

SPEN VICTORIA CC

The Early Years

BROAD CHURCH

1862/5 - ORIGINS

Although 1862 is often cited as a 'birth date', the Club was formally established in 1865, by six men: George Wright, George Hardwick, Sam Haley, Alfred Starkey, James Strafford and Robert Corry.

Valuable assistance was received from James Woodcock of Marsh Rolling Mills.

These founding fathers were all members of the Cleckheaton Wesleyan Sunday School.



All members of that first inaugural team had to attend

chapel regularly to play and this meant they often struggled to find a full side.

One of the Club's earliest fixtures was against Hunsworth Mills, now known as Cleckheaton.

The Moorender
SEASON 2004
CLECKHEATON CRICKET CLUB

**In partnership with
THE HUNSWORTH**



www.cleckheatoncricketclub.com

SDS
1st DIVISION
BRADFORD CRICKET LEAGUE
Adults £ 2.00 Senior Citizens £ 1.00

**Today, Cleckheaton C.C still
has 'Hunsworth' links**

ALL CHANGE!

1865 – NEW GROUND & NEW NAME

In 1865 the Club moved from Whitcliffe Road – its first home – to Spen Lane, where it has resided ever since. It also became known as Cleckheaton – later, Spen – Victoria (rather than Cleckheaton Wesleyans).

The field at Spen Lane was sub-let to the Club for 1/- per week by Charles Mortimer. Soon after, a set of rules were drawn up.



It was in fact very fashionable for cricket clubs to name themselves after the monarch of the time.

See also Birstall Victoria, Copley Victoria, Greetland Victoria, Ripponden Victoria, Sowerby Bridge Victoria, and many, many others!

By 1867 the club had 17 members, and in 1872 the it hired its first professional, Mr B. Doughty.

GROUND FORCE!

1880s/1890s – SPEN LANE DEVELOPMENTS

There were several important events at HQ during the last years of the nineteenth century:

1888 – 3,000 square yards of turf were added to the playing area.



1890 - £120 was spent on erecting first cricket pavilion.

1893 – Ground improvement plans were given the green light by the committee.

SPORT FOR ALL!

1894 – BOWLING GREEN OPENED



The bowling green was opened in 1894 – hence the formal emergence of Spen Victoria Cricket & Bowling Club.

In this part of West Yorkshire – and beyond – it has been quite common for sports to ‘amalgamate’ within the same club organisation, with Spen Victoria a prime example (along with Brighouse Sports Club, Slaithwaite Cricket & Bowling Club, and many more).



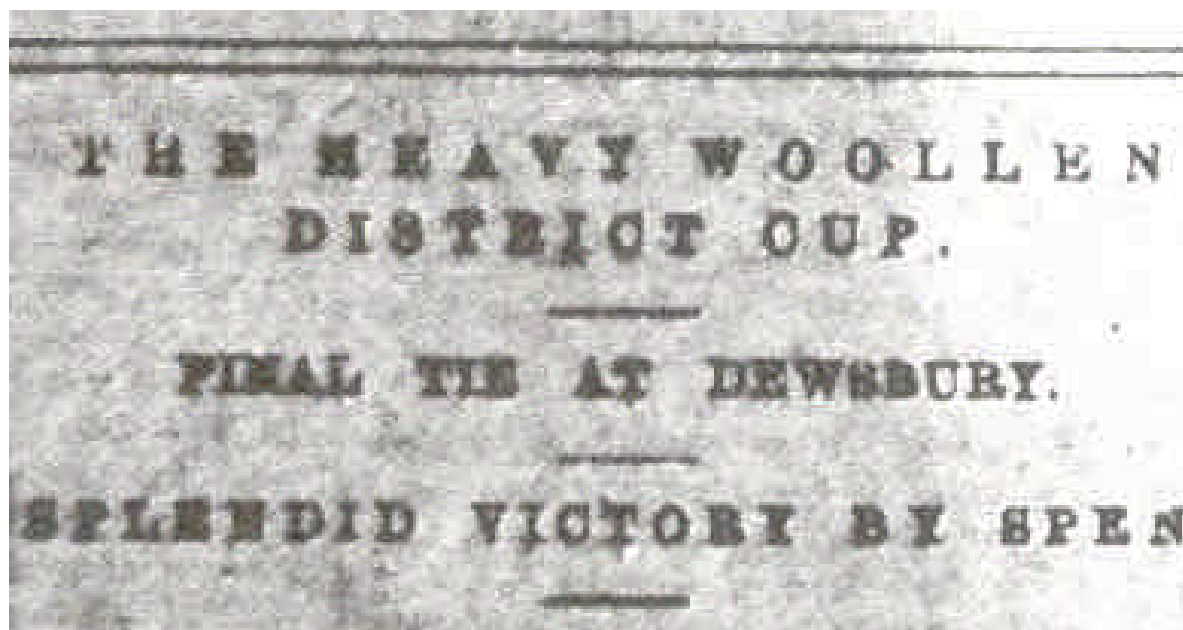
SILVERWARE JOY!

