

The quest for light

The M.C.C. 1924-25 tour of Australia

J.L.Bryan

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FOREWORD

I count myself as having been fortunate to have spent nigh on forty years at Eastbourne as a fellow master with J. L. Bryan. On my arrival there in 1927 as an inexperienced Latin and Greek master, it was Bryan who extended the hand of friendship to me, offering me his encouragement and advice. I feel sure that, without his kindness and generosity, I should not have survived those difficult first few months.

While I was much flattered by Bryan's concern and attention, I was also well aware of his personal interest in my field of study. Although he was an English master, he had a wide knowledge of Greek. Indeed, I am reliably informed that Bryan even made use of these talents when engaged in his sporting conquests. Inspired by the great Roman senator, Cato, Bryan was inclined at critical periods in play to utter variant readings of the senator's oft-repeated affirmation: 'Carthago delenda est!' As a result he became known, to sporting friend and foe alike, as 'Cato' Bryan.

It was from this source as well that the boys at Eastbourne developed their own designation for Bryan. Upon hearing (as boys do) of Bryan's sporting sobriquet, and knowing from their own experience his tendency to heavily edit their more indelicate phraseology, they dubbed him 'The Censor', precisely the same appellation as that enjoyed by the distinguished Roman senator.

When it comes to Bryan's renowned sporting career, I confess that I am quite unable to sensibly discourse upon the subject. As it happens, I saw him play first class cricket on one occasion only, and even then a full day's play was rendered unachievable because of inclement weather. I happened to be embarking from Southampton for my annual summer archaeological excursion on the very same day that a fixture between Kent and Hampshire was commencing at that venue. Having a few hours to spare, I took the opportunity to stroll down to the oval in order to observe 'Cato's' prowess. Unfortunately, I was able to admire his athleticism for only a short period of time before

he was dismissed rather cheaply. Bryan and I then sat together for some time, until the rain came, discussing the relative merits of the Greek and Roman poets.

Of course, J. L. Bryan came from an extremely gifted family. His youngest brother, Brigadier G. J. 'Fruity' Bryan, was decorated with a CBE for his services to the army. His other brother, R. T. 'Rotor' Bryan, was a rather talented poet who went on to work for Intelligence during World War II. Both brothers also played cricket for Kent, and in 1925 all three played for the county first XI.

It was 'Rotor', and not the boys at Eastbourne, who first dubbed me 'Stinky' Smythe. This was a cause for great mirth to J. L., who was wont to call me by this name at every possible opportunity.

The Bryans were gifted all-round sportsmen. J. L. Bryan won a Rugger blue at Cambridge, and was also an accomplished badminton player. 'Fruiter' Bryan represented his country at table tennis at the 1930 Empire Games, while 'Rotor' Bryan was a croquet champion as well as being a discus thrower of distinction. However, foremost amongst these sporting achievements was J. L. Bryan's selection in the M.C.C. team which toured Australia in 1924-25.

I have had the pleasure of reading J. L. Bryan's incomplete but nevertheless compelling manuscript covering this tour, written in a style blending factual reportage and entertaining digression that is worthy of Herodotus himself. In these days of television and computers, when books increasingly are written by cultural illiterates, it is a rare joy to read a work which bespeaks a classical education. Bryan, in recalling preoccupations and preconceptions of a glorious age long past, reveals himself as a gentleman of great character and the living embodiment of Lord Macauley's famous maxim: 'Educate the people'.

Godfrey Boothby-Smythe

Haywards Heath, 1984

THE TOSS OF THE COIN

This has inadvertently become the longest project of my life. When I accompanied the M.C.C. to Australia as the forgotten amateur in 1924-24, I dutifully set about chronicling my impressions. In between, I attempted to write a short essay on each Test. It seemed a simple enough plan at the time. Maybe I would refine my diary notes when I returned to England. After all, they related to a broader theme than the day-to-day battles of each Test match. They were the impressions of a young man visiting an almost empty continent, stitched together just a few years before the tour by a rail link that removed the long sea journey from Western Australia to the other states. In some ways, I felt worldly, groomed during public schooling and my university years into a useful cricketer and promising teacher. In addition, the War years had broadened my outlook. However, on the tour of Australia, I made one discovery above all others. That discovery was simply that events and circumstances are not always what they appear on the surface.

I beg the reader's indulgence on one issue that will surface several times in the book. Early in the tour, I started wondering whether the selectors had chosen wisely in offering me what surely was the last place on the tour. Indeed, my career peaked early, when as a consequence of a fine season in 1921, I was one of Wisden's chosen five Cricketers of the Year. And each day on the tour of Australia, as I carried on with my chronicle, my own doubts about the reasons for my selection grew. As the periodic torment associated with these doubts surfaced, I could not help observing the behaviour of some of the touring party. I needed more than cricket to occupy my thoughts.

I hasten to add that many of my speculations have been put aside. My life at Eastbourne, even after retirement, was demanding and fulfilling. It would have been a mistake to fritter away my productive years with a tour retrospective that has its controversial

elements. Now that I am older and wiser, I hope I can present my story, be it imperfect in form and at times demonstrative as much of my own impressions as strict fact, without fear that I will lose valued friends (sadly, most have already drawn stumps) and upset received wisdom. For we need to remember that in every possible way, apart from the failure to reclaim the Ashes, this was a grand tour. It would have been improper to sully the leadership of the tour, even after a long time, with the darker agenda of the tour. I hope my research, done retrospectively to embellish one or two of my earlier drafts, presents the characters of the tour in the best possible light.

Some of the secrets of the tour were hidden from public scrutiny for 30 years under Australia's official secrets act. Suffice to say, with the benefit of hindsight, these secrets have been diagnosed as being connected with a political agenda that we now would dismiss as misguided. The historians of this tour now know that there were two sides to the tour, and with each side, there was an objective. If we judge the tour as historians might judge it, we would dismiss it a failure in terms of both objectives. For England failed to regain the Ashes, and there was little evidence that the hidden political agenda gained any momentum. There appeared to be little resolved in the various union strikes that littered the Australian newspapers on tour. The tourists left a continent teeming with as many disputes as when they arrived.

This begs the question of whether we should be at all surprised that British leaders in many walks of life should have attempted to convey the principles of the Old Order when they toured the Empire nations. I believe that we have to look kindly on what was being attempted on this tour, without turning a blind eye to the conclusion most of us now draw that what was being promoted was an evil alternative, a cure at least as bad as the complaint. This alternative, unfortunately, was not of the Old Order it seemed, but rather a bastardisation of it. History teaches us such salutary lessons that few have the perspicacity to anticipate before they unfold. For those who venture deep into the bowels of libraries in search of obscure journals, they will find from the mid-1930s, in the *British Fascist Bulletin*, a contribution by one Gilligan, A. Its theme was the linkage between fascism and cricket leadership.

One of the curiosities of this tour was that the scribes believed that other controversies were burdening the M.C.C. touring party. The press kept posing the question of the eight-ball over to Captain Gilligan. Since both teams had to live with the eight-ball over in every game we played, there appeared to be no advantage or disadvantage in it. A more serious, but nonetheless secondary controversy, concerned A.C. MacLaren's first-class score being exceeded by young William Ponsford in a game for Victoria v. Tasmania. Manager Toone and captain Gilligan put some effort into negotiating for the revocation of the first-class status of this game. I must admit in some delight in reading my diary entry on the matter.

I admit that in putting my story together, I have compiled impressions and jotting that span some 60 years. My opening chapter was written after the grim discovery that I was the sole survivor of the 1924-25 tour. Was I being ungracious in putting Sandham's Test record into context in this chapter? I think not, given the method by which the International Cricket Conference declared the Test status of the series I discuss in the chapter.

One would be hard pressed to find a more self-conscious tour account than my own. Even now, having reworked my various jottings from my earliest scribings of the tour, I cannot disguise my own sense of being an extraneous player. The longer the tour went, the more I felt that incidents were unfolding around me that were a consequence of plans turned awry. Back then, I would never have been as bold as to suggest that a member of the touring party failed to perform in the Test matches because he was having an affair with one of the hangers-on. I have no proof of this speculation, except in the atypical behaviour of my colleague, his inability to focus on the task at hand, the faraway gaze in his eyes and subliminal exchanges that I observed between him and the lady in question. I wonder if this lady originally had been summoned to visit the professional to monitor his behaviour, only to fall for him. Given the social mores of the time, such a dalliance across the class boundaries would have been viewed as completely unseemly if it had become known to the manager. I remember thinking on the homeward sea voyage, after

the sensation of the final days of our tour, that the professional and the young lady found no solace in the company of one another. Rather, in attempting to fulfil their desires, the barriers to their romance induced overwhelming tensions. To make matters worse, as a relative of an amateur in the touring party, the young lady's family ties loomed heavily on her, even in this distant land.

I cannot pretend that I had comprehended all during the course of this tour. Rather, in the following years, I thought of what I saw, and obliquely discussed the matter with the professional in question. He saw no more of the young lady when we returned to England. But when I mentioned her, he would look away, hurt, wishing to bury the matter forever.

I have taken the liberty of adding a chapter in which I discuss what happened to each of the players after this tour. For some, professional cricket went on. Their toil was rewarded with series wins against Australia on the next two tours. For others, cricketing life was much more of a fleeting phenomenon, capturing precious moments of youth that all too soon were lost forever. And for some, like Mr Douglas, crippled by injury on tour, there was little cricket left after this tour. He was, after all, of advanced years for an allrounder at the time.

I doubt if the reader has any interest whatsoever in what happened to me. My moments in the game were enjoyable, even glorious at times. But no one is ever going to think of me in terms of cricketing heroics. I would like to think that between my cogitations on other matters on the tour, that I at least pay tribute to the heroes of the touring party who included, in no particular order, Maurice Tate, Jack Hobbs and Herbert Sutcliffe. Many others had their moments. Gilligan showed outstanding leadership qualities in a losing cause. Woolley reminded us at times of what he was capable. I could go on, but Tate, Hobbs and Sutcliffe were the three best players on either side. If nothing else, this probably indicates how well Australia played as a team during the Test series, with good performances from most players rather than outstanding performances from a few characterising their efforts.

There was a humorous side to the tour. Three of the Test matches went on for day after day, played to a conclusion that wearied spectators, scribes and players alike. In a way they were absorbing battles, but one could laugh at the cartoons of Arthur Mailey. Somehow, he found the energy while playing Test matches to draw for the newspapers. He was quick to satirise battles that went into the seventh day. I missed much of the on-field humour, my efforts during the Tests being confined to a little fielding during emergencies, notably in the Adelaide Test. On-field laughter relies so much on capturing the moment with a droll remark and impeccable timing, rather like the most exquisite of Woolley's off-drives.

The Australians, notably Victor Richardson who often fielded relatively close in, were quick to remark on slow batting. There is an irony in this, given that Australia's scoring was often much slower than England's. But both teams usually managed to combine good humour and a competitive spirit in a manner that has been forgotten in far too many sporting contests these days.

STUMPS

I read last week of Andrew Sandham's death. I was the only player on the 1924-25 tour Down Under never to play Test cricket. It was a little hard, as an opening batsman, to win a position in a team containing Hobbs and Sutcliffe. Nevertheless, it was a privilege to be on tour with them. The only other amateurs in the team were Messrs Gilligan, Douglas and Chapman, the present, past and future captains of England. I keep appearing as the man that does not belong, not a captain, not a Test cricketer and now the sole survivor.

It was a grand tour. The English team performed heroics without winning back the Ashes. Yet, at the end of the tour, we tourists felt that Australia's luck was bound to fade. For fortune divided the teams more decisively than skill. Some luck, as always, was of our own making. I will mention the turning point of the Second Test, when we should have made the runs in the fourth innings. And the Australians plagued us with long tenth wicket partnerships, including two in the First Test that accounted for the run difference between the two teams. Some games explored the highs and lows for both teams so thoroughly that at the end, all we could do was draw breath and be thankful that we had been there. The Adelaide game above all contests fitted that category. England had its share of luck in that game, but fortune was fickle. The other two contests were so decisive that we cannot think that luck played much part in the outcomes at all.

The reader must excuse me as I digress onto other matters. I wish to tell the story of how the game legislator's retrospectively turned a fringe Test player into one of the greats. I do this not out of disrespect, but simply to set the record straight. Towards the end of my own modest career, I heard that two M.C.C. teams were heading simultaneously for distant shores to do battle against local elevens. Indeed, I was invited to tour New Zealand as vice-captain to Arthur Gilligan. That would have been a privilege, as I have to

this day maintained immense regard for Gilligan's cricketing leadership. On the other hand, by then I knew enough of Gilligan's other agenda to feel slightly uncomfortable at the thought of being his deputy. This misgiving, be it exaggerated or otherwise, had to do with the world of politics. In retrospect, I feel that world events vindicated me, that however harmless or indeed honourable Gilligan's intentions might have been, he was dallying in a world of dishonourable men. What Gilligan hoped for and what his side of politics represented were two quite different matters.

I graciously declined to tour, mainly because my teaching duties were pre-eminent. Meanwhile, illness prevented Arthur Gilligan from touring New Zealand, so the captaincy was taken over by his older brother, Albert. In terms of ability, there was a considerable gulf between the brothers Gilligan on the cricket arena. Arthur was capable of anything and sadly, was past his best by the time we toured in 1924-25 for reasons I will record shortly. But brother Albert was barely a first class player. Can you think of any other opening batsman with a career average of 17? I will labour the point no further. The older Gilligan scored three 50s on the preliminary Australian leg of the 1929-30 of the tour. He was a popular captain leading a team that performed quite well. Who was in the team?

There was Duleepsinhji, born in India and therefore, in the eyes of the former English player Lord Hawke, unfit to represent England. And old-timer, Frank Woolley, distinguished himself with a batting average of 41 and a bowling average of 20 in the eight games he played. Against New South Wales, he scored a double century. I was fortunate enough to play for the same county as Woolley, Kent. It brings a smile, thinking of the military tactics of some opposition captains smashed into disarray by Woolley's willow. Tactics that might have worked in games in the Royal Air Force did not work against true class, and Woolley always fitted the latter category.

This is a way of introducing the Honourable F.S.G. Calthorpe, the second captain to lead an M.C.C. team to distant shores at the same time. I remember one glorious afternoon at Tunbridge Wells in 1928. Calthorpe's men were fielding to two quadragenarians,

Woolley and Hardinge. Knowing Calthorpe, he would have told his men to keep it tight. These two batsmen would tire quickly enough, he would have told his team. 262 runs later, Warwickshire managed to break the partnership. It turned out to be Hardinge's finest season, and with Woolley's tendency to hit fours rather than run, fatigue was never an issue. Indeed, I heard a joke from the members' quarter, 'Not a great partnership. I only saw two runs. The rest were boundaries.'

Calthorpe was a gifted cricketer and a courageous man. He needed to be, given his unique record of captaining a team that *lost* by 155 runs after dismissing the opposition in the first innings for 15. Calthorpe's four wickets cost a run a piece in the first innings. Howell, who subsequently toured with us in 1924-25 took six wickets for seven runs. Calthorpe's men must have believed they were heading for an early finish when the sixth Hampshire wicket fell in the follow-on still 22 runs behind. Then Mr Shirley helped Brown carry the score to a lead of 63. McIntyre came and went quickly. The ninth wicket alliance of Brown and Livesy put on over 150 runs to stretch the lead to 243. With Brown dismissed for 172, Livesy carried on to a score of 110 not out, aided by last man Boyes. Together, they stretched the lead to 313. Calthorpe batted bravely for a demoralised team, but in the end his men were steamrolled. The gods have given me a long life, but sadly, my dear Calthorpe departed from this world at the age of 43 following a month's illness. But the legislators conferred on him a status that eluded me.

When Calthorpe led a team to the West Indies in 1929-30 at the same time as Albert Gilligan went to New Zealand, his party include a collection of first class players some of whom were immortal, some useful and one rather past his prime. The team included young Voce, hauled from the colliery, full of the Promethean fury of a fast bowler wishing to leave his mark on the world. Wilfred Rhodes, at the age of 52, assumed a valedictory role. The team also included Mr Wyatt, Andrew Sandham and Elias Hendren. Beyond that, there was no one who could have made England's first XI. Against the West Indies, Sandham made 152 at Bridgetown and 325 at Kingston. Voce took eleven wickets in Trinidad on what I am told was a helpful matting surface. Rhodes, while scoring few runs, bowled steadily, in that unchanging rhythm that had characterised his bowling since

the turn of the century. But besides these players, there was no one in the team who you could have regarded as being of Test standard.

To get to my point, the game's legislators decreed after the simultaneous M.C.C. tours of New Zealand and the West Indies that each match played the full representative teams from the colonies would have retrospective Test status. Yet, it is an English adage that each man has his place in the scheme of things. So, how do we reconcile that with Test cricket being played by one nation in two different parts of the world at the same time? So much for our sense of order, for things being done in the British manner: this was closer to anarchy.

The legislators elevated that fringe Test player, Andrew Sandham, to the status of immortality. He created one record that no player will ever break. He was the first player to score a triple century in a Test match. Others have matched that effort and surpassed his innings. But will any player ever again score a triple century in a Test without knowing that he was playing a Test? In the event, Sandham's Test average turned out to 38, respectable enough but not remarkable. Take out his scores at Kingston and Bridgetown, and his average drops to 20. All I wish to do is put his record in context. Sandham was fine player, a true professional, but he was more in the nature of servant and team player than a cricketing genius. I have little doubt that this is as he would wish to be remembered. His Test triple hundred came to him courtesy of the legislators.

Two English Test captains, Calthorpe and Albert Gilligan, should never have played Test cricket. They were among the players including Sandham whose status was unnaturally elevated a year after the event. Unlike Sandham, Calthorpe and Gilligan had rather modest county records. Is my script nothing more than the outpouring of a man embittered that he turned down the opportunity to be a vice-captain and possibly even a captain on a tour that turned into a Test tour? I would be less than human, given my self-consciousness about being the odd man out on the 1924-25 tour, if I pretended that in weaker moments, I have not felt a loss. But it is not loss at all, for I feel that the Test status of the two tours I have cited has been relegated to a contrivance. I view this

differently from the first match ever played between England and Australia, which also had Test status accorded retrospectively. Doubtless, others will contest my position and argue that the West Indies and New Zealand had to start their Test battles somewhere.

