

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1924.

GLOUCESTER FOOTBALL CLUB'S JUBILEE.

Celebration Match and Banquet Next Thursday.

FIFTY YEARS' RECORDS.

R. U. President's Message.

"W. B." is indebted to Capt. W S. Donne, President of the Rugby Union, for the following sent in response to a request for a "message" on the Gloucester Club's Jubilee celebration :-

A Club which has had an honoured career for 50 years, which has furnished its Country and its County with a host of great players, and which, for the best part of such period has been able, year in and year out, to hold its own with any opponents in the British Isles, deserves the heartiest congratulations of all the Rugby Football fraternity. Such a Club is the Gloucester F. C.

At the Spa.

Season.	Captain.	P.	W.	L.	D.	For.		Ag'st.	
						Goals.	Tries.	Goals.	Tries.
1873-4	F. Hartley					No record obtainable.			
1874-5	"			"	"	"			
1875-6	"			"	"	"			
1876-7	J. F. Brown	11	6	3	2	-	-	-	-
1877-8	"	15	10	3	2	30	26	2	7
1878-9	"	15	10	3	2	-	-	-	-
1879-80	"	16	14	2	0	28	27	1	9
1880-1	"	13	7	3	3	18	24	2	7
1881-2	"	19	14	5	0	26	23	8	19
1882-3 *	"	14	11	0	3	15	20	1	4
1883-4	H. J. Boughton	19	15	2	2	21	59	2	3
1884-5	"	20	11	7	2	-	-	-	-
1885-6	T. G. Smith	17	13	3	1	27	32	8	9
1886-7	"	19	10	7	2	11	26	9	11
1887-8	"	19	10	6	3	12	28	3	17
1888-9	"	22	14	3	5	19	38	3	10
1889-90	C. E. Brown	25	14	8	3	31	33	9	14
1890-1	T. Bagwell	26	21	2	3	27	47	5	12

(* Invincible Year.)

At Kingsholm.

Season.	Captain.	Points					Ag'st.
		P.	W.	L.	D.	For	
1891-2	T. Bagwell	34	24	6	4	303	111
1892-3	W. George	30	16	11	3	197	132
1893-4	J. Hanman	29	18	10	1	235	118
1894-5	"	28	14	11	3	254	155
1895-6	C. Williams	26	8	12	6	116	165
1896-7	W. H. Taylor	31	18	5[sic]	5	251	131
1897-8	"	35	24	5	6	335	120
1898-9	"	34	27	6	1	300	116
1899-00	"	32	23	7	2	406	110
1900-1	G. Romans	34	24	5	5	522	75
1901-2	"	34	24	7	3	542	103
1902-3	"	35	19	15	1	381	196
1903-4	"	24	18	4	2	416	200
1904-5	G. Romans & W. Johns	36	23	11	2	499	155
1905-6 †	W. Johns	37	26	8	3	661	165
1906-7	D. R. Gent	34	21	11	2	363	205
1907-8	G. Vears	34	28	9	2	346	230
1908-9	A. Hudson	37	23	10	4	467	239
1909-10	"	38	23	8	7	401	203
1910-11	"	40	25	13	2	483	187
1911-12	"	40	24	12	4	359	214
1912-13	"	39	21	14	4	369	224
1913-14	G. Holford	37	25	10	2	357	167
1914-15)							
1915-16)							
1916-17)	WAR YEARS.						
1917-18)							
1918-19)							

1919-20	G. Holford	33	19	12	2	384	222
1920-21	F. Webb	37	25	10	2	453	262
1921-22	S. Smart	41	24	14	3	500	324
1922-23	F. W. Ayliffe	43	27	13	3	516	273
1923-24	T. Millington	39	24	14	1	426	310

(† Record Season in Points).

On Thursday next, November 13th, the jubilee celebration of the formation of the Gloucester Rugby Football Club will be marked with a special match at Kingsholm between the City and a powerful team got together by the President of the Rugby Union (Capt. W. S. Donne), to be followed in the evening by a banquet at the New Inn Hotel, to which a large number of invitations have been issued.

