

From the Archives

Fifty years of sport by Colonel Miler – part viii

This is the continuing story of the reminiscences of the sporting life of Colonel Edward Darley Miller – founder of Roehampton Club with his two younger brothers George and Charles. His book was published nearly a hundred years ago and serialised in the *Illustrated and Sporting News Magazine*.

In this instalment, the Colonel carries on with his recollections of his time at Harrow School with references to his contemporaries and their achievements. In the previous edition of the newsletter, the Colonel mentioned several military figures who had distinguished themselves during their career. He spoke of the leadership skills of army officers and the reluctance of politicians to appoint them as administrators. He provides a subsequent list of soldiers who have been successful in civilian posts. Away from the military, he refers to other individuals who have done well in life such as members of Crawley family – two in business, two who lost their lives in the army, one clergyman and one a sailor. All of whom sent their sons to Harrow.

Those who devoted their lives to Harrow School (image right) are also cited such as MC Kemp and Teddy Butler. In his time, Kemp captained Oxford at cricket and was regarded as one of the greatest wicketkeepers of the day. He was also one of the best Amateur Association Football players. Teddy Butler, like Kemp spent his whole life at Harrow. He was the son and grandson of headmasters at Harrow School and his son Guy was one of the most celebrated athletes during his time. The Colonel goes on to list many other significant figures at Harrow at the time he was there.



He leaves the last as 'one of the most discussed old Harrovians of his day' – Mr Stanley Baldwin (image left) who went on to become the first old Harrovian Prime Minister since Robert Peel.

The Colonel refers to him as being two years younger with him at the headmaster's but could not remember him in detail. After leaving Harrow the Colonel went to Trinity College, Cambridge expressing more fond memories of his education and his encounters with prominent sporting contemporaries. He openly admits that he did very little work in the early period of his arrival at Cambridge as he was more interested in trying to fit into the hunting fraternity with the Trinity Foot Beagles

Other sporting activities also dominated his time – 'Association

Football, hunting with the University Drag and the occasional day with the Cambridgeshire and the Fitzwilliam to leave me

much leisure for anything else in the winter', and in the summer, he played cricket. In the second year, he enjoyed his leisure time even more as he became a whip to the beagles, kept two horses, gave up football and hunted five or six days a week with the beagles, the drag or with foxhounds. Despite the extent of the leisure time, he passed his examinations.



Cricket and hunting continued to dominate his interest. He remembers his best horse as an ancient thoroughbred with very much fired up fore legs called 'Passion'. He had bought him on his own from a Colonel at his militia training for £20 (equivalent to just over £3,111 in today's money). The owner of the horse became a General celebrated throughout the army, not only for his excellence as a soldier but also for the 'vigour of his language'.

The Colonel refers to many other interesting stories relating to this hardy and popular officer which he has chosen to hold back for later publication. The horse carried the Colonel for four years before he left for India to join his regiment in 1885. At the time of his departure, the horse was very fast and a fine jumper and although he never went lame, he frequently fell on landing, especially after a drop caused by the weakness of his front-legs which could not hold him up. Sadly, the Colonel had the horse put down before he went to India.



Regarding his education at Cambridge, the Colonel refers to his excellent tutor named Glaisher (image left) – a very sophisticated scholar who had never seen a race, ridden a horse or apparently never played a game of any kind in his life. He was a great mathematician. Another learned mathematician at the time was known as a wizard lecturing about space in three dimensions. He made several visits to the university to see Glaisher as he was the only person in the country who he could talk to on the same level about his work. Colonel Miller had a great deal of respect for his tutor who loved hearing about the racing and hunting and promised the Colonel that someday he would go with the Colonel to Newmarket but never did. More in the next edition of the newsletter about his experiences at Cambridge University.

Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist