

MIDDLETON STONEY CRICKET CLUB

Memories



and Extras

Compiled in 2001 when 200 years of cricket in Middleton Park
was celebrated on Saturday, 30th. June.

A TEAM PHOTOGRAPH, 1999



Back Row L - R. Mike Simpson, Phil Shaw, John Jackman, Miles Picknett, Graham Buchholz, Anthony Cripps, Nick Thompson, Paul Wordsworth, Jimmy Roycroft (scorer)

Front Row L - R. Richard Lumb, Nick Moorman, Oliver Ross, Clive Plant (Captain), Alastair Lamb, Peter Kerkoff, Paul Hebbert

Photographs

On cover - Play in the Park, 1976
- from an Oil Painting.

Frontispiece picture - 1999 team.

After Preface - Main entrance of Park, 2001.

After Characters - Frank & Allan Rolfe

After Yorkshire Tour - Nick Thompson,
George Lamb & Nigel Cassidy.

After 1981-87 - Under 35s v Over 35s, 1982.

After The Rise of the Bar - In the bar 1986 & Outside the bar 1982

After Lifers - Nick Price umpiring.

In Appendices.

Middleton Park, C.1900.

7th. Earl of Jersey, Governor of New South Wales, 1890 - 1893.

Bicester v. Chesterton Lodge, 1900.

The Cricketing Cleric, 1911

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Acknowledgements

Much gratitude is extended to the fourteen writers who, excluding the Appendices, have produced 18 contributions. Ian Davenport is thanked for agreeing to write a Preface and he and Julia for correcting some matters. Mike Curry was asked to consult minutes to clarify facts and produced a list of members and photographs. George Lamb produced photographs. Nick and Di Thompson, forever a team, provided a photograph which includes most of today's more prominent players and corrected the spelling of some names. Jim Norman was able to help with a few factual points. Georgina Lamb gave word processing advice and my son-in-law, Giles Haynes, also assisted a great deal in the same way and made suggestions before production went ahead. Conversations with Colin Pickford, Frank Shouler, Nick Price, George and Georgina Lamb, John Livingstone and Bill McFarlan prompted ideas. The Club Committee is thanked for liking such a suggestion, whilst my wife Barbara's tolerance with the number of times I disappeared to put various thoughts and changes into print is appreciated. The Department of Cultural Studies at the Oxford Central Library provided valued access to old copies of local newspapers.

Should any reader spot any errors I offer my apologies and I hope they are not deemed of too serious a nature.

It is hoped those who read this will enjoy the content and the variety of styles and that a greater awareness of the Club and Middleton Park will enhance not only each member's devotion to the Club and the game of cricket but also the *esprit-de-corps* which one feels already exists.

Perhaps, one day, this booklet will be a resource for someone to write an official history of cricket in the Park, of which there is more to uncover, and the Club, of which there are still some gaps.

Much enjoyment has been derived bringing to fruition this memories idea, which arose at a lunch party in August, 2000 given by Richard and Di Stephenson in The Great Barn at Upper Aynho Grounds.

President's Preface

My connection with the Club commenced in 1973 when negotiating the purchase of Middleton Park on behalf of my company. I recall being asked to meet some very concerned representatives of the cricket club, Jim Norman amongst them, who were anxious to know what my attitude was towards the continued use of the cricket ground by the Club and to cricket in general. As an enthusiastic schoolboy cricketer at St. Paul's, and always a keen follower of the game, I was happy to reassure them that the future of cricket in the Park was not only safe but that I would support it in any way I could. Indeed, whilst the conversion of the mansion was taking place, we were able to modernise the pavilion by, amongst other things, laying on electricity, water and drainage and providing toilet and washing facilities. At the same time, we installed the first bar that had been the former Health Hydro's smart reception counter. This led to the club acquiring a licence to sell alcohol, which enabled it to become largely self-supporting.

In 1934 the second of the three mansions that housed the Jersey family was demolished and the present house was completed in 1938. At the time of the demolition an open club was formed to continue the use of the ground and pavilion and the traditions of country house cricket established by the Jerseys.

The earliest cricket match on the ground is recorded in a book titled "Early Club and Village Cricket" by J. Goulstone published privately in 1972. The entry reads "Middleton Stoney v Lord Jersey's Servants 1801 in Middleton Park."

In 1894 the 7th. Earl of Jersey (the present one is the 10th) became President of the M.C.C and the South African Cricket Association was founded. We understand that the first South African touring side played in the Park that year.

One of the most interesting items of cricket 'memorabilia' is the scorecard of the match in 1913 reproduced in the Appendices, which shows that the two leading googly bowlers in the world played for Lord Jersey's XI.

I have two particular memories of matches in recent years. One was the match against Natal University in 1983 when anti-apartheid demonstrators threatened to follow the side and disrupt their games or dig up the wickets. The police could not provide an overnight guard at Middleton Park but did agree to patrol by car at intervals. Thinking this might not be enough, I decided to stay overnight in my car parked on the ground. I dozed off and was suddenly awakened in the early hours by a policeman shouting, "Don't shoot! I'm only patrolling!"

During the above match umpire Jim Lake asked a new bowler his name. On being told, Jim asked "Was your father a surgeon in Italy during the war?" The boy answered "No, but my uncle was." When Jim was a spotter pilot during the war he had been shot down over Italy and it transpired that this boy's uncle had saved Jim's life!

For over ten years a side from my old school, St.Paul's, played against the Club and in one match a boy, who was the son of F. W. Neate an Oxford blue in 1961-62, scored a century. After the game, it emerged that George Lamb had played in matches with the boy's father and grandfather. George, therefore, had encountered three generations of Neates on the cricket field.

The following pages contain memories and anecdotes of cricket at Middleton Park covering the last fifty years or so, told by members and friends of the club and have been compiled, along with some older historic documentation as appendices, by Derek Marsh; he has encouraged and cajoled us into producing a most entertaining and absorbing 'tome' to mark this 200 year milestone and richly deserves our commendation and thanks.

Ian Davenport
Club President since 1974.



The
Memories

Middleton Stoney C.C. - Captain's Perception

By Clive Plant

The ground, players and members of Middleton Stoney Cricket Club combined represent a rare blend of beauty, function and form seldom found in cricket clubs anywhere in the world.

As a club we are difficult to define. We do not play in leagues, we do not play on Saturdays, we are loath to travel away from our own ground. We profess not to play to win, but for the enjoyment of the scenery, company and the simple pleasure of playing cricket well on a sunny day.

We often complain that many of the opposition sides are not strong enough, an unusual concern for league cricket clubs.

We cannot be described as playing village cricket or country house cricket. Limited over contests are not welcome at Middleton Park. This despite some opponents claiming a handsome draw where the prospects of defeat or victory have presented themselves in the dying overs of a game.

We must, therefore, be defined by the type of members we attract. Doctors, lawyers, landowners and lenders of money there may be. But auctioneers, ex-squaddies and men from food and financial industries surely do not use the same changing room. At Middleton they do, even with men from Liverpool.

Rarely does the batting order reflect circumstances or ability, rarely do any batsmen perform as prescribed by the captain. Rarely are more than eleven members willing to play.

Yet the club gains in strength each year and the opposition has been kind enough to leave us undefeated since 1999.

A rare blend of assets produces a rare cricket club. That club is Middleton Stoney Cricket Club. May the next two hundred years refine and build on those strengths for all to enjoy.

Clive has been Club Captain since 1997. He joined the club in 1993 and was Vice Captain in 1995 and 1996.

From Jim Norman

I joined Middleton Stoney Cricket Club when I attended my first Annual General Meeting in 1947. My brothers Denis and John joined at the same time. (John was later captain for a couple of years). The club was in crisis - the 9th.Earl of Jersey had sold the Middleton Park estate to Mr A. J. C. Wall. Mr Wall insisted that he had purchased the whole of the estate, lock, stock and barrel and therefore, if the club wished to use the mower which was in the shed by the pavilion, it would have to purchase it from him for the sum of £5! The club had only £1.13.6d in the kitty. As luck would have it, Fred Hodges went to the Jersey Cup Final (football) soon after the meeting and met Major. The Hon. Arthur Villiers, the second son of the 7th.Earl, who enquired after the club. As soon as he heard of the problem he gave Fred a new white five pound note to solve the club's plight.

The club won the first Harris Cup played in 1950 and again the following year. This competition could be entered by any local team - village, pub, etc. Frank Rolfe captained the club for many years but the club had many ups and downs. I remember Nick Price of Weston Manor Hotel turning up to play when he brought with him his manager and two Spanish waiters to make up the eleven! Another memory is when a captain was elected at an AGM but resigned before captaining the side in one match and then the elected vice-captain would not take over as captain. As Chairman of the club I persuaded the vice-captain to lead the side for one match and then called an Extraordinary General Meeting in order to appoint a new captain. Since then the club has had great support from captains like John Livingstone, John Deeley, Nigel Cassidy and many others who lifted the spirit of the club to make it what it is today.

I must mention Ian Davenport who has been our President for many years: without his support and generosity we might not be playing on this wonderful ground celebrating 200 years of cricket.

A few infills - all absolutely true:-

Frank Rolfe appealed three times in one over for LBW and all of them were turned down so he enquired "Why not?" The umpire replied, "If he does it again, he will be."

Arthur Coles (treasurer) reported to the AGM "The club has £1.13.6d. which is in a tin box on my mantelpiece; if anybody wants to inspect they can.

Fred Hodges announced at the same AGM that it was to be his last season as a playing member. When asked why, the reply was "You see it's me old guts."

As indicated in this article Jim Norman joined the club in 1947. He has been Chairman since 1966 taking over from Bill McFarlan.

Characters - 1947 to 1980.

By Frank Rolfe

When it was first suggested to me that I should write my memories as a Middleton Stoney player I doubted that they would amount to much, but the more I thought about it the easier it became. During my playing days I enjoyed my cricket on many fine grounds but none of them meant more to me than Middleton Park where I spent so many of my happiest times. My first game at Middleton was on 24th July, 1947, when, as a nervous 16 year old, I cycled the 3 miles from my home in Bucknell with bat and pads strapped to my handlebars. I did not trouble the scorers that day. During the next thirty-three years, until I moved to Devon, cricket at Middleton Stoney played a big part in my life. Over the years one tends to forget statistics but remember perhaps a particular game or maybe a great catch by someone. Above all though it is the characters of the game that remain uppermost in the memory and of those I shall try to write.

Some of the players at the club had, at the end of the war, played a little for Bucknell and I recall in particular Ben Coles, Fred Hodges with his windmill bowling action and Len Golder. It was Len, who, during a game at Bucknell, hit the biggest six I have ever seen. The cricket field adjoined the railway line and the ball landed in a coal truck to be lost forever. Another memory I have of dear old Len is of a match at Tusmore Park on a very fast track when Wally Varney and I were really letting it go and Len our wicket keeper was standing some 12 yards back. Only later did we find out that he never wore a box. While on that subject I remember a Married versus Singles match, these were regular fixtures in the early days, and I was bowling from the top end to Vic Gebbels. He had hooked me a couple of times to the pavilion and tried it again and missed. The pain was felt by everyone and as Vic was also not wearing a box it was a terrible blow! I don't think he ever played again.

Another great character was Percy Varney whose quick arm action gave him such pace off the wicket. The first match of the 1949 season was also a Married and Singles game and things had gone well for me. That spring my mother had packed me off to the Alf Gover School in London to sort out my batting. I learned a great deal, mainly how to avoid getting out LBW all the time. Remembering most of what I had been taught, I had reached 99 and Percy was bowling well. For several overs he kept me pegged at one end with his movement in and his immaculate length. I soon began to get anxious. At last he pitched one ball a little further up and I pushed it towards mid on and ran like hell. Percy was the first to shake my hand and said "I wasn't going to give it to you, son."

During the sixties my brother Norman joined the club and together we opened the bowling for several seasons. He did not normally bowl the outswinger, as I did, but ducked them in. Usually fielding at slip I would watch for his signal, which meant the outswinger, was coming. Several catches came my way as a result including the Chief Constable of the Oxfordshire Constabulary.

Mr and Mrs George Woodley were instrumental in getting the club going after the war. Mrs Woodley did so much behind the scenes and served the teas which in later years were to become legendary. One memory I cherish of George is of a day when he was standing as umpire at the bowler's end and the batsman hammered one back which hit George on the knee and the sight of the huge man hopping around on one leg is something I have never forgotten. There is little sympathy on a cricket field on such occasions. George's son Brian was almost as big as his father and kept wicket for several years. Being also a goalkeeper not much got past Brian and he took catches off me that were unbelievable.

Perhaps my favourite character of those days was George Gray. The thing about George was that he never practiced before the season began but would play like he had never stopped from the previous year. A fine left hand bat and slow left hand bowler he took all things so calmly; I never once saw him question a decision neither by look nor gesture. He was a great sportsman whom I greatly admired. We batted together on many occasions, our best partnership being 221 for the second wicket against Tusmore. He used to tease me by saying I always waited for the camera to click after playing a shot! It was not meant unkindly, but to alert me to the quick run. Brian Varney, Percy's son, was a good off-break bowler and also a fine bat as was Micky Golder.

Some of the teams against whom we played also had their characters. Cyril Laver of Banbury Town originals with his so slow leg-breaks always tied me in knots. Ron Randall of Long Crendon, Ron Ridgeway of Steeple Claydon and Jack Greatbatch of Tusmore were just some of the bowlers against whom I had many a battle. Clubs loved coming to Middleton to play in the wonderful park setting among the trees. Oxford Exiles was one of those that appreciated our ground, as did The Entertainers and the Thirteen Club. Although the latter was usually too strong for us we gave them a real fight on more than one occasion. Milton-under-Wychwood was a club whom we played regularly and I remember one game there when we were very lucky to be playing. All around the ground the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled but the storms left us alone. The ball swung a bit that day, I well remember!

No stroll down memory lane would be complete without recalling a few humorous events like the player who, on bending down to field the ball, split his trousers fore and aft. There was the time when my father outrageously gave me out in the 90's because, as he said later, I had been there long enough! I have not forgotten when Terry Moule's dog took a liking to my nether regions and of when Alf Wilks walked out to bat without one. Another amusing incident occurred at Fringford when my brother Norman and Graham Pidgeon both went for a high catch. Graham was a big lad and he came in from the boundary like an express train. Everyone could see what was going to happen; if anyone called I do not know, but the impact was felt all round the ground. It may have been the same match when we shot Fringford out for 31 runs on a fiery wicket. I'm afraid I rattled poor old Jim Garbett's fingers a bit on that occasion. Jim was another of those characters who served Middleton well when he later became our regular scorer. Another was Tom Lovell who came regularly to umpire. Bob Smith was a mainstay of the club for many years and worked tirelessly as secretary and treasurer.

