1751, when it seems to have been superseded by The Royal and Ancient Golf Club, by which he means the Society of St Andrews Golfers.¹⁸

The building on Golf Place was an archery club at the outset, with a parlour room for golfers and thus it was commonly known as the Union Parlour. The parlour was refurbished and expanded to cater for the golfers’ needs. On 26 January 1835, after two years of archers and golfers using the small premises, the Union Club – St Andrews’ first golf clubhouse – was officially opened.

There were 45 Union Club members in the first year, each paying a 5 shilling subscription fee.

The Union Club committee included Playfair, again as Treasurer and Secretary, alongside Mr Patullo, Mr Small, Mr Stirling and Mr Mylne.

In the Union Club, members enjoyed a military officers’ mess of sorts. This model would be emulated at gentlemen’s clubhouses around the world thereafter.

As Charles Rogers noted in his 1849 *History of St Andrews*, ‘The Union Club at present consists of 230 members, who are chosen by ballot – one black ball excluding a candidate. Every member must belong to the golf club and must pay the annual subscription of ten shillings, with two pounds of entry money.’¹⁹

Rogers gives a great amount of detail on the facilities at the club. ‘The building rented by the Club contains an excellent reading-room, amply provided with newspapers and maps of almost every country, which is supported by the members resident in the city. A spacious billiard table, in a separate apartment, and convenient dressing-rooms for golf, are also contained in the building. Provisions and wines are supplied at moderate prices. The club-house, which has been under the charge of Provost Playfair since the commencement of the club, assisted by two directors annually chosen, has of late been extended and improved, and the funds have accumulated to an amount sufficient to meet unforeseen contingencies. A miniature likeness of Provost Playfair, as the founder of the club, is hung up in the reading room.’²⁰

Bigger and Better

In 1834, the Society of St Andrews Golfers became The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. Both the Union Club and the R&A existed as separate identities. According to Peter Lewis, ‘The R&A could not hold a formal meeting with a meal in the clubhouse. When the R&A was in session, it met as it had done since it was founded – in a local inn. The Union Club existed to manage a facility for golfers; the R&A existed to play golf. The same people were running both but the distinction to them was clear-cut and did not overlap’. Both clubs co-existed with different subscription fees.

The Union Club building was eventually too small for their requirements. By 1853, it was in need of much repair but the cost of making it acceptable was prohibitive. A Committee set up on 15 March 1853 decided that they should look to purchase a new building altogether.

It was also decided in the October Autumn Meeting, in a resolution first put forward by John Grant on 4 May 1853, that the Union Club should unite with The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, but this would not happen until 1877.

The clever bargaining done by the Society of St Andrews Golfers in the 1820s with the Council regarding the feuing of the land by the Links gave them the land they needed for a clubhouse. They duly assigned their rights over to the Union Club, who had the finance to build a considerable clubhouse.

The foundation stone for the new Union Club building was duly laid in June 1853, with all the honours of Free Masonry by John Whyte Melville. The first Union Club meeting was held in the new building in July 1854. This is further evidence of Playfair’s supreme ability and the due speed he expected for a new building construction. Playfair contributed £850 from the Union Club members to the construction cost. Unfortunately, on the day the foundation stone was set, Playfair was ill and missed the ceremony but that did not stop Melville from praising him highly.



Teeing off at the 1st

In this photo from around 1880, we get a good impression of how ragged the links were. When we read about Tom Morris as a boy, with other boys, loitering around the links in the 1820s, watching the golfers – this scene is reminiscent of that time.

The two clubs would co-exist in the new clubhouse at the top of the Links from 1854-1877. The R&A had no rights within the building and requested from the Union Club, on 2 May 1855, that they be allowed to hold their meetings in the new building in lieu of a local hotel. As Peter Lewis relates when discussing how the building was owned by the Union Club and not the R&A, ‘When the R&A’s minutes mentioned the building as late as 1877, it is referred to it as ‘Union Club House’ and it was not until that year when a formal merger of the two clubs finally took place. All works carried out between 1853 and 1877 was (*sic*) financed by the Union Club and it is worth noting that the chairman of the Union Club between 1855 and 1877 was none other than John Whyte Melville who was also a member of The Society of St Andrews Golfers in 1818 and Captain in 1823.’

It was the gentlemen of the Union Club who would typically revert to Davie Robertson for odds, matches and balls. His shop was ideally placed diagonally across the road at Sandyhill. In the early 1830s, Robertson’s and Philp’s were the only buildings on the Links trading in golf clubs and balls.

Given that Old Tom worked with Allan Robertson until 1848, he too would have seen the steady flow of Union Club members looking for advice or perhaps to challenge the invincible duo for a game.

It cannot be overstated that the game of golf’s very foundations were largely built by the hugely influential Society of St Andrews Golfers and the Union Club. These strong foundations are also the direct result of Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair’s impact on the structure, order and acceptable standards required of a golf clubhouse.

It is not surprising that, in 1856, Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair was made Captain of the R&A, received his knighthood and was also awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Law by St Andrews University. It is also not a coincidence that the double greens idea that Daw Anderson set out on the 7th hole in 1855 was expanded throughout the St Andrews course under the guidance of Allan Robertson during Playfair’s Captaincy of the R&A in 1856 and thereafter.

