

Herbert Robinson – Paddock CC

(Pavilion Inscription and Plaque)



Upon his death at the age of 82, the *Huddersfield Examiner* described Herbert Robinson as ‘an outstanding worker for Huddersfield League cricket and one of the game’s best known personalities.’

He began his career with Paddock at the age of 12 and played in the club’s victorious Sykes Cup side of 1923. After a spell in the Bradford League, which included three championship successes with Brighouse, he returned to Paddock and played in the ‘Double’-winning team of 1937. He later became president of both Paddock Cricket Club and the Huddersfield League, and also wrote a regular column in the *Examiner* under the pseudonym ‘Cryc’.

The highlight of his career was his retirement event - when 250 guests at a league dinner serenaded him while singing *For he’s a Jolly Good Fellow*. Above all, he was dedicated to ‘local cricket for local boys’.

He also authored the Paddock CC Centenary Brochure that was published in 1972.





In The Picture

Mr. Herbert Robinson

went back to the club the following year as an amateur determined to repay his debt. This he did with honour, walking off with the club's batting prize.

There came a season at Fartown and then several more with Paddock. For three years he played with Brighouse, and during that time the club thrice won the Bradford League championship. Finally it was Paddock again as president (from 1934-36) and captain, until he gave up regular league cricket at the end of the last war.

So much for a playing career which has been remarkably varied and which might (say good judges) have been crowned by a county cap if things had gone just a little differently. Off the field "Robbie" has been just as active, particularly during the past ten years as president of the Huddersfield and District League.

Perhaps his energy and enthusiasm have not produced all the results that he once hoped for (the three-division scheme, for instance, that he proposed at his inaugural meeting is still gathering dust on the table), but they have been good for the League. Nor has the traffic been in one direction only. Through constant council and management committee meetings "Robbie" has learned that there are more ways than one of getting things done. He has learned, too (and he is most insistent about this), that where cricket is concerned there is still a great fund of goodwill among the general public. "Everybody realises," he declares, with a sidelong glance at the footballers, "that cricket is still our traditional game"—and he acknowledges with gratitude the generous support he has always received whenever he has had to appeal for funds. "People have been very good to me."

But although cricket has occupied so much of his time, there have been intervals for other things. There were the pantomimes he produced for fifteen years at Oakes Baptist Church, for instance. "Great days," he recalls now with obvious relish. There was an active spell with the Huddersfield Borough Liberals as honorary secretary. In later years there has been golf—a game which he steadfastly refuses to take seriously. On his day he can be a terrifying player, to partner and opponent alike. Since the war there has been his son's farm at Hereford (now being removed to Eawtry), a venture which has meant missing many a Saturday afternoon's cricket because he felt his presence was required at the lying in of a favourite heifer. Finally (although this is really cricket again) there have been the League dinners, functions which have been enlivened and ennobled by "Robbie's" success in persuading distinguished speakers to come to Huddersfield.

The innings is not over yet. In the autumn of every year, as the first leaves fall and the annual meeting appears on the horizon, there are whispers of a declaration, but it is difficult to think of Huddersfield cricket without "Robbie" in it somewhere—and pretty near the centre at that.

That is why, although they may sometimes wish that "Robbie" would not try to hit so many good length balls back over the bowler's head, the vast majority of cricket-lovers in Huddersfield and district hope that he will be at the crease for a long time to come.

IT is not surprising that Herbert Robinson holds the record for the fastest century (forty-seven minutes) in the Huddersfield and District Cricket League. The brisk, breathless tempo of his everyday life reminds you of nothing so much as a batsman racing the clock to win a match for his side.

Endowed by nature with enough energy for two men, and enough ideas and enthusiasm for three or four, "Robbie" (it is impossible, almost impertinent, to think of him by any other name) has always tried to "push the score along" on and off the field. Some of his strokes, inevitably, fly off the edge, others are lofted dangerously close to fieldsmen, but he is still out there at the wicket. He is a perfect example of "fortune favouring the brave."

He has always been prepared to chance his arm, and although, now that the first half-century has been safely tucked away in the score-book, he no longer attempts to swing every bowler over long-on's head, basically he has changed little with the years. He is still as full of the spirit of adventure and independence as he was in the days when the applause he won with his bat was sometimes drowned by the cat-calls he earned with his pen. The articles he wrote for a local advertising sheet occasionally brought him "boos" on almost every ground in the league.

"Robbie" wrote as he did, as a reformer, with no respect for persons or institutions, not to make easy headlines, but because he felt that the League was running off the rails, and was taking the game with it. Anything to do with cricket concerns "Robbie" most closely. For very many years it has been almost his whole life.

The Paddock first team opened its doors to him when he had attained the mature age of fourteen, and three years later this seasoned veteran played professionally with Undercliffe. It was not, alas, a successful venture. He collected, as he says, more pound notes than runs—but he

Paddock Cricket and Bowling Club, Season 1924.

Cricket Team, First Eleven

WINNERS OF THE HUDDERSFIELD AND DISTRICT LEAGUE



H. Beckwith J. H. Mackinnon F. Warrington Major T. S. Teasdale (President) G. Rowland, Esq. L. Lister F. Macdonald N. Bentley (Clare) H. Wood (Secretary) H. Hill H. Chatterton G. Miller (Professional) H. Robinson (Captain) A. Trybe W. Jessop H. Robinson (League Representative) S. Livesey (League Representative) A. Smith H. Warrington

1924 – Robinson is sat far right next to club stalwart Sam Livesey

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