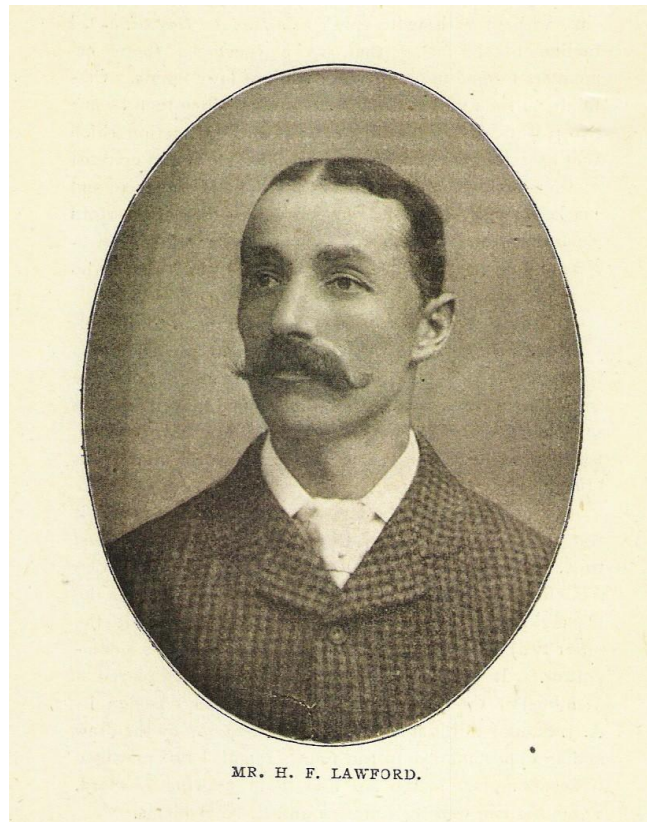


Part I: Herbert Lawford – a biography

Chapter 1: Portrait of a tournament pioneer – Herbert through Victorian eyes

As someone who played continuously through almost the whole first decade of the emerging tournament circuit, and during that time assembled a full collection of the leading men's titles, Herbert inevitably attracted the attention of the early writers on lawn tennis. Nearly all of them watched him in his prime and several played in his tournaments and tasted defeat at his hands. They knew him well and their commentaries and recollections provide the most reliable portrait of the competitor, in company with his own published thoughts on match play and surviving physical images. The purpose of this chapter is to collate the material published by eye witnesses of the nineteenth century, with an exception for Arthur Wallis Myers who was a mere twelve-year-old when Herbert retired from tournament play but early in the twentieth century took the trouble to pick the brain of Herbert's first conqueror in the Wimbledon challenge round (John Hartley)¹ and is too distinguished a historian to be omitted.



1.1 HFL – from “Lawn Tennis Recollections” by Herbert Chipp, 1898, Merritt & Hatcher, p.24 (Reproduced by kind permission of Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum)

Firstly it must be said that there is no known report of Herbert playing “social” or mixed tennis and a popular image of Victorian tennis players should be placed firmly to one side: there were undoubtedly early tennis players who were genial good sports whose only concerns were that the sun should shine, the best man should win and strawberries and

¹ The Complete Lawn Tennis Player, AWM, Methuen, April 1908, 5th edition, p.13 et seq

cream should be served promptly at close of play to the giggles of pretty young things, but Herbert was not numbered amongst them or even distantly related. He had a passion for sport – whether rackets, cricket, soccer, tennis, cycling, shooting or fishing – and his approach was professional. He trained, he practised and he played to win. In his tennis prime, aggression, power tempered by accuracy, fitness and mental strength were the hallmarks of his game and he thrived on competition.

There are remarkably few photographs of Herbert publicly available and two of the best - as indicators of the man and his presence - were taken at the Fitzwilliam club in the 1880's. One in 1883 shows Herbert outdoors in full sports kit at the centre of a large group of players and officials²; the other, taken a year later, is a carefully posed portrait of Herbert, Ernest Renshaw and the Watson sisters in formal dress, with the men in suits and the ladies in heavy dresses, hats and gloves, hands on a flower basket³.



1.2 HFL at the Fitzwilliam tournament, Dublin 1883⁴

In both images Herbert sports a luxuriant handlebar moustache and he has the pride of bearing and smartness of a cavalry officer, though a City man born and bred. His gaze is confident and level, not quite a challenge to all around him but one can visualise the unnerving of milder tennis adversaries as well as errant line-judges. In the picture of the large group he is

² The full group picture is shown on page 14 of JJ Treacy's "Fitzwilliam's First Fifty", 1927. This extract appears as page 4 of Ulick O'Connor's "The Fitzwilliam Story", 1977.

³ The photo appears as Plate 29 on page 44 of "The Seeds of Lawn Tennis", WG Gibbons, 1986.

⁴ This image is shown with the consent of the Archives Committee of Fitzwilliam LTC, 22/1/2020

relaxed, has bared his muscular forearms like a labourer at work and clasps his racket like a garden implement, both hands on the handle and the racket head down. His legs are spread, not crossed, and he is ready for action. The physique is more rugby player than tennis athlete – his weight when match fit was thirteen and a half stone⁵ - and one can well understand Herbert Chipp's comment in his memoirs that his tennis style was "somewhat laboured and ungainly, but of wonderful effectiveness and power"⁶.

Harry Scrivener, Percy French, Herbert Chipp

The photographs hint at a mild peacock tendency. He looks at home in formal dress and his tennis outfit is well tailored and displays an attention to detail: hooped cap matching striped shirt, with buttons down the front and elegant tailored seams at the shoulder - not the run of the mill white cricket shirt with rolled up sleeves. As a sixteen-year-old, Harry Scrivener - destined to be a Wimbledon competitor, All England Club referee and tennis writer⁷ - saw Herbert in action against Otway Woodhouse in the final of the 1882 London Athletic championship and was so struck by the champion's outfit that years later in his reminiscences he was able to provide a detailed description⁸:

"Some idea of the antiquity of the event may be gathered from a description of the costume in which Lawford was arrayed – the very costume, by the way, in which he is depicted in the daring caricature which adorned the walls of the editorial sanctum at the offices of the old original *Pastime* – my first love in the world of journalism. A striped, or more correctly speaking, ringed, football jersey and white knickers, with stockings and a small pork-pie cap, exactly matching the jersey; such was the guise in which the great man first delighted my gaze.... Woodhouse, on the other hand, was less strikingly attired in the conventional white shirt and white flannel trousers. Convention (I suppose) ultimately proved too strong for Lawford too, for not long after this the jersey was discarded for a shirt, and the ringed stockings were replaced by others of one single, and that a more sober, hue. But the knickers were never given up, and I believe I am right in saying that the man lives not who has seen Lawford play a match in a pair of trousers."

In a later piece⁹ Scrivener gave more details of the evolving costume with mention of white shirt, black stockings and a peaked cap, which seems to be his headgear in the 1883 Fitzwilliam picture. For his final comments on the 1882 match, Scrivener compared the styles of the two players:

"I can remember the grace of Woodhouse's play, abounding in clever saves and delightful 'tricky' shots, and the contrast afforded by the steady pounding of Lawford, plucky, persevering, and in the pink of condition; and that these attributes (as they nearly always can and do) gave him the mastery in the end."¹⁰

⁵ Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic News 23/6/1883 p.381 (height 5ft 11in). *Pastime* of 9/6/1886 p.391 gave his weight as 13st 4lb, height 5ft 11in.

⁶ Lawn Tennis Recollections, 1898, Merritt & Hatcher , p.23

⁷ Times 19/8/1937 p.6 & 22/1/1938 p.4 ; Birmingham Gazette 19/8/1937 p.12 etc . A founder of the LTA in 1888, he was Wimbledon referee from 1905 to 1919 ("50 years of Wimbledon" AWM, 1926, p.42 & 63)

⁸ "Lawn Tennis At Home & Abroad", A. Wallis Myers, George Newnes 1903, Ch. II "Memories of Men and Meetings" by HSS, p.30 & 31

⁹ Obituary for HFL in *Lawn Tennis and Badminton*, 2 May 1925, p.9 HC.

¹⁰ "Lawn Tennis At Home & Abroad", AWM, p.31

Another writer who observed Herbert in action was the popular Irish songwriter and poet Percy French who was a member of the Fitzwilliam and a great enthusiast for the game¹¹ (- probably best known to an old generation of English schoolboys for his ballad of Abdul Abulbul Amir, whose toe was trodden on by Ivan Skavinski Skavar with fatal consequences). French witnessed the Irish Open Championships in Dublin in 1884 and penned a mock epic poem to record the event entitled "Ye Tale of Ye Tournament - 1884". In the challenge round of the men's singles Herbert defeated Ernest Renshaw to end a four year reign by the twins and French's last three verses describe the encounter, depicting Herbert as strong, brave and dominant, the mighty hero:

“And now the lion Lawford, right glorious to behold,
Confronts the great twin brother, who holds the cup of gold.
In vain is Renshaw's service, vain every feint and lure,
For now one stands before him whose strokes are strong and sure.
A man whose mighty muscles stand out like knotted cords:
The terror of the Prince's ground, the terror of the Lords.

As sinks the stricken chimney, when wind-blasts blow from far,
As falls the money market when rumour tells of war,
So sinks, so falls, the Renshaw before the giant stroke
Of him who first has been to burst the great twin brothers' yoke.

And now when poles are planted, and stretched the tennis nets,
When maids are missing volleys, and men are serving 'Lets,'
With awe and admiration still is the story told
How Lawford won the champion belt and challenge cup of gold.”¹²

There is comic licence in abundance, and by all accounts Ernest had danced into the early hours of the morning and was the worse for wear¹³, but the general sentiments are echoed by other tennis commentators and Herbert's physique was there for all to see. The reference to Lords as well as Prince's is a curiosity because Herbert was not likely to have played at the MCC ground with any frequency, if at all.

One of the best known commentators on the early tennis players was Herbert Chipp and his *Lawn Tennis Recollections* published in 1898¹⁴ provides unique insights and a rich source of personal anecdotes. Chipp was much the same age as Herbert and he played the tournament circuit between 1882 and 1892, crossing swords with him at least four times¹⁵ and

¹¹ Ulick O'Connor, 1977, p.13. Berrie O'Neill, author of a 2016 biography of PF and president of the Percy French Society, in an email of 8/7/2019 stated his acceptance of O'Connor's information on PF and added that PF played a major part in the laying of tennis courts in Cavan, and himself taught his daughter to play the game; "he played a very nippy game and had a low cut shot which was not easy to return".

