

Chapter 7

Cricket and the War Years 1910 - 1919



Club stalwart E. S. Phillips topped the 1st X1 batting averages in 1914 before being tragically killed early in the First World War in Flanders (1915)



1910's & 1920's



Before and after the First World War Before and after the First World War

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1910

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1913

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1914



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Newport Veterans

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1915-1918 1921

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1919

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1922

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1924

- 50th Anniversary of Newport Athletic Club.
- Freehold of the grounds purchased by NAC from Lord Tredegar.
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1926

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The 'Historic' Rodney Parade Ground



Rodney Parade – Cricket Before 'The First World War' (1910 - 1919)

In 1910, L.F Stedman was re-elected Captain, with D. J. Davies 2nd X1 (after being Capt of the 3rd X1 for ten years) and Bryce Duckham the 3rds. Tom Blandford was Thursday X1 Captain. The 1st X1 played 18, won 8, lost 5 and drew 5. Silverlock had returned to Newport and was re-engaged as a Professional, scoring 110 v Clifton and topping the bowling averages. Rainsford was also engaged as a Professional, giving useful service with both bat and ball. Diver produced some excellent wickets and did good service with the bat in his role as Groundsman/Professional. The 1st X1 Average Bat was won by F. Gordon-Phillips (25.7).

In 1911, L. Foster Stedman was re-elected as Captain of the 1st X1 for a tenth consecutive season, and the 1st X1 playing record was played 20, won 10, lost 3 and drew 7. The Average Bats were won by E.S. Phillips (23.4), G. Shrubsole 2nd X1 (39.2) and captain of the 3rd X1 W. J Martin (35.5). Silverlock, Rainsford and Diver were retained as Professionals.

In 1912, all Captains were re-appointed (L. F. Stedman, D.J. Davies and W. J. Martin). In a very wet season the 1st X1 played 15, won 6, lost 6, drew 3. The Average Bat was won by Frank Rees (13.3). Silverlock and Diver were both retained as Professionals but Rainsford was replaced by Harold Taylor, a right arm fast bowler from the Liverpool groundstaff, but he wasn't a success.

In 1913, L. Foster Stedman relinquished the captaincy after a period of 11 consecutive seasons as 1st X1 captain and was replaced by F. Gordon Phillips and the playing record was played 15, won 8, lost 3 and drew 4. L. Foster Stedman came to Newport in the early nineties, from Lincolnshire, where he played Second Class County Cricket. He was *'a good, forceful bat, and could score fast when he got going. He was also an excellent bowler, right arm medium to fast, and always bowled around the wicket, his most dangerous ball being one which got up and went away quickly, getting him a lot of wickets. He had a very cheery personality, was liked by everybody, and was one of the most popular captains the club has ever had. It will not be out of place to state that Monmouthshire County Cricket Club also benefitted by his knowledge and love of the game, as he captained the County X1, and was also secretary for many years'*. No one has equalled his record of Captaincy in the club's history, captaining the 1st X1 from 1902 - 1912. The Average Bat was won by E. S. Phillips (33.4). In addition to Silverlock and Diver, Sidney Corbett, a medium left arm bowler, from the Edgbaston groundstaff, was also engaged as a Professional with Silverlock scoring 108 v Clifton and 123 n.o v Cardiff.

Newport 1st X1 v Newport Veterans (2nd July, 1914)

F. Gordon Phillips was re-elected as Captain in 1914, with Bryn Phillips and H. Berrow captaining the 2nds and 3rds respectively. Tom Blandford was still captaining the Thursday X1. The 1st X1 played 16, won only 6, lost 6 and drew 4. Both E. S. Phillips and Silverlock scored centuries, Phillips 100n.o v Gloucester and Silverlock 116 n.o v Cheltenham. E. S. Phillips won the Average Bat. Silverlock and Diver were still engaged as Professionals and were joined by Brown, a young professional, who took 59 wickets (Av.13.8). An interesting game took place this season, when on July 2nd the 1st X1 played a team of Newport Veterans, which comprised of Messrs. G. F. Harding, Fred Phillips, T. C. Graham, L. F. Walker, G. Ll. Lloyd, H. H. Clay, Dick Steeples, E. J. Diver, L. F. Stedman, Dr Moynan, Frank Rees, W. Clifford Phillips, J. H. Stratton, Aubrey Butler, A. J. Gould, J. E. C. Partridge and T. Blandford. They were all out for 89 (G. Ll. Lloyd 32), while Newport scored 151 for 7 wickets, Silverlock top scoring with 63 runs. This would have been the last time that these players were together, as the match was played just before the First World War broke out in August 1914. Several players (including E. S. Phillips and his brother Leslie) were killed in action and didn't return.

