

**CRICKET "DERBY" G.B.  
AT BROAD OAK.**

**REMINISCENCES OF "BRAD"  
THORNTON, THE FIRST PRO.**

**WHEN TEAM WERE OUT FOR FIVE.**

As I have few opportunities of witnessing a cricket match I took the advantage of a free Saturday to see the local "Derby" between Broad Oak and Linthwaite, writes a "Guardian" reporter, and the afternoon was both pleasurable and profitable. The view from the Broad Oak field, so pleasantly situated with the Parish Church on one side and facing the hills below Crosland Heath Golf Links on the east, amply compensates one for the steep climb from the bottom of the valley. With its whitewashed walls and gaily painted pavilion, contrasting with the vivid green of the well-kept ground, Broad Oak presents a picturesque scene, especially on such a sunny day as was Saturday.

The fixtures between Linthwaite and Broad Oak have always evoked keen interest and friendly rivalry from supporters of the neighbouring clubs, and the large crowd assembled round the field was evidence that its popularity remains undiminished.

The home team won the toss and batted first. Linthwaite bowled and fielded well, and were in a good position when eight Broad Oak wickets were down for 98. For half an hour the batsmen could do very little with the bowling, but Mitchell, the pro., then came in and played a sparkling innings, of 32 not out, being top scorer for his side. Broad Oak were out for 158, just within two and a half hours, but in a short time they succeeded in disposing of Linthwaite for the meagre score of 55. Mitchell (7 for 13) and France (3 for 26) bowled well for the home team.

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## RETORT FROM LINTHWAITE.

During a walk around the field I met several old stalwarts of the club and stopped to chat with them. Mr. Allan Dyson, of Meltham, a former sexton of Linthwaite, was conversing with Mr. Arthur Edward Iredale, another founder of the cricket club, and Mr. Bradley Thornton, the first professional. Mr. Dyson remarked on how conditions had changed since the occasion on which the Broad Oak secretary wrote to Linthwaite asking for a fixture, and received a reply to the effect that they would arrange a match when they considered the Broad Oak team good enough to play them.

Mr. Thornton has many interesting reminiscences of his cricketing days. He was born at Hall Bower on July 25th, 1857, and as a youth played with the Hall Bower team. In 1882, the year in which the club was formed, he came to Broad Oak, and he still treasures the letter from the secretary, Nathan Whiteley, inviting him to attend the first annual supper of the club to be held at the "Alma Hotel" in the October of that year. He played with the team during a few matches of its first season, and in 1883 he became the first professional at Broad Oak.

There was no cricket league at that time, and they played against neighbouring clubs such as Primrose Hill, Galear, Scholes and Hall Bower. "Brad," as he is generally known, has vivid recollections of one famous match, played at Broad Oak against Crosland Moor on a beautiful day. "We bowled them out for just over thirty runs," said Mr. Thornton, "and when we went in we thought we should win easily. I had taken seven wickets for fourteen runs. To the amazement of the spectators, we were all out for five, and Johnny Mallinson, who went in last, got two of those! Sam Ellam and Joe Battye bowled for Crosland Moor, who used to play in a field at the bottom of Tom Lane."

## TRAGEDY RECALLED.

The captain of the team of which Mr. Thornton was first pro. was Tom Knight, who met his death in such tragic circumstances at a match at Meltham. He had followed Mr. Thornton at the wicket, and although he did not see the ball which killed Knight, the pro. saw him fall. The annual flower show was being held at Meltham, and they had arranged to go and have a jolly evening, but the tragedy cast a gloom over everyone, and they were a saddened team who returned to Broad Oak.

Other players at that period were A. E. Iredale, who also acted as secretary for a time, Tom Beaumont, who became captain, Alfred Whiteley, Fred Hodgson, Jim Ed. Dyson, Willie Mallinson, Johnny Mallinson, Bill Priestley, now a retired policeman, of Burnley, who visited Broad Oak recently, and whose son now plays with the second eleven, Jonathan Inman, Charlie Campnett, William Lofthouse, Law Dyson (now of Meltham), Brook Dyson, Allen Whiteley, George Hinchliffe, Herbert Knight and John Dunning. Sykes Quarby also used to play with them, and was captain for several seasons. The majority of these cricketers have long been dead.

