**Cricket**

***Reminiscences of Bendigo by the Almanac***

***Written by Peter MacIver***

The two stories in today’s *Reminiscences* once again show David Scott’s entrepreneurial spirit. In those days, it was common for visiting teams to play at Bendigo United Cricket Club’s ground, Back Creek Oval. Today this ground is known as the Harry Trott Oval. Trott played for BUCC in 1902 and was discovered as a cricketer when playing for the Capulet club in the Boyle and Scott junior cricket competition in Melbourne.

“THE FIRST ENGLISH CRICKET TEAM AT BENDIGO.”

October 10, 1908. When the team came to Bendigo in 1862 their arrival caused great excitement, and they were met at the Big Hill, some 9 or 10 miles from Bendigo and driven in a coach and six to Bendigo. The road en route was lined with enthusiastic people, who cheered them heartily. I was mad on the game, and was one of those who went out to meet them. I had got our school master to give us a holiday to see the first day's play, and was looking forward to a treat, when, on the opening day, like a bolt from the blue came an order from my father, who did not like sports of any kind. He said to me, "I hear you have got a day's holiday from school; that will suit nicely, as I have some fencing to do, you can start at once and dig post-holes, and fix them and the rails." I said nothing, and put in good work at posts and rails. I then said to father, "We have no nails." He said, "Why, there were plenty there yesterday. Where have they gone?” "Chinamen stole them, I expect," said I, "I will just run down to the ironmonger's and get them." He must have thought I was very good. I started at once, but, alas, not to the ironmonger's, but to a neighbour’s where I had the night before taken my best-go-to-meeting clothes. I changed quickly, and ran all the way to the cricket ground, some mile and a quarter distant.

On arrival at the ground, where the people wore flocking in rapidly, I found the admission was 2/6. I had not a bean. I waited for some kind person to take me in, but no one came along that knew me. To get over the fence was impossible, as the whole of the top was nicely coated with coal tar to prevent interlopers. I strolled round the ground, and at last spied a small hole, scarcely big enough for a rabbit to get through. I managed it, and then there was further trouble. They had spotters round to see that no one got in without paying, and one of them yelled out to me, "Hi, Hi!" I never let on I heard him, but rushed up to H. H. Stephenson, the captain of the English team, and said to him, "I am glad you have won the toss. Now your men will show us some batting," and shook hands with him. The spotter thought he had made a mistake, and never bothered further. Genial Stephenson then, said, "Sonny, come with me,'' and took me into the reserve and afterwards into luncheon. I had a glorious day, and thoroughly enjoyed myself till 6 o'clock, when the stumps were drawn for the day.

On my way home I thought there is trouble in store for me when I get home I had made no mistake. Father said, ''It took you a long; time to get those nails. You have been to the cricket match, and deceived me." He gave me a terrible thrashing, but I never shed a tear. The day was worth it. I was sent to bed and an acquaintance of my father came in and said, "My word your son was in high society to-day; all day with the English cricketers." Father said, "He deceived me, and I gave him a bad thrashing, but I could not get him to shed a tear.'' This about ended my school days, and I then entered the service of Francis Bros., very large universal providers, who had very large stores at the Beehive, in the Mall, and branches all ever the goldfields. I was at one of the branch establishments at Golden-square. It was a rosy billet I got 15/ a week and board and lodging. I stayed there for six months, when they closed the place.

A GREAT SINGLE WICKET MATCH, FOR £10 A SIDE.

October 24, 1908. These festivities rather upset the diggers for some days, and there was great talk about other matches of various kinds coming off, and at last a challenge was thrown out that there was a young fellow, not long out from England that would play anyone on Raywood a single wicket cricket match for a £1O note. It was reported he was a great gun, and had played in one of the leading counties in England. Some of my friends-Bendigonians, you may be sure-said to me, “Don't you know anyone that we can pitt against this man?'' "Yes." I said. “I know one. if he will play, that will just about finish him off." I had in my mind Harry Boyle, who lived at Sydney Flat. Arrangements were soon made, and a wicket was prepared on hard ground, with the grass chopped off. There was a tremendous crowd present, the diggers making a holiday of it, and as gold was plentiful money was also. Harry Boyle was favorite, as he was well known, and had just about this time done some good performances. Boyle went in first, and made 7 runts. The home player then went in and made some very pretty strokes, but did not seem to be able to hit very hard. After making one run he was sent to the right-about with a trimmer which removed his leg stump. Boyle in his second innings made 5, when he gave his hand up, and the stranger in his second innings only made 2, so Boyle won easily by 9 runs, and was carried in triumph all round the ground. His name was on every tongue, and he was the George Parr of the period. Many years afterwards, in 1873, when Harry Boyle bowled the great champion cricketer, W. G. Grace, on the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the thought cameback to me about his great single wicket match at Raywood, in 1863, and my thought then was, "Well, I have seen him do great performances: there is a future before him, and some day he will be displaying his great skill on cricket fields of old England." This also came off, as when in England with the 1878 Australian team he took six wickets for 3 runs on Lords' Ground.