



THE **WISDEN** COLLECTOR'S GUIDE



JONATHAN RICE & ANDREW RENSHAW
Foreword by Sir Tim Rice

THE *WISDEN* WOODCUT



‘Robert Henry Harling, who died on July 1, 2008, aged 98, was the typographer responsible for the redesign of *Wisden* to mark the 75th edition in 1938. It was Harling who suggested to the then publishers, Whitaker’s that they should commission the artist Eric Ravilious, who he knew loved cricket, to produce something appropriate. The engraving that resulted adorns the almanack’s cover to this day. Harling wrote fifty years later that it “remains an ideal graphic introduction to one of England’s most durable publications.” He himself complemented the engraving by setting the word *WISDEN* in Playbill, a chunky, heavily serified typeface he had designed the same year, redolent of Victorian theatre and the Wild West. This also endures.

He had no other known connection with cricket – his sports journalist son Nicholas recalls only one family visit to a Test – but he packed almost everything else into his life. He edited *House and Garden* magazine for 36 years, until he was well into his eighties, was typographical consultant and architectural correspondent for the *Sunday Times*, wrote several well-regarded novels set in and around Fleet Street, including *The Paper Palace*, took part in the Dunkirk evacuations, became a close friend of Ian Fleming, and, in the words of a former employee, had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the sex lives of dowager duchesses.’

Obituary – *Wisden* 2009

‘Ravilious, Eric William, was presumed dead after a Coastal command plane in which he was travelling [he was an official war artist] disappeared on a flight from Iceland in September 1942. He was 39, and famous as a water-colour landscape artist and wood-engraver. Amongst his work is the colophon that has appeared on the front cover of *Wisden* since 1938.’

Supplementary Obituary (51 years late) – *Wisden* 1994

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CONTENTS

AUTHORS' NOTE

VII

FOREWORD BY SIR TIM RICE

IX

PART ONE

THE HISTORY OF THE ALMANACK

1

PART TWO

THE ALMANACKS 1864–2010

9

WISDEN CRICKETERS' ALMANACK AUSTRALIA

302

PART THREE

A GUIDE FOR COLLECTORS

311

COLLECTING <i>WISDEN</i>	312	MIND THE LANGUAGE	329
BUYING <i>WISDEN</i>	312	A HISTORY OF <i>WISDEN</i>	331
BOOK DEALERS	313	PUBLISHERS	331
AUCTIONS	316	OWNERS SINCE 1985	331
REPRINTS	317	COMPILERS AND EDITORS	331
DUST JACKETS	319	PRINTERS	332
PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES	322	PRINT RUNS	333
INSERTS IN <i>WISDEN</i>	322	COVER PRICES	334
REBINDS	323	ILLUSTRATIONS	336
RESTORING <i>WISDEN</i>	324	SECOND EDITIONS	336
SIGNED COPIES	327	STYLE OF FRONT COVER OF	
MY UNCLE'S <i>WISDENS</i>	328	LIMP EDITIONS	337

STYLE OF LETTERING ON SPINE OF LIMP EDITIONS	337	LEATHERBOUND LIMITED EDITIONS	341
STYLE OF BRASSES ON FRONT COVER OF CLOTH BOARD EDITIONS	338	LARGE FORMAT EDITIONS	341
STYLE OF BRASSES ON SPINE OF CLOTH BOARD EDITIONS	338	FACSIMILE EDITIONS	341
COVER DESIGNS	339	<i>WISDEN</i> ANTHOLOGIES	341
COLOUR OF LIMP COVERS	339	<i>WISDEN</i> INDEXES	342
COLOURING OF LIMP COVER AND DUST JACKET SPINE TEXT FROM 1965–78	340	<i>WISDEN</i> AUSTRALIA	342
COLOURING OF DUST JACKET COVERS FROM 1965–78	340	<i>WISDEN RUGBY FOOTBALL</i> ALMANACKS	343
		CONDITION TIMELINE	343
		PRICES/AUCTION TIMELINE	348
		PAGINATION GUIDE	351
		PRICES	355

AUTHORS' NOTE

Cricket followers have always had a strong streak of collector-mania running through them. We have to know everything about the game and its heroes, and ideally to possess memorabilia which remind us of our noble game. It may be wrong to describe these desires as an obsession, but there is certainly an element of the all-consuming passion about it. And cricket, with its rich and varied literature, provides its fans with plenty of affordable, and some not so affordable, items for the collection.

No sport has as vast a literature as cricket, and the centrepiece of any collector's cricket library is *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack*. From the very beginning, *Wisden* gained for itself a reputation for fine writing, impartiality and accuracy that enabled it to see off its early rivals and establish itself as the one true authority on cricket all over the world. It is not for nothing that the fat book in the yellow covers is known as 'The Cricketers' Bible', a nickname that dates back the best part of a century. After only seven editions, in 1870, *Wisden* listed the special features that could be found in the earlier numbers, an indication that the Almanack was already highly collectable.

This guide has been produced to help cricket fans build their own collection of *Wisdens*, not only by giving details of every *Wisden* so far published, but also by giving tips on how to find, buy, restore and protect *Wisdens*, so that they build into a collection that will not only be read and re-read, but will also be likely to appreciate in value rather more quickly than most other investments. This is not an index to *Wisden*, nor a price guide, but it is a dip into the treasures that *Wisden* contains, to whet the appetite for all those who have not yet completed their collection, and to refresh the palate of those fortunate enough to possess a set, but who may not yet have found the time to read all their volumes.

One of the joys of *Wisden* is the single-mindedness of the editors through the years. For them all, it is cricket first, the rest of life second. After the first few editions, which included such unlikely items as the rules of knur and spell and the winners of classic horse races, as the Almanack found its feet, it is only during the war years that they allow some aspects of what was going on around them to impinge on their world. Even then it is only to record the actions of the cricketers involved in battle, or to apologise for late publication because a German bomber scored a direct hit on the *Wisden* works.

As an example of this clear focus only on what happens on the cricket field, we quote from *Wisden* 1935, Essex v Worcestershire at Chelmsford: "On Whit-Monday morning, Nichol, the Worcestershire batsman, was found dead in bed – a sad event that marred the enjoyment of the match but did not prevent Worcestershire gaining first innings lead." This single-minded focus on the important issues is what distinguishes the successful

collector as much as the successful editor or cricketer. We have deviated a little from this custom by listing some of the events going on beyond the cricket field: it is strange to think, from a distance of 140 years, that a few weeks after W.G. Grace became the first man to score 2,000 runs in a season, Stanley found David Livingstone at Ujiji; or that Bonnie and Clyde met their deaths, rather more gorily, two days after the Worcestershire scorecard recorded: 'M. Nichol (died during match)'.

In the preparation of this book, we have had a great deal of help from a number of people. In alphabetical order, we would like to thank Derek Barnard, Bill Furmedge (whose original idea this was), David Jenkins, Mark Jukes, John McKenzie, David Rayvern Allen, Sir Tim Rice, Chris Ridler, Dominic Roberts and Christopher Saunders, not forgetting Adam Chadwick, Curator of the M.C.C. and his Library team. At our publishers, Bloomsbury, we have been nudged and guided with great expertise by Christopher Lane, Jill Coleman, Charlotte Atyeo and Becky Senior, whose help we gratefully acknowledge. However, any mistakes must remain our responsibility.

Jonathan Rice and Andrew Renshaw

April 2011

FOREWORD

BY

SIR TIM RICE

Over the decades I have sunk money into a variety of schemes and objects, few of which have proved the financial bonanza I had hoped, or been told, they would be, but in 1973 I made a very untypical sound investment. I purchased a set of books for £750.

The books in question were *Wisden Cricketers' Almanacks* – a complete run from the first edition in 1864 through to the 110th. Since then I have added a further 38 editions to my shelves and eagerly await the arrival of each new version of the yellow-sheathed masterpiece every April. It is impossible to say how much a full set of original *Wisdens* would fetch today but I have noted with quiet satisfaction that, in May 2007, a run from 1864 to 1999 sold for £120,000 (plus commission). Around the same time an 1896 edition (the 23rd in the series) made £9,400 on its own. Even taking into account some years of manic inflation since the purchase, I suspect the most voracious hedge-fund manager would be quite relaxed about my investment.

However, my *Wisdens* are the one feature of my library, indeed of my entire house, that I would not part with until every other money-raising avenue had been fully exploited. I would rather flog the dog or dispose of my Peter Blake portrait of the Everly Brothers. Ever since I first leafed through a *Wisden* belonging to Michael Dunning (a fellow nine-year-old inmate of the fifth form) in the extremely damp summer of 1954, I have been hooked on this peerless publication.

What a book! It told the tale of England winning the Ashes with even more insight than Patrick Pringle's *The Boys' Book of Cricket*. It had page after page of statistics and records; it contained stories of cricket in places I had never heard of, from Amritsar to Ashby-de-la-Zouch; it was as majestic to hold as a Bible and exuded the same authority. It taught me history, geography and mathematics. Even the advertisements were riveting. It smelt good. It had a photograph of England's triumphant skipper waving to the crowd while enjoying a post-victory climactic fog.