1896 – HEAVY WOOLLEN CUP TRIUMPH

In 1887 Spen scored 472 in a 2nd Round Heavy Woollen Cup match against Dewsbury Clerks. This remains the second highest-ever score in the competition. In the final they lost to Dewsbury & Savile by a record runs margin for a final of 271 runs.

The 1895 final which Spen lost to Batley by 12 runs remains the lowest aggregate score (100) for two completed innings in a final.

Spen finally won the trophy in 1896.





The Dewsbury & Savile ground
- the venue for Spen's 1896 triumph

Spen were defeated in the Heavy Woollen Cup finals of 1889, 1905, 1914, and 1920.



The Heavy Woollen Cup trophy

Spen played in the Yorkshire Council and won the Heavy Woollen Championship in 1914, 1927 and 1930.

FIELD OF DREAMS

1902 – GROUND PURCHASE

The Spen Lane ground was purchased in 1902 and the Club decided to build the existing pavilion and clubroom. It was officially opened in 1909.



Spen Lane today



WOMEN ON TOP!

1911 – BIRTH OF LADIES COMMITTEE

The Spen Victoria C.C. Ladies Committee was established in 1911, three years prior to the outbreak of the Great War.



Over the following decades, the Committee distinguished itself through its commitment to fundraising and the serving of matchday refreshments in the tea room (built originally at a cost of £500).



PAIR OF GREATS!

1914 – SUTCLIFFE & HOLMES

Bank Holiday Monday, August 1914, was the date of the first-ever opening stand between legendary Yorkshire cricketers Percy Holmes and Herbert Sutcliffe.



