

LANCASHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB LIBRARY

Malcolm Lorimer

The collection of books in the Lancashire County Cricket Club's Library at Old Trafford is one of the finest in the country. The M.C.C. Library at Lord's is without doubt the largest and most comprehensive in England, and perhaps in the world, while the library at Trent Bridge has for many years been considered second in importance. The library at Old Trafford, which in 1984 was confined to two large bookcases, has been developed and expanded since then so that it now rivals that at Trent Bridge.

A Famous Club

The origins of Lancashire County Cricket Club are to be found in the Manchester Cricket Club, which in 1857 took a lease on two fields for £36. 6s. 6d (£36. 32); these fields would eventually become one of the finest and most renowned cricket grounds anywhere in the world. The County Cricket Club was formed at a meeting on 12th January 1864 in the Queen's Hotel, Manchester. The new club played its inaugural county match in the following year, defeating Middlesex by 62 runs. Two years later, in 1867, the first Roses Match was played against Yorkshire. This event took place at Whalley and marked the beginning of a series of such matches which soon came to rank alongside Test Matches for their importance and rivalry with the Lancashire public, even among those who might otherwise not be cricket fanatics. In 1926 for instance a crowd of 46,000 watched the Roses Match at Old Trafford on Bank Holiday Monday.

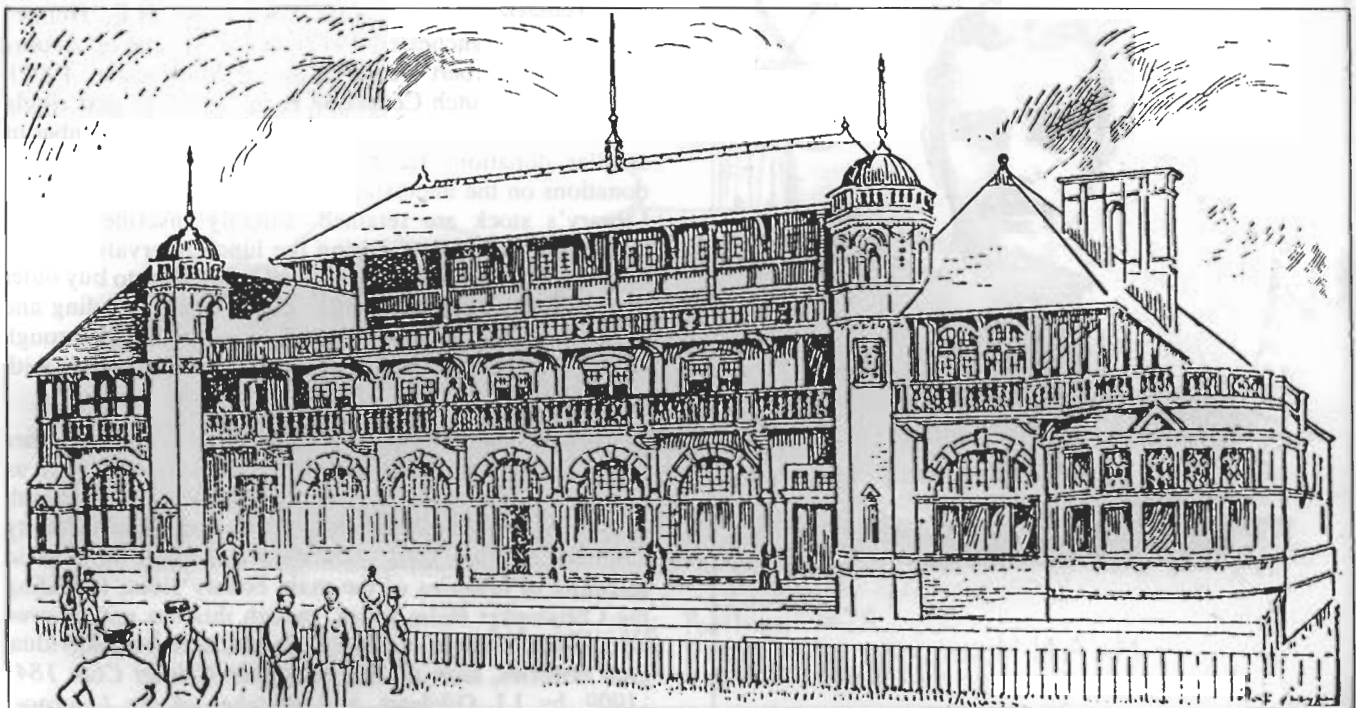
Old Trafford staged Test Cricket before Lord's; this was in 1884 when the second Test Match in this country was played, against Australia. Over the years the cricketing public at Old Trafford has witnessed some unforgettable games, including the nineteen wickets taken by Jim Laker, Ian Botham's



