



ORIGINS

Cricket matches in the region of Bay Horse can be traced back to 1851, when a team called Hay Carr played on a ground on the southern side of the country house of that name. We know they had several matches against Lancaster, and the report in the local press on July 27th 1852 concluded "Mr Lamb, of Hay Carr, provided an excellent lunch on the ground to which the players did ample justice. After the match, the players adjourned to the Bay Horse, where a substantial dinner, was also provided by Mr Lamb. The health of Mr Lamb was drunk three times three cheers, after which the Lancastrians departed for home being highly pleased with their day's enjoyment." There was a return game in Lancaster in August, and the report described a heavy defeat rather more kindly than we would expect today "...seven of the Hay Carr gentlemen were compelled to quit the wicket without adding a single run to the score."

Galgate Cricket Club began playing in 1860, and became one of eight founder members of the Lancaster & District Cricket League in 1892. They were league champions many times, including five consecutive years from 1907-1911. Galgate's supremacy was much celebrated in the press and would have created an enthusiasm for the game in the local area. We have no records concerning the decision to form a new club at Bay Horse — all we know is that they became members of the league in 1909. The railway station was only a short distance from the first ground, which must have been a great convenience for visiting teams at a time when rural transport was poorly developed.



Bay Horse Station

THE EARLY YEARS

BAY HORSE CRICKET CLUB 1909-14

The first match was on May 8th 1909, and the entry of a new club in the second division of the Lancaster & District League achieved only this brief statement in the Lancaster Guardian:

St Thomas's were victorious at Bay Horse, a new club in the league, by 30 — 68 to 38, Walmsley taking eight wickets for 18.
We are, however, fortunate that at that time many of the scorecards, even those from the lower division, were printed, and so we have:

Bay Horse v St Thomas's played at Bay Horse

| St Thomas's | | | Bay Horse | | |
|-------------|---------------------|----|-----------------|------------------------|----|
| T H Gregson | b Bland* | 0 | T Bland | b Walmsley | 2 |
| W Brockbank | b Bland* | 7 | Rev P J Delany* | b Walmsley | 2 |
| W Walmsley | c Holmes b Clarkson | 17 | J Hall | b Walmsley | 0 |
| J Gregson | b Rev Delany | 0 | H Holmes | run out | 12 |
| W Hogg | b Bland | 16 | S Hornby | c W Hogg b Walmsley | 2 |
| J Ford | c J Hornby b Bland | 0 | J Hornby | c J Winkill b W Hogg | 1 |
| W Poulton | b J Hornby | 11 | S Whittingham | b Walmsley | 2 |
| J Winkill | b Clarkson | 3 | R Clarkson | c J Gregson b Walmsley | 3 |
| A Till | b Clarkson | 2 | R Spooner | b Walmsley | 0 |
| J Hogg | b J Hornby | 0 | C Stewart | not out | 5 |
| R Wadsworth | not out | 3 | L Spooner | c & b Walmsley | 6 |
| Extras | | 9 | Extras | | 3 |
| Total | | 68 | Total | | 38 |

Father Patrick Delany, born in Ireland, was the resident priest at the Roman Catholic chapel of St. Barbara and St. Catherine attached to the big house at Clifton Hill. He was also chairman of the Managers of Forton School. He played an important part in the early years of the Bay Horse club. A few memories remain of his huge enthusiasm for the game of cricket. Wilf Gornall says his grandfather recalled going with him to watch matches at Old Trafford — they used to travel all the way to and from Manchester on their bicycles! Rupert (17) and Lionel Spooner (16) were sons of the Vicar of Shireshead. Charles Stewart (16) was the son of the railway signalman at Bay Horse.

* These are examples where the newspaper's compositors had problems with the handwritten scores sent for publication. Where we are sure that there were errors in the printing, here and elsewhere we have made the necessary corrections in preparing scorecards for inclusion in this booklet.

Tommy Brockbank did not play in the first match, but he appeared regularly before and after World War I, and later umpired for the team. He was a farrier living at Bankrigg cottages, Bay Horse.



The first results in 1909 were far from encouraging, and there must have been great joy and relief when they won for the first time — not least because it was an away match against Galgate 2nds and the visitors were faced with what, at that time, was a massive total. Galgate were the foremost club in the league and this was one of only two defeats experienced by their 2nd team in 1909.