Maybe I have alienated the reader with my concerns about the actions of the legislators. I feel that I needed to record this somewhere, in what I hope is a matter-of-fact rather than grudging manner. This will not be your usual cricket tour book. It is overlaid with memories, both vivid and fading. Time has added confusion to the purpose of the tour. It was in many respects a turning point for English cricket. I now turn to what went on before this tour, that makes it so important in England's restoration.

THE CONTEXT

It would be easy to misuse statistics to infer that Gilligan's team was laden with all-time greats. The batsmen included the first, second and third highest run scorers of all time in first class cricket. The bowlers included the second highest wicket taker of all time, plus the eleventh highest. The seventh and thirteenth most prolific batsmen of all time were also in the party, while the second highest scoring batsman is number 28 on the all-time bowling list. In 1969, the county season was reduced, so that it is unlikely that the aggregates accumulated in first half of the century will be matched by any player. My county colleague, Frank Woolley, the number two batsman, played 36 first class games in the season of 1928. In all, he batted 1,532 times in first class cricket. Hobbs, the number one man, batted 1,315 times, so even if his batting average had been 10, he may still have exceeded 10,000 first class runs. Hobbs, Woolley, Hendren (number three) and Sutcliffe (number seven) had outstanding Test careers. Sandham, number thirteen among the all-time batters, was a marginal Test player. And among the bowlers, the hero of the tour and for my money the player of the series, Maurice Tate, was the eleventh highest wicket-taker of all time. Number two, 'Tich' Freeman, never quite succeeded in Test battles.

Arthur Gilligan was a great captain and should have performed magnificently on tour, both with bat and ball. Consider his first Test as captain: on a good pitch, he and his opening partner bowled out South Africa for 30, his six wickets costing seven runs. And when South Africa followed on, he snared another five wickets for 83 runs. He was no ordinary cricketer.

Sadly, an act of misguided stoicism put paid to his bowling career. Playing for the Gentlemen v. the Players in the July preceding our tour, he was struck over the heart while batting. I am told that a hush descended over the arena. A chill tinkled the spine of

every spectator at The Oval for a few distraught moments. Then Mr Gilligan lifted himself from the pitch. Murmurs filled the air.

Instead of retiring from the game for discourse with cardiologists and counsellors, he batted on. There was a principle at stake, to play the game in the proper gentlemanly manner. This was not sport, but ideology. It would not have done to abandon his team at this time. In the second innings, he batted for 90 minutes, time enough to score 112 and share a last wicket stand of 134. Mr Gilligan was a sensation. If only he had thought of the consequences.

Indeed, this moment of true heroism had a long-term retribution. Gilligan never bowled with extreme pace again. The 10 wickets he took in the Tests on our tour of 1924-25 cost 52 runs each, a mockery even against the sternest of batting. When his run-up and delivery stride finally faltered, Mr Gilligan turned with evangelical fervour to proclaiming the gospel of the game through dinner speeches, lectures and coaching. The reader already knows that lack of fitness prevented him on at least one further occasion from leading apostles to distant shores. For him, leadership had to extend beyond the hallowed turf. I only wish he had confined his evangelism to cricket.

What state was English cricket in prior to the 1924-25 tour? Quite simply, the team had to restore respectability to the national cause. In 1920-21, a shell-shocked team toured Australia. I would not expect the modern reader to understand the psyche of players of the time. The War affected everyone. Think of past players: two members of the triumphant M.C.C. team which toured Australia in the under-reported battle of 1894-95 suicided shortly after the outbreak of war. I am talking of young men, men who should have been living lives of adult responsibility, who had shared in glory and had memories they could treasure as they aged. War had fragmented our lives. It was as though childhood was over. I was a lad of 18 when it happened. Suddenly, summers descended from dreams of endless willow-wielding, stretched delivery strides and leather-hunting on verdant fields in pleasant settings to the bleakness of disorder, destruction and death. For four ghastly summers, there was no county cricket. When peace restored cricket to

England's realm, the ripples of disruption to permeate the field of play for a number of years.

Australia played its part in a War halfway around the world. However, there is little doubt that the Australian cricketers were less scarred by the War than their English opponents. And dare I say it, no Australian tourist has ever spent days in quarantine, thereby missing the opening tour match, as the M.C.C. players did, when they disembarked at Fremantle on a spring day in 1920.

England's opponents on that tour were formidable enough without further hardships. The Australians were led by 'The Big Ship', Warwick Armstrong. In his first Test as captain, he downed whiskies in the members' bar and muttered something about malaria, apparently a legacy of a visit to New Guinea a year or two beforehand. Then he launched an astonishing assault on the bowlers. His 158 in the second innings was the highest of the match. It epitomised arrogance, brilliance and stoicism.

Then there was Mailey, a cricketer with a rare spirit. He was down on his luck prior to the First Test of 1920-21, so down that he could not afford a newspaper. With a free glance, he saw his own name among the players to take on Douglas' men. This was one of those moments for which we need a Cardus to capture the full emotion in prose.

THE TOUR BEGINS

In my day, I was lucky to have the best of both worlds. It was well known on the county circuit that in most seasons, I only played for my county, Kent, in August. A year or so after humble beginnings when, in two full seasons, I did not even get a trial at Cambridge, a retired English captain told me that I could play for my country if I so desired. I was so successful that I was one of the five to receive the Wisden cricketer of the year award. The reader will discover a few players in what follows who ensured that I would never get close to Test status. I am writing as an old man. I will pass this manuscript on, to be opened when I die. I would prefer this to be kept as a family memoir, but if there is curiosity for the scribings of a humble, unknown player, than my work may assume a wider audience. I remain a player who, in one fleeting, glorious summer, scored 1858 runs at an average of just over 50.

I was born for teaching, with cricket a joyous diversion. My association with St Andrew's, Eastbourne, has carried on for close to sixty years. As long as the Kent establishment were good enough to allow me to appear for a month, I was more than happy to do my bit. I played 119 times for Kent, the last occasion being in 1932. My deeds are far from sensational. Nevertheless, the memory contains a handful of golden moments when I put down Wordsworth, Chaucer and Homer for a few hours and set out on the hunt for runs. This peaked in a chase against Nottinghamshire in 1925 when I caressed 23 fours in reaching 172 not out. In surging to the target, we men of Kent scored our last 100 in 65 minutes. A couple of years earlier, in making my highest score in a game against Hampshire at Canterbury, I belted a six that weaved its way past the sight screen, through an open window into the pavilion dining room, where it careered

into a picture of Canterbury Week 1877, leaving a mark that remains to this day. So around the circuit, there are at least one or two signs of my contribution to the game.

The reason cricket is such a wonderful game is that it gives otherwise ordinary people the chance to lead extraordinary lives and visit exotic places. I think of the string of professional champions on our tour. For them, cricket was a lifeline. The zest for battle for inexhaustible. Then, I wonder. Sutcliffe, with his immense concentration, could have been a classics scholar. But where would that have taken him, except along to path to obscurity? He travelled the world with his comrades in flannels, carrying the pride of England on his shoulders. He was an ambassador, a fighter who used every bit of talent at his disposal in the national cause. He could not have served his country better in any other field. I, on the other hand without that immense talent and perseverance that separates the forgettable player from the unforgettable, seemed for a little while, at least, to have the best of both worlds. For I could teach, and study, and play cricket well enough to go on one tour. And what a tour that was.

I was astonished to receive the call to join more talented players, more single-minded players on the tour of 1924-25. I had to take leave from Eastbourne for the task. How many times have I been asked by my lovable, if dodderly (and sadly now, mostly deceased) colleagues whether there was any greater sabbatical on earth than a tour with the M.C.C? It is then that I am lost for words.

The M.C.C. disembarked for the first game in Perth, relieved not to be in quarantine, a fate that beheld the previous M.C.C. led by Mr Douglas. To make amends for the previous touring party missing the game against Western Australia, our team played the hosts twice. In the first, Gilligan raced in and dismissed four locals for 12 runs, as the team was skittled for 57. In the second, I played my first first-class innings on foreign soil and managed 20 before being distracted by a line in a Shakespearean sonnet that sent me back to the pavilion. And so I had the rest of the afternoon to regret what might have been, in the most poetic manner possible.

As I sat in the pavilion, I thought of matches past, of the day Kent's bowling genius Freeman took nine wickets for 11 runs, and 17 wickets in all for the match. That was late in 1922, a season tainted a little by that imbecile Lord Harris. I should be old enough now to be graceful, but at my time of life, I sometimes need to say what I think. Just occasionally, I wish these aristocrats who wielded so much influence on the game had been blessed with sufficient neurones for the task. Yes, I am of the old school, but my reasoning is not so limp as to ignore the obvious.

In 1922, Lord Harris, noting that Walter Hammond was born in Dover, within the boundaries of my county, Kent, barred him from playing for Gloucestershire. The very act was infuriating. Anybody who spent a moment or two watching Hammond at practice would have recognised genius. Do not stifle the teenage talent. Let it flower. When I think of Hammond, I think of a man of the stature of a tragic hero.

There, I am drifting again. The reader must be patient. I wish to capture memories, but they get overlain with everything that followed. I came to Australia in 1924-25 believing that in every way, Walter Hammond was more worthy of a tour than I. Yes, I am grateful for the opportunity. I just wish I had been less conscious of this at the time. It did not help that in 1926, young Hammond all but died. When I heard news of his illness, I felt anxious. Had he missed his opportunity for glory? I should have been less speculative. On recovering from his illness, Hammond doubled his batting average from the 30s to the 60s, virtually on a permanent basis.

All this is diverting from the preliminaries to the First Test. In the space of seven weeks, we travelled remarkable distances around the continent, to Queensland, to Tasmania, to seeming far-flung corners of the world. Against Victoria, I made 59 before being bowled by a left-armer, Ironmonger. He seemed to be in the twilight of his career, but more of that later. He took five for 93 in a score of 500, an impressive return indeed. He was sufficiently importunate in delivering the ball to take a hat trick. In another game against an Australian XI, we spotted this harmless looking bowler, Grimmett. He was short and slow. His four wickets in 36 overs cost 176 runs. First impressions are not always correct impressions. As a fellow leggie, I should have recognised his subtle flight. In retrospect,

this shows simply that I was not in the same class as him, although I could certainly turn the ball more, but without flight or control.

How wrong first impressions are. Just as we were more than confident that we could redress earlier humiliations with the touring party we had assembled, so most of us were blithely unaware of the greater designs of our captain and manager. On the other hand, I believe that Collins' men had more than their fair share of luck. This continued in the home series of 1926 until the final Test, when belatedly England's vastly superior bowling stocks came to the fore and wrested back the Ashes.

DIARY JOTTINGS I

I have abandoned the idea of using my old diary jottings to stitch together the story of the tour. Years ago, my tour diary became a victim of a small fire in my school office. Fortunately, little was lost. Undoubtedly, this was a schoolboy's prank, deemed harmless enough at the time. However, quite a few pages of the diary were burnt. It would be immodest for me to suggest that I feel a little of the frustration of that classics scholar Hausman, tortured by a missing fragments from a classical manuscript. Nevertheless, I feel that some of what I intended to tell will remain untold.

November 2: The slow train journey across the continent provides ample opportunity for scribing. Indeed, it was only when I realised the enormity of the train journey ahead that I thought of the idea of scribing my thoughts of this tour. I know I am not the faithful writer, who records the events of every day. I am afraid I must let the mood drive my pen.

Yesterday, we departed Kalgoorlie. It was part of the gold frenzy late last century. The story goes that by the time the decision makers had completed the pipeline from the reservoir in the Darling Ranges to Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie by 1903, the gold rush was practically over. Now, Kalgoorlie is showing a few signs of decay. Public buildings from prosperous times mask a sense that all is not well. Mines still operate but people have left in droves. Some have turned to farming in wetter parts of the state. Others have travelled elsewhere, hopefully, opportunistically.

Of course, in these frontier towns, there is always the belief that the good times will return. And certainly, we were feted as though the town was still in boom times. We played two rather less-than-serious games against the locals. And we lost a 'Test' when we took on the locals in bowls.

The Kalgoorlie games were little more than warm-ups, although there is a story that some of the rather modest talent in the local side had travelled extraordinary distances to appear. No one can remember the score now. I seem to remember that we probably won by nine or ten wickets each time, with plenty of fours and sixes to bring cheers from the crowd. One of the locals hit a six or two, much to the delight of the spectators.

If I remember the games for anything, it is some of the wonderful baking that we sampled. The locals certainly tried hard to please. The game was completely secondary. There is some suggestion that Toone and Gilligan attended a local, rather private function. I have forgotten any details, but I suppose that for a more inquisitive mind, this would have been rather intriguing. If, as I suspect, this was a political function, it would have been a little incongruous. There we were, in a mining town, harsh living by the standards of gentrified Britain. I cannot imagine the locals having too many political sympathies with Messrs. Toone and Gilligan, with their Mother Country notions of chivalry. They are more suited to green fields, white gloves and picket fences, than the dust, heat and desolation of this mining community.

We are still getting wet weather. It has dried off enough to get in some play. Our first day's play against Western Australia after we disembarked from the ship was washed out. One senses that Kalgoorlie, where it is already quite dry, will have withered in a week or two.

We stayed just long enough for the locomotive and weather to change. On a long journey, and it was almost 40 hours from Kalgoorlie to Tarcoola, one gets ample opportunity to meet a lot of characters. I have met a man who farmed in South Australia on what he called 'the wrong side of Goyder's line'. For a few seasons, he made a living in a little place called Quorn, then in two merciless years, the sand buried his barn and his makeshift house. His wife abandoned the homestead and him in despair. As I listened to him, I thought of a world so devoid of order, so uncertain, and I felt pangs of homesickness. Then I thought of the War, and thought that maybe, my own view was a little romanticised.

This man explained the concept of Goyder's line to me. It divided those parts of South Australia where one can crop from those parts best left as grazing land, or nothing. He told me that the settled areas of both South Australia and Western Australian received winter rainfall but invariably had dry summers, rather like the nations skirting the Mediterranean Sea. Every summer then, was hot and dry. To add a little variety life, he told me this afternoon, there is the occasional summer flood. They might yet be a particular hazard on the railway line on which we are journeying at present. My mind is put at rest temporarily when he tells me that he cannot recollect a flood stopping the train.

The usual practice on this great rail journey across the Nullarbor is to comment on the treelessness and vastness of the empty outside. For me, in my present company, there was something decidedly impenetrable with which to contend. As this man recounted his numerous past catastrophes, I started to wonder if my empathy had been exhausted. He turned the journey into the equivalent of a machete-wielding trek through the jungle. Here, words incessant and obsessive, stood between me and the destination. I heard the story of his hard times at school more times than I care to remember. I believe I might have told him that I am a schoolmaster, but that mattered little. He had not heard. In any case, it was not for me to interfere with his narrative.

I heard over and over about the different gauges on the different railway lines in Australia. They stop the nation from functioning as one, making it excessively difficult to move people and goods from one place to another. I slowly built up this image of our arrival at the next station, where the stationmaster would obligingly pull the lever and divert this man to another track of his own, to leave the rest of us in peace. But out here, there is no other direction to go in. The journey contains the longest straight bit of railway in the world. I cannot imagine that I will ever feel so trapped in such a vast space again.

Mr Gilligan and Mr Toone were looking over in my direction anxiously. Belatedly, they summoned me to their sleeping quarters. It was a makeshift meeting room for a makeshift meeting. It was a blessed relief to be in their company.

Toone: There's quite an agenda we have on this tour.

JL: Yes, the Ashes must return to Mother England.

Toone: More than that, have you heard of that man Ponsford? The blighter beat MacLaren's record. That in itself would not be a bad thing, but it was against Tasmania.

Gilligan: Our objective is to persuade the Australian Cricket Board to revoke the first class status of the game in which Ponsford scored his runs. We do not believe that Tasmania can be deemed a first class team. What is more, they have this habit of playing a different team, depending on which side of the island the game is taking place, from one game to the next. So, though the opposition is a little weak, they make it even weaker by never choosing a proper first XI.

Toone: It is hardly the sort of thing we English would countenance.

JL: I think your cause is worthy. I have but one question.

Gilligan: What would that be?

JL: Supposing this Ponsford character goes out to bat in another game and beats his own record.

Toone: Ridiculous. The very idea that one man would set about to score more than 400 runs in an innings twice. Your speculation is so hypothetical as to be ridiculous. It is really out of order.

JL: I humbly beg your pardon. It's just that my experience is that records eventually get broken — if not by Ponsford, surely by someone else.

Toone: That remains to be seen. For our part, we want justice to prevail. A first class record should be compiled against a first class team.

All this made a pleasant change from my conversation with the man from Quorn.

November 3: In scribing in the past tense last night, I was premature in my hope that I had seen the last of the man described above. He was back to correct the deprivation of knowledge I had endured by living on the wrong side of the globe for a lifetime. He wanted to make sure I understood everything that he had gone through time and time again. The only consolation is that we are drawing closer to our destination, Adelaide. If I hear one more time that the east-west transcontinental line has been operating for seven years, it will probably be the finish of me.

This time, the man in question had with him a talking companion. I hoped in vain that they would steal one another's thunder. Instead, they assailed me together, one speaking as the other drew breath. I excused myself on some pretext, and fled for the refuge of one of the discussions between Mr Toone and Mr Douglas. Even there, there are too many members of the Douglas clan plus hangers on for real peace.

November 4: We arrive in Adelaide in the evening. Mr Toone has arranged hospitality through the Sturt Football Club. If this works to our satisfaction, we will return to the club as we are to make three visits in all to Adelaide.

In the evening, when we arrived at the Adelaide station, Mr. V.Y. Richardson, the captain of South Australia, was among those ready to greet us. He is warm, humorous, energetic man. It has been quite interesting to see the immediate spark between him and Mr Gilligan. They give the impression of having to take issue with one another on any conceivable topic. Our captain is rather an apologist for the gentrified classes. Richardson has that Australian spirit in him, the champion of the underdog. From what we can gather, he needs it in South Australia. His first class team has languished without a win for years. When Mr Gilligan makes a jest of this, Richardson simply smiles and hints that maybe the state has one or two things up its sleeve. The magic of their exchange resides in the warmth and vitality with which they disagree.

The more I think about it, the more I believe that this evening, I have seen the beginnings of a most wonderful friendship. It would not surprise if Gilligan and Richardson have rather a lot to do with one another for quite a few years to come. And what makes it work is that they seem to have such different views, at least when they start discussing.

I find something decidedly ‘old world’ in the views of both Mr Toone and Mr Gilligan. Yet, they are both men of such charm and – dare I say it – impracticality at times. But I use the term guardedly, because Toone is the supreme organiser. This is a long tour. For many of us, it is our first tour. There is so much to learn and see. Somehow, Toone at the helm, despite some his excessive fervour for strange causes, is a great source of comfort.