Not every *Wisden* since has meant quite so much to me as the 1954 tome but, as I explore the sequence both forward and backward in time, I quickly see that this is no ordinary sporting annual – indeed, no ordinary publication by any literary standards. I gaze at my rows of *Wisdens* and know that, whichever season I choose to revisit, I shall soon be reminded not merely of the cricket of the time, but of the time itself. Nothing has yet prevented *Wisden's* springtime unveiling; not war, not the General Strike, not even Health and Safety (but they're working on it).

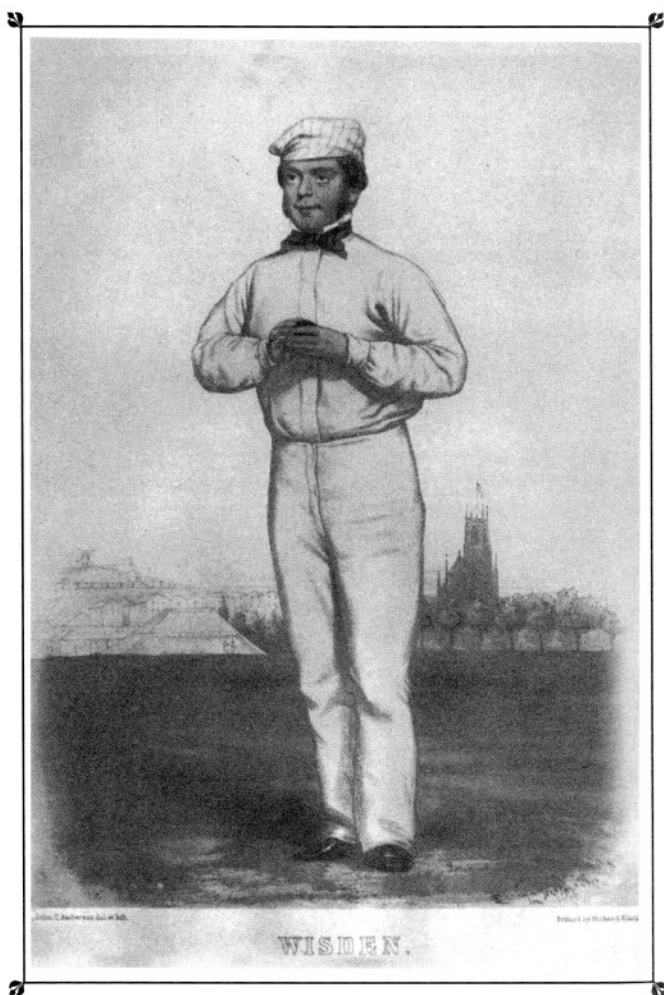
My two runners-up to 1954 are probably the 1916 and 2006 editions. The 1916 volume, with no first-class cricket to report, is a rare and valuable one because of wartime paper shortages, and because it includes obituaries of W.G. Grace and Victor Trumper alongside a list of tributes to cricketers killed in the Great War. The 2006 *Wisden* recalls the Ashes battle of 2005 in a myriad gripping ways. Enough said.

Wisden has not always moved immediately with the times, but it has absorbed and reflected the changes in cricket over the years, whether gradual or frantic. As book publishing embraces the digital world, *Wisden* is now available as a fully searchable e-book for purchase from its website. However, online versions, crucial though they will be to shelfless cricket-lovers, don't sound like such a good investment as the one I made back in 1973. I think I'll stick to the traditional format of pages bound together within covers, the whole shebang wrapped by the unmistakeable golden sleeve.

This foreword is adapted from an article originally published in the Daily Telegraph.

PART ONE

THE HISTORY OF THE *ALMANACK*



John Wisden. This portrait of him at 26, taken from the lithograph by John Corbet Anderson, appeared in the 1913 Jubilee edition of the Almanack which he founded in 1864.

John Wisden's cricketing career was summed up in the 1913 edition of his *Almanack* thus:

Born September 5, 1826; Died April 5, 1884.

Wisden played his first match for Sussex, against Kent at Brighton, in July, 1845, and his last, against the M.C.C. and Ground at Brighton, in August, 1863. After 1863 he did not take part in first-class cricket. He made his first appearance at Lord's in 1846. His first Gentlemen v. Players' match was in 1848, and his last in 1859. He and James Dean founded in 1852 the United All-England Eleven, whose famous matches with the All-England Eleven began in 1857. In conjunction with George Parr, Wisden took an England Eleven to Canada and the United States in 1859 – two years before the first England team, with H. H. Stephenson as captain, went to Australia.

John Wisden, at 5ft 4in and weighing in at seven stone, had hardly the build for a fast bowler, and yet he was one of the very best of his era. Quite probably 'fast' in early Victorian times was the equivalent of an Underwood or a Kumble of more recent years, but Wisden was nevertheless a much feared bowler. He took all ten South wickets when playing for North at Lord's in 1850, and was as famous as a sportsman could be in that era. Sir Spencer Ponsonby-Fane, writing in that same 1913 edition, considered that 'Jack' Wisden:

... was a very fine and accurate bowler, perfect length, but with little work, except what the ground gave it. He was a fast medium, but I think he was classed as a fast bowler – and played on that side in the match, Fast v. Slow. He was a delightful bowler to play against, but required very careful watching, for he was apt to send in occasionally a very fast shooter, then so fatal on Lord's Ground.

He noted that Wisden also liked to distinguish himself from his playing contemporaries – 'I believe he was the first of the players to play in a straw hat, instead of the white toppler worn by the older players. He was a good field, and an excellent bat, which was rather exceptional for a bowler at that time, when bowlers were not expected to be very able performers with the bat.' He was also 'a genial, pleasant, and respectable fellow in every way, liked and respected by every one with whom he came in contact,' although in Wisden's own *Almanack* they would say that, wouldn't they, even thirty years after his death.

Wisden's great memorial is not his place in the record books (though that is indelible) but in the *Almanack* that bears his name. In 1864, a 116-page volume was published in London, and was put on sale for a shilling. *John Wisden's Cricketer's Almanack* (note the position of the apostrophe then; it changed to *Cricketers'* in 1869) was hardly big enough to qualify as a book, but it proved to be the first edition of an annual publishing and sporting phenomenon that has lasted for a century and a half.

Wisden was not an original thinker, but he was commercially very astute and, just as importantly, a lucky man. The idea of a cricketer's almanack was not a new one – his former business and cricketing partner Fred Lillywhite had been involved in the publication of *The Young Cricketer's Guide* since 1849 – but John Wisden was not bothered about whether the idea was his own – the only question was, would it work? Lillywhite Brothers & Co. used their *Guide* as much as a promotional tool for their own business –

‘dealers in foreign cigars, tobacco etc. (unrivalled shag, highly recommended at 6s. 6d.) and sports equipment’ – as a commercial venture in its own right, and no doubt Wisden thought he could do the same. An injury had decided him to retire from professional cricket at the end of the 1863 season, so he had more time to concentrate on his own burgeoning business, which had grown from an early partnership with George Parr in the ownership of a sports ground in Leamington into a tobacconist’s and sports equipment store in Leicester Square (close to where Lillywhites is today, still a sports equipment store but long since divorced from the influence of tobacco). One of the results of his extra spare time was *Wisden’s Cricketer’s Almanack*.

In 1864, the world was in a state of change. Perhaps it always is, but the 1860s were a particularly turbulent decade. America was in the throes of its Civil War, Japan was emerging from its cocoon of two and a half centuries of isolation in a particularly violent way, Brazil was fighting Paraguay and the British Empire was defending itself aggressively across two continents. Cricket in England was changing too. Wisden had been an integral part of the revolution that transformed cricket from an amateur and bucolic pastime to a town-based professional entertainment, but, as the All-England teams crumbled in an overdose of internal strife, the county clubs were just beginning to establish themselves. Cricket was about to become a truly national sport, mixing professional and amateur players in the same team, appealing to all strata of English society, and it was Wisden’s good luck that he chose this moment to launch his *Almanack*.

An even greater stroke of luck, for him and for all those connected with cricket, was the emergence in the mid-1860s of the man many still consider the greatest cricketer who ever lived – W.G. Grace. Grace, born in 1848, played his first major matches in 1864, and went on to dominate English – and indeed the world’s – cricket until the turn of the century. He transformed batting, he was tireless in his bowling. In his youth he was a magnificent fielder, especially at point, and even in his late middle age he was a shrewd and ruthless captain. Above all, he was news. The general public wanted to read about him and about his cricket. *Wisden’s Cricketers’ Almanack* was there to fulfil that need.

Of course, it would take a very good publication to keep its readers interested over a century and a half. *Wisden* launched with the cautious statement from its editors (W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight – the shrewd Jack Wisden did not interfere with detailed editorial matters) that:

We have taken great pains to collect a certain amount of information, which we trust will prove interesting to all those that take pleasure in this glorious pastime. Should the present work meet with but moderate success, it is intended next year to present our readers with a variety of other matches, which the confined nature of an Almanack precludes us from doing this year.

