

TYNEDALE
RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



A Centenary History
1876 - 1976

“The first recorded International match between England and Scotland, of course quite unofficial, was in the 17th Century. It was composed of twenty from Tynedale against an equal number from Liddesdale, the Southerners winning by 3 goals to 2. We are unable to record this as an annual fixture ; however, in 1790 the youth of these same dales were playing a return on the “ Haugh ”, close by Kielder Castle. Five games were played, no times stated ; after four games the tally stood two all ; the North Tyne lads won the fifth and were again declared the victors. No score is given, nor details of the duration of the battle, for battle it certainly was, several of the players being so exhausted by the intensity of the struggle that ‘ a few who died soon afterwards dated the commencement of their illness from that date.’ ”

(From the History of “ Durham County Rugby Union,” 1876 — 1936)

“ Football seems to be rapidly coming to the front as a popular winter game, and once the ‘danger’ element is carefully eliminated, its popularity, I have no doubt, will steadily increase. The game of football, it is allowed by the best judges of athletic exercise, is one of the most invigorating and beneficial pastimes that an adolescent youth can engage in, as it brings every joint, muscle and fibre of the body into action, is eminently calculated to give expansion and elasticity to the lungs, to develop and enlarge the chest, and give a healthy tone to the physical constitution generally ; and if fairly played, and judiciously indulged in, involves no particular danger to any person of sound stamina or robust health. But, I need scarcely remark, it brings also the brain into vigorous action, by requiring at almost every instant nice calculations of distance, exact decisions of cause and effect, and by demanding prompt action when the enemy exhibits a weak point, or an opportunity of fouling him occurs. It should not be forgotten, however, that, by foul play, it is susceptible of being made one of the most dangerous of athletic pastimes, and therefore in selecting teams of players any person whose temper and disposition does not permit him to bear, good humouredly, rebuffs and jostlings, or even wrestlings, in a sudden collision, ought to be vigorously excluded from either side, especially when the game is intended to be played in earnest. As formerly played, it was simply a wholesale pell-mell, inartistic scramble of throwing, tripping up, and kicking the shins of opponents, ending not unfrequently with a ‘ set-to ’ of fisticuffs Now that the game is being made not only safe, but respectable, I take this opportunity of cordially wishing it every success at Hexham.”

(From Local Notes and Comments, by “ Ariel,” in the “ Hexham Courant ” of 6th January, 1877, a week after Tynedale Football Club’s first game).

TYNEDALE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



A Centenary History 1876 - 1976



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Reflecting on a hundred years of Tynedale history, as he looks out over Dene Park, Hexham, for the last time before the club's move to its new ground at Corbridge, is the club's centenary year president, Mr. Stuart Enevoldson.

Principal Officers 1876 - 1976

Season	President	Captain	Secretary	Treasurer
1876-77	Major Nicholson	H. J. Baker	H. Kirsopp	E. Shield
1877-78	Major Nicholson	G. J. Bell	H. Kirsopp	G. H. Bell
1878-79	I. Baty	R. H. Robb	J. M. Wilson	J. M. Wilson
1879-80	I. Baty	R. H. Robb	J. M. Wilson	J. M. Wilson
1880-81	I. Baty	R. H. Robb	J. M. Wilson	J. M. Wilson
1881-82	I. Baty	R. H. Robb	J. M. Wilson	J. M. Wilson
1882-83	I. Baty	G. S. Brown	R. W. Catherall	R. W. Catherall
1883-84	I. Baty	R. H. Robb	M. Robson	M. Robson
1884-85	I. Baty	R. H. Robb	T. J. White	T. J. White
1885-86	I. Baty	T. R. Robson	T. J. White	T. J. White
1886-87	I. Baty	T. R. Robson	T. J. White	T. J. White
1887-88	I. Baty	T. R. Robson	W. Byron	W. Byron
1888-89	I. Baty	T. R. Robson	F. Thompson	W. A. Riddle
1889-90	I. Baty	T. Anderson	W. French	W. A. Riddle
1890-81	I. Baty	D. N. Jackson	G. A. Dixon	W. A. Riddle
1891-92	I. Baty	J. J. McIntyre	J. R. Burn	J. R. Burn
1892-93	I. Baty	W. Turner	W. Byron	G. Byron
1893-94	I. Baty	W. Turner	W. Byron	G. Byron
1894-95	G. H. Bell	W. Turner	W. Byron	G. Byron
1895-96	G. H. Bell	T. Robson	T. Charlton	T. Charlton
1896-97	G. H. Bell	J. F. Fell	T. Charlton	T. Charlton
1897-98	G. H. Bell	J. F. Fell	A. Emerson	A. Emerson
1898-99	G. H. Bell	T. Robson	A. Emerson	A. Emerson
1899-00	C. W. C. Henderson	T. Robson	A. G. Richardson	A. Emerson
1900-01	C. W. C. Henderson	J. F. Fell	J. A. Baty	A. J. Charlton
1901-02	C. W. C. Henderson	J. A. Baty	W. Patterson	A. J. Charlton
1902-03	C. W. C. Henderson	T. F. Lancaster	J. W. Robson	A. Emerson
1903-04	C. W. C. Henderson	J. E. Murray	J. Stobart	A. Emerson
1904-05	C. W. C. Henderson	J. E. Murray	J. Stobart	A. Emerson
1905-06	C. W. C. Henderson	W. Stevenson	T. Oliver	A. Emerson
1906-07	C. W. C. Henderson	G. E. Spencer	I. A. Patterson	A. Emerson
1907-08	C. W. C. Henderson	G. E. Spencer	I. A. Patterson	A. Emerson
1908-09	C. W. C. Henderson	F. G. Spencer	I. A. Patterson	A. Emerson
1909-10	C. W. C. Henderson	F. G. Spencer	I. A. Patterson	A. Emerson
1910-11	C. W. C. Henderson	M. M. Snowball	J. Patterson	A. Emerson
1911-12	C. W. C. Henderson	W. Robb	J. Patterson	A. Emerson
1912-13	C. W. C. Henderson	W. Robb	J. Patterson	C. R. Noble
1913-14	C. W. C. Henderson	W. Robb	L. D. Plummer	W. Armitage
1914-19	FIRST WORLD WAR			
1919-20	G. R. Gibson	S. J. Newman	W. Robb	W. Armitage
1920-21	G. R. Gibson	B. D. Plummer	J. Patterson	J. Summers
1921-22	G. R. Gibson	B. D. Plummer	B. D. Plummer	J. Summers
1922-23	R. H. Robb	B. D. Plummer	G. Nicholson	T. R. Fenwick
1923-24	E. Shield	B. D. Plummer	G. Nicholson	T. R. Fenwick
1924-25	D. K. McComb	B. D. Plummer	G. Nicholson	T. R. Fenwick
1925-26	R. H. Robb	D. Forster	G. Nicholson	T. R. Fenwick
1926-27	J. A. Baty	D. Forster	G. Nicholson	T. R. Fenwick
1927-28	J. E. Gibson	F. C. Jessop	(G. Nicholson)	T. R. Fenwick
1928-29	J. E. Gibson	J. S. Bentham	(T. R. Fenwick)	T. R. Fenwick
1929-30	J. Patterson	J. E. McComb	(G. Nicholson)	T. R. Fenwick
1930-31	J. Patterson	J. E. McComb	(T. R. Fenwick)	T. R. Fenwick
1931-32	J. Patterson	S. G. Irving	(G. Nicholson)	T. R. Fenwick
1932-33	J. Patterson	K. W. D. Hodgson	(T. R. Fenwick)	T. R. Fenwick
1933-34	J. Patterson	K. W. D. Hodgson	T. R. Fenwick	T. R. Fenwick
1934-35	J. Patterson	K. W. D. Hodgson	T. B. Bland	T. R. Fenwick
1935-36	J. Patterson	K. W. D. Hodgson	T. B. Bland	T. R. Fenwick
1936-37	J. Patterson	K. W. D. Hodgson	T. B. Bland	T. R. Fenwick
1937-38	J. Patterson	K. W. D. Hodgson	C. A. Hastie	T. R. Fenwick
1938-39	J. Patterson	A. Brogdon	C. R. Armstrong	W. Shield
1939-45	SECOND WORLD WAR			
1945-46	J. Patterson	A. Brogdon	C. R. Armstrong	W. Shield
1946-47	J. Patterson	W. Rutherford	C. R. Armstrong	W. Shield
1947-48	J. Patterson	W. Rutherford	C. R. Armstrong	W. Shield
1948-49	J. Patterson	J. E. Cousin	T. L. Robertson	R. Robson
1949-50	J. Patterson	J. E. Cousin	T. L. Robertson	R. Robson
1950-51	J. Patterson	W. C. Rutherford	T. L. Robertson	T. L. Slater
1951-52	J. Patterson	J. D. Robb	T. L. Robertson	B. D. Plummer
1952-53	B. D. Plummer	W. A. Dinning	T. L. Robertson	B. D. Plummer
1953-54	B. D. Plummer	W. A. Dinning	T. L. Robertson	B. D. Plummer
1954-55	B. D. Plummer	J. E. Charlton	G. L. Wood	B. D. Plummer
			G. L. Wood	B. D. Plummer

Season	President	Captain	Secretary	Treasurer
1955-56	B. D. Plummer	J. A. Newlands	G. L. Wood	B. D. Plummer
1956-57	Dr. J. J. Hurley	J. A. Newlands	G. L. Wood	B. D. Plummer
1957-58	Dr. J. J. Hurley	C. Fox	G. L. Wood	B. D. Plummer
1958-59	Dr. J. J. Hurley	B. Hunter	A. A. Hunter	B. D. Plummer
1959-60	B. D. Plummer	H. Hastie	A. A. Hunter	L. D. Bouckley
1960-61	A. Brogdon	R. Lyburn	S. T. Enevoldson	L. D. Bouckley
1961-62	A. Brogdon	N. A. Charlton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1962-63	E. R. Blench	A. Charlton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1963-64	E. R. Blench	A. Charlton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1964-65	L. D. Bouckley	D. F. Hamilton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1965-66	L. D. Bouckley	J. R. Scott	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1966-67	G. L. Wood	A. Charlton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1967-68	G. L. Wood	D. F. Hamilton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1968-69	J. A. Barker	D. F. Hamilton	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1969-70	J. A. Barker	W. I. F. Blyth	S. T. Enevoldson	K. T. Bell
1970-71	R. L. Blackburn	W. I. F. Blyth	J. Chapman	A. Charlton
1971-72	W. A. Dinning	W. I. F. Blyth	J. Chapman	A. Charlton
1972-73	L. Holliday	P. Thorburn	J. Chapman	D. F. Hamilton
1973-74	L. Holliday	A. Stokoe	J. Chapman	D. Annan
1974-75	A. L. Richardson	W. I. F. Blyth	J. Chapman	K. T. Bell
1975-76	A. L. Richardson	J. S. Smart	J. Chapman	K. T. Bell
1976-77	S. T. Enevoldson	W. I. F. Blyth	J. Chapman	K. T. Bell

Club Honours, 1876-1976

Northumberland Senior Cup

1887, 1906, 1911, 1914, 1927, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1948.

Northumberland Senior Shield

1904, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1947, 1975.

Northumberland Junior Cup

1904, 1906, 1922, 1925, 1948, 1956.

Northumberland Junior Shield

1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1933, 1965

Northumberland Colts Cup

1973, 1974, 1976

Northumberland Under-18 Cup

1963, 1964, 1966, 1969, 1970, 1971.

Other Trophies

Gala Sevens, 1885 ; Hawick Sevens, 1885 ; Melrose Sevens, 1886 ; Northumberland Sevens, 1930 ; Northumberland Colts Sevens, 1973 and 1976 ; Barclays Bank Under-12 Cup, 1975 ; Tom Watson Under-12 Trophy, 1975.

Individual Honours, 1876-1976

County Championship Appearances

(all for Northumberland, except where stated).

1876-1901

F. H. R. Alderson, T. Anderson, I. Baty, R. J. Baty, W. G. Baty, G. Bailey, G. H. Bell, J. Cowper, J. T. Dodd, J. Douthwaite, J. Elliot, T. Elliot, W. Hamilton, C. W. Harrison, T. Hedley, F. F. Hobson, J. J. McIntyre, W. Pattinson, R. H. Robb, G. Robson, T. Robson, T. R. Robson, T. Rogan, F. Thompson.

1902-1926

W. Adamson, R. Armstrong, T. Armstrong, P. Braidford (Cumberland), W. Braidford (Durham), T. M. Catcheside, R. O. Darlington,

A. E. Emerson, J. S. Emerson, D. Forster, J. W. Forster, R. A. Goodall, F. R. Hedley, J. G. Holmes (Durham), N. F. Humphreys (Durham), D. S. Jackson, O. L. Jessop, M. H. Jones, W. M. B. Nanson, (Cumberland), G. Nicholson, N. Oakland (East Midlands), I. A. Patterson, B. D. Plummer, W. Robb, G. Robson, T. Robson, J. P. Scott, W. Short, W. Sinclair, M. M. Snowball, F. G. Spencer, G. E. Spencer, J. E. C. Strang, G. G. C. Taylor, J. Thompson, G. A. West (Cumberland).

1927-1951

T. B. Bland, E. R. Blench, A. Brogdon, H. P. Brogdon, T. A. Carr, J. E. Cousin, W. A. Dinning, L. H. Garrett, R. Graham, K. Hall, K. W. D. Hodgson, B. X. Jessop, E. W. I. Johnson, B. Liddle, J. K. K. Morrison, A. B. Morton, J. A. Newlands, A. R. B. Polson, A. A. O. Redpath, J. D. Robb, W. Rutherford, W. C. Rutherford, J. C. Suddes, M. Thompson, R. M. Waugh.

1952-1976

D. A. Carr, A. Charlton, J. E. Charlton, W. E. Cousin, R. Cunningham, G. W. Fairlamb, H. G. Fletcher, P. J. Langley, A. Milburn (Durham), A. Pye, J. S. Smart, P. Stonehouse, C. E. Thompson.



Fred Alderson, of Tynedale, Hartlepool Rovers, England and the Barbarians.



Former England scrum-half Dickie Jeeps in action during the British Lions tour of Australia in 1959.
Picture by courtesy of 'Rugby World'

Centenary Messages

It is with much pleasure that I write to congratulate Tynedale R.F.C. on achieving its centenary.

Your club has a very proud history, having achieved unique fame in staging the first seven-a-side tournament in England, supplying many players to the Northumberland County XV and ensuring your future through the great interest being shown in mini-rugby.

My message must conclude by seeking your co-operation in maintaining your desire to win, as you have been doing in recent years, by playing a brand of rugby that may sound "old-fashioned", namely using the whole

fifteen as attackers and employing wing three-quarters in their proper role as ball carriers and not simply as "chasers of kicks."

To all your administrators, officials and players, both past and present, congratulations for the effort you have put into Rugby Union football. May the next one hundred years consolidate your past achievements, and may new peaks be scaled.

Dickie Jeeps

R. E. G. Jeeps, President, Rugby Football Union, 1976-77



Leading the way in a training session in South Africa in 1973, England coach John Elders.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this excellent "Centenary History" in which so many of the Tynedale club's achievements in its first hundred years in rugby football are set out.

The crises it has survived, the innovations it has made, from the first "sevens" tournament in England to the recent lead it has given

in the development of mini-rugby in the county, the many administrators it has produced for Northumberland, the foresight of its committee in its continuing development, all show the tremendous resilience and good sense that has brought the club to such a notable milestone in its history.

While the club's outlook towards spreading its fixtures has proceeded cautiously, it now has an attractive list, including strong opposition from English and Scottish clubs. The driving play of the Tynedale forwards, the boundless enthusiasm and commonsense approach shown by the team as a whole, ensure that they are well respected by any of their opponents.

However, at this time one must look forward. And with its new ground at Corbridge providing magnificent playing and social facilities, with its development of Colts football and general emphasis on youth, all is set fair at Tynedale for the next hundred years.

John Elders

J. Elders, President, Northumberland R.F.U., 1976-77

1. Conquering Heroes

There had been a vast crowd at the game itself—around 5,000, so they said. Now there was another one thronging the narrow street outside the White Hart to welcome the players home.

The Mechanics Band had been there to greet them at Hexham railway station as the special train steamed in, spilling hundreds of jubilant supporters on to the platforms. To the strains of "See the Conquering Hero Comes" the procession set off up the hill and wound its way into Priestpottle, with the crowd growing steadily thicker along the route until, as they turned into Fore Street itself, it stood so densely packed that the team could scarcely force a way through to the White Hart entrance.

Now the captain, Tom Robson, was hoisted aloft and carried shoulder-high into the hotel, with the crowd cheering itself hoarse. Another huge cheer greeted the first glimpse of the cup, brandished triumphantly from an upstairs window. And yet another rent the night sky as the captain himself appeared at the window to address the excited crowd below.

For two more hours they stood there in the darkness while, inside, the players toasted their triumph "with three times three" at the celebration supper. It was only at eleven o'clock as the singing of the National Anthem brought the festivities to a close, that, reluctantly, they began dispersing to their homes.

Yes, it was quite a night in the little market town of Hexham when Tynedale Football Club brought home the Northumberland Senior Cup for the first time on 2nd April, 1887.

Dame Fortune, it is true, had smiled on the team that year. Not only had Tynedale secured a first round walk-over through Bellingham's failure to raise a side but, after producing a brilliant display at Hexham to dispose of the cup-holders, Percy Park, on a pitch cleared of snow on the morning of the game, a further bye saw them through into the final against their old rivals, Northern.

They lacked nothing in encouragement and advice from every quarter, not least from the "Hexham Courant" columnist, "Ariel", who urged the team on thus :

"Let me remind each one of them that the Northern have held the cup three years out of the six, and that they have one of the best clubs in Newcastle to meet. Players, don't forget this ! At the same time, I hope each and every forward lining out will always mark his man, and keep cool, and never cease playing in case of an appeal until they hear the sound of the referee's whistle."

The stage was set for a memorable encounter — and so it proved. On a beautiful spring day at the Northern ground behind Jesmond Church, a large crowd witnessed what the "Newcastle Weekly Examiner" described as "one of the finest exhibitions of modern football there has ever been seen in the North of England", a fast and courageous Tynedale team eventually emerging victorious by a goal and a try to one try by Northern.

As one match report noted, "what they apparently lacked in weight, they made up for in activity, strength and coolness" and, playing for the first time in the blue and white jerseys that have remained the club colours ever since (they had hitherto worn dark blue with a woven broad red belt). Tynedale took the lead through a superb dropped goal by wing three-quarter John Dodd, "the tally-ho of Tynedale from every part of the field proclaiming the fact."

Although Northern replied with a try before half-time, a second half try by the staunch Border forward, Tom Elliot, sealed a pulsating match in Tynedale's favour. Observed a satisfied "Ariel" : "They never played a better game, their passing, dribbling, running and tackling being really a treat to witness."

And another commentator, in praising "the combination and unselfishness of the Tynedale back team" declared that half-back Alderson in particular had done "heaps of clever dashing things."

As the referee signalled the end of the game, the large Hexham contingent in the crowd shouted their delight. So, too, back in Hexham, did the crowd standing outside the Post Office in Beaumont Street, where the news of victory was quickly relayed.

The scene was set for the triumphant return, later that night, of the fifteen men who had brought glory to the town and to the Tynedale club : R. H. Robb (back) ; W. Pattinson, T. Robson, J. T. Dodd (three-quarter backs) ; F. H. R. Alderson, W. Farthing (half-backs) ; T. Elliot, C. W. Harrison, T. Rogan, J. C. Robertson, Dr. McKie, G. Bailey, J. J. McIntyre, I. Baty, J. Scott (forwards).

It was quite a team, too. In the forwards there were five Northumberland County players in Isaac Baty, Elliot, Bailey, Rogan and Harrison. In the backs there was a future England captain and founder-Barbarian in Fred Alderson, a 20-year-old Cambridge University "Blue" who, with Hartlepool Rovers, was to become perhaps the outstanding centre three-quarter of his day and one of the pioneers of the four man three-quarter line. There were also four more county men in Robb, Pattinson, Dodd and the captain, Tom Robson.

Already these players had done much to make Tynedale one of the most formidable sides in the county. But the winning of the Northumberland Challenge Cup was, for all of them, the crowning achievement.