Playfair’s passion for golf and St Andrews has benefitted the town for over 180 years, but it should be noted that his grand plans all started with one small club, the Union Club.



The Grand Hotel

The last decade of the 19th century was a period of rapid change in Scotland. In St Andrews the rate of change was accelerated by the burgeoning popularity of golf. Despite being the most popular of all golfing venues for eminent Victorians, the town was somewhat late in capitalising on the changes that were taking place.

It possessed all of the features required to attract the new wave of tourists but there had been little investment and even less imagination put into its development. The UK had been in the so-called ‘long recession’ since the mid-1870s, and it had been particularly acute in Scotland as a consequence of the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878.

Families on St Andrews beach
Family fun in the 1890s.

Nevertheless, already celebrated as ‘The Home of Golf’, St Andrews was the place where every aspiring gentleman player had to visit. Some progress had been made with its sea bathing facilities with wheeled huts on the beach, horse drawn in and out of the sea, in which a lady could change into her bathing costume and step into the sea to immerse herself before being drawn, dried, changed and refreshed, back onto dry land to alight with all propriety. There were also the antiquities of the town’s historic past, the pre-reformation castle and cathedral, as well as the rocks and cliffs that attracted fossil hunters, gentlemen botanists, zoologists and geologists. It also had countryside of great diversity through which one might ride or ramble.

Hotels had emerged and proliferated slowly after the railway spur from Leuchars on the main line north had opened in 1851, but they tended to be small with limited facilities. They were, however, numerous enough and already a cause for concern to the R&A whose members were concerned about access to play.

The real catalyst to the expansion of tourism in St Andrews was the building of the Forth Railway Bridge in March 1890. This opened Fife to visitors from Edinburgh and Glasgow as never before. The Rusack’s Marine Hotel was built in 1887 to take advantage of the anticipated influx of golfing holidaymakers.

Today, St Andrews’ golfing pilgrims enjoy access to at least 11 different courses in the immediate vicinity, but in 1890 only the single St Andrews Links, known as the Old Course today, existed and pressure for play was increasing by the day.

The R&A managed and maintained the golfing ground since 1799. By ancient statute, everyone – Club members, locals and visitors alike – had the right to golf on the Links. With golf freely available and the number of players increasing rapidly, it is understandable that the R&A, carrying all of the maintenance and management costs, was aggrieved when its members were unable to play.



When it became known that a second large hotel was to be sited on the Links and that it was on a still grander scale, with 100 bedrooms and services comparable with inner London’s best, panic ensued.

It is not difficult to comprehend the town’s dilemma. St Andrews certainly needed a grand hotel; there was general agreement about that.

But what it did not need was any more golfers clamouring for a place on the 1st tee, with caddies fighting for precedence and Club members insisting upon rights of access. Clearly, what was needed was another golf course, but without ownership of the Links, neither the Town Council nor the R&A could do anything about it.

The building of Rusack’s and the proposed construction of the Grand Hotel prompted action that changed the face of golf in St Andrews. This left an indelible mark on the heritage of the game, which began with a Parliamentary hearing to draft the first St Andrews Links Act in 1894.

Tourism in St Andrews
Tourism expanded at an unprecedented rate thanks to the glorious Grand and Rusack’s Hotels. It was a place where the great and the good would frequent and be enticed back to, time and again. It had emerged after centuries of decay as a proud noble town, fit for a king.

On the beach
Bathing huts were pulled into the water, so that ladies could emerge, enter and leave the water gracefully. Mixed bathing may have been on the horizon but for the majority of Tom’s life the men had their beach and the ladies had theirs.



As early as 1890, Mr Alexander Cheape of Strathtyrum (b1802), then aged 88, had let the R&A know that he was prepared to sell the Links land to the Club. Furthermore, he said that should he change his mind, the Club would have the first refusal. StAndrews Town Council would have been well aware of this, when, concurrent with the announcement of the beginning of the hotel’s construction in April 1893, it established a committee ‘to consider the propriety and practicality of increasing the golfing facilities on the links’. This was in immediate response to rumours in the town of the R&A’s desire to construct a second course for the exclusive use of its members.

The relationship between the R&A and StAndrews Town Council had hitherto been cordial but, throughout the first few months of 1893, it deteriorated rapidly – reaching an all-time low when there was a proposal made in the Council Chamber for application for a Compulsory Purchase Order for the Links ‘to reclaim ancient, lost public land by Parliamentary Order’. This, it was added, was in response to the R&A’s stated determination to build a new course for the exclusive use of its members whilst also challenging the public’s rights to walk over the Links on the grounds that, in law, this was a privilege granted by the landowner and not a legal right.

Things moved quickly as a result of the Council’s threat of compulsory acquisition and, in May 1893, following Alexander Cheape’s death on 4 June the previous year, it became known that the R&A had already purchased the Links from the Cheape estate for £5,000. This was a shrewd move for, as Andrew Murray, the then Captain of the Club and one of the best legal brains in the country, pointed out, the Council’s attempt to obtain the Links by compulsory purchase would fail if the Club, as owners of the Links, objected to it. He was right in this respect but wrong in concluding that this was the Council’s only solution. Dr Thomas Thornton of Dundee (later Sir Thomas) was Dundee’s Town Clerk with his own legal practice on Commercial Street.

