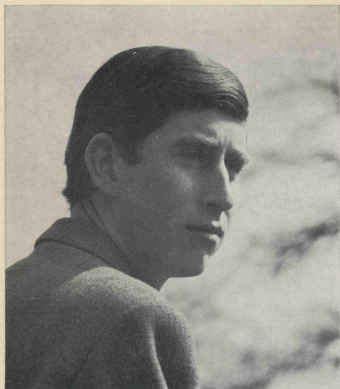


Cardiff Rugby Football Club



Centenary Year 1976-77



A Centenary Message

from

His Royal Highness
Prince Charles,
The Prince of Wales



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

I am delighted to be able to send my best wishes and congratulations to the Cardiff Rugby Football Club as they celebrate their 100th birthday. A hundred years is a long time and during that period Welsh rugby has become famous throughout the sporting world for its style and excitement and above all for the personalities who combine to produce some superb teamplay.

I am sure the Cardiff Rugby Football Club will continue to ensure that Welsh rugby maintains its high standard and I wish them every possible success and good drinking for the next 100 years!

CHARLES



Cardiff R.F.C. 1975-76. Standing (left to right): A. J. Friday (*secretary*), G. Wallace, A. Phillips, M. Knill, B. G. Nelmes, M. McJennett, I. R. Robinson, T. Worgan, S. Lane, R. Dudley-Jones, J. Evans (*coach*), C. Padfield (*coach*). Seated: T. Holley (*first aid*), J. Davies, P. Evans, T. G. R. Davies (*capt.*), M. James (*chairman*), R. Lane, A. J. Finlayson, P. L. Jones. In front: C. Smith, Gary Davies, B. Williams, Gareth Davies, T. Holmes, D. Wilson



Message from our Patron

I offer my heartiest congratulations to the Cardiff Rugby Football Club on their immediate forthcoming entry into their Centenary Year of 1976/77.

The Cardiff Arms Park and the Cardiff Rugby Football Club and the Cardiff Rugby Football Team are well known everywhere in the Rugby world.

Lots of people pleurably remember the scoring ability and great feats of such players for Cardiff as Gwyn Nicholls, Rhys Gabe, Percy Bush, Wilf Wooler, Cliff Jones, Billy Cleaver and others in

days gone by, and Bleddyn Williams, Jack Matthews, Cliff Morgan, Rex Willis, Barry John, Gareth Edwards, Gerald Davies, and others in recent times.

The forthcoming celebration of its Centenary Year by the Cardiff Rugby Football Club assuredly will be a very successful affair, and give great pleasure to all followers of Rugby Football.

It is my fervent hope, and I do not doubt, that the Club will live for many more years, and will celebrate its second Centenary Year.

EWAN DAVIES



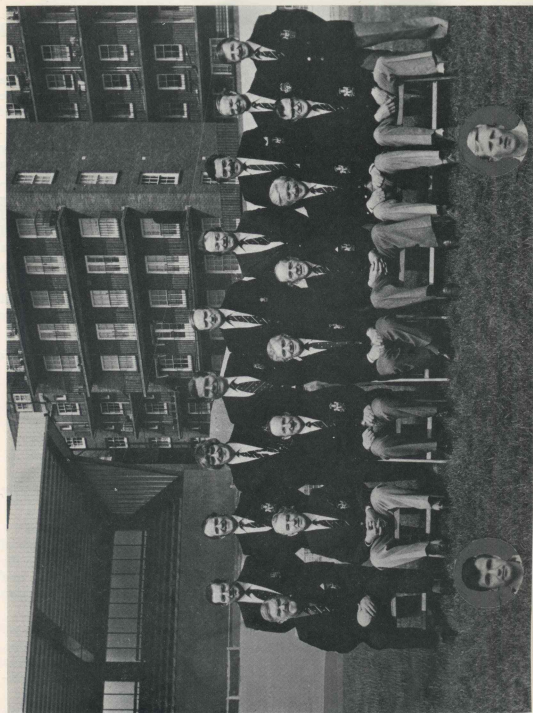
Message from the Lord Mayor

On behalf of the Council and the Citizens of our City, it gives me great pleasure to send to the Cardiff Rugby Club my warmest greetings and congratulations as the Club engages in celebration of their Centenary season.

The records, which speak for themselves, reveal a history of performance which is second to none, and the Rugby Club can be justly proud of a world wide fame which has been earned meritously.

The mould which they have set will ensure, I am quite certain, a future as glorious as the past.

Councillor. IORWERTH JONES,
Lord Mayor of Cardiff



The Cardiff R.F.C. committee 1975-76. Standing (left to right): C. T. Howe, C. D. Williams, M. Collins, P. Goodfellow, K. A. Kowlands, L. H. Williams, C. H. Norris, A. D. Williams, B. Mark. Seated: A. D. S. Bowes, T. L. Williams, A. J. Priday (secretary), D. M. James (chairman), L. M. Spence, W. H. Wilkins, P. Nyhan. Insets: D. J. Hayward, J. E. Davies.



Les Spence
Chairman 1976-77
Captain 1936-37

This Year of Grace

One hundred years ago on Friday, 22nd September, 1876 in the Swiss Hall, Queen Street, Cardiff, the "Cardiff Football Club" was born, as a consequence of the amalgamation of the Glamorgan and Wanderers Club. During the celebrations of our Centenary Year, let us remember with thanks and appreciation of Donald Selby our first captain; of W. D. Phillips our first vice-captain; of E. C. Fry our first treasurer and secretary, and of Messrs. J. G. Thomas, S. Campbell Cory, F. B. Thomas and W. G. Jones, committee, and of all who have followed them.

Cardiff Arms was our home for almost 95 years, our colours after the first year became Cambridge blue and black. These colours have become famous throughout the world wherever rugby is played. As a Club we are very proud of our heritage, based on our attractive style of play which we have endeavoured to maintain throughout the years. It would be invidious of me to mention the names of all the players who have helped to make our Club both on and off the field, "The Greatest".

In this Centenary Year we must not sit back and reflect on the glories of the past, but march forward with enthusiasm and eagerness to prepare a season that will be remembered for the next 100 years.

LESLIE M. SPENCE

Chairman, Cardiff Centenary Committee



Tour of the

1951-52

Springboks

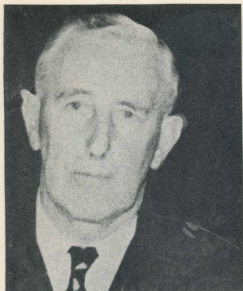
By Dr. Danie Craven

(President of the South African Rugby Board)

"So much was heard of Wales/Welsh rugby and Cardiff Arms Park that when the 1951 Springboks team emerged from the Severn Tunnel, Welsh atmosphere was already in their nostrils. When we passed Newport everybody seemed to know about it and when we arrived in Cardiff there was a whole army of people waiting to exhale rugby atmosphere which, up to that stage of our tour, had been foreign to us all. We were literally trembling in our boots and although it was dark, the team insisted on sneaking through the famous gates into the hallowed Cardiff Arms Park. In the stillness of the night it was as if the past spoke through the heavily laden rugby atmosphere and when it started to rain, for the first time on our tour, the feeling of trepidation increased.

Then came the match against Cardiff and we struck very staunch opposition for the first time on that tour. Trailing behind on a wet field with a wet ball brought out the best of that Springbok team and it is history now that Chum Osche scored the winning try of that match in injury time. So well did the Cardiff team play that we felt they deserved a Springbok head which we presented to them after our final match against the Barbarians at Cardiff Arms Park. This was going to be a private affair and we had all dispersed after the cocktail party. Where we all were, I would not know, but we all got an S.O.S. to go to the Athletic Club and there we all met, having come from far and wide and from all the directions of the wind. Frank Mellish our Manager, presented the Springbok head and we spent a glorious evening with our friends there that night.

What impressed me most was the wonderful spirit which prevailed and which existed between our two respective countries, and when the Chairman made his speech and said that Wales would accept all South Africans as her adopted children, the crowd began to sing a song which was meant for only Welshmen, namely "We will keep a welcome in the hillsides, etc., etc." Tears were running freely over the cheeks of many people, and including ourselves, for it was a great moment. The difficult match against Cardiff and the hard and gruelling match against Wales were forgotten, and Welshmen and South Africans were united with a love seldom developed on any tour. Speak of Wales to any of the 1951/52 Springboks and they will all tell you what a wonderful country and what wonderful people!"



Tour of the 1953-54 All Blacks

By Arthur Millard

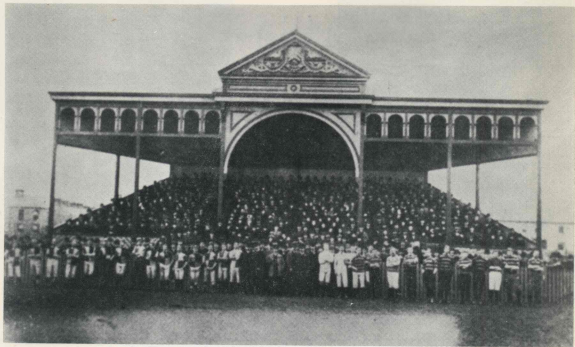
In 1905 I followed the fortunes of the N.Z. All Blacks team in Britain with great interest. In those days there was no radio, all news came by cable, and on Sunday if we wished to learn the result of Saturday's game we had to make a pilgrimage to the newspaper office. I can remember vividly the Sunday morning when several of my schoolmates and I arrived at The Times office and saw the fateful message—"Wales 3, N.Z. 0". A feeling of deep gloom went through our little band, but even through the gloom we realised what a great rugby country Wales must be, and ten days later when we got the message—"N.Z. 10 Cardiff 8" we also realised that Cardiff must be one of the great rugby clubs of the world.

With communications as they were at that time, I little thought that one day I would be sitting in the "Holy of Holies" watching and listening to the most fantastic rugby crowd I have ever seen or heard, the Cardiff Welsh crowd. Nowhere else have I heard such singing, and to hear it suddenly swell into a poean of victory when Wales or Cardiff forges ahead is an incredible experience. In 1953-54 our team were quartered at Porthcawl, an excellent idea because after life in the big cities, it seemed like the peace of the countryside.

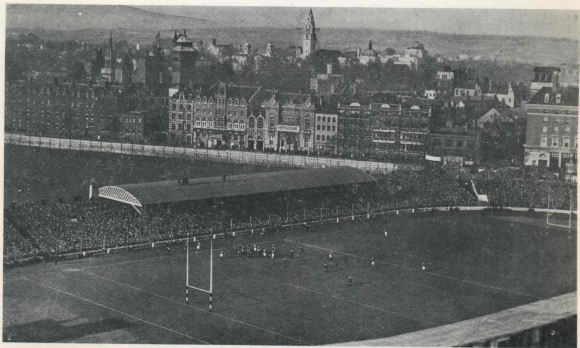
We were well looked after by Porthcawl Rugby Club, the officials and their wives going to a tremendous amount of trouble to make our stay a pleasant one. In spite of the distance they had to travel, the Welsh officials and the Cardiff men in particular were always ready to attend to our wants and to show us that we were especially welcome in Wales. I will never forget the great kindness shown to me and to the team by Hubert Johnson and his men, the Cardiff players did not show us the same consideration in our first appearance on Cardiff Arms Park. We had had a fairly easy game against Llanelli on the Wednesday, but Saturday was quite a different story.

The Cardiff team thoroughly deserved their win, and their backs, with Cliff Morgan as pivot, certainly gave us a lesson. When the Welsh international gave the same result, although not such a convincing one, we began to think Cardiff Arms Park had a hoodoo on us, but this was all changed in the Barbarians game—a beautiful day, a fine result (at least for us) and a reception from the Welsh crowd I will never forget. At the end of the game as I stood watching the players of both teams, helped by 50,000 Welsh voices, singing the famous song of farewell, "Now is the Hour", I had tears in my eyes as I realised I was saying goodbye to one of the great rugby grounds of the world. I have very fond memories of Cardiff. I congratulate the club on its great record over the past 100 years. May it rise to even greater heights in the next hundred.