It will be a memorable event in the history of the Club, and the most notable gathering of Rugby Union enthusiasts ever assembled in Gloucester. A list of those invited to the banquet as guests of the Gloucester F. C. is given below. The Committee have made every effort to make the gathering as representative as possible of those who have been closely associated with the Club from its inception right down to the present season.

That many supporters of the City Club would be keenly disappointed in not being afforded the opportunity of attending the banquet was fully recognised, but with limited accommodation it was felt that to make the function a public one would possibly have created even greater difficulty and disappointment. Some may not agree with this

view, but that was the general opinion of the Committee, hence the decision to make it a strictly invitational affair.

Fifty Years' History.

Started in September, 1873, Gloucester F.C. has had a remarkable history, and few clubs can point to a more consistent record. The first balance sheet of the Club showed a total income of £11. Fifty years later the Club membership was 2,504; gate receipts totalled £3,296 7s. 6d.; £926 was paid in amusement tax, and a balance in hand was shown of £2,188! In addition the Club held 2,099 shares in the Football Ground Co. That is a wonderful record of progress, and a testimony to the hold the Rugby Club has on the sport-loving public of Gloucester. For 18 years the Club had its headquarters at the Spa, where, under the captaincy in turn of Messrs. F. Hartley, J. F. Brown (seven seasons), H. J. Boughton, T. G. Smith, C. E. Brown, and T. Bagwell, the team met with a large measure of success and popularity. In 1882-3 the team went through the season undefeated, and in the last year at the Spa, under the leadership of T. Bagwell, only two matches were lost as against 21 victories and three drawn games.

Space will not permit of a lengthy review of the early days of the Club, but those who remember the matches of the eighties and nineties, will recall the names of a number of brilliant players who were idols of the crowd as Tom Voyce is today. J. F. Brown was the most capable and inspiring leader the Club ever possessed, and it was mainly through his efforts Gloucester rose to such pre-eminence in the football world. To Gloucester, under Mr. Brown's regime, belongs the distinction of introducing the passing game, and they gave Cardiff an object lesson on one occasion, winning by 1 goal, 6 tries to nil.

Many interesting incidents during the Club's tenure of the Spa must be passed over, but mention must be made of the danger which threatened the Club in 1878. A match was arranged with Rockleaze (Bristol) to be played by electric light. There were four lights — at least there should have been four — but one failed entirely, and one of the others was uncertain. The result was that the crowd of spectators got out of hand and did a great deal of damage to the shrubs and walks. The Club received notice to quit, and ordered that no more matches should be played at the Spa. But a petition was got up and signed by 3,000 citizens, and presented to the Corporation. The Council relented and unanimously voted in favour of allowing the Club to again enter into possession.

Thirteen years later there was another upset. In order to bring off an important match with Swansea, the frost-bound ground was given a too liberal application of salt, which ruined the grass. The Cricket Club, who were the tenants, gave the Football Club notice to leave, and it was this action that led to the acquisition of the Kingsholm Ground, now one of the best-appointed Rugby Union enclosures in the country. The choosing of this site for the new "home" was a happy one, for it was here Gloucester played their first match against the College School.

During their 33 years' occupancy of the Kingsholm enclosure Gloucester have experienced varying fortunes, but the Club has always maintained a first-class list of fixtures, and all the leading clubs in England and Wales have visited the ground. Some notable victories have been achieved during this long period, especially against the principal Welsh teams, Llanelly, Swansea, and Newport, all having lost unbeaten records at Kingsholm. Gloucester have established the reputation of being one of the hardest sides to beat at home, and though this has been belied somewhat this season, one recognises the City Club is only passing through a temporary lapse, and will in the near future fully regain their former prowess.

The table of records at the head of this article shows at a glance that Gloucester have always held a high position amongst the leading clubs, and there will be no laxity on the part of the present officials and Executive to maintain that proud distinction. A more complete review of the history of the Club (written by "W.B."), with eighteen pages of photographs, is contained in the Jubilee Souvenir issued under the auspices of the Committee of the Gloucester Club.

