

Arthur Hudson was born on 27th October 1882 at Gloucester, the son of Joseph Hudson, an innkeeper. The family lived at 110, Oxford Road, Gloucester. When he left school, Arthur found employment as a clerk for the Midland Railway. He grew up as a soccer player for Barnwood, and indeed his first matches at Kingsholm were for the City Albion soccer club on what is now the car park. As W B (Bill Bailey of the Citizen) put it *"he had a couple of seasons at the dribbling game"*.

In 1902 he switched to rugby, and had one season alternating between 1st and 2nd team rugby. He played at least 15 matches for the A team, scoring his first try against Berkeley on 8th November 1902, and another against Barnwood. He quickly made his debut for the 1st XV, under the captaincy of George Romans, scoring 2 tries in his first appearance, a 14-11 win over Cheltenham at Kingsholm on 27th December 1902. He also scored a try at Swansea on 21st February 1903, unfortunately in a 32-3 defeat, and another against Pontypridd, finishing the season with 12 appearances and 4 tries.

Thereafter he became a regular in the first team, either at centre or on the wing, although it was as a wing that he was to hit the heights. He came into a team in transition, which was struggling to win more games than it lost, and which failed in every encounter with the big 4 Welsh teams in 1902-03. At the end of the season W B summarised the season as follows: *"At left wing three-quarter Lewis Smith occupied the position for the first half of the season with moderate success. He subsequently lost his form altogether, and retired. Two young players in L Vears and A Hudson alternately filled the vacancy, and both proved worthy of the trust. Both possess a fair amount of pace, dash and resource, and the experience gained in the past season should serve them in good stead next year."*

In 1903-04, Arthur played in 16 of the Club's 34 first team fixtures, and two A team games, but was dropped for a while in the middle of the season. He started the season well, scoring a brace of tries in the second match at Coventry, which helped Gloucester to an 18-6 win. He went one better and scored a hat trick against Old Edwardians, two more in the return game against Coventry, and ended the season with 8 tries. W B commented: *"A Hudson and L Vears were given lengthy trials on the left*

wing, but neither quite fulfilled expectations. Hudson went clean off his form and dropped out of the team."

Arthur really arrived in the 1904-05 season, playing in 31 of the Club's 36 fixtures, and, although not scoring his first try until the end of October, he ended up leading the list of try scorers with a sensational and record-breaking 35 (the next best being "Whacker" Smith with 16). Jimmy Harrison had arrived from Lydney in the middle of the previous season to play at centre inside Arthur, and his presence certainly afforded Arthur many more scoring opportunities. They helped to turn round the fortunes of the Club – playing under a new and much respected captain in Billy Johns, they won 23 matches against 11 lost, whilst scoring 499 points against 155, and losing only two close run matches at Kingsholm against Swansea and Lydney. There were several matches in which Arthur scored multiple tries – 7 against Broughton Park, 6 against United Services, 4 against Old Edwardians, 3 against Clifton, and 2 each against Old Merchant Taylors on Boxing Day, in the return fixture against Clifton, and against Northampton.

W B eulogised at the end of the season: *"The feature of the play during the latter half of the season has been the remarkable combination of the backs, and the prolific scoring of Hudson. The latter missed the first five matches, but once he got into the team he soon made his mark, and, by scoring 35 tries, beat "Whacker" Smith's record of 29 in one season – an achievement which the popular three-quarter is to be heartily congratulated upon."* In analysing Arthur's breakthrough, W B wrote: *"When he came out for Gloucester a couple of years ago big things were expected from Hudson, but he scarcely fulfilled expectations. His re-appearance for the City, however, has been attended with marked success, and on his form he is entitled to be ranked amongst the very best wing three-quarters in the country. His 35 tries bear testimony to his abilities in attack, and his defence, though not so pronounced, has seldom been called to account."*

Before the first match in the 1905-06 season, the new gymnasium was opened amongst some fanfare. It incorporated facilities, including changing rooms which were thought excellent for their time – it was regarded as putting Gloucester to the forefront of English rugby. This is now the oldest building on the Kingsholm ground, and has been

renamed the Lions' Den. In the match which followed, Arthur carried on where he had left off the previous season, with 2 tries against Clifton, who must by now have been heartily sick of the sight of him, and he added another the following week against Bristol. Other notable tallies during the season were 6 tries against Bream in the County Cup, 5 each against Penylan and Hartlepool Old Boys, 4 against Bedford, 3 against Old Merchant Taylors, and 2 each against Lydney, Cheltenham, Lennox and Northampton. This included 10 tries in 4 successive matches towards the end of the season. He finished with a total of 41 tries from 26 appearances to beat his own record of the previous season ("Whacker" Smith scored 27 on the other wing).