'The First World War' (1914 - 1918)

On 4th August 1914 World War 1 broke out, at which point all summer sports matches were abandoned. The grounds were used by Newport Volunteer Training Corps, 1st Battalion Mon. Regiment, the 12th Battalion S.W.B., 3rd Gwent Battalion, and Royal Naval Division, for training. In an extract taken from Newport Athletic Club '1875 - 1925' entitled 'Cricket In The NAC' written by H. Berrow, the author commented *'During the years of War, 1915 - 1918, no cricket was played on the Ground, the staff were cut down to a minimum, and in consequence of this period of inactivity the grounds etc, suffered badly. The wooden fences around the cricket field decayed and became dilapidated, with the result that the general public entered the ground and did considerable damage'*.

The Ravages of War Claims Many Victims

In addition to the deterioration of the Rodney Parade ground, the War saw the tragic loss of many of Newport's best cricketers. Among them was E.S Phillips who ended the 1914 season at the top of the batting averages, tragically it was his last season as he was killed in action early in the First World War. The Outbreak of War also saw the end of Silverlock who had strode the stage since 1892. He would have been 51 years of age by the time cricket was resumed in 1919. He eventually retired to rural Essex where with cricket and angling as his main interests he lived until 1949.



Newport Cricket Club 'Teams of The Past'

Newport Cricket Club 1st XI 1914



Newport C.C.'s 1914 team includes two great Newport Professionals - Back Row (L - R) Edwin Diver (6th from Left), Arthur Silverlock (7th from Left).

Other important Newport Cricketers on the photo are :- Newport Captain F. Gordon Phillips (Front Centre) who Captained the Club twice (1913 & 1914) immediately before the First World War and a further three times (1919, 1920 & 1921) straight after the War.

Other important figures in the photo are Frank Rees (Front - 1st from left), E. S. Phillips (Front - 2nd from left), T. B. Williams (Front - extreme right). Also in the photo is Wales Rugby legend, George Boots (Back row, extreme left) who was the Umpire.

Newport Cricket Club 1st XI v Newport Veterans (1914)

Newport 1st Team (1914)

Newport 1st Team Players

The 1914 Newport Team photo could have been the last photo taken of the team before the War. Several players (including E. S. Phillips and his brother Leslie) were killed in action and didn't return.

Arthur Silverlock



- ◆ Silverlock commenced his career at Newport in 1892 and continued until 1914.
- ◆ No other cricketer in South Wales, enjoyed the reputation that Silverlock built up.
- ◆ Silverlock scored 33,000 runs and took 2,400 wickets for Newport & Monmouthshire – a truly wonderful record!
- ◆ He also played for South Wales.
- ◆ Next to S.F. Barnes, Silverlock was regarded as the greatest Minor County player and close to being the best player never to have played First Class County cricket.

Edwin Diver



- ◆ In 1903, Diver joined Silverlock and Steeples, as Club coach and wk/batsman
- ◆ Diver had First Class experience with both Surrey and Warwickshire
- ◆ He was one of a very few players who played for both the 'Players' and the 'Gentlemen'.
- ◆ Diver was appointed Coach/Groundsman when John Butcher retired in 1905. The ground soon improved and became one of the finest grounds in the UK.

Frank Rees



- ◆ Played more cricket for Newport than any other man.
- ◆ An attractive batsman, topping the averages as far back as 1889
- ◆ He won the Average Bat on no fewer than ten occasions, with the latest date he won it being in 1912 – a wonderful record.
- ◆ 'When he finished he was still batting in quite his old style'. (H. Berrow).