Gloucester International Players.

- W. Jackson, Three-quarter (Gloucester and Halifax), 1894.
C. A. Hooper, Three-quarter (Cambridge University and Gloucester), 1894.
F. O. Poole, Forward (Oxford University and Gloucester), 1895.
F. M. Stout, Forward, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1903, 1904, 1905.
P. W. Stout, Three-quarter, 1898, 1899.
C. Hall, Forward, 1901.
C. Smith, Three-quarter, 1901.
A. Hudson, Three-quarter, 1906, 1908, 1910.
D. R. Gent, Half-back, 1905, 1906, 1910.
A. E. Wood, Full-back, 1908.
W. Johns, Forward, 1909, 1910.
H. Berry, Forward, 1910.
D. Hollands, Forward, (Gloucester and Devon Albion), 1912.
S. Smart, Forward, 1913, 1914, 1920.
G. Holford, Forward, 1920.
A. T. Voyce, Forward, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, and British Team in South Africa.

The Banquet

LIST OF INVITED GUESTS.

The following is a list of the guests invited to the banquet: —

The two teams and reserves, and referee.

Gloucester Club Officials: Dr. Arnold Alcock (President), Sir James Bruton (ex-President), Messrs. Arthur F. Fielding and J. T. Brookes (Vice-Presidents), A. Hudson, Secretary.

The Committee: Messrs. F. A. Abbey, H. J. Balchin, A. Brown, G. F. Clutterbuck, G. J. Collingbourne, A. Cromwell, G. R. Fox, N. L. Hayes, F. Pegler, S. Smart, J. H. Webb, and S. Bayliss.

Gloucester A Team: Messrs. A. Rea (captain), F. Mansell, and F. Bloxsome (ex-captains).

Life Members: Messrs. H. E. Taylor, G. Coates, R. C. Jenkins, Bert Parham, W. Dix, A. F. Hughes, J. Stephens, and A. H. Click.

Ex-Captains: Messrs. T. Graves Smith, T. Bagwell, A. C. Williams, W. H. Taylor, G. Romans, D. R. Gent, W. A. Johns, Gordon Vears, G. Holford, and F. Webb.

Ex-Officials: Messrs. H. W. Bennett, F. W. Lovesy, S. W. Bingle, W. H. Worth, H. G. Brown, and Nigel D. Haines.

International Players: Messrs. F. M. Stout, C. Hall, and C. Smith.

Original Members: Messrs. E. T. Gardom, P. Barrett Cooke, J. W. Bayley, and A. C. Seymour.

Football Ground Co., Ltd.: Messrs. W. G. Ayliffe, Harry Berry, Walter Warner, H. A. Dancey (Directors), S. S. Starr (Sec.), and W. H. Madge (Solicitor).

Gloucester Rugby Supporters' Club: Messrs. C. A. F. Ridsdale (Chairman), F. J. Pitt (Hon. Sec.), and A. H. Margrett (Hon. Treasurer).

Gloucestershire Referees' Society (North): Mr. E. Browning (Hon. Sec.).

Gloucester Schools' Rugby Union: Mr. Eric Keys (Hon. Sec.).

North Gloucester Rugby Combination: Mr. W. A. Thomas (Chairman).

County Rugby Union: Messrs. A. J. Gardner (President), J. D. Meredith (Vice-President), R. A. Roberts (Hon. Sec.), J. H. Tratt (Hon. Treasurer).

Rugby Union: Capt. W. S. Donne (President), Messrs. John Daniell (Selection Committee), Walter A. Pearce and J. B. Minahan (Executive Committee).

Club Representatives: Bristol, Cheltenham, Stroud, Cinderford, Lydney, Clifton, Cardiff, Newport, Moseley, and Bath.

City Member: Col. J. N. Horlick, M.P.

The Mayor, Mr. C. E. Gardner.

President, Chamber of Trade: Mr. G. F. Baker.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr. A. W. Hopkins.

Messrs. H. G. Norman and J. O. Roberts, Press representatives.

THE GLOUCESTER CLUB

A Little Tribute from D. R. Gent.