¹² JJ Treacy, 1927, p.17. PF wrote "Fitzwilliam Ballads" for a number of years and in 1886 he describes observing the Renshaws and HFL off the court: "Often to the white pavilion where the sandwiches they munch/Have I seen the lion Lawford slowly sloping to his lunch" (O'Connor 1977, p.13 & 15)

¹³ Badminton Library 1903 edition, CGH p.165; JJ Treacy, 1927, p.15

¹⁴ Merritt & Hatcher, London

¹⁵ LAC semi-final 1883 (Field 16/6/1883 p.810), LAC quarter final 1884 (Field 28/6/1884 p.909), Wimbledon 4th rnd 1884 (Field 12/7/1884 p.51), Hyde Park 3rd rnd 1885 (Field 25/4/1885 p.537). Pastime profile 28/7/1886 p.69 mentioned HC's "first public match" in 1882.

coming off worst on each occasion. A player of the second rank, he was a friend of Harry Scrivener and like him remained in the tennis world as a referee and handicapper after retiring from serious competition. Also like Scrivener, he was linked to the foundation of the Lawn Tennis Association and he became its first honorary secretary in 1888¹⁶; at the time he published his *Recollections* he was a Vice President of the LTA¹⁷. He knew the game and the players and was particularly close to Herbert because he too was of the baseline faith and modelled his game on Herbert's¹⁸, although his approach to volleying stretched to an extreme in that he would only volley when forced to. Scrivener described how when he and his colleagues were spectators, they cheered vociferously whenever Chipp brought off a volley, so rare was the event¹⁹. As a follower of Herbert's, he is respectful and generous in his reflections - bordering on the worshipful - but candid as well.

He paired Herbert with William Renshaw in his third chapter and like French used the word "terror" to describe him – his force of personality was felt across the net.

"In those days Lawford was simply a terror to second-class players; much more so, indeed, than the champion himself. It required a considerable amount of nerve to stand up against this grim, determined player, with his sardonic smile, who neither asked for nor gave quarter, whose arm never seemed to tire and whose attack was crushing to a degree"²⁰.

Chipp wrote in praise of his mental resilience and match temperament – his ability to adjust his play to a situation and make the most of the resources at his command when his back was to the wall.

"His pluck was proverbial. Who that witnessed it will ever forget his effort in the fifth set against E.W. Lewis in the final of the [*Wimbledon*] 1886 All Comers? The set stood at four-all, and Lawford was utterly "baked". He said to me at this juncture – I was on one of the lines – "I must go for it now, it is my only chance". And go for it he did with a vengeance, Lewis getting only two strokes in the next two games. It was a wonderful effort on the part of a heavy man of thirty-six, who was not in the best of health at the time, and it was made at the close of a hard-fought match against an opponent some sixteen years his junior, whose agility and skill were of the highest order....."²¹
The power of instantly dismissing from his mind the rankling memory of a bad or unlucky stroke – a very great quality indeed, and one to which much of his success must undoubtedly be attributed – was possessed in an eminent degree by this player....."²²
He, in common, indeed, with most players of the front rank, accepted his defeats as a good sportsman should, neither seeking to discount the merit of his opponent's victory, nor making excuses for himself. So absolute was his self-command that, however hard the luck, not the smallest of "swear-words" was ever heard to escape his lips."²³

¹⁶ Field 28/4/1888 p.589

¹⁷ Field 3/7/1897 p.21, Morning Post 12/7/1898 p.3, Queen 16/7/1898 p.124, Leeds Mercury 19/7/1898 p.7

¹⁸ Pastime profile 28/7/1886 p.69

¹⁹ "LT at Home & Abroad", AWM 1903, p.40

²⁰ *Recollections* p.23

²¹ *Recollections* p.27

²² *Recollections* p.28

²³ *Recollections* p.27 & 28

Herbert was certainly blessed with exceptional self-control but it is hard to believe that some colourful words were not emitted at moments of extreme stress – such as when in 1881 he was foot-faulted for the eleventh time in the final of the all-comers at the Fitzwilliam (nothing by halves – and he still won the match)²⁴.

Chipp's account of the aftermath of his first match with Herbert highlights the winner's honesty of approach, although some might feel there was a want of sensitivity. At the London Athletic Club tournament of 1883 Chipp ran up against Herbert in the semi-final and was despatched in straight sets for the meagre haul of just four games²⁵. Shell-shocked and breathless after his defeat Chipp was recovering off court with a drink when Lubbock, another semi-finalist, joined them and made to offer him some words of consolation.

“...Lubbock...said in his kindly way something complimentary to me – that with more experience I ought to play a good game, or words to that effect, appealing to Lawford whether he also did not think so. I remember, too, that apparently in the latter's opinion (Lawford was always candid), Lubbock took a much too sanguine view of my capabilities, and that I possessed “only one stroke”. At the moment I was quite unconscious of possessing any at all, but I mentally resolved that I would endeavour to add a second, if possible, by the time we met again.”²⁶

Subsequently Chipp's standard of play did improve and at London Athletic Herbert may well have been teasing as within a year he was seeking him out for practice games. Chipp describes their first practice game and draws attention to Herbert's natural, sometimes excessive, self-confidence. Chipp, it should be said, was an artist by profession²⁷ and so not restricted by office hours.

“Well do I remember ‘Tom’ calling at my house one evening in March 1884 with a message from Lawford, who would like to have a game with me the next morning, if I could be ready to play at 8.45. I was younger and keener then than now, and for the chance of a game with one of the ‘cracks’ I would willingly have got up at daybreak. Turning into the Portsdown Road the next morning in excellent time, there was Lawford striding along in front of me at the rate of six miles an hour. We duly changed and stepped into the court. It was the first time we had met since.... [*our London Athletic semi-final*] but I believe he was serenely unconscious of ever having exchanged a return or word with me. He asked me to knock over a ball to him. I did so as well as I could. He made no attempt to return it, but remarked that it was a ‘very good length’. At his request I knocked over another, and again the same verdict fell from his lips. He then assessed the odds at 15. The result – four sets to one in my favour – showed that his handicapping powers were somewhat at fault.”²⁸

For later games, Herbert reduced the handicap and after a close match in the covered court championships in 1885²⁹, he played level with him.

²⁴ JJ Treacy, 1927, p.13 & Field 28/5/1881 p.732 . The Field correspondent observed that “At one part of the match it appeared as if Mr Lawford would go to pieces as the umpires faulted him continually for having his foot in the air before the ball had left his racquet....”

²⁵ Field 16/6/1883 p.810 – score 6-0, 6-2, 6-2.

²⁶ Recollections p.23 & 25

²⁷ Pastime profile 28/7/1886, census 1891 (Edmund HO Chipp) etc.

²⁸ Recollections p.25 & 26

²⁹ Field 25/4/1885 p.537

Chipp mentions one specific incidence of Herbert gently mocking an opponent at the end of a game but he tells the story with approval as he felt that his target received his just deserts. The adversary in question was one Ernest George Meers, a newcomer to the major tournaments but of a similar age to Herbert, and Chipp felt that he lacked respect and was unpleasant of character: he was “essentially aggressive, not to say combative, in all that he does” and in Chipp’s view if left in isolation on a desert island would have immediately picked a fight with his own shadow³⁰. Meers chose the Hyde Park covered court championships in 1885 for his first step into the big league and after a bye in the first round came up against Herbert. He arrived on court thinking he could win and his arrogance must have communicated itself to his opponent. Meers shot away from the blocks and attacked furiously, aiming to finish off Herbert in straight sets. Even as the score mounted against him, and it began to dawn on him that victory might prove elusive, he maintained a frenzied pace, sprinting about the court, leaping and bounding in frantic efforts to stay in the rallies³¹:

“Lawford, smiling grimly, played with him as a cat does with a mouse, allowed him three games in each of the first two sets, and then probably thought it was high time to give the stranger a taste of quality. This he did to the tune of a love set, and as Meers vanished in a very drizzle-tailed condition into the recesses of the dressing-room it must have been intensely gratifying to him to hear his opponent’s loud call to C.H.A. Ross to come and give him a game in order that he might ‘get warm’.”

Herbert’s treatment left Meers with a thirst for revenge and for years afterwards he apparently entered any tournament he thought Herbert might patronise with a view to levelling the score (- scalping Lawford in single combat, as Chipp put it)³². This would have involved a small enough number of tournaments but Meers failed in his endeavour and there was no rematch. Chipp reports that on one occasion he travelled to Dublin at considerable personal inconvenience, believing that his adversary would at last be delivered into his hands, only to be thwarted yet again when Herbert’s business commitments prevented his attendance. Meers was an obsessive but in fairness to him it should be said that all were not as critical of him as Chipp and Harry Scrivener described him in his memoirs more favourably as a cultured man - a master of the organ, a keen chess player and a student of the works of Dickens³³.

Herbert Wilberforce, Arthur Wallis Myers

A tennis generation on from Herbert Chipp was a young lawyer by the name of Herbert Wilberforce, a great-grandson of the emancipator of slaves³⁴. Wilberforce took up tennis while still at school and played his first open tournaments in 1882 aged just eighteen. He encountered Herbert immediately, losing to him in the Prince’s handicap³⁵, and then he met him again in the third round of the 1882 All England championships; here he lost in straight sets but stretched Herbert to a creditable 6-5, 6-5 in the last two sets³⁶. His was a precocious talent, which Herbert recognised by choosing him as his doubles partner in the inaugural Wimbledon doubles of 1884³⁷ (but showed no mercy in the singles event that year,

³⁰ Recollections p.56

³¹ Recollections p.58

³² Recollections p.58

³³ “Memories of Men and Meetings”, p.76 to 78. See also obituary in Times 31/8/1928 p.14 etc

³⁴ Times obituary for HWWW 29/3/1941 p.7

³⁵ Profile in Pastime 25/8/1886, edition 170

³⁶ Field 15/7/1882 p.92 & 93 & AELTC Championships database 23/4/1998 for HFL

³⁷ Field 19/7/1884 p.102. HFL & HWWW won the third set but succumbed in the fourth.

despatching him once more in straight sets³⁸). In due course Wilberforce established himself amongst the leading players and with Patrick Bowes Lyon as his partner he reached the finals of the Wimbledon doubles in 1886 and then won the doubles in 1887³⁹. He became secretary of the All England Club in 1888⁴⁰, succeeding Julian Marshall, and in this role he worked alongside Herbert on the management committee. In 1924, when president of the All England Club, he wrote a chapter on the history of the club for George Hillyard's "Forty Years of First Class Lawn Tennis" and he dipped into the committee minutes for vignettes from the Marshall years. In 1882 a new committee of lawn-tennis players was elected⁴¹.

