

## Club History

Worcestershire County Cricket Club was formed officially at The Star Hotel, Worcester, on the 4th March 1865.

The list of those attending the meeting reads like Burke's Peerage. The Club has in its possession the account book for that first year of the Club's life. The expenditure is ruled off at the end of the year with a cost of £13 2s/8d. The first entry for the following year (1866) is interesting; it refers to "hire of horse and man, two days rolling - 16 shillings".

There had in fact been clubs representing Worcestershire on the cricket field prior to 1865. In the 1840's a Worcestershire team played a Shropshire team at Hartlebury Common - and were beaten, and at around the same time XXII of Worcestershire played William Clarke's All-England XI at Powick Hams.

Somewhere in the 1850's a team representing the City of Worcester and another cricket team, which represented the County, decided to combine and it was to be a broad-based club. Their intention was to attract the men from the shops and from the factory floors to join the Club to play alongside the gentry. A Minute from that time refers to the "5 shilling members being allowed to play with the bat and ball on two nights a week and to play with the half guinea members one night a week."

During the period from its official formation in 1865 the County Cricket Club undertook a number of fixtures but few of them we would recognise today as being major county matches. The team was playing Malvern College, Bromsgrove School, Cotswold, Magpies, Burton-on-Trent, Breconshire, Herefordshire etc., etc.

Towards the end of the century there became associated with the County a man by the name of Paul Foley. He was from a family of iron masters in Stourbridge, and he also owned an agricultural estate at Stoke Edith in Herefordshire (the estate is still run by one of his successors).

Paul Foley clearly had great ambition for the County and he established, with others, the Minor Counties Championship which Worcestershire then promptly won in 1895 (tying with Norfolk), 1896, 1897 and 1898. So emboldened, the County applied for first-class status. This meant it had to gain fixtures against six of the other first-class Counties. These fixtures were arranged, although Sussex required a guarantee for their away match with Worcestershire as well as for their home match!.

The County at that time was playing its home matches at Boughton Park.

Paul Foley felt that with first-class status a new ground was required and so he rented from the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral three sheep fields, and he brought from Berkshire a young (23 year old) groundsman by the name of Fred Hunt, who had previously played six County matches for Kent. It was Fred Hunt who turned the sheep pasture into the world renowned and attractive cricket ground, which we now know as New

Road.

The Pavilion was built for the start of the 1899 season and as Worcestershire took the field for its first-ever County match against Yorkshire, starting on the 4th May 1899, Paul Foley, in brown bowler hat and brown boots, was seen painting the sight-screen completing the finishing touches for the match to start.

Important to Worcestershire's success in those days was the presence of the Foster Family in the team. Seven sons of the Rev'd Harry Foster, House Master at Malvern College, all played for the County at various times. H.K. was the first-ever captain of the County and his was an immense contribution. His partnership with Paul Foley was very decisive in the establishment of Worcestershire as a first-class County. His brother, R.E. ("Tip") was perhaps the most gifted of the brotherhood. Tip captained England (as an amateur) at both soccer and cricket. It was a golden age for batting and the Fosters were all illustrious batsmen. More information on the family can be found at <http://www.thefostersofmalvern.co.uk>

The early years for Worcestershire were something of a struggle as the County sought to establish itself as a first-class County and its only success (or near success) came in 1907 when the County came second in the County Championship.

The 1912 season was deplorable in terms of results with the County winning only one of its Championship matches and although its cricket fortunes improved in the following season it was during the 1913 season that the Club's finances plummeted. There was a move, for financial reasons, to wind-up the Club in the middle of the season and only a public appeal headed by Lord Cobham, Lord Dudley, Lord Plymouth and Judge Amphlett headed off that potential early demise of the County. The investigation of the Club's financial health indicated that the Club had lost money in every year since it had gained first-class status. It became apparent also that Paul Foley, for many of those years, had underwritten the loss himself.

The Pavilion at the County Ground is thus the original one and seen today looks little different from the Pavilion used in 1899. Originally there was a veranda at the front which was glazed in (in 1964) to provide additional accommodation.

Originally the scorers were housed in the clock tower and this meant them going to their eerie by ladder at the beginning and end of each session of play. Later the press photographers took over this spot. The two principal dressing rooms were under the main gables at either end of the Pavilion, (one of them remaining the Visitors Dressing Room today). In these dressing rooms the amateurs changed, whilst the professionals (of both teams) changed in a tin shed. This continued until around the time of the ending of the Second World War when, often, there were only two or three amateurs changing in a large dressing room and countless professionals cramped in to a corrugated iron hut.