Gloucester finished the season with 26 wins and 8 losses, and a whole host of new records – aside from Arthur's try scoring, the team's points aggregate of 661 (against 165) beat the previous best of 542 in 1901-02 and was to stand for many years to come; the total of 158 tries was also a record; as was George Romans total of 152 points (70 conversions, one mark goal and 3 penalties). W B summarised Arthur's season in the Citizen: *"The clever Gloucesterian has jumped to the front rank of English three-quarters, and he was deservedly awarded his International cap. Hudson has improved his football all round, and in attack there are few more formidable players to be found in the four countries. A tendency to drop passes has been his chief fault, but the wing man has not always been to blame. Altogether the season has been a big personal success for Hudson, who it is to be hoped will be available for the City for several years yet."*

The most memorable match of the season for all the Gloucester players came on 19th October 1905, when they suffered their heaviest defeat. The All Blacks came to Kingsholm. Gloucester decided to play three half-backs and only seven forwards, George Romans was injured in the previous match and had to cry off, and their best centres were selected even though they were both carrying injuries. None of this proved helpful, and things rapidly got worse. Unfortunately Arthur's day did not start well – early in the game *"from near mid-field Wood intercepted grandly and whipped out a wide pass to Hudson, who dashed down touch. Gillett, however, proved too much for the Gloucesterian, who was knocked out, being apparently stunned. There was a delay for Hudson to be attended to, and he had to be assisted to the line. This was hard lines for Gloucester"* – there were no replacements in those days. However, *"Hudson took his place when*

Hawker started the second half" and soon got into the game.... "Hudson with a flying kick sent to touch in the visitors' 25....From a long kick by Hudson the ball went over the line, and Gillett conceded a minor....and then Hudson tackled Wallace on the opposite side when he was at full speed".

In his summary of the match, W B wrote: *"Then came the unfortunate accident to Hudson, and from this point to the interval, there was only one team in it.... With the change of ends Gloucester, strengthened by Hudson, showed recovery, and again the City gave their powerful opponents a real good game. Hudson did his part well"* But in the latter stages of the game, Wood was injured and Gloucester were again reduced to 14, and it was too much. By the end, New Zealand had piled up 7 goals and 3 tries and ran out 44-0 winners.

This was not Arthur's only encounter with the All Blacks – he also played for the Eastern Counties against them at Bedford – invited because it was a midweek match, for which some players were unavailable.

Arthur played in all four of Gloucestershire's matches in 1905-06, but they had an unusually poor season, failing to score in any of their South-West group games, and a Jimmy Harrison try produced their only points against Glamorgan.

Arthur was selected for an international trial played at Bristol, but it looked as though he had missed his chance when he was not included in the South team in the final trial. So there was some surprise when he was selected to win his first international cap, making his debut against Wales at Richmond on 13th January 1906. W B was of course delighted by his selection, commenting that Arthur: *" is a glutton for work, and if there is a try to be scored he is generally there or thereabouts....Hudson is only 22 years of age. His weight is 12st 7lbs, and he is an inch short of 6ft. When on the run – and the Gloucesterian goes for the line in no half-hearted fashion – he is a most awkward man to tackle, as many a full-back has had cause to remember."*

Arthur played alongside his Gloucester teammate, Dai Gent, and scored a try, but these proved to be England's only points as they lost 3-16. Nevertheless it was reported that *"All round, Hudson was a distinct success*

and easily the best of the English three-quarters. He took the one chance that came his way in capital style, and went through the defence grandly." The South Wales Daily was not much impressed by England's performance and commented that: *"The English three-quarters were a mixed lot, and the latest recruit, Hudson, was the best of the bunch"*. The Morning Leader said: *"Hudson is a most capable man on the wing, a resolute runner and useful with his feet, as well as a fine tackler"*.

Arthur next played for England against Ireland at Leicester on 10th February – a game in which England again performed poorly and lost 6-16. He missed the game against Scotland, but 5 days later England travelled to Paris for the first representative match between England and France on Thursday 22nd March 1906. Arthur came back into the side, and played in front of about 3,000 spectators in an old velodrome which used to stage the finish of the Tour de France. This match was also notable for the appearance of James "Darkie" Peters, the first black player to represent England, and for the French wing, Emile Lesieur, who scored a try and 2 months later equalled the world 100m record of 10.8 sec. What a day to remember! – it was Arthur who scorched across the Parc de Princes turf, and scored four tries, as England won 35-6. This feat of four tries in a match for England has been matched a couple of times in the century since, but never exceeded. Arthur scored two tries in the first 10 minutes of the match, and added two more either side of half-time. The French proved rather more successful on the food front – this inaugural match was celebrated with a memorable banquet in the evening at the Restaurant Champeaux. It was quickly back to earth for Arthur – two days later, on the Saturday, he was playing for Gloucester in the County Cup Final, which was lost 3-8 to Bristol.