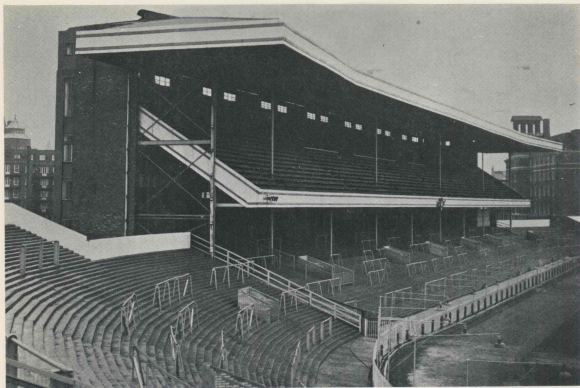
The Changing Face of the Cardiff Arms Park



Boxing Day 1885 — Before the Cardiff v Liverpool match. The new grandstand was officially opened.
It cost £362.



View of the North Stand and field during the Wales v Ireland match in 1932.



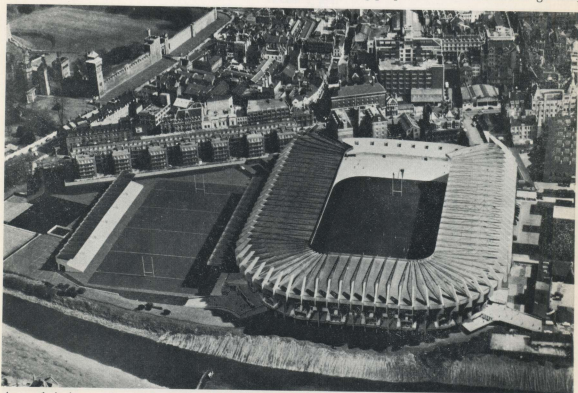
The famous "old" North Stand, so distinctive a feature at the Arms Park, was opened in 1934.



The day the crowd broke in. Wales v Ireland 1936—and the Fire Brigade turned their hoses on unruly spectators to help the police keep order.



The giant reconstruction project in full swing. The new North Stand that was opened in October, 1970 takes shape while the new club ground (*right*) also is being prepared on the old cricket ground,



An artist's impression of how Cardiff Arms Park National Stadium will appear when the entire development plan is completed.

Changeover at the Arms Park

Once the Welsh Rugby Union announced officially that they wished to have their own National Stadium and dispense with the Cardiff Arms Park, and had started negotiations for a site at Bridgend, it became increasingly urgent that if International Rugby and the welfare of the Cardiff Athletic Club was to be maintained, something had to be done to retain a National Ground in Cardiff.

Mr. Hubert Johnson, then chairman of the Cardiff Athletic Club, had given this great thought and finally came up with a solution. He had created, by architects, J. O. Webb & Partners, an artist's impression of what could be achieved at the C.A.P.

It must be appreciated that at the time, there were many magnificent stadia, Stade Colombes in Paris, Newlands at Cape Town, S. Africa; the Sydney Oval and Twickenham, yet Cardiff Arms Park, at that time, could not compare with any of these.

There were many criticisms from those countries who came to play at the Arms Park and, of course, the wish to create a better ground for all concerned, had to be given top priority.

It is an amazing story of the vision and determination on the part of Hubert Johnson, later supported by representatives appointed to the Organising Sub Committee, Frank Trott, Hon. Secretary, C.R.F.C., and David Grant, General Secretary, Cardiff Athletic Club. His dreams, as they were described by many, literally took shape at the C.A.P.

In such a large organisation, there were many people who were convinced that such a scheme was the answer to the future of Welsh/Cardiff rugby, to say nothing of four cricket, four hockey, four tennis teams and an active bowls club.

The greatest possible agreement for the project was achieved when all sections of the Cardiff Athletic Club were assured of their survival and even better conditions, although much time had to be spent in discussion in committee before it became a fact and not just a vision.

Organisations, other than those mentioned above, had to be consulted, in the Welsh Rugby Union, Cardiff City Council, and the Glamorgan County Cricket Club.

The mind boggles when one thinks of the number of meetings that had to be held, the amount of proposals that had to be put forward, and the details which had to be agreed by our Club Solicitor. It must be remembered that the Cardiff Club did not own a blade of grass on Cardiff Arms Park and held only a lease.

In the Cardiff Athletic Club Report of 1966, Mr. Hubert Johnson (chairman) said, "I must, at this stage warn all members, that we shall be entering into a period of serious inconvenience that may well last for a few years. I am sure, however, that we will all take this in our stride to ensure the future benefits to the Cardiff Athletic Club and Welsh Rugby Football".

In the Cardiff Athletic Club Report of 1968, it was quoted, "The model of the new ground plan has been on display in the Committee Room and elsewhere. Many members have viewed with pleasure the lay-out of the new National Arena and the adjoining Cardiff Rugby Club ground. I hope that members are happy about the next 100 years or so of Club Rugby being played in such a setting, in the hub of all that rugby can offer".

Many meetings were held before the scheme was approved and the Welsh Rugby Union produced a model of the future Cardiff Arms Park National Stadium and Cardiff Rugby Football ground.

After much preparation the official opening of the Cardiff Rugby Football Ground took place on Saturday, October 31, 1970 when a match between the W.R.U.'s President's XV and Cardiff R.F.C. was played.

Nine and a half acres of Sophia Gardens had been granted to the Cardiff Athletic Club on a lease for 99 years. The Cardiff Club had obtained the freehold of the Club ground, and car parking facilities also became available, which, in future years, would benefit the Club financially.

This, is the story of the cessation of the old concept, and of the Welsh Rugby Union obtaining the National Stadium, which has proved such a success, and the Cardiff Rugby Football Club having one of the finest Club grounds in the Country. The hockey, bowls, tennis, and particularly the cricket, have wonderful settings for many years to come.

Hubert Johnson pays much tribute to his faithful colleagues in the negotiations, Frank Trott and David Grant, for their unfailing support, their shrewd and very sincere observations, their fairness to all concerned which helped to create the splendid atmosphere that prevailed.



Where'er you be . . . the wind blows free . . . Stanley "Admiral" Bowes in full Scottish dress, in charge of a Cardiff v. Watsonians match.



The Three Great

Eras of the Club

By J. B. G. Thomas

The Cardiff Club can reflect upon its 100 years of contribution to the Game in the manner of Queen Victoria looking at the map of the World during her Diamond Jubilee, and feel proud it has been able to contribute so much that has been pleasant and appreciated by followers and players in many lands. Old age has its compensations and one of these is the achievement of having lived a long time through good times and bad; of having remained steadfast through a changing world; of having created a proud tradition; of having remained loyal to the Game's ideals.

The Club can feel proud that it is still an honour to play for them; that all other clubs want to play against Cardiff, and that the Arms Park with its many fascinating and haunting memories, is still the Mecca of Welsh rugby. Let them come from the four corners of the World and we will welcome them in victory and defeat, say Cardiff, and in the Museum with Hubert Johnson in expansive mood, and in the lower bar with that veteran historian Danny Davies providing the answers to so many queries, visitors will soon understand why rugby football is the real game of the Welsh people, and why everyone wants to visit Cardiff Arms Park.

So many great players have worn the blue and black jersey that if one accepts the view of Stanley Bowes (an admiral in retirement), you cannot play for any other club, one would believe that all the mighty have to wear the club jersey before they are accepted into the rugby valhalla in later years. Not quite true, perhaps, but indicative of the love of one's club that can be engendered in players at Cardiff. Some are forced to leave for other parts; some by personal choice, but all remember their days at Cardiff. That is as it should be.

Cardiff set off in 1876 and by the end of the last Century had achieved world status, and had as its captain, the "Prince" of centres as Gwyn Nicholls was proudly named in 1898-99, then in his fifth season as a first class player. He went on to become one of the true heroes of Cardiff and Welsh rugby and those who watched him play were indeed privileged, while his partnership with Rhys Gabe was such as to be rivalled only by Jack Matthews and Bleddyn Williams in the years following World War II.

From 1898 until 1910 Cardiff enjoyed its first great era and as the City reached its industrial zenith so did its rugby club, and the blue and black jerseys were almost as popular as the scarlet jerseys of Wales. Great names in the Games' honours list were highly skilled and

successful players and heroes in the eyes of the many small boys who crowded the touch lines. Nicholls and Gabe were supported by Percy Bush, Dickie David, J. L. Williams, Cecil Biggs, Bert Winfield, Billy Neill, John Brown, George Northmore, Archie Brice and others, with South Africa defeated in 1907, Australia in 1908, and New Zealand almost beaten in 1905-06 but for a tragic defensive lapse.

It was this era that established Cardiff as a power in the game although one would argue that the introduction of the four threequarter system, by accident rather than design, by the almost legendary brewer from Wiveliscombe, F. E. Hancock in the 1885-86 season, could be regarded as an era almost in itself. Only one match was lost in 27 and that, the very last at Moseley, in a season when Newport and Llanelli were beaten at home and away, and Swansea FOUR times by the enthusiastic stalwarts in the quartered jerseys, inspired by F. E. Hancock, one of the first of the great "personalities" in Welsh rugby. Indeed one of the few real Englishmen to be capped by Wales, deserving of the title "Dai" Hancock and the winner of everlasting fame as captain and threequarter, and I am glad that I was able to talk to team member, Alex Bland, about it all before he died.

The "big" season in the first Great Era was that of 1905-06 under the colourful captaincy of Percy Bush, who is regarded by all as the most amazing personality ever to lead the club. Nowadays, he would have been a personality of many parts and certainly a TV star as he was truly a rugby celebrity in the full meaning of the word, and, as such, there have been very few. Naturally, I did not see him play, but I knew him well and talked about the game with him, to find his mischeivous sense of humour, ready wit and knowledge of the game, fulfilling and confirming all the wonderful stories I had heard about him; many from his life long friend, Rhys Gabe.

In his year, Cardiff lost one of 32 matches, only that to New Zealand and then by an unfortunate lapse on the part of such an inspiring captain as Bush. It was a special year as Newport were beaten four times and, in those days, the rivalry between the Clubs was so intense that the achievement was better than the winning of the World Cup, in the minds of and hearts of supporters. J. L. Williams, a dashing wing, scored 35 tries, Cecil Biggs 17, Reggie Gibbs 10, Percy Bush 11, Gwyn Nicholls nine and Rhys Gabe eight. Four players were supplied to the most famous of all national XV's, that which defeated New Zealand at the Arms Park; in Winfield, Gabe, Bush and Nicholls who captained the side so successfully, even though he was nearing the end of an illustrious career. The next three seasons were only slightly less successful under Bush (again), Gabe and then Bush for a third time.

The seasons that followed were not quite as successful although many fine players appeared, and it was not until the late thirties that the blue and black banner was hoisted high again over the land. L. M. Spence, A. H. Jones and Wilfred Wooller as captains in the three seasons, 1936-39, inspired a high standard of back play, and helped produce a mini Great Era that will be remembered happily by the older members of the Club.

Wilfred Wooller, the greatest Welsh centre of his era and a remarkable all round sportsman, joined the club at the start of the 1936-37 season and was to achieve considerable fame as well as a long association with the Cardiff Arms Park. With him came his Cambridge University team mate, and equally well known international Cliff Jones, at outside half. They gave to Cardiff the "personality" cult of pre-World War One days. Jones was an elusive runner with an effective side step and Wooller a long striding, strong running centre, able to kick with the power of a siege gun. Combined, these two players gave Cardiff the class, the style and match winning touch it needed under the able leadership of Leslie Spence, a flank forward who should have won a cap, and who has become one of the administrative stalwarts of Welsh rugby.

They lost seven matches in 44 and scored an average of 2½ tries a match to shoot to the top of the Western Mail's Championship Table. In the next season, A. H. Jones, a popular wing and utility player, who was first capped in the Twickenham triumph of 1933, took over the leadership in 1937-38 and the record produced one less defeat in 46 matches. Wilfred Wooller followed as leader in 1938-39 and only five defeats were suffered while the brilliance of the side's play and their success attracted not only large crowds to the Arms Park but at visiting grounds, where spectators used to wait outside, as they had done before World War I, to see whether the "stars" were actually playing.

Rugby was hard in Wales at the time, and leading players were closely marked in a defensive era but Cardiff rose above this and achieved some spectacular scoring achievements. With the two former Cambridge players were Les Spence, W. E. N. Davies, Arthur Bossett, Archie Skym, Eddie Watkins, Harry Rees, Jim Regan, Glyn Morgan, and others while Wooller celebrated his year of captaincy by achieving a new club individual points record of 169 which included a record of 12 dropped goals.