As well as its most attractive appearance, the Club is well known for its annual flooding. In the Pavilion, at bar level, there is a brass plaque which records the highest ever recorded flood, in 1947. However, the Ground floods during most winters and a "normal" flood reaches the top step of the Pavilion and the players dressing rooms.

As one walks around the Ground there are various points of interest to take in. In the midst of the chestnut trees (alongside the spot where the Pavilion Marquee is sited during the summer months) there is a smaller tree. This is a Black Pear tree and it is appropriate that, as the Club has three Black Pears as its crest, there should be Black Pear trees at the Ground. The Black Pear trees are reasonably rare, and this particular tree marks the County's first-ever winning of the County Championship in 1964. In view of its age other Black Pear trees have been planted around the Ground in recent years so that the tradition of the Club having the tree, which forms its crest, can continue. The pears in fact are not black but are dark red and taste very bitter and so, it is alleged, taste better when poached in red wine.

The copper beech tree on the Cathedral side of the Ground was planted to commemorate Don Kenyon, his magnificent career, and his contribution to the County's first winning of the Championship in 1964, a feat which was repeated again in the Club's centenary year 1965. Nearby is a tree planted to mark the contribution that Phil Neale made, in later years, as County Captain when the Club won six titles in five seasons.

Contained within the Cricket Suite (the Members' Dining Room) are the Perks Room and the Foster Room, the latter commemorating the brotherhood who played for the County in its early years, and the former commemorating Reg Perks, one of the "golden local heroes" of Worcestershire cricket. These two rooms formed the Club's offices until 1988. The increased demand for dining accommodation meant that the Club gutted the offices and new offices were formed by building on top of the flat roofed building at the turnstile end of the Ground which previously housed the Press Box and Supporters' Association office.

A new Press Box was built in the 1980's within the New Road Stand which itself had been re-built in 1974, with the brick exterior wall replacing what had been tatty metal hoardings. The stand was roofed and, as a result, enabled a suite of hospitality boxes to be built over the stand in readiness for the 1992 season.

Over the years many of the improvements made at the Ground have been funded by the generosity of the Supporters' Association, which also helped the Club very considerably in 1976 when the Club negotiated with the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral to obtain the freehold of the County Ground.

The County has won the County Championship on five occasions (1964, 1965, 1974, 1988 and 1989), the Sunday League on three occasions (1971, 1987 and 1988), the Refuge Assurance Cup in 1991 and the Natwest

Pro40 League in 2007. Since the introduction of one-day Cup Finals at Lord's (the first was the Gillette Cup Final in 1963 in which Worcestershire played and Norman Gifford was Man of the Match) the County has been to Lord's for twelve Cup Finals and has won the NatWest Trophy (in 1994) having earlier won the Benson and Hedges Cup (1991).

Among the first-class Counties Worcestershire could be regarded as one of the smallest, if one thinks in terms of the population it serves and the geographical area it serves. However, ever since the visionary Paul Foley obtained first-class status for the County the Club has been determined to regard itself as one of the major cricketing Counties, and its results in recent years give some indication of its success in upholding that vision.

In addition to names previously mentioned the Club's renowned cricketing status can be seen from the names of others who have graced the County's cricket such as Tom Graveney, Ian Botham, Graham Dilley, Dick Howarth, Roly Jenkins, Jack Flavell, Len Coldwell, Kapil Dev, Glenn Turner, Tim Curtis, the one and only Basil D'Oliveira, Tom Moody, Graeme Hick, Glenn McGrath, Andy Bichel and Zaheer Khan.

Until 2007, success had been hard to achieve since the NatWest Trophy win in 1994. The Club's first ever Director of Cricket, Tom Moody, was responsible for bringing back the good days. To help achieve this, four new players were signed up for 2002 - Ben Smith from Leicestershire, Gareth Batty from Surrey, Stephen Peters from Essex and Matt Mason from Perth. Some success followed including runners-up in the National Cricket League in 2002, promotion for the first time to the first division of the Frizzell County Championship in 2003 and two successive C&G Trophy finals at Lord's in 2003 and 2004. In 2005, Tom Moody was appointed National Coach for Sri Lanka and county stalwart, Steve Rhodes, was appointed Director of Cricket in his place. In 2006 the club gained a 'double' promotion to secure first division status in both the League competitions for the first time in its history. The NatWest Trophy was secured in 2007 and was the first major title in 13 years.