"Among the new committee appeared H.F. Lawford, whose common sense, massive as his style of play, long assisted that body. My own most vivid recollection of that year is the devastating defeat he inflicted on me at my first timid visit to Wimbledon".

Wilberforce included two other references to Herbert, both in humorous vein and suggestive of provocative intent:

"1885. H.F. Lawford's second attempt to set up a Veteran's Championship also failed....."

"1886. Shortly after my election to the club (though unconnected with it) a serious incident occurred. H. Chipp, an industrious and forcible backline player, observed the presence of a daisy on the centre court, and in consequence (I assume) missed an otherwise certain victory. He readily obtained the sympathy of H.F. Lawford, and an incautious expression by that member of the committee found its way into print, thereby evoking the majestic wrath of the secretary. But no daisy was ever seen afterwards within the sacred area."⁴²

The secretary in those days was the dictatorial Julian Marshall ("The AELTC ruled lawn tennis and he ruled the club", to quote Scrivener⁴³) and it sounds very much as though the daisy report was a deliberate wind up. It is hard to understand why, in one of his prime years, Herbert should have pressed for a veterans' event, but it may not have been Marshall who killed off the idea – the club secretary was then nearly fifty and had competed in the Cheltenham veteran's event of 1883, losing in the second round⁴⁴. It may of course have been Herbert's way of stirring the pot by reminding Marshall of his lengthening years.

Wilberforce had a fine academic brain and took a first in his legal studies while a scholar at Downing College, Cambridge⁴⁵. Sports editors took note and turned to him as early as his mid-twenties so that in 1889 he was commissioned to write the All-England series book "Lawn Tennis"⁴⁶ for publishers George Bell, and immediately followed this by contributing the section on men's doubles to the 1890 Badminton Library volume on lawn tennis⁴⁷. *Lawn*

³⁸ Field 12/7/1884 p.50 & AELTC Championships database 23/4/1998 for HFL. HWWW also lost to HFL in the Irish Championships of 1888 (Field 26/5/1888 p.746)

³⁹ "Fifty Years of Wimbledon", AWM, Field 1926, p.81

⁴⁰ "Wimbledon 1869 – 1921, The Changing Face of Worple Road", Alan Little 2003, p.32

⁴¹ Chapter II "The Story of the All England Club", p.35 (GWH's "Forty Years of First Class Lawn Tennis", Williams & Norgate 1924)

⁴² Chapter II "The Story of the All England Club", p.36 to 38

⁴³ "The Tennis Players", Tom Todd, Vallancey 1979, p.123

⁴⁴ Cheltenham Looker-on 9/6/1883 p.363 & Field 9/6/1883 p.766 . The entry was just 9 veterans.

⁴⁵ HWWW Times obituary 29/3/1941 p.7 & Cambridge Alumni 2019 ACU

⁴⁶ "Lawn Tennis", by HWW Wilberforce, George Bell & Sons, 1901 (edition of 1889, revised)

⁴⁷ Badminton Library, 1903 edition, Lawn Tennis p.256

Tennis deals with the history of the game only in summary but in his third chapter Wilberforce outlines the different approaches of Lawford and Renshaw and describes how their interaction affected the development of the stroke play and tactics of the tournament game in the early 1880's⁴⁸:

“*[The year 1880]* was a memorable one in the annals of lawn tennis. It marks the adoption of the volley as a winning stroke – first, I think by Mr Woodhouse, and then by the Messrs. Renshaw, with whose name that stroke has been chiefly and deservedly associated: and it also marks the beginning of that rivalry between the style of the Messrs. Renshaw on the one hand and that of Mr Lawford on the other, the result of which can hardly yet be estimated.

The essential difference between these styles may be summed up in this way: there is always a spot in the court where a player is most at ease; a point from which he thinks he can best attack and also defend; a sort of stronghold to which he invariably returns as soon as possible after having for the moment been compelled to leave it. The spot selected by Mr Renshaw was about a foot behind the service-line, that chosen by Mr Lawford about the base line.

It follows that one style was formed principally on volleying and the other on back play, and from that time lawn-tennis players were divided, broadly speaking, into two classes, one adopting one style and the other the other; and it became a matter of controversy as to which style was the winning one.

For some little time it seemed as if volleying from the service-line would be the game of the future. The height of the net at the posts (4ft) prevented the base-line player from making anything like a certainty of passing the volleyer along the side lines: he was obliged to hit so gently that the chances were greatly in favour of the volleyer reaching and returning the stroke. If no change had been made in the laws of the game, it appears probable that hard back play would have gone out entirely; and I for one think that the game would have lost immensely in interest and variety.”

In May 1882 the MCC and All England Club took action, resolving that the net should be lowered at the posts to 3ft 6in⁴⁹, and Wilberforce attributed the change principally to Herbert's influence⁵⁰. Charles Heathcote, author of the Lawn Tennis section of the 1890 Badminton Library volume, supported this view, observing: “One player, and one alone of first-class position, had hitherto resisted the contagion of the volley. Mr Lawford had played consistently and with ability from the back of the court, but he had been beaten; and it seemed certain that under the existing conditions the volley must be taken to have a definite and constant superiority”⁵¹.

Wilberforce judged that the change was effective and created a better balance between the different styles of play, paving the way for the all-court game:

⁴⁸ “Lawn Tennis” by HWWW, p.9 & 10

⁴⁹ Badminton 1903, Lawn Tennis, C.G. Heathcote, p.159

⁵⁰ “Lawn Tennis” by HWWW, 1901 p.5: “The only amendment which demands any notice is the lowering of the net at the posts, in 1883, to 3ft 6in – a thing which greatly changed and, I believe it is generally admitted, improved the style of play. For this we have mainly to thank Mr H.F. Lawford” [*the year should be 1882*].

⁵¹ Badminton 1903, CGH p.159

“The effect of this alteration became manifest in a very brief space, and it shortly was patent to everyone that volleying from the service-line could not by itself stand against good back play. The proof was supplied by the succession of victories obtained by Mr Lawford over Mr Ernest Renshaw in the first rank of players, and by the supremacy of Mr Grinstead in the second class.

That Mr William Renshaw maintained as he did his position [*as world champion*] is owing to his appreciation of the changed conditions; he succeeded in acquiring a stroke off the ground, hardly if at all surpassed by any one, which in combination with his, at that time, unrivalled powers of volleying made him the finest all-round player we are likely to see for some time to come.”⁵²

It would have taken time for the lowering of the net to feed through to full effect – Herbert’s power game took time to evolve – and although Herbert was a rising force in 1883, it was not until 1884 that he turned the tables on Ernest⁵³. William borrowed from the baseline game, Herbert added volleying as a “finisher” of rallies to his repertoire, and the gap between the two styles narrowed. F.R. Burrow, a witness to the Wimbledon challenge round of 1886, noted with surprise that “normal” roles were reversed in this encounter and Herbert volleyed more than William⁵⁴. Similarly when Herbert played Ernest in the final of the All Comers in 1887, *Pastime* reported that “both played mostly from the base-line, but neither hesitated to follow up a good return on the chance of finishing the rally with a smash”⁵⁵. The cult of the volley had been suppressed, at least for the rest of the century.

The authorities made their decision to lower the net on 12th May 1882⁵⁶ and the Irish Championships commenced in Dublin ten days later with the change in force⁵⁷. The Freeman’s Journal of Dublin took a dim view of what they considered to be high-handed action from London and advocated Home Rule – surely the Irish clubs were capable of managing their own nets⁵⁸. That two English clubs should take it upon themselves to alter the rules in mid-season without consultation was “worse than objectionable”; “in common self-respect the Irish clubs should stop this sort of thing”. At the time Freeman’s circulated its views Herbert was resident in his Irish hotel – the Royal Marine in Kingstown – and presumably he read the newspaper over breakfast on the day of its issue as he put pen to paper that morning to set the record straight⁵⁹. His response was printed the following day along with the Fitzwilliam results⁶⁰.

The Journal’s reporter was misinformed as the change to the height of the net was mooted at the beginning of May and the leading players, such as the Renshaws, Hartley, Tulloch and Richardson were consulted at once, and a letter was sent to Mr Vere Goold of the Fitzwilliam to ask his opinion, as he was the best known of the Irish players.

“He, like the rest, wrote saying the game would be improved by the alteration whereupon the All England and Marylebone committees made the rule that the net should be three

⁵² “Lawn Tennis” by HWWW, 1901 p.10 & 11

⁵³ HFL won the All Comers at Wimbledon for 4 years from 1884 to 1887 and was champion of Ireland for 3 years from 1884 to 1886 – see Appendix 1 to Chapter 4 below

⁵⁴ FR Burrow “Last Eights at Wimbledon, 1877 - 1926” on 1886. Burrow succeeded Scrivener as All England Championships referee in 1919 (50 Years of Wimbledon, AWM 1926, p.63)

⁵⁵ Pastime 13 July 1887 p.31 col’n 2 HC

⁵⁶ Badminton 1903, p.159 & Field 20/5/1882 p.678

⁵⁷ Field 6/5/1882 front page & Freeman’s Journal 23/5/1883 p.7

⁵⁸ Freeman’s Jnl 23/5/1882 p.7

⁵⁹ Freeman’s Jnl 24/5/1882 p.7

⁶⁰ Freeman’s Jnl 24/5/1882 p.7

feet six inches at the posts and three feet in the centre.....In this action of the clubs I fail to see the ‘serious source of complaint’ to which you refer, nor why it should be stigmatised as ‘worse than objectionable’. They make rules to improve the game, such rules being for their own use, but of course any clubs that choose to adopt these rules can do so or can have a code of their own and play over a five feet net without fearing any interference from the All England. HF Lawford”

After signing off with this blunt invitation to create a volleying heaven in Dublin, the All England member sallied forth to play his second round match and lost in five sets to Ireland’s Ernest Browne, affording great satisfaction to at least some of the local corps of journalists⁶¹.

Apart from his impact on the stroke-play and tactics of tennis, Herbert also influenced the design of both racket and ball in the opinion of journalist and historian Arthur Wallis Myers. In his volume “The Complete Lawn Tennis Player” Myers recorded his understanding that it was at Herbert’s suggestion that the supplier Tate produced the first “straight” racket because he wanted a more powerful weapon⁶²:

“The racket in use at this period [*to c.1880*] was designed after the fashion of the real tennis racket and was curved in the head, grotesquely curved according to modern ideas.....Mr Lawford, whose forte was a fierce forehand drive from the back of the court, naturally coveted a substantial, broad-faced weapon, and it was at his suggestion, I believe, that the first “straight” racket was made by Mr Tate. The Renshaws, however, remained almost exclusively loyal to a slight curve; and until they retired their faith was reflected in others.”

