



Tom Scott was born in about 1906 in Easkey, in the north of County Sligo, Ireland. He immigrated to New York, settling in the Bronx, and married the former Bridget Lernihan there in about 1932.

He taught himself to play the fiddle as a boy. He told his daughter, Theresa (Tessie) Scott Burke, that he would play in the evening and let the music echo off the hills so that he could hear and correct his mistakes. He also learned dancing steps from a traveling instructor.

In New York, he worked in a foundry job that affected his lungs and got pneumonia three times; he decided to leave the foundry job in early summer 1942. In New York, he often played in clubs on the weekends, sometimes making more on the weekends than he made all week at the foundry. Sometimes Michael Coleman, a well-known Sligo fiddler who had also immigrated to New York, would visit and the two men would stay up all night fiddling together and passing along tunes. He had his daughters

Tessie and Peggy take Irish dancing lessons from a Mr. Barnes, who taught at an establishment called the Star of Munster at 138th Street and Willis Avenue in the Bronx.

Tom Scott moved to Cleveland a few months ahead of his family and stayed at Mrs. Brown's boarding house on Hough Avenue. After the family arrived, they lived in apartments on Wade Park and Ansel roads. Scott worked on construction and became a steward, giving a job to the young Robert Sweeney, who would become a prominent attorney and public official in Cleveland. A son, Tom Scott, Jr., was born after the family moved to Cleveland, and he also took part in the family's dancing activities.

Soon after the family arrived in Cleveland in late summer 1942, Scott arranged for himself to play and his daughters, Tessie and Peggy, to dance at a picnic at Euclid Beach Park. The Scotts were announced as a group "from New York." In September 1942, Scott started an Irish dancing school at Peck's Hall. He also taught at St. Patrick's on Bridge Avenue. The only other dancing teacher in Cleveland at the time was Belle Conway who taught tap, ballet and "Irish." Reels were done in hard shoes at that time. Kevin Shanahan, whose pupils would include the future teacher Bobby Masterson, was the first to bring soft shoe reels to Cleveland a few years later. Scott's students included future dancing teacher Sheila Murphy. Unique as a fiddler and a dancing instructor, he taught dancing lessons until about 1958, when his daughter Theresa Scott Burke opened her own school, which was still going strong and producing champions, in three locations, in 2011.

He continued to play fiddle and was on a radio show every week that was broadcast from the Terminal Tower. The musicians, including Scott, Francie Keating, and Johnny McNea, were sponsored by a popular clothing store and called the "Cannon Tailor Irish Ensemble." Over the years, Tom Scott played for countless Irish dancing competitions, weddings, and other community events. After his first wife died, he married Elizabeth "Lillian" Gannon in 1946. Tom and Lillian's daughter Betty also ran her own dancing school in the 1970s, which was then taken over by Betty's student Peggy Cannon. Tom Scott died in 1988.