The Lancashire Cricketers, 1880.

memorable century, and in 1995 Dominic Cork's hat-trick against the West Indies. During the Second World War the ground was damaged by bombs, and the Pavilion was also badly hit, but after the war ended the ground was re-built and has now developed into one of the finest Test arenas in the world. Further major developments, to take this famous club into the next century, began this year.

Many famous names in the world of cricket have been associated with Lancashire County Cricket Club. One of the most influential figures made his debut in 1867. This was A.N. Hornby who was to exert so much influence over Lancashire Cricket for the next fifty years as player, Captain and President; he was also Captain of England. Other famous names include Paynter, Washbrook and, of course, the current England Captain, Mike Atherton.



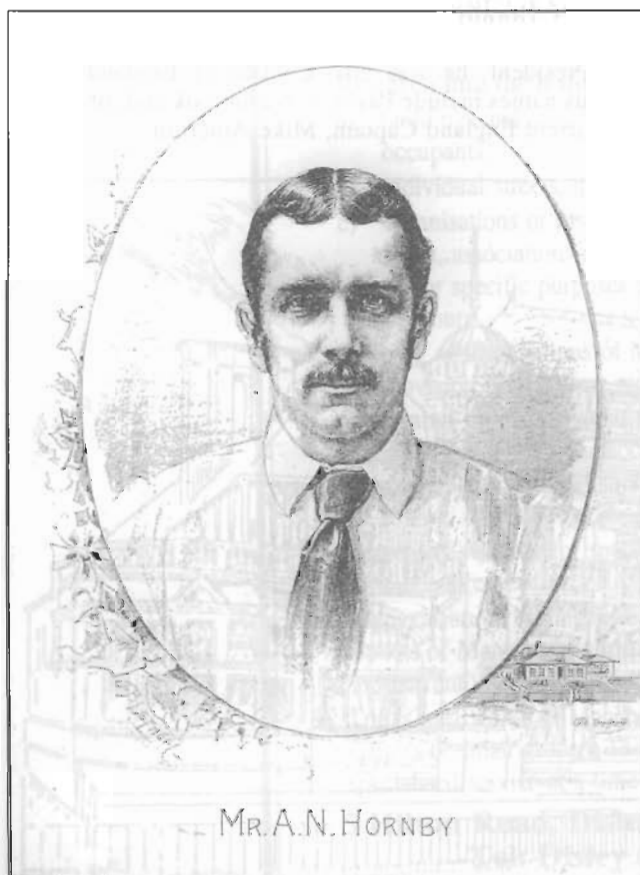
Drawing of "The New Pavilion" at Old Trafford.

The Library

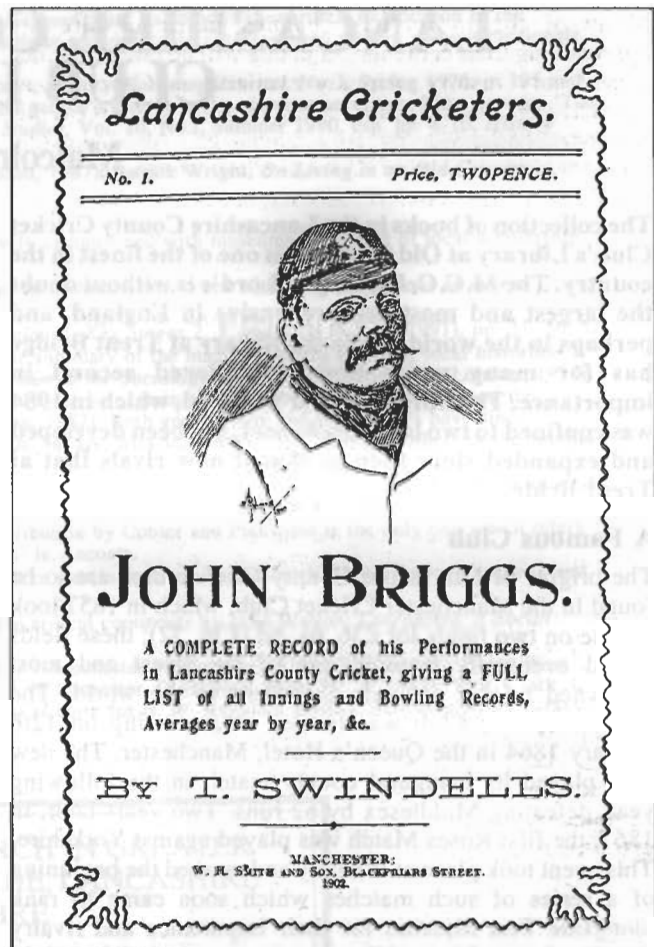
From the two bookcases in 1984, with restricted access, the library has expanded to its present size of some 5,000 items, and is now much more widely available, not only to members of the club, but also to cricket enthusiasts and students of the game. This expansion dates from the appointment of the Rev. Malcolm Lorimer as Honorary Librarian in 1982, ably assisted by Don Ambrose. The stock now encompasses annuals, periodicals, biographies and histories, tour records and scrapbooks, and there is an extensive photographic collection, both of team photographs and of the vast majority of individual players.