Myers went on to comment on the development of the ball in the seventies and eighties⁶³:

“As to the ball, the first used was soft and uncovered. It was Mr J.M. Heathcote in the seventies who discovered that balls covered with white flannel were better to control and had a more uniform bound. For some time the seams were stitched outside, and it was again Mr Lawford at whose suggestion the inside seam was adopted. Playing on the old asphalt court at Wimbledon in winter, the ex-champion found that the old ball did not always bound true on the hard surface. The late Mr F.H. Ayres made several experiments with thread, catgut and what not to satisfy Mr Lawford’s requirements. Boxes of sample balls would be sent down to Mr Lawford’s house. Until Mr Ayres finally triumphed, the punctilious champion was wont to send each consignment back with some such laconic message as ‘burn them’. Characteristic of Mr Lawford!”

Ayres was based in the City of London and supplied the balls for Wimbledon and the major tournaments⁶⁴.

Myers was pursuing a career as a journalist by the age of twenty-two in 1900⁶⁵ and by 1903 was well enough established in the sporting world to be chosen by publisher *George Newnes* to edit their lengthy volume “Lawn Tennis at Home and Abroad”, embracing

⁶¹ Freeman’s Jnl 24/5/1882 p.7. Freeman’s published HFL’s letter beside their list of men’s singles results.

⁶² “The Complete Lawn Tennis Player”, AWM, Methuen 1921, 5th edition p.16 (first edition 1908)

⁶³ “The Complete LTP”, AWM 1908, p.16 & 17. For JMH’s role, see Badminton 1903, CGH p.140

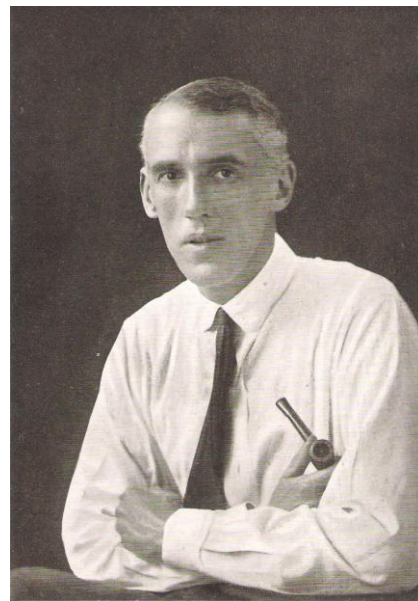
⁶⁴ Badminton 1903, CGH p. 201 – “All good balls now in use are under-sewn – a vast improvement introduced by Mr Ayres....”; on sale by 1885 (Carlisle Patriot 12/6/1885 p.8). Also: Field 21/7/1888 p.XII

⁶⁵ Articles in Pall Mall Gazette 5/9/1900 p.6 & 29/4/1901 p.12 ; census for AWM 1901

contributions from leading players and authorities on the game⁶⁶. He played the tournament circuit himself during the first decade of the twentieth century, without notable success at singles⁶⁷, but if defeat in the early rounds was often his lot, his involvement meant that he was in the swim and rubbing shoulders with stars of the game such as Gore, Wilding, Doherty and Brookes⁶⁸; he became uniquely well qualified to write about the people and events. In 1907 Methuen chose him to write "The Complete Lawn Tennis Player"⁶⁹, covering principally the history of the game, instruction on play for beginners and the more experienced, and guidance on the organisation of tournaments⁷⁰; it was well received and ran to more than four editions. The Daily Telegraph took him on as lawn tennis correspondent in 1908 and he served in the role for thirty years, establishing himself as one of the greatest authorities on the game⁷¹. In 1926 the All England Club recognised his standing by commissioning him to write their Official Jubilee Souvenir book, "Fifty Years of Wimbledon - the Story of the Lawn Tennis Championships"⁷².



1.3 Herbert Wilberforce, 1886⁷³
(Reproduced by kind permission of Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum)



1.4 Arthur Wallis Myers, 1921⁷⁴

⁶⁶ "LT At Home & Abroad", AWM 1903. Chapters from: HS Mahony, GW Hillyard, Holcombe Ward, Harry Scrivener etc

⁶⁷ Times obituary 17/6/1939 p.14 , & "www.tennisarchives.com" 5/8/2019

⁶⁸ Eg: Gore (Field 18/6/1904 p.1021 – lost to him in singles 2nd rd), Wilding (Bystander 11/4/1906 p.92 – partner in doubles), Brookes (Field 3/8/1907 p.229 – lost to him in singles 2nd rd), HL Doherty (Times AWM obituary 1939 – opponent in mixed doubles 1909).

⁶⁹ Nottingham Daily Express 29/7/1907 p.7. The book was published in 1908

⁷⁰ See Preface p.viii etc

⁷¹ Times AWM obituary 17/6/1939 p.14 "There was hardly a centre-court in the world that he had not visited, no coming wonder whom he had not seen at first hand".

⁷² Published by the Field, London 1926

⁷³ Supplement to profile in Pastime 25/8/1886, edition 170

⁷⁴ Frontispiece to "Twenty Years of Lawn Tennis", A Wallis Myers, Methuen 1921

Charles Heathcote, James Dwight and “form”

The Victorians took a keen interest in the “form” or style of players and good form was seen as almost a virtue in itself – in some quarters, winning without style was probably not much better than losing. Many of the writers of the time therefore offered views on Herbert’s style and it has to be said that they were in broad agreement on the subject – his play was marked by its absence.

The meaning of the terms “form” and “style” are quite hard to follow because they change with context and sometimes are used inter-changeably. Herbert himself uses “style” to describe an approach to play (tactics almost) as well as grace or economy in stroke-making. “Form” also seems to be capable of meaning elegance of stroke-making but in addition it may describe adherence to purist (and what to an outsider may seem arbitrary) criteria for play. No doubt the Victorians could make sense of it all but the modern reader can expect to be confused. Writing in 1890 for the Badminton Library on the professional rackets player William Gray, Alfred Lyttelton - amateur real tennis champion⁷⁵ - articulated the purist viewpoint in contrasting Gray with the cricketer W.G. Grace. Gray combined success with gracefulness while Grace achieved success without good “form”, and there is a suggestion that while form is gentlemanly, its absence hints at a deficiency of breeding (written by the son of a lord)⁷⁶:

“[Gray] played rackets just as George Lambert plays tennis – like a gentleman and a sportsman. His object was no doubt, as that of all great players must be, to win. But he was not satisfied with victory unless it was achieved in faultless style. He was wont, for instance, to apologise if he hit the side wall before the front wall, undoubtedly on occasions a telling stroke from a strictly commercial point of view. But such a stroke did not satisfy Gray’s instinctively high aesthetic standard of style.....Though apparently not very strong, and obviously not a heavy man, Gray could hit a racket ball with amazing force. Even in his hard hitting there was an ease and grace delightful to watch, and when he was induced to play a “dropping” game he would seem to caress the ball, taking it very close to the ground and placing it just over the line with an exquisite under-hand curve.....

When the greatest masters of various games are passed in review, none seem to have quite equalled Gray in the combination of absolute success with absolute gracefulness.

If we think of Mr W.G. Grace’s batting we stand amazed at his enormous superiority to all competitors, when supremacy is measured, as it ought to be measured, by results in runs, the good hard standard coin and test of cricketing successfulness. But the methods by which Mr Grace’s runs are made, though sound, serviceable, powerful, and not without the dignity attaching to all very high efficiency, are not ornamental. There is a certain uncouthness and stiffness noticeable in the performance. Thus he who measures skilfulness by success will be abundantly satisfied, but he who, while giving full weight to supreme success, demands also consummate “form”, will find something lacking even

⁷⁵ By 1890 Lyttelton had been amateur real tennis champion 6 times and runner-up 3 times (Badminton 1903 p.103/4). He was a practitioner of good style himself and on his death in 1913 the Times obituarist could declare that he would always be remembered as “the supreme stylist at tennis”; WG Grace characterised AL’s batting style as “most commanding and beautiful” (Sportsman 7/7/1913 p.3). His talents as a sportsman were broad and exceptional. While at Cambridge he represented the university at real tennis, rackets, cricket, football and athletics, and after entering the working world he played cricket and association football for England (Times obituary 5/7/1913 p.10 & Cambridge Alumni 2019). His father was the fourth Lord Lyttelton and Alfred was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge (BA 1879).

⁷⁶ Badminton Library 1903, Rackets, Professional Players, E.O. Pleydell-Bouverie, 1890, p.369 & 370

in the greatest cricketer the world has ever seen. The scorer will be filled with good things, but he whose heart is set upon beauty of style will be sent empty away.”

No one ever accused Herbert of being ornamental, so he must be placed in company with W.G. Grace rather than William Gray, the sort of categorisation that would probably have brought a humble smile to his face. He himself acknowledged his stylistic shortcomings but placed part of the blame – rather implausibly - on taking up lawn tennis at a late age:

“Playing in good form and playing gracefully are one and the same thing; strokes made with grace are made with more ease to the player; hence a good style should be cultivated, as every effort that has been made tells on the player at the end of a match. I speak from experience, as, having begun the game at twenty-six, I was too old ever to hope to play with ease – that is, gracefully – and so only do with an effort many strokes which those who have learnt in their teens do quite readily.”⁷⁷

The Renshaws were famous for their graceful style and this would have contributed to their popularity. Herbert must have suffered years of unflattering comparisons. As William Brownlee generously expressed it in 1889⁷⁸: “He was not what would be called a natural, easy, or graceful player...”; or as Colonel R. Osborn put it more bluntly when comparing Herbert with William Renshaw in 1881⁷⁹: “Lawford, on the other hand, cannot be said to have a style at all; and it is sheer industry and perseverance which have enabled him to reach his present high standard of excellence”. (Brownlee added - in a vein more complimentary than that of Osborn - that Herbert “was tall and powerfully built, never seemed to tire, and cheerfulness and pluck were as characteristic of him then as now”⁸⁰.)