Galgate 2nds v Bay Horse played at Galgate on 5th June 1909

| Galgate | | | Bay Horse | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-----|--|----------------------|----|
| H Teltham | c Hornby b Hornby | 16 | L Hornby | c Price b Jolley | 20 |
| R Mashiter | b Preston | 5 | W Townley | b Illingworth | 4 |
| R Illingworth | c Hall b Preston | 0 | J Illingworth | c Price b Myerscough | 52 |
| T Jolleys | c Holmes b Preston | 7 | Holmes | not out | 25 |
| T Cornthwaite | not out | 68 | D Spooner | c Cornthwaite | |
| W H Price | b Hornby | 0 | | b Illingworth | 15 |
| J Myerscough | c Whittingham | | R Spooner | b Price | 0 |
| | b Illingworth | 12 | J Whittingham | not out | 0 |
| J Nightingale | b Illingworth | 5 | Extras | | 7 |
| F P Hodgson | b Illingworth | 1 | Total (for 5 wks) 124 | | |
| G Clarkson | b Illingworth | 1 | J Hall, J Hornby, R Clarkson & Preston | | |
| J Jackson | b Illingworth | 1 | did not bat | | |
| Extras | | 8 | | | |
| | Total | 123 | | | |

FATHER PATRICK DELANY (1870-1932)

Father Delany played for Bay Horse from 1909-1914. He was born in



Kenmare, Ireland and after ordination became a curate in Lancaster. Because of ill-health he was transferred to Clifton Hill where he remained for 14 years. He moved to be a Parish Priest in Ulverston, and later became Dean of Furness. When he died unexpectedly in 1932, many columns and letters expressing great appreciation were published in the local press. The North-Western Daily Mail wrote: *One of the largest funerals ever witnessed in Barrow took place*

today, when the body of the late Dean Delany was laid to rest in the Borough Cemetery.....The tragic suddenness of his passing caused a gloom over the whole town and district and even further afield. He had not only endeared himself to his own people, but to the citizens of Barrow generally, by his public services, his geniality, and his infectious friendliness.

We thank the Talbot Library, St Walbuge's Gardens, Preston for the above photo and for information about Father Delany

The next few matches included a fine double over St John's (Bay Horse 85, St John's 23; Bay Horse 73, St John's 25 — 4 wickets fell to Father Delany in the first encounter, 7 in the second), a defeat by Storey's by just 1 wicket, before Galgate made amends on July 17th (Galgate 87, Bay Horse 48). On July 31st, they had only 8 players and lost heavily to St Thomas's. Nevertheless, it was a satisfactory first season and Bay Horse finished in mid-table. J Illingworth (42 n.o.) and S Hornby (42) had a fine stand on 14 August as Bay Horse made 137, their highest score of the season.

Although there had been some encouraging results in 1909, the great success in 1910 could hardly have been predicted. Bay Horse lost to Storey's by 19 runs in the first match, but then proceeded to win every game. Here's a typical report from the Lancaster Guardian:

Bay Horse notched another victory in the Lancaster & District League, 2nd Division, beating Marsh Wesleyans by 67 runs. J Illinworth not out 40, and A Bland 32, were in form with the willow for the Trotters, whose total was 142. Notwithstanding a brave attempt by T Watkinson (37), the Marshites were disposed of for 75. Father Delany secured four wickets for 23, and Illingworth three for 16.

So Bay Horse were the "Trotters", at least in the parlance of the local press!

SIX GROUNDS IN 100 YEARS

The club didn't have a settled home until the 1960s, and some of the enforced changes created a feeling of great insecurity. The first ground at Bay Horse was on the southern side of the lane leading from the A6 to the public house and the mainline station. It was opposite the house called "High Abbey" and from 1926 to 1970 there was a tennis court in the corner of the same field. In an interview for the Lancaster Guardian in 1954, when Billy Wildman was secretary of the club, he mentioned that they also had played for a time on a field further west along the Cockerham Road, but we are uncertain of its location. Around 1930 there was a move to a ground beside School Lane, Forton adjacent to the A6. Len Johnstone, a player for around 20 years from the 1930s, said that there was a properly laid square which they were very reluctant to leave when forced to move. The playing field at Cockerham provided a temporary home, then there was a move to a field owned by a former player, Harold Escolme, in Hollins Lane. Finally, thanks to help from landowner Mrs Pike of Clifton Hill, the present home was made available and, with assistance from the Sports Council for its purchase, it is now permanent. The name "Clifton Park", which was adopted in 1981, was suggested by junior member Stephen Hodgson.