Newport 1st Team (1914) & The Phillips (Brewing) Family

There was a long association between Newport Cricket Club and the Phillips Brewing Family. Fred and Edward Phillips donated £708 in 1900 in memory of their father Thomas to build the Rodney Parade Pavilion.

E. S. Phillips (Son of Edward Phillips)



- ◆ Topped the Newport batting averages in his last season in 1914 - tragically killed in action early in the First World War.
- ◆ He won the Average Bat three times in his last four seasons (1911, 1913 & 1914)
- ◆ With Silverlock, he put up many fine partnerships, including 284 for Monmouthshire when they beat Glamorgan by an innings in 1905 - Silverlock 155n.o., E. S. Phillips 133n.o.
- ◆ He was regarded as the best amateur batsman the Club had
- ◆ Backbone of Monmouthshire cricket - Captain and Secretary

F. Gordon Phillips (Son of Fred Phillips)



- ◆ Son of Fred Phillips and cousin of E. S. Phillips.
- ◆ Captained the Club in 1913 and 1914, before War broke out.
- ◆ Re-elected Captain to lead the Club in 1919 when cricket resumed after the War - Bryn Phillips took charge for most of the season, due to the late demobilisation of the captain.
- ◆ He was also elected Captain in 1920 & 1921

Other members of the Phillips Family also played for Newport C.C. :-

HCB Phillips, W.C. Phillips, O. Phillips, M.T. Phillips, Leslie Phillips, P.C. Phillips, The Phillips Family even had their own Cricket team who played at Rodney Parade.



Is the elderly gentleman on the back row (extreme right) Fred Phillips (66 in 1924)?

Could the other very old gentleman in the front row (L - R : 4th from left) be Fred Phillips' brother Edward Phillips (70 in 1924)? He died later that year on November 24th, 1924.

PHILLIPS AND SONS. C. C. 1924.

Newport Cricket Club 'Teams of The Past'

Newport Cricket Club - Veterans Team 1914



Many famous names of the past played in the Veterans team, including two great Newport Professionals :-
Dick Steeples (Back Row - 4th from left) and Edwin Diver (Back Row - 6th from left).

Other important Newport Cricketers on the photo are :- Frank Rees, Fred Phillips, L. Foster Stedman (Captain for 11 consecutive years from 1902 - 1912. Five Wales Rugby legends who played/umpired for Newport Cricket Club are also in the photo - George Boots Umpire. (Back Row - 1st from left), G. Ll. Lloyd, T. C. Graham, G. F. Harding and Wales Rugby Great A. J. Gould.



Newport Veterans Team v Newport 1st XI (1914)



Newport Veterans (1914)

A Newport Veterans C.C team reassembled to play a match against a Newport 1st Team on July 2nd 1914.

This photo would have been the last time that these players were together, as the match was played just before the First World War broke out in August 1914.

Newport Veterans Players

Fred Phillips



- ◆ Fred Phillips was a member of the famous Phillips Brewing Family in Newport.
- ◆ With brother Edward they made a large donation (£708 in 1900) to the Club towards the building of the new Cricket Pavilion in 1901.
- ◆ The donation was made in memory of their father, Thomas Phillips, who was known to all members, as a keen sportsman and a staunch supporter of the Club.
- ◆ Fred Phillips became Mayor of Newport in 1905.

L. Foster Stedman



- ◆ No one has equalled L. Foster Stedman's record of Captaincy in the club's history, captaining the 1st XI for 11 consecutive seasons, from 1902 - 1912.
- ◆ Monmouthshire County Cricket Club also benefitted by his knowledge and love of the game, captaining the County XI.
- ◆ He was also Monmouthshire secretary for many years.

Dick Steeples



- ◆ Appointed as Newport's professional bowler from 1896-1908
- ◆ Steeples, Silverlock and Diver formed a formidable trio of Newport Professionals between 1903 - 1908
- ◆ 'Dick the lion-hearted' - a man who was never beaten
- ◆ He took close on 900 wickets in Club matches.
- ◆ Undoubtedly the best fast bowler of his day in second class cricket.