The library has a complete set of Wisden's *Annual* (1864 to date). Copies of earlier issues are replaced on the shelves by the Willows reprints as they become available, with the originals then being kept in a place of security. Complete sets are also held of the three Lillywhite series: *Guides* (white) 1850-1861; *Companions* (green) 1865-1885; and *Annuals* (red) 1872-1900, and *Ayres' Companion*, 1902-1931, together with a representative collection of more modern works. The *Lancashire County Cricket Club Annual*, 1929 to date, and *Cheshire County Cricket Club Annual Report* from 1932 are also available, together with the *Annuals* published by the various Leagues in Lancashire.

A wide range of cricketing periodicals are also available: both *Cricket: a weekly record of the game* (1882-1913) and *The Cricket Field* (1892-1895) were published weekly in summer and monthly in winter, while the *Cricket Society Journal* (1961 to date) is published half-yearly. Other titles held are the *World of Cricket* (1914, all 23 issues), *Wisden's Cricket Monthly* (June 1979 to the present, time), *Cricket Quarterly* (1963-1970) and *Cricketer Quarterly* (1971 to date).



The legendary A.N. Hornby.



Cover of booklet recording John Briggs's performances for Lancashire.

Our collection of biographical works is very extensive; we have a virtually complete set of biographies of Lancashire players, together with a strong representative collection for players from other counties. Much of this came from the collection of about 1,000 volumes donated by Duncan Mutch, a Lancashire Club Vice-President who died in 1991. There are two quite scarce books in the collection: *J.T. Tyldesley in first class cricket*, by H.E. Holmes (Crompton, Manchester, 1912) and *The Life of Johnny Briggs*, by Herbert Turner (Sowler, Manchester, 1902). The Duncan Mutch Collection is by far the largest single donation we have received, but over the years a number of smaller donations have been made. We receive such donations on the understanding that books needed for the Library's stock are retained, suitably inscribed, while duplicates are sold off during the lunch intervals of First Eleven matches, the funds so raised being used to buy older books to fill gaps in the stock, and to enable binding and re-binding to be done. New books are purchased through the Club Shop, and the Club itself generously assists with special purchases.

We have a number of general histories of cricket together with individual histories of Test-playing countries such as Australia and New Zealand, India and Pakistan and South Africa. All published histories of the Lancashire County Cricket Club are held (naturally) and there is a good selection of histories of the main county sides, including the Christopher Helm series, though this has not covered all counties. There is an equally good collection of individual club histories, such as *The Lancaster Cricket Club 1841-1909*, by J.J. Gilchrist, and *Matches of the Liverpool Cricket Club 1847-1864* (Webb and Hunt, Liverpool, 1861).

Many of the individual Leagues in Lancashire are approaching their centenary, and this will no doubt produce a centenary history. Already available is *Cotton Town Cricket: the Centenary Story of Lancashire's Oldest Cricket League, 1888-1988*, by Roy Cavanagh. An interesting scrapbook is *Moorside Cricket Club*, compiled by the Club's Secretary, Tom Mellodews, about 1929, consisting of press cuttings, letters, photographs and postcards, and menus. The Moorside Cricket Club joined the Middleton and District League in 1890. One or two club histories are held as theses: one such is *The origins of Warrington Cricket Club and its development from 1852 to 1902*, by D. J. Eccles, submitted as part of his M.Ed. degree from Manchester University in June 1986.

