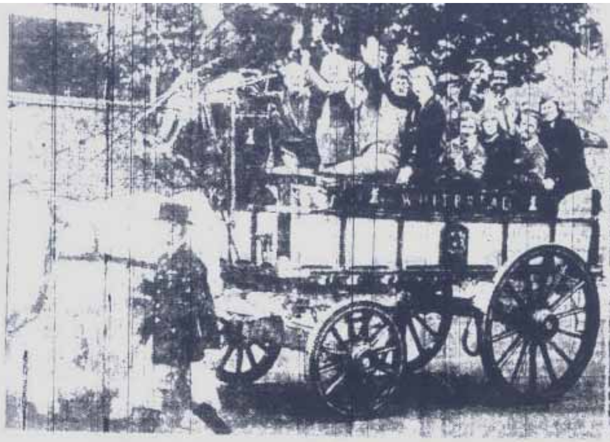

On the victory trail (left) the team arrives at Lords in style; pictured centre a group of supporters prepare to urge on their team and right the jubilant trophy winners.

Cup victory for Bierley heroes

Triumph at Lord's for village cricketers

[illegible]pening batsman [illegible] Nurse spoke for [illegible] the East Bierley [illegible]cket team on Sunday when he said: "It's been a weekend [illegible] shall never for[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] in which Bob Sanderson [illegible] still going while [illegible] Nurse, Murphy Walwyn and Claude Defoe go for quicker runs at the other.

There was a boundary of only about 40 yards on the Tavern side and Nurse was the first of three players to have the satisfaction of hitting a [illegible] in this direction.

Walwyn's moment of pleasure was a six to the longer Grandstand boundary and Defoe emulated him. The ball was actually caught by a fielder but he had stepped back four paces over the line before taking the ball.

Defoe collected the Man of the Match awards with 61 off [illegible] overs, including an on-drive so admirably executed that the Swansea ideal radio reporter told his listeners: "Glamorgan could do with a player of this class."

Defoe's wife Doreen couldn't bear to watch. Soon after Claude had begun his innings she retreated to make some phone calls while a friend kept her in touch with progress.

"I came back just in time to see him out," she told me. "But he was very confident before he went in. He said: 'The pitch was made for me.'"

Skipper Phil Taylor called it "an innings of controlled aggression."

Defoe departed at 152-4 with nine overs left which are worth detailing.

Report by Malcolm Hartley

Pictures by Michael Chuck

Only two runs were scored off the first four as Bierley's following fidgeted with growing impatience.

But then John Decent and Freddie Jones began a London blitz of the most enjoyable kind.

The final five overs yielded 11, 7, 15, 18 and 11 — 62 off five overs, 44 off the last three.

They hit two sixes each — one of them a glorious straight drive to the rails by Decent which put up the 200 — and gave their team the highest total ever scored in a village final.

Decent told me later that they began to throw the bat on a signal from Phil Taylor.

"He gave us the nod and we banged away at everything. It could have gone wrong but it worked out well.

"I was aware of the crowd singing. At first it was all from the Welshmen but it just died away until the only supporters I could hear were the Bierley ones.

"But the most magical moment for me was walking through the Long Room when I went in."

It was raining in Wales and because their chief rivals were unable to play and catch up, Ynys were declared South Wales champions midway through the Lord's final. But in London the sun came out to smile on Bierley's bowlers' backs and the 15-over rule was soon forgotten.

Tony Pickersgill opened with a nervous over which cost five runs, but in his second he flattened the off stump of Chris McKay, a big hitter sent in early to make quick runs, and wicketkeeper Tony Wilson drily observed: "I think that's out."

It was a great tribute to the accuracy of the Bierley bowlers that their first five victims were all bowled as Ynys, unbeaten in any competition this summer, crumbled away towards defeat and the East Bierley support grew noisier every minute.

Dai Thomas hit their only six off Defoe, but after 28 overs Walwyn came on and staggered the Welsh by bowling faster than anyone had done previously — not exactly what you expect in village cricket from the fifth bowler — and the last five wickets were scattered in seven overs.

Pickersgill said: "The skipper did everything right. He took me off and brought Claude on and he got the danger man in his first over. He moved a fielder and we caught a man. He brought himself back and took two wickets in his first over."

So the Ynys supporters' daffodil on a 26ft. green pole wilted and there were Welsh wails as Bierley's fans sang "Ee-aye-addio, we won the cup" and chanted "York-shire, York-shire" as they watched Taylor received the trophy and a cheque for £500 from the president of the MCC, Charles Palmer.

One tribute the team particularly appreciated came when Sir Leonard Hutton shook hands and told them: "This is not village cricket — this is first-class cricket."

Match details. East Bierley: R. Sanderson run out 32; B. Nurse b James 16; M. Walwyn lbw b Watkins 19; C. Defoe c Williams (G) b Curtis 61; J. Decent n.o. 45; F. Jones n.o. 30; ex 13, total off 40 overs (for four wickets) 216. (P. Taylor, G. Fisher, A. Wilson, A. Pickersgill and P. Topp did not bat).

Watkins 9-1-32-1, James 9-0-43-1, Williams (G) 9-0-53-1, Curtis 9-1-46-1, Evans 4-0-29-0.

Ynysygerwn: A. Geoghaghan b Topp 9; C. McKay b Pickersgill 16; M. Davies b Defoe 26; R. Williams b Pickersgill 25; G. Williams b Taylor 13; D. W. Thomas c and b Walwyn 24; D. Evans c Jones b Taylor 6; J. Curtis run out 3; W. Rees b Walwyn 0; R. Watkins n.o. 1; B. James b Taylor 0; ex 7, total off 35.4 overs 124.

Topp 9-0-27-1, Pickersgill 9-0-33-2, Defoe 7-0-25-1, Taylor 6.4-0-27-3, Walwyn 4-1-9-2.

Right: dressed for the occasion, Mrs. Anne Woods, and, left, Philip Bentley, nine, with his special headgear — a Bierley cap worn by his uncle Mr. Donald Carr, seen with him, which he played for the team 20 years ago.

Smiles of success by Man of the Match Claude Defoe (left) and captain Phil Taylor.

Storm on home helps

[illegible] Labour [illegible] home helps [illegible] enough [illegible] Labour spokesman for social [illegible] The Labour group intends [illegible] the matter at the next [illegible] council meeting on [illegible] 18.