The first president was the late Mr. James Edward Kaye, a brother of the late Mr. George Kaye, who lived at Croft, near Sluids, and afterwards removed to Crosland Moor. He was succeeded by the late Mr. James Dyson, who held the position for many years. Succeeding secretaries were the late John Walker, a contractor, of Lano Top, and the late Tom Barrett.

## CRICKETER AT FIFTY.

During the five or six seasons Mr. (Continued in next column).

## LICENCE RESTORED.

A successful application for the restoration of his driving licence was made at the Borough Police Court on Monday by Jack Broadbent, 90, Armitage Road, Milnsbridge. The order of disqualification was imposed in September, when Broadbent was found guilty of driving a car without being insured against third party risks.

Broadbent pleaded that he had had only periodic employment since the disqualification, but his employers were prepared to give him a regular job if his licence were renewed.

The Chief Constable made no objection and the licence was renewed.

(Continued from previous column).

Thornton remained with the club they made progress, and then he became professional for Primrose Hill, with whom he played for six seasons. In 1894 he returned to Broad Oak as pro., and after seven or eight years' service he was succeeded by Jack Ardron, and continued to play with the team as an amateur until 1910, when the old club was disbanded and the Broad Oak Bowling Club was formed. Afterwards he played a few matches with Hall Bower, and was over fifty years of age when he retired from playing cricket!

Mr. Thornton has not kept records of his successes, but he remembers that he averaged 46 runs during one season, and he was head of the averages almost every season. In the old days there were better bowlers, he says, for a batsman thought he had done remarkably well if he had scored thirty. On one occasion he took nine wickets in a match against Kirkburton at home, and caught the last man out. His highest score was 136 with Primrose Hill against Heckmondwike, and his highest score with Broad Oak was 107 at Skelmanthorpe. He scored several centuries whilst with Primrose Hill, one being during a match against Linthwaite. In 1902 and 1903 he received medals from Broad Oak for scoring the highest aggregate runs.

## WALKED FROM HALL BOWER.

The Huddersfield and District Cricket League was not formed until 1891. The second league was called the Alliance, and of this Broad Oak were members. Although they were runners-up for the championship on five or six occasions they never succeeded in winning anything. The second eleven, however, once won the championship. There were no trams or buses in those days, and Mr. Thornton had to walk from Hall Bower to Broad Oak two nights a week and on Saturdays, for he could walk there almost as soon as go to Huddersfield to travel to Galear by train. When the team went long distances to a match, however, they used to engage a spring cart.

Athletic festivals used to be held annually at Broad Oak, and on those occasions "Brad" played with other clubs, such as Armitage Bridge, Huddersfield, Deanhouse and Almondbury.

Mr. Thornton worked for Messrs. Joseph Hirst and Sons at Folly Hall as a lad, and then he was employed by Messrs. John Taylor and Son, Colno Road, as a cloth finisher for a period of twenty-one years. On leaving Nook, just below Newsome, to come to Linthwaite in 1894 he left the mill, but later he worked at Black Rock Mills as a finisher for seven years. Later he was employed by Messrs. Whitwam Bros. for over twenty years, and retired at the end of 1930.

He lives with his daughter at Starta, Cowlaraley Lane, and still takes a keen interest in the welfare of the Broad Oak Club. Although none of his sons showed prowess with the bat or ball, he has a grandson who plays with Dewsbury and Saville.

BROAD OAK C. & A. C. FIRST XI.  
 WINNERS OF THE HUDDERSFIELD & DISTRICT LEAGUE, SECTION II - 1932.



J. Gamble, F. Irving, F. C. Whiteley, S. Taylor, L. France, W. Mitchell, A. Knight, T. Jorico.  
 (Vice President), (Professional), (Coach).  
 W. Horton, H. Knight, E. Shackleton, J. Washington, A. R. Lockwood, S. Hampshire, C. Hurstwood, D. Baxter, K. W. Holroyd.  
 (Scorer), (Captain), (Secretary).  
 Hinchliffe Cup.