This first edition had a great deal of non-cricketing material in it, details of the Wars of the Roses and ‘the winners of the Derby, Oaks and St. Leger; Rules of Bowls, Quoits, and Knur and Spell, and other interesting information.’ We are even informed that tea ‘was introduced into England by Lords Arlington and Ossory in 1666. It was not till nearly a

century later that the middle classes of London and Edinburgh began to use tea daily.' The editor of the *Almanack* a century and a half later would kill for the space to meander down such interesting byways. We must assume that the editors were hedging their bets: they just did not know if a book entirely devoted to cricket would work, but a book about cricket and knur and spell and the art of taking tea daintily, on the other hand ...

Despite competition from Fred Lillywhite's publication (which lasted from 1849 to 1866) and from 1865, from John Lillywhite's *Cricketers' Companion*, the first few editions did meet with more than the moderate success wished for. In 1865, *Wisden* was confident enough to increase the size from 116 pages to 164 pages, an increase of over 40 per cent in extent, and all for the same price. In 1866, the *Almanack* was 200 pages long. This was worth a shilling of anybody's money. However, the rarity of copies of the first few editions seems to imply that print runs, and therefore sales, were not massive.

As the seasons passed, *Wisden* slowly increased its sales and began to establish its position as the pre-eminent cricket publication, but it was by no means a smooth ride. James Lillywhite began publication in 1872 of his *Cricketers' Annual*, so that between 1872 and 1885 (when John Lillywhite's annual ceased publication) there were three annuals for the cricketing public to choose from.

Wisden's editorial team set about creating a structure of regular features which became familiar to readers over the years, and gave a sense of authority and reliability to the publication. It also helped to set it apart from the competition. Some of the features of the *Almanack* which we know and trust today, however, had a very long gestation period. 'Births And Deaths Of Cricketers' appeared in the 1867 edition for the first time, but full obituaries, now one of the most widely read sections of *Wisden*, did not make an appearance until 1892, the second edition under the editorship of Sydney Pardon.

The original policy was not to comment at all on the matches, but merely to record the scores, on the basis that the editors preferred 'leaving the cricketer to form his own opinion with regard to the merits of the men, since a great many of our readers are at least equal, if not superior, to ourselves in arriving at a right judgment of the play.' Perhaps *Wisden* was wary of upsetting his former team-mates, for in recording the scores of the great professional Elevens, the editors 'abstained from making any remarks concerning the individual play of any man, since, where all are so good, it would, perhaps, be invidious to single out any one as being superior to those with whom he has so often played with varied success.' *Wisden*, remembered by contemporaries for his 'unfailing good temper' and his 'genial disposition' was clearly not a man to court controversy by suggesting in a publication that bore his name that one player was not as good as another. Today's editor is fortunately made of sterner stuff: he would have a very thin tome to present to the world if comment was excluded.

By 1870, the *Almanack* was sufficiently sure of itself to change the strict 'No Comment' policy. For the first time, match reports as well as match scores were included. This meant that *Wisden* was 28 pages fatter than the year before, though still only 152 pages, but the comment was mild and uncontroversial: the Varsity match report, for instance, mentioned that 'Mr. Pauncefote stayed whilst 6 wickets went. This gentleman played an innings of 33 runs so correctly and well as to elicit the commendations of all good judges on the ground.'

For the rest of the Victorian age (with the notable exception of 1886, when *Wisden* appeared very late in the year, because of the 'indisposition' of the then editor George West), *Wisden* expanded its sales steadily. In 1880, the Cricket Reporting Agency was founded, and from then on, for 85 years until 1965, when it merged with the Press Association, the editor of *Wisden* was a senior member of the CRA team. Under the leadership of Charles Pardon and his brother Sydney, from 1887 onwards, the *Almanack* began to take the shape we know today. They brought in some brilliant people to the team, like the statistician F. S. Ashley-Cooper, but the Pardon brothers, most especially Sydney, who edited the *Almanack* from 1891 to 1925, gave *Wisden* its voice.

In 1889, Charles Pardon had the inspired idea of selecting 'Six Great Bowlers Of The Year', and so popular was this article that he reprised his idea in 1890 with 'Nine Great Batsmen Of The Year' and, in 1891, his brother continued the theme with 'Five Great Wicket-Keepers'. The Wicket-Keepers were only five in number, probably because there just were not any more than five Great Wicket-Keepers to write about, but this number seemed to work. Also, because three distinct groups of players had been featured in the first three articles, there had been nobody who might have been selected twice, and when, in 1892, the subject was 'Five Great Bowlers', Pardon chose five different names from three years previously. A precedent was set. It was not until 1898 that the phrase 'Five Cricketers Of The Year' was first used, but since that time the choice of the selected five, a personal choice of the editor which he does not delegate, has been a major talking point each year. We can usually pick four of the five before they are announced, but there always seems to be an editorial wild card – think of Phil Bainbridge in 1986, Nigel Briers in 1993 or Claire Taylor in 2009 among recent examples. And how could Wes Hall, Jacques Kallis and Jeff Thomson have missed out?

By 2010 there were over 200 pages of comment and reviews, which are the heart of what makes each year's *Wisden* unique, but it was not until 1901 that Sydney Pardon introduced 'Some Notes By The Editor.' In his very first Notes, he launched into a tirade (a polite tirade, but a tirade nevertheless) against the scourge of throwing, and from this moment *Wisden* began to take sides on the major issues of the day. He particularly deplored Arthur Mold's action (despite having chosen him as one of 'Five Great Bowlers' in 1892), and eventually had the satisfaction of seeing the Laws changed to clarify the position on unfair bowling, the first major campaign that the *Almanack* had been involved in, and thus ended up on the winning side.

For the first century or so of its existence, *Wisden's* views tended to be on the side of the cricket establishment. On the issue of payments for amateurs, a big talking point from the Golden Age at the turn of the century and onwards, *Wisden* generally deplored the idea of gentlemen taking payment for playing, and thereby perhaps keeping a professional cricketer out of the side. However, the editors were more than happy to turn a blind eye to W.G. Grace, who, they admitted, was a law unto himself.

The Great War presented a new set of problems for *Wisden*, those of scarcity and rationing. However, throughout the war years, there was a determination to keep cricket, and cricket reporting, going. Even as the toll of lives on the battlefields became ever more appalling, articles about schools cricket and, most significantly, how to bring back first-class

cricket as soon as possible after the war, dominated the pages that were not devoted to Deaths in the War. The 1916 edition is only 299 pages long, but it is now perhaps the most sought after of all, because it features the obituaries of two of the great cricketers – W.G. Grace and Victor Trumper – not to mention A.E. Stoddart and Sir Spencer Ponsonby-Fane among other cricketing names who died outside the war. From the battlefield, that year's *Wisden* also includes the obituary of one of the more surprising schoolboy cricketers: Rupert Brooke, the poet.

The enthusiasm of Sydney Pardon, as well as his editorial flair, meant that *Wisden* held a fine reputation when the war finally ended, and he made sure that *Wisden* was there to ride the crest of the wave of popularity that cricket enjoyed in the early 1920s. Pardon remained strong in his likes and dislikes (he liked MCC and Lord Harris, but disliked 'unseemly barracking' and the two-day county cricket experiment of 1919, for example) and, by the time he died in November 1925, still in harness, *Wisden* was an integral part of the cricketing summer. Many collectors were already pushing up the prices of the first editions.

Bodyline presented a difficult case for *Wisden*. Stewart Caine, the editor of *Wisden* at the time, and a long-time associate of the Pardon brothers, died in April 1933, as the England cricketers were making their way home from Australia, and, although he added a few lines to his notes for the 1933 edition, they were written largely on the basis of newspaper reports from Australia. His view was that 'the ball to which such strong exception is being taken in Australia is ... dropped short and is alleged in certain quarters to be aimed at the batsman rather than at the wicket. It may at once be said that, if the intention is to hit the batsman and so demoralise him, the practice is altogether wrong – calculated, as it must be, to introduce an element of pronounced danger and altogether against the spirit of the game of cricket. Upon this point practically everybody will agree. No one wants such an element introduced. That English bowlers, to dispose of their opponents, would of themselves pursue such methods or that Jardine would acquiesce in such a course is inconceivable.' To him it seemed that the Australians must be either exaggerating or misunderstanding the issue.

His successor, Sydney Southerton, was presented with the biggest hot potato to affect cricket in a generation. A tour review carrying his initials seemed to take the line of least resistance, perhaps hoping that he would not revive bitter memories. 'Suffice it to say here that a method of bowling was evolved – mainly with the idea of curbing the scoring propensities of Bradman – which met with almost general condemnation among Australian cricketers and spectators and which, when something of the real truth was ultimately known in this country, caused people at home – many of them famous in the game – to wonder if the winning of the rubber was, after all, worth this strife.' He later wrote a more prominent article on the subject in which he appears to take it more seriously, admitting he was wrong in his initial suppositions.

In 1937, *Wisden* ceased to be an independent publisher in its own right, and ownership of the *Almanack* passed to J. Whitaker and Sons, who already published *Whitaker's Almanack*, the biggest-selling general annual compendium, which still contained many of the hallmarks of a true almanac that *Wisden* had long since lost. Wilfrid Brookes continued

as editor, but the influence of Whitaker's was quickly felt. In 1938, many changes to the layout were made: the woodcut made its first appearance on the cover, the counties were arranged in alphabetical order rather than in the order in which they had finished in the previous year's Championship, a full index was provided and more illustrations were included. Sales jumped by more than 50 per cent.