In the penultimate match on August 20th in 1910, Bay Horse achieved a huge victory, scoring 176 and beating the PSA Institute by 130 runs, but unfortunately the Lancaster Guardian did not publish a full scorecard from that match. At a time when 50-60 was often a winning total, this was an extraordinary feat and it would have been good to know the individual contributions. On 3rd September the report read:

Bay Horse beat the "runners-up", Williamson's 2nd—87 to 30—and therefore won the championship with four points to spare. Their record of nine wins in ten matches is exceedingly encouraging. As in the senior competition, all matches have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, there being no draws.

Second Division of the Lancaster & District League: FINAL TABLE 1910

| | P | W | L | D | Pts | For | Against |
|------------------|----|---|---|---|-----|-----|---------|
| Bay Horse | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 856 | 497 |
| Williamson's 2nd | 10 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 610 | 429 |
| St Thomas's 2nd | 10 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 521 | 566 |
| Marsh W. | 10 | 4 | 6 | 0 | -2 | 614 | 664 |
| Galgate 2nd | 10 | 3 | 7 | 0 | -4 | 522 | 665 |
| PSA Institute | 10 | 2 | 8 | 0 | -6 | 407 | 719 |

1 point for a win, 0 for a draw, 1 deducted for a defeat.

Bay Horse scored 242 runs more than any other team in the whole league in 1910.

ENTRY INTO THE FIRST DIVISION IN 1911

Bay Horse achieved their deserved promotion, into an expanded first division which protected the Primitives from relegation even though they had finished at the foot of the table in 1910. Morecambe's 2nd team and Low Bentham had been allowed into the first division, and three new teams appeared in the second division. This meant an expanded fixture list of 14 matches in each division.

Bay Horse had a very satisfactory season against the stronger opposition. On May 27th, St Thomas's were bowled out for just 21, with five wickets to Father Delany and four to J Illingworth. Morecambe 2nd were defeated by 48 runs with good bowling from J Hornby and G Bland, and Father Delany had another 5-wicket haul in the defeat of Low Bentham. By 15th July Bay Horse were 2nd in the league, 2 points behind Galgate. Another win over St Thomas's kept them in touch, but after losing by just 2 runs to the Primitives they fell heavily to Galgate (60 to 144). At the end of the season they and three other teams each had 14 points, and the final positions were decided by "run ratio" as was the practice at that time.

First Division of the Lancaster & District League: FINAL TABLE 1911

| | P | W | L | D | Pts | For | Against |
|---------------|----|----|---|---|-----|------|---------|
| *Galgate | 14 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 24 | 1056 | 549 |
| *Williamson's | 14 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 953 | 793 |
| Bay Horse | 14 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 738 | 721 |
| Primitives | 14 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 742 | 939 |
| Heysham | 14 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 645 | 859 |
| Morecambe 2nd | 14 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 11 | 768 | 855 |
| Low Bentham | 14 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 11 | 748 | 925 |
| St Thomas's | 14 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 10 | 723 | 732 |

** These teams were awarded points when Morecambe 2nd team failed to fulfil fixtures.*

POOR PERFORMANCES IN 1912/13, THEN BETTER IN 1914

After the successful debut in the top division, the subsequent seasons were very disappointing. Bay Horse lost heavily against Williamson's (176 to 46), were bowled out for just 11 by Bailrigg, and won just once in 10 matches. There were only six teams in Division 1 in 1912, and the expansion to seven for 1913 allowed Bay Horse to escape relegation. With just three wins they fared only slightly better, but once again escaped from falling down because Division 1 grew to accommodate nine teams in 1914. Drawn matches were unusual at that time, but in a home game on July 4th 1914, Bay Horse made 152/8 and Williamson's replied with 135/7. This suggests that the pitch at Bay Horse could play well sometimes, though in general the scores might suggest otherwise.

On August 1st 1914, Germany declared war on Russia, and on the 3rd, on France; then on the 4th, Britain declared war on Germany. The following day, Austro-Hungary joined the fray. So as the 1914 season came to an end, the cricket scores in the Lancaster Guardian became surrounded by headlines such as GREAT BATTLE IN PROGRESS—CASUALTIES OVER 2000—GALLANTRY OF OUR TROOPS.