The summer of 2007 will go down as one of the most challenging ever faced in the history of the Club. The whole region suffered two major floods during the summer which brought devastation to the area. The first flood arrived on 25<sup>th</sup> June just two days before the start of the popular and lucrative Twenty20 Cup competition. Just as the clear up from this flood had been completed, the second flood arrived on the 21<sup>st</sup> July. It was the first time the ground had ever flooded in July and was the second deepest flood of the 136 ever experienced at the ground since 1899. The consequences of the two floods were so devastating that no cricket was played at New Road after 21<sup>st</sup> June and losses of over £1m were accrued. The NatWest Trophy was won without the team playing a single game at home.

Off the field the Club appointed its first Chief Executive in 2001 in recognition of the need to develop a modern business to cope with the ever-increasing financial demands of a professional sports team. In the 2004 season a new stand called the Basil D'Oliveira Stand was constructed at the Diglis End of the ground and in 2009 the 110 year old pavilion was replaced by the new £2m Graeme Hick Pavilion. There are plans to re-develop the entire New Road Stand and Severn Bridge Site to ensure the County Ground retains its reputation as one of the best appointed and most loved grounds in the world.

In recent years the Club has had to improve its commerciality in order to remain competitive with the Test Match Grounds and has become a popular venue for rock and pop concerts. In 2003 the pop group Blue appeared at the ground in front of 14,000 young fans and the following year the Club attracted Atomic Kitten and Busted on the same bill followed by Petula Clark the following evening. In 2006 a crowd of over 17,000 (establishing a ground record attendance) enjoyed an outstanding two and a half hour performance from Sir Elton John on a gloriously warm June evening at New Road and it is hoped that similarly high calibre artistes will be attracted to the ground

in future years.

Further information about the Club can be found in "Worcestershire County Cricket Club: An Illustrated History" by Michael Vockins (published by Severn House Publishers, now out of print but available in public libraries), "The History of Worcestershire County Cricket Club" by David Lemmon (Helm), Wisden Cricketers Almanac, the County's own Year Book (current editions on sale at the Club) or via the official Club website at [www.wccc.co.uk](http://www.wccc.co.uk). There is also a wealth of information about the club and individual players through [Cricket Archive](#).

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### **War Memorial**

In the Members' Pavilion there is a wooden plaque on the wall that lists the names of 17 WCCC Members (including 6 ex-players) who died in the Great War. Over recent months SANDRA TAYLOR has spent some time researching the names on the memorial plaque and has produced a document which, in Sandra's words, 'brings to life' their memory and the sacrifices they made.

Sandra is a volunteer for the National Inventory of War Memorials which is associated with the Imperial War Museum. Her remit is to transcribe all the war memorials in Worcester City and report back. It is a time consuming project and involves appeals through the local media and visits to the record office to peruse historical records and old newspapers.

Sandra has given the Club permission to reproduce her findings on the website and has asked us to mention a couple of other sites for those with an interest in these matters. The most significant one is the Commonwealth War Graves Commission at [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org) and another useful site is [www.roll-of-honour.com](http://www.roll-of-honour.com) to which Sandra sends all her work.

The Heritage Group is very grateful to Sandra for the research she has undertaken and for allowing the Club to reproduce her work in this way.

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## **IN PROUD REMEMBRANCE OF THE MEMBERS OF WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT WAR**

### **1914 DULCE ET DECORUM EST PRO 1918 PATRIA MORI**

Anderson	C.	No further information currently available
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Burns	William Beaumont	Second Lieutenant, 1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment. Born 29th August 1883 at Rugeley, Staffordshire, died on 8 <sup>th</sup> July 1916 at Contalmaison, France. Thiepval Memorial Pier and Face 5A and 6C. First team member for Worcestershire County Cricket Club from 1903-1913 and Marylebone Cricket Club from 1906/07-1912.
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On the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> July the drizzle developed into heavy rain, converting the trenches into troughs of knee-deep mud. At about 2 p.m. the enemy were heavily reinforced and commenced a powerful attack. The German artillery pounded the ruins held by the Worcestershire, and strong bombing parties of the enemy worked down from the higher ground. A desperate struggle raged round the ruins of the Church, where a party of the Worcestershire, inspired by two brave subalterns, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant A.W. Isaac and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant W.B. Burns, fought on till all were overwhelmed.