Whilst Hudson and Gent were playing for England against Wales, there were very capable substitutes for them in Gloucester's fixture against Leicester at Kingsholm. It so happened that 3 of the All Black tourists – D McGregor, H J Mynott and C Seeling – were staying in Gloucester that week before returning to New Zealand, and they agreed to make guest appearances for the Club, with McGregor substituting for Arthur on the left wing. This was perhaps a little unkind on Leicester, who arrived one short, and the Gloucester A captain, F Pyart, made up the numbers for them. Gloucester won 20-0, and the match report said *"McGregor was the hero of the match, and the New Zealander was mainly responsible for the*

points scored. All through he played beautiful football, and was most unselfish....At the close of the game the crowd surrounded McGregor, and amidst great cheering, hoisted him shoulder high and carried him to the dressing rooms."

This association of Hudson and McGregor was to have lasting consequences. Duncan McGregor went home to New Zealand after the 1905 tour, but then turned professional and came back to England in 1908 with the New Zealand All Golds. At the end of that tour, he stayed on in the UK and returned to Gloucester, where he resumed his acquaintanceship with Arthur. The two left wings became friends, and when McGregor opened a sports outfitter shop, he had the wisdom to arrange with Arthur to use the name of the local hero, Hudson, to promote the shop. McGregor went north to play in the Northern Union before returning to New Zealand in 1913, at which time Arthur's sister, Elizabeth (known as Bessie), took over the running of the shop and business, with Arthur remaining in his job as a clerk with the Midland Railway. When Arthur's rugby career came to an end in 1921, he took over the family business, Hudson and Company, which passed first to his son, Gordon, and is now run by his grandson, John.

In 1906-07, now under the captaincy of Dai Gent, Arthur played in 22 of Gloucester's 34 fixtures, and ran in 14 tries. He seemed to prosper best against local opposition, scoring twice in the games against Clifton, Lydney and Cinderford. However, Arthur experienced some problems during the season, and was switched to play in the centre (Jimmy Harrison having gone north to play for Wigan). As W B related in his season summary: *"The absence of a regular centre to Hudson considerably handicapped the International for the first part of the season, and he went completely off his game. His introduction to the inside position was a happy one, for with more work to do he regained a lot of his old dash, and effected a general improvement in the line. Hudson has fallen a long way short of his try-getting record of last season, but he had nothing like the same number of opportunities that were afforded him in 1905-06."*

Arthur played for the County against the South Africans when they visited Kingsholm on 3rd November 1906. He was one of six Gloucester players on the field. The match report speaks of *"Hudson recovered nicely, and with*

a grand punt found touch at midfield...Hudson, with a useful kick, gained a nice slice of ground...Hudson and Watkins were prominent for good work...Hudson put in a grand punt to Marsberg, and following up prevented a reply...from a kick Hudson marked and his punt was well followed up...Hudson later picked up cleverly in the open...Hudson, on clearing from the Colonials' rush, was loudly applauded, but the boot was quickly on the other leg...an amusing incident occurred on the touch-line - Loubser tackled Hudson on the line, and in the fall, Hudson clutched at P Le Roux, the touch judge, and all three rolled over together." Arthur played well, but Gloucestershire were outgunned and defending for most of the game, which was reflected in the final score of 23-0 to South Africa.

Arthur failed to add to his international caps this season, although he came close, being picked as a reserve for England against Wales.

The captaincy of the Club changed again for the 1907-08 season, with Gordon Vears now in charge. Arthur played in 19 of the Club's 34 fixtures, but scored at more than a try a game, running in 25 during the season. He kicked off with 5 tries in the first game of the season, a 38-10 demolition of Clifton, but he would probably have taken more pleasure from his try which helped to secure an 8-3 win over Swansea. Indeed he did particularly well against the Welsh, scoring twice against Cardiff both home and away and once against Newport both home and away, but all four games were lost. He was in his usual sparkling form on Boxing Day, when Old Merchant Taylors made their annual pilgrimage to Kingsholm, and scored 5 tries in a 22-8 win. He was certainly the star of the team, as W B recorded at the end of the season: *"Hudson's inability to play regularly was a serious loss to the City, for the International easily stood out as the finest attacking force in the team. Although only taking part in 19 out of 34 games, Hudson easily topped the list of try-getters, his success against the premier Welsh teams being a great feature."*

Arthur won another four county caps, but Gloucestershire failed to progress out of the South-West group in the County Championship. However, he came back into favour with the international selectors, and played in all four England internationals, against France at Stade Colombes on 1st January 1908, against Wales at Bristol on 18th January, against Ireland at Richmond on 8th February when he scored 2 tries, and

against Scotland at Inverleith on 21st March. The Club hosted a dinner to celebrate the international successes of both Arthur and Alfie Wood.

During the summer of 1908, Arthur was elected as captain for the forthcoming season. Unfortunately illness meant that he was only able to play in 8 of the Club's 37 fixtures, and most of the burden of captaincy continued to fall on Gordon Vears. Arthur scored a meagre 5 tries, and they all came in two games in the latter half of October – 2 against Pontypool to win 8-6, and 3 against Lydney to win 25-7. Gloucester managed to win 23, lose 10 and draw 4, with a points difference of 467 to 230. W B lamented as to what might have been in his review of the season: *"At the outset the prospects were particularly encouraging, but early disasters befell the club in the loss of the services of the crack three-quarters – Hudson and Neale. Such club players are not secured every day, and Gloucester found it impossible to adequately replace these men."*

However, Arthur was fit to play against the touring Australians at Kingsholm on 1st October 1908, when he captained a Gloucestershire side containing 6 Gloucester players. The Australians won 16-0, but the score line flattered them. Arthur's only other appearance for the County was in a friendly against Glamorgan.