He was commissioned to advise the Council and duly pointed out that the best course of action was for the Council to purchase the Links from the R&A under a special Act of Parliament. What followed was two years of bitter acrimony between the R&A and the Council and, more importantly, between the local members of the R&A and the townspeople. What should have been decided amicably between the interested parties behind closed doors became a national press feeding frenzy which finally ended in Parliament when the StAndrews Links Act was given Royal assent on 29 July 1894.



Old Tom Morris and Andrew Kirkaldy
Andrew Kirkaldy teeing off, watched by Old Tom Morris, Ben Sayers, Archie Simpson and Sandy Herd, 1895.

When we come to discuss the Links later, we will discover the full story behind the New Course and its design. In 1895, the course opened to popular reception and, as desired, it alleviated some of the pressure on the Old.

The Grand Hotel goes ahead

Although there had been talk in the town for over a year, the first public intimation of a proposal for a hotel to be built at the corner of Golf Place and the Scores Walk was in the registration of a new joint stock company, announced in the national press on 20 January 1893. Capital was set at £10,000 in £5 shares and it sold out immediately. Notably there were no local shareholders – it was very much a Glasgow affair, with Wylie & Lochhead department store and the distillers Wright & Greig being the largest subscribers.

Among the objects of the company were powers to alter and enlarge the hotel and to finance its building and furnishings through bonds and debentures. £9,000 of them were from the General Accident Assurance Corporation, which had its head office in Perth, prosperous branches in Glasgow and London and was about to expand into Ireland, USA and Canada.

Of the share capital, only £4,000 was called up initially; the rest was accessed as building and furnishing proceeded. By 1895, £8,000 had been called and the full amount by July 1896. The remainder of the capital required was financed by a heritable bond of £14,000, with a further debenture bond for £5,000 to build the eastern bedroom wing in 1898-99.

The Directors were Peter Chalmers, Charles M Aitken, James Reid and David Rattray. Chalmers was one of the key people behind the creation of the Rosemount Course at Blairgowrie where he lived and the only significant shareholder who could be deemed local. The manager was John Henry Schmidt, who bought 20 shares from the original owners in 1901. He and his wife came from the Royal Marine Hotel, Kingstown, Dublin.

If the news of the company escaped the local townspeople, it did not the members of the R&A. When David Rattray CA of Gresham House, West Nile Street, Glasgow as managing director of the StAndrews Grand Hotel Co. made application before the StAndrews Burgh Licensing Court in April 1893, it was opposed by the Management Committee of the R&A.

Much of the opposition was based upon the argument that there were already enough licensed premises close to the links and that there was already an abundance of accommodation in the area without any more visitors being attracted to claim access to the golf course. This argument was irrelevant to the business of the licensing court and was quickly dispatched and licence granted.

What should have been focused upon was the fact that Provost Patterson was presiding the court and that he was proprietor of part of the land. They might also have drawn attention to the fact that the part owned by ex-Provost McGregor had already been sold to his son-in-law’s father, Mr Rattray, who was Chairman and Managing Director of the Grand Hotel Co. and that he was relinquishing the licence granted him for his StRegulus Hotel in favour of the new company. Both were beneficiaries of the sale of the land to the company and final transactions depended upon obtaining a licence to sell liquor.

Exchanges in the court were vigorous and bitter but the Town Council minutes on the matter are muted. Although the R&A clearly had strong feelings about the scale of the building as well as the added pressures it would bring for play on the course, the Town Council welcomed the project for it would benefit from the increase in income from the hotel’s rateable value, as well as the jobs it would create and the additional revenue from its guests in the town.

The StAndrews Grand Hotel Co. had obtained a choice site with magnificent views of the great swath of Links land and the expanses of the West Sands, tranquil in the summer months with the sea rippling along its beach and spectacular in the winter with huge rolling white waves breaking onto the shore.

The Union Club had sold the site for a pittance then, surely never expecting that, one day, it would come to be occupied by a building on the scale proposed for the Grand Hotel.

It is doubtful if anyone in the Council Chamber had perceived of the massive scale that the proposed building was going to be. The irregularity of the fact that a licence to sell liquor had been granted to a hotel which did not yet exist passed with little attention. It was not until the foundations were dug and trainloads of red sandstone started arriving at the station that the town’s people and the press started to take note of the scale of the project. With the construction of a steam-powered crane, the arrival of nearly 100 skilled workers and ever-rising scaffolding, the site became something of a wonder in the town.

Work began on the construction of the Grand Hotel in May 1893. When nearing completion in March 1895, it became national press news with a drawing published alongside a lengthy description of its structure, facilities and luxurious accommodation. £18,000 was spent on construction and £4,000 on luxurious furnishings.

The building was certainly imposing, both in scale and colour. The red sandstone was in total contrast to the grey stone that had lent StAndrews its ‘Auld Grey Toon’ sobriquet. Its scale dwarfed all about it; its seven floors made it the tallest modern building in the town and its appointments matched the best in any major city in the country. StAndrews was justly proud of its truly grand hotel.