In his section of the Badminton Library volume on lawn tennis, Herbert makes just the above reference to “good form” but the erudite Charles Heathcote provided a definition earlier on:

“...All good players display the characteristic known as ‘form’, and a few words may be devoted to the explanation of what it is. It is the art of so moving, so carrying the body, and so wielding the racket, as to produce the greatest possible effect with the least possible waste of force, or, as Dr Dwight terms it, ‘the least friction’.”⁸¹

In Heathcote’s mind (that of a lawyer) Form was quite distinct from a graceful style and he would have considered that Herbert was well endowed with the former while perhaps lacking the latter which was of little importance. He elaborated on the general subject, listing “the principal essentials to good form”⁸²: the preservation of balance, taking short steps, keeping

⁷⁷ Badminton 1903, “Match-Playing”, HFL p.277

⁷⁸ “Lawn Tennis: Its Rise and Progress”, W. Methven Brownlee, Arrowsmith 1889, p.13/14. Brownlee, a wine merchant by profession, was a keen cricketer, tennis player and writer and is best known as WG Grace’s biographer and friend (obituaries Bristol Times 4/7/1903 p.4 & Aberdeen Daily Jnl 10/7/1903 p.4, censuses 1891 & 1901). He played mainly in the secondary tournaments and does not appear to have ever encountered HFL or the Renshaws in an open single, although he is known to have lost to Ernest in a handicap in 1887 (Field 18/6/1887 p.867 – Welsh championships in Penarth).

⁷⁹ “Lawn Tennis – Its Players and how to Play”, Lt Col. R.D. Osborn, Strahan 1881, p.18

⁸⁰ LT: Its Rise and Progress”, WMB 1889, p.13/14. On page 19 WMB states the view that “[after 1881] the history of first-class Lawn Tennis has really been a succession of fights between [HFL] and the Renshaws”

⁸¹ Badminton 1903, “In Play”, Charles Gilbert Heathcote, p.244 & 245. In a footnote to p.245 CGH makes reference to an article by Dwight in Scribner’s Magazine – see footnote 83 below.

⁸² Badminton 1903, “In Play” CGH, p.245

the feet under the body and - when at rest - the weight on the toes, avoiding useless flourishes of the racket, and employing a proper backswing and follow-through. In this he drew heavily on the views of James Dwight who wrote at length on the subject in an article in Scribner's Magazine in August 1889 - *Form in Lawn Tennis*⁸³.

An American, Dwight took up lawn tennis in 1874 and was one of the founders of the tournament game in his home country, earning himself the appellation *Father of American Lawn Tennis*⁸⁴. He had played in British tournaments between 1884 and 1887, beating at various times some of the leading players such as Ernest Browne and E.L. Williams, and he was a respected student of the theory of the lawn tennis⁸⁵. In 1886 he had published a book called simply *Lawn Tennis*⁸⁶ as a guide for players of all standards and it was well regarded by Wilberforce⁸⁷ and others (- apparently Ernest Renshaw was to be seen consulting it after losing to Henry Grove in the semi-final of the Northern in June 1886⁸⁸). Dwight's exposition in Scribner's Magazine was no doubt eminently sensible, extending as it did beyond generalisations on style into a comprehensive guide to stroke-making, with detailed consideration of the different ground strokes, volleys and services; however, for present purposes the most relevant aspect of his paper is his commentary on the Form of four leading players - the Renshaws, Herbert and Willoughby Hamilton, who had defeated William in 1888 and 1889 and was on his way to making it three in a row by claiming the Wimbledon crown in 1890⁸⁹:

“The best form that I have ever seen is that of Mr. W. Renshaw. He plays every ball so easily, and with so little apparent exertion, that he always has his feet under him. His style is purely natural, and appears in every different stroke.... With both the Renshaws the form is so good that criticism by an inferior player seems rather out of place.

Now let us take Mr. Lawford, who has been in the foremost rank of players for many years. His style is in direct contrast to that of the Renshaws, for it is labored, and purely the result of study..... The style is awkward and uncouth almost beyond conception, but no one who has not played against him can appreciate the suddenness, the accuracy, and the terrible speed of his strokes.....It is certainly a wonderful example of what patience and hard work can achieve even when there is no natural facility for the game.

Another curious instance is W.J. Hamilton, the best Irish player. I have not seen him for the last two years, and he may have changed, but at that time he used to take every ball forehanded. He is very quick on his feet and possessed of endless endurance, so that

⁸³ Scribner's Magazine, Vol. VI, August 1889, No.2, p.131 to 133. In Badminton p.245 CGH acknowledged his debt to JD - “I have freely availed myself of Dr Dwight's valuable paper in reference to this subject”.

⁸⁴ *Pastime* profile 7/7/1886, No. 163. Dwight was a graduate of Harvard and qualified as a doctor but did not practise. He played with the Renshaws in Cannes as early as 1883 (“Golden Days”, Little 2014, p.24 etc) and partnered William Renshaw in doubles several times in 1885. *Pastime*'s final paragraph: “He has an unequalled mastery of the theory of the modern game, which he has ably formulated after careful study of the examples of the English champion and other great players with whom he has for some three years had the advantage of almost daily practice”. As the joint publisher of JD's book *Lawn Tennis* earlier in 1886, *Pastime* had cause to give him some favourable publicity.

⁸⁵ *Pastime* profile 7/7/1886 p.5

⁸⁶ Published by Wright & Ditson, Boston USA, and Pastime Office, London EC

⁸⁷ “Lawn Tennis”, HWWW 1901, Preface

⁸⁸ Sheffield Telegraph 1/7/1886 p.7 & Field 26/6/1886 p.852

⁸⁹ Field 14/7/1888 p.62 (AELTC 3rd round), 25/5/1889 p.740 (final of Irish All-Comers), 12/7/1890 p.69 (AELTC challenge round)

he can run round a ball and play it forehanded. It was wonderful how well he succeeded; but at the same time it is not good tennis...”⁹⁰

Dwight had been on the receiving end of Herbert’s accuracy and speed of stroke at Wimbledon in 1885 and was defeated easily in straight sets⁹¹. So Herbert’s style is awkward and uncouth almost beyond conception and Hamilton’s play is wonderfully successful but “not good tennis”. If two of the best players in the kingdom are as flawed as this, is style then just for the spectator? Or do I mean form.

Charles Heathcote was the leading historian of the first years of tournament lawn tennis, evidenced by his major work on Lawn Tennis in the Badminton Library, and his comments on Herbert’s achievement in winning the All England singles championship in 1887 took the form of a tribute to man and tournament career and bore no reference to style or form. His respect was tangible. He considered that Ernest Renshaw was favourite to win the final and that Herbert prevailed through sheer force of personality:

“The early stages of the match were unfavourable to Lawford. He had lost two sets to one, and was beginning to tire, and good judges thought his chance hopeless. But Renshaw on this occasion allowed caution to degenerate into timidity, and steadiness into weakness. He allowed his opponent to recover his strength and with it the fourth set. Then by the exercise of great determination, and of a physical effort which must have been of extreme severity, Lawford secured at last the coveted title of Champion of England. It was a great achievement. At the age of thirty-six to defeat, in a contest extending over two hours, an opponent ten years younger than himself would have been sufficiently remarkable. But this was not all. Ten times he had entered at Wimbledon, five times he had unsuccessfully contested the championship⁹². He had manfully withstood the prestige of the volley when it was deemed invincible; and single-handed had maintained the value of back play. He had made converts of his chief opponents, and had in turn not disdained to borrow something from them. In each successive year he had learnt something and had gained something. Through disappointment and defeat he had found his way to victory, and he had his reward. It is rare in any department to find so signal an instance of patience and perseverance. The annals of games present no parallel to it.”⁹³

A player of real tennis and member of the MCC in 1877⁹⁴, Charles was one of the famous threesome who drafted the rules for the first Wimbledon Championships⁹⁵ and he competed in the tournament for its first four years winning third prize in 1877⁹⁶. As a schoolboy at Eton he

⁹⁰ Scribner’s Magazine, August 1889 No.2, JD p.131 to 133; “<https://archive.org>” 24/7/2019

⁹¹ Field 11/7/1885 p.50 – 2-6, 2-6, 3-6

⁹² 1887 was the tenth year that HFL competed at Wimbledon and by then he had contested the challenge round four times – once against Hartley in 1880 and three times against William Renshaw, 1884 – 1886 (50 years of Wimbledon, AWM, p.79). He also lost to William in 1881 but that was in the 5th round of the All Comers (AWM p.83). His 5th losing challenge round year was 1888.

⁹³ Badminton 1903, “The Sequel of Lawn Tennis”, CGH, p.173 & 174

⁹⁴ Badminton 1903, “The First Tournament”, CGH p.143, & MCC register of members 1877 (viewed 26/6/2014). CGH was the brother of real tennis champion John Heathcote, who was the MCC’s principal apostle of lawn tennis (Times obituary for CGH 18/11/1913 p.11 , Todd p.68, 71, 73, 74)

⁹⁵ Todd p.77 & 88

⁹⁶ Todd p.219 to 222. HWWW describes CGH as “a tennis player of repute” in 1877 – a real tennis player (“Forty Years of First Class Lawn Tennis”, GW Hillyard, p.29)

played cricket in the school eleven and distinguished himself in the study of the Classics⁹⁷ before moving on to be a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge and subsequently a fellow of Emmanuel⁹⁸. On leaving Cambridge he joined the ranks of practising barristers and later became stipendiary magistrate for Brighton. He was the most cerebral of the first generation of tennis writers.

Journal profiles – Pastime 1886 and another

Herbert's tournament career ran from 1878 to 1889 and during this time there were a few attempts to profile him in the press but only one that delivered much in the way of personal information. In June 1883 *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* gave Herbert a third of a column and a headshot⁹⁹, but started badly by misreporting his initials as H.L. Lawford and while presenting a reliable account of his tournament results to date (though omitting his 1879 Oxford Doubles win), it offered only snippets of information about the man: he had played rackets from boyhood and taken up lawn tennis in 1878; his age was 31; his height was 5 foot 11 inches and his weight 13½ stone ("being against him when the ground is wet"); he was "a back player" and was the only one who could "make playing at the back of the court and taking the ball off the ground pay against the best volleyers of the day"; and he had "of course won a vast number of country handicaps" (unlikely as he rarely played outside the London area). The journalist recorded Herbert's belief that it was wrong for those who have a chance to win major events to compete on equal terms with "local players" in "level contests" - premier league players, unless handicapped, should stand back from provincial tournaments. Herbert had mixed feelings about playing in handicaps and would have kept his participation to a minimum. Many years later he expressed the view that playing too many handicaps had damaged Ernest Renshaw's game: "I feel sure that playing in handicaps, where long odds are given, is fatal to a first-class player, as he must wait for his opponent's mistake, instead of risking a winning stroke"¹⁰⁰.

The weekly journal *Pastime* did much better. In 1886 on 2nd June it embarked on a series of "portraits and biographies" of the leading tennis players under the label "The Pastime Album" and over fourteen weeks it presented fourteen profiles. Inevitably it started with the illustrious twins, who were given a joint presentation, and Herbert came second on 9th June¹⁰¹.