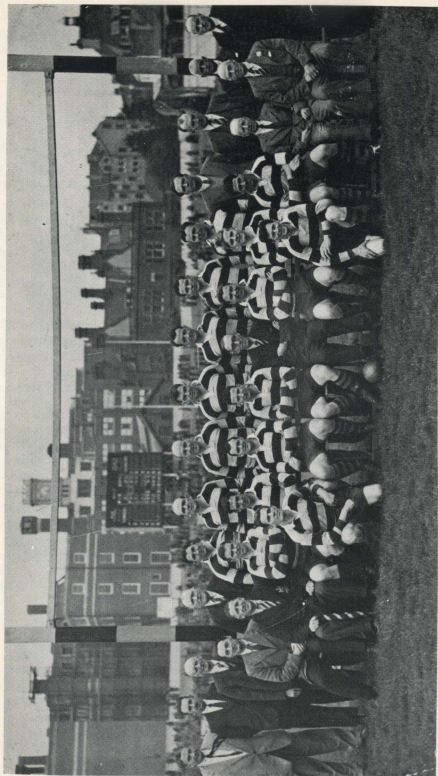
The years of the Second World War were profitably spent by a series of charity matches and the running of a "side", once the 1st XV and others had gone off to war. An "ad hoc" committee of Norman Riches, Arthur Cornish, Danny Davies, Brice Jenkins and others kept the flag flying and during the 1945-46 season Cardiff resumed at full strength with Dr. Jack Matthews as captain. He and his fellows were to launch another Great Era that was to extend well into the 1950's and a stream of outstanding players marched on into the Welsh XV.

This first post war season produced a record number of points in 661 and Bleddyn Williams collected 30 tries to launch a centre partnership with Matthews that grew to match that of Nicholls and Gabe in the Club records. The next season was an equally successful one and then Haydn Tanner, already a giant star in the rugby firmament and the reigning Welsh captain, joined the club and was honoured with the captaincy in 1947-48. It proved to be a remarkable year as he inspired his younger colleagues to noble deeds from the scrum half position, which he dominated in Wales from 1935 to 1949.

Tanner was to launch a post war tradition of great inside halves in the Cardiff side, as he was followed by Rex Willis and Gareth Edwards, and he became as much of an idol at the Arms Park as he had been at St. Helen's and it must have been a proud day, indeed, for this modest master, when he led the Welsh XV out at Cardiff to meet Scotland in 1948 with nine of his Cardiff colleagues behind him, and one would regard this as the acme of achievement in the Club's 100 years. With him were Frank Trott, Jack Matthews, Bleddyn Williams, Billy Cleaver, Clifton Davies, Maldwyn James, Bill Tamplin, Les Manfield and Gwyn Evans. It was a glorious year as so many new records were achieved, with 803 points against 161, and an average of 4.4 tries per match with Bleddyn Williams getting 41 of them. The last match of the season was "embarrassing" said Williams as every Cardiff player tried to give him the ball to get the try to beat the record!

Cardiff achieved third position in the "Western Mail" Club Championship Table in the 1946-47 season and up to 1957-58, when they won the title for the last time, their record ran as follows—third, first, first, sixth, second, sixth, first, second, first, second, second and first, and such consistency over twelve consecutive seasons suggests that the period must be one of their "Great Eras". Up to the present time, their consistency in the championship table exceeds that of all the other leading clubs even though, since 1958 which was the year of Cliff Morgan's retirement, they have not won the title.

For the 1950 Lions tour in New Zealand they supplied five players in Matthews, Williams, Cleaver, Davies and Willis while the record against touring teams during the 12



Cardiff RFC 1947-48. Standing (*left to right*): H. Johnson, S. C. Cravos, J. Powell, E. Spillane, W. G. Jones, G. Evans, L. Manfield, W. E. Tamplin, R. Roberts, E. Jones, Cliff Davies, D. Brown, Dr. T. Wallace, B. H. Jenkins, R. A. Cornish (*secretary*). Seated: W. E. N. Davies, A. T. Thomas, A. D. S. Bowes, D. H. Jones, Dr. Jack Matthews, H. Tanner (*capt.*), D. E. Davies (*chairman*), B. L. Williams, W. B. Cleaver, R. F. Trott, J. Thomas, G. E. Heslop. In front: M. James, Les Williams.

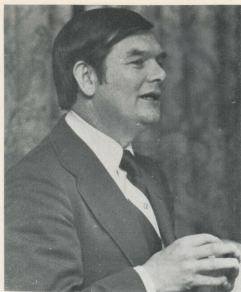


Cardiff in Frank Hancock's great year of captaincy, 1885-86. Standing (*left to right*): A. Duncan, A. F. Bland, A. J. Hybart, J. A. Sant, A. Emery, G. Young, A. F. Hill, H. J. Simpson, W. H. Treatt (*secretary*). Seated: W. Jones, H. Hughes, C. S. Arthur, F. E. Hancock (*capt.*), W. M. Douglas, D. Kedzlie, A. J. Stewart. In front: D. Lewis, J. Mahoney, W. E. Jarman, W. Stadden.

years is also quite remarkable. The Australians were beaten in 1947-48, and 1957-58; the Springboks almost beaten 9-11 in 1951-52 when a refereeing error cost them the match, and the New Zealanders beaten in 1953-54.

The crowds poured into the Cardiff Arms Park to watch the fine Cardiff sides in action and a record club "gate" of 48,500 spectators was achieved in 1951 when Newport were successful at the Arms Park in an exciting match. Such days may never return, as the present ground has a capacity of less than 20,000, and the period 1946 to 1958 may be the last of the "big time", even though brilliance is still displayed on the Arms Park by world class players like Gareth Edwards, Barry John and Gerald Davies.

The long list of successful players in the Era is recorded on another page in this brochure but one cannot fail to mention the skills of Gareth Griffiths, Sid Judd, Des O'Brien, John Evans, Stan Bowes, Malcolm Collins, Haydn Morris, Geoff Beekingham, C. D. Williams, Gwyn Rowlands, Alun Thomas, Gordon Wells, C. L. Davies, Lloyd Williams, Eddie Thomas, Peter Goodfellow, Roddy Evans, Alun Priday and many others who wore the blue and black jersey with pride, but, never with more than did Stanley Bowes.!



Ymlaen Caerdydd!

By Carwyn James

"Watch out for Cardiff in their Centenary Year. They are going to sink you and precious Llanelli".

A long, well-written letter from two young Cardiff supporters, fifteen year old in fact, dated the eleventh day of May, 1975, taking me to task for criticising "in our view the best team in the world".

From the mouths of sincere, honest, and a glimmer of hope even for the precious Scarlets: "At the moment Llanelli are a trifle better than Cardiff. If you think Cardiff are a dull, kicking team then you are wrong."

I may have thought it, once or twice, I certainly never wrote it. The occasional player may have kicked a little too much, now and again, but I can't see any man west of Llwchwr Bridge writing Cardiff off as a dull side. There is far too much mutual respect.

Writing as a Llanelli player of the fifties I can honestly say that we feared Cardiff more than any other side. We had every reason to fear a side steeped in the finest traditions of Rugby Football.

I shall not attempt an historical appraisal: there are others far more competent and authoritative to do that and I look forward to reading Massa Dan's history of the Club. My memories of Cardiff are post-war. I shall never forget the fantastic deeds of that brilliant side of the late forties and early fifties, a period when it was virtually impossible to make the Welsh side if you didn't play for Cardiff.

I could name every member of those illustrious sides and at School we used to talk with reverence about the deeds of Cliff Davies and Bill Tamplin, Les Manfield and Gwyn Evans, Tanner and Cleaver, Jack and Bleddyn, and we wished we lived nearer Cardiff. Compared with the Blue and-Blacks the Scarlets were third division, if that.

And, there is no doubt about it, when I came to play for Llanelli we had inherited an inferiority complex as far as Cardiff were concerned, so vital was the influence that the Cardiff side had exercised in Welsh Rugby. Of power play up front, controlled and disciplined, and

an attacking flair behind, incomparable, winning spectators and winning matches. 40,000 at the Arms Park at a club match! The players of today have much to live up to.

My personal hero was Bleddyn. I would go miles to see him play and then I would practise side-stepping for hours trying to emulate the master. What a joy to play on the same field as him eventually! But Bleddyn and Jack weren't merely outstanding players. In the pre-coaching days they thought deeply about the game and worked out the solutions to beat the best sides in the world, and they put them into practice. And their influence remains. To discuss Rugby Football with such perceptive readers of a game to me is always a privilege and a joy.

And there was Cliff Morgan, whose shadow I chased on many a day, too often in vain, I'm afraid, but I certainly learnt much from the lad from the Rhondda. One of the many illustrious sons of those valleys who have served Cardiff so proudly.

The Rhondda is a natural breeding ground of the extrovert, usually the kindly, sympathetic, generous extrovert who wears his heart lavishly on his sleeve.

Such a man was Cliff Morgan, one of the finest fly-halves of all time, who dominated the centre of the field, a dynamic, mercurial figure, a typical Welsh migrant from the Mediterranean, dark, small, stocky, his smallish legs strengthened and quickened by climbing all those friendly hills in the narrow valley where each street is on a steep incline and where you need strength and breath to go from one room to another.

What remains in my memory of Cliff is the sight of those powerful legs motoring towards the outside gap and at the crucial moment the head being thrown back, a sure sign that he had slipped smoothly from top gear to less over-drive (his two gears in life) heading safely, by now unchallenged, towards the goal line.

There have been others. Including those delightful defectors from the West, four of them from my old school, Gwendraeth Grammar: D. Ken Jones, Robert Morgan, Barry John and Gareth Davies. "Go East young man". Whatever brings them it doesn't matter. Not any more it matters.

Every side has to build the finest possible tradition for the next generation of players. Cardiff used to attract. Not because those sides of the past won matches, but because the manner of winning mattered to them. That is the challenge facing the side of the present day and already there are signs that the Centenary Year is going to be an outstanding one.

That would be my wish and the wish of all members of the Llanelli club. We send you our best greetings for a memorable year. Llongyfarchiadau ar eich canfed. Ymlaen Caerdydd.



The Irish Viewpoint

By D. J. O'Brien

Looking at Cardiff from an Irish viewpoint, I have long race memories of the Cardiff Club!

Pre-war I saved my pennies to travel bi-annually to Belfast to see Wales or Ireland stop each others' Triple Crown—Wales always heavily injected with Cardiff players! My last memory in 1939 is of Willie Davies and Wilf Wooller between them destroying a fine Irish pack that fully deserved a Triple Crown. Similarly, the Arms Park was an almost permanent graveyard of Irish hopes—a bloody arena where the Irish Christians were thrown to make a gladiatorial holiday for the fanatical Welsh tribes!

So it was, that whilst Cardiff Club players were held in awe in Ireland, it was chiefly in the demonic Red Jersey that they were known and feared. There were few pre-war tours to Ireland, although the 1927/28 games against Cork Constitution and Lansdowne included many memorable names. Lansdowne had Sarsfield Hogan as Captain and an all-international three-quarter line in Eugene O'Davy, Lightfoot, Crowe, Arigho, whilst Cardiff included B. R. Turnbull, R. A. Cornish and the Grand Duke of Cardiff Administrators, Danny Davies!

It was Danny who initiated, with Jimmy McMurragh, the first post-war fixtures with Bective Rangers in 1946/47. These were memorable games both on and off the field, when many Dubliners saw for the first time, the genius of the Blue and Black jerseys exemplified by Jack Matthews, Haydn Jones, Bleddyn Williams, Bill Tamplin, Frank Trott—and the many other colleagues who made Cardiff the greatest club in the world at that time. When Bective came back in 1948 to return the fixture in Cardiff, Jimmy McMurragh filled his case with Irish hams to present to his friends on the Cardiff Committee, who were still enduring rationing. Unfortunately, Jimmy started celebrating at Dublin Airport before the team left, and enjoyed the tour so much that when he got back to Dublin after the tour and the Customs Officer asked to see his case—there were all the hams! He had not opened his case for the whole tour—a tribute to Cardiff hospitality!