The final game of the season, the last appearance for Bay Horse of Father Delany and of many others whose names had become familiar in the recent scorecards, was reported in the Guardian on September 5th 1914: Bay Horse 61, St Thomas's 94. Bay Horse finished in mid-table, but no club would appear again under this name in the league. After the war, cricket did continue on the same ground, but the club would be renamed "Shireshead".

REBIRTH WITH SOME OF THE SAME PLAYERS

ON THE SAME GROUND, BUT WITH A CHANGE OF NAME

After the devastating effects of World War I, many organisations took a long time to reassemble. We cannot be certain when cricket resumed on the ground at Bay Horse, for it is likely that there were friendly matches before the club were in a position to re-enter the league. We do know that a team named "Shireshead" joined the Lancaster & District League in 1923. They played on the same ground at Bay Horse, and subsequent handbooks

published annually by the league simply noted the change of name, and did not regard Shireshead as a new club.



Rev Charles S B Spooner
Vicar of Shireshead
from 1892-1935

Tradition has it that the new name was adopted at the request of the Rev Charles Spooner, whose parish had helped the club's relaunch financially. He had a keen interest in sport, and in 1926 was the inspiration behind the formation of Shireshead Tennis Club whose court occupied a corner of the cricket ground. Several of his sons had played for Bay Horse before the war, though he does not appear to have made an appearance himself.



Billy Wildman in c.1923

The first match in 1923 was against Lancaster 3rd in Section B (the league had three "sections" A-C underneath Division 1). Shireshead won this game by 21 runs, and after five matches they were at the head of the table, but thereafter they failed to gain another point and ended in bottom place.

There were some familiar names from the Bay Horse team — Hall, Brockbank, Stewart, Huntington — and some newcomers including Billy Wildman, who scored just nine and took two wickets in his first league match in May 1923. He was to become the team's mainstay for over 30 years.

After such a good season, there were only three victories in 1925 and Shireshead shared bottom place with Galgate 2nd. Six wins in 1926 secured a place in mid-table, and one match stood apart, when Shireshead managed to score 182 v Williamson's 2nds on their home ground at Bay Horse. We have had the good fortune to locate the scorecard:

This remained Shireshead's highest total until the 1970s. Note the very small number of boundaries: two sixes and four fours. Most of the runs came from singles and twos, presumably because the ball usually failed to reach the boundary through the unmown outfield.

The Rev CSB Spooner presided the season had been a successful one, the club having attained to second place in the Lancaster & District League. The medals given by Mr Hindley of Stanley Lodge for the best batting and bowling averages have been won this season by J Reibanks with a batting average of 13.7, and R Hall with a bowling average of 3.6.

1929: CHAMPIONS OF DIVISION 3 AFTER A TENSE FINISH

This game settled the championship of the third division. Neutral umpires were appointed for the match. The home captain won the toss and sent the Lancaster side in to bat. Sixteen overs were sufficient to dispose of the visitors, whose total only reached nine runs. Berwick secured five wickets for four runs and Wildman four for five. Shireshead soon passed this total.....

*Nelson Berwick lived in Calder Vale and was an uncle of Colin Richmond.

Third Division of the Lancaster & District League:
FINAL TABLE 1929

| | P | W | L | D | Pts |
|------------------|----|----|----|---|-----|
| Shireshead | 16 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 28 |
| Williamson's 2nd | 16 | 13 | 3 | 0 | 26 |
| Primrose | 16 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 19 |
| Heysham 2nd | 16 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 18 |
| Storey's 2nd | 16 | 7 | 9 | 0 | 14 |
| Greaves Wes. | 16 | 6 | 10 | 0 | 12 |
| Skerton Prims | 16 | 5 | 10 | 1 | 11 |
| High Bentham 2nd | 16 | 4 | 11 | 1 | 9 |
| Galgate 2nd | 16 | 2 | 13 | 1 | 5 |

