

**Some historical notes about Shrivenham Cricket Club written about 1972 for the
Haig organisers of the Village National Cricket Championship**

By A Clive Carter Secretary of the Club at that time.

Regenerated 13 September 2003

The early material is taken from a handwritten history of Lambourn Cricket Club by Mr. Neale Fraser, Farm Manager, Ashdown House, Lambourn. He has written 6 volumes altogether and has access to the records of the Craven family, who lived at Ashdown. Ashdown House is now National Trust property.

It is not possible to assign a date of establishment of our Club.

Lord Craven was appointed President of M.C.C. in 1840. Cricket was played in the grounds of the gentry, developing from that into the modern game. Lord Craven's relative, by marriage lived at Shrivenham: Lord Barrington. Probably the Presidency of M.C.C. was a reward for many years service to cricket, which would mean that the game had been played at Ashdown for say 10 - 20 years before 1840. Consequently, our Club is possibly up to 150 years old since it is reasonable to suppose that the Craven's team played the Barrington's team.

Lambourn Cricket Club commenced activities in the early 1840s. Their first match against Shrivenham was in 1854 resulting in the scores Lambourn 41 and 36, Shrivenham 22 and 52. The result of a return match the same year is unknown. Regular matches followed accompanied by keen rivalry. Early newspaper articles written by a Lambourn member, who received one shilling per inch, were quite biased and lengthy! In 1861, Lambourn beat Shrivenham on the grounds of Lord Barrington (presumed: cricket was played there until after the first World War). The weather was bad and the ground, situated in a glade across the lake from Beckett House (Lord Barrington's residence) was "of course very wet and heavy". The grounds known as Beckett estate are now owned by the MoD and the Royal Military College of Science is situated there. Beckett House is now the R.M.C.S. Library. For the return match at Lambourn, Shrivenham evidently recruited players from the whole area of the Vale of the White Horse because on

Wednesday July 20th 1861 we read "the Shrivenham players appeared in great force" and "so true was the round arm bowling of Kennard and Giles of Shrivenham that no great score could be made". In the Lambourn second innings T. Bew was so alarmed that he had to be given out 'Run away'. The Lambourn score was only 21 and out of 50 in their second innings, 27 were extras! Small wonder Bew ran away from the fast bowling on those bumpy old pitches. Shrivenham won by 7 wickets. Here it is noted that over arm bowling became legal in 1862.

In 1862, Shrivenham won another game at Lambourn but at the same venue later on lost, on the first innings score. There was a lengthy newspaper report about the latter match! The next match (after 1864) took place in 1868 on White Horse Hill between Lambourn under 20s and Shrivenham, which the latter won as well as the return at Ashdown. The adversaries retreated into their shells until 1877. In one of these matches J. Foard, a possible relative of T. B. (old Tom) Foard played. T. B. Foard was captain of Shrivenham from 1900-1933 and was succeeded by his son. Paul King a grandson of TB played in recent seasons but has now left the district.

In 1864 the clergy turned out in force for Shrivenham; the Reverends G. Murray, Robinson, H. Suckling, J. Ponsonby, A. Miller, G. Mackenzie, Baines and Lawrence, representing the village in two matches against Lambourn, alone.

An idea of the standard of and enthusiasm for cricket in N Berkshire at this time can be gained from the fact that a match against the odds of Lord Craven's XXII vs a United South-of-England XI took place at Ashdown on 23rd September 1869. Jupp and Lillywhite with several others who toured the U.S.A. and Canada the previous year played for the XI.

Our records before 1931 are lost, but by reference to the minutes, it is seen that H. C. E. Olliver (schoolmaster) was treasurer from 1882 - 1936. Subscriptions remained constant from 1901 - 1935. There was a financial deficiency in 1892 and 1938. 1938 was a particularly worrying year.

Until 1933, Tom Foard must have been one of Shrivenham's outstanding players. His playing days must have exceeded half a century. At the age of 60, batting No.11, he scored 39 no in a last wicket stand of 82 with T Day (45). In the same season, he took 6 for 18 to get Bampton out for 32. In an exhibition match to celebrate the gift of

the Recreation Ground as a Trust to the Parish by Lady Barrington (about 1926), old Tom bowled to A E Gilligan (actual year unknown). The first ball bowled him but he put up a brave front to face the second, which did the same. When the hat trick was performed A.E. lost patience and demanded another bowler. Apparently, Illingworth (?) drew cartoons of the scene.

Lady Barrington was made patroness of the Club, a unique honour, for her gift of the ground to the Parish. There are frequent references in the minutes to her generosity. This all took place in bad financial times and it was only a few years later when the Barringtons Estate (Beckett) was sold first to speculators then to the Army.