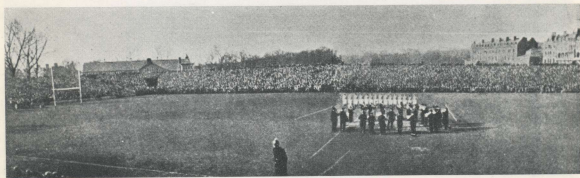
A memorable result came from this fixture. When Cliff Morgan went to work in Dublin he joined Bective Rangers, who had been struggling for twenty years to reach a Cup Final. Cliff's inspiration was such that the team quickly became known as "Morgan Rangers"

worked their code signals in Welsh and won the Leinster Cup! Cliff claims that the celebration lasted seven weeks and that every single member of the team gave a personal party in his home! Cliff is a much loved figure in Ireland, bracketed in skill and as a sportsman with Jackie Kyle. I played in his first game for Cardiff v. Bath, a day when seven of the Cardiff 1st XV were on duty v. England at Swansea. Bill Tamplin was Captain and warned our back row to look after the reserve out-half—"He is young and inexperienced and looks a bit small to me". We won that match by over twenty points, thanks to Cliff's brilliance—as unexpected to us as it was to Bath!

Cardiff's next venture to Ireland was another memorable one, defeating Old Belvedere, then at their strongest, 9-8 on the Saturday, despite the hospitality of the Friday night! On Sunday they played a Young Munster side reinforced by Noel Henderson, Jack Kyle, John O'Meara, Tom Clifford and Tom Reid and guess who?—Jack Matthews! Cardiff won 31-17 with Cliff, dare I say it, winning the duel with Jackie Kyle!

Old Belvedere came back to the Arms Park in 1954 and I was called back to play for them, my first club, against Cardiff, my last club. Belvedere had a fine side, captained by Joe Hackett, and led 11-0 at half time, much to the disgust of Brice Jenkins who, peering like a Welsh Leprechaun over the edge of the committee box was heard to mutter, "O'Brien knows all our plans—he shouldn't be allowed to play against us". O'Brien knew their plans well enough to realise that 11-0 against that Cardiff side just was not enough! I decided that the second half thrust was going to come from Bledodyn Williams and each time he broke I placed myself to where I thought his jink would land him into my tackle. My plans worked perfectly except that I had forgotten how Bledodyn could jink and jink again. Twice I had him exactly where I had expected, but twice he jinked again and disappeared out of my arms like a wraith to wreck our defence and help Cardiff to beat us 21-11. It was typical of the extra bit of brilliance that Cardiff could always produce, either individually or as a team.

Not many native born Irishmen have worn the Blue and Black Jersey—and I am proud to have had both allegiances. Mind you it wasn't easy! I came to Cardiff after three international seasons with Ireland, which included two Triple Crowns. I still had to play five matches with the "Rags" before I was allowed out on-to the Park! There were many Irishmen who would have played five years in the "Rags" to finally don the Cardiff 1st XV Jersey. The name of the club is held in premier esteem in Ireland, not only for its successes over the years, but for the uniquely high standard of its sportsmen both on and off the field. Is it possible, we wonder, that all your achievements, victories, caps, tours, etc., have been crowded into a mere hundred years?



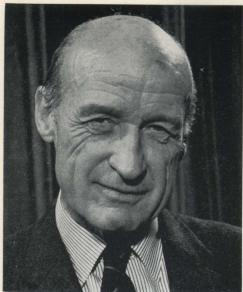
Another bygone day — Wales v France at Cardiff Arms Park in 1921. This was the first international match in Wales after World War I.



The Cardiff team that beat the All Blacks in 1953. Standing (*left to right*): G. Griffiths, J. Llewellyn, Eddie Thomas, M. Collins, J. D. Nelson, J. D. Evans. Seated: C. D. Williams, A. D. S. Bowes, W. R. Willis, S. Judd, B. L. Williams (*capt.*), Cliff Morgan, Alan Thomas, G. Rowlands, G. Beckingham.



Cardiff XV v Kiwis 1945. Standing (*left to right*): W. J. Evans, G. Blackmore, W. G. Jones, W. E. Tamplin, L. Manfield, H. E. Jones, Cliff Davies, Trevor Jones (*referee*), J. Powell. Seated: M. James, Basil Williams, R. Bale, Dr. Jack Matthews (*capt.*), B. L. Williams, Dr. Glyn Jones, D. St. John Rees. In front: W. B. Cleaver, W. Darch.



Cardiff—through New Zealand Eyes

By Terry McLean

I am sure Welsh people will understand that there was a time when all New Zealand male children were brought up to believe that the 1905 All Blacks had been robbed of an unbeaten record because Bob Deans was not allowed the try he was said to have scored on the Arms Park. Living as we did, a small nation Way Down Under, we had other causes for feeling that there must be something funny, or peculiar, or both, about the Welsh and the Arms Park. There was, for instance, the ordering off of Cyril Brownlie from Twickenham by a **Welsh** referee—we nourished a strong feeling of injustice about that. Then there was the beating of the Third All Blacks by Wales because, so it was said, Charlie Oliver, the midfield back, was taken out of the movement, when he was well positioned to defend, by a timely early tackle by Claude Davey in the famous rush for the winning try after Wilfred Wooller had hoisted his gigantic punt.

It was only with the years that we learned to accept that if Mr. Dallas said Deans did not score, why, quite simply, he didn't. Mark Nicholls, shrewdest of tacticians, more than once told me, in person that Albert Freethy was the finest referee he ever saw—so that disposed of that, too. It was also important that though my brother Hugh played in the match, he never once mentioned to me the Oliver-Davey entanglement. He had no bitterness about the defeat in what must still rank, surely, as one of the most exciting internationals ever played; and still amusingly recalls that though he as a fast flank-forward—and a very fine one, if I may say so—conscientiously chased Cliff Jones 75 times; he just failed to catch him “just 75 times”.

So the time came for me, personally, to visit the Arms Park as the only Press correspondent with Bob Stuart's All Blacks. I suppose some traces of the old prejudices lingered in my mind and I must admit a new one burned sharply when Dr. Peter Cooper failed to penalise poor Sid Judd, not far from the Cardiff goal, though the latter had moved around so fast and so far that he was sitting between the back row and the New Zealand scrumhalf whilst the ball was still in the scrum. But that marvellous game with the club had not long been going before I discovered that the sour memories, or such as remained, were being dissipated by the glories and excitements of the play. What a game—Cliff Morgan breaking out of his 25; Rowlands rushing down the wing; Bowes playing with celestial fury; Skinner and Evans indulging, as props always will, a private party and telling the referee to leave them alone—Evans still has, untouched, Skinner's

bloodied nose-stains on his Cardiff jumper. This was rapturous Rugby. There was never any doubt, in our minds, that Cardiff were the better side. As such, they surely formed a direct link with the great Welsh teams, including Wales, which had played the 1905 All Blacks and, more than once, nearly beaten them.

It has been my luck, and pleasure, many times since that memorable first day to go back to the Arms Park; and I was not spinning a tale when I wrote, in an article on Rugby fields I had seen about the world for the programme, Scotland versus New Zealand, at Auckland in June, 1975 that "At the Arms Park, you feel yourself gripped in an atmosphere unique in Rugby and, I suggest, in world sport, too. Let me, as a New Zealander, put it this way: If Aladdin gave me but one choice, I would rather see the All Blacks play Wales at the Arms Park than any other match, anywhere."

Had it not been for the angelic behaviour of the crowd which watched the 1974 All Blacks play a Welsh XV on the Arms Park—will I be forgiven if I say I find it impossible to call the ground the National Stadium?—I doubt that I could have written such words. I would be the last to defend the conduct of the Seventh All Blacks of 1972-73. They often made me feel, as a New Zealander, deeply ashamed. Yet in the galleries of the All Blacks' games on the Arms Park in that joyless season, there was a hostility and bitterness of extraordinary depth. This was not the Arms Park one could associate with that great gentleman, Rhys Gabe, or with Morgan and Bowes and Hubert Johnson, and the numberless men of character and renown and boundless sportsmanship whom I had had the pleasure to meet. One shivered. Was the immortal pitch under threat from odious, sinister, surely non-Rugby forces?

Happily, the accord established in the game of '74—Aladdin himself could not have performed a more magical feat, no matter how much he rubbed the lamp,—abolished, I take leave to say, forever the disastrous unhappiness which had been engendered. Now, therefore, as the club celebrates its centenary, we New Zealanders take leave to offer, on the old terms of friendship which stood through so many moments of hell, fire and damnation, unqualified congratulations to what most of us way Down Under, consider to be the greatest of all Rugby clubs. We have our marvellous memories of the Arms Park—of Wallace and Seeling in 1905, Cooke and Nicholls and Nepia in 1924, Caghey and Gilbert in 1935, Smith and Sherratt with the Kiwis, "Tiny" White and Scott in 1953, Whineray and Meads in 1963, Lochore and Steel in 1967, Kirkpartick and Karam in 1972, Leslie and Batty in 1974. And I myself can see Bleddyn and "Billy the Kick" and Morgan and "Dai Ding Dong" and Bowes and Barry John and..... Oh, the list could go on, like the brook, forever. But they told me 500 words and 500, give or take a few, it must be.

Immortal Arms Park! From far across the world, Way Down Under, we salute thee, home of great men, home of great games, a home of Rugby. When, with luck, we reach our various valhallas, may there be on call replays of Whineray's try and Bennett's breakback and Cliff Morgan's outside break and Cliff Pritchard's pass; and so on and so on. And could we just have, please, miraculously, Wallace and Deans sneaking up the field and Gabe tackling—with the Teddy Morgan try thrown in? Such a pleasure it would be to turn to our fathers, who would certainly be in the audience, to tell them you must **always** play to the whistle.

As I said, if I had but one choice, I would rather see the All Blacks play Wales at the Arms Park than any other match, anywhere.



The opening of the new Cardiff R.F.C. ground on October 31st, 1970 with the Lord Mayor (Alderman T. E. Merrells) kicking off.



Some of Cardiff's captains. Standing (*left to right*): J. Matthews, Bledodyn Williams, W. E. Tamplin, W. R. Willis, M. Collins, P. Goodfellow, Eddie Thomas, Lloyd Williams, D. J. Hayward, H. M. Roberts, K. A. Rowlands, H. Norris, J. P. O'Shea. Seated: W. Wooller, L. M. Spence, T. Stone, Tom Lewis, D. E. Davies.



An Englishman writes in Praise

By David Frost

To many thousands of Englishmen—especially to those of my generation, just becoming aware of the mystique of rugby in the years immediately following the Second World War—Cardiff was and still is the greatest club of all. When we grew up in rugby in those days we came to admire Northampton who could produce formidable packs with Jeff Butterfield and Lewis Cannell behind; we knew about the Gloucester forwards with the kicking of Willie Jones to support them; we were excited by the audacious running and improvisation of Blake's Bristol. But nothing in any English club of the period could match the sheer glamour of a Cardiff side with Bleddyn Williams and Jack Matthews, Haydn Tanner and Billy Cleaver.

In those days Cardiff not only won nearly all their matches, but they also won them by playing handsome, balanced, open rugby which was as delightful to watch as it was fiendishly difficult to stop. No English club travelled confidently to Cardiff. Since then Cardiff have occasionally had some relatively lean years. They have not always played balanced rugby. But, with half-backs like Rex Willis and Cliff Morgan, Gareth Edwards and Barry John, Cardiff could never be dull. They have gone on beating English clubs and filling them with apprehension about future visits.

So deep an impression has Cardiff's attacking rugby made on their opponents over the years that the club's image could probably survive several seasons of indifferent performances. The club's great players have had much to do with the creation of this image and this reputation, but so have the club's officials. If a club's traditions are to be maintained, the club must have men of energy behind the scenes, and Cardiff have been notably well served by clubmen like Hubert Johnson.

Johnson is the kind of man who has the knack of making visitors from England feel at home in Cardiff. This side of the Club is less widely known than the player's record on the field of play, but it is an aspect which has been greatly appreciated by invaders from over the border.

Probably when the young Englishman first travels to Cardiff, he expects to find the players and officials of such a famous club somewhat aloof. Nothing could be further from the

(Continued on page 68)



Cardiff Men at Oxford and Cambridge

by Vivian Jenkins

Cardiff's links with Oxford and Cambridge go back a long way. Danny Davies, who must be the most meticulous club historian of all time—quite apart from all his other qualities!—tells me that altogether 18 Cardiff players have won Cambridge Blues and seven Oxford ones, making 25 Blues in all. Their names will all be in Danny's long awaited book "Cardiff R.F.C.: History and Statistics 1876-1975" when it finally appears, which I hope will be before long. That is one publication I do not intend to miss!

