

# TOUCHLINES

## The Magazine of the Rugby Memorabilia Society

President: CLIFF MORGAN

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- Feeling 'Groggy'!
- Springboks Carded Part 2
- More Rugby Olympians 2

## Editor's Notes

Let me start this time by saying a very big THANK YOU to all of our members who have sent me GET WELL MESSAGES from around the world, they arrived by email, post, phone and some who visited me in hospital. Surely this is what the Society is all about...

With yet another season drawing to a close and clubs fighting for promotion or to avoid relegation, cup competitions around the Northern Hemisphere are close to being decided and our congratulations go to Ireland the 6 Nations Grand Slam Champions. Also, as a Society we wish Gerald Davies and his squad of players GOOD LUCK, as they embark on their LIONS tour to South Africa.

Our AGM is fast approaching on May 17th at Ebbw Vale R.F.C. May I remind you of our auction which will be held during the day. All monies raised will go to the Society funds, which needs a BIG BOOST. So, not only bring yourself, but bring plenty of cash. I do trust that you will enjoy this edition as I have collated it in a bit of a rush, but being out of action for many weeks I hope you will understand!

Before I close please keep your articles coming in for publication in our August edition, normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

Roger

(Roger has done wonders with this issue since he is very far from well.: he and Viv have all our good wishes - Phil)

## Index

	Pages
A Journey To The World of Groggs	3
Springboks Carded - Part 2	4
An Oxfordshire Sporting Gentleman - Part 2	6
Farewell Ken ..	8
At The Going Down Of The Sun	9
Welsh Stars had a rugby ball as war ended...	10
Le Rugby aux Jeux Olympiques: Rugby at the Olympic Games	11
Cash 'Floods' in at Hawick...	12
Goodbye Big Mac...	14
Who Was The First Wales Rugby Mascot?	15
Jim Sewell	15
Programme Gallery	16
Gerwyn Williams's Passing 2009	17
Services Internationals: Word War Two	18
A Brief History of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Rugby - Part 1	19
British Lions Tour to South Africa 2009	20
Rugby's Olympians - 1 - Attie van Heerden	21
Rugby's Olympians - 2 - H.J.C. Brown	22
Rugby's Olympians - 3 - John Arthur Gregory	24

## A Journey To The World of Groggs

Neil Jenkins once said that 'a Welsh cap comes first, then becoming a Grogg, and third comes selection for the Lions'. I must have first visited the Grogg Shop during the mid-1970s. My grandmother lived in the Rhondda and my Dad sometimes stopped at the Grogg Shop on the way over from Bristol. A few of the Groggs from these early visits now reside in my collection.

However, it wasn't until I left university (I stayed as long as I could!) and started working in the early 1990s that I started collecting Groggs and, indeed, other rugby memorabilia. Sadly, my grandmother was no longer with us by then so visits to the Grogg Shop itself weren't very frequent. Instead, it became a habit to pick up one or two or even three Groggs each time I went to an international match in Cardiff from a shop in the Royal Arcade. Thinking back to the vast quantities of alcohol that went hand-in-hand with matches in Cardiff, it's amazing that they all managed to find their way back to Bristol intact!

The Grogg Shop itself is an Aladdin's Cave of rugby memorabilia as many players through the years have returned the compliment of being 'grogged' by gifting international and club shirts and other bits of kit. You can see some of this on the Grogg Shop website - [www.groggs.co.uk](http://www.groggs.co.uk) - which is well worth a visit.

John Hughes stopped making Groggs from clay about 10 years ago and this coincided with me thinking that maybe my collection (which then stood at nearly 100) had got big enough. The older clay Groggs and the newer Groggs look slightly different when set side-by-side so will always look a little odd when displayed together. However, there are a few players of more recent vintage that I'd love to have in my collection - Gareth Thomas and Shane Williams spring to mind - so maybe I'll change my mind one day and start collecting seriously again.

It's very difficult to pick out a favourite Grogg as they're all good in their own way. I've always liked Ieuan Evans and Neil Jenkins as players so, if forced, I'd probably have to say that the two figurine-type Groggs of them were my favourites. Neil Jenkins is my favourite player so I made an exception and bought a non-clay figurine of him in the Lions kit. However, if you ask me which ones are the best Groggs in my collection in terms of capturing the players character and expressions then I'd have to say Sean Fitzpatrick, Delme Thomas, Garin Jenkins and Phil Davies seem the best to me.



The four groggs that I think best 'capture' the player - Garin Jenkins, Delme Thomas, Phil Davies and Sean Fitzpatrick.



The Collection. Has anyone got MORE Groggs than Adrian? Let us know!

We moved house about two years ago and the Groggs have sat in boxes ever since. We're hoping to get a room with customised wall-to-wall shelving sorted soon to house the Groggs, my ever increasing rugby book collection and my snooker table! Given that I have a lovely but very inquisitive one-year old daughter with a great propensity for breaking things then maybe it's no bad thing that the Groggs will stay in the boxes for a little bit longer yet!

**Adrian Parry**

## SPRINGBOKS CARDED - Part 2

Some twelve years before the All Blacks made their second tour of the British Isles, the second Springboks arrived in the autumn of 1912. They included two players who had toured six years previously, Billy Millar, the captain and 'Uncle Dobbin', the vice-captain. Of their twenty seven matches, they won twenty four, including all four internationals, and lost three, to Newport, London and Swansea. As Newport were the first side to beat the Springboks, the Springbok head was presented to Walter Martin, the Newport captain and try scorer in the game. The trophy has held a place of honour at Rodney Parade ever since.

Lewis Bros., Cardiff, issued a very good postcard of the second Springboks, but for this tour none of the British tobacco companies issued any cards of the players. However, cards of a number of British players who played against the tourists are to be found. In South Africa two tobacco companies issued cards of the Springbok players. The African Tobacco Manufacturers (S.A.) issued 29 cards, showing 28 players and the manager Max Honnelt (Transvaal). there is no No.29 card in this series, but two players G. Morkel and J.S. Braine were each given card No.2. the United Tobacco Companies (South) Ltd. (S.A.) issued cards of the twenty



*F.J. Dobbin.*



Lewis Bros, Photo Bath-Copyright

Rees, Printer, Plymouth St., Cardiff.