November 6: This morning, the Lord Mayor, Mr. Glover, received us at Town Hall. Amid the speeches, our captain and manager are flattered to hear that we are favourites to win back the Ashes on this tour. This is by virtue of an omen, an English horse winning the Melbourne Cup earlier in the week. Mr. Toone relays greetings from Mr. Warner and A.C. MacLaren. I have no doubt that MacLaren’s name will be heard throughout Australia until the local authorities revoke the status of the game in which Ponsford broke MacLaren’s record. For it is quite apparent to me now that Mr. Toone is on a mission.

I failed to record yesterday’s practice at St Peter’s College, across the eastern parklands from Adelaide. We received a mention in the local press. They seem to hint that Jack Hobbs is a spent force after his operation. That remains to be seen.

November 7: We start at the Adelaide Oval against South Australia. I have no doubt that future generations of cricket writers and watcher will think of this ground with great fondness. The cathedral at the northern end is so superbly located, behind the magnificent scoreboard. The ground has that aura of time standing still. The spirit of players from the previous century and, in the case of the George Giffen Stand, the name, pervades the ground. It would not surprise me if in one, two, three or seven generations’ time, the ground has the same feel of timelessness that it has on this day.

I am not playing in this game. It is time to meditate, to read, to reflect. I am privileged to be part of the hum on the opening day of this game. I have made arrangements tomorrow to tour the Barossa Valley by train with friends.

Meanwhile, I have gleaned the local press for news from the rest of the world. Churchill has been voted in. Mr. Toone looks decidedly green after peering over my shoulder at an article about the Seamen's Union, which has taken action to prevent overtime among Melbourne waterside workers.

And there was a rather curious exchange in yesterday's paper about half-caste Aborigines. Mrs. W.T. Cooke, President of the Women's Non-Party Association, wrote:

'In case there should be any misunderstanding about the deputation to the Government regarding the half-caste children of the north, I should like to state that no particular stress was laid on the advisability of taking children away from depraved mothers.'

One Alfred Giles, on the same page, adopted a different stance:

'In *The Advertiser* appears an account of a deputation to the minister (Hon. L.L. Hill) on the treatment proposed to be adopted regarding half-caste and other children in the Northern Territory. I do not think I have ever heard or read of such a cruel, shocking and un-Christian proposal as that submitted by a group of people calling themselves Christians. Surely there were mothers and fathers among that deputation, and yet some spoke of 'sentimental letters in the press'. Would they turn sentimental if their own children were to be dragged away from their bosoms and consigned to distant surroundings, never to return to them? ... The black mothers grieve over their departed little ones for very long periods.'

November 8: Reginald Briars, whom I studied with at Cambridge, has made his home in Adelaide with his charming wife, Annie. Reginald teaches at one of the prestigious private schools here, the same one, I am told, as Clem Hill attended. It is a blessing to be in the company of someone who knows something of the classics and of Chaucer. Annie smiles politely when we indulge in our chatter. She is an engaging and intelligent

woman, yet she pretends to know her place. I cannot help thinking that she is very much like some of the characters that appear in the novels of the Bronte sisters. Oh dear, why do I conjure such allusions when I am on tour? This is the gentrified world of cricket, not the romanticised world of the search for perfect love, and – dare I say it – better male behaviour, which seems to be part of the search in the writings of the Bronte sisters.

The story goes that Adelaide's world is changing. Wireless broadcasting has commenced in the city. And there is an airmail link between Adelaide and Sydney. Indeed, for quite some time, the city has had various telegraph communication links, so it is nowhere near as isolated as it once was. Indeed, in today's *Adelaide Advertiser*, there is an article entitled 'North-South Line, An Announcement Next Week'. Given the various feelings I have of the transcontinental rail journey, which, I might add, were bliss compared with the treks recounted by W.G. Grace on his tour of Australia in the 1870s, I quote the article:

'When questioned on his return from Melbourne on Friday regarding the North-South railway agreement, the Premier (Hon. J. Gunn) was reticent. He stated, however, that as a result of a further conference with the representatives of the Federal Government, an agreement had been reached which would be submitted to the State and Federal Parliaments.'

I have sought permission from Mr Toone and Mr Gilligan to spend a night away from the touring party, so that I can take advantage of splendid accommodation arrangements for my little tour. After a day of sightseeing that I am a little too exhausted to recall in detail, and which lives in glorious pictures that will fill me with the sweetest of dreams, I am ready to sleep.

Mr. Toone and Mr. Gilligan expect me to be a little vigilant about the world's activities. According to the paper I read this morning, there was a reception in London to celebrate the seventh anniversary of Soviet rule, at Chesham House, London. H.G. Wells and Bernard Shaw were among the guests.

November 9: I join the rest of the touring party who are touring the Barossa Valley on the rest day of the game against South Australia. This is a charming part of the world, where German settlers who have been here for several generations retain their German accents.

I reluctantly parted from the company of Reg and Annie Briars. It was so enjoyable seeing Reg again and meeting Annie. On this day, I have seen splendid vineyards adorning wineries, churches that belong in the finest paintings, with spires that reach neatly, symmetrically into the sky. I have traversed streets so narrow that they remind me of villages of Britain, in the hamlet of Tanunda, with neat cottages that epitomise care and pride. And I saw the dawn, on a morning cloudless, except for the embroidery of wisps of cloud surrounding the sun as it caresses the eastern sky, to project the perfect hue, preluding a perfect day. One can breathe the air here, swelling with the scents of drying grasses. The morning is serene, heralding a perfect day. I cannot help thinking of contrasts, of times in the War when I was full of the hope that I could experience this sort of day, this joy, fearful that it would miscarry in some forgettable battle for some forlorn cause. Indeed, these moments are so fragile.

Then, I thought of my worth on this tour. Something in me tells me that I am unworthy of a place in the team, the additional amateur needed to keep the professionals in their place. Something else tells me that I should live for the moment, and let myself be filled with joy, for that is the best way of being part of the team. These moments of reflection also bring into one's thoughts a life ahead. I have little doubt that some of my memories will consist of transient triumphs at the batting crease. Yet, I know the warmth of exchanges with friends, both cricketers and non-cricketers, at the end of the day will be most important to me.

November 11: A memorable day for the M.C.C. on Remembrance Day. After Mr. Gilligan and Mr. Richardson had laid wreaths at Pennington Gardens, a short walk from Adelaide Oval, the match was brought to a conclusion in England's favour. One gesture remembered by our team occurred when Mr. Gilligan came in to bat earlier in the game. The South Australian players cheered him, a gesture that touched us all.

November 13: We have taken a 13 hour journey by train from Adelaide to Melbourne. I have been told that I will be playing tomorrow, but I sense that the team being put together for the Test matches is cast in stone, at least as far as the batting goes. Hobbs and Sutcliffe will open, followed by Woolley, Hendren, Sandham and possibly Hearne. There was also Chapman, a gifted amateur.

November 19: Finally, we are on the train to Sydney. We played an exasperating game against Victoria, with too many rain interruptions for my liking. I suppose in some respects this was an absorbing struggle, but I felt increasingly frustrated with the lack of continuity in the game.

November 20: More train travel. Another comical interlude in Albury, as we had to disembark from our train due to the difference gauge. These inter-colonial rivalries look so much like interstate pettiness. This continent needs development, and instead, the nation inherits a chaotic rail system from planners who should have known better. Maybe we British are to blame. We should have organised the colonies properly in the first instance.

November 21: I woke up this morning in one of those moods. I was feeling a little off colour, listless, unenthusiastic. I did not want to go near the nets. Those who travel well will certainly be at an advantage on a tour of Australia.

I have been omitted from the team for the game against New South Wales. The ground is teeming with ten thousand people, who have great pride in the stature of their state team.

Mr. Toone and Mr Gilligan were reminding us all over breakfast about the need for friendship. They have spoken to me separately over the past week over friendship and my role at Eastbourne. I have sworn to secrecy about the leaflets that both the manager and captain have brought with them from England. They are anxious to recruit Australians to their cause, which has a distinct political edge. Even in the privacy of a diary, I think I have written enough of this matter, except to say that both the manager and captain

appear to have been rocked by the rise of Bolshevism. They feel that action must be taken.

Note: Friends of mine refuse to believe that I met Yabba at the Sydney Cricket Ground and travelled with him back to his home. I admit to acting on a whim, and I have indulged in a little licence by rearranging my diary notes to fill out the rather vague jotting I had at the time. Indeed, I felt a certain amount of shame after the event in behaving in such an unconventional manner.

November 22, 23: Interest is running high in this match. Woolley has told me about this character 'Yabba'. He frequently turns up to first class cricket at the Sydney Cricket Ground on weekends. He is a burly man, seen at the SCG wearing a peak cap. He is known for his ready wit. 'Yabba' could be a piece of earth from any where into which God had breathed life moments before. He stood on the Hill and bellowed remarks across the ground. He quickly captured the spirit of what was happening out in the middle. He hated slow play. My curiosity got the better of me. I wandered around to the other side of the ground, where he was standing.

At first, he ignored me. He gave the impression in the way he looked away and continued bellowing that I should tend to my own affairs and leave him to his barracking. I wanted to learn more of the man.

JL: Woolley will be hard to keep quiet.

Yabba: Uh? You sound a bit toffy.

JL: That might be because I'm one of the touring party.

Yabba: Bully for you. Are you in the Test team?

JL: No. I can't make it against the likes of Hobbs and Sutcliffe.

Yabba: Well it's my job to bellow. After a day's work, it's good to come in here and give it my best.

JL: Do you play the game at all?

Yabba: No. I don't get the chance. A working man's got to make his living.

JL: Yes, and no doubt, you've earned every bit of your day off today.

Yabba: Hmmpf ... did the likes of you fight in the War?

JL: As a matter of fact, I did.

Yabba: Well, I fought in the Boer War. But you come over here with your English ways. We did it tough over there.

JL: I'm sure you did.

'Yabba' scoffed another sandwich and poured himself a drink from his flask.

Yabba: We're what you call 'battlers'. That's what gives our boys our there in the middle the fighting spirit. You can train them in your toffy English schools. This is the real place to learn.

I kept talking to Yabba. He was not one to reveal too much of himself. But he kept insisting that there was something he should show me. Did I really want to find out more about his life? As we talked, he invited me back to visit where he lived. The invitation astonished me. But I thought that it would make for an interesting diversion.

Yabba: You'll meet some real people there.'

I could not say no. ‘Yabba’s’ demeanour was a combination of distant gruffness and gentle warmth. And by the end of play, I felt very much like the common man. In some ways, it was good to be liberated from my background, if only for a few hours. We joined the mass streaming across the parklands towards suburbia. Eventually, after a long walk amid the shuffling throng, we caught a tram.

After walking for some time, we caught a tram, filled to overflowing. We journeyed across Sydney, through streets that, by the standards of London, were not cluttered. Nevertheless, it was a slow journey. Some streets were neat and clean, adorned by terraced housing decorated with flower beds. Other streets contained less decorative housing. Dirty, noisy children provided a certain Dickensian backdrop in parts. Overall though, this was a part of Australia that was doing well. These were good times. Sydney had an emerging prosperity that seemed to compare favourably with anywhere in Europe, at least. The sun was receding rapidly into the western suburbs, choking slowly on a haze of smoke and dust.

‘Yabba’ told about the city’s water supply and other amenities that had come into being in the past few years. He displayed the sort of knowledge that comes from expecting nothing in this world. He took every improvement in his stride. Now there were telephones. And of course, we were travelling on an electric tram.

From the accents on the tram, I could tell that a lot of migrant workers had come from Britain. I spoke to a Cockney man who had come out after the war. He felt that his lot had improved, after some hard times early on. His work in a textile factory was higher paying than any job he ever had in the Old Country.

When we disembarked, ‘Yabba’ was surrounded by children who asked him questions about rabbits. One or two were interested in me.

‘I play cricket at school,’ said one young lad. ‘But I’ve never heard of you.’

‘That does not surprise me,’ I replied. ‘It is unlikely anyone who follows the game in this part of the world would have heard of me.’

And so it went on. ‘Yabba’ seemed to be the local handyman. Several woman asked him in to fix various contraptions. I stood by helplessly, as ‘Yabba’ conjured up a soldering iron and repaired broken household wares. He showed a dexterity and eye to detail that belied his physical form. He did not have a lot to say to the women, preferring to concentrate on the problem at hand.

‘Yabba’ lived in a busy little community, where prosperity seemed to be growing. There was hope in the air. There appeared to be enough jobs to go around, to feed the teeming children and shelter burgeoning families. This was far from the life to which I was accustomed. It made the visit all the more enjoyable.

November 24: I have transcribed the following exchange with Mr. Toone.

Toone: Is what I hear true? Have you walked into the crowd and talked to that character with the loud voice? What is worse, have you gone for a jaunt across southern Sydney with him?

JL: I’ve done all those things. It’s interesting to meet that character.

Toone: Do you know what his ilk represents?

JL: As he kept reminding me, he had his living to make. He fought in the Boer War, he fought for Empire. I think it would be appropriate for you not to have another bad word to say against him.

Toone: That is impertinent. You are on this tour because we thought you would be an important part of our cause. As one of the amateurs, we expect a certain standard of conduct from you.

JL: I have indulged in no misconduct. I am not part of the eleven for this game. This man is something of a living landmark at the SCG.

Toone: That is enough. Why do you think you were chosen for this tour? You were chosen, because we wish to do things the British way: Cricket is a metaphor for life. When you are on tour, you are representing your country and all that it stands for. This is quite critical at present. The old order is in danger of breaking down. We all need to stand up and defend what is correct. There is a correct way of playing, a correct of living your life, a correct way of acting. When you are on tour, you are on display for your country. You must stand up and be an example for the cause.

JL: How in any way have I deviated from those ideals?

Toone: I need your assurance to the contrary.

Mr. Toone is not one for unnecessary confrontation. As he realised that maybe he was blowing the incident out of proportion, he quietened. But his remarks leave with me the question: why am I on tour?

I must reflect again on Hammond. I have only seen him play once. He did not score a lot of runs that day. There was no need for him to do so. For a few precious, he exerted such majestic control over Kent's bowlers that I knew I was watching a genius. Often we see fellow cricketers who we believe will move mountains, only for those players to fall into obscurity either through a lack of mental resolution or some previously unspotted technical flaw. I saw no reason to believe that this would be the case with young Walter Hammond. While I will do my best to serve my country as a small player on touring stage this summer, I remain flabbergasted that I could ever have been chosen ahead of Hammond.

I cannot subscribe to the notion that unchangeable order must take precedence over more pressing considerations. Yes, I am a fall-man for the old order. They needed the extra amateur on tour, despite there being around 60 professionals in England who have the

equal of my ability. Well may I have scaled the heights the year I was awarded a Cricketer of the Year, but that could have happened to anyone.

As I write on this evening, made a little bleak by what seems such an unnecessary exchange with Mr. Toone, I wonder about the multiple objectives of the British way of doing things. Some 13 years ago, Scott reached the South Pole, at the cost of his and other lives. A Norwegian capable of skiing beat him with ease, and returned with relative ease before the sting of encroaching winter could conquer him. The Scott expedition was glorified for its important scientific work, with so many eminent men attempting to learn so much, explore so much. Yet, Scott is dead and his great journey now reads as one of the great tragedies of British history.

We have the team to beat the Australians, though I have doubts about Mr. Gilligan's ability to bowl long spells. And if young Ponsford is capable of scoring 400 against the Tasmanians, he must have something up his sleeve for the English bowlers, and he may intend to resign some of the team to very long spells. So far, Messrs. Toone and Gilligan have devoted energy to the Ponsford innings. They want its status revoked, and are quite prepared to devote considerable energy to that. I wonder whether they should focus on ensuring that our bowlers find the right line and length, that our fielders hold their catches and that our batsmen do the job expected of them. Between Ponsford and politics, I feel less than confident that the English, touted by some as favourites, will deliver in the Ashes campaign. Like the Scott campaign, I suspect our mission is clouded by multiple objectives, which go beyond the precepts of sportsmanship and chivalrous conduct on the cricket field.

I should mention that in public, Mr. Gilligan has preferred to say as little as possible as Ponsford. He has been good humoured, and attempting at all times to praise the hospitality on tour. I recognise that this is a sign of true leadership.

December 4-8: v. Australian XI. I don't quite know why I am scribing this story. Perhaps I believe that later in the tour, the importance of what I have been through will become

more evident. I batted at number 4 in our match against the Australian XI. A bowler who intrigued me was Clarence Grimmett. The M.C.C. players had heard that he was helping restore South Australia's fortunes after years in the wilderness, including not a single victory in the Sheffield Shield games after the Great War.

I faced Grimmett. My first impression was of a tight bowler who was unlikely to do much damage to Test class batsmen. His control is exceptional. But he hardly spins the ball. I wondered about his flight. He bowls quite slowly through the air, leaving one to wonder whether he can be pounded out of sight. For a few overs, I defended carefully. Then, as my confidence grew, I started trying to drive, but found it hard to hit the ball through the field. There was a certain precision in the field placement. I played well forward and mistimed a drive into the off side. On another occasion, I thought a well-flighted ball was overpitched. It dropped suddenly onto a good length. I dead-batted the delivery. Then, I scored a run or two as I on-drove with the spin. But it was not easy to accumulate runs. I found boundaries impossible, and even twos and threes rather scarce. Finally, I on-drove one ball, hoping for a boundary, only to find that an agile fielder swooped on the ball and prevented a run. The next ball was, I thought, a full toss. As I drove confidently, it, like an earlier delivery, dropped suddenly. I was committed to the shot, played the ball on the rise and the bowler gleefully completed a return catch.

Why am I so intrigued by this man's bowling? He did not run through the rest of the team. In taking four wickets, he conceded well over 150 runs. I suppose that what intrigued me was that he gave the impression that under no circumstances would I be able to master him. It did not matter that the pitch was ideal was batting and that I was a left hander. Try as I may, I could not be able to get the better of him on a single delivery. Maybe, that is overstating the case. But the psychological ascendancy of this diminutive man was something I have rarely felt from any bowler. True, up to a point, I prefer the fast men. If I think back, I remember the determination in Grimmett's eyes, the discipline, the concentration. Will the better players get on top of him? Maybe they will, as they did in this game, but there may come a time when Grimmett masters them all. Already, he is turning around the fortunes of his state in the Sheffield Shield competition.