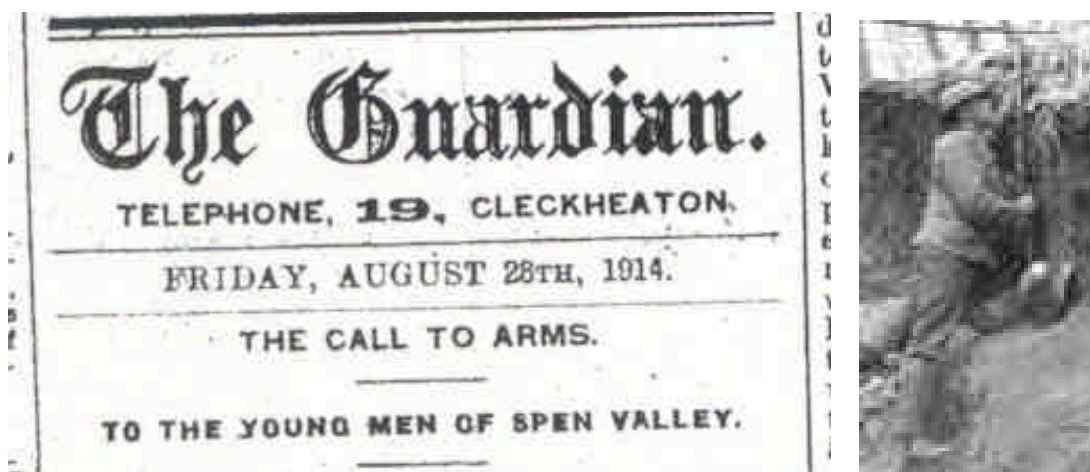
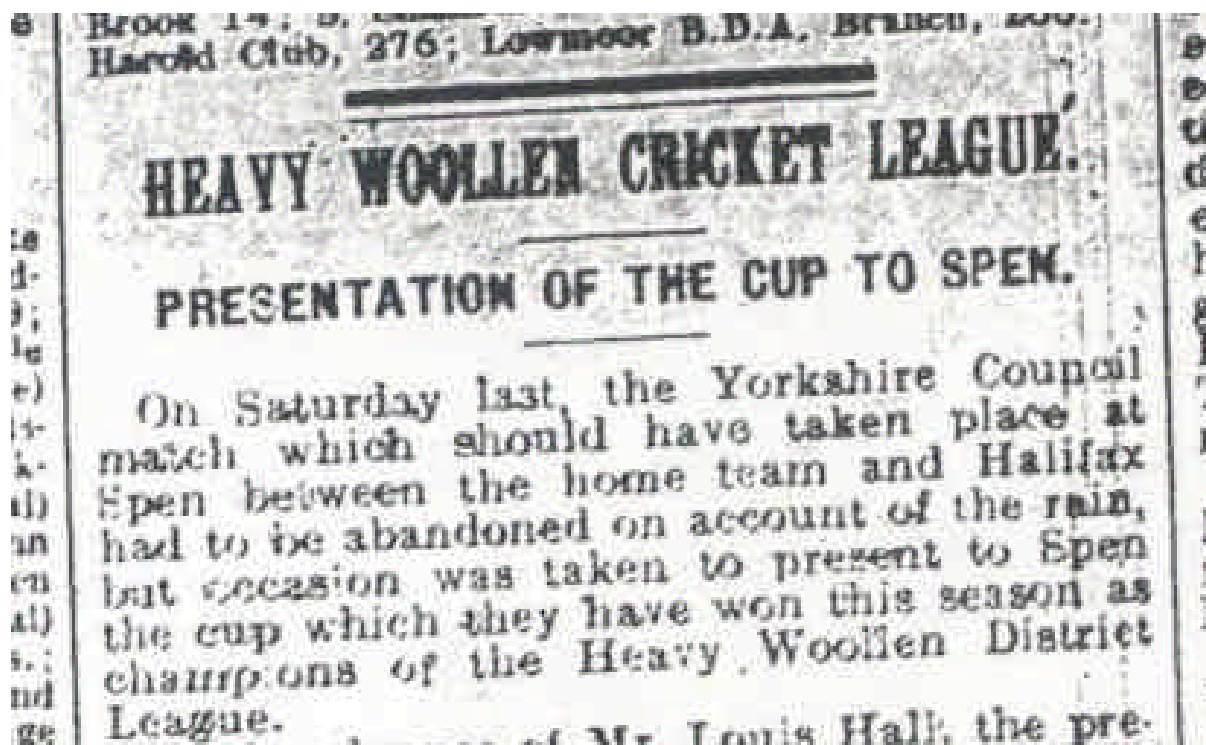
Photo: S. Swift

It was achieved for Spen Victoria in a Yorkshire Council game at Spen Lane against Keighley.

Spen Victoria had bowled Keighley out for 105. Holmes and Sutcliffe then knocked off the target together.

CHAMPIONS & COMBATTANTS

1914 – HEAVY WOOLLEN LEAGUE WINNERS



The call to arms in the Spenborough Guardian

PRIDE OF THE CLUB!

1926 – TEAM PHOTOGRAPH



These men represented Spen in the year of the General Strike. Who are the two gents in suits? And what is the significance of the different types of hat they are wearing?



TOP VENUE!