I had two stints as captain in 1963 and again from 1971 to 1975, the year I was made a Life Member. My interest and love of cricket has never left me. I am president of our village club where we run four sides including a colts XI and under 14 and under 12 sides. My son Allan, who scored a fine hundred for Middleton at Banbury Alcan when he was 17 years old, has had to retire early from sport due to rheumatoid arthritis. My eldest daughter, Lorna, also turned out once or twice for Middleton and has always played ladies' cricket. She is now a registered cricket coach.

There are so many matches to recall, so many cricketers to remember and the days when things went in your favour or when they did not, but then that is cricket.

As indicated in these recollections Frank Rolfe was a playing member from 1947 to 1980 when he moved to Devon to continue farming. He now lives in Lewdown, Nr. Okehampton. He is a Life Member of the Club.

Frank Rolfe and his son, Allan, walking out to open an innings.



A Faux Pas

The Hon Secretary of Middleton Stoney Cricket Club in the late 1960's and early 70s was Bob Smith who lived in The Cottage, School Lane opposite to a house in which I used to spend periods of work from London. After playing no more than one or two games for the club Bob met me in School Lane and asked me if I would become a Vice President. I was absolutely astonished and declined telling him I would only accept when I had done enough for the club to warrant it. It was only later that I realised how naïve I had been. Let me explain. For many years I had belonged to Eton Manor Rugby Football Club and became a member of its committee which appointed Vice-Presidents and they were always members or associates who had made an outstanding contribution or had a longstanding special connection with the club. It was therefore considered an honour. With that experience I wrongly and, have since realised embarrassingly, thought Bob was honouring me without justification. The reality was soon brought home to me that he wanted only to add another person who would give a regular annual donation - it was my money he was after! A year or so afterwards he invited me again and I accepted.

My one and only...

The occasion was the last game of the 1973 season, away and against Swinbrook. The captain was Frank Rolfe who chose me to open the batting with him. I had done this once before at an away game, I think just over the border in Buckinghamshire, when we put on a stand of 87. When I was out Frank and extras had scored 73 and I think he went on to score a century. Frank was the only person in those days who was likely to score a 50 or a ton. However, I digress, back to the Swinbrook game. They had a particularly fast aggressive opening bowler and early in our innings (we batted first) I attempted a square cut, the ball caught a thick edge of the bat, lobbed over the wicket keeper's head and went for four. At the end of the over Frank joined me in between wickets to tell me the bowler had called me "A jammy four eyed b.....d" (Yes, I did wear spectacles!). Rather than annoy me this seemed to inspire me. Certainly I was determined I was going to try to stay in (as I had in the 87 stand) and try not be out to the fiery opening bowler! The end of the story is that I stayed in until our declaration, scored 53 not out which was my one and only 50 for Middleton which included two sixes; another first for me with the club, albeit hit over a very short boundary! I often wonder how that bowler felt after the match and remain indebted to Frank for telling me what he had said.

We only drew the game but honours were very much in Middleton Stoney's favour declaring at 148 for 6 against the oppositions 67 - 7. Frank Rolfe scored 41 and Richard White had a good knock as well scoring a very fast 35 and, to boot, with his slows finished with 3 for 0 off 5 overs.

At the next committee meeting, because of the ungentlemanly conduct, comments and language of the Swinbrook team it was agreed to drop the fixture and, to my knowledge, I don't think the club has ever played them again. Incidentally, it was reminiscing about this game with Nick Price, who played in the match and was a member

of the 1973 committee and listening to some of Nick's interesting stories (coupled with a conversation about the club with George and Georgina Lamb), that initiated the idea for this booklet.

Mixing with the best

Four internationals - three English and one West Indian - and a County XI captain who was later to be Manager of an English touring side were guests of the club at a Cricket Forum in Middleton Stoney village hall in between 1972 and 1974. They were John Jameson, Bob Willis, David Brown, Alvin Kallicharan and Alan Smith all of the Warwickshire CCC, the latter being the captain of that season. It was a question and answer session with Jim Norman chairing the occasion. Although it was quite a coup getting these players along I seem to remember the attendance by club members was not too great but thanks to a healthy contingent of invited members of The Oxford Downs Cricket Club the audience was of a reasonable size. I believe we entertained the guests to dinner in The Jersey Arms afterwards. It was an interesting evening and something, which was a little different in the Club's calendar of events.

Juniors

In more recent years Charlie Ross did a splendid job organising some junior cricket, but I wonder how many members are aware that in 1973 and 1974 the club also ran some junior cricket. It consisted mostly of a series of pick up games built around Frank Rolfe's son Allan and his daughter Lorna and the Brock brothers, Kevin and Garry. At the time there were 11 boys aged between 10 and 15 in the village. Not all were interested but through Allan Rolfe a number of Bicester schoolboys were encouraged to come along. In the first game villagers Richard Gooderson, Jeremy Pigeon, Paul Amos, Patrick Gaulker and Clifford Cheriton took part.

This experiment culminated in an evening match at Under 16 level against Brackley Cricket Club in Brackley on Thursday, 8th. August, 1974. By that time except for Kevin Brock and Paul Amos the Middleton boys had fallen by the wayside and although they were selected for the team Kevin was ill on the day and Paul was not available. However, the Bicester boys enabled us to field a reasonably strong team captained by Allan Rolfe and included a very talented and stylish batsman, Linden Herring, whom I always hoped would continue playing for Middleton. But, alas on leaving school he joined Bicester C.C. with whom he still plays. The other players were Stephen Hawke, Nick Tolley, Ian Cox, Terry Price, Lindsey Higdon, Richard Stockhill, Charles Stockhill, Nick Wilkins and Gary Parker. I name them in case any members recognise them as cricketers who have continued playing in the Bicester area, perhaps for Bicester itself. Middleton Stoney won the match.

The following season we were unable to conjure up sufficient interest through village boys and the Bicester boys left school and went in different directions. Only Paul Amos, Garry Brock and Allan Rolfe played fairly regularly for the club after that.

A wash out

As members undoubtedly know the cricket ground is owned by the owners of Middleton Park (i.e. the main House and the approx.50 acres around it). On my arrival to live in Middleton Stoney the Park was owned by the National Provincial Bank who used it as a conference centre. The Director was Donald Platt who was President of Middleton Stoney Cricket Club. It was traditional, it seemed, in those early 1970s to have a match between the President's XI and the Club.

When I was at school, The Coopers' Company's School, I played cricket with Fred Rumsey who later played for England as a fast bowler on two or three occasions when Fred Trueman was not available through injury. I asked Donald Platt if he would like me to try to get Fred Rumsey to play for his Presidents XI. Donald liked the idea and, to my delight, Fred accepted to play and to join Barbara and me at home for lunch prior to the game. Although it was raining Fred turned up and we duly had a most enjoyable lunch. But, the rain did not cease and the match had to be cancelled. However, Donald Platt kindly invited Fred and me, and possibly one or two others (I confess I cannot remember now) into Middleton Park and we had a most agreeable hour or so drinking in the lovely ambience of one of its sitting rooms, a room that was once the library when it was owned by Lord Jersey. We were sad though that the match had to be put off and that we did not see the ex-international, Derbyshire and Somerset player in action against the Club.

Temporary ground worries

National Provincial Bank amalgamated with Westminster Bank to form National Westminster Bank. Westminster Bank had a Conference and Training centre at Heythrop, Nr. Enstone. The newly formed bank did not require two conference centres so it decided to close and sell Middleton Park. During the preparations for the sale National Westminster were making noises that they did not want to sell with any sitting tenants. Although the Cricket Club were not exactly tenants it was felt that the club almost certainly had a form of 'sitters' rights' and therefore it decided to sit tight and to make no moves to vacate the ground. In case matters became difficult it was thought wise to put right an overlooked past omission and to produce a set of Club Rules.

As I was the Club's Hon.Secretary at the time and had in the past written a Club Constitution for my rugby club, I volunteered to put a proposal for the committee's consideration. A set of 19 rules was proposed - three were amended and one omitted. Hence a set of 18 rules was established. While writing this I was told this Constitution is still used.

Middleton Park was duly sold to a property company with the Cricket Club still continuing to play. After something like six months the property company sold Middleton Park to the Moule family - father and son - who turned it into a Health Hydro. Sadly Mr Moule, snr died quite soon after this and Terry Moule became President of the Club. He is now a Life member. Some newer members will have met him when he was guest speaker at the Club dinner in the Jersey Arms in 1996.

Derek Marsh played his first game for the club in 1969, was on the committee in the early 1970s and Hon Secretary at least in 1973 and 1974. He is still a Vice-President.

The Yorkshire Tour and other memories.

By Mike Curry

"Who's going to clean the ladies loos?" This became John Livingstone's mantra and almost his creed at Middleton and ushered in a new era where those that did the essential work to the ground and pavilion, played the most cricket. The era lasted from 1975 to 1979 and attracted many new members (e.g. Johnny Johnston, John Charles Kelly, George Lamb, Blyth Thompson, Gary and Kevin Brock and Paul Amos) and was one of great development. Money was raised from a Fayre on the ground with John's tombola and sale of works being particularly productive, Nick Price's hundred club making a very valuable contribution. Money raised by these great efforts enabled the pavilion to have the creaky wooden floor replaced by hard core and cement, and then the one changing room was converted into two changing rooms with block partitioning. The floor was made by the Herculean efforts of Geoff Rawnsley who mixed all the cement, practically single-handed. Ian Davenport contributed a couple of stone sinks and more significantly a bar. Then the stockroom was built onto the back at the huge price of £100, with contributions of the tin roof from Jim Norman and the steel door from Turneys.

The needle match was against the Downs, where so many local farmers played (e.g. John and Mike Deeley, Frank Shouler), and how nice it was that they were later attracted to Middleton and joined us. We beat them on more than one occasion with great innings from Nick Thompson (88) and Brian Varney (53), I remember. What of the fielding of Minty? A man with a prodigious throw but who didn't always coordinate his hands so well. I recall him fielding at long leg, for the Downs, when Nick T hit a lofted ball straight at him but slightly short. Minty did the wise thing, moved backwards allowing the ball the bounce, then missed it and it clattered into the old wooden pavilion for 4. His teammates were not impressed but Minty defused the situation with his famous humour by retrieving the ball and returning to the pitch with a limp and a shout of "Don't worry about me, I'm not badly hurt".

On another occasion at the Downs, Middleton was battling for a draw with Mike Curry scoring few (as usual) but staying there, until an appeal went up in the evening gloom. Mike glared at the bowler's umpire thinking he was not caught behind, but then both umpires put their finger up - out twice off the same ball - caught behind and stumped. There's no justice.

Cricket was changing. League cricket was becoming popular and the village sides were moving to Saturday league cricket and finding difficulty raising sides to play Middleton on Sunday. We lost fixtures to many old friends - Long Crendon, Westcott, Milton under Wychwood, Great Tew, North Aston and Rousham, for example. Our policy was always to drop sides that had a clashing league or cup fixture on the day they had agreed to play Middleton, and find someone who wanted to come. This policy has been successful. We have moved with the times.

Who will forget George Lamb's catch at long off (not quite his only catch for the club)? Mike C was bowling his mixture of off-breaks and long hops. The batsman from Bill Denson's XI drove the ball hard and uppish. It did not disturb the bowler's hands but continued to gain speed and height towards George on the boundary. All eyes were on George. Both his hands went up in a surrender position and we thought all was lost. Then the ball struck his extended left hand and stuck! Another wicket down. As we went in for the tea interval, George said "You know, Skipper,

there are some occasions when one hand is better than two". Not in the coaching manual!

Other brief memories are worth jotting down. In 1976 there was a Doctors against Farmers match, with the Bicester doctors fielding 9 players and an umpire (Drs House (umpire), Murphy, Macleod (ex Cambridge wicket keeper), Gill, Evans, Curry, Tulloch, Smith, Stephenson and Talbot. At one point Alastair Tulloch was hit on the ankle by a sharp drive and cried out in an Aberdeen accent, "I'd forgotten how hard a cricket ball was."

Who remembers Peter McKaggie's golden over of 5 wickets, all of them bowled? And in the same season Mike Shires (Oxford Univ fame) leg side stumping that was so quick that the umpire hadn't seen it? And lastly, Paul O'Donnell (Ireland full back) bowling so fast and short that Mike C said that he wasn't a recognised batsman - perhaps he shouldn't have opened the batting then?

Nick Price (aka Colin Cowdrey) had a great influence. He hosted the annual dinners at Weston Manor Hotel at a ludicrously low price. These dinners were always well attended by some 98 in the main hall and another 8 in the balcony. Each dinner was followed by 4 speeches - a visitor proposed the health of the club, the captain replied, a member would propose the health of our guests and then one of them would reply. We had some memorable guests - Godfrey Evans, Pom Pom Fellowes-Smith and Joe MacPartlan to name but three with international status. Nick invented the barbecue and with it the post cricket entertaining ethos of the club, ably led by his extrovert style. Skittles used to be a regular feature on the edge of the square, with Nick running a book and taking fivers off visitors to go into the club funds. The Poole-in-Warfedale team were so impressed by his efforts that they invited us to play there the next year - which links me neatly to the Yorkshire tour.

The club's first tour that we know of was arranged by Mark Miller, in June 1980. We were to visit our new friends Poole, and they arranged two other fixtures. Thirteen of us set off in convoy - Ian Gibson, Nigel Cassidy, Tom Coker, Nick Thompson, Geoff Rawnsley, Graham Smith, George Lamb, Les Watkins, Mark Miller, Mike Curry, Graham Candy, John Markham and Stuart Tarratt - quite a batting line up Pity about there being no bowlers! We were booked into the Pately Bridge Hotel for three nights, and what nights they proved to be.

The first fixture was against the Olicanians at Ben Rhydding. We did well - a creditable 179 with good knocks from Graham S (49) and George L (41). We then rattled them, all 10 of them, for 130 with Nigel taking 6 for 41. This win was made by an inspired piece of wicket keeping. Their opening bat on 42 prodded the ball into the vacant silly mid on position and then called for a quick one. Graham ran round from behind the stumps and did a superb left-footed kick into the bowler's hands behind the stumps who took off the bails - run out! Graham once played football for Oxford University.

John Markham exemplified our style. He volunteered to umpire and there was a loud appeal for LBW. John's finger went up, the batsman started to trudge off, when the bowler, probably Nigel, said that it had pitched outside the leg stump. Amid the giggling, Markham called the batsman back with "I say, you're not out after all. How do you expect me to know the rules?"

That night we celebrated and celebrated and celebrated. Graham Candy was the first to bed - he'd had a busy day, the rest of us tried hard to drink the hotel dry, much encouraged by the

landlord and his wife, who astonishingly took to Miller. Silly games were played and eventually bed called, except for Miller and Gibbo who together with John Markham were placed in the annex - a caravan tucked away in the grounds. Markham did what he's good at and slept, leaving the other two to play poker and make riot. The neighbour was not impressed, so got up at about 5 am and remonstrated with Mark, assisted by a shotgun! Mark decided he was not pleased with the position of the caravan, so moved it to the front of the hotel, onto a show lawn, by hand. The next morning some heads were thick but not Mark's. When asked by the pretty waitress whether he would like tea or coffee for breakfast, he said "Pint of Guinness, please", and got it. Thus the rot set in.

