



Henry Grierson, founder of the Forty Club, which now has a world-wide membership of 3500. His was the idea and he its focal point and inspiration.

Presidents have included Sir Pelham Warner, Sir Jack Hobbs, G. O. Allen and Herbert Sutcliffe; the whole institution is a memorial to a sporting character straight from the Golden Age.

The wandering clubs so far mentioned – a selection only, need it be said, from among many more – were formed without any binding connexion. With those which follow, unfortunately at even briefer length, it is otherwise. There are, for instance, LORDS AND COMMONS which, while never encumbered with a formal club, have played together, men of all ranks and political shades, since 1850. The late Lord Ebbisham was a vigorous figure for many years in parliamentary cricket circles, and the scorebooks are alive with such distinguished names as Dunglass (now Home), Harris, Jackson, Eckersley, Crawley, Wakefield and others. In the nature of things most games are played within reasonable nearness to Big Ben.

It is not a bit surprising that the close affinity between cricket and the arts is reflected on the field. There used indeed to be two clubs of which it was said that the THESPIDS consisted of cricketers trying to be actors, the STAGE of actors trying to be cricketers. The Thespids of happy memory are no more, but the Stage, founded in 1930, continues to flourish, having gravitated for a quarter of a century around the ample form of Garry Marsh. 'Rotund, amiable, shrewd – not always up to the intricacies of cricket tactics but shrewd in his handling of some of the team's younger members who were not exactly afraid to display their histrionic talents on the field – he had an easy charm and a generous nature.' What captain could hope for a better testimonial than this little cameo by the actor and publisher Gavin Doyle?

The oldest of the many county wandering clubs is the BAND OF BROTHERS who since 1858 have fortified Kent cricket and, from its inception 12 years later, the Kent CCC in particular. BB, as it is usually called, has one unique feature. It has always accepted social as well as cricketing members, and this element of men of distinction resident in the county has given it a special status and influence. The title, by the way, derives not from Shakespeare's *Henry V* but from the resemblance being jokingly remarked on between

of Glastonbury, and Wiltshire, for instance, and Shropshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Cheshire, not to say Yorkshire itself. The activities and ambitions of these and other county-oriented clubs naturally vary greatly, but it would be fair to say that all have had a stimulating effect on cricket in their own locality, and in the early, struggling days especially their members stood by the county clubs both in financial terms and in services rendered.

Lastly come the wandering clubs connected with Oxford and Cambridge and those many Old Boy clubs deriving from the public schools. Everyone knows of the Oxford HARLEQUINS because of their cap of dark blue, maroon and buff, surely the most distinctive in cricket and many would say the prettiest. The most active days of the Harlequins, as of their Cambridge counterparts the QUIDNUNCS each confined to blues or those who came close – lie in the past, but both in recent years have shown signs that they are keen to keep alive their ancient and honourable names. The OXFORD AUTHENTICS and CAMBRIDGE CRUSADERS likewise are still active though they can no longer recruit undergraduates of acceptable quality in the old numbers – this for reasons of college selection beyond the scope of this book.

ETON RAMBLERS are both the senior old boys club by foundation and, with 70 days' cricket a year and 1,400 members, also the most active. Ladies are said to have assisted, at their inception in 1862, in the choice of their beautiful, though complicated colours of magenta, violet and green, with gold lines. The qualification for membership has always



G. H. M. 'Bum' Cartwright, President of the Ramblers from 1919 to 1954, and a Treasurer until his death in 1976.

been known rather than for their skill – otherwise the Ramblers would take the field, as they do, with John Hogg, his successor, as the record of the club would be a mention of the late Treasurer ('Bum') Cartwright, who served both on and off the field, with industry, with humour, and with acerbity, as Treasurer from 1919 to 1954, and as Treasurer until his death in 1976.

The BUTTERFLIES, originally a Rugby team, also date from the opening of the club in 1862, at the house, Harrow, Wiltshire, which later. Out of a membership of 1,000 or have been, 37 English cricketers, 450 Butterflies have played for the club, 20-odd have been M.C.C. members, even than most, presumably, to need to recruit good cricketers on the face of it the limits of membership must be divided.

UPPINGHAM BUTTERFLIES, founded later, is unique among all the clubs in that it is highly selective, a 100% membership no means a passport. Their selection

Lords and Commons at Westminster School, 1976: John Farr, MP, Robert Hain, MP, Nicholas Scott, MP, John Watkinson, MP, Sir Charles Mott-Radclyffe and Geoffrey...