1928 – HEAVY WOOLLEN CUP HOSTS



Surprisingly, only once, in 1928, has the Heavy Woollen Cup final been staged at the picturesque Spen Lane ground.



TWICE AS NICE - SPEN SCOOP PAIR OF TITLES!

1930 - HEAVY WOOLLEN LEAGUE WINNERS

| LEAGUE TABLE. | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|------|-----|------|
| Results up to and including Saturday, Aug. 30th. | | | | | | | |
| | P. | W. | L. | D. | Pos. | Ob. | Pct. |
| Spennithorne Victoria | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 36 | 26 | 72.2 |
| Batley | 16 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 32 | 21 | 65.6 |
| Oswestry | 14 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 28 | 16 | 57.1 |
| Liversedge | 14 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 36 | 20 | 55.5 |
| Morley | 18 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 36 | 20 | 55.5 |
| Heckmondwike | 17 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 34 | 18 | 52.9 |
| Cleckheaton | 16 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 32 | 14 | 43.7 |
| Chickenley | 13 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 26 | 11 | 42.2 |
| Birstall | 17 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 34 | 13 | 38.2 |
| Staincliffe | 16 | 1 | 13 | 2 | 32 | 4 | 12.5 |

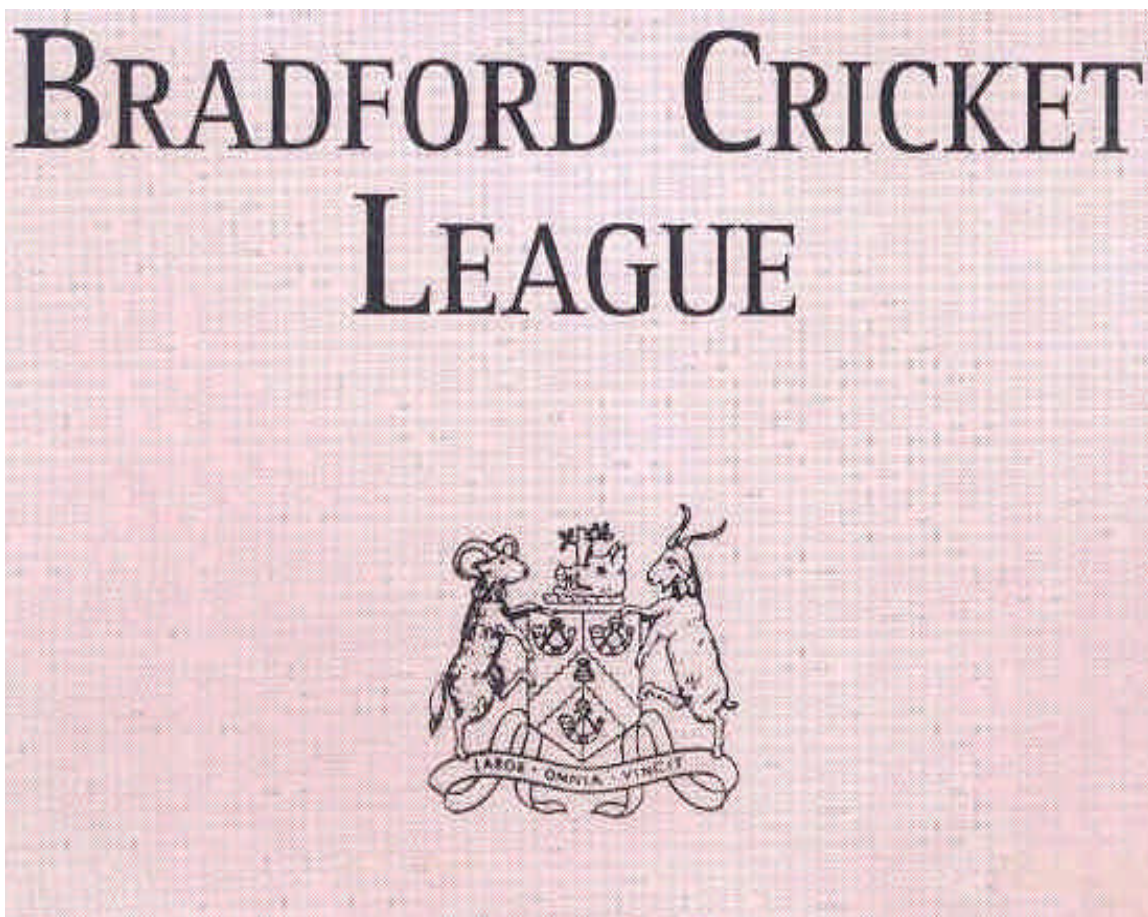
| SECOND ELEVENS. | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|------|
| Spennithorne Victoria | 18 | 10 | 4 | 4 | 36 | 24 | 66.6 |
| Morley | 18 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 36 | 24 | 66.6 |
| Heckmondwike | 17 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 34 | 21 | 61.7 |
| Liversedge | 17 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 34 | 20 | 58.8 |
| Batley | 15 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 30 | 17 | 56.6 |
| Birstall | 17 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 34 | 15 | 44.1 |
| Oswestry | 15 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 30 | 15 | 42.8 |
| Chickenley | 14 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 28 | 9 | 32.1 |
| Cleckheaton | 16 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 32 | 9 | 28.1 |
| Staincliffe | 15 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 30 | 8 | 26.6 |

