



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Old Tom

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you at the proper time. (1 Peter 5:6)

I want to share why one of my life heroes is “Old” Tom Morris of St Andrews. Heroes are real-life people who inspire us to become better friends, fathers, husbands, and leaders for the sake of God and the building of his kingdom on earth.

One of golf’s most iconic buildings is the famous Royal and Ancient clubhouse, which sits behind the first tee of the Old Course in St Andrews, Scotland.

If you’ve been fortunate to make your lifetime pilgrimage to St Andrews, you’ve seen the clubhouse firsthand.

If you’re standing on the first tee and turn around to observe the massive clubhouse, you’ll notice an engraving of an old man- Tom Morris- in the top right section of the facade, right below the clock! His face is engraved into the structure!

No big deal, right? I mean, he is famous. However, it made me pause while standing there.

Finally, after a few holes, it came to me in question form: “How did the son born to a poor weaver in the early 1800s find his bust carved into one of the most prestigious golf structures in the world? Into a structure that exudes favor, power, wealth, and fame?”

Tom Morris was humble—a genuine servant.

At some point, shortly after his death, his servanthood and effect on the game of golf brought him honor among those whom he cared for. They etched his face into their clubhouse as a memorial.

My favorite story about Old Tom comes from Kevin Cook’s book, *Tommy’s Honor*. He shares the day young Tommy (his son) observed his elderly father kneeling before a “gentleman” to tee his ball up. Young Tom looked on and commented with disdain.

Old Tom spoke to his son with this telling comment: “There is no shame in kneeling, son. Had not our Savior told His followers to render unto Caesar? After all, Tom said, it was not his immortal soul that bent, only his knee.”

Rev. W.W. Tulloch, a very close friend of Old Tom, included the following comments in his biography shortly after Tom’s passing:

“...there was no job beneath Tom-he was a club maker, greens keeper, trainer of the caddies, and Starter, a fair competitor-gracious in winning and losing. He often shared a coin for poor caddies in the winter.”

The Sabbath was sacred to Tom, and he upheld it by keeping the course closed, which has been a priority for over 160 years. He said, “Golfers may not need a day of rest, but the course surely does!”

How did Old Tom become a man of integrity and principle? A man of character who received favor from even the most famous people of his time?

Tulloch continues, "Tom had deep motivation and purpose, and it was to God that he desired to be faithful. He daily ingested the Scriptures. They guided his life and shaped his character and the way He lived.

Tom lived his life for the greater reward. Because of his (very long) life of humility and putting others' interests before his own, he was honored at his death with a funeral procession that equaled any other of his day.

His body was honored in the Cathedral graveyard, and a street was later named after him.

He was also honored to have his face carved into the building of one of the world's most famous golf structures. The entire golf world honors him on every pilgrimage to St Andrews.

Prayer: Jesus, we humble ourselves as you did in the Garden of Gethsemane and agree, “Not my will, but Yours be done.”

—

Pete Hiskey

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