From 1944, *Wisden* was published by Sporting Handbooks Ltd, a joint venture between Whitaker's and John Wisden & Co., and it remained under this imprint for 35 editions. The same year the Wisden company had been acquired by the Co-Operative Wholesale Society, shortly after a German bomb hit the Wisden factory in Mortlake.

Hubert Preston was appointed editor as the new owners moved in, and his first offering was a mere 343 pages, less than half the size of the 1940 edition. Paper restrictions meant that only 7,000 copies could be printed. Preston, ably assisted by his son Norman, was not discouraged. When the war ended, English cricket enjoyed a few seasons of massive popularity, and *Wisden* celebrated the return of first-class cricket, rejoicing in the performances of great players such as Bedser, Compton, Edrich, Hutton, Bradman, Miller, Morris and many others. By 1949, with wartime printing restrictions eased, sales topped 30,000, around four times the annual sale in the mid-1930s.

When Norman Preston took over from his father in June 1951, post-war county cricket had settled comfortably back into something of a rut, but in many ways the 1950s saw *Wisden* in its pomp.

The cricket was not of the highest quality during much of that decade, with increasingly slow over-rates and dreary batting, but *Wisden's* take on the situation was shrewd, readable and rather more against dangerous bowling than it had been two decades earlier. The Editor sympathised, for example, with the West Indian batsmen who had been subjected to a barrage of bumpers in Australia in 1951-52. 'In its origin cricket was never meant to be played that way. No matter what the issue involved, the game is greater than the individuals. It is a sad thought that sometimes this truth is submerged in the quest for victory.' West Indies took their revenge in due course.

Preston also lamented the increasing slowness of play: 'Watching some modern batsmen at the wicket one gains the impression they are shouldering the burdens and troubles of the whole world. They certainly give little indication of enjoyment.'

By the end of the 1950s, Preston was appalled by much of what was happening on the cricket fields of the world: 'It would seem that the time is ripe for a complete overhaul of our ideas in regard to pitches, batsmanship and the general conduct of the game.' So *Wisden* tended to approve the changes that came into cricket in the 1960s – the ending of the distinction between amateurs and professionals, the beginnings of limited-overs cricket. It also reported on apartheid in sport and the isolation of South Africa, as well as the age-old problems such as the lbw law, throwing, time-wasting and the decline in sportsmanship, county finances and public interest in cricket, without necessarily proposing any solutions which were practical rather than theoretical.

When Norman Preston died in 1980 (like several of his predecessors still in harness), the editorship passed to John Woodcock, one of the great cricket reporters of his generation,

and we can see a subtle change in the mindset of *Wisden*, from a leisured occupation of the moral high ground to a more pragmatic, though equally principled, view on the issues of the day. *Wisden* began to take sides: compare the somewhat equivocal views put forward by Norman Preston on the Packer affair with the forthright views of Graeme Wright on Shoaib Akhtar's bowling action or Jagmohan Dalmiya's administrative skills in the early 2000s. Woodcock brought more immediacy to the *Almanack*, and his successors, distinguished cricket journalists to a man, have followed his lead. Matthew Engel made some bold but successful decisions to reorganise the book, and Tim de Lisle shocked traditionalists by putting a photograph on the dust jacket, but somehow *Wisden* retains its traditional charm.

Wisden has grown massively as cricket has expanded around the world: where once there were three or four Test-playing countries meeting each other sporadically, and seventeen counties disputing one competition each summer, now there are ten Test-playing nations, three different formats of the game and eighteen counties fighting among themselves for three, four or sometimes more pieces of silverware. And *Wisden* has always reported cricket overseas, cricket at the universities, cricket in schools, club and league cricket and, since 1938, women's cricket. It now also finds room for book reviews, website reviews, ICC meetings, curious occurrences, cricket charities, the upcoming season's fixtures, cricket in the media, umpiring and, of course, the Laws. It is published in four different formats (leatherbound, clothbound and paperbound in standard size, and clothbound in large size; you can also have a traditional dust cover for an extra £3.00) and finds its way into every cricket library every year. It crashes into the bestselling charts every spring: it remains a publishing phenomenon.

The ownership of John Wisden & Co. – the sports goods manufacturer as well as the *Almanack* publisher – changed several times in the latter part of the twentieth century, but the *Almanack* maintained its shape, its popularity and its quality throughout. In 1961, the Co-Operative Wholesale Society allowed Wisden to merge with two other sports goods firms – Surridge and Ives, and Gray-Nicolls – to create a new independent firm, Tonbridge Sports Industries, which was bought in 1970 by Grays of Cambridge. In 1979, the publication of *Wisden* passed to Macdonald and Jane's, then a part of Robert Maxwell's empire. It did not take the *Wisden* editorial and production team long to realise that this was not the best place to be. By 1985, the John Wisden imprint was back on the spine of *Wisden* – this being owned in part by Grays and in part by the printers, McCorquodale. In 1993, J. Paul Getty, the American millionaire who had been introduced to cricket by Mick Jagger, bought *Wisden* and allowed it to continue to flourish, but after his death there was some uncertainty about the company's future, despite record sales being achieved by the 2006 edition in the wake of England's Ashes success in 2005. Then in 2008, John Wisden and Co. was bought by the Bloomsbury Publishing Group.

And so *Wisden* marches strongly on towards its sesquicentennial edition, with thousands of collectors in its thrall. Spring just isn't spring without that fat yellow book by the bedside.

PART TWO

**THE ALMANACKS
FROM 1864 TO 2010**

1864

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- Abraham Lincoln re-elected as President of the United States
- British warships bombard Shimonoseki, Japan
- General Ulysses S. Grant appointed commander of Union forces in USA
- General Sherman's troops march through Georgia 'from Atlanta to the sea'
- Opening of the Clifton Suspension Bridge
- The first fish and chip shop opens in London

WISDEN 1864

1st EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight

PAGES: 116

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

CRICKET HEADLINES 1863

Yorkshire CCC formed

Second team to Australia 1863-64, under George Parr

First cricket club formed in Transvaal

TO THE READER

'In offering our first edition of the CRICKETER'S ALMANACK to the patrons of the "Noble Game", we have taken great pains to collect a certain amount of information, which we trust will prove interesting to all those that take pleasure in this glorious pastime. Should the present work meet with but moderate success, it is intended next year to present our readers with a variety of other matches, which the confined nature of an Almanack precludes us from doing this year. JOHN WISDEN & Co.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

'The Laws of Cricket, as revised by the Marylebone Club; the first appearance at Lord's and number of runs obtained by Many Cricketing Celebrities; Scores of 100 and upwards, from 1850 to 1863; Extraordinary Matches; All the Matches played between the Gentlemen and Players, and the All England and United Elevens, with full and accurate Scores taken from authentic sources; together with The Dates of the University Rowing Matches, the winners of the Derby, Oaks and St. Leger; Rules of Bowls, Quoits, and Knur and Spell, and other interesting information.'

MATCH REPORTS

The Gentlemen and Players

'We have taken great pains and been at considerable expense, in collection for the information of our readers, the matches which have been annually played between the Gentlemen and Players. We have begun with the first match, thinking it would prove an agreeable reading for our subscribers to see the doings of the past distinguished cricketers who in their day stood pre-eminent in the "Noble Game". We of course make no comments upon the matches, leaving the cricketer to form his own opinion with regards to the merits of the men, since a great many of our readers are at least equal, if not superior, to ourselves in arriving at a right judgment of the play.'

The Two Elevens

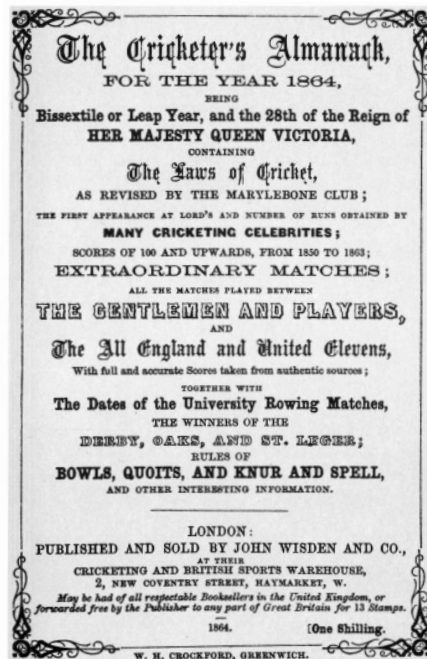
'We have great pleasure in presenting to our readers a full and correct account of all the matches that have been played between these distinguished Elevens. We can vouch for the

accuracy of the scores, since they have been taken from well-authenticated sources. With regard to these matches, we have abstained from making any remarks concerning the individual play of any man, since, where all are so good, it would, perhaps, be invidious to single out anyone as being superior to those with whom he has so often played with varied success.’

MISCELLANEOUS

‘The graces of the modern tea-table were quite unknown to the country folk, although that favourite beverage, brought by the Dutch to Europe, was introduced into England by Lords Arlington and Ossory in 1666. It was not until nearly a century later that the middle classes of London and Edinburgh began to use tea daily. In the latter city, in the reigns of the Georges, tea was taken at four o’clock, and the meal was thence called “four hours”.’