As Tom Robson told the elated crowd gathered outside the White Hart later that

2. A Lusty Infant

The Tynedale club had been formed eleven years earlier, on 11th October, 1876. And it came into being almost by accident.

On the second day of that month a letter had arrived in Hexham addressed simply to the "Captain of the Hexham Football Club." Unfortunately, after extensive inquiries, it became apparent that there was no one in the town answering such a description.

"The younger and more spirited of our townsmen at once took this truth to heart, and considered it anything but a flattering compliment to the pluck and physique of young Hexham", the "Hexham Courant" records. The outcome was an exploratory meeting of a group of enthusiasts on Wednesday, 4th October, followed by another at the Town Hall (now the Queen's Hall) a week later. It was chaired by Mr. Bowker, headmaster of the Royal Grammar School, Hexham.

By the end of that historic meeting, Hexham had itself both a football club and a captain. The Tynedale Football Club was in being.

The names of those who launched the club are engraved in Tynedale history. The three principal officers appointed at the meeting were Henry J. Baker as captain, Henry Kirsopp as secretary and Edward Shield as treasurer, soon to be joined by Major Nicholson as the club's first president.

The committee comprised Mr. Baty, Mr. Bell, Mr. Bowker, Mr. Bulman, Mr. Lishman, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Shield and Mr. Welford.

Just before the turn of the year, on 30th December, 1876, a Tynedale side took the field for the first time, when they entertained Elswick at Hexham. The venue, as the "Hexham Courant" recorded that morning, was "in Mr. Cook's field, in which the flower show was held, at the top of Skinnersburn." And the further observation was added: "The game will commence at two o'clock in the afternoon and, unlike cricket, it is quite possible that it may be over in little more than an hour."

The visitors, who changed their name to Northern a year or two later, included in their ranks a future R.F.U. and Northumberland president in Robert Henzell, while the Tynedale team comprised: R. H. Robb (back); H. J. Baker (three-quarter back); Tully, H. Kirsopp (half-backs); G. J. Bell, F.

night, it was "a great encouragement to football in Hexham."

Had he been able to look forward another ninety years, he would have known just what an "encouragement" that moment of sweet success in Queen Victoria's Jubilee Year was to prove

Shields (quarter-backs); Benson, G. Bell, T. Kirsopp, Temperley, Wilson, Richardson, Beadle, W. Shields, Lishman (forwards).

The weather was unfavourable, but the result made up for it, "a very pleasant and well-contested game" ending in a home victory by a goal and two tries to nil. The Tynedale "infant" was not only born, it was already shouting lustily!

The fixture list expanded quickly the following season, and Tynedale soon found itself playing the likes of North Durham, Northern, Gosforth, Redewater, Tynemouth, Northumberland, Carlisle and the College of Science, with some of whom it continues to have fixtures to this day.

Within a couple of seasons, too, the club's strength had grown to a point where it was able to field more than one team, a Tynedale 2nd XV taking the field for the first time on 28th February, 1880, against the Royal Grammar School, Hexham. The match was played on the Seal, the school winning by a goal and a try to nil.

Two days later Tynedale became one of the six founder clubs of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union at a meeting in Newcastle also attended by representatives of the Northumberland, Tynemouth, Northern, Gosforth and Percy Park clubs.

Two Tynedale players, Harry Robb and William Pattinson, were included in the first county side to take the field, against Cumberland at Whitehaven, during a victorious three-match run in that first season.

The first Northumberland Challenge Cup competition was held the following season, in 1881, the trophy itself comprising an old hundred guinea racing cup weighing over 100oz. and largely paid for by public subscription. It is a cup on which the name of Tynedale has since been engraved ten times, and the prize to which every Tynedale 1st XV, in any season, has always aspired.

Though narrowly beaten by Gosforth in their first-ever cup-tie in that inaugural season, Tynedale soon began to shape their cup-fighting traditions by reaching the final in 1883. And it is some indication of the fervour which cup football has always generated in Tynedale that the first special train ever run anywhere in the North-East for a football match was from Hexham to Newcastle for this very game.

Unhappily for the team and its contingent of supporters, however, victory went to Tynemouth by two tries to nil. The same happened the following year when Tynedale again reached the final and again went down to defeat, this time at Northern's hands by a try to nil.

Twice Tynedale had scaled the heights ; twice they had had the flag snatched from them at the very summit. Perhaps it is little wonder that, after all the heady excitement of the first decade, life began to turn a little sour on Tynedale.

Certainly, by the time the 1886-87 season opened, membership had dwindled to such an extent that a sparsely-attended general meeting felt it had no other option but to instruct the club secretary to cancel all fixtures for the season. The Tynedale club looked in imminent

danger of disappearing before it had really begun.

Happily, some of the club's members felt otherwise. Unwilling to let matters rest where they were, they called a further meeting the following month at which several junior rugby clubs in the town offered their help, as did a number of players from the North Tyne.

The club was back in business, and the team promptly responded in the most encouraging way possible by holding the powerful Hawick side to a single try in their opening match of the season — and by going on to bring the Northumberland Challenge Cup to Hexham for the first time in the club's history the following April.

The uncertainties were over ; the flag, at last, was flying from the summit. And Northumberland, as well as Tynedale, rugby was the richer for it.



A TYNE DALE 'FIFTEEN'



1—HARRY ROBB

Few names are more synonymous with that of Tynedale Rugby Club, or with the town of Hexham which has been the cradle of rugby in the district for so long, than that of Robb. So there is no better name with which to begin this list of fifteen of Tynedale's most outstanding personalities of the past century.

Indeed, among the fifteen players who lined up for Tynedale's first-ever game against Elswick in a field at the top of Eastgate on 30th December, 1876, was R. H. Robb at full-back. And it was the same Henry Robb who, fifty years later, was to be president of the Tynedale club in its golden jubilee year of 1926. It crowned half a century of devoted service to the club as both player and administrator by this lifelong bachelor, who lived in a flat at Hexham Hydro.

Five times club captain during the six years from 1878 to 1884, he had a distinguished playing career for both club and county. He was a member of the side which brought the Northumberland Senior Cup to Hexham for the first time in 1887, and also of the team which, two years earlier, wrote Tynedale's name into the record books by

becoming the first English side to win a Scottish Border "sevens" tournament. In 1880, he also played in Northumberland's first official county match, against Cumberland at Whitehaven.

Once his playing days were over, Harry Robb, whose brother James also played for Tynedale in those early years, went on to serve for many years on the club committee. He later served two terms as president, in season 1922-23 and again in the jubilee season of 1925-26.

The name of Robb has been linked closely with the club almost ever since. Harry Robb's nephew Willie, later to become a Major-General, followed in his footsteps by captaining the club during one of its vintage periods from 1910 to 1913, and playing in the cup-winning sides of 1911 and 1914. His brothers, Milne and Ridley, also played at around that time.

Willie Robb played a number of times for Northumberland and, in one match against Durham in 1911, after being moved from full-back to centre in the second half, he scored three fine tries to win the match, being carried shoulder-high from the field at the end of the game. A fine all-round sportsman, Willie Robb also played hockey for Northumberland and captained Tynedale at cricket.

To complete a unique family record, Derek Robb became the third player bearing that name to captain Tynedale, in the 75th anniversary season of 1951-52. Great nephew of Harry Robb and nephew of Will Robb, he also emulated both of them in earning county recognition and playing in a cup-winning side, in 1948, before polio tragically cut short his rugby career.

With a Robb on the first team ever to represent the club, and two Robbs still among its patrons today, along with Derek's son, Duncan, on the playing strength, the wheel has turned full circle. Tynedale Rugby Club owes a lot to the remarkable Robbs.

3. Over the Border

It could be argued that, during its first decade, Tynedale rugby commanded more respect outside England than in it.

For, even before it had established itself as a force to be reckoned with in Northumberland by virtue of that momentous Challenge Cup victory of 1887, Tynedale's unique achievement in winning three Border seven-a-side tournaments had earned the club a considerable reputation throughout the South of Scotland.

The first of those historic "sevens" successes came in 1885 at Galashiels, followed by a second victory, a fortnight later, at Hawick. Tynedale completed the hat-trick the following season by winning the "sevens" at Melrose — a club which, like Tynedale, had been founded exactly ten years earlier in 1876.

In the Galashiels tournament, staged on 11th April, 1885, in front of a crowd of 3,000, Tynedale were the only side from England among the eleven clubs competing. Having disposed of the favourites, Melrose, in the first round by scoring the only try of the game, they repeated the dose at the expense of the host club in the semi-final, thus gaining quick revenge for their defeat at Gala's hands in the final of the same tournament the previous year.

This left the Hexham side confronted by formidable opposition in the shape of Hawick in the final. However, as it was now too late to play the game in the gathering gloom, it was decided to hold it over until the Monday, Tynedale agreeing to stay on for the weekend in Scotland and play off the final at Hawick.

To allow the Tynedale men time to make the long journey back over the Border that day — some of them on horseback — the game kicked off at the very odd hour of eight o'clock in the morning.

Tynedale must have woken the fresher and brighter-eyed of the two sides, because not only did they trounce Hawick on their own midden to the tune of a goal and three tries to a try but, in the process, turned in a superb display of "sevens" rugby never previously equalled in these Border competitions.

Clutching their gold medals, Tynedale's victorious seven rode back over the Border in triumph. For William Pattinson, Tom Robson, John Dodd, Harry Robb, William Robson, Tom Elliot and Gus Bailey it had been a weekend to remember.

A fortnight later, with two or three changes among the forwards, Tynedale did it again when they carried off the Hawick club's own seven-a-side trophy, this time with victories over Pilmuir Wanderers, Buccleuch Union, Hawick St. Cuthbert's and, finally, Gala by a try to nil.

Just for good measure, John Dodd also won the individual drop-kicking contest, as

George H. Bell had done at Galashiels the previous season.

On 17th April, 1886, came Tynedale's third Scottish seven-a-side success, this time at the Melrose Sports at the Greenyards. Their victims included Abbotsford in the first round, Gala Waverley in the next, and Gala Thistle in the semi-final.

Once more, however, darkness prevented the final from being played the same day, Tynedale's scheduled opposition this time being the host club, Melrose. But, when it was eventually played off the following Friday, Tynedale again carried off the medals after running in the only two tries of the game.

And this time it was the turn of the club captain, Tom Robson, to win the individual competition for place-kicking.

Five of the victorious seven from the Gala tournament of the previous year were still in the team, making it probably one of the strongest combinations ever to be fielded by any club in the long history of the seven-a-side game.

Tynedale, indeed, had been the only English club to take part in the very first of these tournaments to be held, at Melrose in 1883, as well as in Gala's inaugural tournament the following year.

So it was only fitting that, eleven years later, it should itself go on to become the first club ever to stage a "sevens" tournament on English soil.

The tournament took place on Whit Monday, 21st May, 1894. The "Hexham Courant", five days later, devoted half a column to the event, beginning its report as follows:

"On Monday last, a seven-a-side competition was held in connection with the Whitsuntide sports on the Seal, at Hexham, before a large concourse of people. The competition was confined to members that are at the present time affiliated to recognised Rugby football clubs. Six teams entered, and the entrants hailed from the Blaydon, Hawick and Hexham districts.

"The prizes, which were offered for this competition by the committee, were valuable ones, as they gave to the members of the winning team seven gold medals, valued at a guinea each, and to the players of the second best combination seven silver medals"

In the event, Hawick withdrew from the tournament at the last moment, leaving sides from Tynedale, Tyneside Wanderers and Hexham Unionists to compete for the medals. The eventual winners were Tynedale 'B', who beat the Unionists by three goals (one dropped) and a try to nil in the final.

This was some twenty-seven years before the Percy Park seven-a-side tournament of 3rd September, 1921, which has been represented

in some quarters as the first "sevens" tournament ever staged in England, and Tynedale even had a hand in that!

Hitherto, the Rugby Football Union had not permitted seven-a-side competitions to be played where gate money was to be taken. However, at its annual meeting in Anderton's Hotel, London, on 28th May, 1920, it approved the applications made by the Tynedale club and the Cumberland Union for matches to be played between sides of fewer than fifteen players at any enclosure where gate money was taken, with the one proviso: "This rule,

4. One for All

The fact that, right from the earliest days, Tynedale eyes should have looked northwards to Scotland owes not a little to history. The men of Tynedale and Liddesdale, Hexham and Hawick, had been reiving and raiding and feuding backwards and forwards over the Border since time immemorial.

But it owes even more, perhaps, to the rugby passion of a number of North Tyne and Redewater families, who renewed ancient rivalries on the rugby field, the North Tyne men rallying to the time-honoured cry of "Tarset and Tarreyburn, yit, yit, yit."

The Robsons of Byrness, the Dodds of Catcleugh, the Elliots of Hindhope and the Halls of Lauriston had been educated at famous Edinburgh public schools, where the freemasonry of sport was instilled into them from boyhood, and the way of life for many of them in those days was hunting in the morning, playing football in the afternoon and hacking home on horseback in the evening.

If Tom Robson was the most notable of them all, both for his length of service as a player and for his four seasons as captain of the club, he was but one of many players from the North Tyne and Redesdale who, at that time, put their considerable abilities at the disposal of the Tynedale club.

Two of Tom's brothers, George and Will, also played for Tynedale, Will later emigrating to New Zealand where he is reputed to have had "not a little to do with the development of the rugby game in that dominion."

Son Tommy also followed in Tom Robson's footsteps by playing for both club and county and, in 1914, in a Senior Cup-winning team. So, too, did a couple of his nephews — sons of his other two brothers, John and Jacob, the latter of whom became a near-legendary figure as Master of the Border pack for half a century.

Apart from the Robsons, the Redewater area produced another great servant of club and county in the person of John T. Dodd, who hailed from a neighbouring farm, at Catcleugh,

For him match day meant a long horseback

however, may only be invoked in exceptional cases, in sparsely populated districts where they may consider it advisable for the promotion of the Rugby Game."

Certainly, as participants in the first seven-a-side tournament ever held, at Melrose in 1883, as winners three times of Border "sevens" trophies in 1885 (twice) and 1886, and as organisers of the first "sevens" tournament ever to be staged in England, in 1894, Tynedale's contribution to the seven-a-side game is unique among English clubs.

ride from Upper Redewater to the nearest railway station a good many miles away. And even for an expert horseman like Dodd, who with his fellows hunted with the Border pack, and whose brother, "Si", indeed, was the Master of Fox Hounds, a ride home of sixteen to eighteen miles on a dark, cold and, possible, snowy winter's night after a gruelling game for Tynedale spoke volumes for his enthusiasm.

The Elliots had even further to travel than the Dodds, for they lived on the other side of the Border at Hindhope, near Jedburgh. Jim Elliot was a fine three-quarter, while brother Tom was one of the greatest forwards Tynedale ever had, with numerous county appearances to his credit and even one, in 1881, for the North of England against the South at Manchester, making him Tynedale's first international trialist. A third Elliot brother, Will, also played for Tynedale at a later date.

Both Redewater and Bellingham boasted rugby teams at different times, built around the "Four Graynes of North Tynedale" — the Charltons, the Robsons, the Dodds and the Milburns — and, on one occasion, another North Tyne club, Border Rovers, distinguished itself by taking over a Christmas fixture from Tynedale against Hawick, and giving them a good beating. In 1908, too, the Rovers reached the final of the Northumberland Senior Shield, serving to underline the enthusiasm that the men from these parts have always had for the rugby game right from the earliest days.

Tynedale rugby, indeed, was indebted to the Borderers during these formative years. When the club emerged back into the sunlight from the dark shadows cast over it at the start of the 1886-87 season, it was not a little due to the support so readily volunteered by the men of the North Tyne and Redewater that it felt sufficiently encouraged to soldier on.

With this sort of example to uplift them, and with their momentous victory in the Northumberland Senior Cup at the end of that season to enthuse them, Tynedale now set about the task of broadening the club's



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



2—TOM ROBSON

During its formative years, the Tynedale club owed an enormous debt to the men of the North Tyne and Redewater — the Dodds, the Robsons and the rest — who travelled long distances to put their considerable playing abilities at the club's disposal.

None of them gave greater service than Tom Robson, who captained Tynedale for four successive years in the 'Eighties, and whose enthusiasm for the game was such that he once hired a relay of horses to get him from Otterburn for one game in Scotland.

One of the most popular captains in Tynedale's history and an all-round sportsman who later became Master of the North Tyne Hunt, organiser of the Border Sports and a more than useful shot, Tom Robson had his first game for Tynedale in 1880 and, seven years later, had the distinction of captaining the 1st XV to their first-ever Northumberland Senior Cup success. On the team's return to Hexham after the game, he was hoisted shoulder-high by jubilant team-mates and supporters and carried in triumph into the White Hart Hotel for the victory celebrations.

And, in paying tribute to his leadership at the Long Room supper which followed, the club president, Mr. Isaac Baty, said it was "a source of pleasure to know, when the cup went on to the upper reaches of the Tyne and the shepherds of that district were celebrating the Jubilee of Her Majesty, that he, the captain of the Tynedale Club, would have to tell them that, on winning that splendid trophy, they had been assisted, not by an effeminate race, but by men of stout heart and strong hand who lived in the Heart of All England."

Robson's ability earned him numerous county appearances, and his son, Tom, later followed in his footsteps by playing for both club and county, and also, in 1914, in a Tynedale cup-winning side.

Coincidentally, yet another Tom Robson, who lived in Hexham, also played for both Tynedale and Northumberland soon afterwards, captaining the club for three seasons during the 'Nineties and, though himself ruled out of the final through injury, winning a medal as a member of the Northumberland side which carried off the County Championship in 1897-98.

foundations with a view to ensuring that never again would its future be called into question simply through lack of numbers.

Up to this point of time, five or six different clubs in the town of Hexham had been competing for players and for support. The time was ripe for amalgamation.

And this was quickly borne out when, three weeks after the cup final victory, the Tynedale committee took the initiative in calling a meeting of the town's clubs in the White Hart on 26th April, 1887. So crowded was the hotel's Long Room that many found themselves unable to gain admittance as the chairman, Mr. Harry Robb, explained the reasons for calling the meeting and outlined Tynedale's plans for a merger with Hexham Wanderers, Hexham Rovers, Hexham Excelsior and the Heart of All England to form a single, united club.

The idea was greeted with enthusiasm and, as each delegate in turn signified his own club's approval of the amalgamation, he was roundly cheered. The motion "that a united club be formed and that the name of the club be Tynedale" was carried with acclamation — and the annual subscription for each member fixed at one shilling per annum!

The strength of the newly-enlarged club was certainly impressive, with a total of 181 members drawn from the five constituent clubs — 72 from the Rovers, 35 from the Wanderers, 30 from Excelsior, 24 from the Heart of All England and 20 from Tynedale itself.

On a temporary basis a ten-strong committee was set up to look after the club's interests, and first and second team secretaries were appointed to organise a programme of matches for the coming season.

Then, at the annual meeting some four months later on 6th September, 1887, Mr. Isaac Baty and Tom Robson were re-elected president and club captain respectively, and two of the temporary officials appointed in April, Mr. F. Thompson and Mr. W. A. Riddle, were made secretary and treasurer. The committee appointed to help steer Tynedale on its newly-chosen course comprised: Mr. R. H. Robb, Mr. William French, Mr. W. Farthing, Mr. James Scott, Mr. Thomas Anderson, Mr. M. Green, Mr. J. J. McIntyre, Mr. F. J. Guthrie, Mr. John Thompson and Mr. M. Thompson.

There were other clubs in Hexham, of course, either around that time or later — just as there were to be clubs at various times elsewhere in the surrounding district, at places like Bellingham (up to the First World War), West Wylam (in the Twenties) Haltwhistle and Allendale.

But they all faded away, as did Hexham clubs like the Unionists and the Church Lads Brigade, while teams such as Tyneside Rovers,



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1887. Back row : J. C. Robertson, J. J. McIntyre, T. Elliot, C. W. Harrison, F. H. R. Alderson, R. H. Robb. Centre row : W. Pattinson, G. Bailey, T. Rogan, T. R. Robson (capt.), Dr. McKie. Front row : I. Baty, J. T. Dodd, W. Farthing.