(English International and Member of the Club from 1903 to 1910).

So it's the old Club's fiftieth birthday; well, many happy returns to it! I sincerely hope that it will keep going for at least as long again, and that it will give its playing members in particular the great pleasure it gave me. I never tire of telling folk I meet in my football travels up and down the country, of the extraordinary record of the Gloucester Club.

That a small city of the size of Gloucester should have had a Rugby Club that has always been among the half-dozen leading sides in the country is an astonishing record. Look at the towns, two or three times as big - and more - that have tried to run a Rugby side, and have had to be content with poor teams, or, in many cases, have failed in the attempt.

My delightfully happy days commenced at the end of the 1902-3 season, though as a humble spectator. I had seen the Club play many times before then - at Swansea, when Walter Taylor, George Clutterbuck, and Percy and Frank Stout were among the "stars." In the close season of 1902-3, in April I should think, George Romans asked me to play for a scratch side he was taking, under the auspices of the Club, to play at Cinderford. I was then at St. Paul's College, Cheltenham, and I was very excited at the honour, as was everybody in College for that matter.

I forget whether we won or lost, but two things I do remember: first that "Channer" Westbury played well, and that there were easier sides to play against than Cinderford, at Cinderford. And that opinion remains with me now!

FIRST OFFICIAL MATCH.

My first official match was against Bristol, at Bristol, in the Christmas holidays of 1903, and when I look back I can't help thinking that the Fates fully intended me to start seriously, with no soft games in which "to get my hand in," as it were. Cinderford, Bristol at Bristol, Blackheath at Kingsholm, were my opening games. Oh! that game at Bristol! It rained a deluge, blew a hurricane, and was freezing cold. I was lent a pair of Gloucester stockings. They must have belonged to Hawker or some such heavy-weight, for I remember that after I had put my

garters on, they hung over my boots! Then as they got saturated with mud, they tended to hang down well-nigh to my heels. I *did* feel uncomfortable, and looked it, I'm sure. At half-time, we implored the referee (F. W. Nicholls, of Leicester) to stop the match. "Play on, men!" was his stern reply, a phrase of his that was familiar to all players of that time, and "play on" we did.

I believe we won by a try, but I suppose that I must have shown signs of pluck or skill or something, despite the weather and the stockings, for a few days later I had the first of a long succession of cards telling me that I was picked to play on Saturday. I was a proud man, I can tell you. The next match was at Kingsholm, and was against Blackheath. It was memorable to me, because the Blackheath full-back was none other than H. T. Gamlin. I don't mind confessing now that I fully resolved before the match that his tentacles wouldn't embrace me! If I did get near him, there would be a punt ahead or a kick to touch! The match was also interesting in that the new Secretary of the Rugby Union, Eng-Commdr. S. F. Cooper, played on the wing and scored a good try, performing one of his famous jumps to get it.

OLD COLLEAGUES.

My career with the Club after that time is probably remembered by older followers of the game. It was one long pleasure to take part in the games, for they were delightful fellows who formed the side, though drawn from all classes. George Romans, Gordon Vears, Arthur Hudson, "Jimmy" Stephens, Lindsay Vears, George Matthews, Fred Pegler, Billy Johns, Jimmy Harrison, Ernie Hall, "Whacker" Smith, Bert Parham, and, later, A. E. Wood. These are just some of the names that come back to me. What times we used to have, playing good, clean football in all parts of the country, and having a rollicking time afterwards! I can't help thinking that the Club was well served in those days, probably

because it was well run (as I have no doubt it is now). F. W. Lovesy, Charlie Williams, Bobby Bingle, the late H. M. Taynton, the late C. H. Dancey, "Major" Worth, "Billy" Rasbach, Alf Kiddle, Jack Brookes, Arthur Grey, H. G. Brown - these among others saw to the administration, and were partly responsible for the pleasure it was for us to play.