This first edition contains full scorecards of the Gentlemen v Players matches since 1806 and of the games between the All England and United England elevens from 1857. Under ‘extraordinary matches’ there is the scorecard of the game in 1855 between the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia and Shillinglee, Sussex, when the militia were dismissed for 0 in their first innings. From the outset, Wisden was both a book of record and also rejoiced in the off-beat and quirky.



1865

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- American Civil War ends
- President Lincoln assassinated
- Salvation Army formed
- *Alice in Wonderland* published
- Matterhorn climbed for the first time
- Speed limit introduced in Britain: 2mph in towns and 4mph elsewhere

WISDEN 1865

2nd EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight

PAGES: 164

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)

2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)

3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

CRICKET HEADLINES 1864

W.G. Grace plays his first major game

Overarm bowling legalised

Middlesex CCC and Lancashire CCC formed

TO THE READER

'John Wisden and Co return their most sincere thanks to the Cricketing public for the support given by them to this little work. Induced by the flattering patronage of many of the most distinguished Cricketers of the day, they have ventured upon the publication of a second number, trusting that its contents will win for it the same generous support as for its predecessor.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

'Calendar of the Births and Deaths of nearly all the celebrated players who have appeared before the public; The Laws of Cricket, as revised by the Marylebone Club; all the matches played between the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford since their commencement; the Matches played by the Marylebone Cricket Club, the counties of Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Hampshire, Kent, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex and Yorkshire in 1864; The Doings of the Twelve in Australia, and other interesting information.'

MATCH REPORTS

Oxford v Cambridge

'In our first number of the Cricketer's Almanack, these matches were ready for the press; but owing to the observations of one of our friends we did not publish them, though we were well aware that they would have been as interesting to the reader as those recorded. In this number we therefore submit them for the perusal of our friends, because we are quite certain that our work will be incomplete if these matches are not published together with those of the two Elevens and those of the Gentlemen and Players.'

Eton v Harrow

'On the 8th and 9th of July the Annual match between the Etonians and the Harrovians was played at Lord's. The company was far more numerous than on any previous occasion, there being about nine thousand spectators present ... Two marquees stood in opposite ends of the ground, the one being appropriated to the supply of the more substantial necessities of life, while the other was well stored with strawberries, ices, and cooling beverages. Both were at times crowded with customers.'

The scores of the University matches from 1827 are given, and with the coverage of domestic cricket and the tour to Australia, Wisden is already getting into its stride. The publishers hope readers 'will find the Almanack, from its size, a readier reference and a more convenient companion than larger volumes of greater pretensions' – a shot across the bows of the competition in the form of John Lillywhite's Cricketers' Companion which made its debut this year.

1866

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- Unsuccessful assassination attempts on Otto von Bismarck and Tsar Alexander II
- Austro-Prussian War (The Seven Weeks War)
- SS Great Eastern successfully lays transatlantic cable
- Alfred Nobel invents dynamite
- Beatrix Potter and H.G. Wells born

WISDEN 1866

3rd EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight

PAGES: 200

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

CRICKET HEADLINES 1865

Unofficial county champions: Nottinghamshire

Practice nets first used at Lord's

Worcestershire CCC formed

V.E. Walker, for Middlesex against Lancashire, and G.

Wootton, of All England against Yorkshire, both take all ten wickets in an innings

FEATURE ARTICLES

'Calendar of the Births and Deaths of nearly all the celebrated players who have appeared before the public; The Laws of Cricket, as revised by the Marylebone Club; the Matches played by the Marylebone Cricket Club, the counties of Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Hampshire, Kent, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex and Yorkshire in 1865; also the matches played in 1865 by the All England, United All England, and United South Of England Elevens.'

TO THE READER

'JOHN WISDEN AND CO. have again to thank the Cricketing Public for the encouragement given to the Almanack, and they beg respectfully to offer the third number for the perusal of their friends, trusting that it will be received with as much favour as its predecessors.

J.W. and Co. have this year published the matches of the three All England Elevens, feeling certain, from the great favour with which these celebrated Elevens are received in all parts of the country, their doings will be read with interest.

J.W. and Co. have carefully avoided making any remarks upon the play or players, as the purport of this little work is to record the scores of the matches published as a book of reference.'

MISCELLANEOUS

From the Calendar section:

March 1866

10th Sat. Prince of Wales married 1863. James Street, of Surrey b. 1840

11th Sun. 4th Sunday in Lent. Sir Rowland Hill retires from the General Post Office 1864

12th Mon. Bartholomew Good, of Lincolnshire and Notts, d. 1848 *aetat.* 36

13th Tues. Henry Sampson, of Yorkshire, b. 1813

14th Wed. Fly fishing begins. Geo. Fremantle of Hants, b. 1806

1867

WISDEN 1867

4th EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight

PAGES: 164

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)

2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)

3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- First volume of *Das Kapital* published
- Emperor Maximilian of Mexico executed by firing squad
- Queensberry Rules for boxing published
- Garibaldi's troops march on Rome
- Russia sells Alaska to United States for \$7 million

CRICKET HEADLINES 1866

Unofficial county champions: Middlesex

Oxford win the University match by 12 runs

TO THE READER

'JOHN WISDEN & Co. very respectfully offer to the Cricketing Public their fourth number of the Almanack, and have again to thank their numerous friends for the kind support they have received during the past three years.

In consequence of the great increase in the number of matches played during the past season, J.W. & Co. have most reluctantly been compelled to limit the Eleven v. Twenty-two Matches to the Results only, though they are aware that many of their friends are very much interested in them; but, having added the Results of many other Clubs, they trust the Work, as a whole, will give general satisfaction.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

'Calendar of the Births and Deaths of nearly all the celebrated players who have appeared before the public; The Laws of Cricket, as revised by the Marylebone Club; the Matches played by the Marylebone Cricket Club, the counties of Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hampshire, Kent, Lancashire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex and Yorkshire in 1866; also the matches of the following clubs: All England, United All England, and United South Of England Elevens. Anomalies, Butterflies, Cambridge University, Civil Service, Free Foresters, Gravesend and Milton, Incogniti, I Zingari, Kennington Park, Longsight, Oxford University, Quidnuncs, Royal Artillery, Southgate and Upper Tooting.'

MATCH REPORTS

All England Eleven

'John Wisden and Co. would have gladly given the Scores of these twenty-two matches, knowing the interest that is taken in them; but in consequence of the great number played during the past season (in all 69), they are compelled to give the Results only. Had they given the scores in full, this little work would have been so increased in size as to render necessary an addition in price.'

MISCELLANEOUS

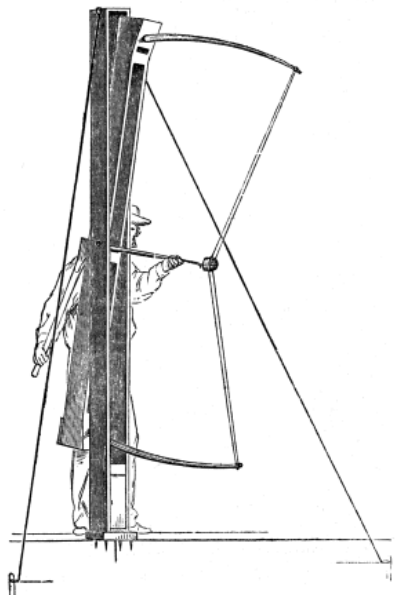
'The Scorers of 1000 (or more) runs in 1866.

W.G. Grace Esq: Runs Scored 2168; Matches played in 33; Innings played out 40; Times not out 7; Highest innings 224*

C.F. Buller Esq.: Runs Scored 1647; Matches played in 39; Innings played out 54; Times not out 6; Highest innings 196
Henry Jupp: Runs Scored 1605; Matches played in 40; Innings played out 68; Times not out 8; Highest innings 165'

Although from the first edition the Almanack carried a two-page 'List of Articles kept by J. Wisden and Co', the first full-page advertisement appears in this edition with a line drawing of the company's patent Catapulta (pictured), an early form of bowling machine. Despite the reduction in pagination from the previous year, coverage of club cricket is expanded, but at the expense of the scorecards of the three England Eleven matches – All England, United All England and United South of England, which played all around the country, often against opposition of up to 22 players.

JOHN WISDEN & CO.'S PATENT CATAPULTA.



The principle of working the Catapulta will be shown at
2, New Coventry Street, Leicester Square, London, W.

1868

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- First Trades Union Congress held in Manchester
- General Ulysses S. Grant elected President of USA
- Last public hanging in Britain
- World's first traffic lights installed at the junction of Great George Street and Bridge Street in London
- Overthrow of the Shogunate and restoration of imperial authority under Emperor Meiji in Japan
- 33 die in Abergele rail disaster, Wales

WISDEN 1868

5th EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight

PAGES: 116

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

CRICKET HEADLINES 1867

Culmination of a long period of rivalry and ill-feeling between professionals of North and South, and of the two 'All England' elevens: these two great matches abandoned this year

MCC sends a team to Paris

Sussex dismiss Kent (batting one man short) for 18 at Gravesend

TO THE READER

'In consequence of the great increase in the number of matches played during the past season, W. & M. have most reluctantly been again compelled to limit the Eleven v. Twenty-two Matches to the Results only, though they are aware that many of their friends are very much interested in them; but, having added the Results of some other Clubs, they trust the Work, as a whole, will give general satisfaction.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

'Calendar of the Births and Deaths of nearly all the celebrated players who have appeared before the public; The Laws of Cricket, as revised by the Marylebone Club; the Matches played by the Marylebone Cricket Club, the counties of Cambridgeshire, Kent, Lancashire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex and Yorkshire in 1867; also the results of the following clubs: All England, United All England, and United South Of England Elevens. Cambridge University, Incogniti, Islington Albion, I Zingari, Oxford University and Southgate.'