As he learns more of the techniques of the game's batsmen, he may improve his bowling, his clever drop, his variations in flight, and compete with the best of bowlers. He seems the most unlikely of heroes, but one day, his time will come.

This game has one peculiar memory. A young lad playing for the Australian XI by the name of Taafe attempted to take a catch on the fence. He slipped, knocked his head on the palings and rendered himself unconscious. Needless to say, help arrived from all quarters within moments to ensure that the lad recovered safely.

CHRISTMAS BATTLE IN SYDNEY

Christmas was near, but would Christmas cheer prove elusive? There was Test to play to divert our minds from festive matters. In the First Test, the Australian captain, that inveterate gambler Herbie Collins, did not even inspect the pitch before the toss. It had enough moisture on the first day to assist the bowlers, particularly Tate. In the early part of the innings, after the left-handed Bardsley had been dismissed in his 20s, lasting that long only because of dropped catches, Collins shielded debutante Ponsford from the swing, cut and fizz off the pitch of Tate. I had seen Tate bowl before, but was unaware that he would be such a revelation on Australian pitches. Collins tried to discourage the great bowler by pretending that he could pick his deliveries. Tate smiled assuringly, and quietly retorted that he himself was not always sure which way the ball would veer off the pitch or through the air. Despite this, the Collins-Ponsford partnership realised 190 runs and the junior partner ended with a century on debut, while his captain also made a century. In a solid team performance, Australia were three for 282 at stumps on the first day. There were a few quiet comments from the English players that the slightest generosity with two or three close lbw decisions would have altered the state of play. I understand from players that these murmurs have prevailed on many tours since our time.

I made a point of trying to encourage Freeman throughout the tour, hoping that the worst would not happen. Alarming, self-belief seemed to desert him during the First Test. He had bowled serviceably in the other games, but now struggled for rhythm. He wondered whether his run up had turned awry on the hard Australian turf. His action felt a little sloppy under the warm conditions on tour. On the second morning of the first Sydney Test, he was bowling to me in the nets. I should not have been there, but for some reason, Freeman want a left hander to bowl at. To my astonishment, I found him rather easy to play.

‘Stop’, I said, after belting a couple of hard drives into the net. ‘What did you do that day you took nine for 11 that you’re not doing today?’

Freeman paused for a moment. Then he replied, ‘For a start, my final delivery stride is too long. And my arm is coming over too high.’ I had to agree. This was the fellowship of the leggings, even if there was a gap in our respective abilities.

He then proceeded to demonstrate how he should have been bowling. All the time, he gave me a commentary. He bowled a perfectly flighted leg break. I lunged towards it and missed, as it snarled past the bat. As a left hander, it missed my leg stump. It reminded me of the value of flight and control.

‘Now, that’s what would happen if I was landing ‘em properly out in the middle,’ he said.

Then followed a ball that looked like it was heading past the off stump, until it dipped, and bowled me. It was so deceptive in flight that had I thrown my pad at it, in all probability I would have missed.

‘That’s the blighter I bowl when everything’s going real well.’

He came in, chastising himself for not getting it right out in the middle, and practically knocked me over with a googly that landed on leg stump, and skidded through at an indecent pace. I would have been leg-before in any circumstances. It did not matter that I was a left hander. I felt happy for Freeman, although a little miffed at my inability to play him. My excuse was that I preferred the faster bowlers.

‘Now, there’s an odd thing. I swear I haven’t let one go like that since July,’ he said.

“‘Tich”, get out in the middle today and carry on,’ I said, my pride wounded but hopeful that Freeman had come good.

I doubt if the scribes of the great game will ever know how well Freeman bowled his first few overs that day. The modern cricket fanatic would have seen it all on television, and appreciated how luckless the great bowler was. He bounded in and reduced the act of preservation by batsmen to a lottery. He beat the bat, he made previously confident

footwork look inadequate. He was a hair's breadth on a number of deliveries from glory. Yet, luck had deserted him. I could see from a distance how his bowling rhythm gradually deteriorated. Within half a dozen overs, he was back to the pedestrian bowler that the Australians respected, but in a complacent sort of way. I kept reminding Freeman of what he did to me in the nets. But, and I mean 'but' for the rest of the tour, he refused to believe that those few deliveries demonstrated that his bowling powers were still supreme. He and I argued over his bowling prowess for the rest of tour. And sadly, self-belief rarely returned to the great bowler. Even when his spirit was waning on the second day of this Test, he managed to bowl Victor Richardson with a beauty just when the South Australian looked set to dominate. It was a googly, that dipped away from the batsman before taking the middle stump.

I have thought time and again, over the past six decades almost, about what went wrong with Freeman. In the end, I have almost settled for one thing. He was in his element on the county circuit, where there was a feeling of certainty, a feeling of destiny. Those feelings apparently mattered enormously. He would never own up to feeling out of sorts the moment he trod on Australian turf. The sun was too high in the sky, the ground too firm, the light too harsh. Call this was a spiritual problem, if you will. In the event, Freeman only played two Tests on foreign soil, this and the one in Adelaide. Maybe, in his mid-thirties, a certain fire had departed from his game. Is this an excuse? We can cite plenty of bowlers who took bags of Test wickets once they had passed the age of thirty. So that was not the reason. That fire, after all, flared again in 1928 when Freeman astonishingly took over 300 wickets in the county season.

Yet again, I have digressed from the purpose of this chronicle. On the second day, Australia meandered on, scoring 450 off of 152.1 eight ball overs (1217 balls) – pedestrian batting indeed by modern standards, despite the cant of us old-timers that things have turned defensive ever since we retired. Tate bowled an astonishing 55.1 eight ball overs in taking six wickets for 130, showing the sort of stamina then left him eleventh on the list of all-time wicket-takers. Freeman's two wickets cost 124, while Gilligan battled for his sole wicket from 24 overs. And to dampen English enthusiasm, Oldfield and Mailey had a 62 run last wicket partnership.

Fittingly, in reply, Hobbs and Sutcliffe made a century opening stand, one of 11 such Test partnerships for them. Sutcliffe, after complaining to the umpire that Victor Richardson was fielding too close at silly point (a position not invented by Tony Greig), found the fieldsman a metre closer to his bat. He offered Richardson a catch from a defensive shot to be out for 59. A joke circulated in the cricketing world that Richardson's eye sight was fading. On the next tour in 1928-29, he fielded even closer. And then in that series of 1932-33 over which I wish to cast a veil, he seemed even closer to the bat. Clearly, an optometrist could have solved whatever problem he had in the field. It was this problem that led to him, in his mid-forties and captain of a tour to South Africa, taking five catches in a Test innings.

Hobbs turned his effort into a century, one of 197 in his first class career, which, like his 61,237 runs, is unlikely ever to be surpassed. The third highest first class scorer of all time, Hendren, batted gamely as batsmen came and went around him, remaining undefeated on 74. The second highest scorer of all time, Woolley, made a duck. Jack Gregory, bounding in with a three metre hop in his last stride, took five wickets including the first and second highest scorers of all time, plus three tail-enders. In contrast to the Australian's batting, my heroic compatriots scored briskly, at a rate of 53 runs per 100 balls in compiling 298, compared with 37 per 100 for their opponents. No doubt, they were spurred on by Mailey, bowling as ever like a millionaire, conceding 129 runs, an effort nevertheless made to look economical alongside his figures of the second innings.

In Australia's second innings, a number of players completed fine doubles. For them it was a suitable Christmas present, with their innings extending either side of Christmas Day. The manager, who I will discuss more in a moment, arranged a sumptuous meal for Christmas Day, combined with just a tippie or two. It was a wonderful diversion from the heat of battle.

Collins, lowering himself to number 4, added 60 to his first innings century, a series of nudges strung together in the fashion of a man who did not bring his gambling habit to the batting crease. Bespectacled Arthur Richardson, on debut and opening in the second innings, moved towards his first Test century, an effort aborted at 98 by another moment

of self-belief by Freeman, when he deceived the batsman in flight and had him caught and bowled. His century would have to wait until the following tour of England. Understated Taylor came in with six down for 260. He would go on to score over 500 runs in this series. With little more than 30 runs against his name, he was joined by last man Mailey.

I know that captain Gilligan felt a ray of hope with Australia nine wickets down and 477 runs ahead. How dismayed he felt as Mailey and Taylor belted 127 runs off his bowlers until Tate took his fifth wicket in his thirty fourth tireless over, bowling Taylor for 108. For a time, Tate had been off the field, hindered by a troublesome toenail, a legacy of his first innings marathon when his toes pounded the hard earth for hour after hour. But Australia also had injury troubles. Taylor batted down the order due to a boil behind the knee that gave him some agonising moments at the crease.

Gilligan's demeanour as our team returned to the dressing room was a study in itself. Was he demoralised? Did he exude the faintest sign of discouragement? The answer is no. He told our men that they had done their best, that they would bowl and field worse in the future and dismiss stronger batting lineups for half the Australian tally. He did not make the mistake of sounding too philosophical. I have no doubt that had this been left to me, I would have made some particularly stupid comment. Or maybe I would have forgotten that I was addressing a team brimming with some of the finest professionals to play, and I might have started canting like a schoolmaster. I would have been dismissed by the others as out of touch with reality. Mr Gilligan, however, always knew the pulse of his fellow players. He knew that above all, they would only perform at or near their best if they were enjoying themselves. In his pre-innings preamble, he finished by saying, 'Put a high price on your wicket. But make them pay dearly for loose deliveries, once the shine is off the ball.'

On the last instruction, Mr Gilligan should have rested easily. With 605 to chase, we started in the proper vein. One of the reasons that I never had a hope of playing of England, and why Sandham was in and out of the team, was put on display for us. Hobbs

and Sutcliffe went about their task as though they had to prove to the world, yet again, that they were the best openers in the game, ever.

When tours took players away from home for seven months at a time, it was a singular sacrifice, yet a singular honour. The pace of life was more like the pace of the game itself. The modern cricketer is asked to play many roles at the highest level. He might be expected to stonewall for hours on end in the crisis of a Test, batting so long that if he has done his job well, the world of fashion will have changed on his return to pavilion. Or he might be expected to come in with five overs to go in a one day match, and immediately start belting bowlers out of the ground. If he swishes indiscreetly in the stonewall role, the scribes will bay for his blood. If he dares so much as play a defensive shot in the swish and giggle role, the press will descend on him. In some ways cricket is as it ever was. The worst critics, often past players carrying chips on their shoulders, seek controversy but fill the airwaves and newspapers with bile. The best, on the other hand, humble the devotee with their balance and insight. This is all a long-winded way of observing that in the timeless Tests of 1924-25, played over however many days it took to achieve a result, the likes of Hobbs and Sutcliffe had no task other than to accumulate as many runs for their country as they possibly could. They had to cane the loose ball so that if a wicket-taking ball finally penetrated their defence, enough runs were on the board for the team to be in a sound position.

The target was less than 500 away when 'Stork' Hendry caught Hobbs off Mailey. Hobbs turned 42 three days before this Test began. If life begins at 40, and if century opening stands are part and parcel of its richness, then twice in this Test, Hobbs had lived it to the full. After that, wickets fell steadily, unfortunately from our perspective, comfortably for a fielding captain defending a huge target in a timeless Test. Sutcliffe finally succumbed for 115, a victim of the octopus-like reach and bucket-like hands of Gregory off Mailey. Hendren and Sandham both failed.

The eighth wicket fell for 276, less than half way towards the target. All was lost. I did not even want to look at our man Freeman as he went out to bat. Mr Gilligan had nothing to say. I had been bowling to him in the nets and he kept hitting me as though I was to be

removed from the attack as quickly as possible. Then out in the middle, he continued the punishment on Mailey that Woolley had started at the other end. Apparently, no one informed Woolley and Freeman that all was lost. They batted on the sixth day as though national pride was theirs alone to salvage. At the time, I was having a discussion with Sir Frederick Toone, our manager. He was something of an anachronism (although with the passing years, I shudder at such a word), an Edwardian in the finest sense of the word. His attention to detail was impeccable. His organisation on tour was as complete and as correct as Hobbs' batting technique. Despite his apparent link to the past, he was always approachable and always gave those of us not engaged in battle a little of his attention. He had immense respect for Lord Harris, though the reader already knows my opinion of the latter. Very much the imperialist in a manner the modern reader would have difficulty understanding, Sir Frederick believed that it was more blessed to be sporting in defeat than unsporting in victory. For his sake, in this respect I am glad that he was not alive to see his principles sullied on the tour of 1932-33.

For the benefit of the reader, I quote Sir Frederick's definition of cricket from the 1930 edition of *Wisden*:

It is a science, the study of a lifetime, in which you may exhaust yourself, but never your subject. It is a contest, a duel or melee, calling for courage, skill, strategy and self-control. It is a contest of temper, a trial of honour, a revealer of character. It affords a chance to play the man and act the gentleman. It means going into God's out-of-doors, getting close to nature, fresh air, exercise, a sweeping away of mental cobwebs, genuine recreation of the tired tissues. It is a cure for care, an antidote to worry. It includes companionship with friends, social intercourse, opportunities for courtesy, kindness, and generosity to an opponent. It promotes not only physical health but mental force.

What of poor Tate? Did he regard bowling almost 90 eight ball overs in this Test as 'genuine recreation of the tired tissues'? And I believe Sir Frederick must have been dozing during those incredibly tense moments of the Adelaide Test that I have yet to describe. Most of the English players were in desperate need of an antidote to worry at that stage. Nevertheless, it takes a certain sort of man to dedicate himself to ensuring that a tour is smoothly run. Let the touring party live with his strange perspectives as long as what he does supports rather than hinders the players on the field.

Meanwhile, Woolley continued treating Mailey's teasing leg breaks with disdain, as he lunged his front foot down the wicket and lofted the bowler time and again over the infield. Woolley to me was always a wonderful combination of elegance and pragmatism. If he thought the ball was there to be hit, he gave it a lashing. Yet, he could be so elegant to watch. He played so many years on the county circuit, always dangerous, sometimes breathtaking. It was a joy to watch him at close quarters. Finally, Woolley fell to Gregory, ironically caught by Mailey, who had conceded 179 runs off 32 overs. And then Collins tossed the ball to the Stork, with a length of frame surpassed only by his longevity (he is still alive in his 88th year as I write). Hendry, having earlier dismissed Hendren and future captain Chapman, removed last man Strudwick (the keeper with the third highest number of dismissals in the first class game). Victory had come to Australia by 193 runs, courtesy of two middle-order English collapses and two last wicket Australian partnerships that summed 189 runs between them. In turn, our man Freeman batted heroically in the second innings to score an undefeated half century, as if to defy my theory about his spiritual problems in this alien land.

So, our men had shown a capacity to fight. Yes, they had a leader who spurred them on, who invoked a spirit within them that the great War seemed to have drained from previous teams. But their leader bemoaned his loss of a yard or two of pace. If only Tate had a little support. Freeman's wickets came expensively, and unless the pitches became sticky, the likes of Woolley were unlikely to be of much use. The English team scored over 400 runs in the fourth innings of this match, in itself a rare feat. Unfortunately, century partnerships for the first and ninth wickets were aided by only two other worthwhile alliances.

I knew that my own part on the field of play would become minor, now that the Tests had begun. Other players used to tell me that I was one of those fortunate players who hardly needed to practice to remain in form. If only it were true. I went through the ritual, just in case through injury, I would be called up to play. In the event, Harry Howell was the only other player on tour not to play a Test. From what he told me, he had wretched luck the four times he played for England. He could not remember such a frequency of dropped

catches in county games. On the strength of his Test bowling figures of a few years ago, the tour selectors felt that the Australians would find little to fear in his bowling.

I will not pretend that I did not take advantage of my time in Australia to see some of the sights. It was so pleasant to leave the cities and feel as though one was in proper country air. In truth though, the country did not always have an idyllic feel about it. Particularly in later parts of the tour, there were many sights that appeared distinctly parched. And on the odd occasion when we were completely blanketed by a dust storm, I found the memory rather distasteful.

In the moments when I pursued such leisure, I was filled with an unspeakable joy. In the War, I spent over four years on active service. In the space, the freedom that I found at some of the best non-cricket moments on this tour, I thought of the contrasts in life that made these moments so much sweeter. Some on tour danced until dawn at every opportunity, feeling that they had to capture the moment, the breath of life, in every form in which it were available. I preferred more introverted pursuits, reading the classics when I had the opportunity, while occasionally venturing out to the theatre and, on one occasion, the opera.

The First Test

Australia won by 193 runs

Australia					England				
1st					1st				
H.L. Collins	c. Hendren b. Tate	114			J.B. Hobbs	c. Kelleway b. Gregory	115		
W.W. Bardsley	c. Woolley b. Freeman	21			H. Sutcliffe	c. V. R'son b. Mailey	59		
W.H. Ponsford	b. Gilligan	110			J.W. Hearne	c. Andrews b. Mailey	7		
A. J. Richardson	b. Hearne	22			F.E. Woolley	b. Gregory	0		
J.M. Taylor	c. Strudwick b. Tate	43			E. Hendren	not o ut	74		
V.Y. Richardson	b. Freeman	42			A. Sandham	b. Mailey	7		
H.L. Hendry	c. Strudwick b. Tate	3			Mr. A.P.F.	run out	13		
J.M. Gregory	c. Strudwick b. Tate	0			M.W. Tate	c. Andrews b. Mailey	7		
C. Kelleway	c. Woolley b. Tate	17			Mr. A.E.R. Gilligan	b. Gregory	1		
W.A. Oldfield	not out	39			A.P. Freeman	b. Gregory	0		
A.A. Mailey	b. Tate	21			H. Strudwick	lbw b. Gregory	6		
	Extras	18				Extras	9		
	Total	450				Total	298		
Fall of wickets: (1): 46, 236, 275, 286, 364, 374, 387, 387, 388, 450.					Fall of wickets: (1): 157, 171, 172, 202, 235, 254, 272, 274, 274, 298.				
	O.	M.	R.	W.		O.	M.	R.	W.
Tate	55.1	11	130	6	Gregory	28.7	2	111	5
Gilligan	23	0	92	1	Mailey	31	3	129	4
Freeman	49	11	124	2	Kellway	14	3	44	0
Hearne	12	3	28	1	Hendry	5	1	5	0
Woolley	9	0	35	0	A. Richardson	1	1	0	0
Hobbs	2	0	13	0					
Chapman	2	0	10	0					
2nd innings					2nd innings				
c. Chapman b. Tate	60				c. Hendry b. Mailey	57			
b. Tate	22				c. Gregory b. Mailey	115			
c. Woolley b. Freeman	27				b. Gregory	0			
c. and b. Freeman	98				c. Mailey b. Gregory	123			
b. Tate	108				c. Gregory b. Hendry	9			
c. Hendren b. Tate	18				c. Oldfield b. Mailey	2			
c. Strudwick b. Tate	22				c. Oldfield. b.Hendry	44			
c. Woolley b. Freeman	2				c. Pnsford b. Kelleway	0			
b. Gilligan	23				b. Kelleway	1			
c. Strudwick b. Gilligan	18				not out	50			
not out	46				c. Oldfield. b.Hendry	2			
Extras	8				Extras	8			
Total	452				Total	411			
(2): 40, 115,168,210,241, 260, 281, 286, 325, 452.					(2): 110,127,195, 212, 263, 269, 270, 276, 404, 411.				