Getting around
Carters took luggage to and from the StAndrews train station. This cart is from The Cross Keys Hotel. In less refined times, luggage was taken on wheelbarrows and pushed by hand by agitated caddies such as Lang Willie.



Architecture of the Grand Hotel

Essentially, the Grand Hotel is a red sandstone version of the red brick architecture of J J Stevenson, some works by Richard Norman Shaw, Colonel Sir Robert Edis and J T Wimperis, with some Glasgow elements, notably the plate glass sashed bay windows, which were rather different from their London counterparts. Extending 115ft along Golf Place and 82ft up the Scores, James Milne Monro, the Glasgow architect, had adopted the northern European Renaissance style with predominantly Flemish features.

The dome is taken from J J Stevenson’s competition design for Kensington Vestry Hall in London; the arcaded top floor probably from John J Burnet’s Charing Cross Mansions, Glasgow of 1891. The slim balconies at every level were unique in Scotland at the time and followed the model of recent grand hotels along England’s south coast.

With immensely spacious rooms at principal floor level, the intention may have been to create a very grand clubhouse, as much as a hotel. Its general appearance was perhaps intentional, strongly reminiscent of Sir Robert’s residential Junior Constitutional Club on Piccadilly.

It was normal practice of the day for architects of such large-scale premises to take shares in lieu of payment or in return for part payment for their services. However, as many hotel businesses had failed in the mid-1880s as a result of the recession which followed the City of Glasgow bank crash in 1878, architects had become very wary of such deals. Given the amount of staff working for Monro, he didn’t risk a large shareholding. Only 20 shares are duly noted in the list of shareholders register with Wylie & Lochhead.

James Milne Monro had already established a reputation as a hotel architect when he was commissioned to design the Grand Hotel but it was his first really large project. His brief was to build something more fashionably up to date than the recently completed Rusack’s.



Balfour drives in
Old Tom Morris watches on as The Right Honourable Arthur J Balfour drives in as Captain of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews on 26 September 1894. Balfour became Prime Minister in 1902. He was so impressed by this photo by local photographer, A Downie, that he asked Tom to obtain six prints.

The Grand’s red sandstone was brought from Dumfriesshire. The hotel was constructed by Messrs William Allan & Cowan of Glasgow, under the superintendence of Robert Swan, clerk of works. The choice of red sandstone may have been to make the property stand out but the reason was also economic as the best white and buff coloured sandstone quarries in Scotland had all been worked out and the Northumberland quarries were more expensive. The colour of the stone was significant as it led to Monro designing a red sandstone version of the London red brick architecture.

Whether Wylie paid for his shares in cash or furnishings is not recorded.

From the press reports of the day we have the following description, ‘The basement floor comprises the culinary and laundry departments and the necessary adjuncts thereto. Provision is also made on this floor for men-servants bedrooms and wine and beer cellars connected with the bar. On the next or principal floor is the entrance hall, from which a broad, handsome staircase leads to the upper floors. Adjoining the hall are arranged the hotel offices and bar, with writing and reading rooms in close proximity. The coffee room is also on this floor facing the Scores and is 24ft wide by 45ft long. Behind this room are arranged the stillroom, waiters and serving pantry, which have direct communication with the bar and private stair to basement. On this floor a large smoking room commanding a view along the golf course is provided.

The drawing room is on the first upper floor, and overlooks both the Scores and Golf Place. This, and the upper floors contain parlour and bedroom accommodation, etc. Communication between the various floors is likewise obtained by means of a service stair and a passenger hydraulic lift. A luggage lift is also provided. There are upwards of 100 apartments, and all the modern improvements are embodied in the hotel so as to make it of the most complete description. It is expected that the hotel, which will be one of the most comfortable and luxurious in Scotland, will be ready for opening on 1 June.’

Like other luxury hotels of that date, the upper floors of the Grand were arranged so that one could book a private family parlour, as well as bedrooms; additional to the coffee room, smoke room and drawing room that all guests could use.

There is no report of the ‘official’ opening in the *St Andrews Citizen*. In mid-April 1895, in a report on housing in St Andrews, the Dean of Guild is reported to have said that the hotel was on schedule to be receiving guests within a month.

In mid-May, there is an article reporting that Mr Asquith, having been unable to find a suitable house to rent for six weeks in the summer, had booked accommodation in St Andrews Grand Hotel. Asquith, the then MP for the area and Home Secretary, destined to become Prime Minister and Earl of Oxford, was a popular figure in the town. He and his even more popular wife, Margot Tennant, were figures of high society who scandalised the town by riding about on bicycles.

Grand Hotel, St Andrews
An original postcard of the Grand Hotel from the late 1890s.





Winston Churchill in Fife
General Sikorski, Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Forces, with Winston Churchill inspecting Polish Army coastal defences near St Andrews in 1940, along with Mrs Clementine Churchill. The Polish Army, evacuated from France, had been placed in charge of coastal defence along the east of Scotland at that time. There is a mosaic on the Town Hall wall in St Andrews made by the Polish soliders as a thank you for the support and warmth they received in the town.