MATCH REPORTS

[*Wisden continued its policy of not commenting on the matches, but merely giving the scores. One of the scorecards printed under 'Extra Matches' was a twelve-a-side match, 'One Leg vs. One Arm', played at Islington on April 22 and 23. The match was left drawn with One Arm needing 20 more runs to win, with two wickets in hand.*]

The Almanack is, just for this year, 'published and sold by Wisden and Maynard' – hence the reference to W. & M. in 'To the Reader.' Unfortunately, the calendar pages for April, May and August show the year as 1867, the compositor having forgotten to update the standing type from the 1867 Almanack. The 1991 reprint by John Wisden & Co contains a printer's erratum slip explaining: 'No, there is not an error in this facsimile reprint of the Almanack; the error was made when the Almanack was originally printed in 1868 ... We did check with the Library at Lord's that their copy also showed the incorrect years. In the circumstances, as this facsimile is published as an exact copy of the original Almanack, we have not corrected the errors contained in the original.'

1869

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- American Transcontinental Railroad completed in Promontory, Utah
- First Sainsbury's store opens in Drury Lane, London
- Suez Canal opens
- End of transportation to Australia as a sentence for British criminals

WISDEN 1869

6th EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Crockford and W.H. Knight

PAGES: 124

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

CRICKET HEADLINES 1868

Unofficial county champions: Nottinghamshire

Australian aborigine team visits England

W.G. Grace scores a century in each innings for South of the Thames vs. North of the Thames at Canterbury, the first time this feat has been achieved since 1817

E.F.S. Tylecote scores 404* for Classical v Modern at Clifton College

TO THE READER

'WISDEN AND Co. very respectfully offer to the Cricketing Public their sixth edition of the Almanack, and have again to thank their numerous friends for the kind support they have received during the past five years. In consequence of the great increase in the number of matches played during the past season, W. & Co. have most reluctantly been again compelled to limit the Eleven v. Twenty-two Matches to the Results only, though they are aware that many of their friends are very much interested in them; but, having added the Results of some other Clubs, they trust the Work, as a whole, will give general satisfaction.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

'Calendar of the Births and Deaths of nearly all the celebrated players who have appeared before the public; The Laws of Cricket, as revised by the Marylebone Club; the Matches played by the Marylebone Cricket Club, the counties of Cambridgeshire, Kent, Lancashire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex and Yorkshire in 1868; also the results of the following clubs: Marylebone, I Zingari, Incogniti, Australian Aborigines, All England, United All England, and United South Of England Elevens.'

Individual Innings of 200 or More Runs, by W.H. Knight

"404 runs by one man!" "Of course that is the largest innings yet hit?" – and "Pray, whose is the second highest innings?" – and "Third highest?" – and "Next?" and "Next?" Such – when Mr. Tylecote's great innings became generally known last season – were the oft repeated enquiries respecting the great scores made of those who are supposed to be well posted in these matters ...

So when last year's hot, heavy and enormous run-getting season had become part and parcel of cricket history, I thought the said history would be a trifle more complete if these innings of 200 runs were gathered together and published in a form handy for reference. I have collected them, and trust the accompanying list of such innings, with the few "Notes by the way" that precede them, will be found interesting to the readers of "The Cricketer's Almanack".

Knight's 'Notes by the way', which cover three pages, is the first article to appear in Wisden. The Almanack reverts after one year to being 'published and sold by Wisden and Co'.

1870

WISDEN 1870

7th EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Knight

PAGES: 152

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)

2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)

3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- First international football match between England and Scotland
- Franco-Prussian War. Emperor Napoleon III deposed
- Siege of Paris begins
- Unification of Italy completed: Rome becomes the capital of the new country
- Death of Charles Dickens

CRICKET HEADLINES 1869

Unofficial county champions: Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire

Emmett (T.), of Yorkshire, takes 16 wickets for 38 runs in the match against Cambridgeshire

W.G. Grace scores nine centuries and G.F. Grace five during the summer

TO THE READER

'In this, the Seventh Edition of the Almanack, an endeavour has been made to render the little Annual more complete as a work of reference on the past season's cricket. Hitherto the Batsman has monopolised all attention by the batting scores only finding a place in the book. This year, the Compiler has tried to do justice to the Bowler, by recording, wherever they were attainable, the bowling summaries to each match, thus bringing "The Ball and The Bowler" into equality with "The Bat and The Batsman" and thereby more equitably telling "The Story of Cricket" in 1869.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

For the first time, Wisden features comments on the playing skills of the cricketers whose feats it recorded.

The Marylebone Club was given three pages of prose before the scorecards

Reports of all matches were included

Articles on each of the counties whose matches are recorded (**Surrey, Nottinghamshire, Kent, Yorkshire, Sussex, Lancashire, Middlesex and Hampshire**)

The Kent Bowler from 1851 to 1869-70, Edgar Willsher

The Three Yorkshire Batsmen of 1869: Roger Iddison, Rowbotham, Ephraim Lockwood

MATCH REPORTS

Cambridge v Oxford, at Lord's, June 21 and 22

'The Grand Stand was fully occupied; the Pavilion (seats and roof) crowded with Past and Present of both Universities; and altogether about 8000 of the cream of English society thronged the ground. At 11.25 they resumed play. A splendid one-hand catch by Mr. Absolom, and a clever stump out by Mr. Richardson, got rid of the steady player, Mr. Gibbon, and the dashing free-hitter, Mr. Evetts; but Mr. Pauncefote stayed whilst 6 wickets went. This gentleman played an innings of 33 runs so correctly and well as to elicit the commendations of all good judges on the ground.'

The Canterbury week, August 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th

'The week of all weeks in the cricketing season is this, annually held in August on the St. Lawrence ground at Canterbury. As a Cricket County gathering of all classes, from Peer to Peasant, it never had an equal, and as a Cricket week played out by the most eminent Amateurs and Professionals in the country, it is far away beyond rivalry ...

THE BATTING, after the first day, thoroughly mastered the bowling, as many as 1678 runs having been scored during the 5 days and few hours' cricket. Mr. W. Grace's 96 and 127 were capital antidotes to his 0 on the Monday. His 127 was the highest individual score of the week. His 96, made in one hour and 35 minutes, was hit from some of the best bowling in England, and was a grand display of fine judgement in placing the ball, clean, powerful hitting, and rapid scoring.'

M.C.C. and Ground v The South Of England

Played at Lord's, May 17 and 18

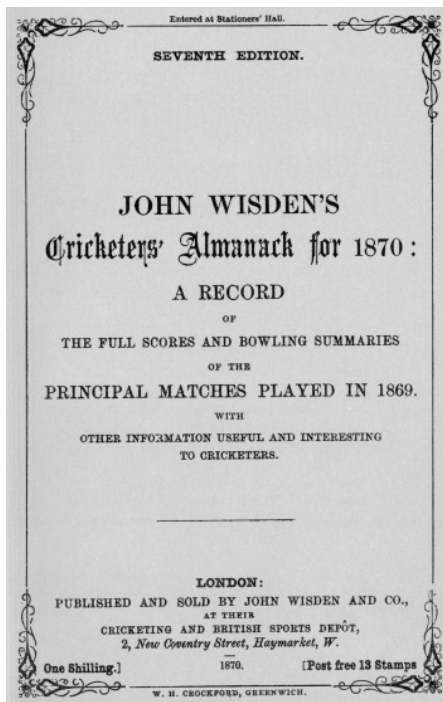
'About 3000 visitors present on Monday and 300 on Tuesday (weather queer that day). Wickets smooth, but dead. Hearne was out for 8 from a capital catch at point by Griffith, who stopped the ball (very hot) with one hand and caught it with the other.'

COUNTY REVIEW

KENT

'The present Kent County Club was formed in 1859. In its earlier seasons the club played their home matches in various parts of the county. In 1864 Notts v Kent was played on the new, prettily surrounded, but not very good Crystal Palace ground; subsequently the little, but good old ground at Gravesend was the home of the K.C.C., and last season the Crystal Palace ground was again selected to play the county's home matches on. But this roving, homeless position is one unbefitting a cricketing county like Kent.'

For the first time, the book is called John Wisden's Cricketers' Almanack (pictured) rather than Cricketer's Almanack, with the apostrophe making the cricketers plural rather than singular as it had appeared in the first six editions. On the page inside the cover is a summary of 'the contents of previous numbers'.



