



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PAPER NO. 123

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DATE: 28 November 2005

**ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER JACKSON (1909-1933)  
AUSTRALIAN CRICKETER**

The story of Archie Jackson is one of the most tragic in the annals of Australian sporting history.

Archie Jackson was born on 5 September 1909 at the Scottish town of Rutherglen in the County of Lanark, a few kilometres south-east of Glasgow.

He arrived in Sydney with his parents on 1 August 1913.

The Jacksons lived in a terrace-house at Balmain and Archie attended Birchgrove Public and Rozelle Junior Technical Schools.

Archie loved sport and he excelled at soccer and cricket and represented the Public Schools' Amateur Athletic Association at both.

Birchgrove Oval, bordering Snails Bay, was near the Jackson home and Archie and his mates, especially Bill Hunt, sometimes gate-crashed the oval but, more often played cricket on the streets, avoiding the horse-drawn traffic and the occasional motor vehicle. Drains were blocked to prevent the loss of precious balls and, when it rained, the streets were flooded much to the annoyance of neighbours and the Balmain Municipal Council.

Jackson and Bill Hunt, using a home-made roller, had prepared a non-too-professional half-length turf pitch, with a mulberry tree behind the stumps, in a local park.

Bill Hunt was a left-arm medium-paced off-spinner and he would tirelessly bowl to his mate for hours. Former Australian Captain, Bro. Monty Noble watched the lads and called out "if you keep practicing the way you are, one day, you may play for Australia."

Years later, he saw Archie Jackson open the innings for Australia against England and Bill Hunt bowl against South Africa.

The practices continued on the sometimes damp and sticky pitch until Bill said "better give it away, Archie, you're getting too knocked about." Jackson: "No Bill, I'll tell you when I've had enough!"

Jackson was one of the few players to practice on untrue sticky wickets.

In the 1923-24 season, Jackson, in short trousers and sandshoes, played in the lower-grade sides of the Balmain Cricket Club.

Next season, fitted out by Dr. H.V. Evatt, he was promoted to first grade.

He had begun work as a messenger boy in 1924 and Bro. Arthur Mailey helped to polish his natural batting style along the lines of Bro. Alan Kippax and the legendary Victor Trumper.

In the 1926-27 season, Jackson's 879 runs at an average of 87.9 was a Balmain Club record.

New South Wales was rebuilding its Sheffield Shield team as a result of the retirement of a number of senior players and, before the start of the 1926-27 season, a trial match of 'Possibles' versus 'Probables' was held. The 'Boy from Balmain' and the young Don Bradman, the 'Boy from Bowral' participated.

Jackson, just 17, was chosen to play for New South Wales but Bradman, with whom he later developed a close friendship, was not selected.

In December 1927, Bradman, the twelfth man, played his first Sheffield Shield match at Adelaide for New South Wales versus South Australia because Archie Jackson had a boil on his knee.

Playing against Queensland, Jackson scored 5 and 86 run out, and left no doubt as to his ability.

Meanwhile, his cricket was helped by employment at Bro. Alan Kippax's sports store.

Later, in 1926-27, he scored his maiden first-class century against Queensland. Next season, he scored a century in each innings against South Australia.

In the 1928-29 season, Jackson managed just under 61 in the Sheffield Shield competition and, the following year, in partnership with his mentor and employer, he and Alan Kippax scored 221 for New South Wales against South Australia.

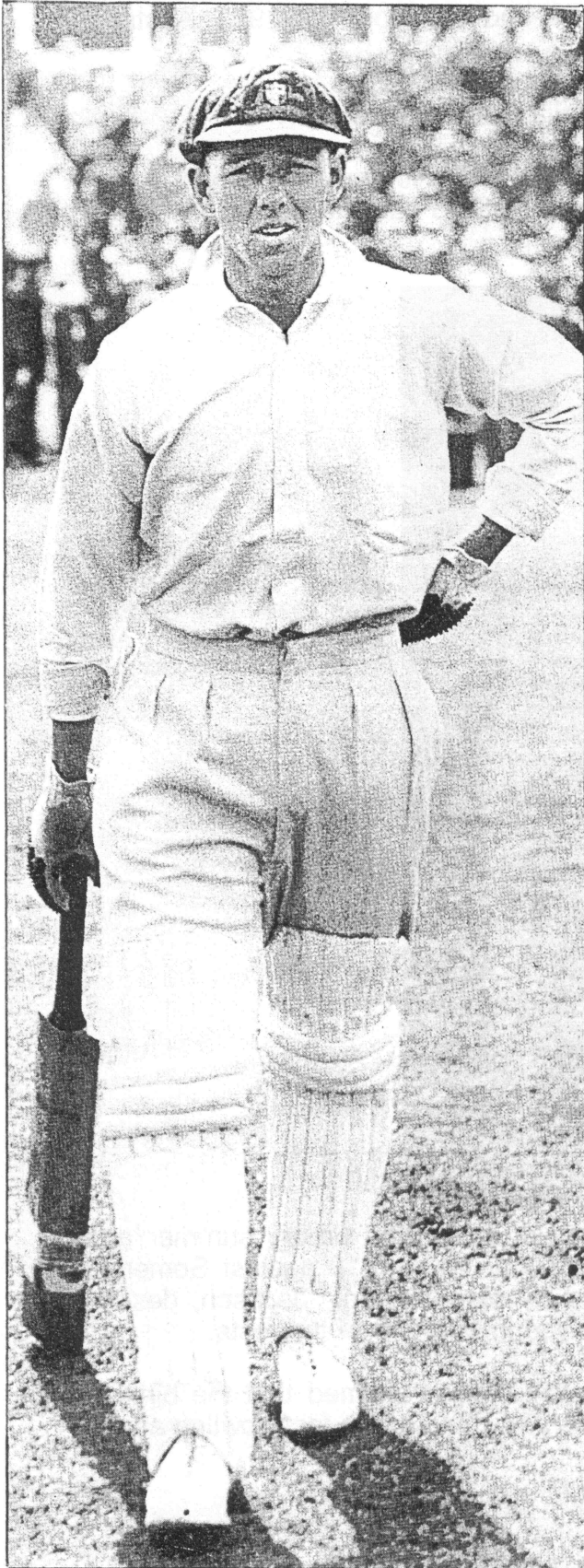
In October 1927, the New Zealand team, returning from England, played New South Wales at Sydney. Kippax and Jackson made 176, the first 100 coming in 36 minutes. Jackson scored 104.