### **SOUTH AFRICAN RUGBY FOOTBALL TEAM, 1912-13**

(Read Left to Right) First Row. J.T. Meintjes, A.S. Knight, L. Louw, J.D. Luyt, G. Morkel.  
 Second Row. T. Luyt, S. Ledger, T. Van Vuuren, E.H. Shum, E. McHardy, T. Francis, J. Braine,  
 W. Mills, R. Luyt, E. Delaney.  
 Third Row. W. Krige, G. Thompson, S.N. Cronje, J. Stegmann, W.A. Millar, M. Honnet, F.G.  
 Dobbin, D.S. Morkel, W.H. Morkel, A. Van der Hoff.  
 Bottom Row. M. Wrentmore, J. Immelman, J. McCulloch, J. Morkel.

eight players with a card size larger than standard. Cards in these two South African series are seldom seen in the United Kingdom.

In the England team who played the Springboks, W.J.A. Davies, the Royal Navy Commander, born in Pembrokeshire played his first international match. He had also been in the victorious London side. There is an excellent caricature of Davies in Churchman's Men of the Moment in Sport, issued in standard and large size in 1928.



*W.J.A. Davies.*

half was Tommy Vile. He played just eight times for Wales, but his international career spanned seventeen seasons. He was not always in favour with the selectors, but the Great War probably cost him a number of matches. later, Vile became a much respected referee, president of the Welsh Rugby Union and High Sheriff of Monmouthshire. there is a card of Tommy Vile in Taddy's Prominent Footballers, Newport group of fifteen cards. Reg Plummer and Vile's half back partner and captain, Walter Martin are also included in this group.



*Tommy Vile.*



*R. Luyt.*

'One of the greatest footballers who ever played for Ireland' is an extract from the information on the back of the R.H. Lloyd card in the set of Irish Rugby Internationals issued by Willis in 1928. Dicky Lloyd was Irelands top points scorer at this time and their captain against Billy Miller's Springboks. As an outside half, the card rates him alongside his counterpart for England, W.J.A. Davies.

In the Newport and Welsh teams on this tour the scrum half was Tommy Vile. He played just eight times for Wales, but his international career spanned seventeen seasons. He was not always in favour with the selectors, but the Great War probably cost him a number of matches. later, Vile became a much respected referee, president of the Welsh Rugby Union and High Sheriff of Monmouthshire. there is a card of Tommy Vile in Taddy's Prominent Footballers, Newport group of fifteen cards. Reg Plummer and Vile's half back partner and captain, Walter Martin are also included in this group.



*Dicky Lloyd.*

The Springboks returned home in January 1913. Eighteen years were to pass before the arrival of the Third Springboks

**Ron Collins**

# **An Oxfordshire Sporting Gentleman**

## **Alfred St. George Hammersley**

### **Part Two**

Still searching for sporting outlets he joined the Vancouver Football (Rugby) Club and eventually became the first President of the British Columbia Rugby Union at its inaugural meeting in 1889. This Union is still arguably the strongest Rugby Union in Canada.

Hammersley had a rare sense of humour. It is said that when Rudyard Kipling paid him a visit he found a note pinned to Hammersley's door saying 'Out On Business'. 'Business' was the name of his horse!

In the Vancouver Courts an act abolishing the use of wigs in Court was passed. A strong supporter of everything British, this was, in Hammersley's opinion, an American innovation. He declared he would never practise in a British Columbia Court again, and was true to his word.

He became interested in real estate and bought some 19,500 acres of land, sub-divided it and attracted some early settlers to an area now known as North Vancouver on the other side of the Burrard Inlet. The first municipal ferry was named 'St George' in his honour.

His family had seen the addition of five children, three boys and two girls, and when, in 1905, Alfred Hammersley decided to retire back to England a banquet was held on the eve of his departure at the North Vancouver Hotel. Many people stood and spoke in gratifying terms and several songs were sung. On rising, Hammersley was given a hearty reception and spoke in reply. Part of what he said was 'The social side of life and sport were infinitely better than stem officialdom to build up a community. To build North Vancouver as she ought to be money was nothing compared with good fellowship, manliness and the love of sport. Were all brought up in a manly way they could play the game and play it well. If we can in our little community infuse manliness of sport and square dealing we would be helping the empire as a whole.' He then sang, by request, his favourite party piece, 'John Peel'. Later the gathering sang 'Auld Lang Syne', and dispersed. Hammersley went off to finalise the family's departure to England.

But he was not finished yet, not by a long way!

Back in England, Alfred Hammersley was becoming a well known figure in Oxfordshire, due to his electioneering on behalf of the Conservative and Unionist Party, in an attempt to become Member of Parliament for Mid-Oxon. When he addressed a public meeting at Alvescot in January 1908, he was described as 'an Oxfordshire man born and bred:- his father was one of the best known County men having been Chairman of the Quarter Sessions and closely connected with all public work His family had been connected with Oxfordshire for many generations - whatever he had done in different parts of the Empire all his better aspirations were drawn from his own home and his love of Oxfordshire. He had lived for 15 years and over in Canada and for 12 in New Zealand.' Alfred's involvement in helping to form the Oxfordshire Nomads Rugby Union Football Club in 1909, many years later to become Oxford RFC, and his presence when acting as Chairman at the inaugural meeting at the Clarendon Hotel, in Commarket, Oxford would have given the new club great support and credibility.

In opening the proceedings the Chairman said, they knew, they had met to consider the advisability of forming a football club under Rugby Union rules for Oxford and district. He confessed he was somewhat surprised that they had not already in existence a successful Rugby club, for he considered there was no better place in England for such a club than Oxford, where they had ample opportunities for matches

with good teams and where it should be easy to start a club and keep it going. When the idea was brought to his notice he at once thought it should be taken up and determined to do everything he could to forward the project. He had no doubt those present were ready and anxious to start a Rugby club and that once it started it would be sure of success. When the meeting arrived at the point to elect officers Mr A St G Hamersley, the Chairman, was unanimously asked to become President of the club, and in accepting the offer, Mr Hamersley thanked them for the honour they had done him and assured them he should take a keen interest in the newly formed club. He referred to his experience of the rugby game both in New Zealand and Canada, and considered that although in England Association Football had caught the popular fancy, the soccer game was not to be compared with the Rugby code. There was no better game in the world than Rugby.

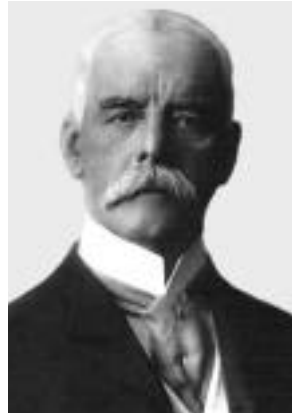
Alfred Hamersley had also been busy elsewhere and a long promotional campaign came to an end on Saturday 22nd January 1910 when he was elected Unionist MP for Mid Oxfordshire.