1871

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- German Empire formed: William I of Prussia proclaimed Emperor of Germany
- Scotland beat England in the first ever rugby union international
- Queen Victoria opens the Royal Albert Hall
- Henry Morton Stanley finds Dr. David Livingstone at Ujiji
- Trades unions legalised

WISDEN 1871

8th EDITION

EDITOR: W.H. Knight

PAGES: 152

PRICE: Limp 1/-

REPRINT:

1. Billing & Sons 1960 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
2. Lowe & Brydone 1974 (1864-78 in set, limp, 150 limit)
3. Wisden 1991 (1864-78 in boxed set, cloth, 1,000 limit)

CRICKET HEADLINES 1870

Unofficial county champions: Yorkshire

Heavy roller first used at Lord's: improvement in quality of wickets begins

W.G. Grace scores 215 for Gentlemen v Players at The Oval, the first double-century in this fixture

Cobden's Match, Oxford v Cambridge: Cobden wins the game for Cambridge by 2 runs with a hat-trick.

Derbyshire CCC formed; Kent CCC re-formed

INTRODUCTION

'The compiler's earnest thanks are here proffered to SECRETARIES of CLUBS, PROFESSIONALS and other Cricketers, for the valued information with which they so readily assisted his endeavours to render this edition a full and faithful record of the Principal Matches Played in 1870.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

'Marylebone Cricket Club in 1870

At a Special General Meeting of the Members of M.C.C., held in the Pavilion on the 4th of May, the Hon. F. Ponsonby proposed, Mr. F. N. Micklethwait seconded, and (after discussion) it was duly carried, that Law IX should read as follows: The Bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot on the ground behind the bowling crease, and within the return crease, and shall bowl one over before he change wickets, which he shall be permitted to do twice in the same innings, and no bowler shall bowl more than two overs in succession.

A proposition to add to Law xlv the words "Or any agreed number" was not carried.'

Statistical lists now include:

'All Individual Innings of 200 Runs Yet Hit

Individual Innings of three Figures hit in 1870

Two Three Figure Scores in One innings in 1870

Twenty-Eight of the Largest Innings Played by The Elevens in 1870

Single wicket Matches in 1870

Closely Contested Matches in 1870'

MATCH REPORTS

North v. South Of England (Return), at Canterbury, August 8th, 9th, 10th

'The Northerners were all ready for play early on the Monday, but owing to missing the train, Jupp and Southerton had not arrived, and it was 12.45 ere the match and the week's cricket was commenced. On the Tuesday the North Eleven (and Jupp not out) were out in the field

for action at 11.20, but consequent on a misunderstanding by Mr. Ottaway, the other not out of the preceding evening, as to the time set for resumption of play, he had not arrived, and it was 11.40 ere play began that day. On the Wednesday they commenced at 11.50, but when time was called at 10 minutes to 7, the match was unfinished, the South having 4 wickets to fall and 55 runs to score to win. The time lost on the two days being ample for one side to have obtained the wickets or the other to have made the runs, and thus have finished what in all probability would have been one of the closest contested, as it certainly was the best played, match of the season.'

Cambridge v Oxford, played at Lord's, June 27 and 28

'When Mr. Ottaway left, the innings was at 160 for 5 wickets, and the time 10 past 7; so 20 minutes remained for 5 wickets to make the 19 runs then required to win. But a catch at slip and an "lbw" speedily got rid of Mr. Townshend and Mr. Francis, making 7 wickets down for 175 runs, or 4 to win – an apparently easy task. But then (in an indifferent light for batting), Mr. Cobden bowled his now famously effective last over:-

From the 1st ball a single was made (3 to win with 3 wickets to fall)

From the 2nd ball, Mr. Butler was superbly caught out at mid off

The 3rd ball bowled Mr. Belcher

The 4th ball bowled Mr. Stewart

And so, accompanied by excitement unparalleled, did the 8th, 9th and 10th wickets fall with the score 176, Cambridge after all winning this "match of matches" by 2 runs.'

COUNTY REVIEW

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

'This county played a brief but brilliant cricket season in 1870, winning every match the Eleven played. There was no county club then in existence, the matches being arranged by, and played under, the management of Mr. W.G. Grace; however there is very little doubt but that in 1871 a County Cricket Club for Gloucestershire will be established on a firm basis.'

MISCELLANEOUS

'The sad deplorable accident that ended in the untimely death of poor George Summers will distressingly assist in rendering the past season at Lord's a memorable one to all classes of cricketers, by whom the unassuming manners, excellent conduct, and great cricketing abilities of Summers were held in high esteem; and it must be some consolation to his relatives and friends to know that no professional cricketer ever left us who in life was more highly respected, and whose death was so deeply deplored, than George Summers.'

[The Nottinghamshire batsman Summers, 25, was hit on the head by a short delivery in the match against MCC at Lord's. He died four days later. The next batsman, Richard Daft, went to the wicket with a towel wrapped round his head for protection. There was criticism of the pitch, but the match report in Wisden notes 'the wickets were excellent'.]

1872

WISDEN 1872

9th EDITION

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THE WORLD AT LARGE

- First ever F.A. Cup Final, at Kennington Oval. Wanderers beat Royal Engineers 1-0
- The *Mary Celeste* is discovered drifting without a crew off the Azores
- James Whistler exhibits *The Artist's Mother* (Mrs. George Washington Whistler, or *Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 3*)
- President Grant re-elected: his main opponent Horace Greeley dies during the election campaign
- Secret ballot introduced in Britain

CRICKET HEADLINES 1871

Unofficial county champions: Nottinghamshire

W.G. Grace scores 2,739 runs at an average of 78.25, when every stroke was run out. This was the first time any batsman had made 2,000 runs in a season, and the feat was not equalled by another batsman until 1893

S.E. Butler of Oxford takes all ten Cambridge wickets for 38 runs at Lord's

Lancashire dismissed for 25 by Derbyshire at Old Trafford, still the county's lowest score

Gloucestershire CCC formed

INTRODUCTION

'John Wisden & Co. thankfully acknowledge the annual increasing support awarded to the "Cricketers' Almanack". [*A mere 15 words.*]

OBITUARIES

[*For the first time, obituaries were printed in Wisden. They appear on page 71 surrounded by a heavy rule.*]

Mr. James Henry Dark

'Mr. Dark's connection with Lord's Grounds commenced when he was a boy of (about) 10 years old ... In 1836 Mr. Dark became proprietor of Lord's Ground; in 1864 (or 65) he disposed of his interest therein to THE MARYLEBONE CLUB, and to the honour of the deceased it should be known that, when more lucrative offers were made him for the ground for building purposes, he rejected them all, in order that – so far as he could aid in keeping it so – Lord's Ground should be Lord's *Cricket* Ground for ever. Mr. Dark was of tempestuous temper, but ...'

Stephen Slatter

"'Steevie' was engaged on Lord's Ground for 44 years. It is curious that after being in Mr. Dark's employ for so long a period, the same year should see the death of both MASTER and MAN.'

MATCH REPORTS

Summary of the Week's Cricket at Canterbury

'1718 runs scored; 106 wickets down

Average per day: 286 runs and 18 wickets

Of the 106 wickets down, 39 were "bowled", 37 were caught, 15 were "c and b", 3 were run out and 1 hit wicket. And it may be of interest to some to know that so many as 45 of the 106 wickets fell to slow bowling, 25 of the 45 slow wickets being due to the bowling of Mr. Rose.'

H.H. Stephenson's Match

North v South, *played at THE OVAL July 31, and August 1 and 2*

'The weather was bright throughout, and the company present so numerous that the attendance averaged 6000 per day, and those present the three days witnessed Mr. Grace out from the first ball bowled in the match, and subsequently play the largest innings ever scored by a cricketer on The Oval, his two innings forming the sensational contrast of 0 and 268.'

COUNTY REVIEW

Sussex in 1871

'The Sussex season, '71, was the more interesting from the fact that it was the last the club could play on the old ground by the sea, inasmuch as that "eligible plot of land" made so famous by cricketers and cricket, was required for more of "those magnificent mansions facing the sea" for which "The Queen of Watering Places" is so celebrated.'

MISCELLANEOUS

[From the Marylebone Cricket Club report]

'June was nippingly cold, and July was wet and windy, but there are two sides to all tales told, and if the greater portion of the three months up at Lord's in 1871 was unseasonably stormy and showery (and it *was* so), sunshine at other times beamed brilliantly on the famous old turf, most opportunely so at the North v. South; at the Oxford v. Cambridge; and at the Eton v. Harrow matches, and those three attractive contests collectively drew to Lord's audiences more numerous than had ever before been attracted there to three matches in one season.'

1873

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- The Alexandra Palace destroyed by fire just two weeks after its opening
- The Jesse James gang carries out its first train robbery near Des Moines, Iowa.
- The QWERTY keyboard invented
- *Around The World in Eighty Days* by Jules Verne is published

WISDEN 1873

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CRICKET HEADLINES 1872

Unofficial county champions: Nottinghamshire

Counties meet to set qualifications for county players

James Lillywhite takes all ten wickets for North v South at Canterbury

Ross Mackenzie, at Toronto, throws the cricket ball a record 140 yards and 9 inches

MCC and Ground dismissed for 16 by Surrey at Lord's, the lowest innings total in a major match since 1839

W. G Grace scores 2,571 runs in 57 completed innings

INTRODUCTION

'John Wisden & Co., in again thankfully acknowledging the annual increasing support awarded to the "Cricketers' Almanack," beg to inform the cricketing community that, notwithstanding THE CRICKET AT PRINCE'S and THE VISIT OF THE TWELVE TO CANADA AND AMERICA necessitated an enlargement by 36 pages of this year's edition, their little record of THE FULL SCORES &c., of the season's important matches, *is not increased in price.*'

FEATURE ARTICLES

Qualifications for a County Cricketer

'A meeting of representatives of the leading counties was held ... for the purpose of determining what shall be the future qualifications for a county player. It may be stated that early in the season the committee of the Surrey County Cricket Club, at whose instance the meeting was convened, communicated with the Marylebone Club with a view of securing the services of that body in endeavouring to remove the laxity which has of late existed relative to the qualifications that constitute a county player.'