NEW YEAR'S BATTLE IN MELBOURNE

The team had only a few days off for rest and a train journey to Melbourne, with that stopover in Albury in the middle of night to change tracks and carriages. That ruined one of our sleeps en route. But there is no restorative like humour, and there was plenty of that on show in the unsettled hours that followed as we continued our journey.

We had a typical civic reception in Melbourne. It was there that I had the pleasure of meeting Warwick Armstrong, the former captain of Australia. Dare I say, we seem to share unease about a certain member of the English aristocracy. As Armstrong spoke, bailing me up in a corner of the reception by virtue of his bulk that left no room for escape, he had several matters to discuss.

‘The bit I’ve seen of your bowling,’ he said, hinting at some net practice he had seen, ‘you’d be as good as anyone if you had a bit of control.’

Armstrong had noted my ability to turn the leg break. For most of the tour, I was relegated to a net bowler. Typically, I would come on late in the innings with batsman well set. That was usually for just an over or two, after which the captain on the day would feel that he had seen quite enough.

The former captain had started writing a column about the various matches on tour. He was not averse to the acerbic comment, some fair, some exaggerated, without any great sense of discrimination. In the flesh, he had an imperious air. In part, this reflected his ability to read circumstances more quickly than most people. It certainly showed out in the middle. There is a story that he was perfectly content to see the Englishman Mead make a large unbeaten hundred. This was in the Oval Test of 1921, when England made over 400 runs before declaring. Armstrong appeared to be of the opinion that Australia

would have been in greater danger of defeat if England had scored between 250 and 300 in half the time.

Armstrong broached an opinion that the English cause would have been helped to some degree by the inclusion of a leading left arm bowler. He thought Woolley was not the answer, and in any case had his better bowling years behind him. I mentioned Kilner.

‘If they give him a go, he’ll probably do well,’ Armstrong said, smiling, as though there was more to what I said than I was aware.

Nearly 50,000 people swarmed into the Melbourne Cricket Ground on a fine New Year’s day. When Australia won the toss again and batted in the Second Test, a breath of optimism raced through the English camp. Keeper Strudwick caught the openers Collins and Bardsley within the first hour, one off the hero Tate, the left hander off the inspirational captain. And the Melbourne crowd’s collective heart stopped when Arthur Richardson ran himself out, three down for 47. Surely new man Ponsford, despite his century in his first Test, and the irregulars to follow would succumb to the pressure. Yes, Kelleway might prove a stumbling block, but the rest of the team? Were they anything more than triers? As usual, we had underestimated that man Taylor. He and Ponsford consolidated, the former eventually run out for 72, but by then the team had 208. Ponsford went on to complete his second century in his second Test, a feat since matched for Australia by Walters. But with the battle still in the balance, Victor Richardson launched his Test innings of a lifetime. The further his innings went, the more rapidly he scored. When the tiring bowlers erred on the short side, they played to his strengths, the hook and cut, nurtured on the short boundaries of Adelaide Oval, home to many a lopsided contest between V.Y. Richardson’s men and the more talented teams from New South Wales and Victoria. And in this consummate Test innings, Richardson belted former captain Mr Douglas for five fours off one over once he had passed his century.

There was a feeling in our camp that by insisting that his extended family tour with him, including his parents, spouse and children, Mr Douglas was finding it impossible to concentrate on his cricket. This was to be the only Test for this Gentleman on tour. He was of a sufficient age, being born in the same year as Hobbs, that playing as all-rounder at the highest level was perhaps a little beyond him. Despite captaining Essex for another few seasons, his best years were behind him.

Richardson found an able ally in Dr Hartkopf, a leg spinner and hard hitter, playing his first and last Test, who went on to score 80. Gregory, who bowled and batted with a rare passion, that has given him the record for the fastest Test century in terms of minutes taken, swung mercilessly in a cameo knock. He dominated a stand with the doctor that moved the score from 439 to 499. Hartkopf followed his lead, adding 100 runs with Oldfield. The innings ended at 600.

After two days in the field, would the English fold to pressure? Hobbs and Sutcliffe had other ideas. They saw off the fury of Gregory, the swing of Kelleway and the leg spin of Mailey. Hartkopf, his identity in the team a little confused by his success as a batsman, bowled ineffectively as a backup legspinner. But the Australians were up against batting of the most robust technique, of the soundest temperament. By the day's end, the great openers had scored 283 runs without loss. But Sutcliffe should have fallen to a famous trap, when dropped by Ponsford hooking. The young man had been instructed to move into position surreptitiously between deliveries, so that Hobbs would not alert his partner to the trap.

Gambler Collins tossed the ball to Mailey for the first over of the day after the rest day. In their desperation, the Australians ran a sweep on how the partnership would end. No one guessed that Hobbs would be bowled by a Mailey full toss, an unthinkable outcome for such a technically superb batsman. Thereafter, Sutcliffe had little support from the middle order, only Hendren, Chapman and Tate, perhaps making amends for a bowling return (three for 142) below his usual efforts, passing 25. 404 runs for four wickets deteriorated to 479 all out.

In Australia's second innings, we thought for a while that England was marching towards victory. Hearne and Tate cut through the Australian top order. With swing and pace off the pitch, Tate breached the defences of Bardsley, Richardson and Ponsford for single figure totals, while Hearne, with his leg breaks, bowled a typically taciturn Collins for 30. The captain had steadied the ship, three for 27 now four for 106. Another 20 runs and Richardson was run out, and at lunch on the fifth day, Australia was a shaky five for 139. When Taylor, for an invaluable 90, Kelleway and Hartkopf fell within two runs of one another, eight out for 168. Oldfield and Gregory managed 71 priceless runs. Australia's lead stretched to 371. Tate and Hearn, who between them did four fifths of the bowling, shared the wickets.

371 runs seemed a tall order. But if ever a batting team were capable of such a chase against bowlers of the class of Gregory and Mailey, it had to be this heroic team. And then gloom descended on the English camp. Just when we thought the openers would compile century stands as a matter of course, Hobbs returned to the pavilion with only 36 runs on the board. Nightwatchman Strudwick did his job, making 22 before falling to Gregory — two for 75. Hearne stayed for a useful partnership. Woolley came to crease, intent on hitting every ball to the boundary, at 37 with no inclination to take sharp singles to keep the strike rotating. He blazed 40 before breaking his bat. Then came a message from the rooms for him to proceed with caution. There was plenty of time. This was a timeless Test. This, I suspect, was the worst piece of advice Mr Gilligan ever relayed to anyone. I think Sir Frederick had a little to do with it, believing that somehow a blazing innings was contrary to the scheme of things.

Taking these sentiments to its logical conclusion, there was never a reason in a timeless Test to attack the bowling. So not all England's fortunes came down to luck. Some stemmed from a misguided perception within the camp of the best way to proceed towards a large but achievable total. His natural style cramped, Woolley fell when an off spinner from Richardson hit his pads. Yes, it seemed that the Old Country had forgotten how to win.

Hendren joined Sutcliffe, who was ploughing inevitably towards his second century of the match. At stumps on day six, with six down for 259, England still had a slim chance. But Mailey and Gregory disposed of the tail the next morning with England 81 runs short.

The last six wickets had fallen for only 36 runs, leaving us to wonder when victory would ever be ours.

The Second Test

Australia won by 81 runs

Australia					1st					2nd				
H.L. Collins	c. Strudwick	b. Tate	9		b. Hearne				30					
W.W. Bardsley	c. Strudwick	b. Gilligan	19		lbw b. Tate				2					
A.J. Richardson	run out		14		b. Tate				9					
W.H. Ponsford	b. Tate		128		b. Tate				4					
J.M. Taylor	run out		72		b. Tate				90					
V.Y. Richardson	run out		138		c. Strudwick	b. Hearne			8					
C. Kelleway	c. Strudwick	b. Gilligan	32		c. and b. Hearne				17					
A.E.V. Hartkopf	c. Chapman	b. Gilligan	80		lbw b. Tate				0					
J.M. Gregory	c. Gilligan	b. Tate	44		not out				36					
W.A. Oldfield	not out		39		lbw b. Hearne				39					
A.A. Mailey	lbw b. Douglas		1		b. Tate				3					
	Extras		24		Extras				12					
	Total		600		Total				250					
Fall of wickets: (1): 22, 47, 47, 208, 301, 424, 439, 499, 599, 600.					(2): 3, 12, 27, 106, 126, 166, 168, 168, 239, 250									
	O.	M.	R.	W.	O.	M.	R.	W.						
Tate	45	10	142	3	33.3	8	99	6						
Douglas	19.5	0	95	1	4	0	9	0						
Tyldesley	35	3	130	0	2	0	6	0						
Gilligan	26	1	114	3	11	2	40	0						
Hearne	13	1	69	0	29	5	84	4						
Woolley	11	3	26	0										
England					1st					2nd				
J.B. Hobbs	b. Mailey		154		lbw b. Mailey				22					
H. Sutcliffe	b. Kelleway		176		c. Gregory	b. Mailey			127					
F.E. Woolley	b. Gregory		0		lbw b. A. Richardson				50					
J.W. Hearne	b. Mailey		9		lbw b. Gregory				23					
E. Hendren	c. Oldfield	b. Kelleway	32		b. Gregory				18					
Mr. A.P.F. Chapman	c. Oldfield	b. Gregory	28		not out				4					
Mr. J.W.H.T. Douglas	c. Collins	b. A. Richardson	8		b. Mailey				14					
R. Tyldesley	c. Collins	b. Gregory	5		c. Ponsford	b. Mailey			0					
M.W. Tate	b. A. Richardson		34		b. Gregory				0					
H. Strudwick	b. Hartkopf		4		lbw b. Gregory				22					
Mr. A.E.R. Gilligan	not out		17		c. and b. Mailey				0					
	Extras		12		Extras				10					
	Total		479		Total				290					
Fall of wickets: (1): 283, 284, 305, 373, 404, 412, 418, 453, 458,					(2): 36, 75, 121, 211, 254, 255, 280, 289, 289,									
	O.	M.	R.	W.	O.	M.	R.	W.						
Gregory	34	4	124	3	27.3	6	87	4						
Kellway	30	10	62	2	18	4	42	0						
Mailey	34	5	141	2	24	2	92	5						
Hartkopf	26	1	120	1	4	1	14	0						
A. Richardson	14	6	20	2	22	7	35	1						
Collins					11	3	10	0						

After one evening of this great battle, when it came time to unwind, I remember a brief conversation with Bill Ponsford. He was a man who preferred to put his energy into vigils out in the middle.

‘You upset the old order with your 400 against Tasmania last season,’ I said.

‘Mainly Victorian selectors,’ he replied. ‘They would’ve dropped if I’d managed only 300.’

‘A certain Mr MacLaren back in England has not quite forgiven you for beating his 424.’

‘No matter what record you set, someone will always beat it.’

Within a couple of seasons, Ponsford beat his own record. The Australian batsman started and finished his Test career with sensational innings. In between, he lost form, often against extreme pace, and in one series against bodyline.

DIARY JOTTINGS II

January 3: We are some days from revisiting South Australia. But we are reminded of South Australia with a story that has hit the national weeklies. A Mrs Cleggett of Bordertown appear to grow weary of her husband's behaviour. He demanded breakfast on arising at 9.30. When Mrs Cleggett could not attend to him immediately, he grew angry. He grabbed a pie from the kitchen table and tossed it at his wife. Then he jostled with her and threw her to the floor. Their teenage boys, who had been out duck shooting, arrived home by car at that moment. Mrs Cleggett took a gun from one of the boys and shot her husband in the shoulder.

'I've had enough of your ill-treatment,' she said. 'I will finish you.'

'Righto!' her husband replied. 'Let me have it.'

Her next shot, through the neck, killed her husband. The police, knowing of Mr Cleggett's drinking habits, had issued a prohibition order, but he still managed to procure supplies. No doubt, in the following weeks, I will have ample opportunities to follow up on this story. I could not help noticing in the same paper that back in the Mother Country, a Royal Commission on Lunacy and Mental Disorder is proceeding. Reference is made in the article to the emotions that draw a man and a woman together. They can be reversed until they repel as violently as they attract. And couples, according to the Commission, sometimes quarrel so much that they accuse each other of being candidates for the asylum. Whether this is so is something for further proceedings of the Commission.

And in the tension of the Test just completed, I read of poor Sophie Bell, a hapless widow from Adelaide. She was charged with twice attempting suicide the day before Christmas. She jumped into the River Torrens once and, when rescued, had one more try.

January 14: We arrived by express train from Ballarat at Adelaide station early yesterday morning. Mr. Gilligan managed to charm a bevy of journalists with some comment about using a double-headed coin to win the toss. He pointed out to the press that Sandham was not succeeding on Australian turf, because he was not quite used to the pace of the wickets. What really wooed the locals over was Mr. Gilligan's praise of Australian crowds. He described them as knowledgeable and generous to players on both sides. As in every press conference, Mr. Gilligan was asked about the eight ball over and declined to comment.

I suppose I should mention the game in Ballarat against a local 15. I managed to score a few runs, but doubtless, that was more of a curiosity for Ballarat's inhabitants than a contribution to the annals of sporting heroics.

Meanwhile, Mr. Toone is extremely concerned by the ongoing Seamen's Union dispute. Another colliery has closed in the Ipswich area near Brisbane. Workers apparently have been dismissed because there is little point in operating the coal mines without being able to ship it to the usual markets.

To add to the woes of our manager, there is a statement in the local press about Lord Westbury's visit to Sydney. He maintains that England has gone to the dogs. His grievance is that there is no longer any desire for the British labourer to work. If a bricklayer has extra mouths in the family to feed, he is not allowed to work harder than his fellow worker. According to Lord Westbury, many men prefer the dole, with occasional employment thrown in. The taxes on the middle and upper classes are excessive. Death duties are exorbitant. Lord Westbury cited one case where three peers in close succession had died, with the result that death duties had consumed almost the entire value of the estate. And I concede that I saw Mr. Toone, stern Yorkshire stock that he may be, turn green at the gills at the mention of the rising influence of Bolshevism in Britain.

It is rather easy to distract Mr Toone during the course of a Test match. I would never do the same to Mr Gilligan, whose body and soul have to be devoted to the battle. But there is talk of the formation of a British Red Army. Its intention is to conscript indifferent civilians and regular Army experts. The aim of the Red Army is form a trained nucleus to act as Commissaries capable of controlling even non-communist Brigadier-Generals. The temptation to bother Mr Toone with this news arises in the moments when I am a little bored. I would rather consign such sentiments to my diary and act in the interests of my England in all spheres of battle.

January 17: A report that is intriguing readers of the local newspaper concerns the disappearance and discovery of a Mr DeGaris. He is a director of the Australian Dried Fruit Association, a role providing both preservation and resurrection, it seems. He was discovered on a steamer heading towards Auckland. His wife, believing the local papers of last week, appears to have given him up for dead despite reports to the contrary. He allegedly gave the game away when a sleuth on the steamer observed a resemblance between a man travelling under the name of Leslie and a photograph in the paper. He followed Leslie until he caught sight of blue pyjamas in the fugitive's possession labelled 'DeGaris'. According to Mrs DeGaris, this must be a hoax because the only pyjamas belonging to her husband that were ever labelled were now dusters.

DRAMA AT THE CATHEDRAL END

After seeming months of meandering around the continent, we arrived in Adelaide for the Third Test in the space of a few weeks. I will not indulge the reader with yet another description of this ground, except to say that in architectural terms, it represents the best setting in the world. Other grounds may have more dramatic backdrops, but there is something about the whole ambience of Adelaide Oval that leaves one feeling that it is the spiritual centre of overseas' cricket. I would not be so foolish to usurp Lords from its role in the world of cricket.

In the Third Test in Adelaide, we English wondered if the wheel of fortune was jammed permanently in a lowly position. It is all very well being sporting, it seems, but it gets to a point where one tires of losing. I jest slightly, because I was in a team of committed men, who did not give up the contest easily. Yet, the Adelaide Test started differently. Collins, Gregory (batting at number three) and then ever-reliable Taylor, with a duck, were out with only 22 on the board. Was this finally to be the triumph of Tate and Freeman, the premier bowlers? There was a little moisture in the pitch on the first morning. But as any batsman who has played at the Adelaide Oval in the past century or so could testify, batting would gradually get easier after the first morning, until the pitch started taking spin.

The hand of fortune played early. First, Tate hobbled off the ground injured, his toenail having come off with great pain. Somehow, batting seemed to get a little easier as time passed. After a couple of hours without anything other than the steady accumulation of runs, Gilligan found joy in having Ponsford caught behind after a rallying alliance of 92 with A. Richardson. And both Richardsons were dismissed by that legendary county all-rounder, Kilner. England had a second chance. Even though batting conditions had eased considerably since the first hour, six were out for 119. Then joy turned to cruel

disappointment, as Gilligan left the field. I watched in frustration as the fightback began. Ryder, batting at number seven, looked ominous. He was striking the ball altogether too cleanly for this to be a fair contest. And so the runs mounted. Andrews looked composed for another couple of hours, until he fell to Kilner for 72 after a partnership of 134. Kelleway, rather curiously, given that he had three Test centuries to his name, came in at number nine. He made 16 out of 55 before falling to Woolley. In these timeless Tests, a bowler as economical as Kilner during this innings was of no great concern for a patient, sound batsman. Not that Oldfield was silent in his patience as he scored 47 of a century partnership.