We might have expected to find Shireshead in Division 2 for the 1930 season after their fine performances in 1929. Movement between divisions in the league did not, however, follow the rules with which we are familiar nowadays. Sometimes, a team would have reasons for opting to stay in a lower division. In 1929/30, Yealand, the champions of Division 4 were promoted to Division 2, and Shireshead remained in Division 3 for 1930. They enjoyed another period of great success, and for Billy Wildman 1930 was an outstanding season. On 20th June against Greaves Wesleyans, who played at Bailrigg, Shireshead were dismissed for 22, J Oakes taking 8 for 7. But Wildman proved even more deadly, taking 9 for 4, despatching the opponents for 20. Then on 19th July in a high-scoring game at Heysham (Shireshead 128, Heysham 2nd 111) Wildman made 76. Thus in the space of a month, he set a club record for batting which stood for 40 years, and one for bowling which was not bettered for 74 years. Berwick, the bowling star of 1929, didn't feature in the team of 1930, but R Hall took over and twice took 6 for 6 as the opposition were dismissed for paltry totals.

1931: A SEASON TO FORGET

Having finished champions of Division 3 in successive seasons, Shireshead jumped right up to Division 1 in 1931. Sadly, this turned out to be too great an elevation and the season proved to be the worst in the club's history. After the match against Williamsons on 10th July, the report in Guardian read "There is nothing much to say about this match except that Shireshead had only nine men and J Till and O Colman each knocked a run". The total of two runs was, not surprisingly, a league record. But worse was to come as, unbelievably, they equalled this dismal record just three weeks later. Against Lancaster 3rd they only had eight men, and opener H Escolme with 1 not out had the distinction of "carrying his bat". These two dismissals for just two runs were to be displayed as embarrassing records in all the subsequent handbooks of the Lancaster & District League.

The Lancaster Guardian of 24th March 1932 carried a report of the annual meeting of the Lancaster & District League, and the position of Shireshead for the coming season led to a tetchy exchange of views between Shireshead's representative, R M Makinson, and the Chairman:

".....the question of promotion and relegation was discussed. In divisions one and two it was automatic, up and down, but that did not apply in the lower divisions.
Mr Makinson: Can Shireshead go into Division 3?
The Chairman: No, you can't. It's automatic, you go down into Division 2.
Mr Makinson: Shireshead made application for Division 2 and were put into Division 1. We didn't want to go, but we went and kept on. Is there any rule? *The Chairman:* Yes.
Mr Makinson: Is it on the card? *The Chairman:* I don't suppose so.
Mr Makinson: When was it made? *The Chairman:* I don't remember. Shireshead, strictly speaking, weren't bound to accept, but they did and now they go into Division 2.
Mr Makinson: Has the secretary told you the rule? *The Chairman:* No, but I've told you and that finishes it. I'm not going to argue all night."

This suggests that Shireshead were hurting quite badly as a result of their humiliating experiences in 1931. They finished bottom of Division 2 in 1932, but were not relegated, and they continued in that division until the outbreak of war in 1939. They nearly always finished in the lower half of the table.

This photo is the earliest we have of a Shireshead team, probably from 1933. In it we find the young Johnny Barrett who had begun to play in 1932. He was to give splendid service to the club for the next half-century! Martin Robinson recalled that it was taken in a corner of the ground in School Lane, to which the club had moved from Bay Horse. Mrs Jean Farmer, Tommy Brockbank's daughter, remembers being taken to matches in the 1930s when her father was umpiring. There is a little uncertainty about some of the names.



THE 1940s & 1950s

The first post-war match was on 11th May 1946 — a home game v Halton. Shireshead lost, but Billy Wildman took 5/15 off 10 overs. He was to continue in a dominant role for another 15 years.



Back row: Umpire (?) Alan Till Roger Speight John Barrett Len Johnstone Will Whiteley John Whiteley
Front row: Margaret Wildman Bill Hetherington Joe Hornby Dr Reid Billy Wildman Harry Bland Margaret Johnstone
[names kindly provided by Jim Winstanley & Mary Yates]

This photo, taken about 1948, shows that many of those who had appeared for Shireshead before the war were still playing. The schoolboy is Gerry Hornby who was soon to be called into the team, and who was a significant contributor in various ways to the club — he died in 2007. In 1946 there was only one division of the league with nine teams, and Shireshead finished 8th. After another poor season in 1947, Shireshead slipped to Division 2 where they were to remain until 1968. This marked the beginning of new period of distinction for the club which has continued right up to the present. Despite the lack of team success, there were some fine individual performances in the 1950s, not least by Johnny Barrett. In 1958 he came closest to beating Wildman's batting record when he made 70 no v Westgate, and in 1959 he took 7 wickets for 2 runs v Hornby. Barrett's astonishing catches at silly mid-off continued to be a source of wonder even when he was beyond the age of 60.