TYNEDALE FOOTBALL CLUB.		FIRST TEAM.			
SEASON 1894-5.		Dates.	Opponents.	Ground	Result.
President - GEO. H. BELL, Esq.		1894.			
Vice-Presidents -		Sep. 16	Brampton	Home	
Rev. Canon Barker.	W. G. Harrison, Esq.	22	Ryton	Away	
W. C. B. Beaumont, Esq.	C. W. Henderson, Esq.	Oct. 6	Northern	Away	
N. G. Clayton, Esq.	C. R. Kendal, Esq.	13	So. Vale, Carlisle	Home	
J. T. Dodd, Esq.	T. Oliver, Esq.	Thr. 18	County Trial M'ch	H'x'h'm	
Thos. Ellis, Esq.	R. H. Robb, Esq.	20	So. Vale, Carlisle	Away	
J. Fisher, Esq.	T. Robson, Esq.	27	Wallsend	Home	
W. Fell, Esq.	D. Stewart, Esq.	Nov. 3			
J. C. Straker, Esq.		10	Blaydon	Home	
Captain: T. ROBSON.	Vice-Captain: R. J. BATY.	17	<i>Tyne Dock</i>	<i>Home</i>	
Second Team Captain - A. EMERSON.		24			
Committee -		Dec. 1	North Furham ...	Away	
W. Baty.	W. French.	8	Brighton	Home	
J. Byron.	J. Porteous.	15	North Elswick ...	Away	
J. Cornish.	Geo. Robson.	22	Brampton	Away	
A. Emerson.	J. W. Robson	29			
T. J. White.		1895.			
County Representative - WM. BYRON, Jun.		Jan. 1	H'rt'ep'l Old Boys	Home	
Hon. Secretary and Treasurer -		5	Brighton	Away	
T. CHARLTON, 14, Hall Gates, Hexham.		12	No:thern	Home	
		19	Gosforth	Away	
		26	Rockcliff	Away	
		Feb. 2	North Elswick ...	Home	
		9	North Durham ...	Home	
		16	Wallsend	Away	
		23	Ryton	Home	
		Mar. 2	Rockcliff	Home	
		9	Blaydon	Away	
		16	Cup Tie (R'kcliff)	<i>Home</i>	
		23	Gosforth	Home	
		30	Cup Tie (2nd r'nd)		
		Apl. 6	Cup Tie (Final)		
			<i>20 Tyne Dock away.</i>		

A club fixture card of the last century, showing Tynedale 1st XV's thirteen opponents for the 1894-95 season. Four of those clubs, Blaydon, Gosforth, Northern and Rockcliff, appear on its fixture list for the centenary season.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1906. Back row : J. S. Emerson, A. E. Emerson, A. J. Charlton, W. Short, R. Moore, J. Patterson, F. G. Spencer, J. E. Murray, G. E. Emerson, G. W. Ritson, R. H. Hutchinson, J. A. Baty. Centre row : W. H. Fenwick, A. Emerson, W. Stevenson, T. M. Catcheside, G. E. Spencer (capt.), W. C. Clemitson, A. G. Richardson, I. A. Patterson. Front row : M. M. Snowball, T. Jackson.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1911. Back row : E. Averell, I. A. Patterson, R. O. Darlington, T. Ritson, J. P. Scott, W. Robb (capt.), G. L. Bradley, J. Short, S. H. Kent. Front row : W. Braidford, J. S. Emerson, W. H. Warburton, J. W. Stephenson, A. E. Emerson, G. Potts.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1914. Back row : F. Nevison, P. Braidford, G. P. Walton, G. Potts, P. Gibb, T. Armstrong, D. Forster, R. Summers, J. W. Forster. Front row : Mr. J. Thompson (President, Northumberland R.F.U.), W. Hulsen, W. Robb, T. Robson, I. A. Patterson, S. J. Newman (capt.), J. Thompson, W. Braidford.



Tyne Green Juniors, Parkend Rangers and Hexham Violets (first winners of the Northumberland fourth teams cup in 1890), were eventually swallowed up in the Tynedale club to make it,

by the outbreak of the First World War, or not long thereafter, a club at last truly representative of the town in which it was centred.

5. The Last of the 'Old Brigade'

It was perhaps just as well that all the Hexham clubs became united under the one banner. Otherwise, it must be doubted whether the Tynedale club would ever have survived the difficult years that lay ahead.

Right from that first season in 1887-88 the omens were not auspicious. The 1st XV won but two of their eleven matches and, worst of all, allowed the hard-won Challenge Cup to be wrested from their grip at the first time of asking when unfancied Tynemouth beat them in the snow at Tyne Mills in the first round.

There were troubles, too, off the field. All the initial enthusiasm for the newly-unified club began to turn sour when, in April, 1890, an extraordinary general meeting of the club was held at which the secretary, Mr. G. A. Dixon, resigned in company with the treasurer, Mr. Riddle, and the chairman, Mr. Robb. Two other committee members, Dr. J. A. Jackson and Mr. George Dobson, and a further member of the club, Mr. William Ridley, also handed in their resignations and, just for good measure, Noel Jackson relinquished the first team captaincy.

The reason was for this spate of resignations the non-fulfilment of a fixture with Percy Park on Easter Monday, a week or two earlier, a number of prominent committee men blaming this on the apathy of the players and Mr. Robb, a former club captain, describing it as "a piece of very bad form indeed."

Nor were matters helped later that year when, after some attempt to settle the differences had seemingly been made, a bitter reference was then made to the resignations at the club's annual meeting by the new secretary, Mr. J. R. Burn, who likened those involved to "rats deserting a sinking ship."

Not altogether surprisingly, Mr. Robb, Mr. Dixon and the others promptly stalked angrily out of the room.

Playing performance also continued to deteriorate. The composition of the first team had by now undergone a complete transformation compared with the early years and, by the mid-'Nineties, only William Pattinson of the "Old Brigade" was still appearing in the side.

After the heady excitement of the 1887 cup victory these were lean times indeed, although Tynedale nevertheless managed to reach the Senior Cup semi-finals on four occasions between 1889 and 1897 without being able to make further progress, and three

of its players, Tom Elliot, John Dodd and Charlie Harrison, played in the Northumberland side which held the first ever touring side to this country, the 1888-89 "Maoris", to a 3-3 draw at Newcastle. But the only Hexham team to taste cup glory during this period were Tyneside Rovers who, in three successive years from 1896 to 1898, carried off the Northumberland Junior Shield.

The lack of success also had its effect on Tynedale's supporters. For one of the semi-final defeats, at the hands of Percy Park in a replayed game on the Brewery Field at Hexham, produced a hostile demonstration afterwards against the referee and future Northumberland and R.F.U. president, Mr. William Cail.

The Newcastle press may have carried it a bit too far in stating that the referee, "after a long series of anti-Tynedale decisions, was deposited at the end of the game in the River Tyne." However, if that wasn't true, it undoubtedly was true that the unfortunate Mr. Cail was subjected to a good deal of verbal abuse both during the game and, afterwards, on his way from the ground across the Tyne Bridge to Hexham railway station.

As he himself complained to the county committee at its next meeting, "during the game if he blew his whistle, he was hooted and, if he did not blow his whistle, he was also hooted." One Tynedale committeeman, he alleged, called him "a scoundrel" and flourished his stick at him while, as he left the ground afterwards, the crowd began to throw clay at him, Mr. Cail retaliating by striking one man and getting hold of another by the neck.

He was eventually rescued by a superintendent and four policemen and by "a number of gentlemen" from Newcastle and Tynemouth, with the crowd continuing to give vent to their feelings with "jeers and hoots and cheers and all that kind of thing."

Following his complaint, the county committee took a serious enough view of the incident to direct that, whenever Tynedale drew a home tie in the cup competition in future, it should be within the county union's discretion to order the game to be played on a neutral ground.

Tynedale promptly lodged a strong protest at this "offensive and utterly uncalled for" action, arguing that the attack by spectators had nothing to do with the Tynedale club.

The letter from the club secretary, Mr. William French, also pointed out that the man

whom Mr. Cail, by his own admission, had struck was "a half-deaf and blind old fellow aged sixty years or so", and reminded the county committee that, because of the "peculiarity" of Mr. Cail's decisions in one match he had refereed earlier that season, another team had actually walked off the field.

Furthermore, the letter added, following the first game with Percy Park at North Shields, a large number of Hexham people were "displeased at Mr. Cail for hitting twice on the mouth with his fist James W. McIntyre, one of the Tynedale players, when on his knees protesting against the play of a member of the Percy Park team (as no quieter or more unassuming young man plays football than McIntyre)."

This exchange of letters, coupled with Tynedale's resignation from the county union, produced a massive volume of correspondence in the local press, with rugby enthusiasts from all parts of the North-East weighing in on both sides, until eventually, at a specially convened general meeting of the Northumberland Rugby Union, oil was poured on troubled waters, Tynedale formally expressing "regret" at the treatment meted out to the referee at Hexham and the county rescinding its motion of censure on the club. Members were told by the county secretary, Mr. J. A. Williamson, that in a letter to the club, he had already made it clear that "this Union never sought to connect the Tynedale club with the scene which occurred after the match at Hexham."

Honour apparently having been satisfied, Tynedale thereupon withdrew its resignation from the county union.

All this apart, however, the club which was really making a name for itself in cup football at this point of time was not Tynedale, nor even Percy Park, but the great Rockcliff side who between 1890 and 1896, carried off the Northumberland Senior Cup seven times in a row — a truly splendid achievement by any yardstick.

Tynedale were among the many teams to find themselves on the wrong end of some heavy defeats at Rockcliff's hands during this period and, even after that wonderful run of cup successes by the coast side had ended, they suffered the ignominy of a 43—0 trouncing in 1898.

And so it went on. By the annual meeting of August, 1901, things had reached such a pass at Tynedale, both on and off the field, that a "modest attendance" of members heard gloomily that not only had the 1st XV had their worst-ever season, winning just two of their eighteen matches, but the club was also in debt, total income for the year having amounted to a mere £32.

Drastic action was clearly called for, and duly taken, when a resolution proposing that

the first team be disbanded was carried without dissent. It was agreed that all first team fixtures for the coming season should be cancelled and only second team fixtures obtained.

Thus, for their 25th anniversary season of 1901-02, there was anything but a silver lining to Tynedale's match programme as, for the first time, they found themselves taking part in the Northumberland Challenge Shield competition for second teams.

Here they found the opposition a good deal more malleable, however, and, following 8—0 victories over both Walker and Northern 2nd XV, swept through to the final against Rockcliff 2nd XV at Newcastle. A hard-fought match ended in a draw and, when Rockcliff refused to line up in response to the referee's decision to play an extra ten minutes each way, Tynedale touched the ball down over the opposing line and claimed both the tie and the cup.

But it was not to be that easy. Rockcliff, predictably, protested that there should be a replay, whereupon Tynedale offered to play them again at Hexham or Newcastle — so long as their expenses were guaranteed.

The county committee ruled that the game should be played at Hexham, with Tynedale taking all the proceeds of the "gate", and, as a bonus, the committee also handed over to the club as a donation the guinea deposited by Rockcliff, who were further required to pay their own travelling expenses.

After all that, the outcome was something of an anti-climax as, once more, the game was drawn at two tries and a penalty goal apiece at the end of extra time. A second replay was needed — again at Hexham — and this time Rockcliff narrowly scraped home by a goal to a try to deprive Tynedale of the satisfaction of winning the Senior Shield at their first attempt.

But it was to be satisfaction not long denied for, in 1904, Tynedale carried off the trophy, which had so narrowly eluded them two years earlier, by virtue of an 11—6 victory over Northern 2nd XV in the final at Jesmond. Though trailing by a try to nil at the interval, they came back strongly in the second half, with Hamilton, Clemitson and Watson scoring tries and Matt Catcheside kicking a conversion.

However, if they were worthy winners in the end, Tynedale almost went out at the semi-final stage when they lost 17—5 to Percy Park at Preston Avenue, only for their objection at the dimensions of the playing area to be upheld.

The game was replayed on neutral territory and Tynedale this time won by 11 points to nil.

The number of senior clubs in Northumberland having been reduced to as few as three the previous season, Tynedale's Senior Shield success automatically qualified them for a place in the Senior Cup competition the following year.

Even more importantly for the longer term development of the club, its finances were now back on a sounder footing and, starting with the 1902-03 season, it had begun renting the ground at Dene Park which had for many years been used by Hexham Cricket Club. After long years on a variety of pitches

6. A Golden Age

It was not to be Tynedale Football Club for very much longer. As if in recognition of the fact that, after thirty years, the club had now acquired the strength and maturity to take its rightful place among the county's senior rugby clubs on a permanent basis, the club fixture card for the 1905-06 season for the first time bore the title, "Tynedale Rugby Football Club."

It heralded the dawn of arguably the most successful decade in Tynedale's history.

During the period from 1904 to 1914, the club carried off the Senior Cup three times, the Senior Shield for second teams five times, and the Junior Cup for third teams twice. Nor does that count the victories of Parkend Rangers in the third teams' cup of 1907, or of Tyne Green Juniors in 1905 and Tyneside Rovers in 1906 and 1907 in the fourth teams' cup — all Hexham teams which are now absorbed into the Tynedale club.

It all began modestly enough. Following the Senior Shield victory of 1904, Tynedale regained senior status in the cup but, in their first year back, lost in the first round to Rockcliff, not helped by the fact that three of their players had been suspended following an incident in a match at Carlisle in which a Tynedale player, on being ordered off, refused to give his name. His captain also declined to supply the name and another player who, according to a newspaper report, "represented himself as captain of the team but whose name has not yet transpired" was also suspended for a fortnight.

Meanwhile, Tynedale's ordinary club fixtures continued to be at second team and junior club level, a feature of one of those games being that no fewer than thirteen of the fifteen members of the Tynedale side comprised five sets of brothers — three Spencers, three Emersons, three Pattersons, two Bates and two Ritsons.

It was George Ritson, a character among characters, who reputedly went off to play rugby against Hawick with a gold sovereign in his pocket — and returned a week later with the sovereign still intact!

By the 1905-06 season Tynedale were finding their feet again at senior level, as a visit to Dene Park by the Durham Cup-holders, Hartlepool Rovers, then at the height of their

including the Seal, Halliwell Dene, Tyne Mills and the Brewery Field at Bridge End, it was now to be the club's "home" for the next seventy years.

Tynedale Football Club was on its way again.



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



3—ANTHONY
EMERSON

Not all Tynedale's great names are remembered for their playing achievements alone. One such is Anthony Emerson.

Though not a player to match his brothers, Arthur and "Sep.", both of whom played in the Northumberland pack, Anthony Emerson was nevertheless a skilful enough half-back in his time to have captained the 2nd XV and been vice-captain of the 1st XV.

His principal contribution to the club, however, was as an administrator. Appointed secretary-treasurer in 1896, he served in one or other of those capacities for most of the next fifteen years, and then took on the combined role once again to keep the club going during the Great War.

It was his work as treasurer at the turn of the century which largely rescued the club from a parlous financial plight, and it was while he was in this post in 1902 that Tynedale first rented the Dene Park ground at Hexham which was to be their home for the next seventy-three years. It was Emerson, too, who was the moving spirit when, in 1926, the club went on to purchase the ground outright to mark its golden jubilee.

Made a life member of Tynedale in 1911, an honour next bestowed on the club's longest-serving treasurer, Tommy Fenwick, in 1935, Anthony Emerson did not confine his services to rugby to the club alone. Tynedale's county representative for many years, he went on to become president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union in 1930-31 and, for his services to the county as secretary-treasurer during the Second World War, was elected an honorary life member of the Union — a signal honour indeed.

It is arguable that, but for the foresight and financial prudence of Anthony Emerson, the Tynedale club would not this year be celebrating its centenary.

power and embarking on a run of eight Durham Senior Cup successes in nine seasons, bore witness. "Tyne" waxed steadily stronger as the season progressed and, after defeating the holders, Rockcliff, who had won the trophy twelve times in the previous sixteen seasons, found themselves at the season's end facing up to Percy Park in the final of the Northumberland Senior Cup at the North Road ground in Newcastle.

A keenly-contested game ended in victory for Tynedale by 11 points to nil, the two tries being scored by Jackson and Jack Baty who had played for the Barbarians while with Percy Park four seasons earlier. The other points came from a conversion by Andrew Richardson and a penalty goal by Matt Catchside.

Once more the scenes last witnessed in 1887 were repeated as jubilant Tynedale supporters, starved for so long of Senior Cup success, harnessed themselves to the team's brake on their return to Hexham railway station and hauled it up the hill into the Market Place. There, in front of a cheering crowd, the popular 1st XV captain, George Spencer, made the speech of his eventful lifetime.

Sharing the glory with him were the rest of his victorious team : A. G. Richardson ; G. E. Spencer, T. M. Catchside, W. Stevenson, W. C. Clemitson ; M. M. Snowball, T. Jackson ; J. S. Emerson, A. E. Emerson, W. Short, R. Moore, F. G. Spencer, J. E. Murray, G. Ritson, J. A. Baty. All were later presented with gold medals subscribed for by one hundred and thirty-seven supporters of the club.

Nor was the Challenge Cup the only trophy which Tynedale won that year, because victory over Ashington and Hirst United in the final earned the third team the Junior Cup, while the second team only went down in the semi-final of the Challenge Shield against Northern after three replays !

All this gave a big fillip to rugby in the district. Besides finishing fourth the following year in the newly-created Northumberland and Durham Inter-Counties Club Championship, Tynedale twice more reached the final of the Senior Cup in the next three seasons, though losing to Percy Park on each occasion, while a dozen of its players earned county recognition during this period. One of them, in the 1907-08 season, was the great Cumberland forward, Bill Nanson, who had played for England against Wales and France the previous season while with Carlisle.

Another notable player who was to join Tynedale briefly a couple of years later was Noel Humphreys, one of the finest half-backs ever to pull on a blue and white jersey, and, like another brilliant Tynedale player of a quarter of a century earlier, Fred Alderson, an Old Boy of Durham School. Unfortunately for Tynedale, after bringing distinction to the club

by touring South Africa with the British Isles in 1910, Humphreys joined Durham City on his return. He therefore graced Dene Park with his skills for only the one season.

That there were other skilful players, too, on Tynedale's playing strength at this time, however, was amply demonstrated by their achievement in winning the Northumberland Senior Cup twice and the second teams' cup four times in the six seasons leading up to the First World War.

In 1911, on the Royal Grammar School ground at Newcastle, a tremendous second half rally against Percy Park brought a 7-6 victory for a gallant fourteen-man Tynedale side that had trailed by two tries at half-time and lost wing three-quarter William Braidford with a shoulder injury. First, Sep. Emerson pulled back one of the tries, and then stand-off Jack Scott, later to be carried shoulder-high into the club's "headquarters" in the North Eastern Hotel, dropped the four-point goal which saw Tynedale home.

Tynedale's team was : R. O. Darlington ; W. Braidford, J. W. Stephenson, W. Robb, E. A. Averell ; J. P. Scott, W. H. Warburton ; A. E. Emerson, J. S. Emerson, I. A. Patterson, G. Potts, J. Short, T. Ritson, S. Kent, G. L. Bradley. The win completed a clean sweep of victories against the other Northumberland clubs for the first time since Tynedale had last won the cup in 1906.

But the match of the competition — and one of the most memorable games ever played by any Tynedale side before or since — came in the semi-final when a last minute try by Averell, magnificently converted from the touchline by Willie Robb, gave "Tyne" a dramatic victory over a powerful Northern side containing five internationals from England, Scotland and Ireland, including J. A. S. Ritson, who himself lived in Hexham.

Of the 1911 cup-winning side, however, only four remained to do battle again with Percy Park in the Senior Cup final of 1914: Willie Robb and William Braidford in the backs, and George Potts and Armorer Patterson in the forwards.

The game, at the County Ground, was a disappointment, producing a scoreless draw and a lot of extremely dull play. But, in the replay, a Tynedale side captained by Sid Newman, and greeted on to the field by lusty shouts of "Now Tyne", gave an altogether brighter display and won 9-6.

Fittingly, the first try came from William Braidford, the man who had missed most of the 1911 final through injury, with the scoring pass coming from his brother, Percy, who gained his first Cumberland cap while still at school. Tynedale's other scorers were Robb, with a well-judged penalty goal, and wing three-quarter Jimmy Thompson, with a splendid second half interception try.

At full-back in the Tynedale side, which fielded a seven-man pack and an extra half-back, or "five-eighth", was Paul Gibb, whose son was later to become wicket-keeper for England.