The First World War saw Alfred Hamersley, now carrying the rank of Colonel keen to play his part in this conflict. At the age of 66 years he was asked by the Army Council to form a heavy battery for service during the Great War, the Headquarters of which were taken at Exeter College, Oxford. The battery was started in February 1915 and men of Oxfordshire joined up, eager to help beat back the enemy. The Battery made a number of wooden guns, which were very useful for the intensive training they went through, but it was not until March 1916 that they were supplied with the real thing and drafted overseas. At this stage Colonel Hamersley, owing to advanced years, gave over the command to a younger man, Major Drought. The Batteries took part in some outstanding battles, including the Somme, Arras and Ypres, for which they were commended by the authorities for their efficiency.

Nationally, the recovery of Rugby Union after the war was quite remarkable. Like any other organisation English rugby suffered greatly, with the loss of twenty six international players, and only four pre-war players played in the game against Wales in Swansea in 1920. But after many team changes things took a turn for the good and 1921 saw England gain their third 'Grand Slam'. That series included the Scotland-England match at Inverleith which provided the opportunity for the English and Scottish Rugby Unions to celebrate the Jubilee of that first ever International in 1871. Alfred St G Hamersley was one of sixteen survivors of that match, ten of whom were English, who were invited to the match and the team's dinner afterwards to join the celebrations, and the occasion would have brought back many happy and varied memories to him.

A letter from Alfred Hamersley, published in the Oxford Times on October 15th 1926, announced that arrangements had been made for a memorial to be erected to commemorate the services rendered by four Oxfordshire Heavy Batteries in the Great War, and the memory of those who fell. Subscriptions, limited to a half-a-crown, could be sent to him at his home at Rycote Park, Wheatley.

This appeal was obviously successful. On Sunday 28th November 1926, 150 men marched from St Giles, headed by the 4th Battalion Oxfordshire and Bucks Light Infantry Band, to the Town Hall in Oxford where, before several hundred local people



Alfred St George Hamersley would have struck an imposing figure around the time the new club was formed.

and several local dignitaries, Colonel Hamersley invited the Duke of Marlborough to unveil the memorial tablet during a memorable and moving ceremony.

The tablet bears the inscription 'Oxfordshire Heavy Batteries (128th, 132nd, 135th, 156th) Royal Artillery. These batteries were raised and recruited in the City and County of Oxford for service overseas in the Great War. They served in France from March 1916 until the end of the War with great distinction. Many most gloriously fell. This tablet has been erected to their undying memory'.

The tablet faces the top of the main stair-case in the Town Hall and, to this day, is a tangible reminder of the will and resilience of one of Oxfordshire Nomads' founders, and first President.

Varying results and then frozen grounds saw the club well into the New Year of 1929. Coupled with the disruptive, frosty weather came the sad news of the death of Alfred St G Hamersley. He had been living in Bournemouth at the time where the sea air was felt to be beneficial. He had led a full and varied life and had travelled the world, no mean feat in those times. He had had an influence on people's lives at every turn he had made. He was the first and only President of the Oxfordshire Nomads RFC, having been one of the major influences in the club's formation and a great supporter of it ever since. He was to be sadly missed.

*(Adapted from 'Green, White & Black', the story of Oxford RFC, by Richard Tyrrell. £16.99 inc p+p, cheques payable to: 'Stray Cat Publishing', 159, Banbury Road, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1AL)*

**Footnote:** Ron Collins writes: With reference to Richard Tyrrell's article, 'An Oxfordshire Sporting Gentleman', it may be of interest that my copy of the great book 'Football - The Rugby Union Game', edited by Rev. F Marshall and published in 1892, was originally owned by A. St. George Hammersley. A printed label bearing his name and Rycote is attached to the inside of the front cover, and his signature is on another page. Helpfully, he has underlined in pencil the reference to himself on page 144 which reads :- 'A. St. George Hammersley was a very tall, powerful forward, working most resolutely in the scrummage, and first-rate at getting the ball on its being thrown out from touch; his departure for New Zealand, where he did much towards improving the colonists' game was a great loss to England'.



The Duke of Marlborough unveils a tablet in the Oxford Town Hall in November 1926 commemorating the Oxfordshire Heavy Batteries which Alfred Hamersley commanded for a time in the First World War. Alfred is seen at the front on the left. The tablet is directly in front at the top of the stairs inside the main door.

## Farewell Ken...

Anyone who met him will mourn the passing of Ken Jarrett of Cardiff, one of our long-standing members and friends. Ken died this April aged 85 or so, after suffering ill health for some time. A real gentleman in every sense, he was a stalwart Arms Park supporter with a fine collection from Cardiff RFC and beyond. His quiet bearing and ever-present pipe, smile and kind word were already missed at our gatherings well before this last sad goodbye. Our every sympathy goes to Ken's wife and family.



## AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN..

It is an unfortunate fact that, if you want to be remembered, it helps to die young.

For rugby players, this was never more true than in the First World War, when the sport's brightest talents, in fact almost all its talents, signed up en masse to fight the 'war to end all wars'. Inevitably, many of them never returned home.

At the end of the war, to mark their sacrifice, one of rugby's greatest writers compiled a poignant record of their lives. EHD Sewell's Rugby Football Internationalists Roll of Honour remains a vivid tribute to the international players who died on active service. It remains one of my most prized rugby books.

I bought my copy in an Edinburgh second-hand bookshop about 25 years ago, and saw another one a few weeks later. This gave me the misguided impression that the book must be fairly common. How wrong could I be! I think I have only seen one for sale in all the years since then, and that fetched a high price at auction.

Sewell's foreword describes how rugby 'signed up' en masse in the early weeks of the war in 1914. 'Above all soars the fact that not a rugby player, certainly not one whose biography appears in this book, waited for conscription', he writes.



There are 89 players featured, from England (26), Scotland (30), Wales (11), Ireland (9), New Zealand (9) and South Africa (4), representing the Commonwealth countries in the fight. The French might also have been included, but Sewell deferred to the Livre d'Or of French Rugby.

For each player, there is a biography sometimes running to several pages, and a plate photograph protected by a cover sheet. Although the page numbering only goes up to 237, the additional leaves needed for the illustrations mean it must have around 400 pages and it weighs almost 2 kilos.

It is utterly compelling reading. Here is Lieutenant-Colonel Edgar Mobbs, former England captain, fatally wounded in an attack on a machine gun emplacement in 1917. There is Sergeant David Gallaher, captain of the all-conquering All Blacks, author of one of rugby's greatest textbooks, killed in action in October 1917. Here is Lieutenant James Huggan, a doctor, who in 1914 played for Scotland against England, joined up in August and was dead by mid-September, having already been recommended for the Victoria Cross.