Then again, there was - and is, fortunately - Tommy Bagwell. The Club has been fortunate in its trainer. No young fellows could have been "fathered" by a more reliable, helpful, and thoroughly sensible man. I hadn't the good fortune to see him play, but I know that as an old player his advice was always acceptable to me, and always given in a kindly manner. I only hope that the players attached to the Club to-day take advice as they should, and don't get it into their heads that they know all there is to know, and that old men, at any rate, can't teach them anything. There is a lot of that feeling in the world, I'm afraid. Some of us "old 'un's" who are inclined at times to offer advice used to play the game ourselves, and at times, perhaps, play it well[*sic*] - they don't seem to remember that. I remember with pleasure, too, Joe Cromwell, then assistant trainer, but now promoted to the higher sphere of Committee man. Poor old Harry Dyke is gone, I believe! It would be a funny old Kingsholm to me, without Harry floating about, and his famous horse not far away. They were inseparable, and were often to be seen holding earnest conversations with each other.

THE KINGSHOLM GROUND.

In my early days we changed at the White Hart; then came our pavilion, opened with great ceremony, and we thought we were a provincial Twickenham, as it were. Now, there are all sorts of modifications in the arrangements for players and spectators, but nothing need ever be done to the playing pitch, as good a bit of turf as

is in the country. I honestly loved to play on it, and what with practices and matches, I got to know every inch of it. I think I could have found touch at one time standing on my head! And what about George Romans? His accuracy at Kingsholm was a by-word in those days.

Of course, the most memorable match in my day was that against the New Zealanders in 1905. We had a very fine side indeed at that time, but we were too light. In the all-important middle of the field were Stephens, Harrison, Hall, and myself, not one of us as much even as 11 stone in weight, whilst my own "fighting" weight was, to be exact, 9st. 4lbs.! That was the chief reason why they beat us by a cricket score - they simply trod on us and went on!

Then there were our "battles royal" with Cheltenham and Bristol. Rarely was there much football played, because feeling ran so high. At times one wondered what we had a ball for, as it didn't seem to matter whether a man had the ball or not. Mind, I am not blaming anybody; we were all as bad as one another probably.

As for individuals, Hudson's dash, "Whacker's" tackling, Roman's kicking, Wood's all-round play, John's dribbling, Stephens's taking of passes, and Gordon Vears's language in his capacity as leader, are abiding memories. The "full-throated ease" with which Gordon used to urge on his men was a joy to listen to; the words were native English undefiled!!

ABIDING MEMORIES.

Well, gone are those days, except as abiding memories. We only go through that phase of life once. I was fortunate in having my lot cast with the Gloucester Club, and I hope that players and spectators

alike enjoy the Club's activities to-day as much as we did. Good luck to the old Club!

I had hoped to come and referee the game on Thursday, but have found it impossible at the last minute to be away from my school the couple of days I should need, so I shall have to be content with reading about it. But I shall be present in spirit.

R. U. PRESIDENT'S TEAM.

Seven Internationals in the Side.

Despite several refusals, Capt. W. S. Donne has got together a powerful team to oppose the City on Thursday. Seven International players are included in the side, and the majority of the other players have figured in International trials.

BACK: L. C. Sambrook (North and Leicester).

THREE-QUARTERS: H. C. Catchside (England and Northumberland), L. J. Corbett (England and Gloucestershire), R. Hamilton Wickes (England and Harlequins), and R. Quick (Bristol and English Trial).

HALF-BACKS: E. Myers (England and Yorkshire), and E. J. Massey (North and Leicester).

FORWARDS: R. Cove-Smith, capt. (England and Middlesex), R. Armstrong (North and Northumberland), H. B. L. Wake (Bath and Somerset), F. D. Prentice (Leicester), J. C. R. Buchanan (Scotland and Devon), H. G. Rew (Devon), J. S. Tucker (England and Gloucestershire), and M. V. Shaw (South and Gloucestershire).

Referee: Mr. A. D. Stoop (England and Harlequins).

Mr. D. R. Gent, the old Gloucester and International half-back, was invited to referee the match, but his scholastic duties prevent him making the journey from Eastbourne. Messrs. George Romans and Gordon Vears (old City captains) will act as linesmen.