The full team which brought the Senior Cup back to Hexham for the fourth time was : P. Gibb; W. Hulsen, W. Robb, W. Braidford, J. Thompson; P. Braidford, S. J. Newman; F. Nevison, I. A. Patterson, G. Potts, D. Forster, R. Summers, T. Armstrong, T. Robson, G. P. Walton.

A good many of them were among the fourteen Tynedale players who represented Northumberland, Durham or Cumberland during this golden era from 1909 to 1914, and

no fewer than seven — Patterson (captain), Hulsen, Thompson, Nevison, Robson, Armstrong and Robb — were selected for the Northumberland side which defeated the Stade Bordelais Universite Club from France 27-12 at Gosforth in that same year of 1914.

Sadly, however, five of that great team were never again seen in a Tynedale jersey. They were among forty-nine past and present players from the club who gave their lives for their country in the First World War.

For a small club it was a massive toll. Eloquent testimony in itself that, in terms of loyalty to country as well as to club and to county, Tynedale Rugby Football Club has few peers in the land.

7. Back from the Trenches

From the bloodstained years of the Great War Tynedale emerged a weakened club but a proud one. Practically every 1st XV and 2nd XV player had joined the colours on the outbreak of war, and it had cost the club many lives, including those of a number of its finest players — as well as that of "Sammy", the half-bred Border terrier who had become the mascot of the 1914 team and gone off to the war with them.

The gallantry of those who served, however, had been rewarded by no fewer than thirty-five medals, including five D.S.Os, fourteen Military Crosses, two D.C.Ms and, not least, the Croix de Guerre, Croix de Chevalier and Medaille Militaire awarded to Tynedale men as battle honours by the French.

The club itself honoured the Fallen in fitting style. Not only did it endow a cot at

Hexham War Memorial Hospital but, in January, 1921, it opened a new pavilion at the north end of its Dene Park ground as a memorial to those who had lost their lives. Consisting of a former Army hut, it had been bought out of the proceeds of a subscription list launched the preceding year and erected by voluntary labour.

At the opening ceremony, performed by the president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union, Mr. Harry Welford, a brass tablet bearing the names of the forty-nine men who had given their lives in the war, presented by the club president, Mr. George Gibson, was dedicated by the Rector of Hexham, the Rev. J. V. C. Farquhar.

The ceremony was followed by a match against Mr. Reuben Hodgson's XV in aid of the War Memorial Hospital and, in the evening, by a dinner attended by at least one representative from the team of every year since the club's inception in 1876. Among the speakers was the former England international, Fred Alderson, who told members and guests that, although he had played all over the country and against Scotland, Ireland and Wales, he had "never played with a finer body of sportsmen than that comprising the Tynedale team of 1887."

Meanwhile, on the field of play, Tynedale won their first post-war game by defeating Old Novos 10-0 on Easter Saturday, 1919, and they went on to have four or five players selected for the first post-war Northumberland sides which, apart from traditional county opposition, also took on British Army and Canadian Army teams and both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Tynedale marked that first post-war season, too, by scoring a record 424 points.

There was plenty of colour about the game as well. At many of the first team games in the early 'Twenties the Acomb Brass Band or Hexham Excelsior Band regaled the crowd with a selection of music at half-time, while on the field the spirit of the club's earliest years was

1914 In Memoriam 1918

W. Adamson	N. Oxland
W. Alder	A. Patterson
B. Alexander	L. D. Plummer
R. E. Atkinson	G. Potts
J. A. Bagnall	R. Rayner
E. Batey	M. Reed
W. Braidford	A. G. Richardson
P. Braidford	C. N. Ridley
J. Brydon	John W. Robinson
T. Burn	G. S. Robinson
T. W. Burn	Jos. W. Robinson
T. Cathrae	John Robson
W. Coulson	James Robson
W. Elliott	W. J. Robson
J. M. Emerson	J. R. Robson
B. D. Gibson	A. Snowdon
J. Grierson	H. J. Spencer
N. F. Humphreys	W. Summers
W. Jefferson	W. R. Thew
S. H. Kent	A. Thompson
D. Little	D. T. Turner
F. O. Mail	E. Walton
A. Morrison	G. P. Walton
W. M. B. Nanson	I. Whittaker
F. Nevison	

carried on by one member of the Tynedale pack who, according to the weekly magazine, "Rugby Football", was "known to have danced at a local hunt ball until 6 a.m. on the Saturday, then ridden home on horseback, changed into hunting garb, hunted until mid-day and finished the day by playing in a cup-tie for his club, and incidentally proving to be one of the best forwards on the field."

In Hexham, the growing enthusiasm for the handling code was underscored by the introduction of the game at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School while, at either end of the Tyne Valley, new clubs were formed at West Wylam and Haltwhistle during the mid-'Twenties.

The West Wylam club, founded after a meeting at which Dr. George McCoull presided, lost its opening match 11-0 against Consett but rounded off its first full season with a flourish when it beat Tynedale 3rd XV with a try in extra time to win the Northumberland Junior Cup. The following season, the newly-formed second team reached the final of the same competition, only to lose 6-5 to Seghill following a last minute try.

The Haltwhistle club, revived after a lapse of thirty years in 1926, began with a Boxing Day match against Mr. John Clark's XV before a big crowd in Bellister Parks.

Tynedale 1st XV, too, took part in a piece of history on September 3rd, 1921, when a "seven" comprising J. Harding, E. S. Davidson, J. E. C. Strang, W. R. Baty, F. C. Jessop, D. Forster and G. Nicholson took part, at Percy Park, in what was billed as the first seven-a-side competition to be held under Rugby Union Rules, — although, as the "Hexham Courant" went to some pains to point out, a similar event had in fact been held on the Seal at Hexham some twenty-seven years earlier.

Meanwhile, Tynedale 2nd XV were continuing to compensate amply for any lack of cup success on the first team's part with a marvellous run in the Senior Shield competition, which brought them the second most prized trophy in Northumberland rugby five times in succession between 1920 and 1924, thus completing a marvellous run stretching either side of the First World War.

Playing at hooker in several of those finals was that legendary Tynedale character, "Tudda" Baty. But the man to whom the team were really indebted was the former 1st XV stalwart, Tom Ritson, who after nearly two decades of rugby, elected to spend the twilight of his playing career leading and coaching the second team. Rarely can such unselfish service by a player to his club have reaped so satisfying a reward.

There was cup success, too, at third team level, with the 3rd XV carrying off the Junior



A TYNE DALE 'FIFTEEN'



4—BEN PLUMMER

The name of B. D. Plummer first appeared on a Tynedale team-sheet during the Christmas holidays of 1908 when he was still a fifteen-year-old schoolboy at St. Bees. He went on to become one of the most accomplished half-backs ever to represent Tynedale and Northumberland, and such was his dedication that, even at thirty, he was fit enough to play eleven matches in eighteen days during one hectic holiday period.

The period from 1910 to 1914 was a "Golden Age" for Tynedale rugby, and Ben Plummer was one of fourteen players from the club to represent their counties during this period. Curiously, he played his first game for Northumberland in France — against Stade Bordelais at Bordeaux on Easter Monday, 1913 — and he went on to gain further county honours after the war, including two seasons at scrum-half.

Although his playing career was interrupted by the First World War, during which he was awarded the Military Cross, Ben Plummer resumed playing immediately thereafter and he was selected as reserve for the first International trial at Bradford in 1920.

He went on to play a number of games for Northumberland, at both scrum-half and stand-off, and captained Tynedale for six seasons in succession in the immediate post-war years, a club record then and since. In 1926, he played at stand-off half in Tynedale's golden jubilee match against Waterloo.

After retiring from the game in 1927, he took up refereeing and handled a number of county matches before turning his attentions to the administrative side of the game, becoming a county selector in 1932.

At club level, he was treasurer of Tynedale from 1948 to 1959, and its president for four successive seasons from 1952 to 1956. At county level, after many years as Tynedale's county representative and eight years as county vice-president, he became president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union for the two seasons 1947-48 and 1948-49.

It was a fitting honour to crown a model career as player, referee and administrator.

Cup in 1922 and 1925 as well as the Tyneside and District Junior League championship in 1923, after drawing the first of their twenty-one games and winning the remaining twenty.

Some sixteen Tynedale players also earned county selection during the six years immediately following the war, including the Durham County forward J. G. Holmes, who achieved the

rare feat of scoring five tries in one game against Westoe in 1924, while in 1925-26 the 1st XV won nineteen of its twenty-five games and finished at the top of the North-East Clubs' Table.

It all made a fitting build-up for the great moment now at hand in the club's history: the golden jubilee year of 1926.

8. Half-time Whistle

The Tynedale jubilee was quite a year. At an extraordinary general meeting held in the Royal Hotel on 8th February, 1926, members decided by a large majority that the most tangible way in which the club could commemorate its jubilee would be to purchase its own ground.

For the past twenty-three years it had held an option on the Dene Park field, and that option was now to be exercised, at a cost to the club of £1,550 — or 1s 9½d a square yard. At the same meeting, the club also took over the tenancy of the adjoining Broad Close field at an annual rental of £35.

A contemporaneous report commented: "In view of the fact that quite recently similar land in the immediate vicinity has been sold at prices varying from 4s 6d to 2s a square yard, the meeting felt that they were taking no hazardous risk in making the purchase as, though the field is not perfect as a playing field, it has served its purpose for twenty-three years and is, at the moment, the only field available.

"It was therefore felt that, should a more suitable field be available in the future, there was a strong probability of the club being able to dispose of the present field at a profit, and an almost certainty that no loss would accrue."

How right, half a century later, that forecast was to prove!

Tynedale being a club which has always prided itself on its sturdy self-reliance, the money required for the purchase of Dene Park was raised by donations, special efforts and a loan from the Rugby Football Union which was repaid within a dozen years or so. As a result of this far-reaching decision, Tynedale Rugby Football Club now had a permanent home for the first time in fifty years.

On the field of play, the fiftieth anniversary was officially commemorated on 13th March, 1926, with a match at Dene Park against Waterloo — although, given that the club had not been formed until the October of 1876 and the first match played some two months thereafter, it could be argued that the jubilee celebrations were, in fact, a little premature.

Be that as it may, the match drew a good crowd and, under the leadership of David Forster, Tynedale did justice to the occasion

by winning 12-3, thanks to tries by Carr (2), Dobbie and Hedley. Tynedale's team, including nine county players, was: R. Bell; J. E. Dobbie, R. A. Goodall, T. A. Carr, A. Williamson, B. D. Plummer, R. R. M. Barr; F. R. Hedley, G. Robson, R. Wilkinson, G. Nicholson, K. G. C. Robinson, J. S. Bentham, D. Forster, J. E. C. Strang.

The same evening a jubilee dinner was held at Hexham Hydro under the chairmanship of the club president, Mr. R. H. Robb, who had himself played in Tynedale's inaugural match against Elswick in 1876. The tickets cost 7s 6d each (exclusive of wines), and one hundred and ten members and guests sat down to dinner, including no fewer than twenty members of Tynedale's four cup-winning sides up to that time. A special welcome was given to the five members present from the original 1887 cup-winning side, John Dodd, William Pattinson, W. Farthing, T. Rogan and Harry Robb himself.

The toast to "The Tynedale Club" was proposed by a former president of the Cumberland Rugby Football Union and of Carlisle Rugby Club, Mr. T. H. Hodgkinson, who, in recalling some of the battles between the two clubs right from Tynedale's earliest days, declared "the old game to be not a patch on the new one."

Where once the game was largely a succession of scrummages and line-outs, he asserted, "now every player seems imbued with the idea of giving the ball air, and quite rightly." During his own playing career, in the course of some six seasons with Cumberland, added Mr. Hodgkinson, he could only remember ever receiving two passes — one was not intended for him, and the other was behind him!

The icing on the cake in jubilee year would have been the winning of the Senior Cup, but that was not to be. A narrow defeat in the semi-final by the eventual winners, Northern, meant that Tynedale's fifth Challenge Cup victory had to wait another year.

That year of 1927 was to prove the har-binger to the second of Tynedale's "Golden Ages."

The junior sides had been linking the first and second of these magical eras with a string of cup victories during the 'Twenties, with the 2nd XV carrying off the Senior Shield five

years in a row between 1920 and 1924 - a feat which earned them a special flag from the Northumberland Rugby Football Union which flew over the grandstand for many years.

Not to be outdone, the 4th XV emulated that achievement by winning the Junior Shield every year between 1924 and 1928.

Now, in 1927, it was the turn of the 1st XV to once again bring home the Northum-



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



5—DAVIE FORSTER

Like Ben Plummer, under whom he served as 1st XV vice-captain during the six seasons immediately succeeding the First World War, Davie Forster was a brave man. As Pte. Forster, of the Northumberland Fusiliers, he served as "batman" to one of Tynedale's greatest pre-war players, Lieut. Col. Willie Robb, and, for his conspicuous gallantry in saving the latter's life on the Somme, after carrying his severely wounded C.O. under heavy fire to a place of safety six hundred yards away, he was decorated with the Military Medal.

But he gained honours in plenty, too, on the field of play, for both club and county. It is not every player who can claim, as Forster could, that he played in two cup-winning sides thirteen years apart. Moreover, in the second of those cup finals, in 1927, Davie Forster not only captained his side to victory but himself kicked the conversion which gave them a 5-3 win over Northern.

It was his second season as captain. The previous year the player who had begun his career in junior rugby with Tyneside Rovers had the honour of captaining Tynedale in their 50th anniversary season, leading them out for their jubilee match against Waterloo on 13th March, 1926.

Twenty-five years later, Davie Forster was still holding an official position within the club on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, as one of the most respected and longest-serving members of Tynedale's general committee.

It must have been a proud moment for him, marred only by the fact that his son, David, was no longer there to share it with him. For, after playing for the club before the Second World War, he was killed while escaping from a prisoner-of-war camp in Italy. In the matter of bravery, it was like father, like son, with the Forsters.

berland Senior Cup which had not been seen in Hexham since 1914.

Shrugging off widely-expressed doubts about a lack of speed in their back division and playing to their strength up front, with the Jessop brothers at half-back shrewdly directing affairs behind, they disposed of both Seghill and Gosforth before meeting the holders, Northern, in the final at the County Ground.

"Tyne" were given a large and noisy backing by their supporters, many of whom wore blue and white "golliwogs", sold in aid of Hexham War Memorial Hospital. Although the cup-holders led by a try at half-time, a torrential downpour in the second half really suited Tynedale's ten-man rugby and heavy pressure on the Northern line eventually brought a try for hooker Geoff Robson which David Forster, captain of the team and sole survivor of the great 1914 cup-winning side, stepped up to convert.

It was enough to give Tynedale a famous 5-3 victory and to spark off the now-customary scenes back in Hexham that evening, with the band playing and a big crowd turning out to greet the victorious team in the Market Place, before they adjourned for a celebration supper in the Royal Hotel. As was his wont, the try-scorer, Robson, no doubt left his horse tethered somewhere nearby, all ready for his long night ride home to Bellingham!

The team which this time left its mark on the club record books was: R. Bell; D. Thornton, R. A. Goodall, T. A. Carr, N. C. Fairlam; F. C. Jessop, B. X. Jessop; J. K. K. Morrison, G. Robson, J. C. Suddes, F. R. Hedley, G. Nicholson, D. Forster, J. S. Bentham, J. E. C. Strang.

After the euphoria of this unexpected cup success, anti-climax followed. That fine forward, J. G. Holmes, having his second spell with the club, had the distinction of playing for Northumberland and Durham against the "Waratahs" from New South Wales in November, 1927, but several other leading players, including the captain, Forster, promptly retired and the 1927-28 season started catastrophically with six defeats in a row.

Tragically, too, the 1st XV lost one of its most accomplished forwards in the October of that year when Jimmy Strang died following an accidental injury in a game at Durham the preceding month. Though only twenty-five at the time of his death, he had played in the cup-winning second teams of 1921, 1922 and 1923 as well as in the 1927 Senior Cup side and, for three seasons, he also represented Northumberland.

Tynedale could ill afford the loss of players of such quality and, while they continued to play some good rugby, the next few years were to be lean ones indeed for all the club's sides in the county cup competitions.

Tynedale, though, were simply gathering their strength for the triumphant years that were to follow.



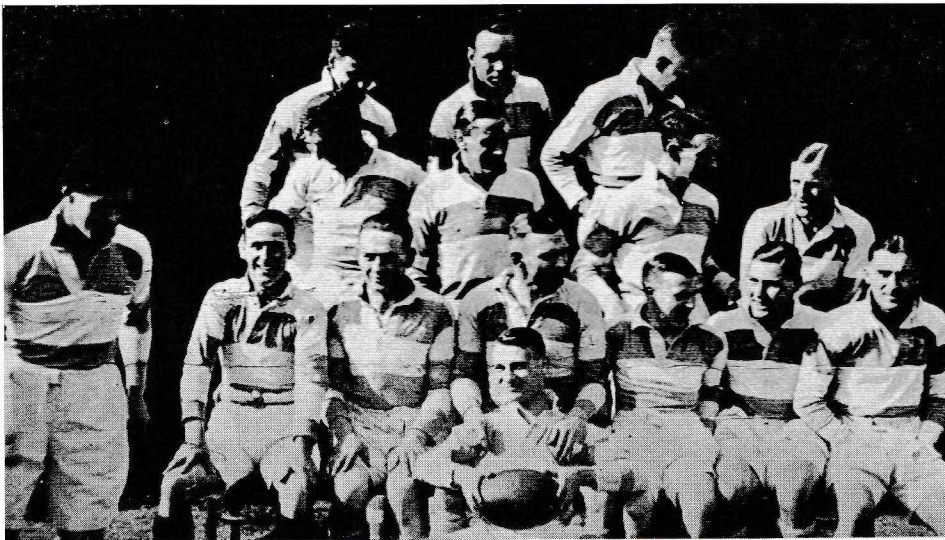
In this 1927 cartoon, three disconsolate Northern players (bottom left) look on as Davie Forster and his Tynedale team begin to celebrate their cup final success.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1927. Back row : G. Nicholson, J. E. C. Strang, J. K. K. Morrison, J. S. Bentham, R. A. Goodall, R. Bell, D. Thornton. Centre row : F. R. Hedley, G. Robson, D. Forster (capt.), T. A. Carr, J. C. Suddes. Front row : F. C. Jessop, N. C. Fairlam, B. X. Jessop.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1933. Back row : R. A. C. Herron, J. C. Suddes, R. Graham, R. H. C. Herron, J. E. McComb, G. J. B. Bell, W. P. Gibson. Centre row : W. Sharp, A. R. B. Polson, E. R. Blench, K. W. D. Hodgson, (capt.), C. R. Armstrong, T. B. Bland. Front row : B. Liddle, A. Brogdon.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1934. "Hoot" Gibson leads off as the team breaks away to take the field in the replayed final. Back row : C. R. Armstrong, S. Scott, G. J. B. Bell. Centre row : A. R. Little, R. Graham, R. A. C. Herron, J. Heppell. Front row : W. P. Gibson, J. C. Suddes, K. W. D. Hodgson (capt.), B. Liddle, E. R. Blench, T. B. Bland. In front : A. Brogdon.

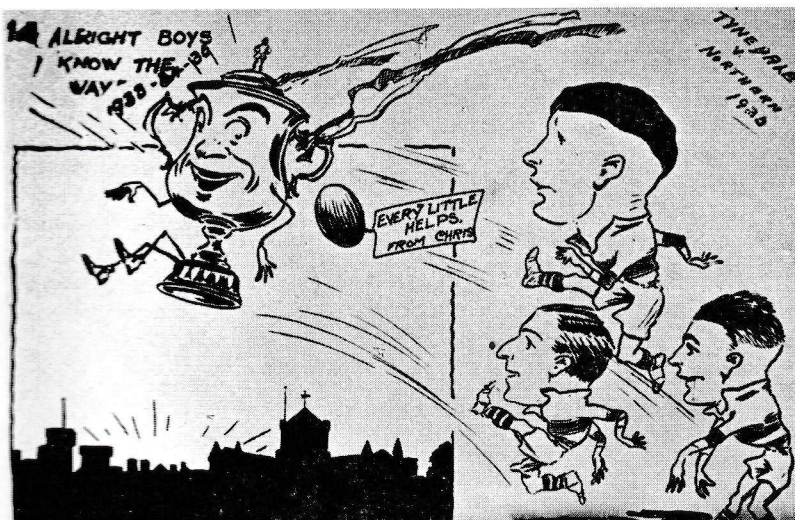


Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1935. R. H. C. Herron, R. A. C. Herron, R. Graham, E. B. Young, D. C. Armstrong-C. R. Armstrong, J. C. Suddes, W. P. Gibson. Centre row : J. Morris, A. Brogdon, K. W. D. Hodgson (capt.), E. R. Blench, T. B. Bland. Front row : B. Liddle, E. W. I. Johnson. Standing behind : three members of past Tynedale cup-winning sides, T. M. Catcheside (1906), D. Forster (1914 and 1927), J. J. McIntyre (1887).