Sewell gives every detail, is proud of every single man in the book. He faced great challenges in compiling the information, from families in mourning, and from places around the world. You have to remember that there was no digital photography, no air mail, and no telephone contact. So, details and photos of the nine New Zealand caps, for example, had to be sourced by surface mail around the world - no mean feat.

The book belongs firmly in a different era, but as historians we have to be grateful to Sewell for his dedication in compiling such a momentous book.

And a postscript: There is one other publication I have which is a superb aid to anyone researching the First World War. The Field magazine produced a special supplement in July 1919 entitled The Last Post: the Roll-Call of Sport in The War.

It is large format, a little smaller than A3 with 48 pages, and crams in the names of all the sportsmen known to have died in the war, together with photos of a few of the more famous names. Headings include athletics, boxing, cricket, golf, tennis, rowing, and various others.

Rugby is covered under the generic heading 'Football' but although there are a few association players the vast majority are rugby. The initial listing is for blues and internationals, but there are several pages of what are described as 'other players'. I haven't counted them but there must be over a thousand names there, each with date of death, military rank, and rugby team.



**Andy Mitchell**

## Welsh Stars had a rugby ball as war ended...

From December 1945 until April 1946, supporters of rugby in Wales, starved of regular matches during wartime days, were able to watch Wales take the field eight times in what were termed 'Victory' Internationals.

There were a total of 40 players wearing the red jersey - 16 in the backs and 24 in the forwards and of those 19 went on to win full caps, though scrum half Haydn Tanner and forwards Bunner Travers and Les Manfield had also been capped in pre-war internationals.



Of the remaining 21 players, forwards Gomer Hughes and Harold Thomas had also been capped pre-war but had turned to Rugby League, with Swinton and Salford respectively.

The 13-a-side game had also seen the defection of Hugh Lloyd-Davies, WE "Billy" Williams, Tyssul Griffiths, Ed Gwyther and Les Thomas - all of whom never gained a Union cap, while George Parsons played for Wales against England in 1947. Cardiff players Graham Hale, Billy Darch, Glyn Jones, Hubert Jones and Jack Bale never won caps, nor did DH Steer (Abercarn/Taunton), FE Morris (Newport/Pill Harriers), D Glyn Davies (Neath), Maesteg forward Sedley Davies, Harlequins centre JA Davies and Aberavon lock Roy Hughes.

Newport and Cardiff prop WG (Bill) Jones had played for Wales posing as his brother-in-law Cliff Davies in Paris as Cliff, later a

British Lion, did not have a passport!

Schoolboy scrum-half Wynford Davies from Pontypridd was another never to gain full honours, along with Alfie Brickell, the popular Abertillery forward, and DJ Davies, a Swansea forward, whose son Mervyn became a British Lion as well as skippering Wales.

David Jones, the son of the splendid flanker Elvet Jones, who is still going strong at 88, said "I find it very sad that when I look through then record books I see no reference to my father. He not only has no cap for those games, he has no jersey."



Players who came on to win post-war caps were Jack Matthews, Bleddyn Williams, Billy Cleaver, Les Williams (later Hunslet RL), Frank Trott and Glyn Davies in the backs and Maldwyn Jones, Griff Bevan, Wilf Evans, RT (Bob) Evans, Rees Stephens, Bill Tamplin and Cliff Davies in the pack.

Bleddyn Williams, Matthews, Cleaver, Cliff Davies, Stephens and Bob Evans all made the 1950 Lions side to New Zealand and Australia, while Travers and Tanner had gone to South Africa in 1938.

Wales played their first Victory international at St Helen's, Swansea in 1945 and defeated France 8-0 with tries by Jack Matthews and Selbey Davies and a Maldwyn James conversion.



In January 1946 the brilliant Kiwis (NZ Army) won 11-3 at Cardiff and in 1994 most of that side made the trip back to the city to meet up with six of the Wales squad.

England won 25-13 at Cardiff two weeks later and Scotland 25-6 in Swansea, but Wales won 3-0 at Twickenham with a typical Tanner try and 6-4 over Ireland at Cardiff with a Bleddyn Williams winner. Wales then lost 13-11 at Murrayfield and also lost 12-0 in Paris in the eighth international in five months.

Of those 40 players who survived the war, 20 have since died and six are still alive. But, what happened to the other 14? Please let us know.

**Howard Evans**



## Le Rugby aux Jeux Olympiques: Rugby at the Olympic Games

Retired PE Educator Pierre Vitalien has written a marvellously researched and illustrated French book on the role of rugby in the four Olympics in which it was included: 1900, 1908, 1920 and 1924. Patently a labour of love - nay, passion - it includes great detail and atmospheric images, including the guides to the rules for the last two of those occasions (see pictures), a Maurice Chevalier song cover, and drawings of the equipment required by those early worthies! Published at 30 Euros by Imprimerie Techniscouleurs of Serignan, this is a very attractive and worthwhile volume. Thanks to Roger (and J-P Delassus!) for the copy we used here.



Fig. 1. - 1. Ballon. - 2. Ballon. - 3. La main de l'attaquant. - 4. Casquette. - 5. Maillots. - 6. Casquette. - 7. Casquette. - 8. Casquette. - 9. Casquette. - 10. Casquette. - 11. Casquette. - 12. Casquette.

**Philip Atkinson**



1900.



1908.



1920.



1924.

## Cash 'Floods' in at Hawick.....

The Hawick RFC pitch and clubrooms suffered two devastating floods during 2005. The clubrooms are only now nearing completion such was the devastation to the internal fabric of the building. To mark the work undertaken on the clubrooms, and to raise funds towards the huge cost (the club can no longer obtain flood insurance), the Bill McLaren Flood Appeal Dinner was held on 3rd October 2008 with the main speakers being the 1989 British Lions captain Finlay Calder and the 2009 British Lions Manager, and Vice-President of the Rugby Memorabilia Society, Gerald Davies. It was a magical evening that helped raise more than £12,000 for Hawick Rugby Club.



The floods were such, we wouldn't have been surprised to see a revival at Mansfield Park of Hawick's famous old "Ba' Game" where the river was part of the 'pitch'.

I had organised a table for the night from my own club Hawick Linden but suffered the usual late call off. Imagine my surprise and delight when one of our group called a few hours before the Dinner to advise we had a replacement, none other than England international and British Lion, Roger Uttley. Another of our party had been pricing some work his holiday house and, on hearing of the event, Uttley was very keen to attend and meet up with a number of former team-mates. A total of eight British & Irish Lions were in attendance, other than Davies, Calder and Uttley, there was Derrick Grant, Andy Irvine, Ian McLauchlan, Jim Renwick and Tony Stanger as well as 14 Scottish internationals.