The Australian Board of Control sent a team to New Zealand in 1927-28 captained by Victor Richardson. The team included Jackson but Bradman missed selection. Jackson made 474 runs on the tour.

An England team toured Australia in the 1928-29 season and Don Bradman was selected to play in the first test at Brisbane. Jackson was not selected, even though he had scored 182 in a trial match.

Jackson was eventually chosen to play in his first test match, the fourth test against England at Adelaide Oval beginning on 1 February 1929.

Described as fair complexioned and good looking, gentle and modest, he was a Methodist and did not drink or smoke.



*The brilliant – and tragic – Archie Jackson, whom some believe was at least the equal of 'The Don'*

This young man of medium height and slender physique at just 19 years and 149 days old, the eighth youngest player to represent Australia, went out with Bill Woodful to open the innings for Australia.

There was some doubt Australia's captain, Jack Ryder was urged not to use Jackson as an opening batsman. He asked the New South Wales captain, Alan Kippax, for his opinion. Kippax said: "I think he expects it."

The innings began badly. Woodful scored 1, Hendry 2 and Kippax 3 and the score stood at 3 for 19.

The great England Bowler, Bro. Maurice Tate, partnered by Harold Larwood, was having a good day until Jackson leg glanced a ball so late that Tate appealed for leg-before-wicket. By the time umpire, Bro. George Hele called "not out", the ball had reached the fine leg fence, a long boundary at the Adelaide Oval with no ropes to reduce the size of the field.

"Did he glance that, George?" asked Tate. "Yes". "Then the kid'll get a hundred."

The kid did get a hundred on debut.

He was four runs short of his century before lunch and a new ball was available.

As the Australians returned to the field, his partner, Don Bradman said: "Take your time and you'll get your century in your first test innings."

Jackson made no reply.

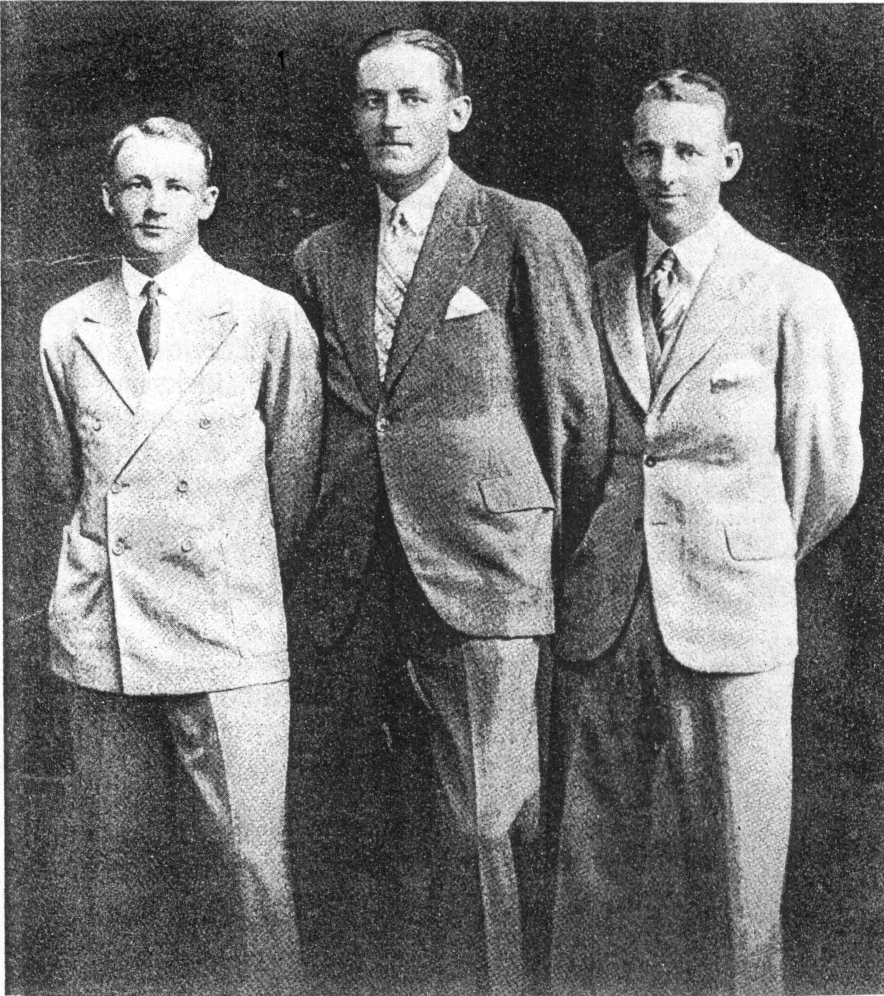
Larwood took the new ball and delivered a lightning-fast ball just short of a length and outside the off stump. The next those present saw of it was as it rebounded twenty or so yards from the fence at the short boundary behind point.

