

Move To Park Bottom – 1895

The year 1894 saw the last season at the Mirfield Enclosure situated at the north-east corner of the Blake Hall Estate.

In 1894 Mirfield were part of the Spen Valley League playing games against Cleckheaton, Spen Victoria, Staincliffe, Roberttown, Birkenshaw, Scholes Albert Mills, Heckmondwike. It was to be a very poor season on the field.

The season opened with a friendly away at Halifax team King Cross. Mirfield scored 81 for 8 and bowled King Cross out for 57. It looked a promising start as the *Dewsbury Reporter* commented on two new players:-

“Mirfield are to be congratulated on their success at Halifax King Cross. Two new players Micklethwaite and Chadwick gave considerable promise with the ball and mainly through their performance Halifax were dismissed for the moderate total of 57. J.Day batted in good style for 28 and was chief score in the complication of 81 for eight which Mirfield put together.”

The Spen Valley League season got underway on 5th May. Mirfield entertained Cleckheaton and were well beaten being bowled out for 33 with not one player in double figures. T.Walker did take all three wickets as Cleckheaton made 55 for 3.

This was followed by defeats to Spen Victoria and Staincliffe. Mirfield were 73 all out with P.Chadwick scoring 25 in reply to Spen's 100. The game at Staincliffe saw a disastrous 24 all out in reply to 120.

On 26th May things improved with a draw away at Roberttown. Street took five wickets as Roberttown made 153. In reply Mirfield scored 98 for 5 with scores of 29 by Frank Day (29), J.Senior (23) and J.Smith (23).

Birkenshaw came to Mirfield on 2nd June and won by two wickets. Mirfield scored 61 but Birkenshaw scored 62 for 8 despite T.Walker taking five wickets. The following weeks game at home to Staincliffe was rained off along with all other games.

On 16th June the *Dewsbury Reporter* said *“Mirfield surprised everybody by running up a total of 162 for 8 declared”* away at Cleckheaton who they had only scored 33 against earlier. Frank Day making 82; J. Senior 29 and P.Chadwick 27. Cleckheaton batted out for a draw making 83 for 4.

Scholes Albert Mills visited on 23rd June. T. Walker again took five wickets but Scholes made 81. Mirfield were dismissed for 57. The *Dewsbury Reporter* commented *“at this present time they have not won a single game”* in the League.

In a friendly match Dewsbury & Savile sent an eleven to Mirfield on 30th June. Dewsbury made 105 with the Reverend Raynham taking four wickets. Frank Day made 31 in a total of 89.

Mirfield's first League win of the season came on 7th July at home to Roberttown. T.Walker took 6 for 18 and Rev. Raynham 4 for 24 as Roberttown only made 47. Day again led the way with the bat making 26 not out as Mirfield won by eight wickets.

A Dewsbury & Savile eleven entertained Mirfield in the return friendly on 14th July. Mirfield won as the Reverend Raynham took six wickets as Dewsbury made 123. P.Chadwick scored 51 and Day 40 as Mirfield won scoring 125 for 4.

Back to the league and another defeat at the hands of Heckmondwike. Kenworthy made 21 in a total of 77 and Walker four wickets as Heckmondwike scored 79 for 5.

The First Round of the Heavy Woollen Cup witnessed a dreadful performance. Scholes made 114 with the Reverend Raynham taking five and Walker four wickets. Kenworthy was the only man in double figures as Mirfield made only 35.

A friendly with Silsden on Monday 13th August saw a win by 18 runs. Mirfield made 98 (H.Fleetwood 27) and Fleetwood and Walker shared five wickets each in Silsden's 80. This appears to have been the last game on the old ground.

The season ended with defeats to Scholes and Birkenshaw. The *Dewsbury District News* commented of the game at Scholes, "*The display of the Mirfield eleven was weak and unsatisfactory.*" Mirfield were bowled out for 29 in reply to Scholes 130 for 7.