Arthur was re-elected to the captaincy for the 1909-10 season, but at the AGM, he announced that *"he wished to hold over his final acceptance for a time. He had every hope of playing, but after the serious illness he had undergone he was desirous of waiting for a time before finally accepting the office"*. He later decided he could act as captain once more, but in the event was frequently unavailable, appearing in only 13 of the 38 Club fixtures. This was in part down to injury, but also to representative honours. He did still score 11 tries for the Club, starting against Swansea on 2nd October 1909, his first appearance for nearly twelve months, and the game was won 8-5. The following month he scored two tries against Cheltenham (won 24-0), and on 28th December he scored four against Bridgwater Albion (won 27-0). In the penultimate game of the season he scored a try against Leicester (won 14-0), and in the final match of the season, which was the County Cup Final against Lydney, he scored two tries in the 18-0 win. The match report described his tries as follows: *"Hudson, getting a pass from Stephens on the blind side of the*

scrum, scored easily...In the last few minutes, Dix and Stephens got the ball out, and Hall making a nice opening for Hudson, the captain ran half the length of the field and scored under the posts."

Despite Arthur's many absences, Gloucester enjoyed a successful season – played 38, won 23, lost 8, drawn 7; points for 401, and against 203. In his review of the season, W B commented that: *"It was a great misfortune to the club that Hudson was available so rarely...the captain was particularly unlucky in the matter of injuries, but though prevented so often from taking his place in the field, he maintained a keen and active interest in the team, and did splendid service in this respect."*

During the South-West group games in the County Championship, Arthur was able to play in the matches against Somerset (won 21-14 at Weston-super-Mare), and Cornwall (lost 0-11). This loss left the group undecided, and Gloucestershire met Somerset and Cornwall again in replays, both of which were won, as was the semi-final against Kent, although Arthur was not fit to play in any of these games. However, by the time the final was played against Yorkshire at Kingsholm on 9th April 1910, Arthur was fit again, and took his place along with 7 Gloucester teammates. The day was a grand one for the County – they won 23-0, and Arthur contributed two tries, one of which was described in the match report as *"Then came a fine bit of combination, in which all the Gloucester backs, with the exception of Neale, took part. Hudson, the last to receive had three men round him in the corner, but cleverly evading his opponents, he slipped over the line and scored a splendid try."* This was only the third time that Gloucestershire had progressed beyond the SW group, and their first County Championship. At the Club AGM in the summer, gold medals and photographs of the Gloucestershire team were presented to the City players who took part in the final.

Arthur's international season was similarly fractured – he appeared for the England side in the first trial against the South, and scored two tries as England won 28-6. He was again in the England team in the final trial against the Rest – despite a try from Arthur, England went down 10-18. Both of these games were played at the newly built stadium at Twickenham. Arthur missed the two home internationals played at Twickenham against Wales and Ireland, but was brought back into the

England team to play in Paris on 3rd March 1910, alongside Billy Johns and Harry Berry, teammates from Gloucester. Arthur scored two tries as France were beaten 11-3. Harry Berry scored England's first try after 10 minutes; then, after 20 minutes, "*Hudson made a fine run and scored*", and later "*Hudson got in again shortly before the finish*". The Daily Mail said: "*The second try was scored single-handed by Hudson, who left half a dozen Frenchmen standing still. Hudson was the strongest of the three-quarters.*" This fine performance earned Arthur selection for the final game of the season against Scotland, again alongside Billy Johns and Harry Berry, but in the event neither Arthur nor Billy were able to play, and this was to prove to be Arthur's last chance to play for England.

In the record of the 1910 Club AGM, it is reported that: "*Mr Hudson, in returning thanks for his election to the captaincy for the third time, tendered his best thanks for the assistance he received last season to Mr Gordon Vears and Mr W Egerton. The latter, as captain of the A team, performed a lot of hard work for which he got little credit. Mr Hudson also asked the members to do what they could to discourage loose remarks made from the touch-line towards the players. Last season several men were subjected to this kind of treatment. The players went on the field to do their best, and he appealed to members to give all the encouragement they could to the players.*"

Arthur was restored to full fitness for the 1910-11 season, when he captained the Club to a record of played 40, won 25, lost 13, drawn 2; points for 483, and against 187. Arthur ran in 32 tries in the 32 games in which he appeared, to resume his position as the Club's leading try-scorer (Washbourne was next with 15). He scored in each of the first four games of the season against Bream (3), Stroud (4), Cinderford (1) and Clifton (5), for 13 tries before the end of September. Later in the season, he ran in a hat trick of tries in successive weeks against Lydney and Cheltenham, and then another in the return match against Bream. Perhaps the highlight of the season for Arthur (and the rest of the team) was the trip to Toulouse, which took 6 days to complete – one of the players described it as "*the time of our lives*". The match was played on 28th February 1911, and the result was Stade Toulousain 13 Gloucester 18.

