

## SLAITHWAITE CC

The Early Years

# HERITAGE CONCERN

## 1848 - ORIGINS

Our current resolve on the HLF Cricket Heritage Project, to preserve the heritage of cricket in the area, was anticipated in Slaithwaite 80 years ago.



Supported by the  
**Heritage Lottery Fund**

In 1925 James Gartside, the Club President, voiced his concern that records of the Club's past may be lost if action was not taken. He wrote:

***The Slaithwaite Cricket Club has now been in existence for upwards of 50 years and I, and other persons connected with the club, have felt for some time that an attempt***

***should be made to put on record the main events in the history of the club, for the benefit***

***of both present and future generations, before all trace of its origin and happenings should be lost in the midst of time.***

Following this, a series of scrapbooks was begun, which provide a record of the Club's fortunes through to the 1970s.



The first of these books begins with an account of clubs early history, which had been printed in a 1905 Bazaar brochure. All of the five scrapbooks which were produced have been an invaluable source for compiling this exhibition.

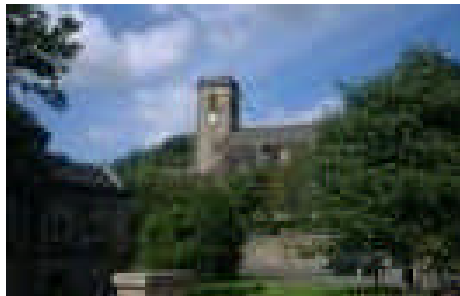
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# CHURCH LINK

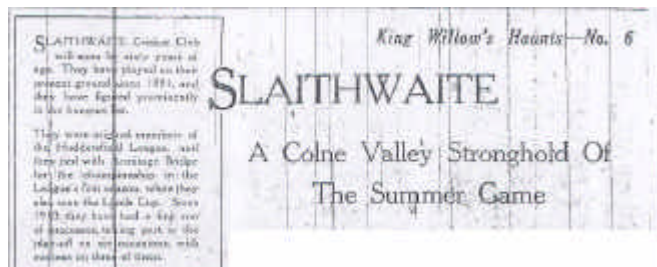
## 1870s - ORIGINS

Cricket was played in Slaithwaite before the present club was formed, in 1873. In the early 1870s the ***'Old Slaithwaite Cricket Club died a natural death, principally owing to Lord Dartmouth wanting the ground for building purpose'***.

The young men of Hill Top managed to beg or borrow the equipment from this original club and form the Slaithwaite St. James CC. Although no mention is made of a link with St. James', the local Anglican Church, the Club's original name leaves little doubt that one existed.



By 1877 this club was known by its current name, Slaithwaite Cricket Club.



The Huddersfield Examiner series '**King Willows Haunts**', published in 1932, lists the leading players from this period, who were '**Thomas and Lewis Bamforth, James Sykes, Wright Gledhill, John H. Wood, John Hopkinson, J.T. Quarmby, J.H. Dransfield, Hiram Wood, Thomas Hirst and G. Maxwell**'.

## EARLY ODDS MATCHES

'**King Willows Haunts**' also mentions the Club's early fixtures, which reveal much about the traditional strength of cricket in Huddersfield.

Slaithwaite often had to play '**fifteen to eighteen men...against the first elevens of other clubs**'. This type of odds match was common for much of the nineteenth century.