The second fixture against Poole was sadly rained off, and rained off in a drizzly way that meant we stayed in their pavilion and looked at the rain, hoping for a clearance. Skittles were played, cards came out and Markham slept.

The third day we went to play Otley on the hallowed ground, where the Yorkshire 2nd XI play, adjacent to the Rugby ground. We were warned about not stepping here and not having spikes too long, in case we disturbed the turf. We were not ready for this seriousness. We had no bowlers at all - Mark and Nigel were injured in an alimentary way and could only manage 7 overs between them. Fortunately, we lost the toss, and were put into bat and Nigel and Gibbo did creditably with 35 and 34 apiece. The rest weren't worth mentioning and the total was a poor 127. They sent out two youngsters to open their batting, who batted very correctly and gradually knocked off the runs. They were assisted by our out-cricket. When on 50 or so, one of the 15 year olds, gently lobbed a shot to George at extra cover. George was taking the game seriously too, and had dressed in full fig - MCC cap, sweater and cravat! George went forward to take the easy catch; the ball missed his hands, and hit him on the chest before falling to the ground. George was suitably miffed and uttered loudly "Oh, Christ!" A remark, which just about summed it up.

During the game, Mark had to leave the field on several occasions, for reasons that would only be of interest to a gastroenterologist. Curiously, when he came back onto the field, the clubhouse emptied of the 50 or so spectators. We never explained it, or did we? After the game we had tea because we didn't bat long enough to take tea between innings. A good Yorkshire tea complete with tales of their celebrated cricketers. One involved Geoff Boycott, who was currently playing for England, but was not flavour of the month there. He had turned up one hour late to a benefit game and brought his girlfriend. They took tea, and Boycott was asked, "Would your mother like tea as well?" We then retired to the bar and performed better than we had on the field. But, we shocked the Yorkshire men. We had arranged a fine system for dropped catches, swearing, run outs and so on. These were announced by Mark, and fivers and tenners put into the hat with some glee and abandon. We southern smoothies, who couldn't play cricket and threw brass about, did not impress the Yorkshiremen. It was a collection for the club funds, after all. Played two, won one, lost one. That's all right, isn't it?

No memories could be complete without mentioning the fun and joy my family have had in the Park. All remember it with great affection as a childhood well spent.

Mike Curry joined in 1974, has been Secretary since 1978 and was Captain in 1979 and 1980.

Three Yorkshire Tourists

After the result against
Otley - wanting to visit
the cemetery!

Nick Thompson



George
Lamb



Nigel
Cassidy

A South African Perspective

By Blyth Thompson

The Middleton Stoney Cricket Club tie which hangs among other sporting mementos of the past reminds me of some of the happiest days I ever spent. M.S.C.C. seemed to epitomize, in a quiet unostentatious way, the best kind of English Country Cricket-those lovely summer days in such beautiful surroundings which Rupert Brooke, or Yeats, with his "bee-loud glade", could have enshrined in a marvellous poem. There was the keenness of the contest itself along with the wonderful, friendly sportsmanship: and, afterwards, the camaraderie over the unique taste of a pint of English bitter and Georgina's tasty barbecue to stay the pangs of hunger amid the comfortable smell of linseed oil and cricket kit. Often, there was the presence of Ian and Julia Davenport (better informed than most, at least about my country!) and other interesting people from various professions from whom one could always learn something of value that was different.

I had occasion to come to England in 1975 so I bought a nice house in Kirtlington near my old Alma Mater, Oxford University, where I was attending a course in International Relations and doing some work for the South African Government. Next to my house was a disused cricket ground that it occurred to me to try to revive but then I learned about M.S.C.C. and fell in love with Middleton Park the moment I saw it.

Apart from the beautiful, rural setting and so many charming features like the chapel, there was the historical association with South Africa. The early Springboks used to be hosted there by Lord Jersey at the commencement of international tours of the British Isles. So I wasted no time in getting Mike Curry, the then secretary, to sign me on. Later I also proposed my old friend, George Lamb, who stayed with me for a while before we found him the house in Little Chesterton that he bought from Audrey Wrinch. I was delighted that Mike and Fridie's daughter, Eleanor, came to South Africa with my Goddaughter, Vanessa Lamb a few years ago.

In the 70s' the square was such that the ball kept low which suited me as an opening bat of only average height because I was able to play scoring shots off the back foot more easily. But I usually did better with the ball bowling leg breaks and top spinners in away games than I did at Middleton Park because I used to rely heavily on flight and bounce to get wickets.

For the most part we were pretty competitive at that time and we had very enjoyable matches home and away under the captaincy of Frank Rolfe and John Livingstone.

On one occasion we had a single wicket competition at Middleton Park to raise funds for charity which was a red letter day for me. There was a betting system, the favourite being a county player from Northants whose name I have unfortunately forgotten. At 47 I was a rank outsider and I think my son William, then a little fellow, at Wicken School in

Buckinghamshire got long odds betting on me. As far as I can remember I managed to reach the final with a caught and bowled, a stumping and a dicey lbw, none of which left me with too many runs to make. Then I met this county fellow who hit the first three balls of my first over for two, four and six and then smacked the fourth straight and hard along the ground. It hit my outstretched boot as I followed through then stopped just beyond me. He thought it had gone on and started to run. I was able to pick it up and throw down the wicket at the bowler's end that I could only just see over his shoulder. Even so the twelve runs took a lot of getting against his accurate medium pacers and I only just made it in the last over with one ball to spare. William went back to school with a pocket full of tin, no doubt to boast about his daddy's fluke victory. I still have the trophy that I would be happy to donate to M.S.C.C. as a floating trophy for a similar annual event.

In 1976 I came back to my home in the South African sun.

This led to another happy event in that I came over to England in 1981 with the Inanda Cricket Team. We stayed at the hotel in Middleton Stoney where we had a lot of fun, inter alia with the well endowed barmaid BJ, and played a strong side that George had put together. Russell Edean, a former South African test cricketer, who must have been every bit of 60 at the time, made a chanceless century for George's XI in that match and there were a lot of other characters in the team.

I am now 72. I am pleased to say South Africa has reentered the Commonwealth which is what I was concerned with and I have taken to golf as my major sporting pastime. I never thought I would meet a lady who would supplant my old Gray Nicholls scoop or my Ray Cook putter in my affections but I have and her name is Wendy, and she is British. We are to be married on 14th November 2000 and, if ever we come back to England, I would like to live near Middleton Park which I recommended to my friend Kendall Brooke, who lives there in the summer. Some of the greatest friendships begin with travel and sport, especially cricket, and I do hope M.S.C.C. will strive to maintain the South African connection. I hope my boys William and Dendy will play cricket at Middleton Stoney and encourage other South Africans to come along. I intend to arrange a cricket cum golf tour to South Africa for M.S.C.C. that I hope will be the first of many and I hope to keep in touch until the Great Umpire gives me out.



RANDOM MUSINGS CONCERNING MIDDLETON PARK

by **George Lamb**

Playing member since 1976; Fixture Secretary since 1986.

"The human species, according to the best theory I can
form of it, is composed of two distinct races,
the men who play cricket, and the men who don't."
with apologies to
Charles Lamb (1775-1834)

My first visit to Middleton Park was in late April 1976. My old friend Blyth Thompson from South Africa and I had been invited to a net practice prior to the start of the season and to meet the Club Secretary, so we were on our best behaviour! After an initial hiccup in the form of a "wiggling" from the Captain, John Livingstone for parking too near to the front of the pavilion, we had an enjoyable net, met a few of the members including Mike Curry (Secretary) and wound up taking ale in the Jersey Arms.

My first impression was puzzlement that such a truly lovely ground and pavilion should be at the disposal of a small and unassuming village cricket club. But then, as I started to play regularly and make friendships, I discovered the interesting history of the place and the importance of the Jersey family connection. In those days the wicket was under-prepared and could present considerable danger to a batsman confronted by genuine pace. Fortunately this didn't happen often although the clubs we played against had to endure a weekly 'going over' dished out by our extremely fast bowler, David Steele. Having such a valuable player should normally have resulted in our being frequent winners, but our batting was in the habit of collapsing and our fielding, with one or two exceptions, notably David Savins - as good an outfielder as I have seen in club cricket - was distinctly sub-standard. Nevertheless, the regular players of those days - Johnnie Johnston, Nick Price, Les Watkins, Geoff Rawnsley, Gary Brock, Frank Rolfe, Brian Varney, Richard White, together with the names above and myself - blended well as a team and we had many exciting low scoring matches.

After playing just a few games at the start of the 1977 season, Georgina and I returned to Africa after my secondment to Barclays Overseas Development Corporation Limited in London. For me, I was about to embark on some of the most enjoyable cricket of my life playing in Botswana and South Africa but eventually the 'Colonial' part of my career came to an end in mid-1978 when I was appointed to a new job in London.

I immediately resumed at Middleton where I had left off and found that in my absence John Livingstone had hung up his boots, and the new skipper was Mike Curry. In the course of 1978 and in the following few seasons a number of new players started to take the field for MSCC. A few names come to mind: John Deeley, Nick Thompson, Mark Miller, Tom Coker, Charlie Ross, Nick Adams (alias 'brother-in-law'), Paul Wordsworth, Nigel Cassidy, Phillip Minty, Andrew Box, Ian Brent-Smith, Peter Clements, Andrew Smith, Jeremy Brown, Mike Simpson, our present Captain, Clive Plant, and of course our Zimbabwean 'professional' Robin Ford - straight from fighting in the bush against Mugabe's terrorists. Robin, or better known as 'Fordie', was a useful all-round cricketer but his real claim to fame was the unending stream of attractive young ladies that

accompanied him to Middleton Park each weekend. Where he met them all was a mystery but as many turned out to be air hostesses the story went around that he patrolled the 'arrivals' area at Heathrow with some gem of a 'chat up line' that clearly worked a treat! One turned out to be an Eskimo Bank Manager, and on another occasion when he arrived with two (Greeks) they obligingly danced on the bar counter shedding garments as they went! Another southern African was Ian Gibson, a tobacco farmer from Rhodesia as it then was. Ian was in his early twenties and over here to complete his agricultural training with Jim Norman. Powerfully built, he bowled at a brisk pace and his reputation with the bat rested on his ability to produce huge straight sixes. Once, when he was on 98, I strolled down the wicket to remind him how near he was to his century. I was sure he hadn't noticed. 'Just take a little care Ian' said I 'and we'll have a double jug on you later'. I needn't have bothered. The next delivery met with the full swing of Ian's bat and a colossal skyer soared upwards only to be caught on the boundary! Sadly, Ian and his wife Moraig are now having to face the full rigours of the Zimbabwean Government's vindictive and murderous land grab tactics.

The Club has been particularly well served by certain senior members. Here I have in mind 'the three Jims'. The late Jim Garbett scored for many decades before passing on a couple of years ago at the age of 94. At his funeral, there was a good turn out from the club and a wreath sent by his bookmaker - a nice touch I thought. Then there was the late Jim Lake who umpired in harness with our present scorer, Brigadier Jim Roycroft. Fine umpires both. Once when I was batting and standing next to Brig. Jim at the non-striker's end, the ball came back up the pitch like a bullet from a hard-hit straight drive. There was no time for Jim to take evasive action and the ball cannoned into him hitting his leg below the knee before careering on to the long-off boundary. Our opponents, none of whom knew about his war-time amputation, stared in disbelief as he nonchalantly signalled four to the scorer - the only damage sustained being a dent in the metal! Coming off the field for tea, and in reply to an enquiry from one of the fielders as to how his leg was, Jim was heard to say, "Well, it's not as good as the other one"!

Of the above names none has had a greater influence on the Club than Nick Thompson (alias 'The Doctor'). About 1980 the late Maurice Honey, the Groundsman at Christchurch College was invited to advise us about what needed to be done to our square. This he did, and from that encounter is dated the long and gradual improvement in the quality of our playing surface. This labour of love has been virtually entirely the work of Nick whose dedication to 'the cause' has been unremitting. He and Di richly deserve the honour the Club has recently bestowed of granting Life Membership.

Dating from about the same time is our tradition of regular Barbeques. Not only has this provided much needed evening sustenance over the past two decades, but bar profits have been greater than they would otherwise have been and the Club's reputation for conviviality has been firmly established. For at least half of the twenty years, Georgina cheerfully dispensed Peter Goss's best bangers, burgers and steaks, and on one occasion when she was delayed, the famous film actor, the late great David Tomlinson was heard to enquire in his inimitable fashion - 'where's my dah'ling barbeque lady'!

Another feature of the early 1980's (sadly discontinued) was the annual Ladies Match. Various ways were devised to make the contest exciting, ranging from batting or bowling the other way round for the chaps, to the use of a specially narrowed bat. When the ladies

batted there were always ready volunteers for the close short leg positions, although why Charlie Ross should have required two short legs is anyone's guess! Without doubt Linda Deeley, with an arm like Jonty Rhodes, was the best lady fielder.

The eighties also saw several Club tours involving visits to Devon, Wales, Yorkshire and Holland. These followed the traditional pattern of club cricket tours - carefree cricket, following by intensive socializing, fuelled by an abundance of ale in the local pub. This pattern was slightly altered in Amsterdam by the absence of proper ale and anything remotely resembling what we know as a pub, but MSCC is nothing if not adaptable and full advantage was taken of the local Heineken brew and various stage performances of a cultural nature for which Amsterdam is worthily famous. One of these involved a large Caribbean gentleman wearing a wrist-watch and a back-to-front baseball cap who deftly manipulated a nubile young lady who claimed that it was her birthday, with volunteer members of the audience mounting the stage to light birthday candles! This performance lacked the elegance and gracefulness of a Fontein/Nureyev duo, but the large West Indian assured us afterwards that for sheer job satisfaction there was nothing to beat it!

Every Club tends to undergo change and MSCC is no exception. Looking back from a perspective of a quarter of a century, one can see that the present make up of the Club includes a larger proportion of 'younger' players who play to a higher standard. There are also many more children to be seen happily playing on a Sunday afternoon than there were in the early eighties or nineties. Younger players, younger wives, busier working schedules during the week, the increasing frustrations of present-day commuting - all these things have brought about a curtailment of the regular late night after match revelry which characterized the 'Deeley years' and afterwards the vintage captaincy seasons of Messrs. Cassidy and Ross. Any account of that period in the Club's history, however brief, could not possibly be attempted without paying tribute to the singing duo of Messrs. Ross and Wordsworth, whose range of vocal performance was (and still is) near to being indescribable. Fuelled by copious quantities of ale, served in those days by our two lady Vice Presidents - Linda Deeley and Caro McFarlan, Charlie and Paul would go through their repertoire with zest, the rest of us loudly supplying the chorus and the requisite hand actions! As this was an almost weekly occurrence their fame spread rapidly and with it the Club's reputation for friendliness and hospitality.