Source: The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War by Captain H. FitzM. Stacker of the Regiment, 1928.

**AND & CO., 1903-12**



**W**illiam Burns played Minor Counties cricket for Warwickshire in 1903 and 1907 and in his debut scored 123\* against MCC and Gloucest. at Leitchfield, followed by a second century tonight and another century of 123 against Oxfordshire in 1902. This was the end of his career with the county of his birth and in 1903 he was qualifying for Worcestershire as an overseas. He played in three matches, the second score of them in the Championship. The following season he was overseas rapidly and has the feat of his 32 centuries with 165 at New Road against Oxford University, in a match that saw the University score 459 for the loss of 7 wickets of 90 overs, in four hours and five minutes, to win by three wickets.

He completed the feat of his three 100 runs in a season in 1906 and during that season equalled his career best. Once again Oxford University refused him this time. Worcestershire did manage to win the match, in just over two hours, by his first Championship by his second on his first and three previous against Hampshire at Southfield. The next time he batted, he scored 125 at New Road against Warwickshire, during a match which produced a total of 166 with Harry Bates.

Edgbaston was the scene for his career best batting performance, when he scored 196 against Warwickshire in 1908. He hit 12 fours and with Ted Arnold, added 301 for the 6th wicket - an English record for the wicket and beaten by M.J. Love and David Ripley for Northamptonshire in 1998.

During the winter of 1909/10 he toured New Zealand with the MCC, led by Captain Edward Wymark and he was also selected for the Gloucesters against the Blues, at The Oval and Souths against 1913 and at Leitch for the following season. In the Oval match he took 7 for 58 in the first innings, taking the last three Essex wickets in four balls.

Edwin Allwood has scored a century and performed the feat twice in the same match but Burns is the only Worcestershire cricketer amongst them. At New Road in 1913 he scored 121\* in an innings of 329 for 4 the last, hitting a four and 12 fives in under two hours, against Gloucestershire and then Gloucester, Dorset, Sussex and Essex with concrete balls.

At the end of the 1913 season he settled in Canada, but returned to England to enlist in the First World War. A Second Lieutenant in the Worcestershire Regiment, he was killed in action on 1 July 1916.

<b>Batting career</b>					
M	I	NO	Runs	Ave	
106	115	29	6000	27.58	
<b>100</b>					
12	133				
<b>Batting career</b>					
O	M	B	W	Ave	500
1416	1	194	5752	487	36.75

**Career best performances:**  
 196 v Warwickshire, Edgbaston, 1908  
 141 v Somerset, Souths, 1913

Another photograph of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant W.B. Burns appears in the Worcester Berrow Journal Supplement of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1916.

CARTLAND	T.	Possibly George Trevor Cartland, Captain Adjutant, 1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion Rifle Brigade. Died aged 23 on 1 <sup>st</sup> July 1916. Son of George and Lilian Cartland, of Bevere Cottage, near Worcester. Serre Road Cemetery No.2, Grave III. E. 14.
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A photograph of Captain & Adjutant G. Trevor Cartland appears in the Worcester Berrow Journal Supplement of Saturday 15th July 1916.

COLLIER	A.J.	No further information currently available.
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GILMOUR	Herbert James Graham	Lieutenant, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment. Died aged 31 on 19 <sup>th</sup> September 1914. Son of Ethel Blanche Price-Hughes (formerly Gilmour), of Red Hill, Worcester, and the late James Graham Gilmour. Served in the South African Campaign. La Ferté-Sous-Jouarre Memorial. Also appears on Worcester St Martin, Worcester Cathedral Cloister Windows and Worcester St Philip & St James memorials.
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September 19<sup>th</sup> 1914 was the first of three days of continuous strain and heavy fighting on the Aisne Heights. The enemy made a serious attack during the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> and Lieutenant Gilmour was one of two platoon commanders who were killed during that attack, along with many of their men.



Source: The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke of the Regiment, 1928.

A photograph of Lieutenant H.J.G. Gilmour appears in the Worcester Berrow Journal Supplement of Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1914.