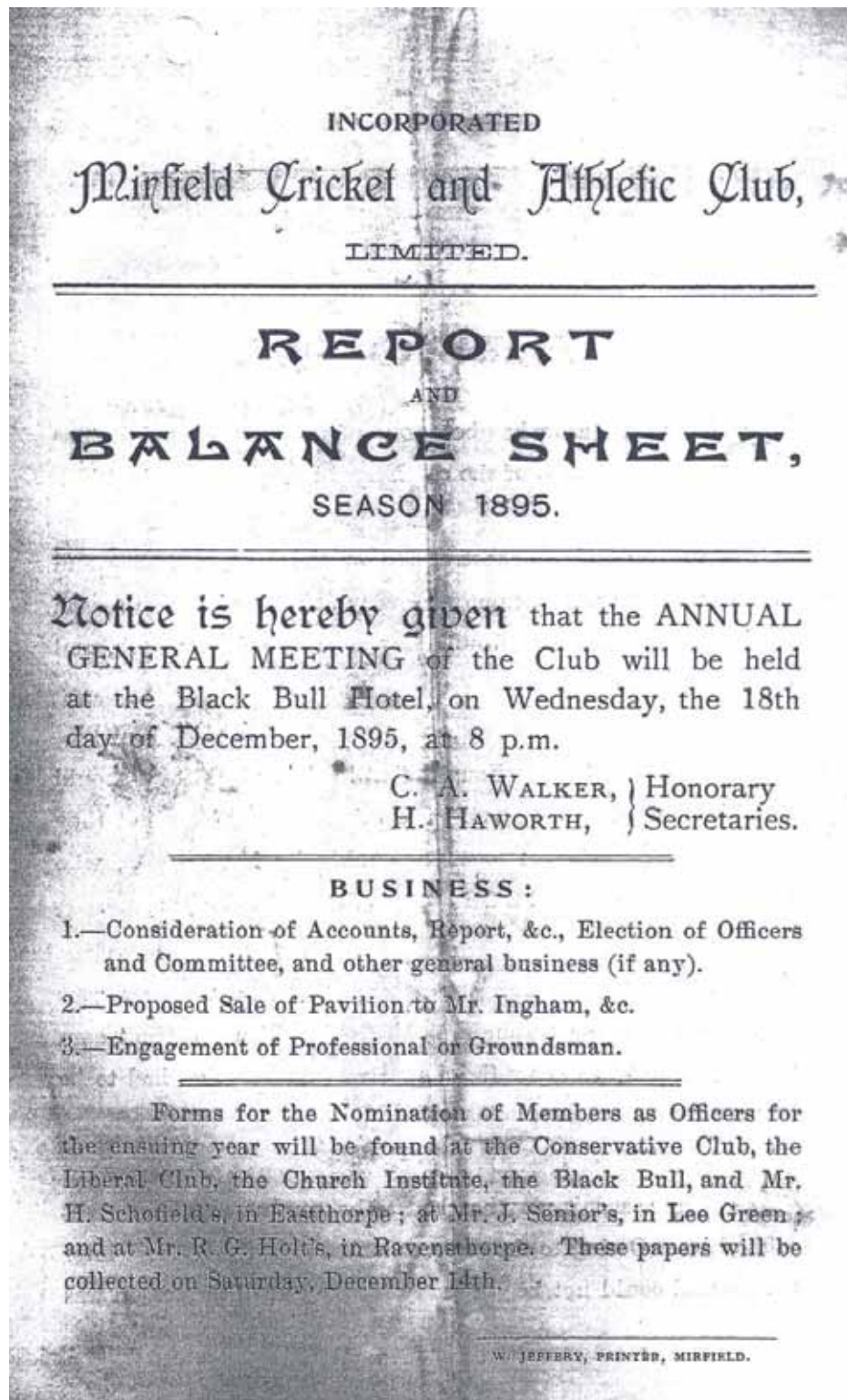
At Birkenshaw, Mirfield appear to have struggled for a team. The *District News* stated:-

"Mirfield with a weak team and comprising a lot of the Parish Church eleven journeyed to Birkenshaw."

Indeed they were bowled out for 50 and despite Walker's 5 for 20 Birkenshaw made 52 for 8.

1894 had been a very poor season on the playing front. At the end of the season the club suffered another blow. From the Report (given by joint secretaries C.A Walker and H.Haworth) and Balance sheet of the Annual General Meeting held at the Black Bull Hotel on Wednesday 18th December 1895 we can learn the following:-

"Owing to the construction of the Heaton Lodge and Wortley Railway; it became necessary at the end of the season 1894, to select a new ground, lay a new cricket pitch, and erect a new pavilion."