Triumphant after winning the Northumberland Senior Cup for the fourth time in as many seasons, the Tynedale side of 1936, with captain David Hodgson being chaired aloft. Left to right : R. Graham, R. A. C. Herron, T. B. Bland, D. C. Armstrong, R. H. C. Herron, K. W. D. Hodgson, E. R. Blench, B. Liddle, A. Brogdon, E. W. I. Johnson, D. E. Murray, J. C. Suddes. Hidden behind are W. Armstrong, W. R. Forrest and E. B. Young.



A feature of the "Hexham Courant" sports pages in the 'Twenties and 'Thirties were cartoons like this one, pointing up Tynedale's magnificent four-year cup run, from the pen of Jack Hedley.



Action from the 1935 Senior Cup final between Tynedale and Northern at the County Ground, Gosforth. Chris Armstrong is the ball-carrier ; on the left, the familiar, and formidable, figure of David Hodgson looks on.



Tynedale's cup-winning side of 1948. Back row : W. C. Rutherford, H. P. Brogdon, S. Short, R. G. Christer, W. Armstrong, J. E. Cousin, W. A. Dinning, W. Luke. Front row : J. E. Charlton, J. D. Robb, R. M. Waugh, W. Rutherford (capt.), J. A. Newlands, K. Hall, K. T. Bell.



Tynedale's 75th anniversary was celebrated by a match against a South of Scotland XV. Back row : J. E. Charlton, J. Grant, L. Holliday, R. W. T. Chisholm, D. Henderson, R. Naylor, J. Pickworth, A. K. McRae, J. B. T. Ritson, J. King. Centre row : J. Fox, D. Forster, (touch-judges), W. Rutherford, H. F. McLeod, R. G. Christer, W. Reid, J. E. Cousin, T. Brown, W. Stonehouse, J. M. Inglis, W. Luke, J. Trail (referee). Front row : R. G. Powell, G. Burrell, P. Stonehouse, J. Wright, J. D. Robb, R. Notman, W. A. Dinning, J. Thompson. In front : J. J. Hegarty, P. J. Langley, W. M. Hogg.

9. The Years of Victory

The 'Thirties opened with quite a shock. Preliminary plans for a new trunk road between Hexham and Corbridge revealed that it would neatly bisect Tynedale's Dene Park ground somewhere around the 25-yard line at the northern end of the pitch. The playing field, as it had been known for twenty-seven years, would be no more.

Negotiations were quickly set in train with Northumberland County Council, the upshot of which was that the club acquired a portion of the adjoining Broad Close field with a view to laying out a full-size pitch running east to west instead of north to south as hitherto. The pavilion, however, was left "marooned" on a triangle of ground on the opposite side of the new road.

Work started on re-modelling the ground in the summer of 1931 and, for the whole of the 1931-32 season, all 1st XV and 2nd XV matches were switched to Broad Close, the third team being required to play most of their matches away from home. In fact, Tynedale soon began to run not just one third team but two, following the amalgamation into the club of the Hexham Boys Scouts rugby section whose various games included one celebrated match on Boxing Day, 1932, against an "Old Crocks" XV comprising Dr. W. Sinclair, T. Weavers, Col. J. Ridley Robb, T. Armstrong, A. V. Bland, G. Robinson, B. D. Plummer, Rev. W. H. S. Wood, Rev. W. R. Tymms, D. Forster, J. E. Murray, G. Nicholson, W. R. Baty, A. E. Emerson, J. S. Emerson. With half a dozen former county players in their ranks, the "Old Crocks" won 14-13, but at the cost of a broken ankle for Forster and a cracked rib for Plummer.

Meanwhile, the new ground had been officially opened a couple of months earlier in October, 1932, when Tynedale played a team selected by their cup-winning captain of 1906, George Spencer, now president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union.

It proved to be a happy augury. For within a matter of months Tynedale were embarking on a magnificent Northumberland Senior Cup run that was to last unbroken for the next four years.

And, just as that 1906 cup-winning team had owed much to Spencer's personal inspiration as captain, Tynedale's great cup sides of the 'Thirties were to be indebted in equally large measure to the dominant leadership of their own new captain appointed in 1932, K. W. D. Hodgson.

Around him David Hodgson gathered a squad of players who were soon to weld themselves into the most formidable force in Northumberland rugby — players like hooker Jack Suddes, lock forward Rex Graham, wing-forward Ronnie Herron and his brother,

Harry, at prop, full-back Teddy Blench, wing three-quarters "Hoot" Gibson and Chris Armstrong and, not least, the superb midfield triangle of Angus Brogdon and Basil Liddle at half-back and, at centre, Tommy Bland, who had been reserve for Durham and Northumberland



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



6—DAVID HODGSON

Of the many fine players to join the Tynedale club from the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School at Hexham the greatest name of them all was Kingsley W. D. Hodgson, who was games master at the school during the 'Thirties.

He joined Tynedale at the beginning of the 1931-32 season with an established reputation, having already played for both Durham County and Yorkshire, and he rapidly became the dominant personality within the club, captaining the 1st XV for five successive seasons with an infectious enthusiasm for the game which transmitted itself to all who played under him.

It produced probably the most famous era in the club's history - one of which brought Tynedale the Northumberland Senior Cup for four successive seasons from 1933 to 1936. Hodgson himself led the side in all four of those cup finals, scoring four of Tynedale's thirteen tries, and he was also one of six members of the 1936 side to represent Northumberland against Hampshire in the final of the County Championship.

Although he officially retired from the game the following year, David Hodgson was still turning out on occasion for the 1st XV at wing three-quarter in 1938-39 — and scoring tries when the situation demanded. In that same season he also refereed the England Under-14 international trial at Hexham.

Sadly, however, David Hodgson was one of the casualties of the Second World War, which also cost Tynedale the lives of two others of the "Super Six" of 1936, Tommy Bland and Basil Liddle.

But his place in Tynedale history was already assured. In any side made up of all-time Tynedale "greats" very probably the first name to go down on the list would be that of K. W. D. Hodgson.

against the South African "Springboks" at Sunderland in 1931.

Three of them, Bland, Brogdon and Liddle, had played, along with Dave McComb, Jimmy McComb, Sid Scott and Geoff. Holmes, in the Tynedale "seven" which, in April, 1930, won the Northumberland county seven-a-side tournament for the one and only time in the club's history, with a 16-13 win over Sunderland in the final. And more trophies were soon to follow.

For four successive years the Senior Cup was to find a resting-place in Hexham, and in 1936, sixty years after its formation, the Tynedale club reached the very pinnacle of its power when it supplied, in Bland, Blench and Suddes, a fifth of the combined Northumberland and Durham side which put up such a stirring performance against Jack Manchester's Third "All Blacks" at the County Ground, Gosforth, before going down 10-6. Moreover, later that same season, Blench, Bland, Brogdon, Liddle, Hodgson and Suddes all played in the Northumberland side which took on Hampshire in the final of the County Championship, also at Gosforth. All that marred the occasion for Tynedale men was the result, the Southerners winning 13-6.

The club's diamond jubilee year of 1936 also produced the last and most thrilling of all Tynedale's cup final victories during its magnificent four-year run. In the memories of some, indeed, it was perhaps the best game ever seen on the County Ground as both Tynedale and Gosforth eschewed normal cup-tie tactics and gave as brilliant an exhibition of fast, open rugby as those privileged to watch it could ever remember seeing.

Ten minutes into the second half, despite having once led 6-0 through tries by Brogdon and Young, Tynedale found themselves trailing 6-15, with Gosforth playing like men inspired and key man Suddes hampered by a cracked rib. Even when Ronnie Herron scored an unconverted try, a penalty goal by Wood promptly restored Gosforth's nine-point lead.

Now, with the game standing at 9-18 to Gosforth, the "Hexham Courant" of 11th April, 1936, takes up the story:

"Minutes were passing. It was felt that Tynedale couldn't do it. In fact, for a time it looked as though they might crack. The game was all Gosforth's at this stage and Tynedale supporters were beginning to resign themselves to the fact that the cup was going east!

"Suddenly Brogdon found himself with the ball and, with an inspired effort, he broke through the Gosforth defence with a dummy here, a swerve there, and scored between the posts. It was a magnificent effort, and the crowd — Tynedale, Gosforth and neutral — rose to him. Blench kicked a goal, and Tynedale were now full of fight (14-18).

"Anti-climax, however! Horsley snapped up a loose ball about halfway, and by sheer strength and determination scored a try for Gosforth which seemed to clinch the game (14-21).

"Many sides would have cracked under the strain. Not so Tynedale. For the first time in the game they began to get the ball in the tight scrums, and their passing machinery became better. They pressed hard for several minutes before Hodgson got over in the corner. You could have heard a pin drop as Blench took the kick for goal. Everything depended on it. Straight and true and over the bar, and Tynedale were only two points behind (19-21).

"Gosforth had shot their bolt, but could Tynedale score in the four minutes left for play? One doubted it and gave mental credit to Gosforth for their victory and to Tynedale for their plucky fight against a big deficit.

"Suddenly the Tynedale backs were into action, and Johnson was speeding like a hare for the line. Someone tapped his ankles and down he came. A moment afterwards, however, Bland got the ball, half-turned as if to make for the corner, balanced himself and dropped a perfect left-footed goal (23-21).

"The impossible had happened: Tynedale had pulled the match out of the fire, and pandemonium broke loose"

For eight of the triumphant Tynedale side victory had never tasted sweeter; captain David Hodgson, vice-captain Angus Brogdon and team-mates Bland, Blench, Graham, Ronnie Herron, Liddle and Suddes were celebrating their fourth cup final win in as many years.

But, if these were the players to whom Tynedale were indebted most as they were played into Hexham that night by the Excelsior Band, all twenty-six of those who had played in one or other of the four finals of 1933, 1934, 1935 and 1936, together with those who had helped carry them through the earlier rounds into the final itself, carved their names indelibly in Tynedale history.

During those four years of victory Tynedale won fifteen successive Senior Cup matches, scoring 240 points against 64. Hodgson scored nine tries and Brogdon, Bland and Armstrong seven apiece, while Bland finished as top scorer overall, his seven tries, six conversions and three dropped goals totalling 46 points.

Altogether, in all matches during this four-year period, Tynedale's playing record read: P. 121 W. 85 D. 11 L. 25. Pts. For 1,659 Pts. Against 620.

In 1933, on their way to the final, Tynedale beat Northern 9-5, Gosforth 14-0 and Seghill 13-0. In the final itself they then gained a handsome victory by 17-0 over Old Novos, the try-scorers in a fast and entertaining game being Chris Armstrong (2), Bland, Liddle and Hodgson, with Blench kicking a conversion.

Tynedale's team was : E. R. Blench; W. P. Gibson, W. Sharp, T.B. Bland, C.R. Armstrong ; A. Brogdon, B. Liddle; A. R. B. Polson, J. C. Suddes, R. H. C. Herron, R. Graham, J. E. McComb, R. A. C. Herron, G. J. B. Bell, K. W. D. Hodgson.

It was, with the 1887 and 1914 sides, possibly one of the greatest of all Tynedale teams. Averaging 5ft 11½ins. in height and 13st. 11lb in weight, it set up a new club record of 425 points in the season. And it so enthused one Hexham sportsman with the manner and margin of its cup final victory at the County Ground that he there and then offered his debenture rights to the County Union for cancellation "to celebrate in an unobtrusive way the fact that Tynedale won the cup."

In 1934, Tynedale scored all their cup victories on "foreign" soil, winning 8-7 at Northern and 8-5 at Rockcliff before once more meeting Old Novos in the final.

For the occasion the railway company ran a special two-shilling excursion from Hexham to West Gosforth — and centre three-quarter Jack Heppell conscientiously contented himself with riding no more than the first race in the Braes of Derwent point-to-point before dashing by car to join his team-mates at the County Ground!

This time, however, Novos proved a considerably tougher proposition than the previous year and held "Tyne" to a 3-3 draw before going down 9-6 in the replay. Tynedale's scorers were Bland with a dropped goal, Ronnie Herron with a try and Blench with a penalty goal, the points in the first match having come from a Hodgson try near the posts.

The team was : E. R. Blench ; W. P. Gibson, J. Heppell, T.B. Bland, C.R. Armstrong; A. Brogdon, B. Liddle, J. Morris, J. C. Suddes, S. Scott, A. R. Little; R. Graham, R. A. C. Herron, G. J. B. Bell, K. W. D. Hodgson.

Just for good measure, apart from winning twenty-five games and scoring a record 434 points that season, Tynedale also claimed victories over both the Durham cup-holders, Durham City, and the Cumberland cup-holders, Cockermouth. They were truly "Cocks o' the North."

In 1935, Tynedale went through the first three rounds of the cup without conceding a single point, and scoring 72 points themselves. They defeated Ashington 23-0, Seghill 32-0 and Armstrong College 17-0 before meeting and beating Northern in the final, thanks to two penalty goals by Billy Gibson, a dropped goal by Basil Liddle and a try by Chris Armstrong. Once more a big Hexham contingent, sporting blue and white favours sold in aid of Hexham Boys Club at twopence each, shouted their heroes home.

The team was : E. R. Blench; W. P. Gibson, E. W. I. Johnson, T. B. Bland, C. R. Armstrong ;



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



7—JACK SUDDES

Another of the personalities of Tynedale's cup-winning side of the mid-Thirties was Jack Suddes, a tough all-round forward and probably the finest hooker ever to pull on a blue and white jersey.

He holds two unique distinctions within the club : he is the only Tynedale player ever to have played five times in a Northumberland Senior Cup-winning side — in 1927, 1933, 1934, 1935 and 1936, and he is the only man to have played in a cup-winning 1st XV, 2nd XV, 3rd XV and 4th XV.

Father of John Suddes, who as fixtures secretary has been principally responsible for Tynedale's much improved fixture list in recent seasons, Jack Suddes made a string of county appearances and was one of six players from Tynedale to represent Northumberland in the County Championship final of 1936. He also had the distinction, that same year, of playing for Northumberland and Durham against the New Zealand "All Blacks."

It was the crowning moment of his Rugby Union career for, not long afterwards, he followed the path of several other leading Tynedale players over the years and went into the Rugby League game with the newly-formed Newcastle club where, coincidentally, he again found himself playing against the New Zealanders — this time at the thirteen-a-side game. In December, 1938, he moved to Bramley and, though by now in the twilight of his career, still retained sufficient of his skills to be chosen as reserve hooker for England for a French tour.

One of his contemporaries, scrum-half Basil Liddle, joined Newcastle at around the same time, and others to go into the League game over the years from Tynedale have included full-back "Casey" Baty, who played a number of times for Northumberland towards the end of the last century before going to Widnes in 1896, stand-off Jack Scott before the Great War, and the club's greatest "export" to Rugby League, Bob Armstrong, who played for Salford and England shortly before the First World War.



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



8—ANGUS BROGDON

The Tynedale club has never boasted an international in all its hundred years. But one of those who went closest to it was Angus Brogdon, a running fly-half who would surely have been in his element in the modern game, and a prolific points-scorer who skills earned him an international trial in December, 1936. The match, coincidentally, was held at Workington, where Brogdon also won the first of his two dozen Northumberland caps in 1930, against Cumberland.

Having started his 1st XV career as a scrum-half in 1927-28. Angus Brogdon earned himself a regular first team spot at stand-off a couple of seasons later and, during the victory years of the 'Thirties, went on to become David Hodgson's able lieutenant — not only his vice-captain for five years running, but the mainspring of the back division.

His seven-season partnership with Basil Liddle at half-back became almost legendary and, together, they played in the Northumberland side which took on Hampshire in the final of the County Championship in 1936, as well as in all four Tynedale cup-winning sides. Brogdon it was who turned the match in the last of those four finals in 1936 when he set the whole ground alight with a brilliant solo try between the posts. With the conversion that followed, it brought Tynedale back from a seemingly hopeless position of 9-18 down to 14-18, with all to play for.

After so many years as "bridesmaid," Angus Brogdon was himself appointed captain of the 1st XV for the two seasons immediately preceding the Second World War and, in 1960-61, crowned a long period of distinguished service to the game, including a spell as chairman of Tynedale's general committee, when he was elected president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union.

His younger brother, Harry, also played in a Tynedale cup-winning side at wing three-quarter, scoring the winning try in the 1948 final against Northern, while his nephew, John Brogdon, played 1st XV rugby for Tynedale in the 'Fifties.

Just to underline the family's all-round sporting ability, son Angus has achieved international recognition at hockey.

A. Brogdon, B. Liddle; R. H. C. Herron, J. C. Suddes, J. Morris, R. Graham, E. B. Young, R. A. C. Herron, D. C. Armstrong, K. W. D. Hodgson.

It was a fine way in which to celebrate the Royal Silver Jubilee, just as another Tynedale team, forty-eight years earlier, had marked Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee by winning the Senior Cup for the first time. Just to point up the coincidence, Mrs. Tom Robson, widow of the 1887 captain, was invited by the club president, Mr. John Patterson, to take the first drink out of the cup at the traditional celebrations afterwards in the Royal Hotel.

Earlier, as the Excelsior Band played the team into the Market Place where several of the welcoming crowd had perched themselves on the fountain, Mr. Patterson had begun his speech by apologising to the Salvation Army for disrupting their usual Saturday night open-air service. But, as he reminded the crowd, it was not every club that had a "hat-trick" of cup successes to celebrate. And, on the following New Year's Day, that achievement was recognised in more tangible form by the presentation of inscribed tankards to the twenty-five players who had taken part. The tankards were presented by Mr. Tom H. Scott, on behalf of the seventy-nine people who had subscribed to them.

But more was yet to come. For, in 1936, Tynedale beat College of Commerce 30-3 and Old Novos 21-3 to reach their fourth successive final. And their fourth successive victory duly followed when that marvellous late rally saw them squeeze home by 23-21 against Gosforth, their try-scorers being David Hodgson (2), Ernest Young, Ronnie Herron and Angus Brogdon, Blench kicking two conversions and Bland dropping the winning goal.

The team was: D. E. Murray; W. R. Forrest, E. W. I. Johnson, T. B. Bland, E. R. Blench; A. Brogdon, B. Liddle; R. H. C. Herron, J. C. Suddes, E. B. Young, R. Graham, D. C. Armstrong, W. Armstrong, R. A. C. Herron, K. W. D. Hodgson.

By a remarkable coincidence, in each of the four years, Tynedale's joy was made complete when the task of presenting them with the trophy fell to a former captain of the club.

Following in the footsteps of Anthony Emerson in 1930-31, the president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union in 1933 and 1934 was Mr. George Spencer, who had himself led Tynedale to Senior Cup success in 1906, while, in 1935 and 1936, the honour belonged to another Tynedale player turned county president, Mr. Malcolm Snowball, who had captained Tynedale in the 1909-10 season.

These were proud days indeed for Tynedale Rugby Football Club.

10. Keeping the Flag Flying

After the feast, the famine. The great Tynedale team of the mid-'Thirties never again attained the same heights and, for the moment at any rate, cup glory was to be Tynedale's no longer.

Ronnie Herron died quite suddenly! Suddes and Liddle took their considerable talents into the Rugby League game; Hodgson, Bland and Johnson suffered recurrent problems with injuries; illness kept Brogdon out of rugby for quite some time. One way and another, fortune no longer smiled on Tynedale.

By now, however, the dark clouds of war were once again rolling across the skies and casting a long shadow over the rugby fields of England. And, once again, Tynedale Rugby Club was to pay a heavy price.

In all, twenty-seven Tynedale players, past and present, were to be seen no more after the Second World War of 1939-45, among them great names like Bland, Forster, Hodgson and Liddle.

On Easter Monday, 1949, another memorial plaque was duly unveiled in the pavilion by the county president, Mr. Ben Plummer — yet another former Tynedale captain, and dedicated by the Rector of Hexham, the Rev. A. G. Hardie.