INTO THE BIG LEAGUE!

1931 – BRADFORD LEAGUE

In 1931 Spen joined the Bradford League and they finished runners up in their first season.

A.C. Rhodes topped the League batting charts with an average of 46.88.

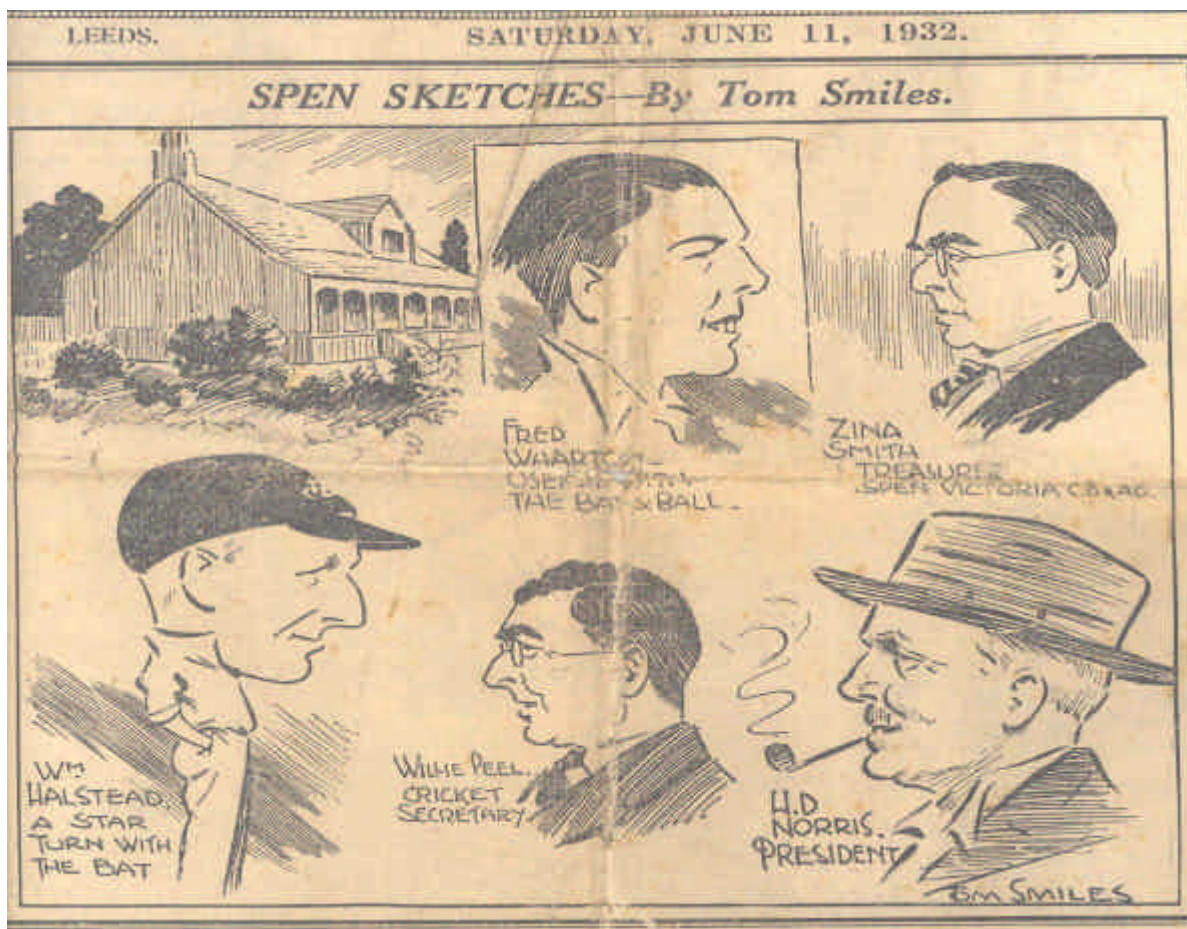


MEN WHO MADE SPEN GREAT

1932/3 – REAL PROGRESS

The Club's early years in the Bradford League were relatively successful. They were runners-up in 1933 when Yorkshire and England batsman Wilf Barber was a key member of the side.

In 1932 the *Yorkshire Evening Post* featured some key figures from this period.



LIGHTCLIFFE VANQUISHED

1936 – FIRST PRIESTLEY CUP WIN

| SPEN VICTORIA. | |
|--|------|
| C. Harrison, b Young | 23 |
| F. Wharton, c Hartley b Young | 49 |
| A. Waterhouse, c Taylor b Mallinson .. | 21 |
| H. Mortimer, b Hartley | 6 |
| A. Robertshaw, not out | 17 |
| H. Priestley, b Coates | 10 |
| W. Kershaw, c Young b Hartley | 0 |
| W. Helliwell, not out | 23 |
| Extras | 3 |
| Total for six wks. (suspended) .. | —153 |
| LIGHTCLIFFE. | |
| H. Taylor, c Helliwell b Wharton | 4 |
| J. Charnock, lbw b Wharton | 25 |
| A. Hartley, Wintersgill | 10 |
| G. Bottomley, c Wharton b Wintersgill .. | 1 |
| P. Coates, lbw, b Helliwell | 40 |
| C. C. Young, b Helliwell | 15 |
| L. Binns, c Beaumont b Wintersgill | 12 |
| R. Thompson, c Beaumont b Wintersgill .. | 1 |
| D. G. Mallinson, b Helliwell | 0 |
| H. K. Booth, b Wintersgill | 1 |
| W. Stevens, not out | 4 |
| Extras | 5 |
| Total | —120 |

(Photo. on page 3.)



Lightcliffe's club crest

The Club recorded its first Priestley Cup triumph when Harold Mortimer led them to a 32-run victory over Lightcliffe in 1936.

PRIESTLEY CUP.

Spennings Victoria's success in defeating Lightcliffe by four wicket in the final for the Priestley Cup on Wednesday evening was a brilliant performance, and one upon which they deserve hearty congratulations. It is all the more gratifying in view of the bad luck which seemed to dog the footsteps of the team at the beginning of the season, and against which players and officials have fought successfully. This was Spennings's first appearance in the final since they joined the league in 1931.