The dawning of the 20th century brought a new wave of optimism to St Andrews. The Cottage Hospital was built and the Step Rock swimming pool completed.²¹ The Bruce Embankment finally had a covering of grass to make a putting green, alleviating the demand for play on The Himalayas, the original Ladies Course.

The construction of the Grand Hotel had attracted an altogether new class of visitor to the town, inducing further hotel proliferation and shops catering for a more diverse demand.

The local press was perhaps exaggerating when it claimed that ‘the Grand Hotel is booked throughout the year’, but there is no doubt that demand was exceeding tee times available and, even in the Christmas and New Year period as well as at Easter, the ‘Links was sorely stressed for play’. It was this ongoing demand for starting times that induced the Town Council to set about the construction of a fourth golf course. On 4 July 1914, the Eden Course was formally opened for play with the first ‘Town Match’ between local golfers – ‘a team of local talent’ – and members of the R&A.

The R&A held a reception for ‘the local talent’ in its clubhouse and the Town Council hosted a dinner for both teams in the Grand Hotel in the evening.

Change of Management

In 1905, money was suddenly scarce and not readily available. As economist historians have observed, as in 2008, the financial crisis started in the USA. Interest rates rose to 6%, which was very high at that time. When the Grand Hotel Co. was unable to meet their interest payments, accountant R B McCaig was brought in to try to salvage the situation, but this was to no avail.

In that same year, 1905, Francis Norie-Miller of the General Accident Assurance Corporation lost patience and seized control, obtaining ‘*dominium utile and dominium directum*’ over the Grand. The original company secretary and board of directors, including Rattray, were forced to resign. They were replaced by the Edinburgh solicitor, David William Marwick (son of Sir James Marwick – Glasgow’s town clerk), as secretary of the company and Harry Armour, James Simpson (Marwick’s senior partner) and Ewing Paterson (Kinburn House) as company directors. H C Page Henderson was proposed as a director but declined to serve.

By a special resolution of the new board, the original £5 shares were split into ordinary and preference shares of £2 10s each and a further 1000 were issued. Simpson and Marwick duly bought these as individuals. By the end of 1906, Marwick owned 509 ordinary and 509 preference shares, while Simpson held 235 ordinary and 345 preference shares. They also subscribed for a further 500 shares, significantly reducing the original board’s fatal dependence on loan capital.

The new board brought in Sir John James Burnet, Marwick’s brother-in-law, (then John J Burnet), to re-design the entrance and ground floor using this new money from the sale of shares. The original entrance was deemed too draughty, which explains the sheltered entrance in the new portico, which is sadly now blocked up.

Marwick, Simpson and Norie-Miller were all experienced entrepreneurs, having been the founding shareholders of the Marine Hotel at Elie, where Burnet had been their architect. As at the Grand, the distillers Wright & Greig were among the major shareholders and Wylie & Lochhead supplied most of the furniture. Furthermore from 1899, the General Accident held its loan capital. It is not without significance that Marwick’s brother James had begun his career with Norie Miller in Glasgow and had become auditor of the General Accident’s North American operations as co-founder of the giant accountancy firm, Peat Marwick.

By 1909, the company’s mortgage debt was £30,000. Francis Norie-Miller had become director, followed by William Constable Hunter of 15 Hill Street, Edinburgh.

The War Years

In August 1914, The Great War began but it impinged little on visitors to St Andrews and the Grand Hotel. It became a place of respite for Officers from the trenches and gentry seeking solace from wartime city pressures. The hotel hosted golfing delegations from the United States Golf Association, when golf rules were addressed, and an altogether new clientele arrived with the emergent US golfing aficionados.

In 1900, a travel writer described the hotel as ‘very much American’. Major figures in American politics, banking and industry visited, together with the movie stars who brought the locals out to gape in awe as they crossed the road to take their place on the 1st tee.

The management structure also altered with Marwick as secretary and Armour, Simpson and Norie-Miller as directors. There appears to have been some sort of offer made to the long-suffering original shareholders as, by 1913-14, their number had greatly reduced. By 1920, the shareholdings of the General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation (as it had been since 1906) were 950 ordinary, 1,880 preference and 1,000 A shares. This gave it control of the hotel, with its company secretary based in the company’s 2 High Street, Perth office to reflect this.

It was not until 1921 that the Grand came to be synonymous with American golf. That year saw a sea change in the Open Championship and the start of a new era in the game. That year also saw an extensive renovation in the hotel’s facilities and decor that would bring it again to the attention of the national press.

Jock Hutchison, a local player who had migrated to the USA with many other proficient local players, returned to bring in the New Year with his friends in the town. He made something more than an impression as he broke the Eden Course record and indulged himself and his new-found wealth in the town and its Hogmanay revels. He made even more of an impression when he returned in July with 12 professional players from the US, among them the colourful Walter Hagen, Jim Barnes and also Joe Kirkwood from Australia.



Jock Hutchison
St Andrews born Jock Hutchison, winner of the very first Senior PGA Championship at Augusta National Golf Club in 1937.

The fledgling Bobby Jones was also there, although he failed to complete the four rounds after tearing up his card when coming to grief in Hill Bunker, by the 11th green. The Open Championship would never be the same again.