In his review of the Club's season, W B wrote: *"Hudson, who was able to appear far more regularly than the two previous years, again topped the honours in try-getting, and his aggregate for the City club now stands at 175 tries – a record to be proud of. The captain's play has suffered through the continual changes in the line, and his form did not reach the high standard of consistency previously set up. Periodically he has come out with brilliant efforts, and he reserved some of his best performances against the crack Welsh teams."* Looking ahead to the following season, W B reported that: *"What the City want is some speedy and clever players in the three-quarter line. The suggestion that some of the men should do a bit of track running in the summer to pick up pace is a good one; it is understood running pumps will be provided if the players will only take the trouble to turn out."*

Arthur missed the warm-up County game against Glamorgan, but returned for the first South-West group game against Devon, and then captained the County against Somerset and Cornwall in November 1910, but a 13-17 reversal against Cornwall saw the County Champions eliminated.

The system for appointment of the Club Captain was that the players elected a captain, and their choice was then endorsed by the Club membership at the AGM. The record of the Club AGM in June 1911 records that: *"Mr Brown referring to the nomination by the players of Mr A Hudson as captain, remarked that they were all much indebted to Mr Hudson who had proved himself an excellent skipper. Mr Hudson, in acknowledging, said he was very much obliged for the unanimous support given to the players' nomination. He regarded it as a great honour to captain the champion Rugby club in the country, and although he should like to have seen the office pass into other hands, the players were unanimous in their support of him, and he had taken it on (Applause). He had an excellent vice-captain in that good sport Gordon Vears (applause), and he looked to him for his usual valuable assistance."*

Under Arthur's captaincy in 1911-12, the Club played 40 games, won 24, lost 12, drew 4, and scored 359 points against 217. Arthur made 31 appearances, and scored 23 tries, making him the leading try scorer again (Washbourne second with 16). Once more matches against the Welsh brought out the best in Arthur, and included a hat trick in the 27-0

defeat of Penycraig in the first match of the season, two in an 11-0 win over Cardiff, one in an 8-3 win over Swansea, another in a 5-5 draw with Pontypool, two against Penylan (won 14-5), one as Abertillery were seen off 27-3, and one in the 8-3 defeat of Llanelly. Indeed, Gloucester played 9 matches against Welsh clubs at Kingsholm, winning 7 and drawing 2. Arthur also scored a brace in a 14-3 win over Northampton.

The team travelled to France again, playing Stade Francais in Paris on 14th March 1912, and again they were victorious, 13-3, including a try from the captain. The players never forgot the banquet to which they were entertained after the match, but returning to Gloucester from this trip, they arrived home in the early hours of Saturday morning, only to have to play Cinderford later in the day – perhaps a 0-3 defeat was not too surprising.

W B summarised Arthur's season as: *"The captain was inconsistent. He started strongly, and scored well in the earlier matches, but subsequently struck a bad patch, and appeared to lose the confidence and dash of old. However, the old International once again proved the club's most prolific scorer, and has now a grand aggregate of 198 tries – a record for Gloucester, which is not likely to be approached for a very long time. On this success the City captain is to be very heartily congratulated."*

Arthur turned out for Gloucestershire against Somerset and Hampshire, but the County had a miserable season, failing to register a single win in the group stage.

At the Club AGM in June 1912, Arthur was elected captain for a fifth season. The record for the season was played 40, won 21, lost 14, drawn 4, abandoned 1; points for 369 and against 224. Arthur's appearances were restricted to 19 matches, but he remained the Club's leading try-scorer with 14. Early in the season, Gloucester won a hard-fought game against Cinderford 12-5, including a try by Arthur, but the match report records a *"rough second half...Hudson was crippled"*. He was back at the start of November to score a hat trick against Clifton, and later in the season ran in four against Cheltenham in a 25-0 win.

Arthur must have been disappointed to be overlooked by the Gloucestershire selectors, missing the chance to play the South Africans and appear in another county Final. But maybe this was not a surprise – in his summary of the season, W B wrote: *“Early on the captain was placed on the crooked list. Hudson, unfortunately never recovered properly, and, as will be seen by the list of players’ appearances, he took part in less than half the fixtures. This was a misfortune, for the continued absence of a captain is bound to have a depressing effect on the players. Despite the limited number of games in which he assisted, Hudson is well up in the try-getting list, and his aggregate for the Club now reaches 212. Reference to the captain’s retirement and his career will be found at the end of this article ... Arthur Hudson has intimated his retirement from first-class football, but as it is his intention to seek election as a Committeeman (and there should be no doubt as to his election), his official connection with the City Club, for which he has rendered such splendid service as a playing member, will not be altogether severed.”*

At the subsequent AGM, Arthur did indeed stand down as captain (to be replaced by George “Biddy” Halford). He was nominated for the Committee, and, as W B predicted, he was elected with a large vote in his favour.