The original 'enclosure' being on the Blake Hall Estate, Mr Edward Theodore Ingham owner of Blake Hall appears to have provided a new field at the bottom of the estate at Park Bottom. This field later became the Memorial Ground after the Great War.

The report goes on:-

"The committee thought that in doing this they should provide a ground and pavilion worthy of the place, and they were at the outset met most favourably by Mr Ingham, who placed at their disposal a field very suitable for the purpose.

Subscriptions were invited but though a very generous response was made throughout Mirfield, still a sufficient sum was not raised to defray the very large expense that had to be incurred.

The season's play has had to be conducted under great difficulties. Owing to the unprecedented severity of the winter the ground could not be got ready for play until the season was well advanced, and the pavilion was not finished until the end of the season. Under these circumstances a successful season could not be looked for, but though there has been a considerable loss on the year's working, still this loss has not been so great as was at one time anticipated.

The club has won 9 matches, lost 8 and drawn 5.

The Committee feel that a good ground and pavilion having been provided there is every reason to believe that in the future the Club will prosper, and they earnestly appeal to all lovers of Cricket in Mirfield and neighbourhood to make the Club, as it well might be, one of the foremost in the district.

The Committee, seeing that they were unable to raise the required funds, appealed to Mr. Ingham to assist them. After consideration, he offered (1) to give the club lease of the ground for 10 years at the present rent with a clause for renewal; (2) to pay further sum of £200 in addition to the £100 already paid by him, and to take over the pavilion as his property, letting the same to the Club free of rent for 7 years and afterwards charging £10 a year rent.

In this way, calculating the rent which Mr. Ingham offers to allow, he will have paid £370 which is the actual cost of the construction of the pavilion. The Committee unanimously resolved to accept Mr. Ingham's generous offer and recommend it to the meeting."

The second eleven had ten games scheduled starting at home on 25th May with Dewsbury & Savile, Farnley, Bankfoot, Horbury and Farnley Iron Works.

As we know from the annual report the team had a better season than in 1894. Winning nine matches. The first reported result was the 11th May victory over Scholes. C.Peacock took 8 for 32 as Scholes were dismissed for 67 in reply to Mirfield's 81. J.Smith making 18. It is interesting to see C.Peacock doing so well as another C.Peacock (Colin) would become a Mirfield legend about 70 years later.

The first game on the new ground went unreported except for the score. Mirfield scoring 72 with C.Halliday top scoring with 13. Honley scored 122 for 7.

On 1st June Mirfield suffered a seven wicket defeat at the hands of Farnley. Mirfield making 70 with the Rev.C.T Raynham making 14. The second eleven drew the game away scoring 103 with Farnley 35 for 4. The following week joint secretary C.A Walker scored 17 in a total of 69, but Bankfoot struggled to 55 for 7 in reply with Hind taking five wickets. The second eleven also drew scoring 50 for 3 (J.Longbottom 22 not out) in reply to Bankfoot's 111.



The Rev CT Raynham

The return game with Honley saw the Reverend take five wickets as Honley made 127. Mirfield made 87 all out in reply with Frank Day 22. This was followed by a heavy defeat at Farnley. W.Dransfield took six wickets as Farnley scored 113, but Mirfield slumped to 46 all out. The second eleven fared better Beaumont taking 7 for 16 as Farnley made 50. Mirfield won by 4 wickets.

On 24th June K.Lockwood's eleven visited Park Bottom and Mirfield totalled 192 for 8. C.Halliday scored 87 and W.Kenworthy 38. Lockwood's eleven made 113 all out.

Monday 3rd July the second eleven won at Grange Moor. Foley took five wickets as Moor made just 30.

July saw a General election and the cricket results disappeared from the local papers for about two weeks. On 27th July the first round of the Heavy Woollen Cup was due to be played, there is no Mirfield result and they don't appear in round two.

On 10th August took the noticeable scalp of the strong Dewsbury & Savile club. Albeit against their second eleven. Hind took five wickets as Dewsbury made 64. Frank Day scored 40 not out in Mirfield's 72 for 3. On the 17th August a record was set as Horbury were bowled out for just 8! A.Walker the captain took eight wickets and Street two. Mirfield had scored 75.

The last game of the season on 14th September ended in defeat by three wickets to King Cross. Mirfield making 60. The same week the *Dewsbury Reporter* commented; *"the railway cutting is coming on fast."*

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