Pastime gave Herbert's correct date of birth and endorsed *Illustrated Sporting's* physical statistics – "a powerfully-built man, 5ft. 11in. in height, measured in his stockings", weighing "when in condition, 13st. 4lb." It also agreed that Herbert had played rackets from boyhood and took up lawn tennis in 1878. Thereafter it ran through Herbert's education, naming schools and university, probably overstating his schoolboy sporting successes as there is little to be found in the relevant school records. Assessing his time at Edinburgh University, it painted the picture of a young man little attracted to academe who devoted his energies to his sporting interests: "his inbred love of sport predominated over his studious inclinations, and the principal part of his time for the next three years was spent in shooting, fishing and playing rackets....During this time too he played for the University Eleven at cricket". He went up to university at the age of seventeen and contrary to *Pastime's* assertion,

⁹⁷ Email from Eton College archivist 1/10/2009 – he was runner-up in the top classics prize.

⁹⁸ Times obituary 18/11/1913 p.11 & Cambridge Alumni 22/2/2012 ACU. He obtained a first class Classical Tripos in 1862.

⁹⁹ 23/6/1883 p.381

¹⁰⁰ HFL letter to the Field 22/7/1911 p.200 . In 1902, Chipp referred to "the baneful influence of much handicap play" (Badminton 1903 p.278 "Note")

¹⁰¹ Renshaws – Pastime 2/6/1886 p.367; HFL – 9/6/1886 p.391

stayed only two years before departing to embark on his stock exchange training, making no attempt to complete the four year degree course and graduate¹⁰².

On his entry into the working world *Pastime* had him pursuing a Spartan daily training regime:

“Regularly every morning from May to October he rode a bicycle from Caterham to Reigate and back – a distance of nineteen miles, before breakfast – for the sake of a swim in the lake at Gatton Park. This would occasionally be varied by a ride to Brighton - forty-one miles – before partaking of his morning meal.”

This is based on life in Kenley, near Coulsdon, after the family move from Tunbridge Wells in 1872/73, and sounds rather extreme. Scrivener, many years later, described a more moderate regime during the tennis years, built around running rather than cycling, but he too featured swimming and the iron discipline of exercise before breakfast: “Nearly always in hard training, he would keep himself fit by a run before breakfast of a mile or two followed by a bathe and another run home again”¹⁰³. Herbert himself told of maintaining fitness during the Irish championships with a swim and a run every morning¹⁰⁴. He saw himself as an athlete with a need to keep in condition for a number of sports and *Pastime* went on to quote his general philosophy:

“He maintains that the athlete should go in for every branch of sport, so that he should not get stale at any one, and certainly he carries his theory into practice, for, although shooting is his favourite sport, and lawn tennis his favourite pastime, he is perfectly happy with either a rod on a good river, a bicycle on a good road, his skates on a good sheet of ice, or in a boat on the Thames”.

Pastime listed Herbert’s tennis tournament results, which included his victory in the challenge round of the Irish for the third year running in May 1886 but ended before his fourth Wimbledon All Comers title, and provided this commentary on his approach to lawn tennis:

“As the advocate of a distinctly separate style of play to that adopted by the champion, and as the most able exponent of his particular game, H.F. Lawford necessarily occupies a position in connection with the pastime second only to W. Renshaw. As volleying first gave the latter his peculiar celebrity, so has a steady adherence to the base-line play made the subject of our sketch as well known to all classes of players. To the majority it may appear strange that any one having the experience of Lawford could still maintain that good back play is more effective than good volleying. The man at the net is such a terror to the ordinary player, to whom the idea of passing him seems impossible, that we can well understand that the believers in the base-line game are very few indeed. It is not our purpose here to enter into a discussion on the relative merits of the two styles – suffice it to say that Lawford ably demonstrates the value of his own theory.”

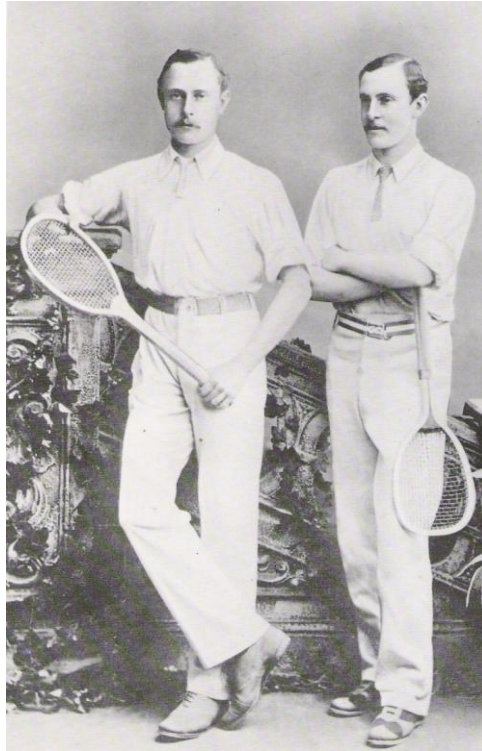
In a way there is a slightly dated feel to these observations as by this time Herbert had adapted his game to incorporate volleying – after suitable approach play – and the Renshaws

¹⁰² See Chapter 3 below

¹⁰³ Obituary in *Lawn Tennis and Badminton* 2/5/1925 p.9 HC.

¹⁰⁴ “The House on Sport”, Editor W.A. Morgan, Gale & Polden 1898, p.429. “The next three years I stayed at a fine hotel at Kingstown, on the sea, had my swim and my run every morning and *won*.”

had backed away from their commitment to volleying from just behind the service line. The game and the debate had moved on.



1.5 The Renshaw twins¹⁰⁵

Harold Mahony on the Lawford stroke

In his book *Lawn Tennis at Home and Abroad*, published in 1903¹⁰⁶, Wallis Myers enlisted the services of tournament veteran Harold Mahony “to give an impartial account of the various methods of playing the game and the players who developed them”, and the genial Irishman duly provided “a description of the chief exponents of the various schools of play and the merits and demerits of their various systems”¹⁰⁷. His chapter was headed “The Old School and the New”. The Old School begins with “the Renshaw and Lawford era”¹⁰⁸ and in the course of his first few pages he covers the different approaches of Herbert and William Renshaw. It is familiar territory but in discussing Herbert’s game, he devotes considerable attention to the Lawford forehand drive and he is probably one of the first British writers to refer to its use of “top spin” – putting “duck” on the ball (- *dip* would perhaps have been a better word). He describes how the stroke had become widely used and how he saw it as peculiar to lawn tennis, “although many of the best players have never employed it”¹⁰⁹. For

¹⁰⁵ “Lawn Tennis At Home & Abroad”, Wallis Myers, 1903, p.7

¹⁰⁶ George Newnes, London; Editor’s Note dated April 1903 (xvi)

¹⁰⁷ “LT at Home & Abroad” p.1

¹⁰⁸ “LT at Home & Abroad” p.3

¹⁰⁹ “LT at Home & Abroad” p.6 (top line)

champions Joshua Pim and William Larned¹¹⁰ “it is a graceful and effective stroke, the ideal drive”¹¹¹; but for William Renshaw it perhaps came too late as he “used no top on his stroke” and preferred to hit with “a slight undercut which caused the ball to skid on the ground”¹¹². Mahony kept silent on his own preference – maintaining his impartiality – and gave this account of Herbert’s principal weapon:

“H.F. Lawford is generally credited with being the originator of severe baseline play, and was certainly at that time the leader in this department of the game. His forehand drive was by far his best stroke, the ball being struck with a horizontal racket and near the top of the bound, and an upward movement at the moment of striking imparting considerable top spin to the ball, causing it to drop very rapidly after crossing the net. The advantages of this method were that the ball could be struck much higher and harder without going out of court when a full-length stroke was played, and the “duck” on the ball made it possible to play a much faster short cross when playing a volleyer.

This stroke has been so largely employed, and is so essentially a lawn tennis shot, that a fuller description of it may not be out of place. Nearly all the critics refer to this stroke as ‘of low trajectory’, and as passing only inches over the net. I presume flat trajectory is what is meant. As a matter of fact, the trajectory is anything but flat. A rifle bullet is described as having a flat trajectory when the bullet drops but little. A projectile continuing indefinitely in a straight line would have an absolutely flat trajectory. But the “drop stroke”, as it is called in America, has a very curved trajectory indeed, and to keep good length must be struck feet over the net, it being easily seen that the greater the “drop” the greater must be the elevation, supposing the velocity and length to remain constant....[A] reasonable employment of this stroke is most effective, and great credit is due to Lawford for evolving it.”¹¹³

By 1905 *The Field* was using the term “top spin” in an article on the development of lawn tennis¹¹⁴, and in its review of the first fifteen Wimbledon champions in 1911 it echoed Mahony’s description of the Lawford drive¹¹⁵: “Taking the ball at the top of the bound with a horizontal racket, [*HFL*] imparted top spin, thus causing it to fall rapidly after crossing the net. It was the prototype of the modern lifting drive now so much in vogue on the Continent, and for inventing it Mr Lawford deserves recognition”.

Mahony is not known to have played a tournament single against Herbert but he first played in the Irish championships in 1887, aged twenty when a student at Trinity College, Dublin¹¹⁶, and he would have seen him in action for some three years¹¹⁷. His tournament

¹¹⁰ WA Larned was US open champion in 1901 & 1902, defeating RF Doherty in the challenge round in 1902 (*Badminton* 1903 p.443, “Wimbledon Singles Champ’s 1877 – 2005” p.24, *Morning Post* 28/8/1902 p.7); Pim was Wimbledon champion in 1893 & 1894 (“Wimbledon SCs 1877 – 2005” p.20)

¹¹¹ “LT at Home & Abroad” p.4 (penultimate line)

¹¹² “LT at Home & Abroad” p.6

¹¹³ “LT at Home & Abroad” p.4 & top of p.6

¹¹⁴ *Field* 15/7/1905 p.99 & 100. See also PA Vaile in *Field* 4/6/1904 p.928

¹¹⁵ “The Blue Riband of the Lawn”, *Field* 24/6/1911 p.1278 (bottom of 2nd Col’n). Wallis Myers was probably the *Field*’s lawn tennis editor at this time as his daughter said he held the role for 20 years (“A. Wallis Myers – A Testament to Tennis” by Prue Wallis Myers 2004, “hard struggle pays off” etc)

¹¹⁶ *Field* 28/5/1887 p.738. “H.S. Mahony, Dublin Univ” lost to Ernest Renshaw in the 4th round. Age: HSM obituary, *Freeman’s Journal* 29/6/1905 p.7

career was a long one, stretching from 1887 to 1904, and in his time he encountered both Renshaws as well as Joshua Pim and the following generation of champions¹¹⁸. He was a faithful competitor at Wimbledon playing in the singles every year between 1890 and 1904 apart from one year out in 1895; a semi-finalist five times, finalist in the All Comers twice, he found excellent form in 1896 and defeated Wilfred Baddeley in the challenge round to claim the crown¹¹⁹. Similarly he was champion of Ireland just once, in 1898¹²⁰. His participation in the game included several forays to America, where he played at least once in the US open¹²¹, and also to the continent. By 1903 his first hand experience of the master players certainly spanned the Old School and the New and his breadth of knowledge would have been second to none.