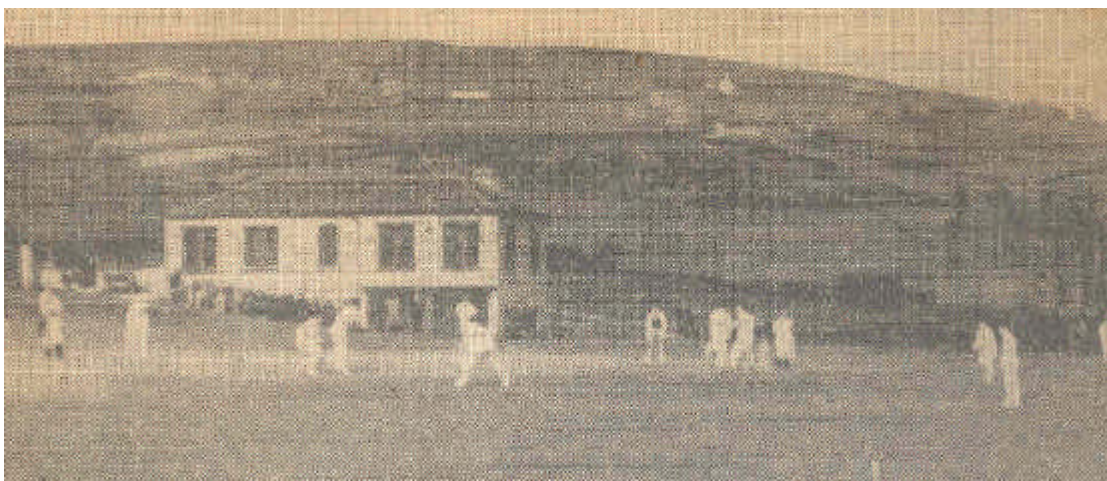
Although league or cup competitions were not played until the 1880s, matches were still very competitive and often played for a stake. This was originally a sum of money, but by the 1870s teams commonly played for a matchball or an after-match dinner.

So it was often agreed that weaker teams were allowed to field extra men to make the contest viable.

# Permanent home

## 1880s - CONSOLIDATION

The 1880s saw a rise in the Club's fortunes which was sparked by two developments. Firstly, the acquisition of a permanent home in 1881, after two venues had previously been used, meant that the playing area could be improved and finances raised through events like regular bazaars.



Secondly, a professional was engaged, which helped improve the standard of the team.

The *Huddersfield Examiner* explains how this led to an improvement in status and **'as time went on better class Clubs found their way into the Slaithwaite fixture list, and matches began to be played on equal terms.'**

# Twice as nice!

## 1924 – DOUBLE-WINNERS

During the inter-war years Slaithwaite were one of the most successful clubs in the area. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI were Huddersfield League champions on four occasions - 1925, 1929 1934 and 1938 - while the 2nd XI league title was won five times, 1919, 1929, 1930, 1933 and 1936.

In the knockout competitions 1924 was a breakthrough year, as both the Sykes Cup and the Paddock Shield were brought to Hill Top for the first time.



The Sykes Cup final was won when Slaithwaite successfully defended their total of 147 by dismissing Huddersfield for 138.

In the Paddock Shield, after batting first and scoring 106, the 2nd XI secured a 17-run victory, as Huddersfield 2nd XI were bowled out for 89.

Slaithwaite celebrated as the teams returned.

## REJOICINGS AT SLAITHWAITE.

Enthusiastic scenes were witnessed at Slaithwaite last night on the return of the Slaithwaite cricket team with the Sykes Cup.

They were met by '**cheering crowds**' as around 1,000 people lined the streets. The Club President, Councillor J. Garside, then addressed the crowd before everyone '**adjourned to the pavilion, where the rejoicings were continued.**' And again, one week later.

## CRICKET CELEBRATIONS.

The large and enthusiastic gathering held last Saturday to celebrate the winning of the double event by the Slaithwaite Cricket Club was a huge success.

The event was suitably reported in the local press and the speeches which were made paid tribute to the spirit that prevailed at the Club:

***...this year was the greatest of them all, because this year both teams have contributed to a record that may last for years and possibly, in the words of the poet, 'it may be for ever'...As was pointed out by Mr. Denton at the presentation ceremony, one of the secrets of the club's success is that there is a real clubbable feeling amongst its members, that manifests itself in a willingness to share the work and shoulder some of the responsibility. While this spirit persists there is no anxiety about the future fortunes of the club.***

# Rastrick vanquished!

1925 – BYRAM SHIELD WINNERS

## CRICKET

### SLAITHWAITE v RASTRICK

#### PRESENTATION OF BYROM SHIELD.

The last home match and incidentally, the final game of the season for the Slathwaite club was when Rastrick appeared at Hill Top on Saturday. The facility of such an arrangement was early apparent, for spectators were practically absent altogether, and five of the Slathwaite team were away on holiday, those including the professional. Of course the championship had been won, and there was nothing to fear, but events might not turn out so luckily every time.