The match was started at Park Avenue before 1,870 people on Monday, but showers considerably interfered with the play and no fewer than five stoppages were caused. Spennings had first use of the wicket and Wharton and Harrison opened the innings. It was soon apparent that the Lightcliffe attack was particularly keen, the fielding being described as better than anything seen in a Priestley Cup final for several years. Both batsmen, however, batted with confidence and put on 68 runs before the first wicket fell. Wharton batted with confidence and put on 68 runs before the first wicket fell. Wharton was distinctly unfortunate in getting to within one of his half-century and being then caught by Hartley off Young. Harrison's share of the partnership was 23. Waterhouse added a useful 21, but after this the next four wickets fell fairly quickly. Robertshaw and Hellwell made an unfinished stand of 34 and Spennings's innings was suspended with the total at 152 for six.



The winning Spen team

On Wednesday evening play lasted only thirty minutes, in the first ten of which Thompson and Mallinson (Lightcliffe) were dismissed without adding a run. Binns tried his best to save the situation, but at 12 he was caught by Beaumont off Wintersgill, and Lightcliffe were all out for 120. Spen Victoria's suspended score was 152 for six. Wintersgill and Helliwell bowled remarkably well, taking five for 40 and three for 38 respectively. The figures were:—Spen Victoria: Wintersgill, 23-4-10-40-5; Wharton, 10-1-30-2; Hellewell, 16-4-38-3; Harrison, 4-0-7-0. Lightcliffe: Coates, 12-4-25-1; Hartley, 28-12-49-2; Young, 20-4-37-2; Mallinson, 13-2-32-1; Thompson, 2-0-8-0.

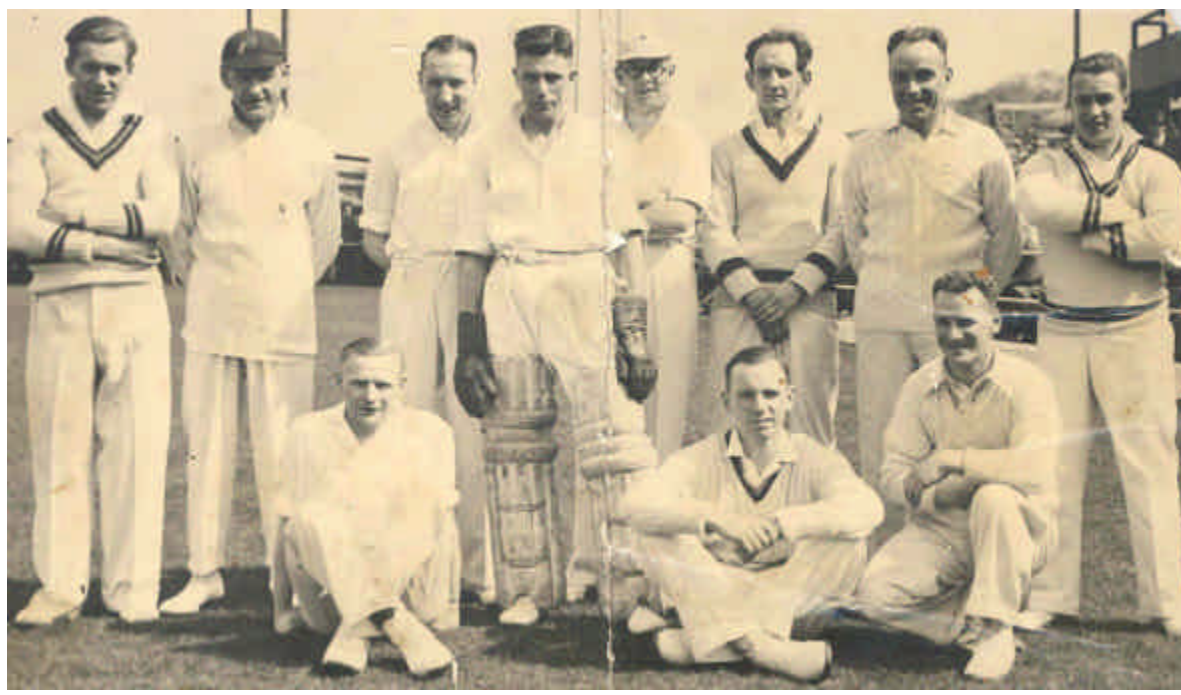
The Lord Mayor of Bradford (Alderman Jonas Pearson) presented the cup and replicas, and both he and Mr. A. C. Day (president of the Bradford Cricket League) congratulated the teams on their excellent displays.