In the immediate pre-World War 2 years, the scene was largely influenced by the Hayward brothers E (Chippy) and R (Dick). The latter's brother-in-law, W (Bill) Sharp, then a L/Cpl. at R.E. Shrivenham engaged in building the barracks, and was also a force to be reckoned with. He was the last Shrivenham batsman to score a century in the Recreation Ground¹. This was in 1937 when he scored 111 against G.W.R. (7 shop) Swindon. Bill is now retired from the Army (Major) and although a native of Northumberland has made his home in the village. He was Chairman of the Club until the 1973 A.G.M.

The Haywards often took all 10 opposition wickets between them and on several occasions, Bill Sharp prevented a recurrence by taking the odd one or two.

In 1938, finances were poor and at a Committee meeting on March 18th 1938, Dick Hayward proposed a Duck box be started, the batsman donating 2d per duck. At the end of the season the money to be donated to the Club unless, someone scored a hundred. On September 2nd there was 7s 6d in the box and on September 3rd nothing. Dick Hayward scored 100 n.o. vs. Purton.

The Club was faced with the prospect of disbandment due to the war and the poor financial state. There had been a dispute (not the last!) between the Club and the Council in 1937, which had culminated in the grounds man being instructed to keep off the table with the horse mower. The Club then tended the table from then on. Attempts to raise funds failed but the Army who had established itself in the new Barracks were

¹ Up to the date of this note

allowed the use of the Rec. at a rent of £10 thus saving the day. Every effort to carry on was made and 33 matches were arranged for 1940.

Interest petered out in 1941. The U.S. forces had no desire to play! (Babe Ruth the baseball player was at one time a visitor here.)

After the war, a start was made in 1947. The grass was scythed from the table. E (Ted) Harvey who had started before the war became a leading light. Use was made of his knowledge of grass and horticulture. He became skipper and gave a total of 25 years service to the Club as player and Chairman.

The pre-war deficit had been transferred into a balance of over £27, but the Club were still at variance with the Council due to the bad state of the outfield. The Council were also asked to help finance the laying of a new table. This would have cost £90 for an area 30 yd. x 10 yd. Their non-committal reply caused the Club to examine alternative possibilities and was on the point of removing to another village when a change of heart developed. Fred Woodward resigned as Hon. Sec. after 18 years and the Council laid on water to the table, which assisted members in the maintenance of it. Ted Harvey's experiment with chicken manure to rejuvenate the impoverished turf only caused an alarming rate of growth of grass and whilst speaking volumes for the chicken by product did nothing to improve the turf.

The Club was ambitious however and for a while ran two XIs. Fred Woodward who had become Chairman found ill health too much and stood down. He became umpire, however. Passing years only gave rise to further concern for the table. Permission was sought to build a concrete practice wicket. The last two items were not satisfied for many years.

In 1964 Fred Woodward was made a Life Member for 40 years service, mainly off the field, for the Club. It was the first such honour since the late Tom Foard and H. C. E. Olliver. His status was short lived because in October 1965 he died. It was one of my first duties as Hon. Sec to collect towards a memorial clock erected on the Memorial Hall and facing the ground in honour of Fred².

² Still there today!

A word here about Fred would not be amiss. He was a surprising character because he received a bad ankle injury as a boy, as a result, it is believed, of being struck by a cricket ball. This injury was a permanent disability. The cure in those days was to strap the useless leg up so that a peg leg could be worn, the knee fitting into a cup. I can remember seeing him with peg leg and walking stick, not realising, all those years ago, that he had two genuine legs. Since he couldn't play he acted as scorer, then secretary, but after the war (I think) his leg was let down and the artificial one thrown out. Thus, he was able to play. He needed a runner when batting but claimed that he had hit the ball out of the ground an unsurpassed distance. He could also bowl and his dolly droppers often tempted the batsmen to surrender their wickets. In later years as umpire, he used to rest his limb by seating himself on a shooting stick donated for the purpose. His memory is also perpetuated by the annual award of a Cup bearing his name given to the person who makes the season's outstanding performance.

To return to the Club, definite steps to replace the worn out turf were made in 1965. With the aid of the Lord's Taverners backing arranged through the National Playing Fields Association, the Berkshire Education Committee and the Shrivenham Parish Council sufficient funds became available to pay for a square 30 x 33 yd. to be re-laid. The cost was £400.

For the season following the relaying of the wicket in October 1966, some home games were played on the grounds of the Royal Military College of Science. Thus, a return to the original home of cricket in Shrivenham was made. The ground now, though, was immaculate, unlike the uneven heavy surfaces of 100 years ago. It is also situated well away from the lake.