In the 1950s, the club's future was made uncertain by the enforced move from the ground in School Lane. But undoubtedly the most important single event in the 1950s was the appointment of 19-year-old Harold Thompson as Secretary. He remained in this position for 46 years until his untimely death in 2001, and for some of the time he was also the Treasurer. Harold was a fine bowler and from the archives we can present a full summary of the Lancaster & District league matches in 1955. This gives a seasonal picture typical of the mixed fortunes experienced by Shireshead throughout the 1950s.

14 May: Waring & Gillow 75/6 (Thompson 3/18)
Shireshead 32/4. Match drawn.
21 May: Lads Club 56 (Dunkerley 5/10)
Shireshead 58/7 (J Hornby 22, W Wildman 18)
28 May: Waring & Gillow 49 (Thompson 5/19,
Dunkerley 5/18); Shireshead 44/6. Match drawn?
4 June: Royal Albert 125/9 (Thompson 5/47 off
19 ovs); Shireshead 86 (H Bland 29, J Hornby 20)
11 June: Shireshead 88 (J Hornby 42, G Hornby
14); Lads Club 27 (Dunkerley 5/13, Thompson
3/13)
18 June: Shireshead 60 (J Barrett 14, C Wilkinson
14); Middleton 32 (Thompson 4/9, Barrett 4/10)
25 June: Hornby 35 (Dunkerley 6/10, Thompson
4/20); Shireshead 25
2 July: Shireshead 55; Halton 56/2
9 July: Garstang 31 (Park 6/10, Wildman 2/7)
Shireshead 34/9 (Chippendale 5/16)

16 July: Mitchells 46 (J Barrett 5/9);
Shireshead 39 (Blackshaw 6/13)
30 July: Waring & Gillow 37 (Wildman 4/5)
Shireshead 40/7 (H Thompson 13 n.o.)
6 August: Shireshead 33; Royal Albert 34/1
20 August: Middleton 84 (Barrett 4/28,
Thompson 2/8); Shireshead 64 (E Dunkerley 15)
27 August: Shireshead 38; Hornby 40/7
(Wildman 4/8, Thompson 2/11)
3 September: Shireshead 25; Halton 25
(Thompson 6/11, Wildman 3/14) Match tied
10 September: Garstang 72 (Thompson 4/11,
Wildman 4/18); Shireshead 37

Harold Thompson topped the bowling averages with 41 wickets at 4.9. The leading batsman was J Hornby with 140 runs at 10.77.

There were also mid-week games in the Bilsborrow League in which the bowlers frequently dominated, scores were seldom high, and the matches could be completed swiftly. Nevertheless the games were enjoyable and there were some very close finishes. This evening match took place on Tuesday 5 July 1955 at Scorton. It lasted for just 26.3 overs, but we can imagine the excitement as Harold Thompson joined Johnny Barrett with the score at 18/8, and the winning runs were added in 2.5 overs.

| SCORTON | | | SHIRESHEAD | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----|
| C Richmond | b Thompson | 6 | G Hornby | b France | 1 |
| V Richmond | b Thompson | 2 | B Walmsley | run out | 8 |
| J France | b Thompson | 0 | N Wilkinson | b Roskell | 2 |
| ? Roskell | b Barrett | 0 | K Barrett | b Roskell | 0 |
| ? Cornell | b Barrett | 4 | H Bland | c Cornell b France | 3 |
| ? Kelsall | c J Hornby b Barrett | 4 | J Barrett | not out | 11 |
| ? Carr | c G Hornby b Thompson | 2 | J Hornby | b Roskell | 0 |
| P Richmond | b Barrett | 0 | D Croskell | c Cornell b France | 0 |
| J Winstanley | c Sub b Barrett | 0 | D Barrett | c Winstanley b Roskell | 1 |
| ? Swarbrick | c Hornby b Wilkinson | 4 | H Thompson | not out | 6 |
| ? Kelsall | not out | 5 | Extras | | 6 |
| Extras | | 0 | Total (8 wkts) | | 32 |
| Total | | 27 | France 8-0-18-3; Roskell 8-0-14-4 | | |
| Thompson 5-0-17-4; Barrett 5-0-10-5; | | | | | |
| Wilkinson 0.3-0-0-1 | | | | | |