The drizzling rain of the morning had the effect of delaying the start until 4.25, when Rastrick, having won the toss, decided to bat. Their start was not at all convincing, Dodson cleverly caught Gill off his own bowling in the first over, and quickly followed this up by bowling Shaw. A. Carter, however, batted finely, and despite frequent bowling changes, scored 55 by sound cricket until beaten by Wilkinson. The seventh and eighth wickets offered some opposition, but as Helm being dismissed by Shaw off Sykes, the innings were declared closed. Slathwaite made a very sorry show with the bat, Johnson 19 (missed second ball), N. Sugden 19, and L. S. Dyson 12 being the only double figure contributors to a total of 74. Scores:

Rastrick.	
L. Gill, c and b Dodson	2
W. Shaw, b Dodson	7
A. Carter, b Wilkinson	55
T. Smith, c Sugden b Dodson	11
A. Whiteley, c and b Dyson	9
F. Berry, b Johnson	8
H. Buckley, c and b Johnson	19
R. Helm, st Shaw b H. Sykes	16
H. L. Thompson, not out	9
Extras	11
<b>Total for 8 wickets (dec.)</b>	<b>129</b>
Slathwaite.	
A. Shaw, c Whiteley b Wadsworth	1
H. Hammett, c Berry b Wadsworth	0
A. Johnson, c and b Wadsworth	19
F. Walker, b Thompson	5
N. Sugden, c Wadsworth	19
P. Sykes, c Buckley b Thompson	5
L. S. Dyson, b Buckley	12
W. Wilkinson, b Buckley	6
J. Dodson, c Shaw b Smith	6
E. Webster, b Wadsworth	1
H. Sykes, not out	6
Extras	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>

#### PRESENTATION OF THE SHIELD.

Between the innings session was made to present the Byrom Shield to the Slathwaite club for winning the championship in 1925. Mr. Mackethwaite, of Rastrick, occupied the chair, and after apologising for the absence of the Slathwaite president (Mr. James Garrside), who was away on holiday, said that he was pleased that Slathwaite had won the championship for they were admittedly the best team of the season. He then called on Mr. H. B. Atha, of Lockwood, to make the presentation.

Mr. Atha also had apologies to make for the League president, who was also on holiday, but he said it was a pleasure to him to come to Slathwaite to present the Shield to them to keep for twelve months. He regarded the Slathwaite team as one of the best of the season in their district, and they had one of the best professionals. No matter what others said he considered when a professional took over a hundred wickets in a season in league cricket he had been doing exceptionally well. He had a great regard for their captain, who up at headquarters was a hard worker in trying to bring cricket in the district up to a higher level. This was the fourth time that the championship had been won by Slathwaite, and on behalf of the League he asked Mr. Herbert Sykes, as captain, to accept the same.

Mr. Sykes, in accepting for the Slathwaite club, said that all would agree that they had earned the honour, and that they owed a great deal to their professional. They also owed a great deal to the weather, the past season being one of the best for many years. A good professional was a great asset to any club, and clubs in the district were beginning to find out that a good professional paid. He thanked the public for their support during the season—it had been splendid throughout, and they had very many supporters who were not members of the club. Personally he would like the honour of winning the Shield to go round, not to Huddersfield or Farnley, but he would like to see such clubs as Rastrick, Lockwood or Holmfield have a look in. (A voice: What about Luthwaite?) To such clubs the success would do some good, and he thought that neither Huddersfield, Farnley or Slathwaite would suffer applause.

Votes of thanks to the chairman and Mr. Atha closed the proceedings.

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Dyson	1
Johnson	3
A. Johnson	2
Wilkinson	1
R. Sykes	0
H. Sykes	1

Wadsworth	
Shaw	
Buckley	
Sykes	

only one match not started through rain  
Slathwaite v Lockwood being



# PRESENTATION OF MEDALS

## To SLAITHWAITE CRICKETERS.

There was a very large attendance at the Slaithwaite Liberal Hall on Saturday evening, when at a dinner arranged by Slaithwaite Cricket and Bowling Club, opportunity was taken to present the gold medals won by the first eleven as champions of the Huddersfield and District Cricket League. The handsome shield, which was presented at a cricket match last month, was also in evidence on the platform. Mr. Herbert Denton, a former president of the club, presided, and was supported by Mr. James Gartside, president, and Mr. J. W. Denton, secretary of the League.