However, Arthur was persuaded not to hang his boots up finally, and he made 5 appearances for the Club in 1913-14, scoring 6 tries. They came in the form of two hat tricks in November – in a 17-3 win at Stroud, and a 19-0 defeat of Bath. He was re-elected to the Club Committee at the AGM in 1914, topping the poll.

The Great War then intervened, but even this failed to bring the curtain down on Arthur’s rugby playing days. He enlisted in the Royal and spent most of the war based at the Royal Naval Barracks at Devonport (HMS *Vivid*), but this was interspersed with considerable periods at sea, occasionally on cruisers, but mostly in submarines. Whilst ashore he organised a team to play visiting ships’ crews, and also appeared for Devonport Services, the Navy and the Combined Services. Towards the end of 1918 Arthur moved away joined the Harwich Naval Force, guarding the English Channel and frustrating German attempts to lay mines in it; naturally Arthur was elected captain of the Harwich Naval Forces XV.

During the war, in 1915, Arthur married Ellen Mary Phillips in Hereford. Their son, Gordon, born in 1915, would later enjoy a distinguished playing career with Gloucester, outstripping his father with 296 first team appearances, being elected captain for 3 seasons and later following in his father's footsteps as Secretary, before serving as Chairman of the Club for 10 years. Arthur was always keen on tennis, and this rubbed off on his daughter, Gwendoline, who qualified for the Wimbledon singles twice and women's doubles on 7 occasions during the 1950`s under her married name of Scott. In 1951 she played in the opening ladies singles match against the defending champion, Louise Brough, on centre court.

In 1919, Arthur not only resumed his playing career with Gloucester, but also became Assistant Secretary of the Club. He was soon back into the swing of try-scoring, registering his first against Abertillery on 20th September 1919, and scoring again in the two succeeding matches against Cheltenham and a Forest XV. When Gloucester played at Bath, they ran in 8 tries, 4 of them from Arthur, to win 24-0. However, he was now age 36, and this was to be his last season. He finished his try-scoring for the Club with a hat trick against Cheltenham on 6th April 1920. His final game for the Club was four days later – a 3-0 victory over Swansea at Kingsholm on 10th April 1920. During the 1919-20 season, Arthur made 26 appearances and scored 17 tries, which again made him the leading try-scorer.

W B wrote in the Citizen at the end of the season: *"Of the pre-war players, Arthur Hudson and Fred Webb again rendered yeoman service, and it is fitting that the pair should be at the top of the try-getters. Hudson's form has simply been wonderful considering his length of service. Like other players, he had his off days, but he retained his keenness, dash and scoring ability in a remarkable degree, and no player was more feared by opponents than the old International. In addition to his playing, Hudson's services have been at the disposal of the Club in many ways; in fact from September to April all his spare time has been practically devoted to the interests of the Gloucester F C, and the welfare of the players. But he loves the work and the good old Rugby Union game, and knowledge that his services are appreciated by the members will, I am sure, amply repay him for all he has done for the premier City club."*

In a career which spanned 18 years, Arthur played 260 matches for Gloucester's 1st XV, and scored 235 tries, including a record 41 tries in the 1905-6 season. In addition he made at least 19 appearances for the Gloucester 2nd XV. He captained the club for 5 seasons from 1908 to 1913, and under his captaincy, the Club played 195 matches, won 116, lost 57, and drew 21; points for 1710, against 846.

And so to Arthur's final game of rugby. A week after his last appearance for Gloucester, he captained Gloucestershire in the County Championship Final against Yorkshire at Bradford. Reporting on the match on 17th April 1920, the "Athletic News", a northern newspaper, said: "*Hudson was disallowed what appeared to be a perfectly legitimate try, and then had the misfortune to dislocate his shoulder in tackling Netherwood when the latter was awarded his try. The visiting captain held his man up and pulled him back on top of him; the ball was never grounded over the line. But Mr Potter Irwin gave a try....I sympathise with Archie [sic] Hudson in his mishap. He has been playing for I do not know how many years – he is, I think, 39 years of age – and has toured various parts of the world and played for England, while he has been of rare service to his county, and club, earning hundreds of tries. And in what he had expected would be the closing game of his career he dislocated his shoulder. Hudson is a footballer against whom I have never heard one word of adverse criticism uttered. He has been a grand sportsman in the real sense of the word; and I do not think he would take a mean advantage of a player.*" Other Gloucester players in the team that day were F W Webb, W Dix, T Millington, G Halford, S Smart, A Hall, F Ward and F W Ayliffe; Webb(2) and Ayliffe scored tries, and Millington kicked a conversion, as Gloucestershire triumphed 27-3, by 3 goals and 4 tries to 1 try. It was unfortunate that Arthur should have finished his career having to leave the field with injury, but his team certainly raised their game to allow him to finish on a high. This brought to 29 the number of Arthur's county caps, during which he scored 14 tries.