A regular visitor to Hawick during his playing days with Stewart's Melville, Finlay Calder spoke fondly of the club, its stalwarts and its history and of its ability to strive in the face of adversity. Toasting 'The Path Less Travelled', he added: 'For me, Hawick Rugby Football Club stands for everything that is good in the game, sheer honesty and endeavour. For despite everything that has been thrown at it, it keeps on going, whether it be a decline in population, economics, or this ever-changing weather.'

Calder's speech was followed by a live auction of various items including many pieces of rugby memorabilia. The top item was Bill McLaren's hand written fact sheet from the first Scottish Cup Final between Hawick and Watsonians in 1996 which the Greens won 17-15. Watsonians RFC, amongst others, were rumoured to be set to bid and a local Hawick solicitor was behind pulling together a fund supported by businesses and residents from the town to make every effort to keep such a remarkable item in Hawick. With an estimated selling price of £300 - £500, the sheet sold after furious bidding for an incredible £3,000. The huge

cheers as the hammer went down made it clear Bill's sheet was staying in his beloved Hawick.

Gerald Davies wowed the sell-out audience as he gave the toast to 'The World of Rugby'. After regaling the gathering with tales from his rugby past, Davies, who starred for Loughborough Colleges at Melrose and Gala sevens during his playing days, paid tribute to the man behind the microphone and spoke of his enormous worth to the game of rugby and to the town.



Lions both! Finlay Calder and our vice-president Gerald Davies spoke at the Flood Appeal Dinner.

The 63-year-old said: 'He was a master commentator, and is a wonderful man, a gentleman and a gentle man and he valued the game. When you listened to his commentary, apart from his accent, you wouldn't know he was Scottish, even if Scotland were playing. He took such an unbiased view of what he

saw. And you talk to anybody, not just those who follow the Six Nations Championship, but worldwide, everywhere graced by your man of Hawick - they loved him. Because of who he was and the way he presented the game that we adore. And you knew that Bill McLaren adored what was in front of him.'

Guests were taken through the evening thanks to the inimitable wit and repartee of Hawick's very own Ian Landles, who had the Mansfield Park walls reverberating to the sound of laughter from the moment he took the microphone until he finished his part in proceedings with a poignant poem in tribute to Bill McLaren.\*

It is fairly well known how unlucky Bill McLaren was in his playing career. He took part in a Scottish trial but a full cap eluded him after tragically being struck down by tuberculosis. Despite having built up over many years an extensive collection of Scottish Trial programmes, I had never managed to come across the one in which my former PE teacher had played. Remarkably, just a month after the Dinner, I picked up from eBay a programme for the game between a Scottish XV and The Army at Murrayfield on 15th February 1947. And there, listed at wing-forward in the Scottish side, was none other than W.P. McLaren of Hawick.

I think I experienced the same delight as the whole of Hawick had experienced in winning his Cup Final fact sheet. I am not convinced this is the aforementioned trial match as Bill wrote in his autobiography of playing against W.I.D. Elliot whereas in the programme they are listed together in the same back row. Nevertheless, I will certainly treasure the rather tattered programme as much as the memory of once taking notes for him in the commentary box at a South of Scotland v Edinburgh match in 1982.

The whole evening was a wonderful event and was perhaps best summed up in a letter to a local newspaper the 'Hawick News' by McLaren's daughter Linda Lawson, wife of former Scotland cap Alan, the parents of Gloucester and Scotland scrum-half Rory.

'What a night it was at the flood appeal dinner at Mansfield Park! If dad had been able to attend he would have wriggled with humility and embarrassment at all the heartfelt compliments paid to him. It has been difficult to convey in words to mum and dad the joy and atmosphere of this unique occasion, but they surely felt the warmth and love radiating towards them in their home on the hill. Alan and I were honoured to represent them and the family on such a memorable evening of fun and laughter.

There were so many wonderful contributions to the experience that it is hard to mention everyone individually, but we thank all those who made the huge effort to achieve so much. Specifically, John Thorburn's organisation was perfect, the music and singing a highlight, Zandra Elliot eloquent in her thanks, the speeches of Finlay Calder and Gerald Davies very special and Ian Landles has a true gift with words and humour, which is a joy and privilege to savour.

However, the most significant aspect of all was the achievement of the community, headed by Rory Bannerman, in securing dad's "Big Sheet" for the town, a gesture which speaks volumes in itself and which took our breath away. There could be no greater tribute and mum and dad were thrilled and amazed.

This is also proof indeed that it is the people of Hawick and of the rugby club, in particular, who are exceptional. Little wonder then that dad is as proud of Hawick as Hawick is of him.'

\*Photocopies of the poem of over 1,100 words can be purchased from Gary Alexander, see contact details in Members Directory, for a minimum donation of £3 including postage, with all proceeds going to the Hawick R.F.C. Flood Fund.

**Gary Alexander**

**Gary adds:**

'Someone has started a campaign on Facebook to have Bill knighted. I certainly support it and the link is as follows

<http://www.facebook.co./group.php?gid=71786527160>

Any support you can give in helping a wonderful man gain due recognition for what he has done for rugby, commentary, his country and his town would be greatly appreciated'.

---

## Goodbye, Big Mac .....

Sadly, but appropriately in terms of our recent 'Touchlines' tribute to him, Scotland's oldest rugby cap relinquished that honour, when James 'Mac' Hendeson died on 5th March 2009, aged 101. He made 14 Test appearances 1939-1948, and became a successful farmer, businessman and restaurateur in Edinburgh.

He was interviewed when the BBC's Grandstand broadcast the 125th Anniversary Calcutta Cup match in 2004, and was guest of honour at last year's 150th anniversary of the Accies Club at Raeburn Place and photographed holding the Calcutta Cup - which he had helped to win 75 years before - with Mike Blair, Scotland's captain. In a glorious aside he told Blair: 'It's a bit heavier than I remember it'. To mark his 100th birthday in 2007, the Scottish Rugby Union held a lunch in his honour at Murrayfield.

## Who Was The First Wales Rugby Mascot?

Who was the first Wales rugby mascot? Was it in the 1990s? Or even the 1980s?

No. It appears that Wales had a mascot against Scotland at St Helen's, Swansea on February 7, 1925!!!

There have been three different photographs that have appeared of Master Ivor Jones from Pontymister, near Risca, which in turn is near Cross Keys in Gwent.

Ivor, or 'Little Danny', as it seems he was also called, was about six years old, when he became the Wales mascot for just that one match.

Why? Well, firstly, the captain of Wales that day was the splendid Cross Keys forward Steve Morris (pictured right with the mascot) and Ivor's father just happened to be Dan Jones, who was on both the Risca and Welsh Rugby Union committees.