Meanwhile memory will have to serve me instead, and obviously it is the Cardiff players who figured for Oxbridge in my own playing days that most easily come to mind. There were the two Robertses, for instance, John and Bill, sons of the eminent Cardiff Presbyterian minister, who had one distinction shared only by two other sets of brothers. They played on opposite sides in the 'Varsity match, in 1928—John for Cambridge and Bill for Oxford, when Cambridge won by 14 pts. to 10. John's years were 1927-8 and Bill's 1928-9-30-1, so they only just overlapped.

Bill often told me afterwards that the hardest tackle he ever had in his life was when brother John up-ended him in the first five minutes of that 1928 match. John was the elder of the two and went on to win 13 caps for Wales, as centre or wing—(oddly he played at full-back in his two 'Varsity matches') and was renowned, above all, for his tackling and the determined way he went for the line. In a way he was the Lyn Jones of his day.

As a wing he knew only one way to the corner flag—the shortest and straightest! I shall never forget him, in a Cardiff v. Baa-Baas match, trying to find a way past Jack Bassett, the Baa-baas and Wales full-back, whom I rate the most devastating tackler I have ever seen. The thumps as they collided could be felt all over the ground, or so it seemed, and it was John, nearly every time, who went down. But back again he came for more, always with a smile on his face for he was one of the happiest players that ever graced the game.

Later he went to China as a missionary, and was able to write home after a few years there "I am beginning to understand the language a little. Soon I'll be able to read Captain Crawshaw's writing". The worthy Captain's calligraphy had long been a mystery to the members

of his annual touring team! It was said, indeed, that one Llanelli player, whenever he got his invitation to tour, had to take the letter round to the Town Clerk to get it deciphered.

But I digress. Suffice to say that Danny Davies, in his book of all the Cardiff records, has written after the name of John Roberts, the simple words, "My favourite player". Quite a compliment that, from one who has known most of the Cardiff players for the last sixty years!

Brother Bill Roberts was an elusive-running fly-half who had a great triumph in the 'Varsity match of 1931, when he led the Dark Blues to victory, and played Cambridge practically on his own. I can vouch for that because I was in the centre outside him, and can still see his dropped goal, which was one of the decisive scores of the match.

Bill played only once for Wales—against England in 1929, but that was a vintage time for Welsh fly-halves—among them Harry Bowcott. He like the Roberts brothers was a product of Cardiff High School, which at that time, under the coaching of the late Eric Evans, was churning out a succession of future internationals and Blues. Harry played for Cambridge in 1927 and '28, won eight caps for Wales and reached his peak on the Lion's tour of Australia and New Zealand in 1930, when he played in all five internationals. He was in more ways than one the *beau ideal* of a fly-half—or centre, come to that. He never seemed to have a hair out of place, and I particularly remember his classical passing, with the full swing-away from the hips.

They say it's "old hat" these days, but is it? I could argue a long time about that. Also he was one of the finest exponents of the torpedo punt—left-footed, mostly—I have ever seen. His brother Jackie also won his Blue at Cambridge, in 1933, at scrum-half, with Cliff Jones outside him, and Jackie, too, was a grand little player, who came very near winning his Welsh cap. Cliff Jones and Wilf Wooller, of course, are legends. Danny Davies's book will tell you all about them. They played together for Cambridge for three years, from 1933 to 1935, and were just as much the talk of the Rugby world in those days as Barry John and Mike Gibson have been more recently.

Indeed, if I had an Aladdin's lamp, one of my wishes would be to see these two pairs in opposition. What a battle it would be!

This brings me to the time when I myself played for Cardiff. Yes, I did, just once! It was a bit of a fraud, really, but when you have been around the international scene for a time you learn to "use your loaf", a little!

In 1932, my last year at Oxford, I was hoping to get a Welsh trial, as a centre, so I played for London Welsh against Swansea, on the last match of the "Exiles" Christmas tour. The "Big Five", I had heard, were to be there. In those days we played Cross Keys, Neath, Llanelli and Swansea in four days, and I did not realise, in my innocence, what four matches like that, plus all the Christmas fare, could do to our London Welsh team. By the time we reached Swansea half the team were on their knees. We lost, by over 30 points, and bang went all my hopes of a trial!

Six years later, in 1938, I had been "crooked" and the Welsh selectors asked me if I could prove my fitness by turning out for London Welsh against Swansea in the last match of the Christmas tour! By then I had lived and learned a little. "I think that would be a bit too soon", I said.

It was then that they asked me if I could play for Cardiff against Swansea the following Saturday, December 31st—provided Cardiff, of course, were agreeable. That was a different proposition altogether! Playing for Cardiff at the Arms Park, with Wilf Wooller, Arthur



Cliff Morgan called the tune in many a match with his twinkling side-steps. Here he plays a different tune as he tinkles the keys during the 1970 reunion of the Cardiff team that beat the 1953 All Blacks. The singers (*left to right*): Eddie Thomas, Gareth Griffiths, John Nelson, J. D. Evans, Stan Bowes, Bleddyn Williams, Viv Llewellyn (*referee*), Hubert Johnson (*chairman*) and Rex Willis.

Bassett, Horace Edwards, Les Spence, Eddie Watkins, Jim Regan and all sorts of other experts in the side—though Cliff Jones was “crooked” at the time—seemed a far better idea—especially as my challenger, Howard Davies, was full-back for the other side. Cardiff, in those days, were just about the best team in Britain.

We won the match, 12-8 and I myself had next to nothing to do, but poor Howard Davies, on the other side, was under pressure all the time. Wilf Wooller, I remember, gave him some especially awkward moments. Anyway, I played against England, thanks to Cardiff and I am afraid a bit of low cunning on my own part.!

At least I can now say that I once played for Cardiff, and any Welshman would be proud of that. It has been, is, and always will be, a great club—arguably the greatest in the world over the years (sorry, Carwyn, we are talking about a Centenary!)—and I, for one, am very happy to ‘doff my lid’, to the Blue and Blacks. Here’s to the next hundred years—may they be as happy and as successful as the ones that have passed!



Boyhood Memories of the Cardiff Arms Park

By D. E. "Danny" Davies

My earliest memories of the Cardiff Arms Park arise from the years at the start of the century and are of a sweet sound, the sound of singing and cheering which could be heard from the area in which I lived, East Terrace, the Southern end of Cardiff's Churchill Way, then known as Pembroke Terrace. Nearby was the 'Taff Station' of the Taff Vale Railway Line, Cardiff's Queen Street Station of today. The Taff Vale Hotel still flourishes in Queen Street. The flow of hundreds of ardent enthusiasts from the Station was a most lively indication of an important Rugby match. Very many of these Welsh Rugby Patriots would make their way to the ground through Bridge Street, Caroline Street (which one of my Rugby Colleagues in later life was apt to describe as "Gravy Lane") across St. Mary Street into Westgate Street. Many thousands of others would make their way from the Taff Station, and the Rhymney Valley Railway Station in Newport Road through Queen Street to the ground.

Westgate Street would be thronged. There was little or no horse drawn traffic to hinder the crowds; the motor car had not 'arrived', and Police, some on horseback, would usher the fans towards the entrances. Vendors were abroad, some selling hot chestnuts and potatoes from their coke fires, and their stands the magnet for urchins in winter. Others sold sweets, peppermints, bulls-eyes, brandy snaps and pasties from their baskets, and some even pepsin chewing gum. Their cries were well known in and around the Cardiff Arms Park.

A castellated like wall about 12 feet fronted the length of Westgate Street from the Angel Entrance to a point opposite Quay Street, it was demolished many years later when the Flats were erected. A small stretch of wall still remains, linking the County Club to the entrance gates thereby, and it was often used on International days by clambering gate crashers trying to gain entrance after the gates were closed. From the West side of the ground attempts to gain admittance were quite often made by bold sprites crossing the River Taff at low tide. Tickets were sold from pay boxes in the street and entrance into the ground had to be made through tall wooden barriers, at whose openings gatemen would lustily cry out: "Show your tickets, **please!**" Inside the Angel entrance the pathway curved leftwards around the cricket field to the West entrance of the football field, where adjoining the cricket field at this part, was the splendid twin-turreted pavilion, erected in 1904 for the joint use of Cardiff's Cricket and Football Clubs. I have written fully about this Pavilion in my official history of the Club

and I had reached man's estate after served as a soldier in World War I, from October 1914 to August 1919, before I was honoured by using it when making my debut for Cardiff against Newport on April 2nd, 1921.

Inside the cricket field, immediately below Westgate Street's long wall, was a moat about 10 to 12 feet wide, probably the residue of an ancient stream which had its original source from some part of Cardiff's Castle grounds. Weed, reed and wild flower grew in it, and, occasionally, a water rat might be seen scurrying through the scum! The moat was filled in later for use of tennis courts of the Athletic Club and disappeared entirely with the building of the Westgate Street flats.

Trees surrounded the whole perimeter of the football and cricket grounds. A small wood existed between the old South stand and a long high wall on the North side of Park Street. The area of this wood is now occupied by Cardiff's General Post Office and its ancillary buildings. Trees lined the River Bank behind the Football and Cricket Fields, and there was a small paddock beyond the side of the pavilion. There was a splendid clump with many beautiful old chestnut trees, stretching from the Angel entrance to the Cardiff Bridge, but sad to relate most of them disappeared with the building of the Cardiff Centre Hotel. Part of a low wall still fronts this area, and against it, a relic of the past, an old milestone from which I learned a little of my geography: 158 miles to London, 12 to Cowbridge and 12 to Newport. Passers by were wont to sit on the low wall, or stand and try to glimpse a little of play through the trees during a cricket match.

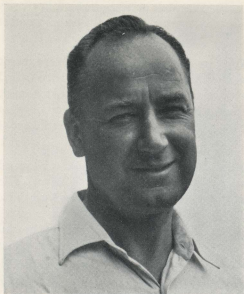
Before the new Pavilion was fully utilised, International and other teams changed for matches at the Angel and Grand Hotels facing the cricket ground. Players were obliged to walk down the Angel Entrance pathway to the West Corner of the Football field, and after the end of the match would have to mingle with the crowd making its exit. I remember one occasion, as a nervous young boy, slapping the back of one of the returning players, and learned from the crowd close to him: "It's Hinton". It was indeed W. P. Hinton of the old Wesley Club who had made his debut as full back for Ireland against Wales that day March 9, 1907.

It was a sad debut for Hinton as Wales defeated Ireland by 29 points to nil, a brilliant triumph for Wales and glory for Cardiff as four of its players scored 26 points, namely J. L. Williams, 3 tries; R. T. Gabe the Welsh Captain, 1 try; Percy Bush, 1 try and a dropped goal; H. B. Winfield 2 conversions and a penalty goal; D. Ponty Jones of Pontypool was the only other scorer.

Three other Cardiff men played, R. J. David at scrum half and W. Neill and J. Brown in the forwards.

After International matches, mourning cards were sold outside the ground. The verses extolled the glory of "Gallant Little Wales' victory over her English, Scottish or Irish adversaries as appropriate, and I am not sure whether alternative cards were simultaneously printed to sadly bemoan a Welsh defeat with a patriotic prophesy of future victories!

The Cardiff Arms Park, Mecca of World Rugby, lies in the very heart of Old Cardiff, now a modern city. In 1920, the ground was offered to the Cardiff Cricket and Football Clubs for £30,000. Today, its value can be counted in millions, yet there are many 'old timers' who aver that 'The Park' has lost its old character—in concrete. I wonder?



The Late Thirties

By Wilfred Wooller

My arrival in Cardiff from North Wales in September 1936, was ostensibly to work for the Coal Exporting firm of G.L.M. Limited, situated in the Cardiff dockland. The true reason however, which brought me south was, I suspect, the glamour of the Cardiff Rugby Club to which I had been initially attracted by my Cambridge friend, the mercurial Cliff Jones and his good mentor Hubert McVicker. It was a reflection of the comparison of the leisurely mood of the 30's in comparison with the bustle of modern days that I chose to follow a rugby inclination rather than a career per se. I was to do the same once again after World War II but this time it was Glamorgan Cricket and never have I regretted the route my sporting instincts has led me. Initially, I gravitated as a schoolboy from my home in Colwyn Bay to one of the nearer first-class Cheshire clubs, Sale, because a cousin of mine played for them. In due course a large and somewhat older than normal student, I found myself in the centre alongside international Claude Davey who, in turn, introduced me to the Welsh Selectors. Thus I came to play at national level in South Wales and for the first time to appreciate the rugby tradition and history that abounded in the South.