In 1955 it would have seemed extraordinary to many onlookers that a 19-year-old Secretary should be appointed to run a cricket club. It could easily have been seen as a sign of weakness that no-one of greater experience could be found. With hindsight, we can now say that this was the best decision taken in the club's history, and without the commitment and perseverance of Harold Thompson there may well have been no centenary for us to celebrate now. Of the ten clubs competing in the second division of the Lancaster & District League in 1956, only Garstang and Shireshead are still in existence. Harold took over at a time when many clubs were becoming vulnerable, and Shireshead's own future was in jeopardy because the much-loved ground in School Lane, with its properly laid



Harold Thompson 1936-2001
Club Secretary 1955-2001

square, was becoming unusable as the nearby smallholding expanded. A meeting on 4th April 1957 made the dreaded resolution: "Owing to lack of room around present pitch it was decided to use Cockerham C C pitch". Cockerham played mid-week cricket behind the Parish Hall and so there was capacity for weekend games. Shireshead played there for five seasons before former player Harold Escolme allowed them to use a field sandwiched between the railway and Hollins Lane, just south of Foxholes. There were no off-field facilities apart from a tiny hut, and Harold's wife Sylvia recalls how difficult it was to provide teas for the players in a location quite remote from the main part of the village. The move to the present ground, the sixth, occurred in 1968, and from that time onwards there began a welcome period of stability after many years of uncertainty.

Mrs Sylvia Thompson remembers the early years of their marriage when she would often receive emergency calls from Harold on Saturday mornings asking her to go from home to home to recruit two or three players to make up the team. Those conscripted were often not very willing to help out. During Harold's first years as secretary a former player, Dr JB Reid of Higher Foxholes, was President and was undoubtedly a great source of support. Older club members still remember contests for the "Dr Reid Cup", a trophy he presented for annual contests between Shireshead and Galgate.

THE 1960s & 1970s

Towards the end of his career, Billy Wildman was more often involved in evening matches in the Bilborrow League than in the Lancaster & District League games on Saturdays. The scorebooks show how the young Terry Oliver played alongside Wildman for several years, the two sometimes bowling in tandem. In an evening match on 20th July 1961, Pilling were dismissed for 36 in 10.6 8-ball overs, 58-year-old Billy taking 6/15 and 18-year-old Terry 4/11. When Billy retired, it was Terry who took over his mantle and over the succeeding years his record was comparable to that of Billy. In 1968 when Shireshead headed the 2nd Division to gain promotion, Terry took 65 wickets in league matches, conceding only 164 runs from 167.4 overs — an incredible bowling average of 2.52 and a strike rate [balls per wicket] under 16. He took 7 for 9 and 6 for 12 v Civil Service, 7 for 13 and 6 for 7 v Storeys 2nd, 7 for 21 v St Luke's, and 6 for 8 v Hornby. He was well supported by Jack Pegg who took 45 wickets at an average of 4.76. Terry was also second behind Johnny Barrett in the batting averages!



Terry Oliver
in 1962

It was more difficult next season [1969] in the 1st Division, but nevertheless Terry Oliver took 30 wickets at 8.07 and was well placed in the league averages — the statistics suggest that he decided to concentrate on his batting that year, for he was 5th in the league averages. Terry scored 73 v Garstang, 52 v Westgate and 36no v Caton. The best bowling in the entire league that year was by Ronny Carradus — 8 for 14 v Westgate. Although in mid-table in the league, Shireshead didn't pass unnoticed. Then in 1970 we were champions, a feat repeated in 1973 and 1974. In



Colin Richmond
in 1970

1973 Keith Hawkhart was the outstanding bowler in the league with 47 wickets at 3.91, taking 8 for 6 v Hornby and 8 for 22 v Lansil. In that year the batting averages were headed by Colin Richmond, now one of our regular spectators at Clifton Park. Keith Thornton was the prominent all-rounder in 1974 and Keith Hawkhart had a big wicket haul again. In 1975 the top four batsmen were Keith Thornton, Michael Richmond (60 v Hornby, 55 v Ingleton), Brian Danson and Colin Richmond, and the top bowler was Tom Rickerby, all of whom were to play significant parts when we joined the new league in 1976.