Mr. Denton said that when he joined the Slaithwaite Cricket Club 26 years ago it was not in the prosperous position it was today. They were there to celebrate the success of the club winning the shield again and they all looked with them in those success. He did not say that this year's team was the best they had ever had, but it was certainly a first class team. Since the year 1910 Slaithwaite had been very prominent in winning both shield and cup, and he considered they had the finest team between 1911 and 1919. He remembered that in 1910 they appointed William as professional and the following year they won the shield. In 1911 both first and second elevens finished the season at the top of their respective leagues. In 1912 they played off in the final, but Huddersfield beat them; they again won in 1914; and in 1915 and 1916 they played off in the final, but were not successful. He hoped the club would go on doing well and playing cricket from the true cricket point of view. The team had played well together, and in the right spirit throughout, and so had just won the battle before they commenced. He had been reminded that there were not many players left who played with the team in 1911-12—there were only Norman Spalden, Percy Sykes and Herbert Sykes, and they hoped they would go on playing for Slaithwaite for many years yet. Mr. Denton concluded by expressing the hope that the club would continue to give every help and encouragement to young players in their own districts, rather than being into the team players from other districts.

The president, Mr. Gartside, read a telegram from Cr. Cutten, who expressed his regret that he could not be with them, and congratulating them on their success; Mr. Gartside also said how pleased he was to see an old friend present in Mr. Arthur Blackburn (supplies), a former very valuable slip man and first wicket batsman. He was very pleased that they had had such a successful season, if they had had a little bit of good fortune in the Cup semi-final but thought they would have beaten Huddersfield, and so won the final and another set of medals. But the double event of winning cup and shield was left for the future. With Slaithwaite's record in the past, and with such a team, he thought they could look forward to the year when they could win both in one year.

Mr. Gartside then presented medals to the following—  
Herbert Sykes (captain), Norman Spalden, Percy Sykes, E. E. Greenwood, A. W. Shaw, A. Johnson, L. S. Dixon, Jack Dawson, J. W. Earnshaw, J. Brown, H. Middleton, T. Hartshorn, W. Wilkinson, E. Webster (money), R. Middleton (money), G. Aspinall (money).

Herbert Sykes, the captain, in response, said that he had made many mistakes, but he was glad about them because that himself. He would like to thank the players for the splendid support they had given him during the season. They had made the job a pleasure.

Mr. J. W. Denton, in making a vote of thanks to Mr. Denton and Mr. Gartside, congratulated the Slaithwaite club on having a captain who could also be a secretary. They were lucky in having able to keep their feet in the ground, and to go away in the knowledge that those who should go round about the other clubs would have to try all the harder to beat those who always seemed to be in at the houses. He was glad that the deciding games had been done away with, as he had never agreed that a club which was at the head of the league table should have to play off at the final, when wickets were uncertain, and the luck of the day often decided the result. He would like to see two divisions in the league, with promotion by merit, so that there would be something for the bottom clubs to play for as well as the top clubs. It could be easily arranged to bring in two more clubs and having twelve clubs in each division.

Mr. Herbert Sykes seconded the vote of thanks.

# CRICKET CHAMPIONS.

## Presentation of Medals to Slaithwaite Players.

Gold medals won by the Slaithwaite Cricket Club, as champions of the Huddersfield and District League, were presented to the players during an interval in a dance at the Liberal Hall on Saturday. Mr. H. Denton presided over a large attendance, and was supported by Councilor J. Gartside (president of the club), Mr. J. W. Denton (secretary of the league), and others.

The chairman said they all enjoyed in the success of the team in winning the "Byron" Shield. Since 1910 the club has been prominent in winning both the shield and the cup, and he hoped they would go on playing the game in the right spirit. He always hoped that Slaithwaite had only one man whom they paid to play cricket, and that was the distinguished professional. It would be a great mistake to have several professionals. He would like to see all the players together in a good spirit, and that was what the motto. Of the old players only Norman Spalden, Percy Sykes, and Herbert Sykes were now left, and he hoped they would continue to play for some time. He was a strong believer in sport, and had always appreciated it.