Newport Veterans Team - Also Famous Rugby Players

There was a close relationship between Cricket and Rugby in the early days. Five Wales Rugby legends played or umpired in the 1914 Newport Veterans team :-
Arthur Gould



- ◆ First 'superstar' of Welsh Rugby.
- ◆ Wales Rugby (27 Caps)
- ◆ Newport C.C. & Monmouthshire
- ◆ Assistant Secretary until 1912.
- ◆ Died during the 1st World War

George Llewellyn Lloyd



- ◆ Wales Rugby (12 Caps)
- ◆ Captained Newport Rugby and Cricket for 3 consecutive seasons
- ◆ Cricket (1899, 1900 & 1901) & Rugby (1899 - 1903)
- ◆ Won the 1st XI Average Bat in 1897

T. C. Graham



- ◆ Wales Rugby (12 Caps)
- ◆ Captained the 'Invincible' Newport Rugby Team in 1891
- ◆ Captained Newport C.C. 2nds in 1889 a
- ◆ Won the 2nd XI Average Bat in 1891
- ◆ 'His cricket like his Football was of a strenuous type' (H. Berrow)

George Boots



- ◆ Wales Rugby (16 Caps)
- ◆ Famous Newport Forward
- ◆ Umpired for Newport from 1903 - 1914



Other Wales Rugby Players who played for Newport CC

Walter John Martin - Wales Rugby (3 Caps), Newport C.C. 3rds

Capt. (1911 & 1912) Won 3rd XI Average Bat in 1911

Arthur Boucher - Wales Rugby (13 Caps) - 'Quite a good fast bowler' (H. Berrow)
George Frederick Harding - Wales Rugby (4 Caps), 4 - 4 runs v Cardiff (1888)



The 'Historic' Rodney Parade Ground



Rodney Parade – 'The War Years' (1914 - 1918)

On 4th August 1914 World War 1 broke out, at which point all summer sports matches were abandoned. The grounds were used by Newport Volunteer Training Corps, 1st Battalion Mon. Regiment, the 12th Battalion S.W.B., 3rd Gwent Battalion, and Royal Naval Division, for training purposes.

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Lt. E. S. Phillips, tragically killed in action (1915)

The Outbreak of War also saw the end of Silverlock who had strode the stage since 1892. He would have been 51 years of age by the time cricket was resumed in 1919. He eventually retired to rural Essex where with cricket and angling as his main interests he lived until 1949.

Resumption After the First World War

During 1919, after a lapse of four years, Cricket was resumed, but there was no groundsman, as John Butcher (the Club's groundsman since 1878) had died. Tom Leigh, one of the assistants, prepared the wickets with only First and Second X1 fixtures being arranged, and these were not of the same calibre as formerly.



In 1919, F. Gordon-Phillips who had Captained the Club in 1913 and 1914, before War broke out, was elected Captain to lead the Club, though Bryn Phillips took charge for the greater part of the season, due to the late demobilisation of the captain.

Frederick Gordon Phillips was the son of Fred Phillips, (brother of Edward Phillips) of the famous Phillips Brewing Family. Edward and Fred Phillips donated a vast sum of money in memory of their father Thomas, towards the building of the new Cricket Pavilion at Rodney Parade in 1901.

F. Gordon Phillips - 1st X1 Captain immediately before and after the War (1913, 1914 & 1919, 1920, 1921)

No Professionals were engaged in 1919 and the 1st X1 played 16, won 7 and lost 9. It wasn't a successful season, only J. F. Rust scoring a century (112n.o. v Abergavenny). T. B. Williams topped the batting averages and Bryn Phillips the bowling with 52 wickets (Av. 8.2). Owing to the dilapidated state, the main portion of the stand in front of the cricket pavilion was taken down

Newport Cricket Club Captains (1910 - 1919)

1910 L. Foster Stedman
1912 L. Foster Stedman
1914 F. Gordon Phillips
1916 The Great War
1918 The Great War

1911 L. Foster Stedman
1913 F. Gordon Phillips
1915 The Great War
1917 The Great War
1919 F. Gordon Phillips