I suppose it was partly because of that enviable ethos that the Club attracted a number of unusual characters, not all of whom are remembered for their cricketing ability. One such was the late Jeremy Mason, son of the famous BBC script writer Edward J. Mason (of 'Paul Temple' fame,) and a thespian in his own right having had a part in the old TV soap 'Crossroads' Always immaculately turned out, Jeremy was a fairly regular player for a few seasons and living proof of the Club's time-honoured custom of not selecting the team on merit. Some judge batsmen by the number of their runs, others by the manner of their making. By either criterion Jeremy was easily (how can this be put kindly?) the least able cricketer ever to appear at Middleton Park, but he cared a great deal about being seen to be trying his best. This was one of the reasons why he was so popular - the others mainly having to do with his epic performances in the bar, and the undeniable fact that he was an exceedingly nice chap. He was never called upon to bowl and only occasionally, usually as a result of a snick off the edge, did he trouble the scorer! But to behold Jeremy

in action in the field was to appreciate his commitment to the game, He knew only too well that he could not rely on his hands to stop a ball struck in his direction, and he therefore chose instead to lie down in its path and let the ball hit him! He would then scramble up and somehow get his return back roughly in the right direction. Sadly Jeremy died whilst still young. At his funeral, the service commenced, and afterwards his coffin disappeared from view, to the strains of Flannigan and Allen singing 'In the Blue, Blue Mountains of Virginia, on the Trail of the Lonesome Pine' - his regular 'party piece' which he liked to sing late in the evening in his deep bass voice standing on a chair. There was not a dry eye to be seen.

Nowadays, we are a 'cricket club that does a bit of drinking' rather than the other way round - but none the worse for that. If occasional excesses there be, they are a little muted compared with the past, except perhaps for the Players Dinner at the end of the season which still retains serious potential for mega hangovers the next day. The Club has always been, and remains a happy club, and freer than any I have known of internal disharmony. Much of this happy state is due to the unusual degree of continuity the club has enjoyed in the running of its affairs. Ian Davenport as President, and Jim Norman as Chairman have been at the helm since before I joined the club, and John Livingston, either as Captain or Treasurer, also. Mike Curry as Secretary and myself as Fixture Secretary have been in place for many years and as already mentioned, Nick Thompson's contribution over two decades has been truly monumental. It is doubtful if any other cricket club in Oxfordshire could boast a comparable record. Add to this the enormous input of a number of wives in so many different ways from tea making to the barbeque, to operating the bar and to spring cleaning the pavilion, and one begins to appreciate why Middleton Park has been such a happy place for such a long time.

There have been many exciting games on the ground and the one, which stands out in my memory, was the 1981 all-day fixture in which I raised a side to play against the Inanda Cricket Club of Johannesburg. At that time it was unfashionable to play against a South African touring side, and exactly a week before our match the wicket at the Parks in Oxford had been dug up and saturated with oil during a three day game between a combined Oxford and Cambridge XI and a Sri Lankan touring side. It was thought that Tamil Tiger demonstrators had been at work and as a result of this, we had an anxious discussion about the possibility of the anti-apartheid protestors taking a leaf out of their book and wielding their spades at Middleton Park! In the end Ian Davenport suggested that he should act as guardsman, pitch a tent on our square the day before the match and sleep there overnight! We took this offer quite seriously but as there had been no publicity about our game it was thought we might get away with it without troubling the President! The game ended in a high scoring draw, and my side, gathered from players, with whom I had played at home and overseas, and including two test cricketers, narrowly failed to get the 233 to win, - this despite a marvellous century (125 run out) by the famous South African opening batsmen Russell Endean.

And so, at the opening of a new millennium, we celebrate two centuries of the great game on the green sward of Middleton Park. There cannot be many happier or lovelier places to be on a sunny summer afternoon. Someone writing a hundred years ago would probably have said much the same sort of thing and my hope is that someone in another hundred years from now will feel able to honestly express the same sentiment.

1981 - 1987

By The Skipper

Middleton Stoney C.C. has certainly given me some of the more pleasurable hours of my life. 1981 - 1987 were memorable years for me as I had the privilege of being 'The Skipper.' On reflection, I wish I had kept a record of all the matches won, lost, etc., but to me they are only statistics and wouldn't measure the amount of fun we had during matches and in the bar afterwards.

Our first tour was in 1982 to Devon; Linda had to delay our wedding for 24 hours as we were all enjoying ourselves at St.Giles-in-the-Wood in true club spirit.

We toured Devon again in 1983 to renew old acquaintances. I have to record a terrific match against Onix of Natal; I'm sure some of that side would have played for South Africa as they certainly bowled fast enough!

In '84 we made our first trip to Talybont on Usk where there were memorable singing evenings, ably led by a young Charlie Ross.

Inanda, RSA, also returned to play one of the only two innings games at Middleton Stoney (In those days M.S. had difficulty lasting out in all day games!) At lunch-time we were 76 - 7 so we declared (they were not amused). They went in and declared at 153 - 4. I was then back in control; we declared at 102 - 7 leaving them 26 to chase in the remaining 4 overs! It was far better than a beer match! That particular day I had two minor county players in my side, namely Nigel Cassidy and Richard Pineo and after I had declared Richard uttered a classic "do you think we've got enough?" They got 25!

That year we also beat our old friends Oxford Downs by 7 wickets.

In 1985 we went overseas touring to Amsterdam - played 3, lost 3.

In 1986 we had 40 playing members, which was a record in the club's history. Sadly many matches that year were rain affected.

There are far too many characters for me to thank and mention in the 1980s but Jeremy Mason and Nigel Casidy certainly played a huge part.

When we celebrate 200 years of cricket in Middleton Park and one has been a small part of it, it has indeed been a privilege.

"The Skipper" John Deeley joined in 1978 or 1979, was captain from 1981 to 1987 and is still a member.

1982 - Under 35s versus Over 35s.



Back Row L - R:- Frank Shouler, Les Watkins, George Lamb, Michael Richards, Simon Murdoch, John Livingstone, Geoff Rawnsley, Simon Preston, Robin Ford.
Middle Row L - R:- Greg Whales, Jim Garbett, Ian Brenu-Smith, Mark Miller, Gary Brock, Stuart Tarrant, Nick Williams, J. Greenwood, John Tracy-Kelly, Jim Lake.
Front Row L - R:- Tom Coker, Nick Price, Mike Curry, John Deeley (Club Captain), John Markham, Blyth Thompson, Nick Thompson, Aynalie Ford and a friend.

Jim Garbett 1903 - 1998 by Jimmy Roycroft

Jim Garbett, who for over 30 years was scorer at Middleton Stoney Cricket Club, was born on 12th. November, 1903 in the Old Kent Road, London. When he was 4 months old his family moved to Bicester where he remained ever since. I mean that almost literally as he had only been out of the county on two occasions: once on a day trip to the sea-side with his sister and again on the Club's tour of Wales, when, incidentally, not a ball was bowled for three days because of inclement weather.

Jim worked at RAF Upper Heyford as a storeman. His first job was a "reserved occupation" during the war, so he did not serve in the His Majesty's Forces, but was a member of the Home Guard.

He was passionate about two things, cricket and betting on the horses. He went on playing cricket for Bicester C.C. until he was 60, making his first 50 when he was 55. I asked a contemporary of Jim's to assess his cricketing capability. He said that when Jim was batting the fielding side's captain would try not to get him out because he could keep down the run rate far more effectively than any of his bowlers. Jim used to score when watching cricket on television!

As for betting on the horses - if there was a meeting anywhere in the British Isles (which geographically includes Southern Ireland) Jim would walk to the bookies' shop in Bicester, a round trip of 2 miles, even when he was in his nineties.

When Jim reached his 90th. birthday his eyesight started to fail, consequently I had to tell him what was going on and he would record it in the scorebook. I would say something like "Smith has been caught by Jones off Brown's bowling." Jim would immediately ask, "Are you sure?"

The Club organised a special party in the pavilion to celebrate his 90th. birthday and to recognise his considerable contribution to the club as scorer. He died just two weeks short of his 95th birthday.

He was a good old chap, one of the club's characters, and is sadly missed by all in the Club who knew him.

Jimmy Roycroft joined the club in about 1980 first acting as an umpire until an impairment made that impossible and he then continued as a scorer; a job he still fulfils.

MEMOIRS OF A BOOZING MEMBER

By Gregory Bowden

One of the many delightful features of the MSCC is that it tolerates a small number of non-playing Boozing Members, as I prefer to call them. For those of us who are not in the least gifted at wielding a fine piece of willow but nevertheless thoroughly enjoy the spectacle of a cricket match as one of the few remaining special English treats, Sunday afternoons at Middleton Stoney can be blissful. The bliss is further heightened at the end of play when the bar opens, the pints flow and exotically cooked burnt offerings emerge from the barbecue

I had been a happy boozing member for some years when, early in the 90's, George Lamb asked me whether I would like to bring an eleven to play against the MSCC with me as non-playing captain. It was irresistible.

Fortunately, a number of my school friends were distinguished cricketers - indeed many of them had played at Lords at one time or another - and I was confident that they would make interesting opponents for the Club. I appointed the late Earl of Cottenham as the playing captain and he and I put together a formidable side. This was quite deliberate for I had warned Charlie Cottenham that MSCC was no ordinary village side but one that would challenge even thoroughly competent players. Charlie was not in the least worried about this!

The day of the game dawned and I invited my eleven to lunch before the match. It was one of those rare perfect summer days except that it was rather hotter than normal. I set up the lunch in the garden and thought carefully about what to serve. I had recently come across a marvellous Spanish Rose from Torres and I thought that in view of the heat, this would slip down rather well. This was very bad thinking! The rose, which I had chilled down to an icy cold temperature fitted the bill too well and as they basked in the warm sunshine, the players found that more of this innocent pink nectar was needed to offset the effects of the warm sun and to wash the luncheon down.

Although it took a little persuasion, I managed to get everyone safely to the ground in time for the match and as my players were finally preparing themselves, a fellow Boozing member asked me if I was nervous. "How could I be?" I replied. " I am the only person who cannot lose: either my eleven wins or my club wins!" This line turned out to be a great consolation as the afternoon went on.

I do not wish to dwell on the slaughter that followed. Charlie Cottenham was out for a duck and anyone on my side who scored a run or two that afternoon was something of a hero. Was it the rose or was it anno domini catching up on my distinguished Lords-playing team? Whatever the answer, the MSCC was spoken of in hushed reverend tones for many years afterwards by all eleven of them. Indeed, it was an afternoon we have never forgotten.

Gregory Bowden has been a member of the club since the mid-1980s.

"The Rise of The Bar"

Looking at the successful position of the Club in 2001, at a time when non league or social cricket maybe seen as less attractive to many young cricketers, my mind wandered over the possible reasons for our success. Fortunately I think we are able to blame "The Rise of The Bar".

The provision of alcohol within a clubhouse might be regarded as a basic and essential provision, and the 'Bar' at Middleton certainly had a primitive start. A table in the corner sufficed for many years before the benevolent Nick Price (the then owner of Weston Manor Hotel and cricket enthusiast) introduced more suitable arrangements, with a purpose designed counter, a till and , more importantly, Bitter on draught!

The 'Bar' has since been modernised and moved to its current position; the knowledge of another landlord, Nigel Cassidy, and the building skills of John Deeley have resulted in an attractive area which seems to be very conducive to socialising and the imbibing of drink of all variety.

You may wonder at my justification for celebrating our 'Bar' in print, but I would argue that our 'Bar' has been centrally responsible for the improvements and maintenance of the club's position, by virtue of the financial income on one hand, and the provision of a happy ambience on the other. It is the latter which encourages spectators, Vice-Presidents and Players to stay (often for many hours!) after the close of play.

Any Sunday evening throughout the summer , local VP's and supporters can confidently turn up at 6 ish , enjoy the left over cakes (if very lucky!) from a Middleton Tea, and watch the final hour of a "time" organised (as opposed to an "Overs") match when a close and enjoyable finish often occurred. They would then expect to be offered beverages at a reasonable price, be able to discuss the day's match, the national team's success or failure and then be tempted by the culinary delights in charcoal meat from the BBQ that is manned by the players after each game.

If they are truly fortunate, and the evening bar enthusiasts include club stalwarts such as Charlie Ross, Andrew Smith and Paul Wordsworth, then singing is likely to be on the agenda. Hearty renditions of "Swing Low" and other sporting songs would keep everyone at the 'Bar' until the licensing laws intervene.

From a financial point of view, the steady income from the 'Bar' over the years has provided the improvements in the club infrastructure which may have been taken for granted by new members. The provision of showers (under Clive Plant's guidance), practice net facilities, the turf management equipment and now a handsome Flagpole have all been underwritten by profits from The 'Bar'.

In summary, if one was searching for the essential ideal of an English country cricket venue, which would include a picturesque ground, reliable wicket provision, a welcoming 'Bar', space for parking and most importantly, safe areas for young children to run and play, one would have difficulty in surpassing the facilities at Middleton Park. I would therefore salute and thank all those involved in "The Rise of the Bar" over the years, particularly the club's officers, the 'Bar' managers and, of course, the many customers.

Long may the ascent continue.

Nick Thompson

Playing Member 1979 - to date

Life Member 1998

Vice Captain for 5 years

Groundsman 1981 - to date

In the bar 1986



Outside the bar 1982



Cricket Teas at Middleton Park

A personal view over 21 years

Like the prepared wicket, the stumps , the bails , the white coats the shiny red ball and the scorebook, Teas are an integral part of an afternoon at Middleton Stoney Cricket Club. The delicious Teas provided by us "Gals" (and the men sometimes!) are known all over the Country and in fact in some parts of the world. Over the years, Teas have been supplied for visiting teams from Worcestershire, Yorkshire and the sides that come out from London at weekends. Also we have hosted touring teams from South Africa and Zimbabwe.

I do not recall how I was introduced to the Tea Rota in 1979 (the club has a long tradition of wives/partners supporting the players by providing teas) nor how I came to organise the Rota , but I seem to have been trying to "sort" the Tea Rota since 1986, with help from Clarissa Brent-Smith in recent years.

In 1979 , the Tea Ladies were paid £3.15 each , this has increased to £15 in the year 2000; this seems to be a 475% increase which sounds impressive but it does not buy that much tuna or cheese! The helpful hints at the bottom of the Tea Rota programme have changed little, except for the addition of 2 tea towels in 1989. What happened before I wonder? Does anyone remember? Originally we had to make sure that Spectators paid for their teas, but to avoid embarrassment all round, this practice changed in 1991 and has been replaced by a voluntary donation to the Red Cross box on the counter.