Freeman became a victim of Ryder's in more than one way during the partnership with Oldfield. The aggressive Australian came in at number seven. He had missed the first two Tests with an injury, and presented late in the order as though not quite fully fit. He belted Freeman to all parts of the ground. Then, the bowler fated to have little influence on this tour, in trying to catch a soaring lofted drive, injured his hand. After returning to the dressing room, he fainted with pain. Sir Frederick played the unaccustomed role of nurse until help arrived. That left Woolley and Kilner to wheel down the overs. Ryder accelerated, with nine down for 416. He dominated yet another troublesome last wicket stand that yielded 73 runs before, in desperation, Hendren took the ball and dismissed Mailey. So the last four wickets, with English bowlers tumbling infortuitously, added 370 runs. And in six and a half hours, Ryder, subdued at first by the circumstances, coming in at five for 118, scored 201 not out.

In its own way, the injuries to our bowlers were good news for me. It meant that I was able to spend a few hours in the field. I was placed in the covers, where I had acquired a reputation. The finest fielder on earth would not have been able to stop Ryder's scorching drives late in the innings. He was prepared to play across the line and once he passed the century, hit in the air, unafraid if he did not quite get to the pitch of the ball. I remember throwing myself in the air in the hope of intercepting one drive that almost hit the pickets on the full. As the innings progressed, I inched back in the covers when Ryder was facing. I tried not to look intimidated. I threw myself over the ground on one occasion,

making a stop that brought a warm round of applause. And Mr Gilligan, although unable to bowl, remained encouraging to the end. One interesting battle that went on was between Woolley and Ryder. The left armer bowled with admirable control. The aggressive batsman wanted to belt him out of the attack. On one or two occasions, he got Woolley away, but most of the time, it was a stalemate. I could not help thinking that in these conditions, Woolley would have enjoyed batting against his own bowling, although I suspect that the patrons in the grandstands on the western side of the ground would not have felt that safe had the bowling been from the southern end.

The demoralised English team dispensed with their regular openers late on the second evening. Whysall, a recognised opener, and Tate, who four and a half years later would score a century against South Africa as a nightwatchman, opened. They faced the fire and brimstone of Gregory and the nagging brisk medium pace of Kelleway with trepidation. Before stumps, the opening bowlers had dismissed Whysall and Strudwick. Chapman and Tate resumed in the morning at 2 for 36. Sadly for their cause, both were out soon enough — four for 69. Now, Hobbs and Sutcliffe were in the middle and, as ever, in charge. The murmur went around the ground, ‘What score would England have if these two had been allowed to open? Has England thrown away early wickets?’ After all, these two had managed three century opening stands in the first two Tests.

Sutcliffe proceeded at a snail’s pace, letting Hobbs take a more celebratory role in the art of batting. They warded off Gregory and tamed Mailey as their team mates could not. Collins, despite knowing that Ryder was still recovering from a bowling injury, handed the double-centurion the ball. He was rewarded when Oldfield caught the inexhaustible Yorkshireman behind for 33, the partnership yielding, by the standards of these immortal partners, a modest 90. Sutcliffe, after all, had scored 59, 115, 176 and 127 in his first four innings of the Tests in losing contests. Woolley, intent as ever on hitting fours, blazed to 16 as his partner stood still, before being winkled out by Mailey. Hobbs and Woolley, one a rotator of the strike, the other more like a lumberjack who felled loose and not so loose deliveries to the pickets, made the odd couple. They rarely teamed successfully.

There was one exception, a stand of 142 at Lords the previous English summer against South Africa.

The gods instead chose to smile on the alliance of Hendren and Hobbs, who scored 117 together, until Hobbs, after another routine day at the crease, fell for 119. Hendren, with perhaps disappointing support from Kilner and Gilligan, both dismissed by Richardson, was left with last man Freeman. After the latter's heroics in the first Test, surely he could hold on long enough for 'Patsy' to make a deserved hundred. But Gregory came in for a final onslaught. Hendren, with a lofted slice, was caught by Taylor at cover point for 92, to end the innings 124 in arrears.

Now, the fate of England was in the hands of three bowlers, Freeman, Kilner and Woolley. Tate fronted up to the bowling crease, but despite his economy, presented less than his usual menace to the batsman. He bowled only 10 overs. Soon, Woolley and Freeman were bowling. Woolley dismissed Richardson at 36, with Collins following at 63. Ryder, elevated to number three, teamed with Taylor until the latter fell to Freeman at 126. Ponsford and Ryder grafted a partnership that raised the lead to 339. Rain intervened, and freshened the pitch. Ponsford, Ryder, Andrews, Vic Richardson and Andrews, fell in the space of five runs, Woolley and Kilner doing the damage. Only Kelleway offered resistance, with a priceless undefeated 22.

Arguably, this represented Kilner's finest hour in Test cricket. He had rapidly become an esteemed county allrounder, batting left handed and bowling left-arm orthodox for Yorkshire. The cricketing world seem to reside at his feet. But just three years and two months later, Roy Kilner would die from enteritis, imprinting his immortality on the game through a sadly aborted career.

Needing 375 to win, the old firm, Hobbs and Sutcliffe, added 63 before Hobbs fell to Richardson. Woolley tried to win the game in few hits before Kelleway bowled him for 21. Hendren came and went. Then Sutcliffe found an able partner in Whysall, who batted on confidently. Tragically, for the English cause, Sutcliffe fell to Mailey for 59, four

down for 155. But still England edged towards their target, through Whysall and Chapman. They fell within a few runs of one another, leaving England six down for 254, still needing 121 to win.

The lower order players continued to make steady contributions. Kilner went for 24, falling to Richardson with the score at 279. Then through determination and a sense of destiny, Tate and Gilligan posted the 300, before Mailey bowled Tate for 21, with 64 still needed. By now, the game was getting too tense to view from the dressing room. I took a stroll down King William Street, and returned to find the English cause still alive.

‘Where’s Sandham,’ I asked the manager, on my return, fearing to speak to any of the players who sat nervously in the dressing room.

Sandham, twelfth man in this game, was to be found seeking solace in St Peter’s cathedral a short walk from the ground. There, he felt more uncomfortable than ever, for he could hear the shouts and excitement of the crowd reverberating around the hallowed walls. Across the parklands, Gilligan and Freeman batted calmly, raising 348 by the time rained stopped play. That proved providential for the tired Australian bowlers.

For the spectators at the ground, the tension had been unbelievable. Each wicket that fell somehow swung the pendulum back towards Australia. Each run that the English eked out of the bowling pushed the pendulum back the other way. A bad ball could turn the match. A rash shot could end the English cause. Polite claps for the runs that were scored gradually become more nervous. The roars that greeted the fall of each wicket were more a demonstration of emotion than a hope that Australia would win. Yet, the stakes were high. This was Australia’s chance to reclaim the Ashes. This was cricket of the highest. Can I justify leaving the ground? I think so. The tension was too great. I was haunted with thoughts that maybe I could have saved another run or two in the field, runs that assumed a value much greater than normal.

I suspect our manager was completely ignorant of the restlessness that Gilligan felt throughout the following evening and night. The captain, burdened by responsibility, frustrated by his own lot as a shadow of the bowler he had been just six months beforehand, had a sleepless night. Next morning, he fell to a reinvigorated Gregory for a 31 that had the crowd on its toes. As a member of the opposition touring party, I reluctantly was flushed with admiration that the great fast bowler could keep bounding in, day after day, giving his all for his team. With 12 still needed for victory, Mailey found the edge of Freeman's bat after he had scored 24. And so England lost an epic struggle, that at a number of phases of the game seem destined to fall our way.

Played from January 16 to January 23, with a rest day on the 18th, we tourists stayed at the Sturt Football Club, home of Vic Richardson, a living legend in this part of the world. For Vic, this was a bad omen, as he scored a total of four runs in two innings. Vic was brilliant at any sport to which he turned his hand. That he could represent his country in Test cricket was remarkable, given his prowess at Australian rules football, baseball and lacrosse.

The officials at the club knew that Vic had a rare friendship with Arthur Gilligan, that later bloomed into a legendary radio commentary duo. And Vic played a part in persuading Hendren, three seasons later, to coach the South Australian team. Local notary and president of the football club, Freeman, with a little smoothing over from Richardson, persuaded all the touring party, including his namesake, on one evening during their long, luckless campaign in Adelaide to autograph a cricket bat.

'Surely my signature has no part on this bat,' I protested.

'John,' replied Victor, 'without your name, this is worthless. Remember, it's a team game. And your signature belongs plumb in the middle.'

Legend has it that the full significance of this bat struck president Freeman as he entered his house the same evening. He was delighted that his three year old boy was still out of

bed. He gave him a hug and said, 'Today, I brought home something special, very special. The family will talk about it for years.' And for weeks, months, even years to follow, he never tired of showing anyone with the slightest curiosity the bat that he had in his possession.

The Third Test

Australia won by 11 runs

Australia					2nd				
1st									
H.L. Collins	b. Tate		3		b. Freeman		26		
A.J. Richardson	b. Kilner		69		c. Kilner b. Woolley		14		
J.M. Gregory	b. Freeman		6		c. Hendren b. Woolley		2		
J.M. Taylor	lbw b. Tate		0		b. Freeman		34		
W.H. Ponsford	c. Strudwick b. Gilligan		31		c. Hendren b. Kilner		43		
V.Y. Richardson	c. Whysall b. Kilner		4		c. Tate b. Woolley		0		
J. Ryder	not out		201		c. and b. Woolley		88		
T. Andrews	b. Kilner		72		c. Whysall b. Kilner		1		
C. Kelleway	c. Strudwick b. Woolley		16		not out		22		
W.A. Oldfield	lbw b. Kilner		47		b. Kilner		4		
A.A. Mailey	c. Strudwick b. Hendren		27		c. Sutcliffe b. Kilner		5		
	Extras		13		Extras		11		
Total				489	Total				250
Fall of wickets: (1): 10, 19, 22, 114, 118, 119, 253, 308, 416, 489.					(2): 36, 63, 126, 215, 216, 217, 217, 220, 242,				
	O.	M.	R.	W.	O.	M.	R.	W.	
Tate	18	1	43	2	10	4	17	0	
Gilligan	8	2	17	1					
Freeman	18	0	107	1	17	1	94	2	
Woolley	43	5	135	1	19	1	77	4	
Kilner	56	7	127	4	22.1	7	51	4	
Hobbs	3	0	11	0					
Hendren	5.1	0	27	1					
Whysall	2	0	9	0					
England					2nd				
1st									
W. Whysall	b. Gregory		9		c. and b. Gregory		75		
H. Strudwick	c. Gregory b. Kelleway		1		not out		2		
Mr. A.P.F.	b. Gregory		26		c. Ryder b. Kelleway		58		
M.W. Tate	c. Andrews b. Mailey		27		b. Mailey		21		
H. Sutcliffe	c. Oldfield b. Ryder		33		c. Ponsford b. Mailey		59		
F.E. Woolley	c. Andrews b. Mailey		16		b. Kelleway		21		
J. B. Hobbs	c. Gregory b. Mailey		119		c. Collins b. A.		27		
E. Hendren	c. Taylor b. Gregory		92		lbw b. Kelleway		4		
R. Kilner	lbw b. A. Richardson		6		c. V. R'son b. A. Rich'son		24		
Mr. A.E.R. Gilligan	c. Collins b. A. Richardson		9		c. V. R'son b. Gregory		31		
A.P. Freeman	not out		6		c. Oldfield b. Mailey		24		
	Extras		21		Extras		17		
Total				365	Total				363
Fall of wickets: (1): 15, 18, 67, 69, 159, 180, 297, 316, 326, 365.					(2): 63, 92, 96, 155, 244, 254, 279, 312, 357, 363				
	O.	M.	R.	W.	O.	M.	R.	W.	
Gregory	26.2	0	111	3	23	6	71	2	
Kellway	15	6	24	1	22	4	57	3	
Mailey	44	5	133	3	30.2	4	126	3	
A. Richardson	21	7	42	2	25	5	62	2	
Ryder	6	2	15	1	2	0	11	0	
Collins	5	1	19	0	9	4	19	0	

DIARY JOTTINGS III

January 19: Hobbs is 99 not out at stumps on the third day. Already, he has passed Clem Hill's all-time record for the most number of runs in Test cricket. Hill was at the ground. From all accounts, he was quite oblivious to his own record being broken.

January 25: It is quite extraordinary to reflect on a Test match that started on a Friday and finished on the following Friday. For the first day, it was fine and cool. Then the temperature started rising. For a day or so, the weather was hot, unbearably hot. Rain followed, improving England's chances greatly, since we had the bowlers to exploit the damp wicket. Amid the drama, I had quite forgotten to keep an interest in Hearne's progress. The poor man had various excisions to his salivary glands. I cannot imagine him being the same force for the remainder of the tour.

I cannot recollect a match of greater emotional highs and lows. There we were, three of our front line bowlers unable to bowl, as the last four Australian wickets fell in the first innings while they plundered over 300 runs. But as if to make up for the wretched luck of the injuries to Tate, Gilligan and Freeman, the rain came to aid Kilner and company when all seemed lost, with Australia already over 300 runs in the lead in the second innings and only three wickets down.

The local press was filled with more horror stories for Mr. Toone. There was a lengthy article on mummifying Lenin, although it was balanced with some closing remark about what a mess Lenin had created in Mother Russia and beyond. And to cap it all off, Adelaide with abuzz with the latest feat of stupidity by Lord Hawke. Here we are, trying to restore England's pride in cricket, absolutely dependent on the professionals in the line-up, and Hawke proclaimed the following, as reported by cablegram from England: 'I pray God that no professional will ever captain an English team, or it will become exactly

like league football.' Needless to say, Mr. Gilligan is spending some time assuring our fine professionals that this was a sleight to be ignored. What was remembered less by Lord Hawke's critics was his defence of Mr Gilligan, to the effect that a man calling himself a cricketer to attack Mr Gilligan is beneath contempt. Indeed, the touring party could have done without the reference to the professionals, who have carried to this side if individual performances mean anything. I suspect that Lord Hawke, in trying to defend our captain, has merely upset the greater part of the team. He has said the wrong thing at the wrong time in trying to defend the captain. I asked our team scorer for the respective contributions of the amateurs and professionals on tour, after hearing all this. In three Tests of this series so far, the amateurs have scored little more than 250 runs between them at an average of 21 and taken only 8 wickets at an average of over 60. The professionals have scored the remaining 1950 runs at an average of almost 41. They have also dismissed 49 batsmen at an average of 41. I imagine that if an Australian were privy to this information, he would suggest that we appoint a professional captain and play the best 11 men, since the amateurs are the difference between the sides so far.

I remember where all this started. More than once, the Lancashire professional Cecil Parkin has criticised Gilligan's captaincy. Parkin himself is one of the eccentrics of the game, who takes wickets by unorthodox means. He makes it impossible for a captain to place a field for him. He has now declared himself unavailable for Test cricket. Going back a little earlier, 18 months ago, Parkin wrote a book entitled *Cricket Reminiscences: Humorous and Otherwise*. In it, I remember he thought that expecting amateurs and professional to use different gates as they entered and exited the playing arena a little excessive. Having noted that, he also mentioned that he preferred the company of his fellow professionals. Parkin has done enough in his time to rock the establishment.

It is of some amusement to me to read that Lord Hawke's old friend (a rather broad use of the term, dare I say) Warwick Armstrong was reported in the press as saying that it was time for the Lord to get out of English cricket. From what I know of the exchanges between Armstrong and Lord Hawke, it was a way of implying that the departure of the latter was thirty years overdue.

I should mention that after the Test, we attended a function at which Lord Forster, the Governor General in Australia, spoke. He played a little first class cricket in his time, and was quick to point out that in response to Lord Hawke's assertion, he would not have hesitated to play under the captaincy of Jack Hobbs.

Collins and Gilligan both gave gracious speeches. They appeared to agree among themselves that the luck, both good and bad, was shared evenly between the teams in the Adelaide Test.

January 27: Little to write tonight. We had a rather ordinary journey by sea from Melbourne to Launceston overnight. I opened the batting and duly failed. The oval seemed to be swaying as I took my guard.

January 28: I made amends for my first innings failure by collecting a few runs in the afternoon in the second innings. I bowled two overs in the morning and was duly slaughtered. I think the whole team feels lethargic and unsettled. We have been spoilt with the train journeys. A return to sea caught us all a little by surprise. We are playing rather ordinary opposition, and not performing that well ourselves.

February 2: The M.C.C. completed a three day match against another Tasmania XI in Hobart today. We played rather better this time. I can understand the concerns that Messrs. Toone and Gilligan have about the first class status of Tasmania. This is only an issue because Ponsford's quadruple century against Tasmania has made it an issue. If the Tasmanians ever bothered to put a relatively similar XI in the field twice, it would convince us at least that they are making some attempt to provide their best team on all occasions. On that basis, my sympathies are now with the captain and manager.

A CHANGE OF FORTUNE

Judging by the mail that Mr Gilligan and Sir Frederick had to answer, even staunch Australian supporters longed for an English victory. We richly deserved it after heroic endeavours, plagued by injury difficulties. After coming so close to an overdue victory, having already lost a series that we might have been leading 2-1, England fronted up for the Melbourne Test hoping for a change of luck. It came with the toss of the coin.

England's innings opened with century partnerships for the first and second wickets, including 126 from Hobbs and Sutcliffe followed by the latter in tandem with Hearn. One simply had to marvel at the technique of England's openers. They were the best combination the game has produced. I glanced at Mr Gilligan towards the end of the first day.

'We seem to be putting a team effort together very well today,' he said, breaking into the warmest smile.

A series of mini-partnerships punctuated the second day's play until Whysall and Kilner came together at 394 and carried the score to 527. Whysall, facing Kelleway, was out stumped as he overbalanced. It only cost him his wicket, for 76. Five and a half years later, he lost his balance on the dance floor. He injured his elbow. Then septicaemia set in. It cost him his life in hospital a fortnight later, at the age of 43. But mortality could not rob him, for a few precious days, of the joy of being in England's first — and overwhelming — victory against Australia since the war. The only unfortunate aspect of the innings was Gilligan's dismissal without scoring off Kelleway.

Spurred on by the comfort of 548 runs behind them, the English bowlers, Tate, Hearne and Kilner set about sending a steady procession of Australians back to the pavilion.

Taylor top-scored with 86, the only partnerships reaching fifty being the 61 that he made with Andrews and a late order rally with Gregory of 72. Though expensive, Woolley dismissed the top scorer. For a change, Tate had almost nothing to do, bowling only 16 eight ball overs. Rain delayed play on the third day. This was one of the times when Gilligan seemed to have complete command over the game, and luck as well. Hearne, with his flighty leg breaks, and Kilner with a rare confidence that slowed runs at his end to a trickle, bowled half the overs of the innings between them. Once the rain fell, it was a little while before the run ups were dry enough to suit the fast men.