The contrast between Sale and Cardiff could not have been greater. Cardiff ran one Second XV affectionately known as the "Rags" while Sale ran eight or nine sides each week and each player emptied two and six into the match kitty, provided his own boots, stockings and shorts.

I felt like visiting royalty at Cardiff when that ubiquitous secretary Jack Watters welcomed me and made himself familiar with my various measurements and boot size. On Tuesday I turned up for my first training session to find all the equipment needed laid out in the old wooden pavilion in a room lit by a huge coal fire on which it was the enjoyable custom to cook kippers and eat them with fresh bread rolls. A shandy in the old Club Bar afterwards was served by an exceedingly handsome young lady called "Babs" Filer. On the match day, every article of kit, spick and span, was laid out in the changing room and we were attended to by a friendly old masseur, the old Powderhall sprinter, John Powell. To a player who had previously to lug a kit bag all over the place, before and after matches, and more often than not finding one's own transport, this was indeed a luxury. So it was I came quickly to realise the Cardiff administration required me only to expend my energy on the field of play.

I came under the benevolent authority of the Club Captain, a recent President of the W.R.U., Leslie Magnus Spence, a clever leader who led by example and apology. The number of times he accidentally poked his elbow into someone's eye or trod on their corns was legion. It is a constant source of amazement to me that he eventually directed a business in brittle China and Glass.

It was not long before I came to realize that the character of Welsh Club Rugby was infinitely tougher and more exacting than its counterpart in the North of England. When local teams came to grips it was not an occasion for social graces or even mixing after the battle. Two clubs alone, Newport and Cardiff, had a licensed Clubhouse on the campus. It was not customary to drink an opponent's health, and a tough match at Swansea, who had a pack as solid as teak, required on occasion a police escort to the waiting bus which carried the Cardiff team to a suitable hostelry nearer friendly territory where we could lick our wounds, or celebrate our success as the case may be. Let it be noted the girls, unemancipated as they were, stayed home on the Saturday night. That was an evening reserved for men, beer, and rugby talk. The girls could be entertained after Chapel on Sunday.

I was quick to realize under the captaincy of Les Spence that rugby games in Wales were not just the subject of a quick team chat before a contest. They were planned practical battles and team development was evolved from match to match by attention to detail in training sessions or in the game itself. We had a fine run that 1936-7 season beating all Club records since the early part of the century. At full-back was the ebullient Tommy Stone, all five feet five inches of him, and the half-backs were Gwyn Morgan, Cliff Jones or Lyn Williams. Horace Edwards and myself were in the centre and on the wings, internationals Arthur Jones and Arthur Bassett, supported by Gwyn Porter, who was just emerging. Les Spence had among his forward stalwarts Wendy Davies, Harry Rees, Eddie Watkins and Archie Skym all of whom were or became Welsh Internationals and in addition we had one utility forward worth his weight in gold on or off the field—Ianto Jones.

The following year we improved slightly on that record under the captaincy of Arthur Jones and we slightly bettered it again when I had the privilege of being captain in the final year before war broke out. Professional Rugby League had taken its toll of Cardiff players, we lost five, but the reserve strength was amazingly good and from that source had emerged Duncan Brown, Jumbo Thomas, Stan Bowes, Graham Hale, Ernie Knapp, W. R. Davies, older brother of the immortal Cliff, and Roy Roberts. Brown and Hale would certainly have been capped if the war had not intervened and there were other possibles. Nor, before crowds of 20,000 did we lose once to the illustrious Barbarians in those years leading up to the war.

The Cornish tour was a rare social event in the 30's. It was the opening up of new territory. Clubs had not yet learned to flit about the world like the moderns. The tour was a Cornish spring awakening after the quiet sleep of winter. The rugby, at Plymouth, Falmouth or Penzance was rustic in character, but the social activities were vintage in quality. It was for example, one of the few parts of the country where one might see a sixteen stone forward swinging in the breeze outside an irate lady's bedroom. He had been testing the fire escape, a sit-in pulley device. The control ropes were mysteriously lashed to a double bed leaving him stranded mid-way between the roof and pavement harangued by a furious female. Nor was the sight of a running fire-work battle between the team in the coach and sprightly locals in erratically driven cars, an uncommon sight. One might also hear the splash of naked bodies diving into the ice cold harbour to win a modest bet. In Cornwall, in those halcyon days, it was accepted as high spirits to be lowered in vast quantities of ale, and debts to be settled agreeably in the cool light of morning reason. I never did have much zest left for the tail end of the season after that tour.



Cardiff VII that won the Snelling Sevens in 1966, beating Newport 23-20 in extra time. Standing (left to right): T. Holley, (*first aid*), M. Richards, A. R. Pender, L. Baxter, A. D. Williams, R. Bish, (*coach*). Seated: J. H. Williams, G. L. Porter (*chairman*), W. G. Hullin (*capt.*), W. J. Thomas.



Among our souvenirs . . . Barry John hands over his boots and Gareth Edwards supplies a Lions' jersey for the Cardiff R.F.C. museum. Watching proceedings are Colin Howe (*left*) and John Bevan.

Cardiff moved into the war in September, 1939 as I captained an unbeaten record of two games, Cardiff and District and Bridgend, the Club's only unbeaten season. It then closed down abruptly. It was some weeks of blackout and inactivity before the public realised that war was a slow moving event and that total destruction was not immediate. Many of the Cardiff teams had joined the 77th Heavy A.A. Regiment stationed at Cardiff Docks and other rugby players were within call. With the authority of our Rugby loving Colonel, Idris Evans, Sgt. Spence and other ranks, Wooller and Wendy Davies, got permission to use the Cardiff Arms Park, provided there was no cost to the Cardiff club which had virtually sealed up its accounts. The venture was an instant success. Fixtures with the R.A.F., Army Units and Combined Sides who could travel to Cardiff were supported by the sports' starved public at several thousand a game. A good deal of money was made for various charities before Cardiff, realising the potential, re-opened officially as a Club. Brice Jenkins became a competent administrator and there was help from old hands like Hubert Johnson who was stationed in the area.

Before I left for a climate less rugby minded, I had the pleasure of introducing to the Cardiff team a fair, shock haired, teenage out-half who was studying at Cardiff University. It was Billy Cleaver and I was delighted when we returned years later to sanity and peace, that he was now a great Cardiff player.



Cardiff, winners against Australians in 1957. Standing (left to right): C. T. Howe, J. D. Evans, W. R. Evans, H. Nicholls, K. D. Jones, G. Beckingham, D. J. Hayward, W. R. Willis. Seated: L. Griffin (referee), C. D. Williams, Cliff Morgan, Eddie Thomas (capt.), G. Wells, A. J. Priday, T. L. Williams. In front: Glyn John, A. Barter.



The Coal Mining Industry and Cardiff R.F.C.

By Maldwyn James

Speak to anyone from the valleys who is 50 years plus of age and they will tell you that the City of Cardiff made its name as a result of the millions of tons of coal it exported from its docks in the last 100 years. When I first played for Cardiff in 1943-44 season, the team was composed mainly of players associated with medicine and mining, these being two professions that were exempt from military service. Arthur Cornish, who was running the club with the help of Bruce Jenkins and Danny Davies, would make up the team with the lads who were home on leave from the Services.

The now famous Dr. Jack Matthews was a medical Student at Cardiff and other doctors or medical students in Hubert Jones, Glyn Jones, St. John Rees and Peter Williams (father of J.P.R.), were joined by mining engineers, W. B. Cleaver, Gerry Blackmore, George Tomkins and myself, and to make a team, joined on occasions by Bleddyn Williams and Ewart Tamplin, and when he wasn't on R.A.F. duty, by A. M. Rees. Again Hubert Johnson of the R.A.F. never failed to appear when he was available. It is interesting to note that the Cardiff front row of Gerry Blackmore, myself and George Tomkins were all qualified mining engineers and were probably unique in the history of the Club, as the first mining front row!

Another interesting fact is that W. B. Cleaver and myself were both Colliery Managers playing for Cardiff and Wales at the same time, the odds against this ever happening again must be high. Gerry Blackmore is still Coal Mining in Canada, George Tomkins left mining and joined the Ryan Group, W. B. Cleaver is the Deputy Director for the South Wales Coalfield and having retired early to enjoy myself, I am doing what I like doing best—"being with Cardiff".

Late in 1945 Cardiff were invited to tour France, and we spent New Year's Eve in Nantes, and with this team were two more mining men in Cliff Davies and his cousin from Kenfig Hill, W. G. Jones. These two were not qualified Engineers but earned their living by hewing coal from the "face" by the skill of their bodies; indeed two of the toughest Colliers I met in a long mining career. They had ousted Blackmore and Tompkins and, as a result, provided Cardiff with their second Mining front row, with the difference that it was now composed of two colliers and a colliery manager. It would be difficult for this to repeat itself in the Cardiff Club.

Cliff and W. G., as they were universally known, were certainly the toughest of all front rows I have played with or against, and this was manifest against Australia in September, 1947, when the pre match build up contained much publicity regarding Cardiff's Mining front row. How well I remember going down in the first scrum of this match only to hear Nicki Shehadie (now Mayor of Sidney) exclaim, "Let's push these Bastards where they belong into the bloody ground!" One can imagine what followed this remark, and reports described it as a "Blood Bath", but it was Nicki Shehadie, Dawson and McMaster who eventually found themselves pushed into the ground!

One of the greatest thrills I have ever experienced was in the last minute of this match seeing Cliff sprinting for the line through an exhausted Australian team. What a victory and what a team!!! It was hours later in the after match dinner that we discovered the word "Bastard", is a term of endearment amongst the Aussies. Alas too late!

The wonderful character Cliff was to demonstrate his versatility in many ways and there are two occasions which will remain with me for ever. Imagine being a member of the Welsh XV in the Twickenham dressing rooms, everybody keyed up, and then out into the ground for photographs with 30,000 Welsh supporters hoarse in their acclaim for Wales. Then back into the dressing room and behold the Bard of Kenfig saying, "Now Boys we'll have the first verse and chorus of Calon Lan", and the room would ring with this wonderful song. As a result all the tension disappeared and Cliff had performed the impossible. Secondly, I well remember that great Welshman Ivor Emmanuel in the club after an International. The bar upstairs was packed and it was impossible to get any order.

Cliff had other ideas, he got up on to a table in the centre of the room and just stood there saying nothing, gradually one could hear the noise getting less and less until there was perfect order. Cliff then spoke to the crowd and said in his own inimitable manner, "Now look lads I've got our Ivor here, and I want you to hear him singing some of the songs he does on T.V."

Ivor then proceeded to give one of the finest hours of Welsh singing that it has been my privilege to hear and after thunderous applause which followed each song, Cliff had only to raise his hand to get perfect order once again. The impossible being made possible by my friend Cliff. How else can I describe him?



French President M. Vincent Auriol being introduced to the Welsh Team before the start of the 1947 match in Paris. Cliff Davies is on the right



A Player apart—

A Man beloved—

Cliff Davies

By Dr. Jack Matthews

Humour and the name of Cliff Davies in the game of Rugby are almost synonymous, and all those players who played with him would whole-heartedly agree. There are very few characters around these days who have the personality and repartee that he had. If anyone enjoyed the game at all, and all that went with it—it was Cliff. His wonderful carefree spirit was infectious and almost impossible to cure. There was no antedote to it. Some of his actions and statements will forever be remembered by all those who enjoyed the pleasure of his company.

I persuaded Cliff to play for Cardiff and he played for the club from the end of the War until 1951. I can well remember him playing for the Medical team against Bridgend during the latter part of the war, and he was known as “Dr. Davies”. He had his leg pulled for many years following this appearance because a great friend of Cliff’s at Kenfig Hill used to make coffins and Cliff used to assist him—what a combination! If Cliff would arrive a little late at a match it was because he had to fix up “so and so” with a “box” because the “poor dab” had gone on. Cliff was never moody; he always had a smile and never seemed to have a care in the world.

During our trips with the Cardiff team I can well remember the great debates he used to have with the big guns of the Mining Industry, namely Maldwyn James (when Maldwyn hooked against Karl Mullen, Karl always used to say “keep your hands down James”), and Billy Cleaver (the Blond Bombshell). I am sure that many strikes were averted on these tours, irrespective of any Trade Union. Cliff used to lay the law down to these two workers! Cliff always had the last word. This used to be part of the game of rugby football and he enthused a great friendship into the team.