Herbert on “match-playing”, the Badminton Library 1890

In the late nineteenth century the 8th Duke of Beaufort set out to develop a modern encyclopaedia of British sports to which “the inexperienced man, who sought guidance in the practice of the various British Sports and Pastimes, could turn for information” and “to point the way to success to those who are ignorant of the sciences they aspire to master, and who have no friend to help or coach them...”¹²². He named his work “The Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes” and it ran eventually to twenty three volumes¹²³. Publication began in 1885 with a volume on hunting and a court ball-game compendium followed in 1890 with the title “Tennis, Lawn Tennis, Rackets, Fives”¹²⁴. The section on lawn tennis can be regarded as the bible of the early history of lawn tennis because it was written when the game was some sixteen years old, it was comprehensive, and its team of writers had been actively involved and were authorities on their subjects. The principal author was Charles Heathcote, who was a central figure at the All England Club in 1877 and whose brother John had been involved in lawn tennis experiments as early as 1873¹²⁵, and others were drawn in to cover special topics. Wilberforce wrote on men’s doubles, Spencer Gore (the first Wimbledon champion) wrote on the first fifteen years of lawn tennis, Lottie Dod on ladies’ tennis, Richard Sears (champion of the USA 1881 - 1887¹²⁶) on the game in America, Herbert Chipp on the management of tournaments, and Herbert Lawford on “Match-playing”. The Renshaws were notably absent and the suspicion must be that this was due to disinclination on their part rather than a lack of interest from the editor.

¹¹⁷ According to Tatler in its obituary for HSM (5/7/1905 p.5,): “As a boy he lived in Fitzwilliam Square in Dublin and his enthusiasm for lawn tennis was first fired by the doughty deeds of the two Renshaws, Lawford and Ernest Browne on the famous enclosure in front of his house”.

¹¹⁸ ER: Irish 1887 (Field 28/5/1887 p.738); WR: Irish 1889 (Field 25/5/1889 p.740); JP: “Wimbledon Gentlemen’s Singles Champions 1877 – 2005”, p.21 & 22; following generation: eg: “Wimbledon Singles Champs” p.21 & 22; R Doherty 1897, L Doherty 1898 & 1902; A Gore 1899.

¹¹⁹ “Wimbledon Singles Champs”, p.22

¹²⁰ Field 4/6/1898 p.836, Badminton 1903 p.440

¹²¹ Sporting Life 31/8/1897 p.2

¹²² Preface to the volume “Tennis, Lawn Tennis, Rackets, Fives”, Edited by the 8th Duke of Beaufort, Longmans 1890, 1903 edition, reprinted Ashford Press 1987. Reviews – Field 5/7/1890 p.41, Times 19/6/1890 p.10

¹²³ Introductory Note to the reprint of 1987 by the 11th Duke, Ashford Press

¹²⁴ Morning Post 22/10/1885 p.2, review of “Hunting”

¹²⁵ Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic News 17/6/1938 p.632, Bystander 29/6/1938 p.510 & 511. See this chapter above p.16 footnote 94.

¹²⁶ Badminton 1903, p.443

At the time of writing Herbert was probably some four years past his peak as a player but he had put his name forward for the 1890 Irish¹²⁷ and All England championships¹²⁸ and was still closely involved with the tournament game as a member of the All England Club management committee. Mature in his stockbroking career at the age of thirty nine, comfortably established in his country house on Wimbledon Common with wife and baby son, he was in a mood of reminiscence and well placed to comment on the state of the game.

Herbert must have been given clear instructions on the content of his chapter but as Heathcote had supplied an earlier chapter headed "Tactics of the Singles Game"¹²⁹, he was sensitive to the potential for confusion in the mind of the reader and would have foreseen a struggle to hold his attention. Heathcote wrote for the serious tennis player and apart from comprehensive advice on positioning, placement of the ball and court craft, his guidance included tips such as learning "of the enemy's play beforehand" and during the knock-up¹³⁰, and advice on how to pace yourself for a five set match. On the subject of physical condition, he exhorted the novice "to remember that a tournament extending over several days, on each of which it is possible that five advantage sets may be played, is one of the severest tests of constitutional soundness and physical strength to which men have ever voluntarily subjected themselves in the pursuit of a game"¹³¹. This was instruction for serious competitions, not the vicarage lawn. Herbert therefore came straight to the point, as was his wont, and began with the mental side of match play:

"The majority of those who play lawn tennis will wonder, on seeing the title of this chapter, what there is to say about playing matches that is not already said in the preceding chapters on the game. The small minority, however, who have engaged in important contests before thousands of critical spectators will well understand that playing a *match* is a totally different matter to having a friendly *game*, however keenly the latter may be fought out....There is one great element which the friendly game lacks – one, too, that plays an important part in the public trial – and that is the mental strain, which is inevitable over a closely contested match. Some men feel this strain so much more than others, that it is not uncommon to find a man getting a little the best of the contests with an opponent almost always in practice, and yet going down before the same player if they chance to meet in a tournament; it does not mean that he is an inferior player, but simply that his nervous system is not so well organised. This weakness can be overcome to a great extent by habitually playing matches, but it is never entirely removed; and there are men whose merits as players should place them in a higher rank than they will ever attain to had they no nerves."¹³²

Herbert highlights the importance of mental strength while trying to be tactful – the gentle reference to organisation of the nervous system would have surprised Herbert Chipp and has the feel of editorial intervention. He describes how players "perhaps not of front rank" become tentative under pressure while first class players know they have to play their best in order to win and so appear "to the uninitiated spectator to play worse, and make more mistakes". But other than offering the view that match-play will improve through familiarity – by playing more matches - he gives little or no guidance on method and approach. Himself a natural born

¹²⁷ Field 31/5/1890 p.792 – HFL notified his withdrawal at the end of May.

¹²⁸ Field 5/7/1890 p.28: "Mr Miller also had a bye as Mr Lawford decided not to play on the wet ground"

¹²⁹ Badminton 1903 p.247

¹³⁰ Badminton 1903 p.253

¹³¹ Badminton 1903 p.254

¹³² Badminton 1903 p.272 & 273

competitor, he was perhaps least aware of the scope for those of fainter heart to improve themselves.

After dealing with the mental approach, Herbert embarks on a brief commentary on the history of the tournament game, current standards of play and the wellbeing of the tournament circuit, before finishing with some tips on style of play and observations on “playing in good form”.

According to Herbert, all that was required in 1880 for a man to achieve “high rank” was fitness, a good eye, consistency in both forehand and backhand, and the capacity to keep the ball in play¹³³. But now times had changed:

“...now, unless a player can make brilliant strokes, strokes just skimming the net, into the far corners of his rival’s court, he is nowhere; the old game of hammer and tongs, long wearisome rests of everlasting sameness, is over, and we have in its place a game of infinite variety, and enough bodily exercise to satisfy anyone.....If we hear nowadays of a match in which the rests have been long, we at once put down the play as a long way below first-class, and the players as probably afraid of one another”¹³⁴.

Herbert’s own game had been through the process of transition because in 1880 he participated in some of the longest attritional matches.

However, in his view the standard of the best players was no better in 1890 than it was in 1886 and he felt that first class play should be much better than it was. There was ample scope for improvement and the best players made far too many mistakes in the most important matches¹³⁵. He looked for a new messiah:

“That the standard will rise I have no doubt, but someone must come forth to raise it; someone equally good at all points of the game; he must be active, and yet sufficiently powerful, with plenty of reach and unlimited lasting powers, an unerring eye and steady nerve. All these qualities are essential in a man to be quite first-rate, and we have never seen their union in one individual lawn-tennis player.....”¹³⁶

Herbert clearly accepts his own shortcomings but he is indicating the view also that William Renshaw has recognisable defects. In Chipp’s view – expressed in a footnote to the 1903 Badminton edition - Joshua Pim was the player who most nearly approached Herbert’s ideal but in 1890 Pim was a few years from full maturity¹³⁷. In a letter to the Field in 1911 on the subject of *The Blue Riband of the Lawn*, Herbert appears to confirm Chipp’s report: “I have been asked the question often, and always replied that I consider Pim the finest player we have ever had.....After Pim, I should bracket together Brookes, W. Renshaw, and H.L. Doherty...”¹³⁸.

Herbert then offers a reason why the old guard of top players – the Renshaws and himself - could not scale the heights and in some ways he is describing the limitation on all

¹³³ Badminton 1903 p.273 & 274

¹³⁴ Badminton 1903 p.274

¹³⁵ Badminton 1903 p.274, para 3

¹³⁶ Badminton 1903 p.274, para 2

¹³⁷ Badminton 1903 edition, “Note” on p.278, written in 1902. In his best year – 1893 – Pim achieved the unique feat of winning the singles and men’s doubles in all three majors (CGH, Badminton 1903 p.182)

¹³⁸ Field 22/7/1911 p.200. HFL’s letter included the interesting observation that he advised William Renshaw not to return to tournament play after his elbow injury of 1887 – “It was a very different player who returned to the court after ‘87”.

pioneers: they have no one to learn from, and those that follow them pick up where they leave off.

“Of course the great difficulty that men who have kept in the first class for years have had is that they had no opportunity of seeing play superior to their own, and so have had to proceed, as it were, in the dark: many of their best strokes they have learnt by almost accident in some knock-up game, and then have thought it worth while to practise until they could do them with ease. Players of a lower grade, and also those who have of late attained front rank, have encountered no such obstacle; their task has been to imitate; hence the rapidly narrowing line of demarcation between the classes¹³⁹.”

There may be a hint here on the origin of the top-spin forehand – a mishit in a knock-up game to wonderful effect, worked on, practised and moulded by Herbert into his weapon against the volley.

Herbert moves on to take a few sideswipes at the proliferation of tournaments all over Great Britain and her colonies – “more so-called championships than anyone can remember” such that in a few years every hamlet will have its own champion¹⁴⁰ - although his principal objection seems to be that the word “champion” is being debased. He highlights Wimbledon’s status as the world championship.