The real memorial to those who had fallen, however, was the acquisition of the Broad Close field adjoining the first team pitch. A fund for the purpose had been started while the war was still in progress, and the purchase was finally completed in 1948.

Indeed, in marked contrast with the First World War, rugby at Tynedale had this time been kept alive and flourishing during the war years. Off the field, some excellent work had been done on the administrative side by the secretary-treasurer, Mr. Tommy Robertson, to ensure that the club was a "going concern" when rugby re-started in the county in September, 1945, and it was to be the club's

good fortune that this hard-working official was to remain as its secretary for a further eight years after the war's end.

On the field, the club's changing rooms had been promptly taken over as an ARP post on the outbreak of war, while the floodlit training sessions, started in February, 1939, had had to be abandoned.

Nevertheless, a makeshift Tynedale side, drawn from the farming community, the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and Servicemen back on leave or stationed nearby, and captained by Walter Rutherford, had played a varied programme of matches, chiefly against opposition from Army and RAF units stationed in the area, beginning with four successive victories in as many weeks over an Army XV including the former England Rugby League tour captain, Troop. A number of these games were staged for the benefit of war charities.

So, by the time those players who had survived the war had been welcomed back at a re-union dinner held at the Royal Hotel (entertainment by the Haltwhistle Vocal Union Quartette and the "Crazy Gang" of Rolls, Royce and Walter), Tynedale were able to put a very useful side indeed into the field. Five players turned out for Northumberland in unofficial county matches in that first post war season, and the two Rutherford brothers played in a combined Northumberland, Durham and Cumberland side against the "Kiwis", a New Zealand Army team of international strength, as did Will Rutherford, Ken Hall and Bill Dinning against the "Wallabies" from Australia the following year.

The Northumberland Senior Cup competition re-started in 1946-47 and, although Tynedale that year lost in the semi-final to the eventual winners, Percy Park, their tenth cup success was not to be long denied them.

On 2nd April, 1948, having beaten King's College and Seghill in the earlier rounds, Tynedale defeated Northern 15-13 in a thrilling final at the County Ground, in which Northern came back from 6-15 down after "Tyne" had lost wing three-quarter Harry Brogdon with concussion.

It was Brogdon, indeed, who had scored what turned out to be the winning try, but the "man of the match" tag went to stand-off half Ken Hall, who not only converted the try to add to his two earlier penalties and a dropped goal, but stamped his personality on the game with a thoroughly accomplished all-round display.

The Tynedale side, captained by Will Rutherford, were spurred on throughout the game by a vociferous body of supporters, bedecked in blue and white favours and rallying to the sound of a hunting horn.

1939 In Memoriam 1945

W. N. Barrie	K. W. D. Hodgson
T. B. Bland	M. N. Irving
F. T. Brown	B. Liddle
G. L. Burgess	C. Milner
R. W. Casebourne	J. Morris
S. Cunningham	B. Murray
W. Curry	J. W. Ridley
T. B. Darney	F. W. Rutherford
J. H. Dixon	S. Scott
J. E. Dobbie	W. Smith
R. W. Foreman	C. L. Stephenson
D. Forster	H. C. Stevenson
R. Gibson	J. S. Wood
J. Heppell	



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



9—WILL RUTHERFORD

In all of Tynedale's long history there have perhaps never been a more formidable pair of brothers playing in the same pack than the Rutherford brothers in the years immediately before and after the Second World War.

Both started playing for Tynedale and Northumberland in 1938, both owed much of their enthusiasm for the game to the influence of David Hodgson and both went on to captain the 1st XV — Will in the three seasons straight after the war, and Walter in season 1950-51. Elder brother Hector also played a number of first team games, earning the nickname of the "Gentle Giant." All three Rutherfords played together in the pack for the first time against Blaydon in December, 1938.

But it was Will who followed in Angus Brogdon's footsteps by winning an international trial at wing-forward at Sunderland in 1946. The previous season, along with brother Walter at prop, he had played for Northumberland, Cumberland and Durham against the New Zealand Army side, the "Kiwis," and he was also one of three Tynedale players in the Northumberland and Durham side which took on another side from "Down Under", the 1947-48 "Wallabies" from Australia.

Later that same season Will Rutherford captained the Tynedale side which carried off the Northumberland Senior Cup for the tenth and, so far, last time in the club's history. Once again brother Walter played alongside him in the pack.

Although he retired from the game for business reasons soon after being re-elected captain for the 1948-49 season, Will Rutherford had already done more than enough to ensure his place among the greatest of all Tynedale forwards.

And today his name still lives on through his son, Willie, who keeps up the family tradition as a 1st XV stalwart and one of the strongest-running three-quarters in Northumberland rugby.

Tynedale's victorious team comprised: S. Short; H. P. Brogdon, R. M. Waugh, K. T. Bell, J. Charlton; K. Hall, J. D. Robb; W. Luke, J. A. Newlands, W. C. Rutherford, W. A. Dinning, G. R. Christer, W. Rutherford, W. Armstrong, J. E. Cousin.

Only Will Armstrong still remained of the celebrated 1936 cup-winning side but, by the oddest of coincidences, as had happened with all four cup wins in the 'Thirties, it yet again fell to a former Tynedale captain to present the trophy in his capacity as president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union. This time Mr. Ben Plummer, the 1st XV captain from 1919 to 1925, did the honours.

Just for good measure, the third team, captained by "Drew" Richardson in his farewell match, captured the Junior Cup a fortnight later when Bobby Dodds kicked a last minute penalty goal to give them a hard-fought 11-8 victory over Ashington 2nd XV.

This completed a notable hat-trick of cup successes for the club as, a year earlier, the second team, captained by Bobby Blackburn, had carried off the Senior Shield for the twelfth time in Tynedale's history.

Indeed, these had been two successful seasons in every respect for the Tynedale club. Three cups had been won, eight players had represented their county and, even though the following three seasons were to prove largely unproductive in terms of trophies won and honours gained, the Tynedale star was now shining bright, ready for the next prestigious occasion in the club's history — the 75th anniversary year of 1951.



The Northumberland Challenge Cup : won by Tynedale for the tenth time in 1948

11. A Change of Style

Forging the link between past and present in Tynedale's 75th anniversary season was the name of Robb. For just as a Robb had figured in the first team ever to represent the club in 1887, and the same Robb had steered the club, as president, through its jubilee season fifty years later, so now did another member of the Robb family, his great-nephew Derek Robb, leave his mark on club history by assuming the 1st XV captaincy for the anniversary year.

On the field, the highlight of that season of 1951-52 was the official 75th anniversary match on 11th October, 1951, against a South of Scotland XV containing several internationals, in which Tynedale put up a fighting display before going down 23-12. One of the touch judges was Tynedale veteran Davie Forster, who had captained the 1st XV in their golden jubilee match against Waterloo a quarter of a century earlier.

Off the field, the principal event was the commemorative dinner staged in the Royal Hotel after the game with Darlington R.A. on 1st December at which the club president, Mr. John Patterson, presided. The toast to the Rugby Football Union was proposed by the club chairman, Dr. J. J. Hurley, who urged "stern, surgical and radical" measures to speed up the game, with particular reference to reducing the amount of touch-kicking and scrummaging. In reply, the vice-president of the R.F.U., Mr. Joseph Brunton, reminded those present that only 150-200 clubs in the whole of England dated back as far as Tynedale. Other speakers included the vice-president of the Northumberland Rugby Union, Mr. Eric Watkin, former Northumberland president Mr. Broderick Thompson, former Tynedale president Mr. Jack Baty, Tynedale 1st XV captain Mr. Derek Robb and former captain Mr. Ben Plummer, and Tynedale committeeman Mr. J. L. Dodd.

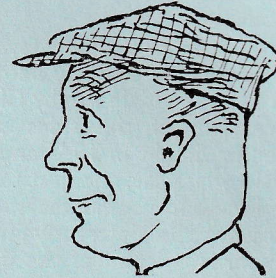
Yet another notable event, and one of possibly even greater significance so far as the club's overall development was concerned, came some four years later when Tynedale marked the opening of their new clubhouse by the Northumberland president, Dr. G. G. T. Tregarthen, on 22nd September, 1955, with a game against the County President's XV.

Up to this time the ex-Army hut erected as a war memorial thirty-four years before had continued to do yeoman service as a make-shift clubhouse, providing the most spartan of changing accommodation for the players. Facilities were, by any yardstick, primitive in the extreme: three antiquated house baths fed by a coke boiler of elderly vintage.

There was no bar. Instead, following time-honoured tradition, the players continued to assemble for their post-match pint in the Globe, the latest in a long line of Hexham public houses to double as Tynedale's unofficial



A TYNE DALE 'FIFTEEN'



10—JOHN PATTERSON

During the past century the Tynedale club has had several long-serving presidents, including Isaac Baty for sixteen seasons from 1878 to 1894 and Chris. Henderson for just one season fewer from 1899 to the outbreak of the First World War.

But the longest serving of them all was John Patterson who, for seventeen seasons spanning either side of the Second World War, held with distinction the highest office that any rugby club has to offer. He was first elected president in 1929 and, remarkably, despite a six-year break during the war, continued in that position right up to 1952. The following year he was made a life member of the club.

The Patterson family have done much for the Tynedale club and, perhaps uniquely in Northumberland rugby, no fewer than three of them, all brothers, have served as secretaries of the club.

First came William Patterson who played for Tynedale at the turn of the century and was appointed secretary for the 1900-01 season. He went on to represent the club on the county committee for many years and, as a respected chartered accountant in Hexham, was honorary auditor to both Tynedale and Northumberland for some forty years.

His younger brother, Armorer Patterson, was an outstanding Tynedale forward before and after the First World War, making over thirty appearances for Northumberland and playing in Tynedale's cup-winning sides of 1911 and 1914.

He took over as secretary from 1905 to 1909 and, like his elder brother, later became county representative, following Anthony Emerson's election as Northumberland vice-president.

Armorer's immediate successor as club secretary in season 1909-10 was his other brother, John, whose playing career had unfortunately been cut short by injury. He, too, went on to serve four years as secretary before and after the Great War, and then became chairman of committee right through the 'Twenties before being elected president in 1929.

"headquarters" — a line which, at various times, included the Black Bull, the White Hart, the North Eastern, the Old Grey Bull and the Royal.

So, in every respect, the opening of the new clubhouse, with its changing rooms, bar and social room, represented a notable milestone in the club's history. It was the product of several years of intensive fund-raising by the special efforts committee, led by Mr. Laurie Bouckley.

From a playing viewpoint, however, the 'Fifties could scarcely be described as a vintage era for Tynedale Rugby Club. With the gradual break-up of the sides which had won the Senior Shield in 1947 and the Senior Cup the following year, the first team inevitably struggled for quite some years, although this did not prevent some attractive fixtures being secured towards the end of the decade against leading Border clubs like Hawick, Kelso and Gala.

One fixture, indeed, brought opposition from even further afield when, in 1959, the Irish side, Malone, visited Dene Park on an Easter tour. A hard and exciting game ended in a 6-3 victory for a Tynedale team including Ken Bell, Colin Fox, Rufus Hall, "Dai" Hopkins, Jack Kent, Gordon Richardson and Eddie Robson — all committee stalwarts of recent times, and the shillelagh hanging behind the clubhouse bar remains to this day as a memento of that Easter Monday visit by the Ulstermen nearly two decades ago.

And so to the 'Sixties. Although the club



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



11—"DREW" RICHARDSON

If ever anyone could be dubbed "Mr. Tynedale", it is surely Andrew Richardson!

There was a Richardson (possibly a relative) on the first-ever Tynedale committee in 1876, and the name has been linked with the club almost ever since. "Drew" Richardson's father was secretary in 1898-99 and 1st XV vice-captain the following year, and played at full-back in the cup-winning side of 1906. "Drew" himself captained the third team to Junior Cup success in 1948, and his son, Gordon, earned county recognition as a hooker in the late 'Fifties.

had a lean time in the cup competitions — the Northumberland Junior Cup won by Angus Hunter's 3rd XV in 1956 and the Northumberland Junior Shield won by Edward Robson's 4th XV in 1965 being its solitary successes since the 1948 Senior Cup victory — the 1st XV playing record was generally better than average. Despite a bad year in 1966-67, when twenty-one games were lost, there were clear indications that things were on the upturn.

This was confirmed the very next season when Tynedale lost only seven of their thirty-five games and scored over 500 points. It was perhaps no coincidence that that season also marked the arrival at Dene Park of Tynedale's first-ever club coach in the person of Scottish international trialist Peter Robertson, from Hawick. Under his aegis Tynedale rugby has flourished ever since - and training come a long way since the pre-season paper chases of the early 'Thirties!

Another notable "first" that same season was Malcolm Young's record-breaking achievement in scoring 204 points for the club. Sadly, however, he was to become one of several very good players to leave Tynedale over the next few years to further their ambitions in new surroundings — among them two future England trialists in Young himself and wing three-quarter David Carr, joint holder, with Phil Stonehouse, of the club record of seven tries in a game. It was a disturbing, if perhaps inevitable, by-product of the "new look" rugby which, during the 'Seventies,

Although his job before the war entailed Saturday afternoon working and precluded him from official selection most of the time, "Drew" would nevertheless contrive to turn up somehow on match days, carrying his bag in the hope of getting a game.

After wartime RAF service (subsequently the source of many a lengthy tale in the bar), he at last managed to find a job which got its priorities right in giving him Saturday afternoons off, and he and his fellow prop, Bobby Dodds, rapidly became the twin terrors of the 3rd XV circuit.

He played just once for the 1st XV, but ended his playing career on the highest of notes by captaining his side to Junior Cup glory in 1948.

A long-serving member of the general committee, and a selector for several years, "Drew" Richardson saw his devotion to the club recognised in 1974 by his election as president. And, while this elevated position within the club somewhat inhibited him in his other vital role as Tynedale's most vociferously partisan supporter on the touchlines, his two-year term of office proved outstandingly successful in every respect.

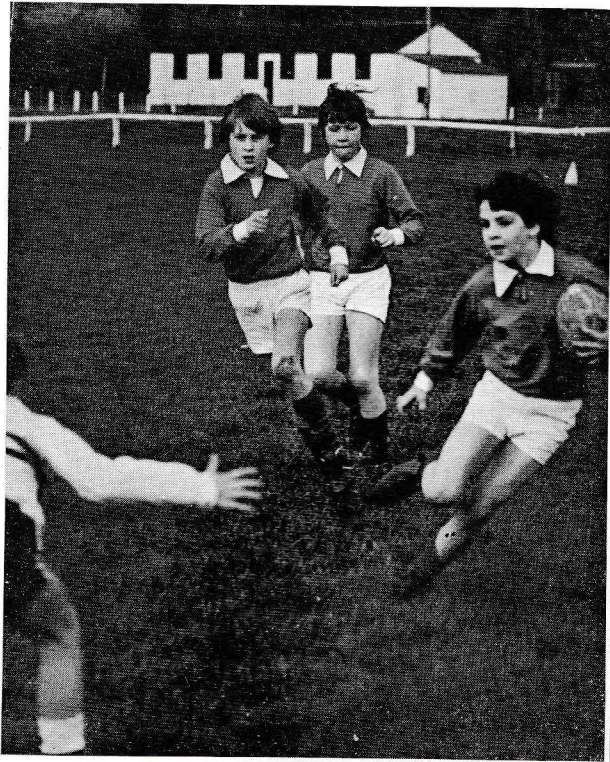
"To me it is a privilege to be a member of Tynedale, never mind president," declared Andrew Richardson on his election to the club's highest office. No words ever summed up better a true clubman.



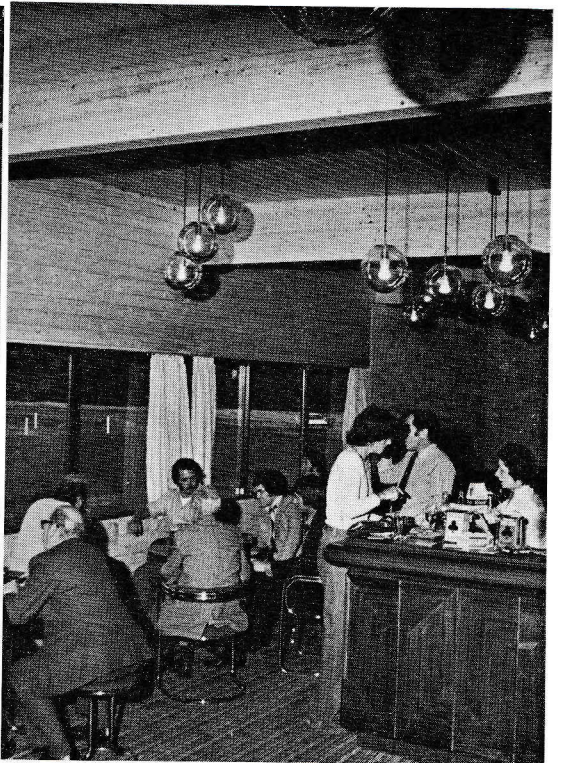
Claiming Tynedale's third success in four seasons in the Northumberland Colts Cup in 1976 were this team. Back row : D. Ford, A. Johnson, R. Telfer, F. Dickinson, P. Walker, J. Self, A. Gledson, R. Parker. Front row : D. Pick, M. Fagan, H. Murray, G. Forman (capt.), R. Self, S. Tiffin, I. Dodds.



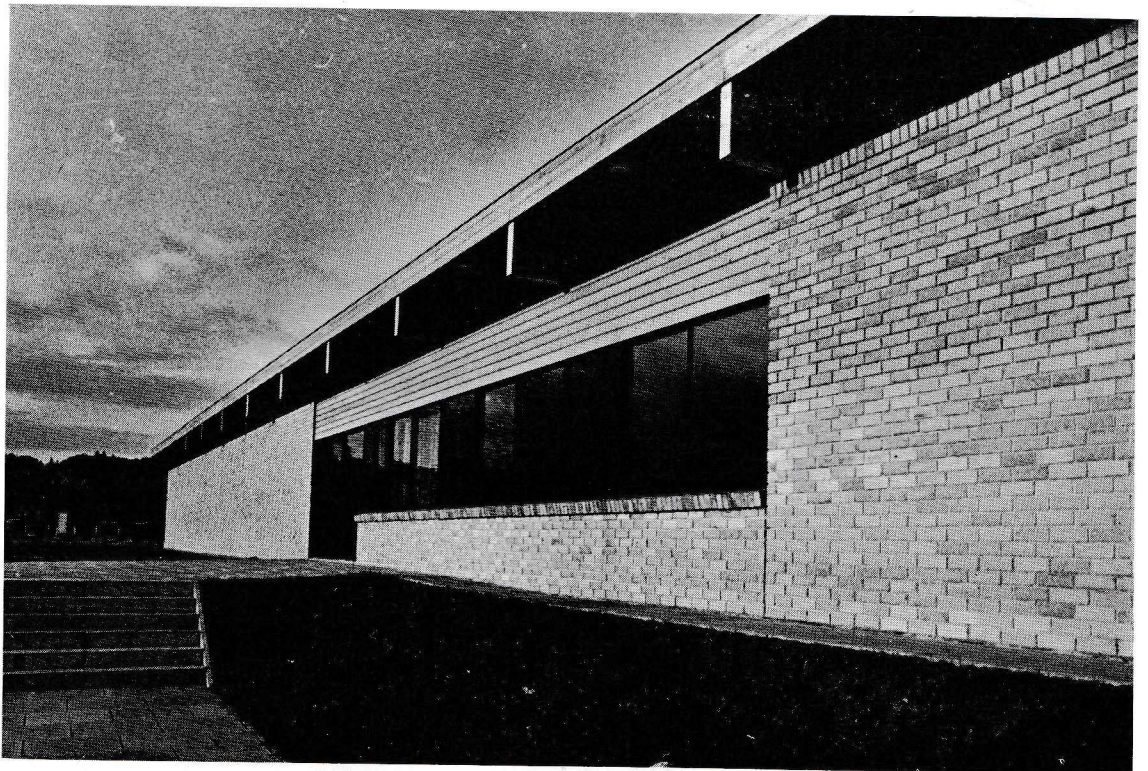
Right wing Willie Rutherford on another powerful run, with Chris Davy and Alan Stokoe in support, in Tynedale's 31—10 victory over Melrose at the Greenyards in 1975.



Tynedale Under-10 fly-half Gordon Dodd in action in the Northumberland Mini-Rugby Tournament.