Councilor Gartside, who handed the medals to the players, with an appropriate reference to each recipient, acknowledged the great services rendered to the club by Mr. Denton, and referred to the progress made when Mr. Denton was president. He congratulated the players on their success and said that if they had had a little bit of fortune they would have beaten Huddersfield in the "Sykes" Cup match and thus won the cup and another set of medals. The "double event" in one season was left to the future, but he hoped it would not be long delayed. He presented medals to the following players—Herbert Sykes (captain)—who said he was glad to accept that position in his first year as captain—Norman Spalden, Percy Sykes, E. E. Greenwood, A. W. Shaw, A. Johnson, L. S. Dixon, J. Dawson, J. W. Earnshaw, J. Brown, T. Hartshorn, W. Wilkinson, E. Webster (professional), R. Middleton (money), and G. Aspinall (baggage man). R. Middleton, one of the players, was unable to be present.

Mr. J. W. Denton, in making a vote of thanks to the chairman and president congratulated Slaithwaite on their success, and also on having a secretary who was also capable of being the captain. They were also fortunate in being able to keep local lads like Percy Sykes and Lawrence Dixon, who were good enough to go out as professionals. He was glad the League decision money had been done away with, as he never agreed that a club which was at the head of the table should have to play off at the final, when wickets were uncertain and the luck of the day often decided the result. He would like to see two divisions in the league, with promotion by merit, so that there would be something for the lower clubs to play for as well as the top clubs. They could easily arrange to be taking in two more clubs to make the number twenty-four.

Mr. Herbert Sykes seconded the resolution, which was carried.

# Slaithwaite meets the Caribbean...

## 1933/4 – CONSTANTINE AND EDWIN ST. HILL

By the 1930s, Slaithwaite CC was a grand and rather distinguished club. Its membership – playing and non-playing – would have comprised villagers, and probably *only* villagers.

But as clubs like Slaithwaite became more successful, they became more ambitious. Instead of hiring a professional from Huddersfield or Bradford, why not go further afield?



Learie Constantine was a legendary West Indian cricketer. He had become a huge star in league cricket circles after signing for Nelson.

He played an exhibition match at Slaithwaite in 1932. Accompanying him was Edwin St. Hill, a fellow Trinidadian who was professional at Lowerhouses.

**L. N. CONSTANTINE'S  
VISIT TO  
SLAITHWAITE.**

**THE TEAMS CHOSEN.**

Great interest is being taken in the visit to Slaithwaite next Tuesday of L. N. Constantine, the brilliant all-round cricketer who hails from West Indies, and who is professional for the Nelson club in the Lancashire League, and all that is required to make the event a huge success is favourable weather.

The party will consist of Constantine, his wife and little daughter, Miss Marjorie Knowles, the Cotton Queen of Great Britain, and Mr. J. Sharples, of Nelson, a representative of the firm employing Miss Knowles, and by whose persuasion she is appearing in her official capacity.

They will be met about noon by Mr. James Gariside, president of the Slaithwaite Cricket and Bowling Club, and during the early afternoon will be conducted round the Transmiring Station at Moorside Edge, by permission of the B.C.C.

Wickets will be pitched at 4 o'clock, and the tea interval will be taken from 5 to 5-45. In order that intending spectators who will not be leaving work until five o'clock will have the opportunity of seeing Constantine in action, it has been arranged that he will neither bat nor bowl until after the tea interval.

The two teams will be as follows:—  
Mr. H. Robinson's XI: H. Robinson (Bradley), F. Sharpe (Bradley Mill)—who is taking the place of F. Smalley, Yorks, and Hinton, who is suffering from an injured back, F. Lockhart (Bradford), F. R. Beckett (King Cross), W. Hirst (Brighouse), W. A. Hutton (Bradford), D. H. Jewett (Halifax), J. Hill (Brighouse), J. Smith (Brighouse), E. D. Somers (Lidgate), F. Berry (Wharfedale), and J. R. S. Raper (Bradford).

Slaithwaite XI: A. Johnson, W. Renshaw, N. Walker, A. Saxelby, G. A. Dawson, J. Dawson, J. Houghton, J. Thornton, J. Beaumont (Thongbridge), F. E. Greenwood (Huddersfield), L. N. Constantine and another.