In 1945 when we visited Nantes and Cognac, Cliff was our chief interpreter with his vocabulary of “Bonne Anne”. His great episode with the French was when one of the French forwards had a snap at his ear and he responded similarly with a few canine teeth he had in his upper jaw. But all was in good fun and all ended well.

A great pal and front row forward who played for Bristol, produced another amusing incident. This front row was blind in one eye and Cliff would always pack against him on the "blind" side but, on the one occasion that Cliff was late coming up to a scrum he had forgotten that he was not on the "blind" side and Cliff could not make out why we had not heeled the ball. He said this lad is miraculous until it was pointed out to Cliff that he had packed on the wrong side!

Cliff was slow to anger and it was rare to see him in this state, but in one game against Newport, a Black and Amber forward had done something to Cliff and when the scrum was down Cliff broke up and entered the Newport Scrum and hauled out the culprit. Over a pint that night all was forgiven and forgotten!

The day we arrived in New Zealand with the British Lions was a day to be remembered because when at Nelson in the early hours of the morning we were met by the playing of a band. and, when they had stopped playing, a voice from the large welcoming crowd was heard above all others, and it was chanting "Is Cliff Davies from Kenfig Hill there? "Here I am", said Cliff, and it was a distant relative and Cliff burst into song with "Sospan Fach". On that Lions tour he taught a lot of the team to sing in Welsh, and his famous saying was "Well now boys you must sing it quiet". He conducted many of the Welsh choirs of the Welsh Communities in New Zealand and Australia. He was carried away with song many times with his brow sweating and his collar and tie off.

He and Graham Budge, his fellow prop on the tour, used to order a plane and fly over the towns we played in just to see the scenery. Another famous saying he manufactured on that tour was that there was more history attached to Kenfig Hill than anywhere else in the world bar Jerusalem. Yes, he loved his own home town. Mr. W.J. Jordon, who was the High Commissioner of New Zealand, travelled back home with us, and he and Cliff became great friends, and they played crib together every morning, and the High Commissioner would not start the game until Cliff joined them.

No greater character or humourist has ever donned a rugby jersey. What a pity there are so few of his type playing today.

So many wonderful stories can be told of him—of his kindnesses and his thoughtfulness. Just after the War, when everything was so scarce we were on tour in Cornwall. We were staying in an hotel that had been newly furnished albeit utility and someone had been a little rough with a wardrobe. Leave it to me said Cliff. He went out and bought some tools and wood and he said, "Now boys, sing away like hell, while I hammer away and do running repairs. The wardrobe was in better condition than before—a remark was made—who are preparing the box for Cliff? His reply was, "I am bloody good at making wooden boxes and the next bugger that breaks anything will be measured for one".

Besides having such a happy disposition he had tremendous energy—often working a night shift and then playing at the Arms Park, and on more than one occasion walking home late at night, having missed the last bus and train. One night I managed to persuade him to stay in the flat I was living in. My wife said that he would have to sleep in the lounge with our Alsatian. In the morning Cliff was fast asleep on the settee with the Alsatian.

Cliff developed a huge cauliflower ear—a forward's occupational hazard. At the time I was a Houseman at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary, so I asked Cliff to come to the hospital and

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Rugby Football—

A Way of Life!

By Bledwyn Williams

Rugby Football is a great game to play, whether one achieves fame and acclaim or not. I have lived my life against an exciting back-drop of Rugger, with a profound awareness that I have fulfilled the traditions of my family's sporting heritage. I treasure every memory of the many years I spent as a player with the greatest club of all—Cardiff. Even all these years later, I cannot escape the thrill of excitement when games of special regard are recounted by former colleagues during moments of oft recurring nostalgia.

For instance, Cardiff against Charles Saxtons Kiwi's (the well remembered New Zealand Army Team) during the 1945/46 season, which heralded a Golden Era of vintage Rugby by the club, and which was the first of some truly great games against visiting International Touring Teams, during my time as a player. Jack Matthew's team was beaten by a Jim Kearney try to nil on that Boxing Day in 1945, in a game of extraordinary good quality. It was a result that deprived us of an unbeaten record, which came as an anti-climax, but the crushing disappointment was that we had failed as a club, as in 1905, 1924 and 1935, to gain victory at the Arms Park against a New Zealand side. Eight years later, however, this situation was to be rectified.

Our continued policy of providing fast open Rugby paid handsome dividends, and through the turnstiles larger and larger grew the crowds with each successive year, reaching a climax in the 1950/51 season, when with Newport as the visitors, 48,500 people packed into the Arms Park, a record for a club game, which stands even to this day.

With the great Haydn Tanner at the helm, arguably the greatest ever Cardiff side, was set to do battle with Bill Mclean's "Wallabies", who arrived at the Park unbeaten in October 1947 with a reputation of being rather over physical in their approach, (Shades of England's tour to Australia 1975). The fact that they met their match in all aspects of the game is now a matter for the history books. Suffice to say that Bill Tamplin, Les Manfield, Roy Roberts & Company up front, were the masters of all situations and the result of 11 points to 3 in Cardiff's favour was no more than deserved.

Four years later the club once again with my great co-centre Jack Matthews in command, in his final season and in Cardiff's 75th Anniversary Year, took on Basil Kenyon's

"Springboks", who were then regarded as World Champions, and whom I still maintain was the most accomplished Touring side to visit these shores since the war. It turned out to be one of the truly great games, and only an error of judgement by referee Cyril Joynson of Caerleon deprived Cardiff of the victory they so richly deserved after out-playing the South Africans before 53,000 spectators. Cardiff were leading by 6 points (a Bill Tamplin penalty and a try) to 5, with the Springboks back on their heels, when the referee made a vital mistake. Dr. Jack charged down a Lategan attempted clearance kick and burst over near the posts for what was an obvious try

The Springbok players were in no doubt as to its legality and moved behind their own goal line to await the conversion kick. But they, like the Cardiff team, were amazed when Referee Joynson, forgetting the newly introduced change of law which did not make a charge down a knock on, ordered a scrummage. Disappointed we most certainly were, but disappointment turned to disbelief when midway through the second half the referee decided to award a try to the Springboks under similar circumstances. This time Cliff Morgan had a clearance kick charged down by scrum half Oelofse, who sprang on to the ball as it spiralled over our line, and was allowed to walk away with the spoils.

Never have I known a feeling of such keen frustration and injustice shared by our Cardiff fans as when we trooped off the Arms Park that day losers by two points. The sporting South Africans however, recognising their extraordinary good luck, generously presented the club with a Springbok head which they had meant to award to the teams that defeated them. Proudly mounted on the wall of the trophy room today, it serves as a reminder to the club that in defeat too, there can be victory for the true sportsman.

For me, two years later, the disappointment of the Springbok defeat was mellowed in the excitement and invigoration of being the captain of the first Cardiff side to beat the New Zealanders. I was a few months later to skipper Wales to victory over the same All Blacks, but that particular match, gratifying though the result was, in no way provided me with the same degree of exhilaration, nor did it measure up in any way to the high standards set in the Cardiff—New Zealand clash. The result, a goal and a try to a penalty goal in our favour, with all the points coming in the first 20 minutes of the game, tells only part of the story, for it could never have been accomplished without the magnificent effort of the late Sid Judd and his truly herculean pack,—the sheer brilliance of Cliff Morgan and Rex Willis at half back, the heroic fearlessness of the late John Llewellyn at full back and the expertise of the all Welsh International back division.

I could never hope to recapture the excitement of this match in mere words. One had to play in it, or see it, to appreciate the agonising tension of those closing minutes on our own line, when the Cardiff players called on every last reserve of their rapidly diminishing energy to hold out against the torrential flood of the desperate All Blacks offensive. I personally have never experienced a more nerve-racking situation, but held out we did, the end coming with Geof Beckingham stealing a tight head, for Cliff Morgan to despatch the ball safely to touch near the 25 yards line.

It was truly the proudest moment of my life when Stan Bowes, after playing the game of his life, and with no physical effort at all, lifted me like a baby on his shoulders to lead us triumphantly from the field of play. It had been one of the hardest games I had ever played in, and certainly the most tense with the last three minutes the longest of any that I can recall.

There were other memorable club fixtures, not least of all the four annual games against arch-rivals Newport which were always something special. There was for instance the game



Cliff Morgan . . . played 29 times for his country.



Bleddyn Williams . . . 22 appearances for Wales.

at Rodney Parade in the 1947/48 season, when Newport were leading by 2 penalty goals to a goal, with minutes left for play in a match brimful of excitement and magnificent rugby. Ken Jones had been well and truly looking after Les Williams our left wing who could not get away to score, often times from overlap situations. Then suddenly the 'Old Gent' Maldwyn James, who we reckoned was loitering with intent, was caught up in the chain of events by accident and appeared from nowhere with the ball in his possession. A dive pass reminiscent of Haydn Tanner at his best gave me the opportunity to dummy Ken Jones who still had a weather eye on Les Williams, to cross for a try near the corner flag.

In those days the crowds were so large at these fixtures that a good many spectators were accommodated inside the ropes on the periphery of the field. After grounding the ball my momentum took me into the crowd behind the dead ball line at the cricket field end. I came to an abrupt halt facing my old friend the late Albert Elms, a black and amber fanatic in the extreme. Realising it to be the decisive score, Albert, with his feet inches away from my face snarled, "I could kick those brilliant white teeth in for you, if only I wasn't so fond of you". How many times after we laughed over the incident, and how often we discussed the strength of the marvellous love-hate relationship between the two neighbouring clubs.

Incidentally, Bill Tamplin, as he so often did at Rodney Parade, converted the try in question from near the touchline, rubbing further salt into the wounds. Again at Rodney Parade after Newport's Bobby Owen had been on the receiving end of one of Dr. Jack Matthews special tackles. Leaving the field the Doctor was approached by a huge Newport supporter of threatening demeanour who berated Jack for his tough treatment of a man so much lighter in weight than himself. Quick as a flash came Jack's reply. "What about yourself,—you're much bigger than I am!". Departure of the said gentlemen in one hell of a hurry.

Another amusing occasion happened when a French air line pilot, sent to pick up the Cardiff team to play at Nantes and Cognac in an old three engined German Junker transport plane, lost his way between Bristol after stopping there for customs clearance, and the old Cardiff Airport at Tremorfa. And on the same trip, travelling between Nantes and Cognac by coach, in the early hours after a rather hectic evening, stopping to take care of nature behind a hedge, being joined by the referee's wife, much to the embarrassment of the team and their committee. Then, later in the day after a sumptuous eight course lunch and much wine, seeing our scrum half Billy Darch disappearing into the mouth of the scrum after delivering the ball.

Another marvellous tale is of the late W. G. Jones, a great prop and cousin of the incomparable Cliff Davies, who alas, also departed this world too soon, arrived at Cardiff station to wave goodbye to the Welsh Team off to play Scotland. Chatting idly to the team before departure, non International Jones was handed a train ticket by the then Secretary, Capt. Walter Rees, who must have assumed from W. G.'s cauliflower ears that he was one of the travelling party.

The short of it was that Billy had a wonderful weekend at the expense of the Welsh Rugby Union, completely unnoticed by the powers that be, and treasured it as the escapade of a lifetime. But after all, the free trip was no more than Billy Jones deserved for helping the Welsh Rugby Union out of a predicament during the 1946/47 season of victory Internationals. Wales was due to play France in Paris on the Easter Monday and Cliff Davies had been chosen to play in his customary prop position.

Alas, on the previous Saturday morning, prior to the annual Cardiff-Barbarians clash, Cliff was involved in an accident at the pit where he worked, injuring a leg and was forced to cry off both games. The Welsh team was due to travel to France on the Easter Saturday

evening but had no reserve standing by, holding a current passport, to take Cliff's place. W. G. Jones was approached and readily agreed to play in Paris even though he was sporting a huge and painful cauliflower ear sustained in the Barbarians match and also in the knowledge that because he also lacked a passport, he was to take the field at the Stade Colomb stadium as Cliff Davies, on whose passport he travelled. W. G. had an excellent game but regrettably he was never to gain a full International cap nor did he have the pleasure of seeing his name among the players registered in the Official Programme on that memorable Easter Monday.