Wales had lost 34-10 in Inverleith 12 months earlier and the 'Flying Scotsman' Ian Smith had scored three of the eight tries.

At Swansea it was the same story as Smith ran in four of the six tries and Scotland won 24-14. Ron Herrera of Cross Keys made his debut, but for Morris it was his first time as captain and his 18th appearance. Morris was relieved of the captaincy and played just one more game for Wales. He played a Cross Keys record 635 games. He was a gentle man off the field but Wales, it was said, bowed to the other countries request that he be dropped due to his sometimes over-vigourous play. He became chairman of the Keys and died in 1965 at the age of 69 with his ashes being scattered at Pandy Park.

And the mascot? It does not appear that Wales had another one for at least 60 plus years. Young Ivor Jones grew up to play for Cross Keys and is believed to have become a policeman.

Now, an Ivor Jones played in the centre for Cross Keys/Abertillery against the 1935 All Blacks, but surely that could not have been him? If it was, he would have only been 17 years old at the best.

Ivor died in the 1990s at the age of 75. His brother-in-law, Alan Williams, skippered the Keys in the 1951-52 season.

**Howard Evans**



Welsh Girl Mascot with NZ Kiwi Mascot (1905?): from the NZ Rugby Museum.



**JIM SEWELL** - Will the All Blacks hit the right note this year?!

## PROGRAMME GALLERY



The poster is for a rugby match in the Coupe d'Europe. At the top left is the GUP logo. To its right is the text 'Coupe d'Europe'. Below this is the C.A.B. Brive logo, a shield with 'C.A.B.' inside. To the right of the logo is the text '9902936 BRIVE Stadium' and 'Dimanche 17 novembre, à 14 h 45'. The main match title 'CABC - LLANELLI' is in large, bold letters. Below the title is a dark banner with the text 'Voir le rugby de plus près'. Underneath is a black and white photograph of a rugby scrum. At the bottom of the photo is a logo for 'Centre of France LA MONTAGNE'. Below the photo is another dark banner with the text 'Pour voir la vie de plus près'.

**Coupe d'Europe**

**C.A.B.** 9902936 **BRIVE Stadium**  
*Dimanche 17 novembre, à 14 h 45*

**CABC – LLANELLI**

**Voir le rugby de plus près**

Centre of France  
**LA MONTAGNE**

**Pour voir la vie de plus près**

**This Brive v Llanelli clash from 1996 was in the 'H' Cup - that's Heineken to us, but with the ban on alcohol-related sponsorship of French sport, the posts-shaped 'H' was their only clue! Llanelli lost, by the way.**



## Gerwyn Williams's Passing 2009

The death of full back Gerwyn Williams means that there are only 7 survivors of the Wales team that defeated NZ in 1953 in Cardiff: G Griffiths, B Williams (capt), C Morgan, G Rowlands, J Gwilliam, WO Williams and C Meredith.

Shortly before Gerwyn Williams died, the Welsh Rugby Union went some way to reuniting him with one of his most treasured possessions. His first Welsh international cap, which he won when he made his debut for Wales against Ireland in 1950, had been proudly presented to his old school, Port Talbot Grammar, many years before. But Williams's cap went missing some time in the Sixties. More than 40 years later, the WRU took the decision to offer him a replacement and it arrived in January as he entered the last throes of his battle with cancer.



Gerwyn was an old-fashioned full back in that he did not join the line as an attacker, but caught, kicked and tackled well despite not being a big man. He was born in Glyncoed and was a life member of that club. Schooled at Port Talbot, yet though he played for Taibach RFC, he never played for nearby Aberavon. In 1938 he represented Wales under-15s when they defeated England in Cardiff. Gerwyn then went to Loughborough University and was later in the Royal Navy and played for Devonport Services.

A schoolteacher, he joined London Welsh, but for two seasons (1950-51 and 51-52) he played for Llanelli. Against South Africa in their magnificent tour of 1951-52 he played four times - Llanelli, Wales, Barbarians (at Cardiff) and for London Counties - the only team to defeat the tourists.

He made his Wales debut at Belfast in 1950 and played in a 6-3 win that gained the Triple Crown, followed by the Championship and Grand Slam by defeating France. In 1951 he played against England, Ireland, Scotland, France and South Africa. In 1952 Gerwyn again played in a Triple Crown, Championship and Grand Slam winning team - against England, Scotland, Ireland and France. He then played against New Zealand in 1953 and finally against England in 1954, but was injured in the latter and never played again, though he was skipper of London Welsh in 53-54 season.

As well as being a Barbarian, he played County rugby for Middlesex and Hampshire. He played cricket for Wales Schools and won the Loughborough Colleges Welterweight boxing title during his student days.

Gerwyn played for the Barbarians against NZ in 1954, having helped save the Wales game v NZ when he and Bleddyn Williams held All Black Brian Fitzpatrick just short of the line as NZ led 8-5. Wales then won 13-8. He coached at Cambridge University, London Counties, Blackheath and Whitgift public school, where he was head of PE and also wrote three books on how to play Rugby.

Whitgift is in Croydon, near where he lived. I believe he died at Clare in Suffolk. Born Glyncoed 22/4/24. Died, we understand, on the 10/2/09, aged 85.

**Howard Evans**

## Services Internationals: World War Two

For the 'more mature' of us it may not seem a life-time ago, but for younger members (like 30 year olds!!) the War ended 30-odd years before they were born. Some rugby got played, of course, with so-called 'World Cups' in the Desert and all sorts. Services games raised vital funds at home, Rugby League and Union players got to play alongside one



another for a time, and our esteemed vice-president Bleddyn Williams has oft recounted the miles he was flown to take part - and star - in such encounters. An especially wonderful but hair-raising tale is of a scheme to pluck him from one spot almost in mid-air: mercifully wiser counsels prevailed. Ask him about it!

Neil O'Brien has kindly provided the images of programmes from one of the wartime series, that between the servicemen of Wales and England. Swansea and Gloucester were the most popular venues, and there were some great players from both codes included. An early Playfair Annual contains considerable detail about the wartime game, with valuable statistics, should you wish to discover results and teams. Perhaps a member might like to provide images and comments on the England Scotland clashes, or any other of these enterprises which raised cash and spirits while providing a diversion for both players and fans from the horribly serious other business of the times?