OBITUARIES

Deaths of Cricketers in 1872

'Mr. R. Baggallay, Mr. Benjamin Dark, Thomas Heath (of Notts), Mr. Lighton, Mr. Butler Parr (Notts), Mr. G.F. Parry, Major Wolfe, R.A., Lord Harris (*late President of the Kent County Club*).' [*Only the list is given: no details.*]

COUNTY REVIEW:

Yorkshire in 1872

'The match at Prince's against Notts, and at Sheffield against Surrey, were gallant and close fights that brought defeat, but entailed no disgrace on the Yorkshiremen.'

So many defeats were not pleasant; but the fact that Yorkshire had no “foreigners” in their ranks, but always fairly fought out their fights with true sons of their Shire, is a credit to them.’

MATCH REPORTS

North v. South, at Canterbury, August 6th, 7th, 8th

‘The South commenced the batting with Jupp and R. Humphery, the North bowlers at starting being J. C. Shaw and Lockwood. (Here it is as well to state that all hits to the seated visitors counted 4 and were not run out, hence so very many 4’s were made.) ... A stirring Kentish cheer notified Mr. Thornton’s walk to the wickets and I hope he will do 50, exclaimed one of the many admirers of hard hitting present; but the 50 did not come off, for when, by a brace of 4’s and a 2 (all leg-hits and all from J. C. Shaw), Mr. Thornton had made 10 runs in 5 minutes, Shaw bowled him.’

MISCELLANEOUS

All the Twenty wickets

Mr. C. Absolon – an old liberal supporter of Metropolitan cricket and cricketers – was the grey haired hero of this very successful bowling feat, i.e. – having a hand in the downfall of all the twenty wickets; he bowled 10, two hit wicket, six were caught from his bowling, and he caught out the remaining two. The match made famous by this bowling of Mr. Absolon’s was Wood Green v United Willesden, played at Wood Green, July 21, 1872 ... Summing up Mr. Absolon’s bowling in 1872, *Bell’s Life* of the second of November last states: “Mr. Absolon is entitled to seven hats for taking three wickets in consecutive balls on seven different occasions. *B.L.* also states that Mr. Absolon scored 1109 runs and took 519 wickets last season!!!’

1874

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- Disraeli succeeds Gladstone as Prime Minister
- 'Sphairistike', an early form of lawn tennis, patented by Walter Clopton Wingfield
- The Factory Act establishes a 56-hour working week, and prohibits children being used as chimney sweeps
- Death of the original Siamese twins, Chang and Eng Bunker, aged 62

WISDEN 1874

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CRICKET HEADLINES 1873

Unofficial county champions: Gloucestershire and Nottinghamshire

Sussex dismissed for 19 by Nottinghamshire at Hove, still their lowest first-class total

W.G. Grace completes the first double of 1,000 runs and 100 wickets in a season (2,139 runs and 106 wickets)

Adelaide Oval opened

Leicestershire CCC formed

INTRODUCTION

'John Wisden & Co., in again thankfully acknowledging the annual increasing support awarded to the "Cricketers' Almanack," hope for a continuance of that support to the edition for 1874.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

The Counties – Qualifications for a County Cricketer

'This, we believe (we are not sure) was the last of the meetings in 1873 on this subject, and we *suppose* that the above five regulations are the laws that explain what really does constitute a County Cricketer; anyhow, the practical result of all these meetings, discussions, divisions, rules and regulations was that in 1873

Mr. G. STRACHAN played for Surrey against his native county Gloucestershire

SOUTHERTON played for Surrey against his native county Sussex

T. PALMER played for Surrey against his native county Kent ...'

COUNTY REVIEW

Marylebone Cricket Club

'With a view to promote county cricket, and to establish a new and interesting series of matches at Lord's Ground, the committee, in the course of winter, offered a challenge cup competition. Regulations were drawn up and sent to the counties. The project was favourably received by some and declined by others. Five acceptances were received in the first instance, ties were drawn, and the prospect of an interesting season was afforded. For various reasons two of the five accepting counties withdrew from the competition, and finally, as the liberal views of the committee did not meet with general support, or were otherwise misrepresented, the original idea was abandoned ...

In justice to themselves the committee must repeat that the challenge cup matches were only projected with a view to promote county cricket. The fact that all expenses would be borne by the M. C. C., and that the matches would be played on a neutral ground, afforded a reasonable belief that such contests would be viewed with interest by cricketers in general.'

Middlesex C.C.C.

‘Old TOM HEARNE was not up to his big hitting form of 1872; nevertheless he made double figures in six innings out of eight, a proof that “there is lots of hitting in the old boy yet”’

MATCH REPORTS

The Gentlemen v. The Players of England, played at Lord’s, June 30 and July 1

‘When Mr. Grace had made 65 runs, he was caught at point by Carpenter from a NO BALL bowled by J.C. Shaw; barring this bit of luck his truly “great” innings was a splendid sample of how to time, hit and place the ball. His 163 was made by the following hits:- one 7, a straight drive to the Nursery ground wall; a five (four for an overthrow), thirteen 4’s (including some superb cuts), six 3’s, 17 2’s and 47 singles.’

Lancashire v Surrey, played at Old Trafford, June 19 and 20.

‘A most decisive victory this of Lancashire’s, whose Eleven won by an innings and 117 runs, their two bowlers being unchanged throughout Surrey’s two innings. Richard Humphrey, with 11 and 25 was highest Surrey scorer in both innings. The Lancashire men fielded well, Mr. Hornby especially well; they gave no extra in either innings.’

Lancashire bowling unchanged throughout both matches.

‘To Watson and William McIntyre it is due to record that they were the only Lancashire bowlers tried in *both* Lancashire v Surrey matches played in 1873. In those two matches they bowled as follows:-

		Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts.
At Old Trafford	McIntyre bowled	46.3	19 for	70 and	11
	Watson “	45	15 “	79 “	8
On the Oval	McIntyre “	40	17 “	52 “	11
	Watson “	39	15 “	49 “	8’

MISCELLANEOUS

98 and 90 not out in One Match

‘Mr. G. Podmore made 98 and 90 not out in Residents v Visitors match at Eastbourne last autumn.’

1875

THE WORLD AT LARGE

- Captain Matthew Webb becomes the first person to swim the English Channel
- U.S. Congress passes Civil Rights Act, prohibiting racial discrimination
- The first Kentucky Derby is run
- Britain buys the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal

WISDEN 1875

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CRICKET HEADLINES 1874

Unofficial county champions: Gloucestershire

W.G. Grace performs the double again

Alfred Shaw takes all ten wickets for MCC against The North at Lord's

INTRODUCTION

'John Wisden & Co., in again thankfully acknowledging the annual increasing support awarded to "The Cricketers' Almanack," hope for a continuance of that support to the edition for 1875.'

FEATURE ARTICLES

The Largest Innings and the Smallest Innings Scored in 1874

'A Side out for 2 (Leg Byes). Nether Stowey v Bishop's Lydiard. From *Bell's Life* of Sept. 19 Old *Bell* did not state when or where this innings was brought off, nor did it state in what part of England "Nether Stowey" or "Bishop's Lydiard" is situated; what *B.L.* did state is: "The smallest score of the season was recently played between Nether Stowey and Bishop's Lydiard. It will be seen that not one of the Nether Stowey batsmen obtained a run in the second innings ... (Small as the total of this innings is, it is not the smallest on record, as there are others of only 2 runs and "a few" the total of which are 0.' [*Nether Stowey and Bishop's Lydiard are in Somerset.*]

The Three English Twelves who have Visited Australia

'Mr. W.G. Grace's team ... played 15 matches, winning 10, losing 3 and leaving 2 unfinished; a fairly successful tour, considering the undoubted improvement made by Australian cricketers since the visit of Parr's team, and the generally admitted fact that Mr. Grace's team did not nearly represent the full cricketing strength of the old country.'

OBITUARIES

Roger Kynaston Esq

'For many years Hon. Sec., and subsequently, Treasurer, to M.C.C. A popular and efficient Hon. Sec. A courteous and esteemed gentleman.'

John Lillywhite

'John Lillywhite was buried Oct. 31, in Highgate Cemetery, his remains being laid in the grave where rest his Father, his Mother, and his Wife.'

COUNTY REVIEW

Surrey in 1874

'All other bat work for Surrey seems dwarfed into comparative nothingness by the batting deeds of Jupp, whose splendid double *not out* of 43 and 109 in the match against Yorkshire;