*A. H. Booth took the place of Hutton  
G. Burgess (King Cross) - - - Raper  
M. Wade (Brighouse) - - - Lockhart  
and this fills the vacant place for Hirst.*

**The Huddersfield Examiner anticipates Constantine's appearance in an exhibition match at Slaithwaite - which was the catalyst for St. Hill to join the club as professional a year later.**

## FEAST FOR CRICKET-LOVERS.

UNIT OF FAMOUS WEST-INDIAN CRICKETER.

ACCOMPANIED BY ETON BOYER.

THEIR attendance in Barboursville and other parts of West Virginia on Tuesday and Wednesday of the present week, the famous West-Indian cricketer, Sir Herbert Richards, of Barboursville, West Virginia, who had the privilege of a passing visit, a limited stay at the present hotel, presented the scene for one of the greatest cricket feasts of the year.

In addition to the various cricket matches, several other events were held, including a tennis match, a golf tournament, and a horse race. The cricket matches were particularly popular, and the spectators were highly enthusiastic.

UNIT TO BE HELD.

It was the wish of the committee to have a unit of the famous West-Indian cricketer, Sir Herbert Richards, of Barboursville, West Virginia, who had the privilege of a passing visit, a limited stay at the present hotel, presented the scene for one of the greatest cricket feasts of the year.

Several days, Richards was extremely popular, and his visit was much enjoyed by the spectators. The cricket matches were particularly popular, and the spectators were highly enthusiastic.

It was announced in the afternoon that the unit would be held on the following day. The spectators were highly enthusiastic, and the matches were held in a very successful manner.

### AN EARLY START.

F. J. Greenwald, of Barboursville, and J. Boyer, of Huntington, opened the first team's innings in the morning of Tuesday. The batting of the first team was very good, and the match was very interesting.

Greenwald was one of the best batsmen of the team, and he was very successful in his batting. He scored several runs, and he was very popular with the spectators.

Boyer was also a very good batsman, and he was very successful in his batting. He scored several runs, and he was very popular with the spectators.

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### THE BATTLE.

Charleston took the first wicket, which was a surprise. He took a run of about 100 runs, and he was very popular with the spectators.

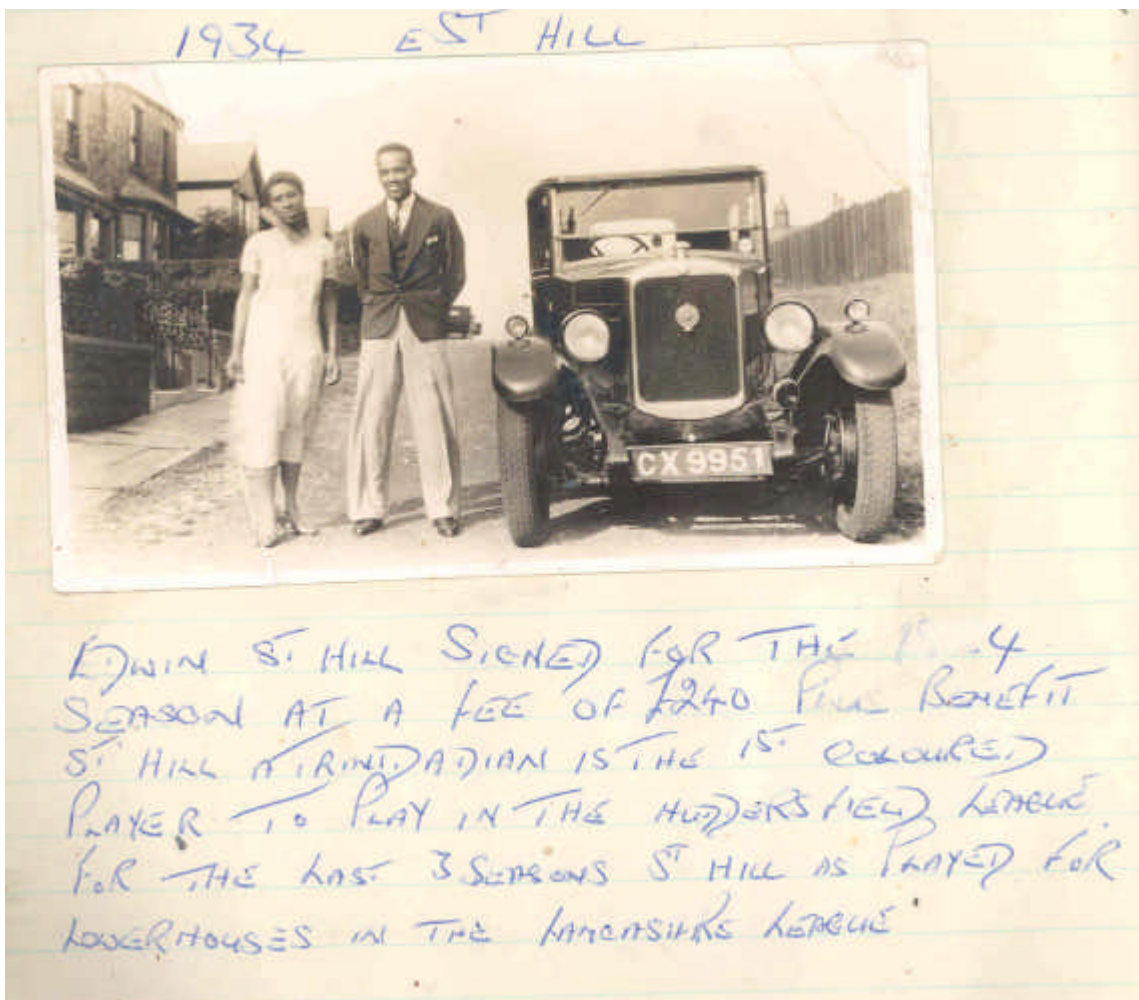
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### St. Hill and his wife in Slaithwaite.