### Neil O'Brien and Phil Atkinson

(Meanwhile, we might pause to think of Bleddyn's contemporary, fellow Lion and Welsh team mate and great friend Dr Jack Matthews, making slow progress after a recent stroke)



## A Brief History of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Rugby: Part One

Emmanuel's rugby footballers have a proud history with 51 Blues and a record number of 12 Cambridge Captains. Cuppers have been won four times. These achievements place them in the top echelon of Cambridge college rugby sides. Moreover, with 27 Internationals and 4 Lions players, it is a record surpassed by only a few of the top class clubs in the country. Nearly 150 years ago Emmanuel men first played College rugby matches on Parker's Piece when the teams were 20-a-side. They were part of the Emmanuel Football Club, which included both Rugby and Association players. The two codes went their separate ways in 1893 and the Emmanuel RFC was formed as a separate entity. The sport was eventually banned from Parker's Piece because of damage to the turf and until the Wilberforce Road ground was opened in 1910, matches were played on a shared pitch leased from St John's.

All fixtures until the 1920s were friendlies against other colleges and feeder schools such as Bedford. They were played almost exclusively in the Michaelmas term. The first Varsity match was played in 1872 and the first Emmanuel man to represent the University was Richard Pattisson in 1881, later a Fellow of the College. He was joined on the Cambridge side of 1882 by Charles Sample. Neither man won a Blue, as at that time they were only awarded for rowing, athletics and cricket. Rugby 'Blues' were first awarded in 1885 after a fierce debate in the Union. Both Pattisson and Sample gained consolation as Emma's first England rugby caps, Pattisson whilst still an undergraduate. Sample also was a first May Colour and College Captain of Boats in 1883.

The results of the College first and second XV's after the Club's formation in 1893 were initially not very good. However, they steadily improved and, thanks to the arrival of a number of talented freshmen, the side in 1897 was unbeaten. In 1900, the College had four men in the 1900 Varsity side for the first time: John Daniell, George Keeton, Francis Jones and John Bedell-Sivright. The 1900 Emmanuel team photograph in this article features John Daniell wearing a suit and cap. He was arguably Emma's greatest all-round sportsman. He captained the England rugby side as an undergraduate and later became President of the RFU. Three years a cricket Blue, he captained the Somerset County side for 12 seasons. Uniquely, he was an England selector both for rugby and for cricket.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, Emma was recognised as a 'Good Rugger College,' providing at least one member of the Varsity side every year between 1898 and 1913. During that period, in addition to John Daniell there were nine Blues and six



*Early 1900s.*

Internationals. Emma's first two Varsity Captains were William Lely in 1908 and Barry Cumberlege in 1913. Barry Cumberlege, a scrum half for four years in the Varsity side, played full-back for England after the Great War. He was later an international referee. A good number of Emmanuel men over the years have played for the University side, but narrowly missed a Blue. One such character was Arthur Blakiston who was at Emma from 1910 to 1912. Remarkably, he gained 17 caps after the war playing in the invincible England side of the 1920s in the back row along-side Wavell Wakefield and Tom Voyce. He also played for the 1924 British Isles team in South Africa in all four tests.

In the 1920s Cambridge rugby became competitive and Cuppers started in 1923. Emmanuel RFC held its first dinner also in 1923. Membership was over 100 and in 1926 the first tour took place to Liverpool. Carl Aarvold was the Emma star in the late 1920s. He played in four successive Varsity matches, uniquely on the winning side each time, being Captain in his final year. He won 16 caps for England and was Captain six times. He also captained the 1930 British Lions in New Zealand in all four tests. Emma had two more Blues at the end of the 1920s and early '30s, John Askew, who capped by England as an undergraduate. Tommy McClung, College Captain in 1953/4, played for four seasons for Scotland. His brother; Gilbert McClung, led the Emma VII to the final of the Middlesex Sevens at Twickenham in 1956. The team caused a sensation by knocking out Hawick, the guest side, in their first match and later disposing of Esher and Wasps on their way to the final. There was a further Sevens success in 1963 when David Storey's side won the inter-college Sevens, which replaced the full Cuppers competition (because of frozen pitches).

**John Marsh**



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LIONS  
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SOUTH  
AFRICA  
2009**

Have a great series, and let's have lots of memorabilia and memories to keep for many years to come!

## RUGBY'S OLYMPIANS - 1

### Attie van Heerden (S.A.)

A recent enquiry about internationally capped rugby players, who also participated at the Olympic Games, had me curious about the South African perspective regarding this versatility.

Adriam Jacobus 'Attie' van Heerden is the only rugby Springbok to have participated at the Olympic Games. Considering the many multi talented sportspeople South Africa have produced over the years, this is an astonishing fact. The era of sport isolation during the Apartheid years obviously contributed to this fact. For example, Jaco Reinach was a Springbok rugby player (versus the New Zealand Cavaliers of 1986), as well as a Springbok athlete, at one stage the record holder for the 400 meters. Jaco surely would have gone to the Olympic Games during either 1984 and/or 1988. Jaco passed away in a motor vehicle accident a number of years ago.

After playing for Western Province during 1919, Attie played his club rugby in the Transvaal from 1920 to 1923. Both Attie's father and brother were also very talented sportsmen. Attie was a very fast athlete, tall as well as powerfully built, 1.86 meters tall and 84 kilograms.

Attie did not participate in the Currie Cup Tournament of 1920, held at Bloemfontein and Kimberley, due to his participation at the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium. The selectors for the Springbok rugby team never the less selected him for the 1921 tour to Australia and New Zealand. Attie played 17 games in total for the Springboks during the 1921 tour. He played in the first and third tests against New Zealand, having the distinction of scoring the first ever try, for either of the nations, in the history of matches between S.A. and N.Z. In total, Attie scored 42 points, from 14 tries in the Springbok jersey on that tour. In the first official match of the 1921 tour, against New South Wales, Attie scored five tries. This was a Springbok record until 1956, when it was



improved by Roy Dryburgh, who scored six tries. Attie was the top try scorer on the tour of 1921.

As far as athletics goes, Attie was crowned as the South African champion in the 120 yards hurdles (16.0 seconds), as well as in the 440 yards hurdles (58.2 seconds) at the South African Championships held in Johannesburg in 1920. His best time in the 440 yards hurdles at the Olympic Games in Antwerp was 57.2 seconds, winning the second heat. Attie unfortunately could not qualify for the final, which was won by F.F. Loomis with a time of 54.1 seconds.



Later on Attie played League for Lancashire. He scored 107 tries whilst playing League. Some sources suggest that he raced against horses at some stage during his stay in the U.K. He later

returned to S.A. and worked as a security officer with Iscor (now Mittal Steel). Iscor was a very large company, mining and manufacturing steel. I do not have further information about his later life, save for the fact that he passed away on 14 October 1965.