I do recall being advised that the sandwiches "should be made with thin sliced bread" and I think more cakes were homemade in 1979, but with the expansion of W.I. cakes and the improvement in

quality and variety from supermarkets, the players ,visitors and children have had a consistently high standard of teas over the years. What of the menu? Nobody will be surprised by the conservative nature of the players favourites and we do not have to work too hard to stimulate their jaded palates! Sandwich fillings of cheese and pickle, tuna and egg head the list , with occasional exciting additions in the form of prawns and samosas from Athis Vadivale! Chocolate undoubtedly heads the Cake top ten!

Fridie Curry , Georgina Lamb, Sandra Norman and myself are still providing Teas from the original "Tea Lady" list that I have from 1979. That seems to be at least 200 teas between us !

Despite all the pressures on our time these days, I hope that people connected with M.S.C.C. will continue with the Tea tradition over the next 21 years, as the excellent Teas (I am told by the players) certainly contribute to the overall pleasure of playing Cricket at Middleton Park.

Di Thompson

Supporter	1979 - to date
Bar Secretary	1995 - to date
Vice President	1996 1997
Life Member	1998

THE BARBEQUE

by
Georgina Lamb

Middleton Stoney has long had a great reputation among the local cricketing fraternity for its conviviality and at the centre of this is the after-match Barbeque. In the early 1980s Nick Price, owner of nearby Weston Manor Hotel, was able to purchase for us a new gas Barbeque at a cost £150. I remember thinking at the time that it would take ages to recover this cost but not only did we do so in two years but we have had a couple of new ones since then.

I decided at an early stage of our years at Middleton that if George was going to stay at the Club all evening then I was not going to just stand around and drink - I had to do something! So I became 'The Barbeque Lady' for over 10 years until grand-children commitments began to appear regularly in my diary.

I found that doing a couple of hours cooking afforded plenty of opportunities for conversation with both teams and soon learnt that the BBQ kept everyone happy. Firstly, the wives as they did not have to cook when they got home; secondly, the children because they could play longer, and finally the husbands, who could stay and drink or sing till later. And all this at a very reasonable cost!

Keeping the price at not much more than cost kept the Club going much later and soon we were having to order more items from Bicester butcher, Peter Goss. We had a selection - steaks (which were always tender), beefburgers and his speciality - sausages. During the BSE crisis we had to adapt and changed to Peter's lamb & mint and pork & apple burgers but eventually dropped the latter as they were too fatty for the BBQ. One important aspect is that it always takes place - rain or shine - and I was never without volunteers to take turns at holding a large umbrella over 'me and my machine' if it turned out to be a wet evening.

The opposition sides who had come some distance, particularly appreciated and enjoyed their food before travelling back, and many times I would see children having their pyjamas put on so that they could be carried straight to bed when they got home.

Long may the BBQ tradition at Middleton Stoney survive!

Extras

Lifers.....deservedly imprisoned by the Club.

A tribute to Nick and Di Thompson has been made by George Lamb in his Musings; he has been more in touch with their gargantuan contributions to the club, but what of the others?

Frank Rolfe, with whom we have just re-established contact having traced his latest address. He has been mentioned by a number of writers in this 'collection' but a little more is merited.

He was captain for a good many years, a little controversial perhaps because of his seriousness and, it was thought by some, his desire to use the talents of the team in order to win in preference to seeing that each player had more fun (apologies if that does him an injustice - some would say 'why not?') He was dedicated to his cricket which he played whole heartedly. He was a very fine player. Standing perhaps at 6'1" or 2" he had a sturdy square shouldered athletic farmers physical presence, batted beautifully being a very hard hitter of the ball and obviously with a good eye. If anyone in the side was likely to score 50 or more it would be him. His height and build helped his splendid medium fast bowling and his ability to keep a good length. He was a tower of strength in the side.

Bob Smith, who sadly died in June or July 2000 in his seventies. He was more enthusiastic than talented as a cricketer. He would play if needed but would willingly stand down if there were too many players - that was not very often in those days. However, he was a tireless worker as secretary and for one period as combined secretary and treasurer. He was more than that though, really a general factotem; often finding the last few players, sorting out equipment or teas and helping with the grounds - you name it and he would have done it! As one member said, he was more than half the club.

Bill McFarlan, chairman of the club in the early sixties, remembers that players at that time did not as a custom adjourn to the local hostelry (there was no bar in the pavilion then) for a drink after the game so he, Bob and one other used to take the opposition to The Horse and Groom at Caulcutt.

Les Watkins was very keen on his cricket and liked to swing his bat liberally which led to some successes. He was tireless in preparing the wicket and ground, which he did for many years, often alone, and looking after the kit. In latter years he can often be seen in the corner of the ground nearest to the exit by Clock Court watching the matches.

Nick Price. Although he is mentioned a number of times by other writers a little more would seem appropriate. He came into the scene while I was a playing member and besides playing was, amongst other posts, primarily Social Secretary. He was the mover behind the initial development of the bar and his work on the social side meant that in the early seventies the finances of the club were greatly enhanced. He was full of good ideas, which brought in funds. During his time too there were some very fine Dinner Dances at Weston Manor Hotel at which there were some amusing and well prepared speeches by the likes of Godfrey Evans, the former England wicket-keeper, members of the Oxford

Miscellany

Did you know?

The 7th. Earl of Jersey, as well as being a cricket enthusiast, was a founder member and the first president of the Amateur Athletic Association.

When the Hon. Arthur Villiers was out for his second duck for Eton in the annual game against Harrow he had to pass as he went up the pavilion steps his father - the above mentioned Lord Jersey - ' for whom he had deep regard and who took this most hardly, being in the depth of misery. Arthur said, "I'm most awfully sorry father, but after all it's only a game." '

Despite his two ducks there is no doubt he should have been in the side as a report of a house match shows "Villiers's leg-breaks were in both innings too much for the opposing batsmen, who were never comfortable with them." In the match he got altogether thirteen wickets for 101 runs, besides making 100.

In 1959, thirteen years before he joined MSCC in 1972, John Livingstone brought a West Kent Countrymen XI to play a team raised by Peter Langdon "Langdon's Threshers" at Middleton Park. Although only the first match was played at Middleton, this match continued for nearly 25 years, subsequent matches being played at Standlake (the ground of The Oxford Downs C.C. of which Peter had become a member) and at Rousham. Peter Langdon played some matches for MSCC and was once a Vice President of the club.

There has been a very special friendship over the years between M.S.C.C. and Oxford Downs C.C. A number of players who were also farmers played games for both Clubs e.g. Jim Norman, Colin Pickford, Graham Pidgeon, Frank Shouler, and John Deeley. There could be others.

Willie Piggott, a black American at USAF base, Upper Heyford was, in the late 60s and early 70s, a fast bowler with the club. He was a lithe, charismatic character and pretty fast with the ball: sadly he was not always available to play because of Air force duties. He brought a West Indian XI to play in season 1976.

Downs Club and our skipper, John Livingstone. (See also "The Yorkshire Tour, etc." by Mike Curry).

Terry Moule, as owner of the Park and President, was both generous and helpful to the club, and was a keen player, enjoying fielding in his favourite position the gulley as well as batting. He was the only playing president since at least the 1960s. The fact that he laid out a golf course in the park alongside the cricket was a great asset to those cricketers who liked to play both games.

.....and a past member, who is not a life member, who deserves mention for his contribution to the club, is Geoff Rawnsley. He too did exemplary work on the grounds and as a committee member. It is to those who do look after the pitch that I think the rest of us, past and present, owe so much.



Nick Price umpiring

For 2 seasons Circa.1986 and 1987 there was a match between the club and a team made up predominantly of Vice Presidents, most of whom were past players in the club. This ceased, I surmise, because the VPs had all come out of retirement and one could see that if it continued it would have become a somewhat one sided game!! In one match the reigning Oxford University wicket-keeper, James Cope of Keble College, who was a guest for the VPs side, scored 63 not out. Peter Rymer and David Markham both of Tusmore Cricket Club were guest players in one of the matches.

The clock on the pavilion was once on the sports ground, known as 'The Wilderness,' belonging to the Eton Manor Clubs (Boys and Old Boys) that was financed by The Manor Charitable Trust, of which the Hon. Arthur Villiers, who played for Middleton Park, was a founder Trustee. When the Boys' Club was closed in 1967 the clock was in store with The Trust's Villiers Park, the residential educational centre in the village from 1965 to 2001. It was given to the club by Villiers Park in about 1977 - it must be well over 40 years old, perhaps even 50, and still works!

The Annual General Meetings have been held in The Jersey Arms, by kind permission of the successive owners - Jack Ansell, Robert Ansell and Don Livingston for a very long time - certainly back to the 60s (maybe longer) - until last year. Such generosity has been greatly appreciated.

C.P."Dennis" Davis, who used to umpire for the club, was on an International Panel of Rugby Football Union referees. Sadly a sudden illness prevented him taking charge of an international. He had though been in control of many Regional, County and first class club matches. He was a member of Ilford R.F.C. and The London Society of RFU Referees.

Throughout the 1950s there was an annual match in Middleton Park between an XI raised by Colin Pickford and Denis Norman to play Monks Marvels of Northampton. Monks Marvels was a side raised by John Monk, the secretary of Northampton R.F.C. Wanderers (the 2nd XV), in order to keep the rugby players together during the summer by playing a few matches against villages and club teams.

Colin and Denis knew John Monk as when they first joined Northampton R.F.C. they were to begin with in the 2nd.XV. Some of the players of Monks Marvels were on the verge of playing for Northampton C.C.C. Colin believes these matches were really the beginning of 20 over cricket. He recalls that in one match, the No.3 batsman, John Barton scored 119 not out by the end of the 20 overs.

Kevin Brock, who while living in Middleton Stoney attended Bicester School and, later, played a few games of senior cricket for the club in the 1980s was capped for England at football at all levels, from Under 14 schoolboy to senior England 'B' (equivalent to 'A' today). He played professional football for Oxford United (turning down Spurs), Queen's Park Rangers and Newcastle United.

Nigel Cassidy, a former club captain, played football for Oxford United and Scunthorpe United.

George Lamb was Open Champion at table tennis of British Honduras (now Belize) in 1963 and afterwards played exhibition matches against two former world champions, Richard Bergman of Sweden and Chou Lin Chen of China.

In 1956 Derek Marsh, as captain of a combined Eton Manor and Fairbairn House Colts Rugby XV v Blackheath Colts had the privilege of meeting and shaking the hand of the legendary cricketer and all round sportsman C.B.Fry. Christopher Fry was a member of Blackheath R.F.C. and was the guest of honour at the match. He was then into his 80s. At the turn of the 19th.Century C.B.Fry opened the batting for England with W.G.Grace. As many will know he represented England also at rugby football and as a long jumper and played association football for The Corinthians and as an amateur for England. He had a number of other sporting talents too.



The Soil's Lament

A Wicket's life is a hard one, and it's getting harder.

Life used to be fairly relaxed, even soft !

A weekly summer "cut", an irregular roll and a winter deliciously unattended with no one looking after my ends !

Modern life is full of exotic, a rotating mixture of weedkiller, wormkiller and mosskiller: Our roots are then force fed fertilisers with mixtures of Nitrogen, Phosphate, Iron and yet more weedkiller to drive away the friendly clover.

Why do they need to spike holes in our surface and then scratch (scarify) half the same surface away (Brere Rabbit seems to do quite a good job anyway) before smothering us again with 3 tons of clay.

A 2 ton roller is no joke either, it is very heavy being squashed between April and September so

Is it worth it ?

Of course it is, when the Captain smiles !

The Granddaman

QUOTATIONS

Prompted by the quote of Charles Lamb used by George Lamb in his Random Musings Concerning Middleton Park, here are a few more: -

Sarah Bernhart, 1844- 1923, actress and theatre manager.

On seeing a game of football "I do love cricket - it's so English."

.....

William Temple 1881 - 1944, British churchman.

"Personally, I have always looked on cricket as organised loafing."

Remark to parents when headmaster of Repton School.

.....

Sir Max Beerhohm 1872 - 1936, British writer and caricaturist.

"It's not in support of cricket but as an earnest protest against golf".

Said when donating a shilling towards W.G.Grace's testimonial.

.....

Thomas Hughes 1822 - 96, British novelist and Liberal M.P

"It's more than a game. It's an institution."

Referring to cricket in Tom Brown's Schooldays which he wrote (1857).

.....

Seen on a T shirt of a supporting member of Glamorgan C.C.C. on holiday in South Africa

"Cricket is Life - the rest is mere detail."

.....and some humour by "the resident manic spider"

Supposing

by John Hallam

George Lamb and Richard Lumb wander erratically from the pavilion, each with a whisky in his hand and nursing hangovers from the previous night's MSCC social event. The opposition, a sturdy village team, are warming up in the nets.

"Better go and assess the opposition Lummers." They stagger across to the nets. Now look Lummers, I'm number eleven, when you get in before me, I'd be grateful if you'd rattle up enough runs for us to declare! God Almighty! I haven't been this drunk in years!" They both stare as a large black-curly bearded member of the opposition runs up to the stump and bowls the ball with tremendous velocity towards the stumps at the other end. The three stumps cartwheel out of the ground.

"Lucky you have a game's eye, George. Should be no problem for you!"

"If I have to face one ball from that monster, I fully expect to be blind at the end of the game!"

"Have another to stiffen the resolve, George," says Lummers, re-charging George's glass.

The captains return from the toss.

"Who won the toss, Clive?" "We did." "What does that mean - match abandoned, adjourn to the bar?"

"No, George, it means, we're batting and you and Lummers are opening."

"Opening!" cries Lummers as he watches the huge black bearded opposition bowler destroy the net stumps with another fizzing delivery.

"You must be raving mad - I feel faint, Clive, I can't open, I'm stoned!" whines George.

"That shouldn't make any difference, George! Huh, Huh, Huh."

"Why can't Miles open?"

"He'll be late."

"Why?"

"He's still with that blonde from last night and the good doctor's on call. Best of luck, George."

Snowy bounces over, indicates Lummer's whisky. "Hi, Lummers, little early for that, isn't it?"

"Never too early for this, Snowy! Clive has taken leave of his senses and asked George and me to open!" Snowy puts her arms reassuringly around George's shoulders. "Don't worry George, this is your day, I know it!"

"My last day you mean, Snowy. Tell Georgina ...thank her for everything in case I never see her again. Come on Lummers, any last requests?"

"A suit of armour each!"

George and Lummers, padded up, are holding each other up as they wobble their way to the middle.

"Do you want to take first ball, George?"

"I don't want to take ANY ball! I am merely here for moral support, Lummers"

Lummers marches to the non-striker's end and is surprised to find George standing beside him. "What the hell are you doing here? We can't both stand at the same end!"

The huge bearded bowler looks at them and they smile weakly at him.