GRAHAM	A.G. Alec George Malcolm Graham, Captain 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment attached The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. Died 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 1914. Le Touret Memorial Panel 17 and 18.
ISAAC	A.W. Second Lieutenant, 5 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment. Born 4th October 1873 at Powick Court, Worcestershire, died 7 <sup>th</sup> July 1916 at Contalmaison, France. Thiepval Memorial Pier and Face 5A and 6C. First team member for Worcestershire County Cricket Club from 1899-1911. Also appears on Worcester Guildhall, Worcester St John in Bedwardine and Worcester Masonic Hall memorials and Worcester Cathedral cloister windows.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8th July the drizzle developed into heavy rain, converting the trenches into troughs of knee-deep mud. At about 2 p.m. the enemy were heavily reinforced and commenced a powerful attack. The German artillery pounded the ruins held by the Worcestershire, and strong bombing parties of the enemy worked down from the higher ground. A desperate struggle raged round the ruins of the Church, where a party of the Worcestershire, inspired by two brave subalterns, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant A.W. Isaac and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant W.B. Burns, fought on till all were overwhelmed.



Source: The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke of the Regiment, 1928.



Another photograph of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant A.W. Isaac appears in the Worcester Berrow Journal Supplement of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1916, with the statement "missing, believed killed".

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ISAAC	John Edmund Valentine	Captain, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion Rifle Brigade. Born 14th February 1880 at Powick Court, Worcestershire, died 9th May 1915 at Rouge Bancs, Fromelles Ridge, Armentieres, France. Awarded the DSO. New Irish Farm Cemetery, Grave XXXI. F. 13. First team member for Orange Free State 1906/07 and Worcestershire County Cricket Club from 1907-1908. Also appears on Worcester Guildhall, and Worcester St John in Bedwardine memorials and Worcester Cathedral cloister windows.
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JEWELL	Dudley Mark Hayward	Second Lieutenant, 18th Battalion Royal Fusiliers attached Royal Engineers. Died aged 22 on 20 <sup>th</sup> January 1916. Son of Ada Margaret Pugh Cook (formerly Jewell), of Warnercroft, Selsey, Sussex, and the late Maurice Jewell. Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Cuiuchy, Grave III. D. 13.
JEWELL	Edward Herbert	Second Lieutenant, "B" Company 11 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers. Died aged 21 on 16 <sup>th</sup> May 1916. Native of Selsey, Sussex. Son of Ada Margaret and the late Maurice Jewell. Ecoivres Military Cemetery, Mont-St. Eloi, Grave I. M. 11

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LUSHINGTON	Cecil Henry Gosset	Lieutenant, "A" Company 10 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment. Died aged 31 on 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 1916. Son of Maj. and Mrs. Arthur James Lushington, of The Park, Sandling, Maidstone, Kent; husband of Evelyn Marian Lushington. Thiepval Memorial Pier and
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GRAHAM	A.G.	Possibly Alec George Malcolm Graham, Captain 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment attached The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. Died 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 1914. Le Touret Memorial Panel 17 and 18.
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Source: The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke of the Regiment, 1928.

fall later at the head of a battalion of another regiment in Palestine. He is mentioned in despatches on 22/6/15, 12/7/16 and 5/6/19.



Source: The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke of the Regiment, 1928.



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WODEHOUSE	Ernest Charles Forbes	Lieutenant Colonel, Worcestershire Regiment. Died aged 43 on 12 <sup>th</sup> March 1915. Son of the late Lieutenant Colonel C. Wodehouse, C.I.E.; husband of A. Violet Wodehouse, 11 Prince of Wales Terrace, Kensington, London. Awarded the DSO. Le Touret Memorial Panel 17 and 18. Also appears on Worcester Guildhall and Worcester St John in Bedwardine memorials and Worcester Cathedral cloister windows.
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Ernest Wodehouse is mentioned a number of times in the Regimental book. During the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, Lieut. Col. Wodehouse led a battalion advance, storming the buildings in front and preparing to hold them against counter-attacks. However, no support came and the British artillery intermittently bombarded the captured buildings. It became clear that that the battalion's position, far in advance of the remainder of the brigade, encircled by the enemy on 3 sides and shelled by both artilleries, was no longer tenable. Officers and men fell fast during the retirement, which was over open and level ground flanked on both sides by the strongly posted enemy. The loss of Colonel Wodehouse was felt most keenly by all the survivors, for his courage, kindliness and resource had been the mainstay of the battalion throughout the long ordeal of the winter. He is mentioned in despatches on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1916.



Source: The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke of the Regiment, 1928.

A photograph of Major Wodehouse with the following statement can be found in the Worcester Berrow Journal Supplement of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May 1915: "The late Major Wodehouse 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Worcestershire Regiment who was killed at Neuve Chapelle and to whom General French paid a high tribute last week".