As playing conditions improved, batting records began to fall. Brian Walmsley had come close to Billy Wildman's long standing record of 76 when he hit 72 at Bolton-le-Sands in 1961. Then in 1970, 40 years after Billy Wildman had created the record, Alan Twiname equalled it with 76 for Shireshead 2nds against Middleton. One year later John Bowker broke the record emphatically with 91 for the first team v Ingleton. Also in 1971 Mike Thornber made 77 no v Storeys, and John Bowker had other scores of 71 and 59. In that season in league and cup, there were seven individual scores over 50. In 1974 Colin Richmond scored 90 in a cup match v Middleton. It was, however, a junior player who made the first century. In 1978, two years after the formation of the junior section, we were invited to travel to Dumfries to play their Under-16s, and John Carr made 101 not out in a total of 146/8 when no other batsman reached double figures. Here are some averages spanning just eight seasons which show that we should be cautious in comparing statistics over much longer periods. After promotion to Division One, the same batsmen did appreciably better despite the higher standard, but the bowlers generally did less well. Moving to the higher division meant not only stronger opposition but also better playing conditions. Comparing individual performances between past and present is meaningless unless we make appropriate allowances.

Averages for the 1967 season in Division 2

| Batsman | Inns | n.o. | h.s. | Runs | Ave |
|-----------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| J Barrett | 15 | 1 | 32 | 183 | 13.07 |
| T Oliver | 15 | 5 | 18* | 99 | 9.90 |
| A Hindle | 11 | 2 | 11* | 64 | 7.11 |
| Bowler | Ovs | M | Runs | Wks | Ave |
| T Oliver | 167.4 | 82 | 164 | 65 | 2.52 |
| J Pegg | 153.4 | 60 | 214 | 45 | 4.76 |

Averages for the 1969 season in Division 1

| Batsman | Inns | n.o. | h.s. | Runs | Ave |
|------------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| T Oliver | 15 | 2 | 73 | 258 | 19.85 |
| A Hindle | 14 | 0 | 69 | 230 | 16.43 |
| J Bowker | 14 | 1 | 58 | 174 | 13.38 |
| Bowler | Ovs | M | Runs | Wks | Ave |
| R Carradus | 130.5 | 49 | 198 | 34 | 5.82 |
| T Oliver | 120.1 | 24 | 242 | 30 | 8.07 |
| J Pegg | 129 | 31 | 305 | 34 | 8.97 |

Averages for the 1973 season when Shireshead were Division 1 champions

| Batsman | Inns | n.o. | h.s. | Runs | Ave |
|------------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| C Richmond | 10 | 3 | 46 | 128 | 18.28 |
| K Thornton | 10 | 2 | 27* | 144 | 18.00 |
| T Oliver | 9 | 1 | 60 | 118 | 14.67 |
| K Blondell | 11 | 4 | 25* | 84 | 12.00 |
| Bowler | Ovs | M | Runs | Wks | Ave |
| K Hawkhard | 136.1 | 52 | 184 | 47 | 3.91 |
| T Rickerby | 62.4 | 16 | 173 | 20 | 8.65 |



The 1st XI of 1968 after promotion to Division One of the Lancaster & District League

Jack Pegg, Colin Richmond, David Spencer, Terry Oliver, Harold Thompson, Brian Walmsley, Allan Twiname
James Jemson, Denis Howell, Gerry Hornby, Tony Hindle, Brian Spencer
The team finished in mid-table, but Terry Oliver was top of the league bowling averages with 49 wickets at 4.47, taking 9 for 13 v Lansil.



Celebrating the Division One Championship in 1973

The young player in the foreground on the far left is David Moorby who was tragically killed in a road accident. He is remembered in the title of 2nd XI's Player-of-the-Year trophy.



**1ST DIVISION CHAMPIONS OF THE LANCASTER & DISTRICT
LEAGUE IN 1970**

Colin Richmond Johnny Barrett Michael Richmond Mike Thornber Brian Walmsley Keith Thornton
Tony Hindle Ron Carradus Terry Oliver John Bowker John Garner



The 1st team in 1975, our last season in the Lancaster & District League
Alistair Winstanley, Frank Cox, Brian Danson, Harold Thompson, Barry Stoker, Bill Cowan
Brian Walmsley, Michael Richmond, Tom Rickerby, Colin Richmond, Hilton Walker