Contemporary reports speak of Arthur being the hardest man to tackle, tearing down the wing with his knees coming up so high that anyone not catching him just right was knocked flying. Arthur himself is quoted as saying that he told his centre to hold the ball, until Arthur suddenly shouted "Now" – the pass would be made and Arthur would be racing away to the line. At his peak he was one of the most dangerous attacking wing threequarters in the Home Countries, and WB recalled that "*more*

than one Welsh international had reason to remember futile attempts to tackle the Gloucester when in full cry for the goal-line."

But perhaps the final word on Arthur the player should be left to Dai Gent, rugby correspondent of the Sunday Times, and a scrum half who played many times in the same Gloucester, Gloucestershire and England teams as Arthur – he wrote that Arthur was *"a wing who has thrilled me – a splendid example of a man using his excellent physique to the best advantage, without too much finesse"*.

The record of the Club AGM in June 1920 shows that: *"The Committee's recommendation to appoint Mr Arthur Hudson as paid General Secretary met with unanimous support, and the old International's popularity was testified again and again by the hearty reception accorded him."* The outgoing Secretary (Mr J T Brookes) opined that *"the position demanded a man who had had clerical experience – one who had tact, was sociable, level-headed, and able to give judgement on any matter that came before him. In his (Mr Brookes') view, Mr Hudson possessed all the qualifications necessary, and he trusted the Committee's recommendation would be heartily confirmed. It was proposed that the salary attaching to the office should be £120 for the ensuing season. [the resolutions were passed unanimously] "On rising to acknowledge his election, Mr Hudson received a great ovation. He remarked that he did not deserve half the good things said of him, and if Mr Brookes had sat down midway through his speech, he would have been more than satisfied. He took the post with the sole idea of continuing to do what he could for the Gloucester Football Club. It had been his idol in life. Reference had been made to the fact that Gloucester had two attractions – its cathedral and football team; he was sorry he knew of only one (Laughter) He thanked the members very much indeed for so heartily adopting his nomination, and promised that all his efforts would be concentrated on maintaining the high standard and dignity of the club. (Loud applause) On the proposition of Mr W H Pickard, seconded by Mr Lafford, it was recommended to the committee that Mr Hudson be made a life member of the club."*

Arthur combined the role of Secretary with Treasurer and Fixture Secretary for many years. He took a close control of club affairs and finances, and liked to tell people that he ran the Club *"like a business"*. It prospered as a result, and Arthur's central role in this was regularly

acknowledged by the President, Dr Arnold Alcock, and Chairman, John Brookes, with whom he worked closely throughout the 1920s and 1930s, when Arthur took pride in a continuous period of a "healthy balance sheet". His influence spread across all facets of the Club, and "The Doc" was to reminisce later about "the genius displayed by Mr Hudson in the management of the affairs of the club".

He also became a Director of the Ground Company, which owned Kingsholm.

During the Second World War, the Kingsholm ground was given over to the local civil authorities, but Arthur kept a close eye on the facilities, and did his best to counter the spreading dilapidation.

When the war had ended, and Kingsholm had reverted to the Ground Company for use by the Rugby Club, there was a feeling that the time and effort which Arthur had devoted to the Club's interests during the war years should be recognised. The minutes of the Club Committee for 3rd June 1946 include an item as follows:

"It was unanimously agreed that the Secretary be given an Honorarium of £150 for his services to the Club since 1939/40. Mr Hudson said whilst he much appreciated the proposal he could not accept any remuneration in accordance with his expressed decision at the beginning of the season. He suggested however that it be given to start a fund to provide a ground for local Clubs and which object might be considered as a fitting War Memorial by the Club to the players who lost their lives.

After considerable discussion it was agreed to accept the magnanimous offer and further resolved: "That a Memorial Fund be inaugurated to commemorate the memory of the players of the Gloucester Rugby Football Club who have made the supreme sacrifice in the two Great Wars."

"That this memorial should take the form of a fund to purchase a playing ground for the use of Clubs of Gloucester & District Clubs at the discretion of the Gloucester Rugby Football Club and its Trustees."

The President proposed and Mr Smart seconded that £500 be placed to the Memorial Fund as the Clubs first subscription and this was unanimously carried."

The Citizen published a report on these plans on 27th June 1946:

"GRFC launched at its annual meeting in the Central Church Hall on Wednesday evening 26 June), a memorial fund to purchase a ground for the use of local rugby clubs. It will commemorate rugby players who made the supreme sacrifice in the two great wars. The ground envisaged will be large enough for five or six playing pitches, and will be situated outside the City. So far about £800 is in hand to start the fund. DR A Alcock announced that the Club had voted £500 as a start, and the Hon Sec, Mr A Hudson, had generously given to the fund the whole of the honorarium of £150 which the Committee had voted him for the war years. Mr A T Voyce said the Committee planned to put some money they had received from the services matches to the fund, and the President had handed a cheque to the Hon Treasurer. Dr Alcock told the meeting that it was Mr Hudson who had thought of the scheme and planned it. He knew that what was needed and what would be a real memorial to last for generations was a playing field for many rugby clubs in Gloucester and district. Mr H Smith (Hon Sec of the North Glos Combination) said that for many years the ground question had been a bugbear to local clubs and the Combination and the local clubs were very grateful that the Gloucester Club was going to help them."