He scored a chanceless 164 in 250 minutes.

Australia scored 369 with Tate taking 4 for 77 and Larwood 1 for 92. Australia eventually lost the match by 12 runs.

In the 5th test, he scored 30 and 46 and Australia lost the series 4-1.

He was the toast of Australia and a star of Anthony Hordern and Sons' sports department. Testimonials enabled him to buy a DeSoto car and helped his family to move to a cottage in up-market Drummoyne.



The 'Three Musketeers' of cricket, photographed in about 1929. Don Bradman (left) poses with Alan Fairfax and Archie Jackson.

Next came the 1930 tour of England. It was a damp and dreary summer and Jackson's health and form began to deteriorate. He made 118 against Somerset and Bradman, who made 117, was barracked for slow batting. Jackson, despite poor form made 1097 runs for the tour. He played in only two of the tests.

During the fifth test at Kennington Oval, Harold Larwood claimed that the birth of leg-theory or bodyline was the result of Bradman flinching at his fast bowling aimed at his body.

He wrote:

My great friend Archie Jackson stood up to me, getting pinked once or twice in the process and he never flinched. With Bradman it was different.

Another journalist, however, wrote:

The dangerous wicket helped the bowlers who made the ball fly, Larwood being particularly vicious. Frequently the lads, after being hit, writhed in pain but, bruised and battered from head to toe, they carried on.



Don Bradman (right) and Archie Jackson leave the pavilion for their great stand in the fifth Test, at the Oval, in August 1930. It was during this Test that Larwood bowled short bumping balls which hit Jackson and Bradman many times, in a bowling performance later seen as a precursor of bodyline. Arthur Mailey wrote: 'Frequently the young men, after being hit, writhed in pain, but, bruised and battered from head to toe, they carried on.' He said that Bradman's innings under these conditions proved he was 'the greatest batsman of all time'

Jackson made 73 in a fourth wicket stand of 243 with Bradman who eventually scored 232. Australia won the match and the series with Larwood taking 4 wickets for the series at an average of 73.0 runs apiece.

Jackson, in ill health, returned to Sydney ahead of the rest of the team, unwelcomed and unrecognised.

He moved to Brisbane, hoping that the warmer weather might improve his health. He took a job as assistant coach and played some cricket but he died from tuberculosis on 16 February 1933 at the Brisbane suburb of Clayfield. He was just 23 years and five months old.

Archie Jackson played in 8 tests for Australia. He scored 474 runs at an average of 47.4. Against England, in six tests, he scored 350 runs at 58.33.

In 107 first class innings, he scored 4383 runs at 45.66 including eleven centuries.

His Sheffield Shield average was 54.64.

English cricketer, Trevor Bailey, wrote of Jackson:

Had he not died of tuberculosis within four years [of his test debut] he must have become one of the greatest of all Australian batsmen. There was an elegance about his style which made older spectators think back to Trumper.

There were some who thought him equal of The Don.

Archie Jackson's body was brought to Sydney and interred at the Field of Mars Cemetery. Thousands lined the streets as a two-kilometre cortege passed by.

The pall-bearers were his team mates:

Bill Woodful	Bro. Bert Oldfield
Victor Richardson	Stan McCabe
Bro. Don Bradman	and
Bro. Bill Ponsford	Bro. Alan Kippax

Bro. Sir Donald Bradman correctly assessed the situation when he wrote in 1981 that when the 1930 team to tour England was chosen:

the majority of Australians (in my opinion) believed that the batting star of the team was likely to be Archie Jackson.

The future would decide differently.

Bro. Archibald Alexander Jackson, salesman of 46 Wrights Road Drummoyne, was made a Mason in Lodge Haberfield No. 284, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales on 14 December 1929.

He was passed Fellowcraft on 15 January 1930 and raised a Master Mason on 4 March 1930.

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