

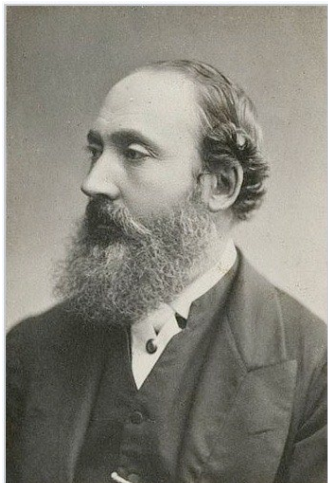
From the Archives

Fifty years of sport by Colonel Miller – Part VII

Colonel Edward Darley Miller was one of the three brothers who founded Roehampton Club in 1901. In 1923, he published a retrospective account of his sporting life over a period of 50 years and the people he met along the way. The book was serialised in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News Magazine* from January to April in the same year.

In this extract from the serialisation, Colonel Miller continues his fascinating memoirs with those of his contemporaries at Harrow who have made names for themselves in world affairs and the realms of sport. The author was singularly fortunate in being at school with an outstanding generation of Harrovians, and his recollection includes such cricketers as the brothers Kemp and de Paravicini, and such great soldiers as General the Hon. Sir Herbert Lawrence, Major-General Sir Percy Cox, LT-General Sir Charles Kavanagh and General Sir Walter Congreve VC.

The Colonel makes a point of reaffirming his time at Harrow with 'unmixed pleasure' and his good fortune to have enabled both his sons to attend the school and to stay in touch with those responsible for the running of the institution. At the time the Colonel was attending the school, the

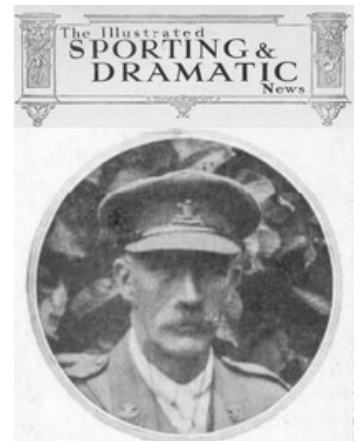


Dr George Butler - Headmaster at Harrow School

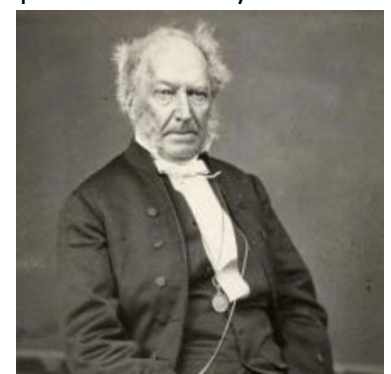
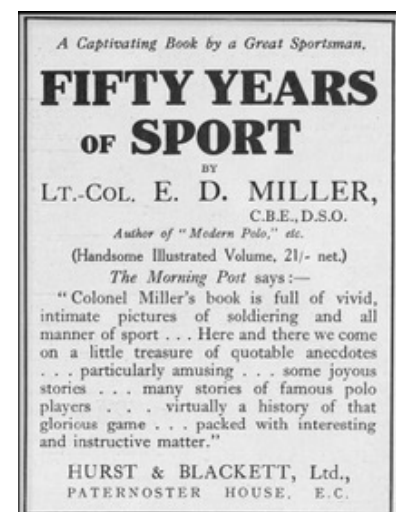
headmaster was Dr Butler who the Colonel regarded as the most celebrated headmaster of the day. He goes on to say how privileged he was to have known him and remembers his kindness towards him and the affection and respect he gave him in return. The Colonel also remembers the school for its excellence in sport with a number of fine cricketers and racquet players within its ranks. He also recalls the Ashburton Shield for rifle shooting which the school won on more than one occasion. He sees their success at cricket being largely due to the keenness and interest taken in the game by Lord Bessborough (Fred Ponsomby) and Bob Grimston, who spent their whole summers there searching the younger boys in the game and looking out for promising talent.

The Colonel talks about the school cricket team having the best cricketers of his day and not losing a game for some years at their home ground at Lords. He openly admits that he was not much of a cricketer or football player but represented his House both at cricket and football in his second year. He proudly mentions in his memoirs that he was part of the winning House teams in both sports in his final year at the School.

Another feature of his time at Harrow was the reputation of the school for its music. He recites the name of Edward Bowen as a tutor to a certain number of boys in the Headmaster's House and his good fortune to be one of them. It seems that he was responsible with John Farmer for giving the school an incomparable selection of school songs far ahead of its rivals. John Farmer's enthusiasm for music and his contribution to the composition of the school songs had a long-lasting effect on many of the boys. The Colonel himself looks back at this experience with the following account. No old Harrovian can listen to one of the old songs, the words of Bowen and the



Lieutenant Colonel Miller CBE DSO



Edward Ernest Bowen - Cricketer and Association Football Player

music by Farmer, without sincere emotion which brings back to him the happy days of long ago, especially that great school anthem *Forty Years On* which actually expresses in the first verse the feelings of the Harrow boy, and in the last the feelings of the Old Harrovian, who is, like myself, alas, able to look back the full forty years.

The Colonel then refers to a number of boys at the school as his greatest friends whose careers he watched with interest. The first of these individuals was Frank Seely who went on with the Colonel to share rooms at Trinity College, Cambridge. These rooms were kept in the family for years initially handed down to his brother George Miller who, in turn handed them down to his younger brother Charles, sharing a room with Jack Seely, the former Secretary of State for War. Another name from Harrow School was Ernest Crawley who was Captain of the cricket XI in 1883 and also found his way to Trinity College, Cambridge before setting up a prosperous business. Many of the other names mentioned by the Colonel were polo players and/or distinguished themselves in the army in the Boer War and the First World War. He also makes special mention of General the Hon. Sir Herbert Lawrence who was in Dr Butler's House in Harrow and went on to highlight his military career as Chief of Staff to Lord Haig during the Great War. Lord Haig was a member of Roehampton Club along with many other military figures suffering the loss of two of his sons (also Old Harrovians) during the conflict. The Colonel refers to the leadership skills of army officers and the reluctance of politicians to appoint them as administrators citing Sir Herbert and his attributes for the job as Viceroy of India which would have been a guarantee of success.

To be continued in the next edition of the Club newsletter.

Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist



Music concert at Harrow School