Part of the elegant lounge bar which looks out over the 1st XV pitch.



Tynedale's impressive new clubhouse at Tynedale Park, Corbridge, opened by the immediate past president of the Rugby Football Union, Mr. G. Tarn Bainbridge, at the start of the 1976-77 centenary season.

was to totally transform the game.

Tynedale opened this new decade with another singularly successful season, winning twenty-nine games and reaching the final of the Northumberland Senior Cup by virtue of victories over Rockcliff and Morpeth. But, although they won abundant possession, they were unable to capitalise on it and the holders, Gosforth, ran out victors by 19-6.

So they did again in 1975 when, after beating Percy Park and Northern, Tynedale once more faced up to Gosforth in the final and once more went down to defeat, this time by 22-3 after missing a string of penalty kicks and dominating much of the first half.

On this occasion, though, they did at least have the dual consolation of having seen Alistair Whitfield's 2nd XV carry off the Northumberland Senior Shield with a 24-4 victory over North Shields a few days earlier, and of winning a place themselves in the national knock-out competition for the John Player Cup the following season.

On 20th September, 1975, they took the field against the Cheshire Cup holders, Sale, in a preliminary round tie and, though hard hit by injuries, nevertheless gave a creditable account of themselves. In a storming finish, they went down only 16-15 to the eventual semi-finalists, a national daily newspaper subsequently dubbing them the "Tynedale Terrors."

By this time, indeed, Tynedale were pro-

12. Young Blood

For more than half a century Tynedale Rugby Club's principal "nursery" has been the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Hexham.

Had Hexham Grammar School, in 1920, not made the far-reaching decision to switch from Association to Rugby Football, it must be wondered how far the Tynedale club would have developed over the past fifty years, or whether it would have stayed the course at all, notwithstanding the fact that it had managed well enough without Grammar School players up to 1920.

The man who must take more credit than any other for the school's "conversion" is Mr. Bill Dix who, with the backing of his headmaster, Mr. Charles Rogerson, worked hard and enthusiastically in those early days to ensure that the foundations of rugby within the school were properly laid.

The club, too, played an active role. Not only was the school allowed full use of Tynedale's ground and other facilities at Dene Park, but club stalwarts like Ben Plummer, who was 1st XV captain at the time, and Geoff Nicholson, who was secretary for most of the 'Twenties besides appearing in the 1927

ving themselves a match for all but the highest quality opposition in the North of England and South of Scotland. Under the leadership of Ian Blyth, five times captain in the space of seven seasons, including the current centenary season, back play flourished as never before since the palmy days of the mid-'Thirties.

Tynedale scored so freely that, in 1972-73, a year after the introduction of the four-point try, they set up a new club points-scoring record of 814 points, and they went on to average over 700 points in each of the ensuing three seasons. Individually, Alan Stokoe twice in successive seasons broke the club record by scoring 246 and 310 points in 1971-72 and 1972-73, while Tony Milburn went close to it with 297 points in season 1974-75.

The Tynedale game had been based for so long on solid forward power that this transformation to fast, open, fifteen-man rugby, founded essentially on teamwork but providing ample scope for individual flair, was as unexpected as it was entertaining.

Boasting a successful team, a rapidly improving fixture list and a refreshing brand of rugby, all Tynedale needed now was the playing strength in depth to ensure consistency of performance from game to game and season to season, together with the right setting in which it could fully develop its gathering potential.

As the club looked ahead to its centenary season, these twin objectives were moving rapidly towards realisation.

cup-winning team, helped stimulate interest among the boys by taking part in practice matches. Those pioneering days at the school were exciting ones, with improvisation often the order of the day — as on the occasion when a school team travelled to Keswick in a laundry van!

But, as the rugby game gradually took root at the Grammar School, it began to make an increasingly significant contribution to the Tynedale club. As early as 1921, indeed, a Tynedale fourth team made up largely of Hexham Grammar School players contested the final of the Northumberland Junior Shield, losing only narrowly 11-9 to another Hexham side, Tyne-side Rovers 2nd XV, at Dene Park, in a "pipe-opener" to the Tynedale — Wakefield game on Easter Monday.

And it was a measure of the success wrought in a relatively few years by those in charge of the sport at the school that the Northumberland Under-18 Cup was won in five successive seasons from 1924 to 1928 by a Tynedale fourth team consisting almost entirely of QEGS players.

From that time onwards, until relatively recent times, a majority of players throughout the club in most seasons first learned their rugby at the Grammar School. Not that it has drawn from the Grammar School exclusively. The 1st XV in particular has always had a strong non-QEGS element, even in the great years of



A TYNE DALE 'FIFTEEN'



12—BILL DIX

Though neither a player nor an administrator with the Tynedale club, Bill Dix nevertheless had a profound influence on its development over the past half-century.

For he it was who, in season 1919-20, introduced the game of rugby football to the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School at Hexham. It was a move which was to shape both the school's fine sporting tradition and the composition of many a future Tynedale team.

At the time, there were no other schools in Northumberland playing rugby and the only schoolboy opposition was provided by Newcastle's Royal Grammar School. But, as Tynedale 4th XV, the school side quickly proved itself a formidable enough force to win the Northumberland Junior Shield several times within the next decade.

The youngest master in the school at 21 when he first joined the staff in 1911, he went on to serve for 41 years as geography master under six different headmasters, until his eventual retirement in 1952.

Throughout that time, he sustained a wide variety of sporting interests outside the school, playing hockey and tennis for the Tynedale clubs at Prior's Flat and, for a number of years, being an active member of Hexham Golf Club.

But rugby was his first love and, during his twelve years as rugby master at Hexham Grammar School, he never missed a single school 1st XV game. He was the first in a long line of school rugby masters to forge a link between school and club, and Tynedale Rugby Football Club has been indebted to him ever since. Fittingly, it marked his retirement in 1952 by conferring on him honorary life membership.

1932-36. Without the Grammar School contribution, however, the club would have been much smaller, while the strong links between school and club have helped ensure continuity and durability.

Goodwill on both sides has done much to conserve this happy situation. On the school's side, a succession of dedicated sports masters have imbued the pupils with their own enthusiasm for the game and eagerly supplied a stream of young players to Tynedale. David Hodgson will never be forgotten; nor will Bobby Blackburn, whose death during his presidential year in 1970-71 was such an enormous loss to both school and club; latterly, Chris Davy and then Rob Macfarlane have held the reins at the school, while at the same time putting their own playing services at the disposal of the club.

Thanks to them, Tynedale has had a generous supply of gifted players from Hexham Grammar School over the years: Jack Suddes, Tommy Bland and the Armstrongs in the 'Thirties; the Rutherfords, Ken Hall and Bill Dinning at the end of the war; and then Ken Bell, Brian Hunter, Cecil Thompson, Gordon Richardson and David Coulson in the post-war years. Both Thompson and Coulson, like two other Hexham Grammar School players, Denis Williamson and Rex Patterson in the 'Thirties, were England schoolboy internationals.

Even today, when the number and influence of former QEGS pupils on Tynedale rugby has visibly diminished, the likes of Ian Blyth, Ian Greener, Alan Pye, Roger Dinning and Wallace Cousin continue to make their mark at first team level.

The golden years of rugby at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School probably came in the 'Sixties when, in season 1963-64, and again in season 1968-69, the school 1st XV went through a considerable fixture list without incurring a single defeat. In addition, the Morpeth schools seven-a-side competition was won against strong opposition in both 1968 and 1970, and the Keswick "sevens" cup on no fewer than four occasions, while, playing under the Tynedale name, the school won the Northumberland Under-18 Cup six years out of nine between 1963 and 1971.

But those days are gone for ever. For, by an odd — and, some might say, unhappy — coincidence, Hexham Grammar School ended its life just before Tynedale's centenary year began. After surviving adulteration and dilution, the school has now undergone basal pruning, lateral grafting and a total change of personality to re-emerge in its new form as Hexham Queen Elizabeth High School.

What effect this will have on rugby within the school and within the Tynedale club only time can tell. All that can be stated with some confidence, in the meanwhile, is that the effect will be nothing like so shattering as it might have been but a few short years ago.

It was in the 1964-65 season that a Colts side was first introduced at Tynedale, under the guidance of Hexham Grammar School master Mr. Harry Fletcher, principally to provide a regular rugby outlet for pupils at non-rugby playing schools, notably Haydon Bridge Technical School, who hitherto had had to be content with occasional outings in the third or fourth teams.

But the early enthusiasm faded and it was not until 1971-72 that Colts rugby was started in earnest, with a fixture programme of some twenty-seven matches being played.

The first game against Morpeth was won 55-4, but that scoreline flattered only to deceive; the Colts were to be on the wrong end of some poor results before they really began to find their feet the following season.

The big step forward came when the Colts' "mentor", John Clark, gave up playing to concentrate his energies solely on the Colts, and found a willing helper on the coaching side in John Cousin, a former 1st XV captain and county back row forward. Further assisted by the arrival of an outstanding young player in Stephen Eno, who went on to win a place in the final England Colts trial, Tynedale Colts enjoyed a much improved year, culminating in the winning of the Northumberland Colts Cup for the first time with victories over Ashington, Gosforth and, in the final, Ponteland by 14-7.

In 1973-74, the Colts did it again, this time showing a great deal of character in defeating an older and bigger Northern side 12-10 in the final at the County Ground.

By this time, too, the original once-a-fortnight training sessions, with perhaps ten players present, had given way to regular weekly training sessions, attracting up to a couple of score of young players from all parts of the district. And the Colts "nursery" was now beginning to feed players into the 1st XV with players like Robin Murray, Peter Telfer, John Smith, Chris Dixon, Martin Lytollis and Ian Thompson all moving through into the senior side.

In 1975-76, with the former Alnwick and Northumberland scrum-half, George Haldane, now adding his coaching expertise, Geoff Forman and Hamish Murray played throughout the season for the County Colts, David Pick turned out at scrum-half in the first team and another player with colts experience, John Hedley, also had several 1st XV outings. Tynedale thus continued to confirm themselves as the outstanding Colts side in the county.

The fixture list was further expanded, too, one trip being made as far afield as Edinburgh, and the season was rounded off in fine style when the team won the Northumberland Colts Cup for the third time in four years with a 26-15 victory over Ponteland in the



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



13—KEN BELL

As player and administrator, K. T. Bell has few, if any, equals among post-war Tynedale personalities.

A much better player than he was often given credit for, he might well have proved it had he been played continuously in his best position at stand-off half, rather than at centre or wing.

While a National Serviceman in 1948, Ken Bell had the unusual distinction of playing in two Tynedale cup-winning sides in the space of a fortnight, replacing the injured Maguire in the 1st XV which carried off the Northumberland Senior Cup and helping "Drew" Richardson's 3rd XV win the Junior Cup.

Although Ken Bell later went on to become 1st XV vice-captain in the mid-'Fifties and, indeed, captained the side for a dozen games or so when Jimmy Newlands fell ill, his major contribution to the club has been off the field rather than on it.

Having served his "apprenticeship" under the late Laurie Bouckley on the special efforts committee in the late 'Forties and early 'Fifties, which culminated in the opening of the Dene Park clubhouse in 1955, he became assistant treasurer in 1960 and treasurer a year later. Apart from a five-season break between 1969 and 1974 it is a position he has held ever since.

A valuation surveyor by profession, Ken Bell's keen financial brain and total dedication to his job during one of the most crucial periods in the club's history made him not only a quite outstanding club treasurer, but probably the most competent Tynedale official of the past quarter of a century. With club secretary Jim Chapman, he played a key role in the protracted negotiations involved in the sale of the Hexham ground and the acquisition of Tynedale Park at Corbridge, and, fittingly, both men were made honorary life members of the club in 1976 in recognition of their work.

Tynedale's county representative from 1961 to 1975, and highly thought of in county circles, Ken Bell also attained the ultimate honour in Northumberland rugby in 1975-76 with his election as president of the Northumberland Rugby Football Union. No clubman ever deserved it more.

final. They followed it up eight days later by winning the Northumberland Colts "sevens" Cup at Morpeth.

From a playing viewpoint nothing has had a greater impact on Tynedale rugby in the 'Seventies than the development of Colts rugby.

Meanwhile, however, the development of rugby at junior level had been given a further impetus in 1974 by the introduction of a Northumberland Mini-Rugby Tournament, aimed at eight to thirteen-year-olds. This was taken up enthusiastically by a number of clubs in the county, including Tynedale, whose coaching organiser, Chris Davy, was also made chairman of the new county mini-rugby committee, and, after a trial period at the latter end of the 1973-74 season, mini-rugby began in earnest at Tynedale in season 1974-75.

Two trophies were won in that first season and, by the middle of the 1975-76 season, Tynedale had something like a hundred and fifty mini-rugby players on its books, drawn from over two dozen schools all over the district. The club ended the season by getting three of its five sides through to the finals of the Northumberland tournament.

13. Green Fields

Although the successful development of junior rugby at Tynedale during the early 'Seventies improved the flow of young players into the club, it placed a further strain on its already cramped playing and clubhouse facilities at Dene Park, Hexham.

Opened in 1955, the clubhouse had already been extended by the addition of a bar lounge in 1966, built at a cost of some £6,000, but if this had helped to ease the after-match pressures on the social side, the lack of pitches and changing rooms continued to present problems from a playing viewpoint.

In the autumn of 1970, however, the opportunity arose to purchase the former Tyneside Agricultural Society showfield at Corbridge — and, boldly and imaginatively, the club grasped it with both hands.

The first intimation that Tynedale Park, with its vast expanse of thirty-five acres, might be available for sale came to the ears of the club president, Mr. Bill Dinning, who, wearing another of his hats, was a leading figure in the local agricultural community. Tynedale were playing Northern that day and it was in the Northern clubhouse at McCracken Park that the idea was broached and several senior committeemen decided that, in view of the enormous scope which Tynedale Park might offer for the future if acquired and developed, a general committee meeting should be called as a matter of urgency.

In between the Colts and mini-rugby systems, the number of games organised for other sides of school age within the club was also stepped up considerably during those two seasons. So much so that, in one ten-day period at Easter, 1975, Tynedale found itself fielding no fewer than fifteen sides at 1st XV, 2nd XV, 3rd XV, 4th XV, Colts, Colts 'B', Academicals, Under-19, Under-18, Under-16, Under-14, Under-13, Under-12, Under-10 and Under-9 levels.

Re-organisation of the education system in Tynedale along comprehensive lines between 1974 and 1977 could have been a death-blow to the club, and indeed the continued provision of the sport in some form in at least some schools will still be essential in improving the quality and experience of schoolboy players coming into the club.

But the dedicated work put into developing the Colts and mini-rugby networks during the 'Seventies will undoubtedly do much to cushion the blow caused by the disappearance of the Grammar School, in a way that would not have been possible before 1970, and the club shows every prospect of earning increasingly rich dividends from it as the years progress.

Two evenings later, on Monday, 2nd November, 1970, the committee voted to make an offer of £12,000 for the ground, and also to form a property committee comprising Mr. Dinning as chairman, Mr. Jim Chapman (secretary), Mr. Alan Charlton (treasurer) and Mr. David Barker (assistant treasurer), along with three leading committeemen in Mr. Stuart Enevoldson, Mr. Ken Bell and Mr. John Clark.

As the Tyneside Show was registered as a charity, the purchase took several months to complete — and, in the meantime, the club itself had to buckle down to the immense task of raising the £12,000 required. Various loans and grants were eventually secured from outside bodies, notably the Sports Council and Northumberland County Council, but, at the outset, the club was indebted to the generosity of twenty-three people who, between them, subscribed no less than £10,000 of the sum required by way of personal loans.

At an extraordinary general meeting on 1st April, 1971, members gave approval for the signing of the contract, the club newsletter written by first team stalwart Douglas Hamilton observing: "A vote in favour is a vote for the future players of Tynedale. It is also a vote for a lot of hard work. There is something in working for posterity, and didn't previous generations at Tynedale do just that for us?"

Although refusal of planning permission for

building at Dene Park and Broad Close held up any development at Corbridge for several seasons, except for the provision of a couple of playing pitches, the breakthrough came when the Hexham ground was sold to Northumberland County Council for £75,000 in 1974 and the clubhouse and car park to the National Coal Board Opencast Executive for £27,500 the following year.

The property committee now approached a leading firm of Newcastle architects, Faulkner-Brown Henty Watkinson Stonor, to prepare a scheme for the new ground and clubhouse at Tynedale Park, and the Hexham firm of J. H. Newman and Sons (Builders) Ltd. was subsequently engaged to carry out the clubhouse contract at a cost of over £108,000. Building work began in May, 1975 — some four and a half years after the Corbridge project was first initiated.

Meanwhile, the Tynedale club spent the whole of the 1975-76 season shuttling backwards and forwards between the playing pitches at Corbridge and the changing rooms and clubhouse at Hexham three miles away.

Fortunately, however, even after Tynedale 1st XV had played its last official game at



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



14—BILL DINNING

There are few better-known figures in Northumberland rugby today than Bill Dinning, arguably Tynedale's best player of the past twenty-five years.

Having played his early games for the club during the war years, often against Services sides, Bill Dinning was selected for the county immediately after the war, initially in the unofficial matches of 1945-46 and, the following season, in the championship side. He then played for Northumberland virtually without break right up to 1953, missing only one game and setting a new record for county caps.

It was a quite remarkable achievement, and a tribute not merely to his ability but to his fitness and his total dedication as a player.

Along with his brother-in-law, Will Rutherford and another team-mate, Ken Hall, Bill Dinning

Hexham on Wednesday, 16th April, 1975, beating Northern 22-12 in a Senior Cup semi-final, the co-operation of Northumberland County Council enabled the Broad Close pitch to be used throughout the 1975-76 season for training purposes and for the Sunday morning mini-rugby sessions.

And, by July, 1976, the club's magnificent new headquarters at Corbridge (home of the celebrated Corstopitum "Lion") was ready. The development on the green fields of Tynedale Park, bordering the River Tyne, envisaged the eventual provision of five rugby pitches, a sixth floodlit training pitch, a football pitch, a cricket square and a pair of squash courts.

At its heart lay a large, single-storey clubhouse, covering some 7,000 sq. ft. (650 sq. metres), built in Mitford Pressed Silver Grey Rustic brick which, like the timber used in the construction, had been exposed throughout. The building was set on a low podium to allow for the provision of stepped concrete terracing on the east side, sheltered from the prevailing westerly winds.

The clubhouse accommodation comprised ten spacious changing rooms, tiled plunge

played for Northumberland and Durham against the "Wallabies" in 1947-48 and, later that same season, was in the second row in the Tynedale side which carried off the Northumberland Senior Cup.

Vice-captain of the 1st XV in the club's 75th anniversary season of 1951-52, he continued to play regularly up to the mid-'Fifties and, even when appearing on only an occasional basis in the junior sides in 1956, was still the driving force in the pack in the Tynedale 3rd XV which, that year, won the Northumberland Junior Cup.

Some felt that a special law should have been drafted to preclude this hard, uncompromising forward from trampling over third team innocents!

From then until 1970, Bill Dinning concentrated his attentions on his growing family and his many farming commitments, but since his return to active duty within the club has been one of its most influential figures, besides having the added pleasure of seeing his son, Roger, carry on the family name as 1st XV No. 8.

Bill Dinning took over the club presidency following the sudden death of Bobby Blackburn in 1970 and served a second term in 1971-72. Among other posts, he has also been chairman of the property committee, as well as being one of the prime instigators behind the introduction of mini-rugby at Tynedale.

And, as the originator of, and the main driving force behind, the acquisition of Tynedale Park, Bill Dinning's place in club history is forever assured, as was formally acknowledged in 1976 by his election as an honorary life member of the club.



A TYNEDALE 'FIFTEEN'



15—STUART
ENEVOLDSON

Prior to his arrival in Hexham in the spring of 1952, Stuart Enevoldson had played most of his rugby in Yorkshire and Lancashire. He went on to play for several years in the Tynedale 1st XV front row, followed by a spell in the junior sides, before hanging up his boots.

It was to be the prelude to a busy career as one of Tynedale's most valuable administrators of the past two decades.