Bowling to a team following on, Tate broke through the pain barrier to dismiss opener Bardsley without scoring. Then, with only five runs still on the board, Kilner dismissed Collins. Gregory, elevated to number three, and Taylor made another 64 runs together before Kilner snared the fast bowler. Ryder and Taylor strung together another 64 runs before Woolley dismissed the double centurion of the previous Test. Mr Gilligan, his fitness in considerable doubt, bowled enough overs to dismiss Taylor, who top scored, with a ball that jumped from a length and flew to slip. Wickets continued to fall at regular intervals, Ponsford and Arthur Richardson batting down the list and failing.

Excitement in the English room among those of us not in the eleven mounted as wickets continued to fall. When Tate bowled Oldfield, so troublesome in earlier Tests, our England had overcome their opposition by an innings and 29 runs. No bowler had worked so hard for so long for the eventual team reward as Tate. He ended with five wickets for 75. Ironically, his seven wickets in the match were fewer than his haul in any other of the Tests on this tour but the third, when he was unfit.

Never have I felt so much joy among players. The series was lost. This should have been a let down, the mission already a failure.

‘Men, it is time for a drink’, said Mr Gilligan as he entered the dressing room after fending off excited fans with a sense of history.

I should mention that Herbie Collins was one of the first to come into the rooms to congratulate the team.

‘Lads, make the most of it,’ he said. ‘You won fair and square. It’s been a long time. You’ve worked hard. Seize the moment, but I’ll bet any of you a quid or two you won’t win the next Test in Sydney.’

Collins shook hands all round.

‘I’m glad you weren’t out there bowling,’ he said to me. ‘You’d have spun it a mile.’

Another lasting memory I had of this game was the wicket keeping by Oldfield and Strudwick. The Australian man completed no less than four stumpings in England’s only innings to dismiss Hobbs, Woolley, Chapman and Whysall. And he caught Gilligan for that unfortunate duck. Without him, England might have batted another day or so. Strudwick completed only three catches in the two innings. But he managed to adjust superbly to a wicket that kept changing pace and bounce, first dry, then wet, slow and with awkward bounce. Once the pitch started drying, some balls took off. Under these difficult conditions, Strudwick looked completely composed, encouraging his bowlers, doing his utmost to ensure that Australia would have no escape.

Now England could savour victory and reflect on the ingredients of success, of which team play is indispensable. If we need any confirmation of cricket as a team game, the following story, as told by Arthur Gilligan and cited in *Wisden*, Tate’s captain at Sussex, should do the job:

Tate, I must say at once, was the greatest bowler our county has produced. Curiously, when I first played for Sussex, Maurice used the same run-up and style of delivery as his father — a slow bowler! A sheer piece of luck caused Maurice to change his methods. Sussex had batted very badly in 1922, and when we had a day off the whole team practised at the nets. Maurice Tate bowled me several of his slow deliveries, then down came a quick one which spreadeagled my stumps. He did this three times. I went up to him and said, ‘Maurice, you must change your style of bowling immediately.’ My hunch paid. In the next match against Kent at Tunbridge Wells, Maurice, in his new style as a

quick bowler, was unplayable. He took three wickets in four balls and eight in the innings for 67. That was the turning-point in his career.

By the end of the Fourth Test, Tate had taken 29 wickets in the series. And so Gilligan's contribution to the campaign of 1924-25 was much greater than his own batting and bowlings figures could ever reveal.

The Fourth Test

England won by an innings and 29 runs

England

1st

J. B. Hobbs	st. Oldfield b. Ryder	66
H. Sutcliffe	lbw b. Mailey	143
J.W. Hearne c.	c. Bardsley b. Richardson	44
F.E. Woolley	st. Oldfield b. Mailey	40
Mr. A.P.F.	st. Oldfield b. Mailey	12
E. Hendren	b. Ryder	65
W. Whysall	st. Oldfield b. Kelleway	76
Mr. A.E.R. Gilligan	c. Oldfield b. Kelleway	0
R. Kilner	lbw b. Kelleway	74
M.W. Tate	c. Taylor b. Mailey	8
H. Strudwick	not out	7
	Extras	13
	Total	548

Fall of wickets: (1): 126, 232, 289, 307, 346, 394, 527, 527, 548.

	O.	M.	R.	W.
Gregory	22	1	102	0
Kelleway	29	5	70	3
Mailey	43.6	2	186	4
Ryder	25	3	83	2
A. Richardson	26	8	76	1
Collins	6	1	18	0

Australia

1st

H.L. Collins	c. Kilner b. Tate	22
A.J. Richardson	b. Hearne	19
J. Ryder	b. Tate	0
W.W. Bardsley	run out	24
W.H. Ponsford	c. Strudwick b. Hearne	21
J.M. Taylor	c. Hendren b. Woolley	86
T. Andrews	c. Hearne b. Kilner	35
C. Kelleway	lbw b. Kilner	1
J.M. Gregory	c. Woolley b. Hearne	38
W.A. Oldfield	c. Chapman b. Kilner	3
A.A. Mailey	not out	4
	Extras	16
	Total	269

Fall of wickets: (1): 38, 38, 64, 74, 109, 170, 172, 244, 257, 269.

	O.	M.	R.	W.
Tate	16	2	70	2
Gilligan	6	1	24	0
Hearne	19.3	1	77	3
Kilner	13	1	29	3
Woolley	9	1	53	1

2nd

c. Whysall b. Kilner	1
lbw b. Hearne	3
lbw b. Woolley	38
b. Tate	0
b. Tate	19
c. Woolley b. Gilligan	68
c. Strudwick b. Tate	3
c. Strudwick b. Tate	42
c. Sutcliffe b. Kilner	45
b. Tate	8
not out	8
Extras	15

(2): 5, 5, 69, 133, 190, 195, 215, 234, 238, 250..

O.	M.	R.	W.
25.5	6	75	5
7	0	26	1
20	0	76	1
16	3	41	2
6	0	17	1

A NEW ERA BECKONS

You may by now think that there is little more to tell about this tour. Two new Australians entered the team for the Fifth Test, both worthy of mention. Humbled by defeat, the Australians fronted up for the Fifth Test a fortnight later by including Kippax and Grimmett in place of Arthur Richardson and Bardsley. Clarrie Grimmett, having migrated first from New Zealand to Victoria, and then to Adelaide, had changed the half-life of visiting Sheffield Shield players who came to take on South Australia. Vic Richardson once counted on spending two days in the field per opposition innings. He maintained that Grimmett cut that to a day. Now, at the age of 33, Grimmett had the opportunity to play for his adopted country. And I will write of Kippax's elegant cameo in a moment.

Collins walked out to toss the coin. After winning it, he walked in again, and prepared for battle. A few minutes and three runs later, he was back in the pavilion, a victim of a heartened Gilligan. Ryder and Gregory put on 52 before they were dismissed within a few runs of one another. The team scratched around against Kilner and Tate, reaching five for 103 with the dismissals of Taylor and Andrews.

Then new boys Kippax and Ponsford came together. Kippax cover drove overpitched deliveries with elegance and pulled anything short with grace. Ponsford worked his broad bat effectively, exuding an aura of impregnability that had broken the heart of many a bowler on the first class circuit around Australia. Their contrasting styles bemused the bowlers, who felt that no common plan would suffice to dismiss both. After doubling the team score, Kippax's defence finally wilted against Kilner's persistence. When Ponsford and Kelleway both fell with the score on 239, Oldfield added 25 with Mailey followed by 31 with Grimmett. Kilner and Tate matched one another almost ball for ball, wicket for

wicket and run for run in the final analysis, with four wickets each for 92 and 97 respectively.

Sensation followed. Having scored 560 runs in the first four Tests, Hobbs was caught behind off Gregory without scoring. Sandham, scarred by his unsatisfactory monastic experience in the most tender moments of the previous Test, was run out with only 15 runs on the team ledger. And Woolley dithered around, afraid to loft the ball in the dire circumstances. Sutcliffe, with 712 runs in the first four Test, was caught off Kelleway, leaving his team at three for 28. Woolley and Hendren tried to restore respectability, but Gregory snared the latter for 10. Hearne and Woolley built the score to 96 before a new phenomenon bedevilled the English cause. Grimmett, observing the long lunge forward of the left hander, deceived Woolley with a perfectly flighted leg break that dropped, then spun in just enough to dismantle the off stump. Then he sent Hearne on his way, lbw. Except for Tate and Kilner, the rest of the team folded without a whimper.

Grimmett, in his first innings of Test bowling, from just 95 deliveries took five wickets for 45. This was the man who had crossed the Tasman with the hope and rare determination of rising out of obscurity. His only real success in Victoria was against South Australia. So he hopped on the train and travelled west, believing that there he would be respected. Then the Australian cricketing fraternity trembled at its foundations, at least for a week or two. Outclassed for years by the cricketing talent of New South Wales and Victoria, South Australia now defeated New South Wales. It was the state's first win in a Sheffield Shield game since 1913-14 — given that war suspended competition for three seasons, that meant seven whole seasons without a victory. The hero was Grimmett, who took nine wickets in the game for 146. A few weeks' later, he was in the Test team.

Jack Gregory opened the batting in Australia's second innings. Gilligan found enough pace and heart to bowl Jack's partner, Ryder, for seven. Andrews strode in at number three, not the biggest name in the game, but with an aura of confidence befitting a man captaining New South Wales at a time when its only real competition came from

Victoria. It took two more seasons before these premier states had to take South Australia seriously, when Grimmett bowled and the Richardsons batted the state to glory, winning the Sheffield Shield. I hasten to add that I consulted *Wisden*, not my memory, for this detail. That is not the full story, of course. Several other players in the South Australian team had the best season of their lives and made important contributions.

Soon, Hearne, with surprisingly little success during the tour, trapped a lumbering Gregory lbw. In strode Taylor, already with over 500 runs for the series. He and Andrews grafted their way to 110. It was team cricket, a little dull, designed to wear down the stamina of even Tate. The great bowler soldiered on, his boots modified to cope with the hard Australian turf. Then Strudwick, courageously standing at the wicket as Tate hovered around at a fast-medium pace, stumped Taylor. Ponsford, a good and faithful servant to the team for the entire series, had a communication mix-up with his interstate colleague, Andrews. He was run out with the score at 130, just 258 runs ahead. Kippax, after such an elegant beginning to his Test career, was wiled out by a flighty delivery from Woolley. Collins, lowered to number seven, set about slowing the procession to the pavilion, but not before Hearne dismissed Andrews for 80, more than half the team's score. Kelleway and Collins carried the score to 209, before Tate dismissed the captain. Almost inevitably, the English now faced the frustration of a century partnership for the eighth wicket between Kelleway and Oldfield. They were content to play out over after over from Kilner, taking liberties with Hearne. As ever, it seemed, Gilligan was unable to bowl late in the innings. He stood by in frustration, a great leader who yearned to lead by example but could not. Then he tossed the ball to Tate. At 325, with a lead of 453, the heroic opening bowler took his third, fourth and fifth wickets of the innings, finally finding the rhythm that made him unplayable even in good batting conditions. Tate's 38 wickets in five Tests was a record for an English bowler on an Australian tour that still stands.

Then, their spirit and stamina sapped by a long and luckless campaign, Hobbs, stumped off Grimmett, and Sutcliffe, bowled by Gregory, were back in the pavilion with only 15 runs on the board. Never have I felt a greater certainty that the end of game was nigh,

even though only two men were out. Only Woolley, Hearne and Tate passed 20 as Grimmett, with six for 37, ably supported by the other bowlers delighted with the new string in their bow, brought a sudden end to the conflict with only 146 runs scored. The innings lasted only 45 overs.

Was Mr Gilligan depressed by all this? Not on your life. At the end of the game, he paid tribute to the team, giving special praise to Tate, Sutcliffe and Hobbs. He mentioned what a privilege it was to captain such a team of fighters, a team that lost consecutive Tests by 193 runs, 81 runs and 11 runs. 193 runs not a convincing margin, you ask? In a game in which one team scored 902 runs and the other 709 runs, the gap does not appear quite so considerable, considering that 189 of those 902 came in Australia's two last wicket partnerships.

Was Australia the better team? To this day, I believe that their bowling was a little thin. They were fortunate for the heroics of Gregory and Mailey. It was a case of two bowlers who conceded plenty of runs, but nevertheless were still capable of snaring vital wickets. Mailey's stamina and humour are enduring memories of the tour. After bowling over after over during the series, he still found the creativity before bedtime to create amusing cartoons about the on-field battles. These appeared in the daily newspapers. He took pity on the spectators, as they watched contests enter the seventh day. He drew batsman with cobwebs on them. Where the battle bordered on the tedious, he injected humour. He was so much a figure of a glorious age of cricket, an age that is now forgotten in the modern era of professionalism. And I am not sure that his value to the team was fully appreciated by all scribes. Jack Gregory performed every deed on the cricket field with unmatched passion. The idea of dropping his pace and tightening his bowling was rather foreign to his style. I have seen him bowl in this manner, particularly when there signs that he was succumbing to exhaustion. But the Gregorian spark was ever-present. He was never what the modern writers call a 'percentage player'. He aimed always to give everything.

The Australians were lucky to have Kelleway in the team. He always gave the impression of bowling above himself. His best effort in a single Test was four in the Third, yet he

managed 14 wickets for the series. I can remember spells from him where he did not look like taking a wicket, but I cannot him ever bowling badly. Sometimes he was barely medium pace, but the team told me that most of the time, he was decidedly brisk. Arthur Richardson managed to slow the runs when bowling, but that was of no concern to seasoned professionals who were prepared to wait for the loose one. Anyone observing the Fourth Test in isolation, when Gregory failed to take a wicket, would have regarded the Australian bowling as unbalanced. With a left arm orthodox bowler in place of the tight but unpenetrative Richardson, the team might have been about right. Grimmett did much to bring balance to the team, even though he, like Mailey, was a leg spinner. But unlike Mailey, he hardly bowled a bad ball, and his subtle variations were bewildering. All the same, my quiet misgivings that this bowling lineup would not succeed in England were justified on the tour of 1926 when in the Tests, most affected to some extent by rain, each wicket taken by Australia cost more than 50 runs. To put this in context, the Australian bowlers, who conceded 658, 494 and 903 in different innings of the 1938 tour when foolishly, they omitted Grimmett from the tour, took their wickets at a cheaper rate than the 1926 tourists.

The strength in the Australian team overwhelmingly was the depth in the batting. No fewer than ten players accumulated over 200 runs in the series, while an eleventh, Mailey, shared in that fateful century partnership for the last wicket in the First Test. A twelfth player, Kippax, shared in a century partnership in the last Test, while a thirteenth, Dr Hartkopf, scored an 80 in his only Test. That only two, Taylor and Ponsford, scored more than 400 runs for the series is immaterial. Every player in the batting did their job, despite the best efforts of the English bowlers and fielders.

For the English team, Sutcliffe and Hobbs made over 1300 runs between them, and were therefore good enough for three batsmen. Woolley and Hendren each scored over 300 runs, but after that, the pickings were slimmer. As for the bowling, that man Armstrong was correct. Kilner played in the three Tests after that reception where I met 'The Big Ship'. He took 17 wickets, fitting magnificently into the attack. With the bat, he made one reasonable score in five innings. Woolley never looked quite at ease bowling in the

Australian conditions, Hearne's wickets came dearly, except in two innings, and I have written quite enough about Mr Gilligan and Freeman.

What is the best way of illustrating that 4-1 was a totally misleading result? The simplest is to compare this series with the following tour in 1928-29, when England reversed the result by winning 4-1. On our tour, England's batting managed 34 runs per wicket while batting, compared with just over 36 runs for the Australians, a difference that is more consistent with a 3-2 result or a drawn series. Compare this with 1928-29, when England averaged over 43 runs per wicket, and Australia just 33. Averages on the latter tour reveal a gap between the teams that, in a game played over four innings to completion, would amount to 200 runs.

The Fifth Test

Australia won by 307 runs

Australia

1st	2nd
H.L. Collins c. Strudwick b. Gilligan 1	lbw b. Tate 28
J. Ryder b. Kilner 29	b. Gilligan 7
J.M. Gregory run out 29	lbw b. Hearne 22
T. Andrews c. Whysall b. Kilner 26	c. Woolley b. Hearne 80
J.M. Taylor c. Whysall b. Tate 15	st. Strudwick b. Tate 25
A. Kippax b. Kilner 42	c. Whysall b. Woolley 8
W.H. Ponsford c. Woolley b. Kilner 80	run out 5
C. Kelleway lbw b. Tate 9	c. Whysall b. Tate 73
W.A. Oldfield c. Strudwick b. Tate 29	not out 65
A.A. Mailey b. Tate 14	b. Tate 0
C. Grimmett not out 12	b. Tate 0
Extras 9	Extras 12
Total 295	Total 325

Fall of wickets: (1): 3, 55, 64, 99, 103, 208, 239, 239, 264, 295.

(2): 7, 43, 110, 130, 152, 156, 209, 325, 325, 325

	O.	M.	R.	W.	O.	M.	R.	W.
Tate	39.5	6	92	4	39.3	6	115	5
Gilligan	13	1	46	1	15	2	46	1
Kilner	38	4	97	4	34	13	54	0
Hearne	7	0	33	0	22	0	84	2
Woolley	5	0	18	0	8	1	14	1

England

1st	2nd
J. B. Hobbs c. Oldfield b. Gregory 0	st. Oldfield b. Grimmett 13
H. Sutcliffe c. Mailey b. Kelleway 22	b. Gregory 0
A. Sandham run out 4	lbw b. Grimmett 15
F.E. Woolley b. Grimmett 47	c. Andrews b. Kelleway 28
E. Hendren c. Ponsford b. Gregory 10	c. Oldfield b. Grimmett 10
J.W. Hearne lbw b. Grimmett 16	lbw b. Grimmett 24
W. Whysall lbw b. Grimmett 8	st. Oldfield b. Grimmett 18
R. Kilner st. Oldfield b. Grimmett 24	c. Ponsford b. Collins 1
M.W. Tate b. Ryder 25	c. Mailey b. Kelleway 33
Mr. A.E.R. Gilligan st. Oldfield b. Grimmett 5	not out 0
H. Strudwick not out 1	c. Mailey b. Grimmett 0
Extras 5	Extras 4
Total 167	Total 146

Fall of wickets: (1): 0, 15, 28, 58, 96, 109, 122, 157, 163, 167.