Although Jock had stayed with his family at 30 North Street during his New Year sojourn, he chose to stay with his American friends in the Grand Hotel for the duration of the Championship. He had taken US citizenship in 1920 and was proud of ‘being an American’. He was, however, not expected to win the Open. The greatest fear was that Walter Hagen or Jim Barnes would take the trophy overseas for the first time. When Jock beat Roger Wethered in a two round play-off for the title, relief was expressed that he was a local and that the Americans had failed after all.



Jock, however, saw things differently. He was, he insisted, an American and, what is more, the first American to win the Claret Jug, the Open Championship trophy. The press on both sides of the Atlantic made much of the story and of the suggestion that his presentation of the trophy was performed without respect – merely thrown to him as his local friends and US players carried him shoulder high about the 18th green. It is said that in the presentation ceremony, the Chair of the Green Committee was so upset about the trophy leaving the country that he did not call for three cheers for the winner, but instead glumly handed over the trophy and called for three cheers for Roger Wethered, who Hutchison had just beaten by nine shots in a 36-hole play-off.

The constant stream of US visitors through the Grand increased in consequence of Jock's win as club players across the US discovered that St Andrews was the place to visit to gain your golfing credentials.

The 17th green, The Old Course, St Andrews (top)
In 1890, Horace G Hutchinson in the *Badminton Journal* described the Road Hole hazards as 'that horrid little round bunker to one side of it, and that hopeless hard road on the other. And the canny golfer we see approaching it in instalments, and the bold spirit, taking his fate in his hand, going for glory or the grave'.

Roger Wethered (left)
1921 Open runner-up, 1923 Amateur Champion and brother of Joyce Wethered – one of the finest female golfers of all time who won the Ladies Amateur four times.

It is quite possible that it was the anticipated visits of the leading lights of US golf that induced extensive renovations in the hotel that year. It is equally likely, however, that it was the announcement that Edward, Prince of Wales, was about to become Captain of the R&A and suitable accommodation for him and his entourage would have to be found in the town for his three-day stay. Although we cannot be sure that the renovations were carried out before the Open in mid-July 1921, we can be certain that the Grand Hotel was a model of modernity by September 1922, when the Prince took up residence on Tuesday 25th.

The Prince drove from Balmoral Castle, reaching the hotel at 5.30pm, to be greeted by a huge crowd that had gathered throughout the day. After a quick change, he drove to the Town Hall where he was given the Freedom of the City and attended a 'banquet of wine and cake'. The following day, he became Captain of the R&A when he drove the first ball from the 1st tee. In front of crowds estimated at some 10,000, he played four rounds of golf in two days before departing again, forever a favourite figure in the town. He returned the following Spring, this time with no fanfare, to once again stay at the Grand with somewhat less of an entourage, although his party was said in the town to be augmented by 'several ladies'.

In 1923, the accounts for the Grand Hotel showed a trading profit of £3,191, reflecting the success of the business.

The Grand Hotel had entered a new era with the Prince's visit. Its new refurbishment in the Art Deco style was much commented upon in journals in 1925 when it was said to compare with 'the best of its kind in the world'. Messrs Wylie & Lochhead Ltd of Glasgow again supplied furnishing. Now part of House of Fraser, it was a huge firm, which then had its own in-house designers and furniture works occupying a complete street block.

The same Glasgow firm supplied the Art Deco styling for the interiors of the great ocean liners then emerging from the Clydeside shipyards. If the hotel had enjoyed social repute before the Prince's visit, it gained an altogether new social clientele after it. Throughout the 'roaring' twenties, it hosted engagement and wedding parties of the great and the good of the 'flapper' generation and, in the 1930s, music hall personalities and increasingly popular film stars besieged it. Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Astor, and Mary Pickford drew large crowds, as did Sir Harry Lauder and Sir Edward Elgar.

But, in a town that lives and breathes the great game, it was the US golfing greats who were most significant of the Grand's residents, and none more so than Bobby Jones. The town had awaited his coming for the Open in 1930 and it was not disappointed.

Not only did he win the Open that year but he also went on to take the 'Grand Slam of Golf' by winning the Amateur and Open Championships on both sides of the Atlantic. He and his Walker Cup team mates resided in the Grand for the Open and played practice rounds in preparation for the Walker Cup.

Jones won an enduring place in the hearts of the townspeople that year and, like the Prince of Wales before him, was awarded the Freedom of the City in 1958.



HRH Prince Edward, Prince of Wales drives in as Captain of the R&A

Here we see Andrew Kirkaldy giving some last minute golf advice to the future King. St Andrews has historic Royal connections – Robert the Bruce, who presided at the consecration of St Andrews Cathedral in 1318, Mary Queen of Scots, Charles II, Prince Leopold, Prince Edward and more recently Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen Mother, Prince William and Prince Andrew. It is a bond that simply goes back almost 700 years.



The Decline and Fall

The outbreak of the Second World War saw widespread requisitioning of public buildings, private houses and hotels throughout the country. With a major Royal Air Force station at nearby Leuchars and the Polish Army in exile based in St Andrews, the town was hit particularly hard. The Air Ministry requisitioned the Grand Hotel in February 1942 to billet pilot officers, although it continued to take a few paying guests until October that year.