Having served for some five years on the general committee, "Ene" became secretary in 1960 at a time when the club's finances were in a distinctly shaky state and, along with treasurer Ken Bell, was primarily responsible for getting it back on an even keel, the huge deficit of 1959 being turned into a credit balance by 1961. He went on to retain the secretaryship right through the 'Sixties, during which period the lounge bar extension to the clubhouse was completed

Amid all this, "Ene" still found time to involve himself in the playing side at a point in Tynedale's history when results were often little short of depressing. As a member of the selection committee for seven years, and its chairman for four, he did as much as anyone to encourage the new and more positive approach to the game which, by the end of the decade, was producing vastly improved results.

Made an honorary life member of the club in 1972, he was an active member of the property committee responsible for the purchase and subsequent development of Tynedale Park, and indeed, right from the outset, proved one of the project's most enthusiastic supporters.

Not the least of the many benefits that "Ene" has bestowed on the club over the past quarter of a century, however, have been his two rugby-playing sons, Nigel and Peter, both of whom have played at prop forward in Tynedale 1st XV, in England schoolboy teams at Under-15 and Under-19 level, and in the England Under-23 squad.

There could be no better choice to link Tynedale's past and future, as centenary year president, than Stuart Enevoldson.

baths and showers, a separate referees' changing room with showers, an attractive entrance foyer, a large wood-floored social room, a carpeted, elegantly-lit lounge bar, a well-equipped modern kitchen, a committee room, and a full range of ancillary facilities, including toilets and storage. The windows were of tinted glass, and the interior furnishings to a high standard, with blue, green and beige the predominant colours.

Around the clubhouse, parking provision had been made for some three hundred and fifty cars, while the comprehensive landscaping scheme had involved the planting of nearly a hundred hardwood trees.

Including the initial purchase of the ground, the total project had cost in the region of £142,000 by the time the new clubhouse was officially opened at the beginning of the 1976-77 centenary season.

Apart from the official centenary dinner planned for Langley Castle on 14th October, 1976, the opening of the new clubhouse was to be the principal event of the centenary season. The occasion chosen for it was Tynedale's match against the Scottish First Division champions, Hawick, on the first night of the season, Wednesday, 1st September, 1976, with the immediate past president of the Rugby Football Union, Mr. Tarn Bainbridge, being invited to perform the ceremony.

And so the centenary season began, with a new ground, a new clubhouse, an infusion of new young blood and, following the annual meeting in July, 1976, a new thirty-four strong team of officers and committeemen led by the new centenary president, Mr. Stuart Enevoldson.

Compared with the modest list of eleven names making up the first club committee in October, 1876, it was a committee of formidable size, but one whose composition amply reflected both the growth of the Tynedale club over the past century and the increasing complexity of its administration in modern times. Life may have been hard in the old days, but it was also immeasurably simpler!

This then is the story of a hundred years of rugby football at Tynedale. The club has travelled a long, and sometimes rocky, road over the past century, but one posted with memorable milestones and peopled with colourful characters along the way. And, as Tynedale Rugby Football Club reaches its centenary, it has never been in better heart, never looked to the future with a greater optimism.

After one hundred years, the game of rugby football remains in good hands in West Northumberland, while the Tynedale club itself remains imbued with the spirit of the rugby game — the spirit which, for rugby men everywhere, has always set the game above all other games.

And long may it be so.

Tynedale Rugby Club Centenary Season

Fixture Programme 1976-77

September	1	HAWICK	H	January	1	NORTHERN	H
	4	WATERLOO	H		8	Middlesbrough	A
	8	KELSO	H		15	WESTOE	H
	12	SCOTTISH BORDER CLUB	H		22	DAVENPORT	H
	18	ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL	H		29	LANGHOLM	H
		F.P.	H	February	5	West Hartlepool	A
October	25	AYR	H		12	GATESHEAD FELL	H
	2	Percy Park	A		19	STOCKTON	H
	9	GOSFORTH	H		26	HULL AND EAST	H
	16	ST. HELEN'S	H			RIDING	H
	23	Durham City	A	March	5	KENDAL	H
	30	GALA	H		12	Morpeth	A
November	6	Darlington	A		19	Hartlepool Rovers	A
	13	ALNWICK	H		26	SUNDERLAND	H
	20	LIVERPOOL	H		27	ANTI-ASSASSINS	H
	27	Newcastle University	A	April	2	BLAYDON	H
December	4	HUDDERSFIELD	H		9	BLACKHEATH	H
	11	Melrose	A		11	SALE	H
	18	REDCAR	H		14	ROYAL NAVY	H
	27	CARLISLE	H		16	North Durham	A
					23	Wigton	A
					30	ROCKCLIFF	H

Officers and Committee, 1976-77

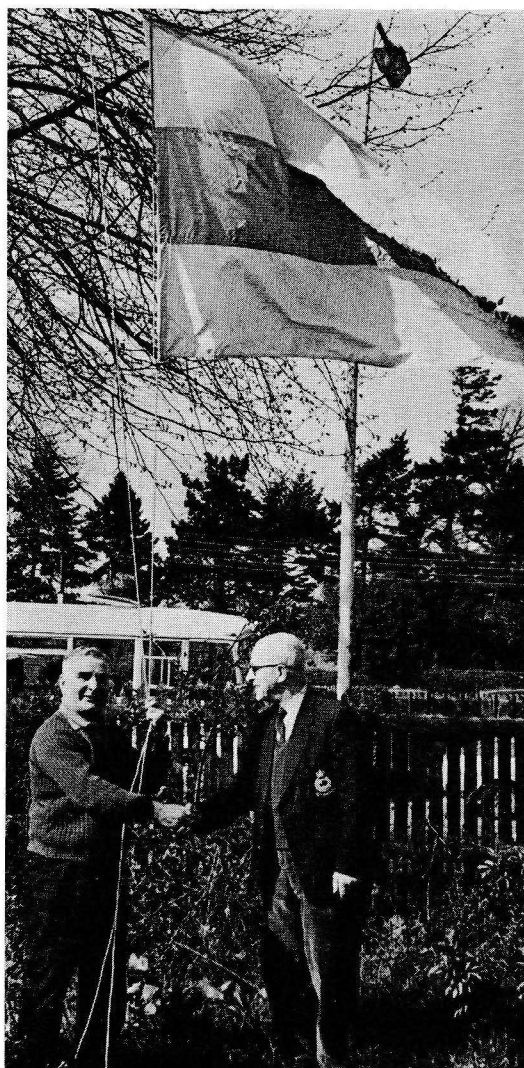
OFFICERS

President : S. T. Enevoldson
Senior Vice-President : K. T. Bell
Junior Vice-Presidents : J. A. Suddes, I. McConnell
 Wood, J. Chapman, J. Kent.
Secretary : J. Chapman
Treasurer : K. T. Bell
Assistant Treasurer : A. W. Coates
Subscriptions Secretary : L. Holliday
Fixtures Secretary : J. A. Suddes
Colts Secretary : J. M. Clark
Teams Secretary : J. Kent
Coach : P. Robertson
1st XV Captain : W. I. F. Blyth, *Vice-Captain* :
 A. Pye.
2nd XV Captain : A. Whitfield. *Vice-Captain* :
 M. Herdman.
3rd XV Captain : M. O. McLoughlin. *Vice-*
Captain : R. T. Suttie.
4th XV Captain : T. A. Little, *Vice-Captain* :
 M. C. T. Fyfe.
Colts Captain : R. Telfer. *Vice-Captain* : R. Parker.

GENERAL COMMITTEE

Principal Officers, Team Captains, H. Armstrong, A. Brogdon, J. M. Clark, W. E. Cousin, W. A. Dinning, K. Docking, D. F. Hamilton, J. B. Hindmarch, M. Herdman, D. H. Hopkins, T. C. Jones, F. W. Maughan, C. D. Patterson, A. Pye, P. Robertson, E. Robson, J. B. Shotton, R. T. Suttie, E. Ward.

Hauling down the flag after more than seventy years at Dene Park, Hexham, two of Tynedale's most loyal club stalwarts, groundsman Wilf Young and past president "Drew" Richardson. Overleaf, they pick a "Team to Remember".



A Team to Remember (1)

Selected by **Andrew Richardson** and **Wilf Young**.

Every rugby club has its "characters." People for whom rugby is the source of life itself. People who can while away hour upon happy hour in a corner of the bar in endless reminiscence of games, players and incidents in years long past. People whose respect for history, whose memory for the minutest of detail, appear awesome to the mere mortal who fails to share their all-consuming passion, their total commitment to the game and club they love.

Tynedale Rugby Club boasts two such men, two characters extraordinary, in Andrew Richardson and Wilf Young.

Both have been connected with the Tynedale club for well over half a century. Both played in Tynedale cup-winning sides, "Drew" Richardson as captain of the third team which won the Northumberland Junior Cup in 1948, Wilf Young as hooker in the second team which carried off the Northumberland Senior Shield the previous year. "Drew" Richardson went on to become president of the club in seasons 1974-75 and 1975-76; Wilf Young to become the most indefatigable of groundsman for the best part of seventeen years, in succession to those other notable club stalwarts, Jack and Alan Shepherd, and "Cully" Stewart.

Here then is the side which, in their view, comprises the finest players ever to pull on a blue and white jersey during those fifty years.

TYNEDALE SELECT XV, 1927-1976

E. R. Blench; D. A. Carr, P. M. Dixon, T. B. Bland, A. Pye; A. Brogdon, M. Young; W. A. Dinning, J. C. Suddes, W. C. Rutherford; R. Graham, J. E. McComb; W. Rutherford, J. R. Scott, K. W. D. Hodgson.

FULL-BACK

Teddy Blench. No arguments about the greatest full-back of the past fifty years. A cool, sturdy, dependable player at full-back, Blench's greatest attributes were his strength in the tackle, his safe fielding of the high ball and his excellent line kicking. He also possessed a fine turn of speed.

WING THREE-QUARTERS

David Carr (Right Wing). The first choice on the wing was relatively easy. Tynedale has not had another player like David Carr, whose physique, power and forceful running later earned him an international trial with Gosforth — though, loyalists to the last, Wilf Young and "Drew" Richardson swear that his best rugby was played at Tynedale!

Alan Pye (Left Wing). A more difficult choice here, with players like Billy ("Hoot") Gibson, whose beret concealed a bald head, Chris Armstrong, Harry Brogdon and Willie Rutherford all staking a claim to the other

wing position. But Pye eventually got the vote as the best all-round footballer, whose pace and elusive running would ideally complement the powerful Carr on the other wing.

CENTRE THREE-QUARTERS

Tommy Bland. No question here as to who should fill the first of the centre three-quarter positions. The "Prince of Centres" is how both men describe Tommy Bland, a complete footballer with the ability to kick or break off either foot, and to score tries as well as set them up. A natural athlete, good enough to represent Northumberland at cricket and golf as well as rugby, he was a determined runner with a brilliant swerve, and an accurate place-kicker and drop goal specialist into the bargain.

Peter Dixon. Possibly the most controversial choice in the side, but one on which "Drew" Richardson and Wilf Young are adamant. They thought a lot of Peter Langley in the 'Fifties, and agree that some contemporaries might rate the all-round ability of Alan Stokoe somewhat higher among present-day players, but they argue that Dixon, at his peak, with his crash tackling and direct, incisive break up the middle, would have been the perfect foil to the more subtle skills of Bland.

HALF-BACKS

Angus Brogdon (Stand-Off Half). His only rival for the fly-half spot was Ken Hall, who dominated the 1948 Senior Cup final and, unlike Brogdon, could kick with both feet. But then Brogdon rarely kicked anyway; he was a brilliant running fly-half, with a remarkable pair of hands, and one of the fastest men off the mark ever seen in a Tynedale jersey. Coupling magnificent defence with attacking flair, his dazzling breaks and superb dummying brought him twenty-two tries in one season alone. "He could go through a gap that wasn't there", affirms Wilf Young.

Malcolm Young (Scrum-Half). Despite keen competition from Basil Liddle, Frankie Brown, Derek Robb, Cecil ("Kettle") Thompson and Tony Milburn, Young, they thought, had the edge on everyone, both as an all-round sportsman good enough to win a Soccer "Blue" at Cambridge as well as international trials at rugby, and as the most astute of tacticians at the base of the scrum. Moreover, even in a side so well blessed with place-kickers as this one, Young's precision kicking with his left foot could scarcely be bettered.

FRONT ROW

Jack Suddes (Hooker). An outstanding hooker among a bevy of outstanding Tynedale hookers, including the likes of Jimmy Newlands, Gordon Richardson ("Drew's son") and Rob Cunningham — county players all. But Suddes was without peer.

Bill Dinning (Loose Head Prop). A hard, strong, uncompromising forward, he gained a

record number of Northumberland caps after the war and played for Northumberland and Durham against Australia in 1946. A splendid scrummager, equally at home in the front or second row, he was typical of a long line of Tynedale forwards, making up for anything they may have lacked in inches by strength, hard graft and mobility about the field.

Walter Rutherford (Tight Head Prop). This was the position which the two "selectors" found most difficult of all to fill, simply because of an embarrassment of riches. With the young Enevoldsons still to reach full maturity as prop forwards, the choice eventually narrowed itself down to Tom Jones, Dennis McMeekin and Walter Rutherford. In the end, the choice fell on Walter Rutherford, whose entire playing career was spent with Tynedale and Northumberland. He was, like his fellow prop, a hard, mobile forward in the typical Tynedale mould — and, as someone put it, "no gentleman" if ever he felt himself or a team-mate put upon by the opposition.

SECOND ROW

Rex Graham. A big man of 6ft.-plus and weighing around 15 stones, Rex Graham was, in the words of "Drew" Richardson, "a solid lad." Although he had one leg shorter than the other as the result of a boyhood accident, it seemed to have little effect on him, and he was quite outstanding line-out forward in the four cup-winning sides of the mid-'Thirties. He played for Northumberland in 1936.

Jimmy McComb. Another six-footer of 14 stones, he captained Tynedale in the two seasons from 1929 to 1931 and played alongside Graham in the cup-winning side of 1933. A really solid scrummager and hard "tearaway" forward.

BACK ROW

David Hodgson (Wing-Forward). Not just the first choice for the back row, but for the side as a whole. Captain of Tynedale throughout the four-season cup run in the 'Thirties, and a natural leader of men, Hodgson was also a player whose individual talents earned him county honours with Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland. A big, rawboned forward standing over 6ft. 2ins, he was a fine dribbler of the ball and, like all the greatest wing-forwards, always to be found wherever the ball was, scoring a hatful of tries coming up on the inside of his fly-half, Angus Brogdon.

Will Rutherford (Wing-Forward). Yet another "natural", and arguably one of the great Tynedale forwards of all time. A fast, robust, hard-tackling player and a fine pack leader, he earned an international trial and captained Tynedale to their 1948 Senior Cup victory over Northern. "He could go along a three-quarter line and knock them all down," declares Wilf Young.

John Scott (No. 8). The other rather unexpected choice in the side, with any number of accomplished back row men to be considered, including the modern trio of Roger Dinning, Justin Smart and Wallace Cousin, and four former club captains in John Cousin, the versatile Brian Hunter and Doug Hamilton, and the even more versatile Alan Charlton, who played everywhere from hooker to full-back. But Scott, they agreed, was the man for the job: a specialist No. 8, a great reader of the game, a forthright tackler and a hard, technically sound forward with the will-to-win.

The captain? Hodgson, of course, with his able lieutenant from the 'Thirties, Angus Brogdon, just stealing the vote as vice-captain ahead of five other distinguished club captains.

"What a side", chorused Wilf Young and "Drew" Richardson. And who would argue with them?

A Team to Remember (2)

Selected by Michael Sharman

Team-picking is irresistible. Team-picking from a playing membership stretching back one hundred years is impossible.

Yet, after reading and researching the deeds of so many Tynedale men, it is a temptation not to be denied. So here then is a Tynedale team made up of those who, in their day, seem to me to have been players of quite outstanding calibre.

TYNEDALE SELECT XV, 1876-1976

Teddy Blench; Harry Robb, Tommy Bland, Willie Robb, Tom Robson, sen; Angus Brogdon, Ben Plummer; Bill Dinning, Jack Suddes, Walter Rutherford; Arthur Emerson, Armorer Patterson; David Hodgson, Davie Forster, Will Rutherford.

In choosing the team, I have deliberately discounted present-day players, who have yet to stand the test of history, and a number of other players, including the British Isles half-back Noel Humphreys and the England internationals Fred Alderson and Bill Nanson, on the grounds that their stay with Tynedale was but brief and their careers mainly developed with other clubs.

Nevertheless, even when confining the choice to those who were Tynedale men through and through, one is conscious of having had to pass over the likes of John Dodd, Tom Elliot, William Pattinson, Charlie Harrison and "Casey" Baty in the 'Eighties and 'Nineties, Jack Baty, Sep. Emerson, Will Short, Bob Armstrong and Jack Scott prior to the Great War, Jimmy Thompson, J. G. Holmes, Geoff Nicholson and Basil Little between the wars, and Ken Hall and Alan Charlton, among others, since the Second World War ended.

Yes, it really was an impossible task after all.

One Man's Rugby : A President's View

By Mr. Stuart Enevoldson

Rugby in my early days, I suppose, meant occasional visits to watch Hull and East Riding and, at the risk of being branded a heretic, not inconsiderable support for the other handling code.

Education at a soccer school ensured that rugby was a "non-starter," as Colts rugby was still some thirty years away. So all that I really knew about Rugby Union was that two brothers indulged in the pastime, from which they never seemed to return before Sunday morning. Furthermore, the bedroom window was always wide open on the Sunday, even in the middle of winter, whilst they always appeared to return with anybody's kit but their own.

My own introduction to the playing side of the noble game took place in wartime whilst at University. I took to it like the proverbial duck to water. Admittedly, my ears were starting to dry out but progress in the rituals of the game was somewhat delayed by a nation-wide shortage of beer !

The opposition in those days was usually provided by Services XVs, consisting of two officers (they had played at school), the senior of whom was the skipper, four or five N.C.Os, who knew which side their bread was buttered on, and the remainder poor swaddies. At least four of these unfortunates had probably never even heard of the game but, through the

Schoolboy internationals Peter and Nigel Enevoldson.



misfortune of being in the wrong place at the wrong time (i.e. departure from base), had been conscripted to make up the numbers.

Such games were hilarious. The two officers always lost but, in the true British Army tradition of getting things right in the long run, the lesson that two cannot defeat twenty-eight eventually caught on. Thereafter the two officers took up the wing three-quarter positions.

Looking back, it was a great introduction to rugby. The wild nights we enjoyed (at least until the beer ran out) in numerous Corporals' messes after the obligatory tea of beans and chips will never be forgotten.

Rugby in the early years after the war reflected much of this wartime spirit and comradeship. The game, by present-day standards, was slow, disorganised and truly played off the tops of players' heads. But those whose playing careers spanned these years enjoyed every minute of it. Which was just as well, because the same was seldom true for the spectators !

It was in the late 'Fifties that rugby's administrators made the first of the major law changes which have revolutionised the game, namely the playing of the ball after the tackle. In due course, modifications to the offside law around the scrum and line-out and the so-called Australian dispensation law affecting kicking to touch, have produced a game which, providing all players are competent and equally involved, and providing over-coaching and over-caution do not make it too stereotyped, must be the nearest thing to the ultimate in team games.

Finally, may I recommend the stimulation of interest in the game given by two rugby-playing sons, even at the expense of over 13,000 miles' motoring to follow their progress in the days of their success. And, in paying tribute to the indulgence shown by my better half as I have happily revelled in all that the rugby game has to offer, I continue to wonder, like countless thousands of rugby men before me, how she ever put up with it.

As Tynedale Rugby Football Club enters its second century in impressive new surroundings, it may look to its menfolk for its players and administrators, and to the lads who will follow them on. But, without the ladies, it might as well shut its doors tomorrow.

S. T. Enevoldson, President, Tynedale Rugby Football Club, 1976-77.

" We have only to add on our own part that we wish the undertaking long life and prosperity, and we have a pleasant anticipation of seeing many a well contested game crowned by the victory of the 'eximii juvenes' of Hexham."

(From the Hexham Courant" of 7th October, 1876, commenting on the inaugural meeting which led to the formation of Tynedale Football Club four days later).

A CENTENARY HISTORY

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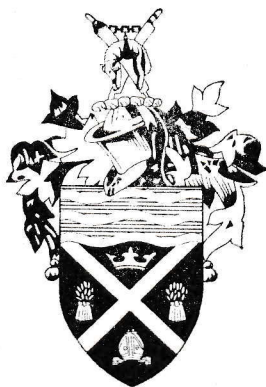
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