"Look, George, I'll bet you twenty five quid you can't survive the first over"

"Twenty five - done." They shake hands and George wanders up to the striker's end.

The first delivery whistles past George's ear. "Well left George" quirels Simmo from the boundary. Lummers and George confer mid-pitch. "Remember, George, hit the middle ball of the three balls you are seeing"

"Which three balls, Lummers? I can't see any balls."

The huge bowler tears up to the wicket and hurls the ball towards George who waves the bat some four feet from the ball and is struck on the leg. George crashes to the ground like a felled OAK.

"Owzat?"

"Not out," cries George leaping to his feet. The umpire feels too intimidated to disagree. Lummers approaches as George collapses to the ground, offers his hip flask - "Little heart starter, George?" George takes a large glug.

"Two balls to go Lummers and you owe me twenty quid"

George leaps to his feet. The bowler begins his marathon approach to the wicket. George takes a blind swipe and the ball whizzes out to the covers. Lummers rushes up the pitch. George remains rooted to the spot.

"Run George!"

"Not bloody likely! You run!"

"We can get three."

"I don't want three."

They both watch the ball as a fielder rushes towards it, misses and the ball rolls gently over the rope.

"That, Lummers, is what I believe they callFOUR! One ball to go."

Lummers wanders back to the non-striker's end. The bowler thunders in. George shoulders arms and watches the ball whistle over the stumps. The umpire calls 'over' and George heads towards the pavilion.

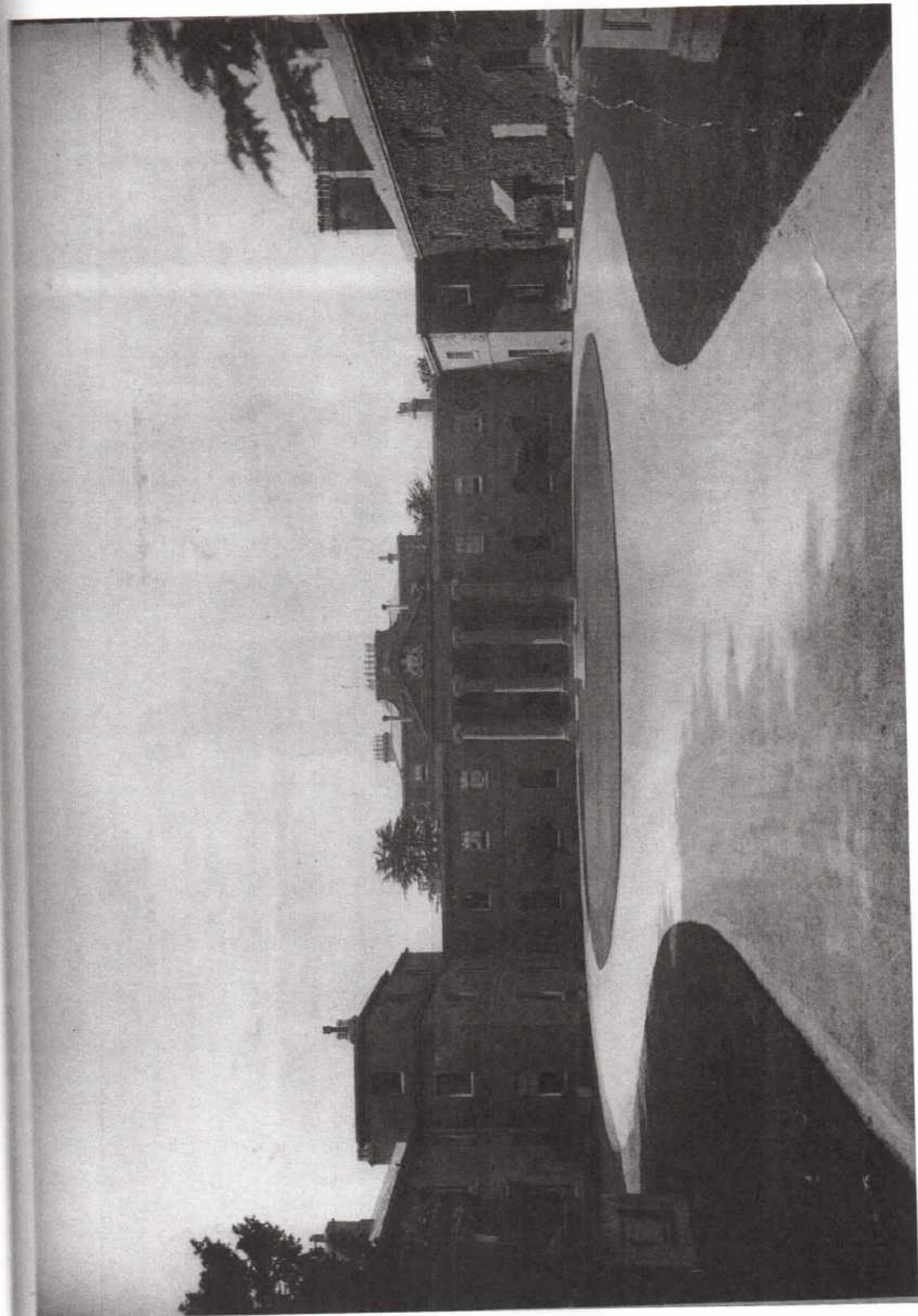
"Where are you going?"

"Retired Hurt, Lummers. You owe me twenty five quid. Best of luck, Lummers, I'll visit you in hospital! I might come back when the blacksmith calms down a bit, if I'm not too sozzled! Georgina, are you winning the battle with the cucumber sandwiches?"

John Hallam joined the club in 1992 and is a non-playing member.

APPENDICES

- 1 Middleton Park - the House, C.1900
- 2 A Sensible Governor
- 3 Somerton v Midleton Stony (sic) 1855
- 4 Return game - Middleton v Somerton 1855
- 5 1894 & players 1920s and 1934.
- 6 1896 Junior XI and 13-a-side match.
- 7 1896 Fixture List
- 8 1899 matches in the Park
- 9 1900 matches in the Park
- 10 Bicester v Chesterton Park, 1900 involving Middleton Park players.
- 11 Lord Jersey's XI v.Mr H. Tubbs' XI, 1913 ref. Bosanquet & Schwarz.
- 12 The Cricketing Cleric
- 13 Autograph copies.
- 14 Officers and Members as at 1st,January, 2001



A cutting and photograph, about the 7th Earl of Jersey who was Governor of New South Wales in from 1890 to 1893.

A Sensible Governor.

In this connection one remembers that when Lord Jersey was earning great popularity as Governor of New South Wales he set an admirable fashion for his vice-regal successors by attending the cricket matches in an easy lounge suit and a large brown holland helmet. Thus attired his lordship, who frequently walked to the ground followed by a perspiring aide-de-camp, would sit for hours watching the play with the keenest interest and occasionally exchanging views on pastoral problems with some enthusiastic squatter of his acquaintance.

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This is the first report and scorecard (enlarged) for cricket in the Bicester Herald - Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire Courier and Town & Country Newspaper. of June, 23rd, 1855

The Herald was founded that year and is older than The Oxford Times which began in 1862. The herald later became the Bicester Advertiser.

The scores were low!

CRICKET AT MIDDLETON STONY.—On the 19th instant; a friendly game at cricket was played at Middleton Stony, between eleven of that village, and eleven of Somerton. The latter won with three wickets to fall. The following is the score :—

SOMERTON.			
1st inn.			
T. Berridge, b Stevens . . .	3	b Phillips . . .	2
B. Allabarton, b Mac Queen . . .	1	c Rose . . .	3
J. Allabarton c J. Varney . . .	0	not out . . .	5
J. Hickman, c Claydon . . .	3	c J. Varney . . .	11
W. Smith, b Mac Queen . . .	1	b Stevens . . .	0
H. Smith, c Rose . . .	4	b Stevens . . .	0
J. Pullin, leg before wicket . . .	1		
R. Golder, b Mac Queen . . .	0	b Mac Queen . . .	9
C. Golder, c J. Varney . . .	0		
C. Mansfield, not out . . .	0	c Clayton . . .	3
R. Bayley b Stevens . . .	3	not out . . .	5
Byes, &c. . . .	7	Byes, &c. . . .	11
	23		49

MIDDLETON STONY.			
1st inn.			
Mr. Stevens, b Golder . . .	3	leg before wicket . . .	8
— Allen, b R. Allabarton . . .	6	e Mansfield . . .	0
— Rose, c and b R. Golder . . .	5	b Hickman . . .	10
Mac Queen, b B. Allabarton . . .	0	b ditto . . .	3
-- Varney, sen., b ditto . . .	0	b ditto . . .	2
— Varney, jun., b ditto . . .	0	b Allabarton . . .	3
— Phillips, not out . . .	0	b Hickman . . .	2
— Claydon, b Allabarton . . .	0	handled the ball . . .	0
— Coggins, b R. Golder . . .	1	b Allabarton . . .	0
— Ryman, b Allabarton . . .	3	not out . . .	9
— Jakeman, c R. Bayler . . .	1	b Hickman . . .	6
Byes,	4	Byes,	3
	23		46

The return game Somerton v Middleton played 31st July, 1855, which Middleton won after losing the first encounter.

Note the expression "It is now game and game."

The scores were still low!

SOMERTON.

CRICKET.—A well-contested game at cricket was played at Somerton, on the 31st ult., between the players of that village, and those of Middleton Stony. The latter were the winners by two runs. It is now game and game. The batting of R. Pretzman, Esq., was admired by the whole field, as was also the play of G. F. Apthorpe, Esq. The following is the score:—

MIDDLETON.		MIDDLETON.	
1st inn.		2nd inn.	
R. Pretzman, b Hickman	- 6	b Allabarton	- 12
G. F. Apthorpe, b Allabarton	2	b ditto	- 7
— Rose, b Hickman	- 3	b ditto	- 0
— Allen, c by Tubb	- 7	e by Tubb	- 4
G. Ryman, b Allabarton	- 0	c by ditto	- 0
W. Mac Queen, b ditto	- 4	b Allabarton	- 0
— Varney, b ditto	- 0	c by Taylor	- 0
W. Varney, b ditto	- 1	not out	- 0
A. Stevens, b ditto	- 2	b Allabarton	- 0
J. Phillips, not out	- 1	run out	- 5
— Jakeman, b Allabarton	1	b Hickman	- 5
Byes	- 3	Byes	- 4
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	30		27

SOMERTON.

SOMERTON.		SOMERTON.	
1st inn.		2nd inn.	
R. Golder, c by Stevens	- 2	b Mac Queen	- 0
J. Hickman, c by Rose	- 9	l. b. w.	- 0
T. Berridge, b Stevens	- 4	c by Varney	- 10
J. Tubb, b Pretzman	- 0	b Mac Queen	- 3
J. Allabarton, c by Ryman	1	run out	- 8
G. Rose, b Pretzman	- 1	b Mac Queen	- 4
B. Allabarton, l. b. w.	- 1	b ditto	- 5
— Serjeant, b Stevens	- 1	b ditto	- 7
J. Pullen, b ditto	- 0	not out	- 0
C. Mansfield, b ditto	- 0	b Mac Queen	- 1
J. Taylor, not out	- 0	b ditto	- 2
Byes	- 0	Byes	- 7
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	19		43

Research, in a very limited time, in The Bicester Herald and its successor, the Bicester Advertiser, revealed the following:-

1894

I was trying to discover whether the match in the Park involving the South African touring side had been reported. It was not but I found this, which is a précised version -

"In April, The Oxfordshire Cricket Club Association held a public meeting to consider a proposal for a County Cricket Challenge Cup. Lord Jersey and Mr. Tubbs were otherwise engaged and could not attend. They sent letters conveying their hearty co-operation in the scheme and wishing it a success. Lord Jersey was unanimously voted President of the Association. A Mr Hanley (?) donated £5 and would collect £10 from Oxford. It was thought there would be no difficulty in raising a sufficient sum to get a very handsome trophy"

1925

As my time researching was rapidly coming to an end, in order to find out who was playing in the 1920's, I was only able to take note of home and away matches against Weston-on-the-Green.

On Sat.9th.May at Weston - Middleton Stoney 88 for 5 (F.Hughes, Joe Varney and A Cuthbert each scored 22 runs, S.C.Eves scored 16.) Weston 43 (A.Cuthbert took 4 wickets and S.C.Eves took 3 wickets) M.S won by 45 runs.

Return game in the Park - Middleton Stoney 70 (Percy Varney 19, A.Keen 15) Weston 62 (Percy Varney took 7 wickets, Cyril Varney 2 wickets and S.C. Eves 1 wicket). Middleton won by 8 runs.

There were two other Varneys in this Middleton team, the others being Chris and Jess, making four in all.

In addition to the players mentioned in the two matches above, other players in these games were J.Addison (the village postmaster, I believe), Arthur Coles, F.or E.Williams and H.Voden (?).

1934 - The year the open Club was formed - in order to find out who was playing and who were some of the club's opponents.

Those playing this season were:-	W. Bailey	Arthur Coles	E.Gebbles
R.Gebbles	Len Golder	Fred Hodges	Fred Hodges
Ron James	Mason	T.Massey	A.Peach
J.Parrot	E.Savins	Stan Savins	A.Stratford
F.Turner	Fred Varney	Percy Varney	G.Bishop

Results recorded in the newspapers:-

2nd.June	v. Launton	at Launton	Lost by 34 runs.
23rd.June	v Launton	at Middleton	Won by 135 runs (E.Young 36, A.Coles 45 and F.Turner 57 for Middleton)
11th.July	v Mr.F.Chainey's XI	at Middleton	Drawn (Chainey's 151 - 8 dec. M.S. 148 - 9 : P.Varney 63, L.Golder 45)
14th.July	v Bicester II		Won by 142 runs (A.Stratford 46 for Middleton)
19th.July	v Wendlebury	at Middleton	Lost by 35 runs
July	v Oxford Shipton Cement Works	at Shipton	Won by 107 runs. (Middleton 181 - 1: Fred Varney 101n.o., Stratford 28, F.Hughes 51 n.o.)
6th.August	v Mayfair Early Birds	at Middleton	Won by 91 runs (M.E.B. 146, M.S. 237 - the whole team bar Mason (2) reached double figures - the best scores were L.Golder 32, A.Peach 31, P.Varney 31 n.o. and F.Hughes 29. Peach took 5 wickets.)
1st.Sept.	v Marsh Gibbon		Won by 44 runs (M.S. 120 - F.Hughes 30, M.G. 76 A.Stratford 6 wickets) P., F. and C. Varney played in this match

The main bowlers this season, in these matches, were: - P. Varney, Turner, Golder, R.Gebbles, Mason, Coles, Stratford and Peach.

In 'Characters 1947 to 1980' by Frank Rolfe you will notice that Len Golder, Percy Varney and Fred Hodges were still playing after the war and two other Varneys, Wally and Brian, were members of the club.

Derek Marsh.