In 1968 fund raising by way of Bingo was finally established and this source has provided our Club but Tennis, Football and Royal British Legion, with a substantial income. For us it has meant the realisation of a practice net³ and wicket, the purchase of a motor roller and the replacing of two sightscreens. The Parish Council also helped to subsidise the latter.

These improvements have helped encourage youngsters, as has the coaching made available through the Wiltshire Association of Cricket Clubs.

³ Still there today

Affiliation to the new Berkshire Cricket Association and Berkshire County Cricket Club added to the Haig has helped stimulate interest. For our last two Haig matches crowds of approximately 300 were in attendance.

Some statistics

For Shrivenham

W Sharp	111 15GWR (7 Shop)	home	1937
R.Hayward	101 no vs Purton	away	1938
RE Staff (Shrivenham)	out for 14	home	1939
R.Hayward	8 for 8 15 and 52	North London Nomads (15 all out)	home 1939
R.Hayward	8 for 13 vs Purton		1939
Records 1947 - 54 are lost			
F Hambidge	9 for 2 vs Southern Electricity Board (12 all out)		1954
R.Burrough	106 wickets including 8 for 15 vs Roundway Hospital Devizes		1958
B Tubb	101 no vs Harwell away		1959
D Bradfield	8 for 22 vs Denchworth		1959
R Burrough	114 wickets		1959
Playing record	W 25, L 6, D 10.		1959
R.Burrough	100 wickets		1960
B Tubb	104 no vs Wroughton (a)		1961
F Hambidge	8 for 18 vs Old Campers and 105 wickets		1961
R Burrough	8 for 36 vs Upwey (Weymouth)		1961
F Hambidge	98 wickets		1962
Shrivenham	212 for 0 wicket vs Witney Mills (away)		1963
	E. Harvey 139 no		
	K. Wallace 62 no		
M Hall	104 vs N. Abingdon(a)		1963
F Hambidge	8 for 29 vs Westinghouse (Chippenham)		1963
K Edwards	8 for 16 vs Lambourn		1963
"	8 for 25 vs Radley		1963
K Edwards	8 for 42 vs B.R. (14 Shop)		1964
R Burrough	92 wickets (8 for 49 vs Northleach		1965
F Hambidge	11.5 overs, 3 maidens, 36 runs, 9 wickets vs Oxford West Indians		1965

Shrivenham 247 for 6 wickets dec off 41 overs vs Upwey including a seventh wicket stand of 106 in 10 overs 1966
 D Bradfield 107 no vs Stanton St. John 1967
 AJT Wothers 98 no vs Plesseys at Shrivenham 12 8 1972
 almost beating the pre-war record of W Sharp

Against Shrivenham

F Braxtom 9 for 17 for Aldbourne 1932
 W Young 100 Swindon Banks 1932
 A. Smith 9 for 45 for Purton 1935
 K. Walters 97 and 10 for 33 for Tockenham 1961
 Shrivenham 8 all out vs Childrey 1969
 Earl Shilton(Leicester) 215for 1 dec.(2nd wicket stand of 213 both batsmen 100s)1969

Honours Won

Morse Shield (run by Swindon CC)

1957 bt Royal Military College of Science
 1964 bt Tockenham
 1966 bt Loco Sports

6 a side (run by Swindon CC)

1968 Winners

Haig National Village Championship

Winners Wiltshire area 1972

Famous people to play at Shrivemhaa include the Nawab of Pataudi (59 for Balliol College in 1960) and John Snow, 23 and 2 for 24, for Cuiham College in 1961.

Present day players of Shrivenham include Fred Hambidge, 25 years experience (painter and decorator); Dick Burrough, 18 year. Service, is skipper (since 1966) fixture secretary and chief groundsman. He is the mainstay of the Club. Both Fred and Dick are bachelors. Dick is a Civil Engineer at R.M.C.S. Many of the other players are employed in the building industry, Pleeseys, Pressed Steel, school teaching and the Civil Service. We have one farmer and one soldier. The blend of brain and strength has served us very

well. We have 2 more Hayward brothers, Tony and Barry, who are not related to the earlier Haaywards. Tony is a heating engineer and Barry works for Vickers Armstrong and plays football for Devizes Town. Tony is an accomplished batsman, winning the man of the match award in the Wilts final of the Haig N.V.C. whilst Barry is a fine all rounder.

No special arrangements were made for Haig games. I felt that we stood a good chance this year as we were favoured by the draw. We let our-selves down' against Shillingstone, otherwise we would still be in with a chance. The match against Little Durnford was a very fine exhibition of village cricket and without a doubt the most exciting ever seen in the village.

I enclose some photographs of the ground as requested. If necessary, I can supply negatives.

I hope that this epistle is of interest.

AC Carter former Hon Sec