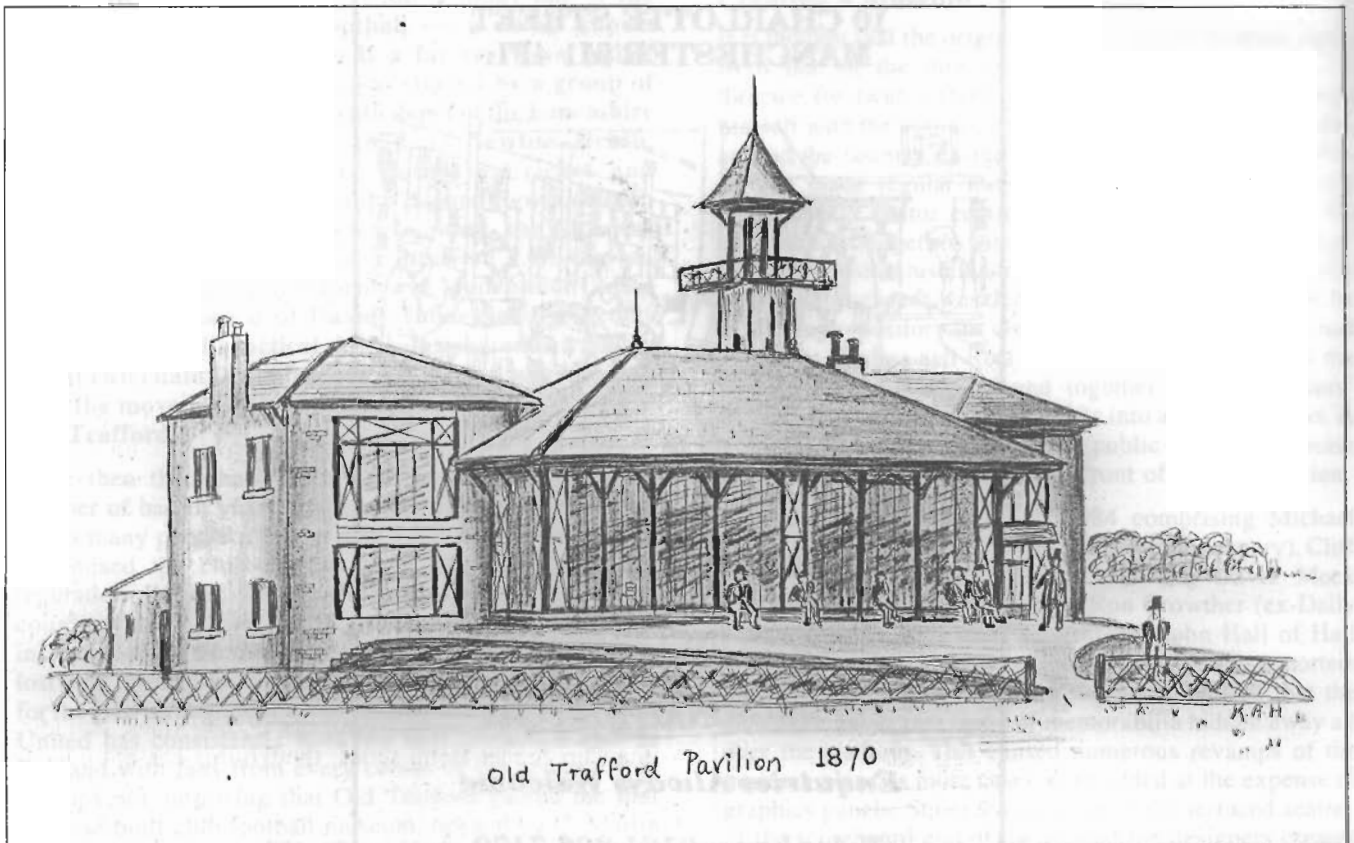
The library contains all the main published tour books – full accounts of international cricket tours – published before 1947; since then there have been two or three such books for each tour and we have complete coverage. Interesting examples are: *The Fight for the Ashes in 1926, being a critical account of the Australian tour in England*, by P.F. Warner, and *Kissing the Rod: the story of the Tests of 1954*, by P.G.H. Fender. In addition to these individual tour books, other accounts will be found in annuals and periodicals. These published accounts are supplemented by the unpublished *Diary* kept by the Rev. Vernon Royle, who was a member of the M.C.C. tour of Australia, 1878-79. Royle later became President of Lancashire Cricket Club and the library has a photocopy of his *Diary* the original being with the family.