It was a choice billet for the young officers and a very happy place for many of the town's young ladies. With golf on their billet's doorstep and a Town Council providing dances and soirées for entertainment, those who survived the war look back with many happy memories. Needless to say, the RAF left a lasting impression in the town and it certainly made an indelible impression on the Grand Hotel.

Artworks by resident amateur artists soon replaced superb Art Deco panels of tapestries and paintings. Their works had an aviation theme and whole walls were covered with paintings of fighter aircraft engaged in dogfights and bombers caught in a searchlight's glare. The young men also had little concern for the woodwork or stained glass, the former suffering from stray darts and the latter from a mis-hit golf ball.

The Grand was de-requisitioned in 1946 and immediately reverted to hotel use, but things were altogether different. There was neither the capital nor the incentive to refurbish to its earlier grandeur. With the country in penury with war debts and the top rate of income tax at 19 shillings and sixpence, there was little demand for luxury hotel accommodation. There were few visitors and rationing hardly allowed for haute cuisine. Most of those determined to golf in St Andrews sought cheap accommodation and their stay was short. General Macarthur and Captain Lloyd Mangrum were early guests at the Grand from post-war Germany, before Lloyd went on to win the first post-war US Open. Sam Snead took up residence whilst winning the Open in 1946 and Bing Crosby stayed overnight in 1947.

It is clear from press commentary that the hotel was struggling in an uncertain marketplace and its grand scale, more than anything else, made its survival simply untenable. The Town Council, who were desperate to raise what it could from local taxes, raised the hotel's annual rates from pre-war £700 to £1,050.

The end of the story of the Grand Hotel began in 1947 when Hugh Donnington Smith (b1909) and his wife Elizabeth Madeliene Smith (b1910), who was known as June, began buying up shareholdings, with the solicitor John Cargill Cantley. The *Dundee Courier* on 4 March 1949 reported that the hotel was going to re-open on 8 April. 'It was closed during the winter months for the first time, because of staff problems created by the Catering Wages Act.' This act basically 'set up a complicated system of statutory control over the wages, conditions and health and welfare of workers in various branches of the catering industry'.²² Donnington Smith noted that the books were looking good from mid-June to mid-October.

Like many other luxury country resort hotels, the Grand Hotel was put up for sale and it appears that the only offer made for it came from the Catholic Church, with a view to turning it into a teacher's training college. In a town that had given birth to the Reformation in Scotland, this proposal was unwelcome and objections to it were vociferous in the press. The Catholic Church quickly withdrew its offer.

In 1949, the hotel was put up for sale. The University wanted to buy the building and convert it into a students' hall of residence. However this change from a hotel was not popular locally. The St Andrews Hotel and Boarding House Association opposed it, saying that it was vital to the economic security of the town. They even tried forlornly to involve the Scottish Secretary. The Amateur Champion Golfer Cyril Tolley also was against the change.

In the *Dundee Courier* of 7 August that year, he gave numerous reasons why the hotel should not be sold to the University: 1. The attraction of the town to American tourists. 2. The visitors to the town to both play and watch golf need accommodation and the town is already limited in that respect. 3. The University already has accommodation for students, which brings revenue for boarding-house keepers and owners of lodging houses. 4. American tourists do not want that type of accommodation. He questioned why only the University had been approached about the sale and most important of all, noted that there were other interested buyers who wanted to retain the building as a hotel as they appreciated the value of the hotel to golfers and tourists alike.

Nevertheless, after a meeting of the shareholders on 12 September 1949, the University's offer was accepted. On the previous Monday, the Town Council themselves, by eight votes to two, gave their approval to the sale. Planning permission was granted for change of use to a student's hall of residence.

Renamed Hamilton Hall in honour of Douglas 14th Duke of Hamilton (1903-73), the then University Chancellor, the plan was to extensively alter and refurbish the hotel to accommodate over 100 students in 70 single and double rooms. In the *Dundee Courier* on 10 January 1950, the University said they hoped the work would be completed by October. The building remained a feature of the St Andrews Links but its character was very different from its great days when it had welcomed Royalty, dignitaries from all walks of life and the stars of American golf and Hollywood.

The *Dundee Courier* on 2 March 1950 noted the auction sale by Mr J McGregor (St Andrews) of the furniture from the Grand Hotel. How upsetting this must have been for locals and tourists who had seen the beautiful hotel in its prime. The paper noted that it was mostly private individuals who purchased the items. It would be another 63 years before the building would be returned to its former glory.



Bing Crosby in St Andrews

Bing Crosby with local golfer James Wilson in 1950. Wilson, a building contractor from St Andrews, beat Bing in the 1st round of the Amateur Championship. The fact that Bing even played in the Amateur gives a real indication that he was a golfer who was taken seriously. They became good friends and, in 1971, created the Bing Crosby Trophy for senior golfers in The St Andrews Golf Club, The New Golf Club and the R&A. First time entrants in the event can also win the J K Wilson Trophy.

St Andrews at war (top)

The Air Ministry requisitioned The Grand Hotel in February 1942 to billet pilot officers, although it continued to take a few paying guests until October that year.