(2): 3, 31, 32, 60, 84, 99, 100, 146, 146, 146...

	O.	M.	R.	W.	O.	M.	R.	W.
Gregory	9	1	42	2	10	0	53	1
Kellway	15	2	38	1	7	1	16	2
Mailey	5	0	13	0				
Ryder	7	0	24	1				
Grimmett	11.7	3	45	5	19.4	3	37	6
Collins					8	2	36	1

AFTERMATH

What good, then, came from this tour for England? Above all, the Test team were worthy opponents. On their previous tour, they lost all five Tests by margins of 377 runs, an innings and 91 runs, 119 runs, eight wickets and nine wickets. This time, Australia somehow climbed out of precarious predicaments in two or three of the Tests to seize victory.

It was apparent that Australia's bowling stocks were on the wane. Mailey's 24 wickets cost over 41 runs each, Gregory's 22 around 37 runs each. Subsequent to this series, Australia toured England in 1926 with a bowling line up that did not cater well with the varying conditions. Arthur Richardson's cameo successes in 1924-25 gave him inflated potency in the eyes of captain Collins. This was to count against the Australians in the deciding Test of the rain-affected 1926 tour as Hobbs and Sutcliffe settled in on a wet pitch. For these professionals, gentle off spin was a godsend. They pretended to be in difficulty to keep Richardson bowling. Gregory's bowling lacked potency on English pitches. And Grimmett and Mailey had few telling spells between them.

Australia's luck was running out. England would win three of the next four series, despite the presence of a man by the name of Bradman in all but the first of these. A champion bowler, Larwood, would emerge for England in 1926 to provide Tate with much needed support. Gilligan became a selector for this series, beyond the rigours of bowling at the highest level. And Hammond would break all batting records in his first tour of Australia in 1928-29 (only to have each of his records shattered in 1930 in England by that genius from Bowral). With scores of 251, 200, 119 not out and 177, Hammond, with middle order support from Hendren, Jardine and Leyland, would turn the team, with Hobbs and Sutcliffe at the helm, into an awesome batting combination. The team passed 600 in an innings once, 500 twice (losing one of these Tests) and 400 on another occasion. They

won the First Test in 1928-29 by the astonishing margin of 675 runs, balancing at least one or two humiliations of the early 1920s. The triumph of 1928-29 would not have been possible without the confidence restored on the 1924-25 tour. In Adelaide, England scored 334 and 383 to win by 12 runs, atoning for the luckless 11 run loss on the previous tour.

Australia in vain turned to a 46 year old, Blackie, and, plumping for youth, a 45 year old, Ironmonger, finger spinners both, to assist Grimmett, already in his late 30s, on a mission out of control. Yes, this was the same Ironmonger whom I thought was getting on in years on our tour.

Jack Gregory, whose three wickets in England in 1926 cost 298 runs, bounded to the crease for the last time in cricket in the First Test of 1928-29. The doctor told Gregory that having wrecked his knee, he would never play cricket again. The man who played cricket with such unrestrained passion in each and every match broke down and cried in the dressing room. The English celebrated with stiff upper lips and a swag of centuries and double centuries, sheltered from the indignity of dodging and swaying on the back foot to deliveries steeping at their throats from a good length. And battle plans were easier to draw without Gregory's explosive batting or brilliant fielding and prolific catching. This was the man who, having taking the first nine wickets in a Sheffield Shield innings against South Australia, ran out the last man with a remarkable bit of fielding to deny himself the triumph of joining those first class bowlers who have dismissed all ten in an innings.

To summarise, the real achievement of 1924-25 was the restoration of English pride. Their first task was to play on equal terms. Without luck, they had to accept narrow defeats with dignity. In subsequent battles, they would avenge the indignities of the first two series following the War, and compete in some of the greatest battles that the game has witnessed.

I was but a small player, a passenger in a side that started the restoration. Cricket never became fully my life, but for a few glorious months on that tour of a lifetime, it was so. It would have been presumptuous of me to launch into prose at an earlier stage. In any case, with my school duties, there was never time for such a pursuit.

Since I am the last man alive from this tour, I think it appropriate to write a little of what became of the other players. I suppose I should confine my writing to the fate of players on tour. I see a need to devote at least a paragraph to Hammond. History may record that he should have taken my place on tour. He reached his absolute peak on the Australian tour subsequent to ours. There were many great moments in the years that followed. Then came a second War. Following that, Hammond, besieged with personal anxieties, led a group of men to Australia in 1946-47 who faced overpowering opposition. The captain made four fifties in 19 innings, including a century and double century. But he failed in the Tests. The ordeal, facing an Australian team brimming with spinners who could turn the ball prodigiously, fast bowlers who pounded the pitch relentlessly, batsmen who scored centuries seemingly at any position in the order, bowlers who could bat, batsmen who could bowl, fielders who could subdue missiles with their bare hands — it was enough to squeeze the final few drops of cricket out of that cricketing monolith, Walter Hammond. He moved to South Africa and bankrupted himself in the motor trade. That was such an unfair ending for such a great man, even more grievous when one thinks that he never fully recovered from severe injuries incurred in a car accident five years before his death. Rumour has it that drink was the undoing of him, and contributed to his inferior performances at the highest level late in his career. If this is true, I am inclined to think he was yet another victim of war, affected psychologically though not apparently broken by what he had to endure.

I feel aggrieved when I think of how Lord Harris did his utmost to sabotage Hammond's beginning with that bit of legalism about county boundaries. All that remains now are the fondest memories of those who saw Hammond bat, bowl and field. How right Viscount Cobham, former Worcestershire captain, was at the Hammond's memorial service in Bristol Cathedral. He mentioned that no one could evaluate the sum of human happiness created by the majesty of Hammond's cricket.

As for those players on tour, some might have thought that Hobbs' career was in twilight. Yet, between his 43rd and 46th birthdays, he scored 11,000 first class runs at an average in the 60s. This included a triple century for Surrey v. Middlesex, two masterly partnerships with Sutcliffe at the Oval in 1926 against Australia and in all, four Test centuries subsequent to the 1924-25 tour. His opening partner, Sutcliffe, became one of the most successful players against Australian Test bowling of all time. He averaged over 66 per innings against Australia, and 60.7 in all Test cricket. Both Hobbs and Sutcliffe knew how to exploit the lbw law that operated at the time: a ball pitching outside the line of the off stump could not provide an lbw dismissal.

Frank Woolley was a fine cricketer with forthright views. On the latter, in his retirement year, 1938, he told Norman Preston in an interview that before the First World War, there were around 30 county players up to Walter Hammond's standard. The Golden Age it might have been, but I think this a slight exaggeration (with due respect to those truly brilliant players Jessup, Foster, Rhodes, Braund and Barnes — but who were the other 25?). I understand from the Australian players I have spoken to over the years that Woolley intimidated them while batting, with his average against them of only 33 belying his true effect on Australian bowlers and fielders.

Elias Hendren sufficiently impressed the South Australian Cricket Association during our tour to become their coach on a five year contract in 1927-28. When the association would not grant him leave of absence to tour with England in 1928-29, he reluctantly terminated the contract. His 169 in the first innings of the Test series was some consolation for the damage to his financial security. He became the official scorer for Middlesex, but given his immense talent, his financial returns from the game were paltry. In 1960, when his health was failing, members of Lords took up a collection for him.

Maurice Tate became the first nightwatchman in Test history to score a century, against South Africa in 1929. He would have taken many more wickets if short legs had been in use in his time, as balls rearing surprisingly from a length and taking the edge of the bat fell harmlessly on the leg side. As England's bowling stocks strengthened, Tate's role

declined. In 1928-29, White, Larwood and Geary took their share of the wickets to fall. Astonishingly, Tate still bowled over 4,000 deliveries on tour, as he had in 1924-25. And by 1932-33, when Larwood, Voce and Bowes had reasoned that it was more blessed to belt a batsman's brains out than to think him out, Tate bowled only 775 balls on tour, just 45 more than he bowled in the First Test of 1924-25.

Captain Gilligan's best playing days plainly were behind him by the time our tour commenced, due to the injury I have already discussed. His successor on the 1928-29 tour, Percy Chapman, will be remembered most for winning back the Ashes as captain in the final Test of 1926 and then for retaining them in 1928-29. His own playing record, while sound, was clearly inferior to that of most professionals who played in the English Test team at the time. Hobbs respected him deeply for being willing to consult the professionals in the team on tactical matters. I played enough times with him at Kent to appreciate what an outstanding personality and leader he was.

Strudwick, the durable wicketkeeper, died a few days after his 90th birthday in 1970. For many years, he held the record the number of first class dismissals. In the 1959 *Wisden*, he wrote an excellent article on the plight of professional cricketers in his younger days. He dared not stand down for injury, fearing losing his place in the side and his pay. Keepers' equipment in his early days was flimsy, and the job punishing, particularly as the tracks were far from perfect.

Some argue that Sandham was a trifle unlucky to commence his career fighting for a place in the strong Surrey side. In addition, like many others on the 1924-25 tour, the War robbed him of some of his best playing days. On the basis of his retrospective Test triple century, his supporters also believe that Sutcliffe prevented him from cementing a regular spot as an opener in the Test side. Perhaps Sandham is best thought of as an admirable foil for Hobbs, as his opening partner for Surrey. They managed a century for the first wicket 63 times together. Sandham made 107 centuries in all. In many respects, his record stands as that of the quintessential county professional.

John Hearne was one of Middlesex's greater all-rounders. He scored 37,252 runs at an average of 41, and captured 1,839 wickets at a cost of 24.4. His Test record was that of a useful rather than great player, with 806 runs at an average of 26 and 30 wickets costing 48.7 apiece. His only Test century came before the War, at Melbourne in 1911-12.

On tour there were unfortunate souls whose lives thereafter were all too brief. Roy Kilner carried on with a distinguished county career, scoring consistently for another three seasons. In both 1925 and 1926, he took more than 100 wickets but in 1927, his bowling had lost its sting. It is to his credit that he took up bowling after the War, doing so in response to the retirement of Drake and Hirst at Yorkshire, plus the death of Booth in the Battle of Lens. Sadly, in April of 1928, he died of enteritis, aged 37.

William Whysall was a curiosity, a late maturing cricketer. He cemented his place in the Notts side after the War when in his mid-thirties. For five consecutive summers, he passed 2,000 runs. I will remember him most for his heroic 75 in the Adelaide Test when the cause was lost by 11 runs. In 1929, at the age of 41, he scored 2,716 runs. Then, in 1930, he scored hundreds in four consecutive innings. In October of that year, he injured his elbow in a fall on the dance floor. Septicaemia cost him his life on Remembrance Day a couple of weeks later.

A month after Whysall's demise, John Douglas, former captain of England, drowned in a collision between two steamships. He won a boxing bout against the Australian 'Snowy' Baker in the 1908 Olympics. Thanks to Foster and Barnes, he won the Ashes in 1911-12. After the War, he was captain of England during the 5-nil loss to Australia in 1920-21. On our tour, his role was tiny compared with that of previous campaigns, in terms of runs scored and wickets taken. His playing role came to an end on our tour following a collision between a car and a Chinese gardener's wagonette. The collision occurred in pouring rain. The wagonette allegedly was on the wrong side of the road and had no lights. A Mr Baker, who was driving J.W.H.T. at the time, was impaled on the shaft of the wagonette, a grisly end. The only reason I remember this is that I assumed captaincy

of the England XI playing at the time, as Mr Douglas, appointed captain for the game, obviously was unable to continue.

Fielders who refused to hang onto catches inadvertently sabotaged Harry Howell's Test career. He toured Australia in 1924-25, being the only player other than me not to play a Test. I believe he deserved a chance in at least one Test, given that only Kilner provided penetrative support to Tate in the Tests. Possibly, he had lost a yard or two of pace by the time we toured. It was Howell who opened the bowling with Calthorpe when Warwickshire lost to Hampshire by 155 runs after dismissing the opposition for 15 in their first innings. Howell was several months short of 42 when he died on July 9, 1932.

Richard Tyldesley played one Test on our tour for no reward. Recalled in 1930 to the team to play Australia, he took seven wickets at an average of 33. In all first class cricket, he took 1,513 wickets. He was one of four brothers (and six Tyldesleys in all) to play for Lancashire. He died September 17, 1943, aged 45.

POSTSCRIPT

by Barry Briars

J.L. Bryan contributed much to my education through the leisure hours he spent in my company and his financial support after my own family fell on hard times. Not only did he contribute to tutoring fees in my university days at Cambridge, but he also paid for several trips from Australia to England. I cannot in a few words do justice to his moulding of me. Without his support, I doubt if I would have ever left Australian shores, let alone undertaken a considerable part of formal schooling in the Mother Country.

Before I venture into my explanation of why J.L. never finished this manuscript (for what you read, incomplete as it may be, is the product of a considerable amount of editing on my part), I will recall the essence of a number of conversations I had with J.L. about Australia. To be honest, the country failed to impress him. He felt that it was uncivilised. The white population, he believed, had assumed control of the land in the space of little more than 100 years without in any way demonstrating that they were worthy custodians. Australian men believed in something they called “mateship”. To J.L., this implied that they were anti-intellectual, brutally suppressing their own emotions, believing that they were pioneers: I think J.L. believed that this meant development of the land had to take place at all costs, and that any person not comfortable with this view was a bludger, a parasite, to be held in contempt within the community. At the time of his visit, the British Empire was still relatively dominant in world affairs, although the Boer War and then World War I had rocked the Empire and sent signals that it was no longer the pre-eminent power on the world stage. Hints of this come out in J.L.’s manuscript, in the poor performances of the English cricket in the first two series after the War, and in the fate of several players of the 1894-95 tour. Essentially, World War I ended much of the romance associated with cricket and replaced it with something more brutal. Boys’ own stories would remain part of the imagination, as an escape from the horrors of war, and from the responsibilities of manhood, notably the emotional dimension of life, especially

relationships with women. That is not to say that J.L. did not occasionally yearn for a “boys’ own” world. Rather, he had the sense to know how such a perspective could take one through life. He often confided that cricket was the most gender-exclusive of all activities, both in its ritual and in the time it took out of one’s life. When I mentioned the growing status of women’s cricket, he would respond simply by suggesting that women who played the game at a higher level lived a little like their male counterparts, to the exclusion of family-related activities.

Shortly before his death J.L. left me in charge of this manuscript, agreeing that it was incomplete and idiosyncratic. Despite his scholarly perspective, which considerably eased the burden of writing, somehow this was a surprisingly unnatural task for him. I believe this is so because he treated cricket as a form of recreation, quite distinct from his scholarly pursuits. He thought that cricket books were best written by cricketers themselves, quite an advance on the thinking of his own age, when professionals were the second class, uneducated citizens who did the hard work while the amateurs lorded it over them. Yet, typical of the contradictions of the man, J.L. adored the writings of non-cricketer Neville Cardus. In any case, J.L. wanted to play the game rather than write about it.

A belief that I developed over time was the J.L. was not a frustrated cricketer. He played *more* cricket than he cared for, not less. His problem was that he was so gifted that he had to vote himself out of the team in order to miss out. I think he really wanted to be a great scholar, not the sort who wins the admiration of friends and colleagues in a small setting, for plainly he there he was better than most of us as a scholar. It became evident to me over time that he looked up to, and perhaps was even jealous of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. He too spent a little time creating mythical worlds but, rather like his cricket scribing, he was too shy and never quite managed to bring a project to completion. He met Tolkien once, at least, and particularly after the death of the great author, never tired of recalling the meeting.

I would to have followed up on some of the controversies alluded to by J.L. in this manuscript. He never told me who the player was embroiled in a romance on tour, although he assured me that more than mere flirtation took place. As far as I could surmise from his vague recollections of the issue, the woman in question carried the cricketer's child. The baby was brought up in the woman's family as a younger sister in the manner with which such indiscretions were dealt in such times. Concerning the woman's identity, she was not in the Douglas clan, though she may have been a family friend.

As is evident in the manuscript, J.L. felt some resentment at the attempts of Gilligan and Toone to bring a political dimension to the tour of Australia. Toone passed away not too many years after the tour, so how his beliefs may have changed is of little consequence. What happened to Gilligan is of more interest. It took him a number of years to recant his views on fascism, though it now seems that he shared some political opinions with erstwhile royalty at the time. The slightest hint of Gilligan's political leanings at any social gathering after the World War II was enough to bring shame to his countenance. My own observations are that Gilligan and J.L. maintained an awkward friendship in the years after the tour, which warmed considerably once Gilligan's politics had been purged by events on the world stage.

It is quite extraordinary that J.L. even bothered trying to piece notes together from his tour. By his own volition, he was the least important player on the tour. Indeed, it appears that he was chosen on the strength of form displayed three years before the tour commenced, rather than the 1924 season immediately preceding the tour. How ironical it was that he was called on to act as captain in one game after Douglas' involvement in a motor accident. Any number of the gifted professionals on tour would have had a greater practical knowledge of the game, and would have been more suitable leaders. Indeed, the biographies of most men on the tour could be gleaned to a large extent from the records of their first class cricketing careers. Not so for J.L. He defined himself as a teacher first, and a frustrated scholar second.

I remember one conversation I had with J.L. in his later years concerning cricket. This was after the West Indies had terrified the English players in the summer of 1976, through the express speed of Roberts, Holding and Daniel, with support from various fast-medium bowlers. The manager of the West Indies team, Clyde Walcott, asserted that spin bowling was obsolete, that professional players had no need to leave their creases and take risks. J.L. looked me in the eye and said calmly, "One reasonable leg-spinner might be enough to make those people who think spin bowling is dead eat their words." No support for J.L.'s reply emerged immediately on the world cricket stage. I think rather that the truth in this response took years, if not decades, to emerge. In any case, J.L.'s faith in the future of spin bowling showed a fine understanding of the game at a time when certain skills were unfashionable.

It is with a little reluctance that I submit this to the publishers. The story may be compelling for some, but it tells us little of the man. I do not feel that it is my place as custodian of his story to write too much concerning him. From his grave, J.L. may reluctantly agree that he used his talents well. From the perspective of many of his peers, he was brilliant in everything he did. By his own perhaps too severe standards, he was mediocre: a cricketer outshone by many, a scholar who ultimately grew a little stale in his teaching post. These would be his own judgments, not those of anyone else, but not to allude to them however fleetingly would be to prevent J.L.'s story from being told.