We have not so far been able to include radio and television recordings of tour games, but this is a possible development for the future. There are plans, though, to establish a video collection of Lancashire First Eleven games from commercially established sources and to establish a system of videoing future games.

1878 Diary 1878 the 17th October
 1878 P. the day the highest team left
 England from Southampton for "Australia"
 to play several cricket matches there
 for 9 & 2. "Australia" Capt. Cates.
 Oct 17th Thursday.
 Left Southampton about 3-15 of the
 P & C Steamship "Australia", Capt. H. H.
 Hutton came down to see us off. Had
 a farewell pass day for starting of
 continued for 24 hours.
 Oct 18th Friday got up in the morning
 the ship rolling very much, felt very
 uncomfortable & had to part with what
 little I had on "board" but to my
 berth & stayed there all day, not feeling
 at all well. In the night a rat
 eat the side out of my foot, rather a
 good beginning of "Jan over Maul"
 while he was in bed. Maul being the
 same cabin with me. Our cabin was
 148-149, 150 & 151. Schuch & Lucas is
 a nice little cabin next to Hutton & Mills.

Extract from the diary of Rev. Vernon Royle, 1878-9.

Several volumes of press cuttings cover all County matches, both league and competitions, from c.1892, including *Cricket 1910-1913*, chronologically-arranged cuttings of every Lancashire match. These are supplemented by a range of scrapbooks. If we cannot obtain the original scrapbook for preservation we try to get permission to make a photocopy, so allowing us to build up as



Old Trafford Pavilion 1870

Drawing of Old Trafford Pavilion, 1870.

comprehensive a data-base as possible for the benefit of researchers. We realise, of course, that people compiling this type of record may not wish to part with the original. One such book of original cuttings was the work of Mr. Walter Lawton of Rochdale, who maintained a very comprehensive scrapbook on Lancashire County Cricket for the years 1888 to 1913 and this original is now in the library. Similarly, A.T.Kemble, a former Lancashire player, compiled two scrapbooks: one covers 1891-92 and contains only match reports, while the other, for 1893-99 includes match reports, biographical articles and other material. The library is fortunate to have photocopies of both of these books. Arthur Appleby, another former player, compiled his own personal scrapbook; this is now in the County Club's museum rather than the library, along with other non-library material. The library would be pleased to hear from anyone who has compiled similar scrapbooks, particularly for more recent years, with a view to either donating them to the library or for giving us the opportunity of having a photocopy made.

All this printed material is complemented by an extensive collection of photographs ranging from team photographs from 1865 onwards to individual (portrait) pictures of the majority of the County players for the same period. One notable exception from these individual photographs is that of R. Wood of Liverpool, who is the only English Test Match player without an individual photograph, so far as is known. If any reader knows the whereabouts of a photograph of Wood the Library would be delighted to be informed. These team and individual photographs are taken for the Club's records, and they are supplemented by a small

collection of press photographs, though these are not purchased in any organised way.

Among a comparatively small collection of archival material held by the library are the original scorebooks of the club's forerunner, the Manchester Cricket Club, from 1851 to 1855. Other archival material includes the County Club's Minute Books from its founding in 1865 to the present day; these are not available for public consultation at present; and the scorebooks of First and Second Eleven games, and all Test Matches played at Old Trafford. Photocopies can be supplied of individual match scorecards - details on application to the Hon. Librarian.

The library is still housed in bookcases, on closed access for security reasons, but it is open to any interested person at lunchtime each day during First Eleven matches and at other times by prior appointment. Unfortunately it is not available during Test Matches and One-Day Internationals as the room containing the Library is then used for team lunches: due to pressure on the catering facilities. Club members only may borrow certain books, but study facilities are available to researchers, whether journalists, historians or genealogists. Postal enquiries are encouraged rather than enquiries by telephone; **all such enquiries should be addressed to Malcolm Lorimer or Don Ambrose. The address is: The Hon. Librarian, Lancashire County Cricket Club, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 OPX; the Club's telephone number is 0161 282 4000, fax 0161 282 4100.** You will find a friendly atmosphere and a warm welcome, where you can settle those inevitable arguments about the game - and perhaps start a few new ones.

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