Party at the Grand Hotel (bottom)

This photo, taken in 1946, perfectly captures the clientele celebrating in the bar of the Grand Hotel.

University of St Andrews Hall of Residence

Hamilton Hall was the residence of choice for St Andrews University students, but it was never the most comfortable. The heating system was decrepit and the hot water supply was a constant source of complaint. In 1976, a negligent student was responsible for a fire in the upper floor of the building. Although quickly extinguished by the local fire brigade, it left the roof and cupola damaged and extensive repairs were required. Then, when new safety regulations became law, the necessary upgrading and maintenance costs made new halls a better option and, in 2005, the University withdrew it from residential use and offered it for sale.

A False Dawn

The Open Championship was the big event of the summer of 2005 in St Andrews but, when the town came down to earth again in August, all the talk was about the fate of Hamilton Hall. Rumours were rife. The University confirmed that the iconic building, which had played a prominent role in the film *Chariots of Fire*, had been sold to an American developer. That was, however, the extent of local knowledge.

Chariots of Fire
Taken during the shooting of *Chariots of Fire* (1981) on West Sands.



It was not until November the developers became known, with an announcement in the local newspaper that they had obtained a part share in nearby Kingsbarns Golf Course, which at the time was neither confirmed nor denied by the known owners of the course. What was of immediate local concern was that members of a newly proposed elite golf club in the building would enjoy privileged starting times ‘on the St Andrews courses as well as on the acclaimed layouts at Kingsbarns, Crail and Elie’. In September, the local newspaper reported, ‘work was about to begin on the exclusive golf and sporting club’.

When nothing happened, rumours originating in America and reported in the local press that the developer, the Wasserman Company, had ‘gone belly up’, were hotly denied. As the hall stood bleak and empty throughout the playing of the Women’s Open in 2007 and the press reported further concerns about the Wasserman enterprise, Kingsbarns put out a statement that there had been no change of ownership. Concern grew. In December, Mike di Carlo let the press know that he was ‘hopeful that the Hamilton Hall enterprise would flourish’.

With the Open to be played in St Andrews in 2010, the building would make an appalling spectacle were it to be smothered in scaffolding or besmirched with grime. There was talk that the R&A might purchase the building, but this was officially denied in May 2008. Anger about its state was expressed in *The Courier* and in *The Daily Mail* in July; even *The Times* newspaper thundered ire about its scandalous condition in October when it belatedly reported that Phil Mickelson had made a seven-figure sum investment in the project.

When, however, Fife Council let it be known that it wanted the owners to get in touch, it became very clear that all was not well. From the onset, the developer’s claims for members’ access to local golf, the total lack of any local consultation and the continuous inertia, justified the concerns expressed. It came as no surprise when it became known that a bank was offering Hamilton Hall for sale in 2009.

Hamilton Grand

The townspeople of St Andrews breathed a collective sigh of relief when, in November 2009, the Kohler Organisation announced that it had purchased Hamilton Hall, for they knew that the building was secure. Now, at last, an organisation with an exemplary track record in the town was consolidating its interests and making a further contribution to the town’s wellbeing.

Herb Kohler’s commitment and achievements were there for all to see. His organisation had transformed the Old Course Hotel and restored it to premiership status. The Duke’s Golf Course had been improved beyond all expectations. The townspeople’s optimism became absolute when, in 2010, Mr Kohler himself held two days of local consultation in the Town Hall when he laid out his plans for the building and listened to what the local folk had to say. Within two months, the building was spruced up and presented with an acceptable face for the Open Championship in July 2010, and development plans were submitted to the Fife planning authority.

Some three years later, after tens of thousands of hours work from more than 300 craft and tradesmen, Hamilton Grand was opened again. It was no longer an unkempt students’ hall of residence. Today, the building has been transformed into a collection of 26 luxury homes consisting of two, three and four bedroom apartments, ranging in size from 1,133 to 2,780 square feet and includes a penthouse with a private balcony that boasts a 360-degree view across St Andrews, the Old Course and coastline.

Some of the properties also offer breathtaking views over the Old Course. All apartments feature individual characteristics preserved from the original building. Prices started at £1.2 million. On the 6th floor there is a spectacular open deck for owners, offering panoramic views across the golf courses and West Sands. There is also a library and a private lounge for residents. For the public, there is a stylish public bar and restaurant.



Hamilton Grand
No longer a students’ hall of residence, the building has been transformed into a collection of luxury homes that boast panoramic views across the Old Course and along the coast.

The majority of works have been managed by the Scottish branch of the international construction services company, ISG. Andy Mallice, Managing Director of ISG Scotland said, ‘This has been a remarkable project – working with a site of such historic and national importance. The entire team has been proud to be a very small part of the St Andrews story – to secure the future of this very special property, one that is known and loved by those who enjoy the game of golf the world over’.

It is good to see Hamilton Grand being invested in and taken care of once more. As you walk on the cobble stones in the entrance to Ham’s Hame bar, know that you are following in the footsteps of the greatest in the worlds of golf, politics and Royalty.

Let’s hope that for the next 100 years, the building continues to be fit for a King.