Results in the Bicester Herald of 28th. August, 1896.

Note the Junior XI which won the two matches reported by 95 runs and 64 runs respectively.

In a later editions of the Herald the Juniors beat Ardley by an innings and 16 runs, beat Chesterton & Somerton by 95 runs and 5 wickets (sic - i.e for the loss of only 5 wickets), beat Bicester by 64 runs and lost to Bicester (scores not readable). They were obviously a good Junior side.

The age limit for this team is unknown but A. Villiers was 12 years old.

Note that the senior game between Middleton and Somerton was 13-a-side.

MIDDLETON JUNIORS v. CHESTERTON AND SOMERTON JUNIORS.

This match was played at Middleton Park on Friday, and ended in a win for Middleton by 95 runs and 5 wickets. Lord Jersey kindly provided tea, and prizes were given by Lady Jersey to the players after the match. Scores:

CHESTERTON AND SOMERTON.	
W. Scarborough & Eaton & R. Dean	17
R. King & Williams	1
R. Johnson & Hunt & Villiers	1
H. Maitland & Eaton & R. Dean	1
J. Johnson & R. Dean	1
P. Under & Villiers	1
T. Andrews & R. Dean	1
F. Cooper & Villiers & R. Dean	1
W. Martin & Villiers	1
J. Gossage & Villiers	1
P. Wischauer & R. Dean & Villiers	1
G. Orbach not out	1
Extras	1
Total	54

MIDDLETONS.	
F. East & J. Johnson & King	22
R. Dean & King	61
W. Williams & Scarborough	7
A. Draper & King	12
Mrs. A. Villiers not out	20
Albert Whiston & Ed & R. Johnson	2
C. Butler & R. Johnson	4
J. Butler not out	7
Extras	2
Total	125

Arthur Whiston, W. King, K. Eaton, A. Dick did not bat.

MIDDLETON v. SOMERTON.

This match (13 a side) was played at Middleton Park on Saturday, and ended in a win for Middleton by 157 runs on the first innings. Lunches, etc., was kindly given by the Earl of Jersey. Scores:

SOMERTON.		Second innings.	
T. Golder & E. Draper & Emberton	4		
A. Evans & Draper	1	s Draper & Dean	10
C. Larner & Curtis	1		
J. Nash & Draper	1		
F. Thomas & Dean & Draper	1	not out	11
K. Walton & Curtis	1		
R. Adams & Curtis	1	not out	9
W. Cross & Curtis	10		
A. Walton & Emberton	1		
W. Allen not out	1	s Emberton & Dean	1
W. Cross run out	1		
J. Bennett & Curtis	1		
S. Golder & Emberton & Curtis	1		
Extras	7		
Total	71	Extras	2
Total	125	Total	125

MIDDLETONS.		Second innings.	
R. Dean & Ed & R. Walton	11		
E. H. U. Draper run out	1		
J. Creed 1-b-w, b Wm. Cross	40		
T. Emberton & S. Golder & Nash	11		
F. W. Todd & Haynes & Nash	11		
F. W. Topwell & Adams	10		
J. Telfry & Adams	1		
Earl of Jersey & A. Walton & Nash	1		
J. Conquest run out	1		
H. Hodges & Thomas	1		
T. Skidmore & Thomas	10		
W. Dean & Thomas	1		
W. Curtis not out	1		
Extras	14		
Total	125		

MIDDLETON PARK v. SWIFT'S HOUSE.

Played at Middleton on Monday, and ended in a win for Middleton by an innings and 20 runs. Lord Jersey kindly provided luncheon, etc. Scores:

SWIFT'S HOUSE.		Second innings.	
T. Edge & Goolby	1	b Warren	5
W. Massey & Marrell	1	b Warren	10
C. Haydon & Norton	11	s Rees & Buckland	9
J. Jemoock & Rees & Marrell	7	s Ed & Buckland	1
C. Gardner & Norton & Marrell	1	s Norton & Warren	2
A. Damsell & Marrell	1	s Darling & Buckland	0
J. Harrison & Darling & Norton	1	s Trollope & Warren	0
H. Clifton not out	1	b Buckland	0
J. Midwell & Marrell	1	run out	0
W. Staley & Norton	1	b Warren	0
D. Denny & Marrell	1	not out	1
Extras	1	Extras	1
Total	28	Total	28

MIDDLETONS.		Second innings.	
T. Trollope & Jemoock	4		
A. Turner & Edge	13		
H. Marrell & Massey & Jemoock	7		
E. Rees & Harrison	1		
J. Baker & Edge	1		
E. Warren & Jemoock	0		
Earl of Jersey & Edge	11		
H. Norton & Jemoock	1		
C. Goolby & Edge	1		
W. Darling not out	1		
T. Buckland & Edge & Harrison	1		
Extras	11		
Total	102		

MIDDLETON JUNIORS v. BICESTER JUNIORS.

This match was played at Middleton on Tuesday, Middleton winning by 64 runs. Lunches, etc., was given by Lord Jersey. Scores:

MIDDLETONS.		Second innings.	
F. East & R. Johnson	6	b Norton	1
K. Dean & Ed & Scarborough	1	s J. Johnson & Scarborough	11
H. Williams & Ed & Johnson	1	brook	11
A. Draper run out	1	b Scarborough & Rees	11
W. Scarborough & East & Williams	1	brook	1
Mrs. A. Villiers & Johnson & Scarborough	1	s South & R. Johnson	11
Albert Whiston & South & King	1	s Kirtland & R. Johnson	11
Kirtland	1	s King & R. Johnson	1
J. Butler & Ed & Kirtland	1	s King & R. Johnson	1
Arthur Whiston & Ed & Kirtland	1	s King & R. Johnson	1
H. Draper not out	1	not out	1
W. Dean & South & Kirtland	1	s Scarborough & R. Johnson	1
C. Butler & Kirtland	1	s Scarborough & R. Johnson	1
Extras	1	Extras	1
Total	27	Total	27

BICESTER.		Second innings.	
A. Thomas run out	1	s Dean & Williams	0
F. South & East & Williams	1	not out	0
R. Johnson & Villiers	1	s Williams & Villiers	0
W. Scarborough & East & Williams	1	not out	0
K. Kirtland & Ed & Williams	1	s A. Draper & Villiers	1
R. King & Williams	1	s W. Williams	1
T. Holden & Williams	1	s A. Draper & Villiers	0
J. Johnson & Villiers	1	s A. Draper & Villiers	0
F. Jemock & Villiers	11	s Villiers & Williams	0
W. Dean & not out	1	s Ed & Villiers	0
Extras	1	Extras	0
Total	22	Total	12

1896 FIXTURES
for Middleton Park

(In alphabetical order)

- v Bletchington
- v Brasenose College Servants
- v Cherwell Valley
- v Fritwell
- v Kirtlington
- v Mr. Tubbs XI
- v Oxford City
- v Oxford City Police
- v Oxford City Post Office
- v Oxford University College Scouts C.C.
- v St. Edward's School
- v Somerton
- v Souldern
- v Steeple Aston
- v Swifts House
- v United College Servants
- v Upper and Lower Heyford (2 matches).

Source - Bicester Herald - matches reported only.

1899
 matches
 in
 Middleton
 Park

MIDDLETON PARK v. BUOKNELL

... on Wednesday, was the
 he season. Both sides
 ... innings. The visitors'
 ... and Middleton was enabled to
 ... than this number just before
 ... for the loss of six wickets, and thus won by
 four wickets. Score:

BUOKNELL.		Second Innings.	
W. S. Enser c Buckland b Clara	24	c and b Read	2
H. Peverill c Villiers b Clara	3	not out	18
H. Holiday not out	27	b Read	4
H. Rolfe c Clara	3	c Villiers b Read	2
H. Rolfe, jun., c Read b Clara	0	b Read	0
H. Rolfe b Clara	1	b Read	2
H. M. Mackerness b Clara	0	b Read	0
H. Rolfe, jun., b Read	1	c Read b Clara	1
H. Shaw c Allen b Read	0	b Golby	1
H. Tibbitts c Priest b Clara	0	run out	0
H. Tibbitts c Priest b Clara	0	b Golby	4
H. Extras	0	bys	1
Total..	60	Total..	42

MIDDLETON PARK.		Second Innings.	
H. Renn b Enser	14	b Holiday	4
H. Priest c Mackerness b	4	b Holiday	0
H. Read b Enser	8	c Holiday b Enser	0
H. Rolfe, jun., c T. Rolfe, jun.,	1	b Enser	5
H. Rolfe, jun., b Enser	10	not out	37
Hon. A. Villiers b Holiday	10	not out	6
H. Golby b Holiday	0	c Stenns b Holiday	0
Lord Jersey c Enser b Holiday	0	c Tibbitts b Holiday	1
H. Reay b Enser	0	bys	4
H. Allen not out	0	bys	4
H. Allen, leg-bys 2	4		
Total..	51	Total (8 wks)..	43

CARL OF JERSEY'S XI. v. MR. H. TUBB'S XI.

This annual match, at Middleton Park on Saturday, resulted in the game being left drawn.

MR. H. TUBB'S XI.	
D. W. Nickett c Read b Polley	77
Hon. F. J. N. Theagar b Polley	44
H. Holloway c Read b Polley	22
H. J. Daughill b Read	0
C. J. M. Godfrey c Read b Howidge	20
A. F. Latham not out	4
A. Bradshaw not out	15
bys	104

Total (5 wickets) 104
 *Innings declared closed.

MR. H. TUBB'S XI.	
H. Polley b Godfrey	15
H. K. Moulder c and b Holiday	07
H. Polley b Godfrey	2
H. Bird c and b Godfrey	2
H. Read not out	15
H. Read not out	8
Total (4 wickets) 145	

A. Worsley, Hon. A. Villiers, T. and R. Kemp did not bat.

MIDDLETON PARK v. BALLIOL COLLEGE SERVANTS.

Middleton Park eleven continues its victorious
 ... and at home on Monday it won its match
 ... Balliol College Servants by forty runs. The
 ... of the game was the breakdown of
 ... batting after the fourth wicket had
 ...

BALLIOL COLLEGE SERVANTS.		Second Innings.	
H. Sawyer not out	43	c A. Draper b Hon. A. Villiers	20
H. Read	21	not out	8
H. Read b Read	8	b Hon. A. Villiers	20
H. Read b Read	12	c Key, Draper b Hon. A. Villiers	0
H. Read b Read	0	b Villiers	19
H. Read b Read	0	not out	8
H. Read b Read	0	b Reader	0
H. Read b Golby	0		
H. Read b Golby	0		
H. Read, leg-bys 1	4	bys	2
Total..	67	Total (6 wks)..	79

MIDDLETON PARK.	
H. Bateman	22
H. King	4
H. Marks b Bateman	5
H. Draper c Barley b Bateman	29
H. Bateman	13
H. Sawyer	8
H. Bateman	12
H. Bateman	0
H. Bateman	0
H. Bateman	0
H. Bateman	0
H. Bateman	0
H. Bateman	0
Total..	137

MIDDLETON PARK v. OXFORD POST OFFICE.

Oxford Post-office eleven visited Middleton on Tuesday, but had an ignominious defeat. Score:

First Innings.		Second Innings.	
J. Brown c and b Clara	1	b Emberton	0
F. Stone b Clara	1	not out	1
H. Roberts c Read b Clara	5	b Emberton	4
A. Rouse c Hon. Villiers b Clara	13		
F. Draper b Golby	11		
H. Roberts b Golby	0		
V. Whitshir c Emberton b Golby	0		
A. R. Cole b Clara	0		
J. Collett c Golby b Clara	0		
G. Mc Donald b Golby	0		
A. R. Bayliss not out	0		
bys 1, leg-bys 1	2		
Total..	33	Total (two wks)..	5

MIDDLETON PARK.	
H. Renn b Rouse	25
F. Priest c and b Whitshir	0
T. Emberton hit wkt. b Draper	38
F. Varney c Cole b Roberts	5
Hon. A. Villiers b Draper	7
W. Enser c Cole b Rouse	47
F. Read c Collett b Brown	20
Lord Jersey b Brown	0
J. Clara not out	3
H. Golby run out	0
G. Allen c and b Rouse	2
bys 2, wkt 1, not out 1	10
Total..	170

MIDDLETON PARK v. NEW COLLEGE SERVANTS—
 Played at Middleton Park on Saturday. Baiting first
 the homesters compiled 101 runs, and as the Servants
 were disposed of for 78, principally through the
 effective bowling of Read, Middleton were left victors
 on the first innings by 23 runs. Score—

MIDDLETON PARK.		Second Innings.	
H. Renn b Allen	15	b Allen	49
A. Draper c Finch b Nash	38	b Allen	0
C. Bowler c and b Hayliss	8	not out	80
T. Buckland b Hayliss	0	b Allen	2
Hon. A. Villiers run out	4	b Allen	9
H. Johnson b Hayliss	12	c Hughes b Allen	4
F. Read not out	15	not out	25
Lord Jersey b Allen	0	b Allen	0
C. Golby b Allen	0	c Flint b Hayliss	2
T. S. Biles b Allen	0	b-h-w b Allen	0
H. Leybourne b Allen	0	b Hayliss	0
Extras	0	Extras	0
Total..	101	Total..	128

NEW COLLEGE SERVANTS.	
A. E. Allen b Read	53
W. Finch c Buckland b Golby	19
W. Hayliss b Read	4
F. Huft b Read	0
J. Nash c Reader b Read	1
F. Salmons b Read	0
G. Dickins b Golby	0
J. Bluhm b Read	7
J. Medcraft not out	3
H. Hughes b Read	0
W. Hiers b Hon. A. Villiers	4
Extras	0
Total..	78

1899

MIDDLETON PARK v. OXFORD POST OFFICE.

A game as above was played at Middleton Park
 Tuesday last, when the homesters won by the over-
 whelming number of 128 runs. Enser, Emberton
 Renn and Read did most towards gaining the victo-
 ry in the way of batting, but perhaps not a little was
 also to the bowling of Clara and Golby. Score—

MIDDLETON PARK.		Second Innings.	
H. Renn b Rouse	25	b Emberton	0
F. Priest c and b Whitshir	0	b Emberton hit wkt. b Draper	38
T. Emberton hit wkt. b Draper	38	F. Varney c Cole b Roberts	5
F. Varney c Cole b Roberts	5	Hon. A. Villiers b Draper	7
Hon. A. Villiers b Draper	7	W. Enser c Cole b Rouse	47
W. Enser c Cole b Rouse	47	F. Read c Collett b Brown	20
F. Read c Collett b Brown	20	Lord Jersey b Brown	0
Lord Jersey b Brown	0	J. Clara not out	3
J. Clara not out	3	H. Golby run out	0
H. Golby run out	0	G. Allen c and b Rouse	2
G. Allen c and b Rouse	2	Extras	10
Extras	10	Total..	170

OXFORD POST OFFICE.	
J. Brown c and b Clara	1
F. Stone b Clara	1
H. Roberts c Read b Clara	5
A. Rouse c Hon. A. Villiers b Clara	13
F. Draper b Golby	11
H. Roberts b Golby	0
V. Whitshir c Emberton b Golby	0
A. R. Cole b Clara	0
J. Collett c Golby b Clara	0
G. Mc Donald b Golby	0
A. R. Bayliss not out	0
Extras	2
Total..	43

Second Innings—Renn b Emberton, 0; Stone not out, 1
 H. Roberts b Emberton, 4; total, 4.