STAR MEN!

1938/40 – TEAM PHOTOGRAPHS



1938

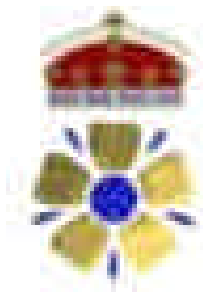


1940

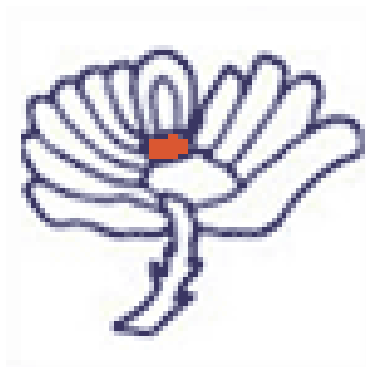
COUNTY SUPERSTARS!

1943 – SECOND DIVISION CHAMPIONS

Spens were relegated to Section 'B' in 1942, despite the heroics of Clifford Sykes. Interestingly, this event was a prelude to an amazing renaissance in the Club's fortunes.

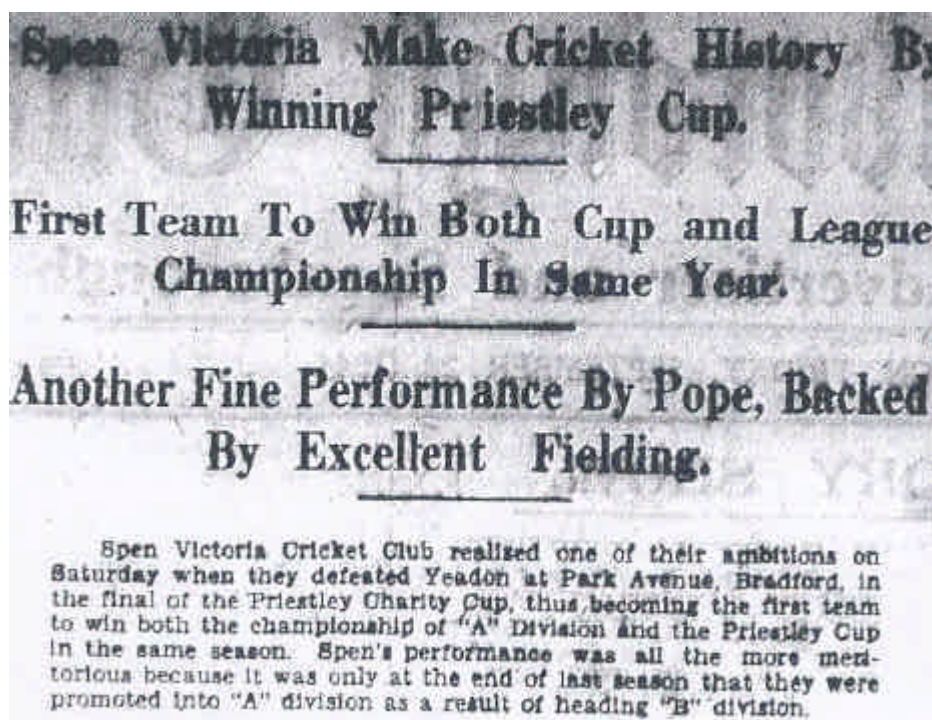


The Spens attack was led by Derbyshire and England bowler George Pope and Yorkshire spin merchant Arthur Booth. In 1942 they scooped the Division 'B' title, with the two men taking a combined total of 149 wickets.



DOUBLING UP!

1944 – LEAGUE & CUP TRIUMPH



Back in the top division, Spennithorne enjoyed their best ever season.

In the midst of the World War, they bagged the Division 'A' and Priestley Cup 'Double'.