Trustees were appointed for the Memorial Fund – Arnold Alcock, Tom Voyce and Arthur, who continued in this role until his death. Many individuals and rugby clubs contributed, collections were made, and the Club contributed income from match programmes, so that by the time of the Club AGM in 1949, the fund stood at £3,086. Sites at Barnwood and Hempsted were considered, but in 1952 seven acres were purchased at Tuffley Avenue, backing onto the Wagon Works sports ground. The Memorial Ground remains in use to this day as the home of the Old Cryptians and Widden Old Boys Rugby Clubs.

In 1951, Arthur reminisced on the 60th Jubilee of the Club playing at Kingsholm – *"Looking back over 50 years as a player and official, I do not begrudge one minute of the time I have devoted to Rugby. To me it has been a*

labour of love; it has given me some of my richest memories.” He was described by the Club’s President, Dr Arnold Alcock, as “the heart and soul of Rugby in Gloucester.”

Arthur remained as Secretary of the Club for 42 years, finally relinquishing the post in 1962, aged 80. And when he did give it up, he continued as Team Secretary; he was also a life member and life vice-president. He assumed the mantle of “Grand Old Man of Gloucester Rugby”, and it was claimed that he did more for Gloucester rugby than any man.

He also served on the county rugby committee, and other sporting interests were athletics and tennis – he was secretary of the Gloucester Athletic Club, another club he took to financial security, and he ran 20 tennis courts on his land at the Chestnuts, Escourt Road (although they were compulsorily purchased in the 1930s to allow construction of the Gloucester ring road).

The reputation of Arthur Hudson in the world of rugby was such that the 1972 New Zealand All Blacks, after a pitch inspection at Kingsholm on 27 October, on their way back to their hotel, called in to pay their respects to Arthur, now 90 years old, who had of course played against the first All Black tourists in 1905. The following day the All Blacks beat Western Counties by 39 points to 12 points.

At the time of Arthur’s death on 27th July 1973, aged 91, he and his wife were living at 2 Tewkesbury Road, Gloucester. He died after a short illness, although he had been in ill health for five years. The funeral service was held at Hucclecote Church followed by cremation at Gloucester Crematorium.

An obituary was published in the Citizen on Friday 27 July 1973:

“ARTHUR HUDSON, GLO’STER’S “MR RUGBY” DIES

The City Albion footballer who changed codes to become a legend in Gloucester Rugby circles, Mr. Arthur Hudson, died this morning, aged 90.

Although ill-health has kept him out of circulation and away from the Kingsholm "scene" for the past five years, his death follows a short illness and a spell in hospital.

Playing soccer for City Albion when they used a pitch sited where the existing Kingsholm car park is now laid he was introduced to the neighbouring rugby club in 1904 by Mr. Alf Kiddle and from that moment rugby became his life.

After a season in the United he gained his first team place as either a wing threequarter or centre and skippered the Gloucester club from 1906 to 1908. During this spell he won his CountyCap and played nine times for England.

After service in submarines during the First World War his playing career continued until 1920 when a broken collarbone against Yorkshire in the CountyChampionship final took him into retirement.

This retirement opened an administrative door that was to span three decades.

He was general secretary of the Gloucester club for 35 years until the late fifties and the years before the war he also combined the duties of treasurer and fixture secretary.

Also a member of the County committee, Mr. Hudson had, since retiring from the secretary's position continued as a life member and a life vice-president.

Rugby however took only part of his active and industrious life. His sporting interests varied and while a clerk with the Midland Railway he captained the soccer and cricket sections and was secretary of the Gloucester Athletic Club in the 20's when they held regular events at The Spa that were of nationwide interest.

While with the Athletic club he took them financially from the red into the black and spearheaded one of the most successful athletic clubs in the country.

Tennis too found a space. Until the war he ran 20 public tennis courts on his land at The Chestnuts in Escourt-rd. – his lifetime home. When the war came he was forced to dispense with the courts due to a shortage of labour.

Immediately after the war he personally nursed the baby that was to become the Memorial Ground, a permanent reminder of the rugby players who were killed in action, and until his death he was a trustee.

Well respected in business circles Mr. Hudson, originally a clerk with the railway developed one of Gloucester's leading sports outfitters businesses on the present Northgate Street site and was a member of the Rotary Club.

The death of Mr. Hudson who is survived by his wife Ellen Mary, son Gordon, present chairman of the Gloucester club, and daughter Gwen, comes just five weeks before Gloucester, for whom he did so much and who he loved so greatly, celebrate their centenary. A centenary in which Arthur Hudson played such a vital and loyal role."