St. Hill was professional at Slaithwaite in 1934 and 1945. He took 152 wickets for the club in total at an average of 10.52.

In his first season the Club tied with Golcar for the League Championship with St. Hill scoring 408 runs at an average of 20.40 and taking 87 wickets at an average of 12.91.

The Slaithwaite CC annual report concluded that ***'the engagement of St. Hill has been successful to a point, and we claim it has brought increased interest into the League.'***

## SLAITHWAITE'S NEW PROFESSIONAL.

EDWIN ST. HILL, OF LOWERHOUSE.

The big news in the local cricket world has been taken. Rumours have been current of late that some local clubs were to engage players of outstanding repute as their usual professionals and it is fitting that the Slaithwaite club, who have been widely mentioned in this connection should take the first step. They have engaged as their professional for next season Edwin St. Hill, the West Indian, who for the past three seasons has played with the Lowerhouse club in the Lancashire League. He will be the first coloured player to be introduced into the Huddersfield League.

Mr. Hill, who was introduced to the Lowerhouse club by Constantine, visited Slaithwaite with his more famous countryman in a friendly match this season, and attracted the interest of the Slaithwaite officials on that occasion. 28 years of age, he has played for the West Indies in America and Australia. Last season he scored 427 runs with an average of 20.73, and took 27 wickets at an average of 13.67. We understand that Slaithwaite have offered him £240 together with a benefit match for full weekly services for the season. This means he will be available for all-round games.

### PLAYED IN THE COLONIES.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Herbert Sykes, secretary of the Slaithwaite club, we are able to publish the following details concerning St. Hill from a writer who signs himself "Lowerhouse." The writer states: "This native of Port of Spain, Trinidad, is a well-educated man. He was signed by Lowerhouse on the recommendation of Constantine and in his first season the club realized over £200 in "gate" money for its enterprise.



E. ST. HILL.

St. Hill has played cricket in Australia and New Zealand. One of his brothers came over to this country with a previous team from the colonies, but this player was a batsman only. Slaithwaite's new professional is a great all-round cricketer, and the opinion is often expressed that the best has not been seen of this player yet.

Mr. Hill is essentially a player who plays for his club, otherwise his averages with both bat and ball would have been better than they are. On countless occasions he could easily have hurried out his bat and the West Indians delight to put action into their play and the additional risk thereby incurred is joyfully accepted by them.

**A press report announcing the signing of St. Hill by Slaithwaite CC – almost certainly the first black player to play in the Huddersfield & District League**