The principal sources used were 'Matie Atletiek 1885 to 1985' by F.J.G. vd Merwe; 'Paul Roos se Springbokke 1906 to 2006' by Piet vd Schyff, 'Men in Black' by Palenski et al and 'A Statistical History of Springbok Rugby' by Schnapps. Many thanks also to Heurich Schulze for demanding such high standards from me.

**Brian Edwards**

## RUGBY'S OLYMPIANS - 2

### H.J.C. Brown

#### British Lions Rugby player, Great Britain Olympian - and almost England!

A sunny afternoon at Twickenham, rugby's headquarters, in 1963 during the second half of the Calcutta Cup match between England and Scotland, still, in these days of professionalism that most charismatic of fixtures. There are other matches of course, which claim a greater importance, notably the tri-nations series in the southern hemisphere between South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, but of all rugby's annual meetings, infused as it is with the inherent and unique charm of the six nations, it is the Calcutta Cup that stands apart.

A scrum near the right hand touchline saw England win possession and the ball spun to the English fly half Richard Sharp. The next 20 seconds saw Sharp enshrined forever in Twickenham folklore. A deft show of the ball to his centre before slicing majestically through the Scottish inside backs to take him clear, and up to the Scottish full back with a man spare on his outside. Here, we thought was going to be a superb try for England's left wing, only for Sharp to hold the ball back with a delightful dummy and swerve, and cross unopposed half way out.

It was an English try that has been recalled often with a wistful nostalgia given to few in Twickenham's history. Among others, one thinks of the impossibly romantic Russian prince, Alex Obolensky, on England's right wing, crossing diagonally from one touch line to the other to score against New Zealand in 1936, and Andy Hancock's meandering run from deep within his own territory in the last minute of injury time to rob Scotland in 1965, but for the panache of its execution, and its sheer mesmeric beauty it is surely Sharp's that is the best.

Twickenham, then of course was the bastion of amateurism, and rugby at the highest level in its officialdom and infrastructure was still clinging largely to being the preserve of the public schools.

God was in his heaven, and all was well with the world therefore, when Sharp, charming and articulate with flaxen hair flowing and reading geography at Oxford, made his memorable mark. He was, it seemed rather fittingly, given the era's prevailing mindset the right type of man to score a splendid try at headquarters.

In *Time and the Conways*, J.B Priestley writes of those seminal moments, some seemingly unimportant, which, given the juxtaposition of place, time and circumstance can change one's life and destiny. Such a moment was Sharp's at Twickenham and its indirect impact on John Brown, destined to be Sharp's replacement on the British Lions tour to South Africa in 1962.

It was Brown's misfortune, in place, time and circumstance, to be around when Sharp and others were playing at their best, and to be injured at one of those moments, when he was worthy and capable of playing for his country.

H.J.C., as he was to become affectionately known, was born on the 4th December 1935 and first gained junior representative honours for England Schools against Wales at Cardiff Arms Park in 1953. Others honours followed, for Somerset, before he captained St. Luke's College Exeter in 1958. In 1959 he joined Blackheath, still in this day and age an establishment of Corinthian values and the most famous and historic of names, who share with Guy's Hospital and Neath the honour of being one of the game's oldest clubs.



Brown had become one of the most gifted and robust young centre three quarters in the English game. He had joined the RAF in 1960 and continued his rugby career with appearances for the combined services before joining the Harlequins in 1963. In 1962 he had toured South Wales with the Barbarians on their Easter tour, a long established and fondly remembered tradition that was a cornerstone of the amateur days and famed for its lavish hospitality.

On each Good Friday they played Penarth, then Cardiff on the Saturday and Swansea on Easter Monday before finishing with Newport on the Tuesday and then recovered both physically and mentally from their exertions!

It was one of those seminal moments, before a trial match for England which was to prove the undoing of Browns dream of playing for his country. He had scored two memorable tries at Banbury in the first of the trials and was selected for the second at Exeter, after which it was confidently expected that he would be awarded the cap that many Englishmen believed was rightfully his, only for his ankle to be broken whilst playing for Middlesex, the county of his birth, against Surrey some weeks before.

Undaunted, he recovered and pursued his career with enthusiasm, to be rewarded later by being called up as a replacement for Richard Sharp his beta noire, on the 1962 British Isles tour to South Africa during which he made six appearances, typified by the wholehearted approach which had become his hallmark.

It is to his eternal credit that, as his rugby career entered its twilight years, his resilience and determination was to lead him to represent his country in another sport, requiring another discipline.

H.J.C., now flight lieutenant, had become a parachute instructor at Aldershot, and had previously met, as a colleague in the RAF, a fellow officer called Mike Freeman who was a leading figure in the British Winter Olympic bobsleigh teams preparation for the 1968 event in Grenoble, and who saw in Brown, a man whom he considered to be ideal in build and temperament for the physical demands required in forging a successful team. Thus it was, that Brown, after many months of training and dedication took his place in the British four-man bobsleigh team for the European championships at St. Moritz in 1968 in which they won the bronze medal, the highest position ever attained by a British four-man bobsleigh team, before he competed at that pinnacle of sporting endeavour, the Olympics at Grenoble in the winter of that year.

H.J.C. Brown will remember his sporting life with justifiable pride, and we can only imagine that sometimes, like each of us, he will lie awake in the darkness of the small hours and take stock.

In the armed forces he had served his country with honour and dignity. In rugby it was one of those seminal moments of fate, so redolent of Priestley, and not form, the bitch goddess which had betrayed him, and he never did play for his beloved England, but he had represented this nation with distinction, at the highest level in two different sports, an honour achieved by very few.

**Alan Hughes**

**Footnote:** Rugby Relics have available items of H.J.C. memorabilia for sale. Each item or group of items is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity signed by John.

**Dave Richards**



## RUGBY'S OLYMPIANS - 3

### John Arthur Gregory

He was educated at St. Andrew's College, Dublin and Rydal School. He was banned for one year from playing rugby union after having played rugby league for Huddersfield in 1947. He was All-Ireland 100 yards and 220 yards champion from 1947 to 1949. A silver medallist in the 4x100m relay team at the 1948 Olympics in London. The medals were briefly upgraded to gold when the American team were disqualified but on appeal the winners were reinstated. He also appeared for the Great Britain relay team in the 1952 Helsinki Olympics but they came 4th. He raced for the Dublin athletic club Crusaders. He joined Clifton from the Dublin club Wanderers but quickly moved to Blackheath where he won his only England cap. In 1949 he joined Bristol where he became captain in 1952. He appeared twice for the Barbarians. His only try for the Barbarians was scored against the East Midlands. He retired in 1954.



*G.B. 4 x100 Relay, Silver Medal, London 1948. 2nd from left Ken Jones (Wales International), 3rd from left John Arthur Gregory (England International).*



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