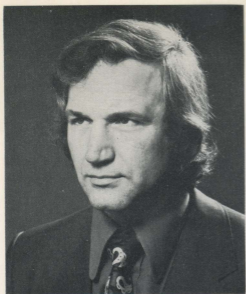
Another fond memory is of Cliff Davies, whose travelling kit usually consisted of nothing more than a clean collar tucked away in his coat, and a toothbrush peeping out from his breast pocket. Clifton was a great footballer, loved by all—one of nature's Gentlemen, who enriched every company with his wonderful philosophy of the world and calm acceptance of all that life had to offer. Of those privileged to hear it, who could forget his rich baritone rendering of Leoncavallo's operatic aria 'The Prologue' from *Pagliacci*, delivered with such depth of feeling and compassion.

Then there was the other Cliff—Cliff Morgan, about to play in his first senior game for Cardiff at Bath, in a match in which I had to prove my fitness after 3 months with my leg in plaster in order to tour with the 1950 Lions to Australia, Cliff with the carefree, confident approach that was to depict his play throughout a wonderfully colourful career, assured me that I would score a try near the end of the game that would clinch my inclusion in the eyes of the Lions selectors. "Leave it all to me" called Cliff over his shoulder as he took the field.

Sure enough, minutes from the end of the game, in which I had gone through the motions of taking part, Cliff asked if I was ready for action. Taking the ball from Brian Mark at scrum half, the talented young rascal beat the wing forward on the outside, waltzed inside his opposite number and drew the full back before giving me a perfect scoring pass. Judgement was pronounced, "Williams is fit", and I did travel to Australia and New Zealand on a Tour which was to prove in all aspects another of the great highlights of my life.

Another memory of the puckish sense of humour possessed by the irrepressible Morgan came a few years later when we were laying to rest our much revered and well loved former Hon. Secretary, Brice Jenkins, at the Ararat Church in Whitchurch. Brice who was known to be very strict about the distribution of tickets, would have been delighted to know that his 'Boys' were officiating in this capacity and would have fully appreciated Cliff's witty little aside as he struggled manfully to keep his place as pall bearer, "I think Brice must be taking the full allocation of tickets up there with him"!

These are but a few anecdotes recalled from a storehouse full of extremely happy memories of my association with the great Cardiff Rugby Club, of which I feel it has been a great honour to share, and I humbly hope that somewhere along the line, I was able to give something in return.



Hymns —

Ancient and Modern

By David Hayward

A hundred years old. A century of blood, toil, tears, sweat, dismay, delight, diligence and daring. Newport, Neath, Swansea and Llanelli have all arrived at that age before us, but we always were a little younger in our outlook than them. A glance at the history books will tell us that Queen Victoria had just been proclaimed Empress of India, Bell had invented the Telephone and the Boer War was brewing. A glance at the photographs of those early years would certainly show some differences in apparel and appearances from those favoured by the modern player. Despite these obvious differences of make-up and manners, I'll guarantee that they shared one thing in common with the player of 1976, their enjoyment of a jar of ale (albeit their's was probably much cheaper and much stronger) and the same, somewhat bawdy, sense of humour, that ranges from the undergraduate to the underground.

There is one tradition regarding after-match bonhomie which makes Cardiff somehow different from most others, and this is probably rooted in its early Victorian origins, and has been reinforced by the overlay of generations of non-conformist players from the valleys and the deep west. They always sing in public but not your disorganised, discordant renderings of "The Ball of Kerriemuir" and its like. But melodic, choral pieces, usually Welsh Hymns and invariably well conducted and harmonic.

The likes of Steve Hughes, Gary Samuel and Roy Duggan, could take a bunch of Manchester United chanters, and have them singing four-part harmony to "Sanctaidd" in less time than it takes to put the boot into a Leeds United fan. Such is the tradition. It is also traditional for the Captain to insist that a newcomer to the side, sings a solo on his first away match. I well remember a new prop forward to the Rags being somewhat overwhelmed by the grandeur of the combined, and solo, singing of a particularly good singing Rags side, and after his first game, played at Glynneath, he was more than perplexed when called upon for his first solo. This wasn't too surprising, since he was English and a captain in the British Army. After several minutes silence, he stood, and to his eternal credit, gave a rendering of "She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain".

But he didn't sing it, he spoke it, with a presence, and a delivery, and in such beautifully modulated tones that caused John Price to whisper in awe that he made Laurence Olivier sound like Albert Steptoe. The Cardiff players and the Glynneath Club had never before

heard anything like it and I doubt if they have since. It was magnificent. Sufficient to earn rapturous applause and send all the aspiring young props in the club searching for elocution lessons. Indeed we had two highly promising but virtually incoherent young props from Hirwaun, who returned to the Heads of the Valleys, and as far as I know have never played rugby since.

Many and varied are the players who have the ability to twinkle their toes on the pitch and twang their tonsils to good effect when off it, thus delighting both the 'terrace toads' and the 'lounge lizards'.

My first vivid memory of Cliff Morgan, was not surprisingly on the rugby pitch. It was near Christmas, and we had lost our first game of the season away at Gloucester. In order to revive and sustain spirits, we all came back to the club, and I remember Cliff doing some amazing virtuoso performances on the piano. I have forgotten the songs and the pianissimo, but I have vivid recollections of his scarlet braces. Before my time of playing, but not of knowing, there was a truly great Cardiff fly-half, who, in conjunction with Maldwyn James, sang rapturous harmony. He sang beautifully with a slight lisp, which made his rendering of "I went to University, not to study philosophy, I got my degree in Jazz—because I could "razzamatatz" much more interesting than a straight-forward delivery.

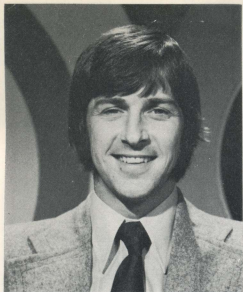
Even on our present day committee, we have our star performers. Lyn Williams could harmonise with a buzz-saw and make it sound sweet and if Haydn Wilkins didn't "Do it his Way" everyone would miss a treat and he would probably sulk. Colin Howe breaks everyone's heart about his 'lost kitten', and Stan Bowes can still blast eardrums and the Racial Relations Act with his rendering of "Johnsons Jubilee". Keith Rowlands knows more Irish Folk songs than the I.R.A., Peter Nyhan is a yodeller of Alpine standards, Howard Norris knows enough pornographic songs to create different repertoires for the next five new Universities, and even if the rest of us can't sing at least we know the words, in English and Welsh.

It is strange, so far, that I only seem to have mentioned Backs and Props, but I can assure you that the Big Boys in the second row have all added their weight to the Gymanfa Ganu scrummage.

To view the immense frame of Maurice Braithwaite and then to see him lift his hirsute face from a pint, lick his lips and sing "Lark in the Clear Air" is as much of a surprise as Colonel Gadd singing "My Yiddishan Mamma" and is infinitely sweeter. Phil Kallonas does the "Laughing Policeman" better than the constable who caught me on the breathalyser, and not to be outdone "Robbo" does a better version of "The Yellow Submarine" than the Beatles, and Maldwyn Gough was singing "The Soldiers Bible" long before Max Bygraves.

Fot better, or for worse, the rest of us padded out the bill in between the songsters, and in our case it can be only adequately summed up in the immortal words of Dylan. "Thank God we are a musical nation",— and patient too.

P.A. To Max Boyce—why aren't you a member yet?



Gareth and I . . .

By Barry John

Retirement is never easy for any person, but to a sportsman it takes on gigantic proportions; simply because he is giving up something which he has loved all his life. Work is essential and is a necessity, but sport is different, particularly with Rugby Union Football, for there is no compulsion and one plays it for sheer enjoyment and pleasure.

When I decided to finish playing, some years ago now, it was the most frustrating and painful time of my life. So many things, including the past, present and future quickly flashed through my mind.

No longer would I experience that super tingling nervous feeling on a Saturday afternoon; no more would I pull on the Blue and Black of Cardiff. In fact, during those first few months of retirement, I must confess to some moments of depression and sulkiness, but I quickly decided that this was no good, and that it was far better to look at my good fortune in having played for the greatest club in the world and to have such numerous memories.

Mind you, these days, when I turn up to see the boys on a glorious, warm Autumn or Spring afternoon and I get carried away with the feeling of wanting to join in—I tend to use a little trick psychology on myself. I run up the steps to the Press Box, and after covering a few flights of steps in double-quick time, I eventually arrive panting in my seat—that's when I realise that even if I wanted to be out there, I would not even last the pace.

So now, I've come to realise and accept that these memories are even more important in my life.

For a start, how can I ever forget playing at Cardiff without remembering Gareth. When in 1972 I had eventually decided in my own mind to finish, I realised what it really meant from my own personal point of view. Gareth and I would no longer run out together on that electric turf at Cardiff; but then I thought and realised that although the umbilical cord between us would be broken, the great bond would always remain.

Gareth and I had always understood each other, right from the beginning of our rugby careers. We were bred from the same Welsh stock; came from the same type of homes, where rugby was always the dominant factor, and above all Welsh was the means of all communication. This always played an important part in our game, because Welsh was always our first language on the field and more often than not, off the field.



Barry John and Gareth Edwards. This great Cardiff pair played together 23 times for Wales—a world record for a half back unit in international rugby. Only Cliff Morgan (29) played more games at fly half for Wales than Barry John (25).

Many a time, opposition wing-forwards standing barely two yards away, would look blank in amazement as either Gareth or myself 'babbled' away in Welsh, as to what we might do from the next scrum. What the language did for us, was that we were able to go into more detail, than say play signals, and nowadays, detail is very important. Gareth is definitely THE dominant scrumhalf in World Rugby and to have played with him for so long was such an undisputed honour for me—his magic touch was always present and his wizardry could cause no rivalry.

Playing Rugby Union Football is one thing; but to play with the most complete rugby footballer ever is another thing. Perhaps, the best and simplest way I am able to sum up my feelings towards Gareth's play, in that unforgettable match in 1971 and with easy, relaxed, matter of fact way; rifling out those bullet passes from all directions, when I remember saying to John Dawes. "Do you think it would be a good idea if I carried a stamp in the next, with one word written on it—'Approved—B. J.' I felt that this would save time all round and give the backs that extra split second!!!

I now look admiringly at Gareth's play from the warmth and safety of the Press box, and any game which he appears in, excites me greatly, for it holds that feeling of expectation—you know, sitting on the edge of your seat just waiting for something exceptional to happen, and very rarely am I disappointed. So much has been written about him, that even I, who had been so close to him, find it difficult to recall untold tales of his genius

(Continued on page 68)



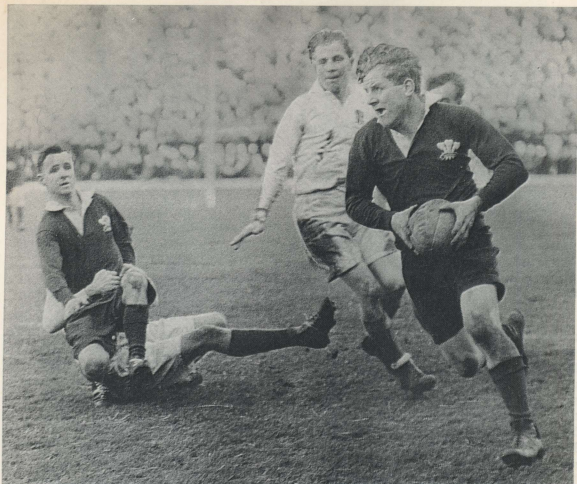
"It's either the Club or Gareth and his Caps!"



ARMS PARK FAVOURITES IN ACTION

Cliff Morgan, Billy Cleaver and Keith Rowlands were men guaranteed to pull in the crowds. They loved to see Cleaver break the hearts of opposing packs with his deadly accurate touch-finding; Morgan mesmerise tacklers with his jink and swerve; and the towering Rowlands dominate a line-out or heave his way out of a maul. Morgan (*left*) keeps Newport's Ken Jones threatening company, while Rowlands (*below*) tussles with Neath's giant Brian Thomas.





A FAMOUS KICKER AND HIS BATTERED BOOTS

Billy Cleaver (*above in action against England at Twickenham in 1946*) is ever remembered for his skill in punting. Yet the Cardiff outside half invariably played in boots that were falling apart. "They were comfortable," he explained, and shunned the offer of a new pair from the club. He wore these boots (*right*) while giving a memorable display against Newport in 1949