Copies of scores of Middleton Park matches recorded in local

newspapers 1900

MIDDLETON PARK v. NEW COLLEGE SERVANTS.

Middleton Park won this match on Saturday on their own ground by 25 runs on the first innings. In the home team's first innings Allen accomplished the hat-trick. Score:

MIDDLETON PARK.		Second Innings.	
R. Renn b Allen	15	b Allen	49
A. Draper b Finch b Nash	84	b Allen	0
C. Reader lbw b Bayliss	8	not out	30
T. Buckland b Bayliss	0	b Allen	9
Hon. A. Villiers run out	4	b Allen	10
M. Johnson b Bayliss	12	c Hughes b Allen	21
F. Read not out	15	not out	25
Lord Jersey b Allen	0	b Allen	0
C. Golby b Allen	0	c Hutt b Bayliss	2
T. S. Birt b Allen	0	lbw b Allen	0
E. Leybourne b Allen	0	b Bayliss	0
Byes 5, leg-byes 2, w	2	Extras	6
T. U. 101		Total.. 152	

NEW COLLEGE SERVANTS (OXFORD).

A. E. Allen b Reader	33
W. Finch c Buckland b Golby	19
W. Bayliss b Read	4
F. Hutt b Rend	0
J. Nash c Reader b Read	1
F. Salmons b Read	0
G. Dickens b Golby	3
J. Bigham b Read	7
J. Medcraft not out	3
H. Hughes b Read	2
W. Hicks b Hon. A. Villiers	2
Byes 3, wides 2	4
Total.. 76	

Extras	2	Extras	0
	5		0
Total.. 74		Total (3 wks).. 19	

MIDDLETON PARK v. OXFORD CITY POLICE.

Another win awaited the Middleton Park eleven on Wednesday, when they were playing at home. The visitors went in first and compiled 91, J. Cross (51) and H. Parker (17) being the chief scorers. The home team replied with 205, R. Renn (44), Rev. W. H. Draper (42), A. Bradshaw (39), Hon. A. Villiers (11), Lord Jersey (17 not out), and C. Golby (22) getting into double figures.

Middleton Park scored an easy win over Heyford at Middleton on Saturday. Score:

HEYFORD.		Second Innings.	
P. Scarsbrook b Golby	20	lbw b Golby	35
A. Walton c Varney b Clare	10	c Allen b Read	7
E. Massey st Renn b Clare	6	run out	0
W. Lerner c Read b Varney	7	b Golby	0
A. Haynes b Read	10	b Read	5
E. Walton c and b Clare	10	b Read	0
Rev. L. Meredith b Read	1	c Renn b Read	0
S. Allen c Read b Clare	9	run out	0
J. Slatter c Lord Jersey b			
Clare	1	run out	9
A. Margetts b Clare	0	st Renn b Hon. A.	
		Villiers	0
E. Allen not out	0	not out	0
Byes 2, leg-byes 3	5	Bye 1, no ball 1	2
Total.. 80		Total.. 69	

MIDDLETON PARK.

R. Renn b Massey	22
C. Golby not out	66
Rev. W. H. Draper lbw b Walton	12
J. Varney c Haynes b Walton	6
Hon. A. Villiers b Walton	0
J. Clare lbw b Walton	0
F. Fox b Walton	5
Lord Jersey b Walton	2
G. Allen c Haynes b Lerner	2
E. Esau, jun. b Scarsbrook	2
Byes	2

MIDDLETON PARK v. OXFORD CITY.

This match at Middleton on Friday resulted in a draw. Score:

MIDDLETON PARK.		OXFORD CITY.	
R. Renn b H. Busher	2	T. H. K. Moulder c Worsley b Read	15
H. Tabb b S. Busher	0	H. Busher c Renn b Theatger	1
M. J. Daughish lbw b Moulder	9	H. T. Baines c and b Theatger	5
Hon. S. G. Theatger b Eade	23	S. B. Emmott not out	15
H. J. Leveson-Gower b Eade	10	G. B. Dickenson c Villiers b Theatger	9
F. Eade b Eade	0	H. J. Eade lbw b Leveson-Gower	11
Rev. W. H. Draper b Eade	10	H. Bacon c Daughish b Leveson-Gower	0
T. Emberton lbw b Moulder	14	M. Phillips not out	5
M. J. Lubbock not out	15		
A. Worsley c Baines b Moulder	15		
Hon. A. Villiers c Phillips b Baines	40		
Byes 14, leg-byes 2, wide 1, no-ball 1	15		
Total.. 147		Total (6 wks).. 61	

S. Busher, Hatt, and Venables did not bat.

MIDDLETON PARK v. SOULSBURY.

At Middleton Park on Tuesday, the home team winning by 70 runs. Score:

MIDDLETON PARK.	
R. Renn b Payne	40
T. Priest b Allen	5
J. Varney lbw b Bloxham	3
J. Mackarness b Allen	0
T. Buckland c Lerner b Payne	17
Hon. A. Villiers not out	49
J. Clare b Lerner	7
Lord Jersey c Walton b Allen	9
G. Mathews b Lerner	4
E. Leybourne c Walton b Lerner	4
F. Read c and b Haynes	24
Bye	1
Total.. 156	

1900

Although this is a score card and photograph of a Bicester v Chesterton Park match in 1900, Hon. F. Theisger, Rev W. H. Draper, Hon. A. Villiers, M. L. Daughlish, H. Tubb, and T. E. Emberlin, at least, had all also played matches for Middleton Park at this time.

BICESTER v. CHESTERTON LODGE.

This match at Bicester yesterday was left drawn, Chesterton Lodge, with one wicket to fall, requiring 11 runs to win. Polley played capital cricket for his second century this season, and he was also the most successful with the ball, disposing of five of the visiting team for 28. Score :

BICESTER.

Polley b Tubb	104
T. H. E. Moulder c Draper b Ricketts	6
T. E. Emberlin c Villiers b Theisger	3
Arnold c and b Theisger	1
W. Harper b Ricketts	1
A. Draper c Leatham b Ricketts	4
E. Peverill b Ricketts	5
King c and b Ricketts	6
S. Bennett c and b Ramsay	25
F. W. Pawtist at Dashwood b Daughlish	29
A. Campin not out	0
No-balls	8

Total..187

CHESTERTON LODGE.

Hon. F. J. N. Theisger b Polley	57
G. W. Ricketts c Peverill b King	0
A. B. Ramsay b Bennett	5
M. J. Daughlish b King	1
J. Hill c Arnold b Bennett	4
A. E. Leatham b Polley	30
Hon. A. Villiers not out	13
Rev. W. H. Draper b Polley	0
W. A. Newcombe c Emberlin b Polley	14
A. Dashwood c Pawtist b Polley	0
H. Tubb not out	19
Byes	8

Total (@ wkts)..157



CRICKET. 1913

Two day match between Lord Jersey's XI and Mr. H. Tubbs XI.

Two players in this Lord Jersey's XI were Internationals. One B.J. Bosanquet (An Old Etonian) played for England. As mentioned in the Preface he is credited with inventing the googly, known as "a bosie" in Australia. He was also a powerful batsman and in 1911 scored 103 in 75 minutes playing for the Gentlemen against the Players at Scarborough. Bowling in Test matches, he had two great days; 6 for 51 at Sydney and 8 for 107 at Nottingham. He also threw the hammer for Oxford.

The other R.O. Schwarz (An Old Pauline) played in 20 Tests for South Africa between 1905 and 1912 and was regarded as the leading googly bowler after Bosanquet whom he had studied whilst on the 1904 tour. In addition he played rugby for England.

In this scorecard, the bowling analyses appear to be the wrong way around, but in the late C.19th. and early C.20th. bowling analyses, at least in the Bicester Herald, were reported this way!

I.D. and D.M

LORD JERSEY'S XI. v. MR. H. TUBBS XI

This match was played at Middleton Park on Friday and Saturday last, the above gentlemen fielding strong elevens. The game resulted in a win for Lord Jersey's XI. by 48 runs. Scores and bowling analysis:—

LORD JERSEY'S XI.		Runs
R. V. Buxton, c Tufnell, b Holbrooke		24
B. J. T. Bosanquet, b Holbrooke		11
F. Read, c Montgomery, b Napier		58
M. B. Burrows, b Holbrooke		11
G. A. C. Sanderman, b Napier		0
F. Wetherby, not out		15
Hon. A. Villiers, c Gibson, b Napier		0
A. L. Harris, c Gibson, b Napier		0
T. Emberlin, b Napier		0
W. Golby, st Druce, b Holbrooke		1
Extras		4
		122

Second Innings.		Runs
R. V. Buxton, c Hoare, b Holbrooke		17
B. J. T. Bosanquet, c Daughish, b Holbrooke ..		13
F. Read, c Druce, b Napier		39
M. B. Burrows, c Tufnell, b Gibson		14
G. A. C. Sanderman, c Shouler, b Gibson		0
F. Wetherby, c Napier, b Montgomery		55
Hon. A. Villiers, c Tufnell, b Gibson		19
A. L. Harris, not out		0
T. Emberlin, b Napier		0
W. Golby, c Montgomery, b Napier		0
Extras		5
		162

MR. H. TUBBS XI.		Runs
G. N. Montgomery, c Buxton, b Sanderman		1
C. Shouler, l.b.w., b Sanderman		13
K. Gibson, l.b.w., b Schwarz		10
C. M. Hoare, c Villiers, b Sanderman		1
W. G. Druce, b Sanderman		28
H. C. C. Tufnell, b Sanderman		4
G. G. Napier, c Wetherby, b Schwarz		8
Capt. A. Ponsonby, b Sanderman		1
M. J. Daughish, not out		3
Rev. S. W. B. Holbrooke, b Sanderman		1
H. Tubbs, b Schwarz		1
Extras		7
		78

Second Innings.		Runs
G. N. Montgomery, c Burrows, b Sanderman ..		15
C. Shouler, c Villiers, b Schwarz		20
K. Gibson, b Schwarz		0
C. M. Hoare, c Emberlin, b Schwarz		10
W. G. Druce, b Schwarz		2
H. C. C. Tufnell, b Sanderman		2
G. G. Napier, c Sanderman, b Schwarz		24
Capt. A. Ponsonby, b Schwarz		10
M. J. Daughish, b Bosanquet		44
Rev. S. W. B. Holbrooke, b Schwarz		7
H. Tubbs, not out		8
Extras		12
		158

BOWLING ANALYSIS.—Lord Jersey's XI.				
	O.	M.	R.	W.
Rev. S. W. B. Holbrooke ..	15.2	1	69	4
G. N. Montgomery ..	7	2	27	0
G. G. Napier	9	2	22	5
K. Gibson	1	1	0	0

Second Innings.				
	O.	M.	R.	W.
G. G. Napier	12.1	2	39	3
Rev. S. W. B. Holbrooke	12	2	60	2
K. Gibson	11	3	33	3
H. C. C. Tufnell	4	0	21	0
G. N. Montgomery	1	0	7	0

Mr. H. Tubbs XI.				
	O.	M.	R.	W.
R. O. Schwarz	15	4	29	3
G. A. C. Sanderman	14	0	42	7
F. Read	1	1	0	0

Second Innings.				
	O.	M.	R.	W.
G. A. C. Sanderman	18	0	69	2
R. O. Schwarz	20	4	54	7
B. J. T. Bosanquet	5.4	1	19	1

The Cricketing Cleric



The bearded person on the left of the above picture is Rev. William H. Draper (1836-1924) who was Rector of Middleton Stoney for 50 years (1874-1924). He had 13 children and lived in the older of the two rectories in the village (now named Middleton Stoney House). He played cricket for Middleton Park till at least 1900 (aged 64). In the 1890s and in 1900 three other Drapers, K.H.U., F and A also played for the Park - it would seem reasonable to presume that they were his sons.

In this picture Rev Draper is with Lord Longford who married a Villiers and who was the father of the present Lord Longford who was 95 in December, 2000. He could be the child kneeling in this picture of circa.1911.

Note the cricket taking place in Middleton Park in the background. Could the photograph have been taken behind the shed that is still standing?

See Aspects of the Early Seventies - Mixing with the Best

A collection of five handwritten signatures in black ink. From left to right: a stylized signature for John Jameson; a signature for Alvin Kallicharan; a signature for David Brown; a signature for Bob Willis; and a signature for Alan Smith.

John Jameson (England)

Alvin Kallicharan (West Indies)

David Brown (England)

Bob Willis (England)

Alan Smith (England Manager)

All of Warwickshire C.C.C.

Officers and Members as at 1st. January, 2001

President	Ian Davenport
Chairman	Jim Norman
Captain	Clive Plant (P)
Vice Captain	Nick Moorman (P)
Secretary	Mike Curry
Treasurer	John Livingstone
Fixture Secretary	George Lamb (P)
Bar Secretary	Di Thompson
Social Secretary	Andrew Smith (P)
Ground Managers	Nick Thompson (P)
	Anthony Cripps (P)
	John Jackman (P)
Committee Member	John Deeley (P)
Scorer	James Roycroft

Life Members Terry Moule, Nick Price, Frank Rolfe, Di Thompson.
Nick Thompson and LesWatkins

Playing Members (excluding any Officers who still play (P))

Nick Adams, Graham Buchholz, Peter Clements, George Gibbs, Paul Hebbert, Peter Kerkoff, Alistair Lamb, Richard Lumb, David Martin-Sperry, Miles Picknett, Charlie Ross, Oliver Ross, Philip Shaw, Mike Simpson, Sathya Vadivale, Andrew Wordsworth, Paul Wordsworth.

Members

Otto Baur, Gregory Bowden, "Dennis" Davis, Bryan Godliman, John Hallam, Damion Hannon, Harry Jenkins, Michael Martin, David Moorman, Anne Moorman and C. Vadivale.

Vice Presidents

Tom Abernethy	Derek Ancil	Robert Ansell
William Bankes	Ian Brent-Smith	Ben Brooks
Nigel Cassidy	Mike Curry	Nick Davenport
John Deeley	Linda Deeley	Andrew Fulljames
Dennis Keating	Don Livingston	John Livingstone
Derek Marsh	Caro Mcfarlan	Bill McFarlan
Phillip Minty	Jim Norman	Colin Pickford
Michael Richards	James Roycroft	Dick Rymer
Frank Shouler	David Steele	John Talbot
Paul Turney	Anne Ansell	