“There is, however, one championship that stands out from the rest, and I hope always will: the winner is not champion of this or champion of that; he is *the* champion of lawn tennis. I need scarcely say that I refer to the meeting held every summer at Wimbledon. This has now taken place annually since 1877, and greater interest is taken in the result all over the world than in all the other tournaments put together.

It is only at this meeting that the question of who is the best man of the year is definitely decided, for in each year since its institution *every* man has competed who has had the remotest chance of victory, and who has been fit and well at the date fixed for the struggle¹⁴¹.”

He gives ringing endorsement to the Wimbledon practice of allowing the winner of the All-Comers a day of rest before facing the champion in the challenge round¹⁴² – after all, he had had four years to appreciate it, just one to regret. Then he launches into a homily on styles of play in what presents itself partly as an explanation of his own approach, partly a comparison of himself with the Renshaws, and partly a statement of his views on the role of the volley¹⁴³.

“Lawn tennis is the only game I know in which a man’s bodily make should in a great measure influence his style of play; one must not look for the same style in a powerfully built man of about six feet in stature as one sees in a light, active player of some nine or ten stone. The heavy man, to be successful, should rely most on his powers of attack, knowing that on the defensive he has no chance with his more agile opponent. The slimmer player, on the other hand, aware that he cannot in a long struggle continue

¹³⁹ Badminton 1903 p.275, para 2

¹⁴⁰ Badminton 1903 p.275, para 2. “...We may see the day when it will be a distinction to a lawn tennis player *not* to be a champion.”

¹⁴¹ Badminton 1903 p.275 para’s 2 & 3

¹⁴² Badminton 1903 p.276 para’s 1 & 2

¹⁴³ Badminton 1903 p.276 para 3, & 277 para’s 1 to 3

sending down stroke after stroke with the terrific force of his rival, must trust most to his activity and powers of returning those strokes – in fact rather wait for his adversary to make a mistake.

The young player, therefore, should first ascertain, and then cultivate, that style which his body is most suited for, and not be led into trying to copy any particular player he may admire, regardless of the fact that he and the object of his worship are as different in make as a greyhound and a mastiff.....

[The game chosen] will depend upon the physical qualities of each player; in one man's game volleying will predominate, in another back-play will form the most important part; but to be very successful the former must be capable of good strokes from the back line, and the latter must be able to volley effectively when opportunity offers".

The *Pastime* profiles of Herbert and the Renshaws describe them as being of much the same height at nearly six feet but Herbert is considerably heavier - thirteen stone four pounds¹⁴⁴ to William's ten stone nine pounds¹⁴⁵; heavy man versus agile man, mastiff versus greyhound.

Having advised the young novice on his choice of approach and style, Herbert announces that he will end his chapter with a warning to young players not to play too much because it leads to staleness, "which is quite fatal to all dash and brilliancy, and makes a racket feel double its real weight"¹⁴⁶. An hour and a half of play two or three days a week is all that is necessary to improve a man's game, but during the whole of that time "he must be doing his utmost" - intensity is required. "The game is not learnt in a season" and patience and perseverance will be rewarded.

He finishes with an expression of humility (rather unconvincing), an invitation to take or leave his opinions, a reference to his friendship with a duke¹⁴⁷, and an unashamed claim to a place at the high table of lawn tennis. Characteristic of Mr Lawford, Wallis Myers might say.

"In what I have written let it be understood that I lay down no laws. My impressions may be right or may be wrong; I simply record them at the request of the Editor – an old friend – for what they are worth, as the ideas of one who has played a good many of the most important matches of the last ten years."¹⁴⁸

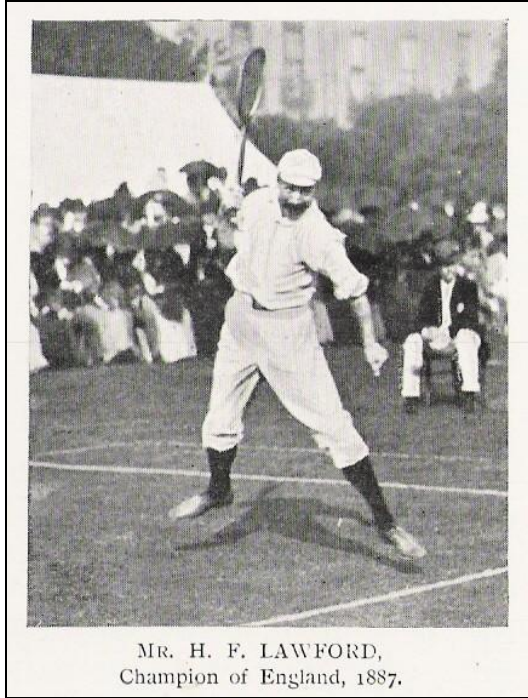
¹⁴⁴ "Pastime", June 9, 1886 p.391

¹⁴⁵ "Pastime", June 2, 1886 p.367. Ernest was much the same as William – a pound or two heavier.

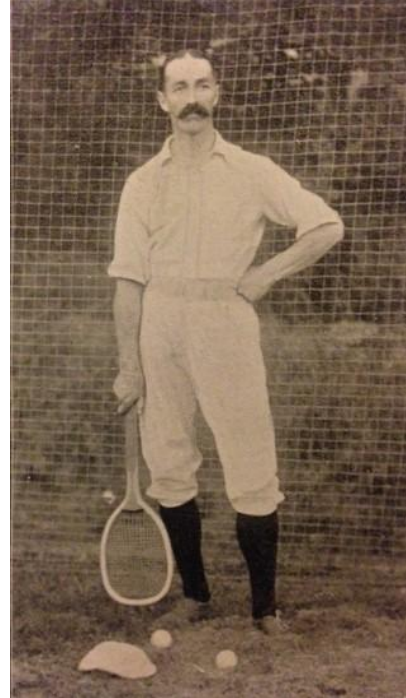
¹⁴⁶ Badminton 1903 p.277 para 4 & 278 para 1

¹⁴⁷ Granville Farquhar, a first cousin of the 8th Duke of Beaufort, joined Herbert's family firm of stockbrokers in 1874 and was later senior partner, so there was inter alia a business link between the families. Granville's mother was born Mary Octavia Somerset, daughter of the 6th Duke of Beaufort.

¹⁴⁸ Badminton 1903 p.278



1.6 Herbert in full flow¹⁴⁹



1.7 Ready for action, c.1898¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ "Lawn Tennis At Home & Abroad", Wallis Myers, 1903, p.3

¹⁵⁰ "The House on Sport", Editor WA Morgan, Gale & Polden, 1898, p.430

Chapter 2: Family roots in the Square Mile and childhood to 1862

The Lawfords were a City of London family of long standing. The four male generations before Herbert all earned their living within the square mile and Herbert continued the tradition, following in his father's stockbroking footsteps and maintaining family links to the ancient Drapers' Livery Company. The Lawford name may have been nothing to conjure with by the time Herbert joined the workforce but it still enjoyed some prominence through attachment over the years to financial service and legal firms and sheer number of City employees. In the first half of the nineteenth century Lefevre, Curries, Raikes, Lawford & Co. were bankers of Cornhill; Lawfords, Solicitors supplied their services from Drapers' Hall in close proximity to their largest client the Honourable East India Company; and Steer, Cuerton, Lawford & Co. were building their reputation as City stockbrokers preparatory to a move to Threadneedle Street. Social relationships with City families such as the Freshfields, Curries, Jones-Lloyds and Marjoribanks were manifest in Lawford diaries of the period and from the beginning of the nineteenth century names such as Baring, Cazenove, Holland, Bruce and Bowring came to be lightly sprinkled across the family tree. Business, social and family lives were interwoven and the Drapers' Company offered influence in City politics as well as support when times were hard.

**Thomas of Hereford and Southwark (1679 – 1726)
Valentine of Basinghall Street (1709 – 1783), and the Drapers' Livery Company**

Early in the eighteenth century Thomas Lawford gathered together wife, children and the tools of his trade as a leather dresser, and made the long trek from his home in Hereford to Southwark on the south bank of the Thames¹. One would like to say that in these pastures new he prospered and grew rich, living to a comfortable old age after founding a dynasty, but the prosaic truth is that he laboured and lived in this grim suburb – one of England's first industrial slums - for some ten years and then died in obscurity. When he breathed his last in May 1726 he was forty-six years old and a Lime Man working for a Master named Brent². His second wife Hannah inherited from him just a part interest in a Southwark lease from Brent and the outlook for her and her two children was far from rosy. In the year of his death, however, Thomas had taken the farsighted step of apprenticing their son Valentine to one Martha Ellison, widow of John Ellison of Aldgate, citizen and draper, and this was to transform their lives.

Valentine applied himself to his trade and completed his apprenticeship and was "freed" by the Ellisons in 1735. He married in 1739 – an heiress and daughter of another draper – and by 1743 was affluent enough to meet the property qualification required to complete his rise from apprentice to Liveryman of the Drapers' Livery Company. The Livery numbered about one hundred and eighty and was the electoral body of the company that appointed its management team, the Court of Assistants. Valentine graduated to the Court in 1764 and remained there until his death in 1783 climbing to the Company summit as Master in

¹ Role of leather dresser per Drapers' records. Per "Pedigree of the family Lawford" by Reginald Ames c.1890: his first wife was buried in Hereford in 1708 and he married his second wife in Ludlow c1709; daughter Mary born in Ludlow 1712; father Richard died in Hereford 1715; eldest son Thomas apprenticed to London feltmaker in 1720 (London Apprenticeship Abstracts).

² Will of Thomas Lawford 10 May 1826. Poll Book for 1742 records Edward Brent as a freeholder of Southwark "St Johns". The New Broad Street baptism record for an Edward Brent in 1829 describes the father as a Lime Merchant (ACU).

1775³. The next three generations of Lawfords all yielded a Master and Herbert became a lifelong company member after joining by patrimony at the age of twenty-three.

The Drapers' Company originated as one of the City guilds in the fourteenth century but by the eighteenth century it had ceased to control the cloth trade in London and had lost any representative role within the cloth industry. Through endowments over the centuries, however, it had acquired extensive property interests – particularly in the City – and was a powerful charitable foundation. It was influential partly through its wealth, partly through political power (which was linked to government of the City), and partly through the connections and financial resources of its members. In his history of the Drapers Johnston says that even by the beginning of the seventeenth century the Company's involvement in the cloth trade was greatly reduced.

“...Many of the smaller Masters had abandoned their trade for that of other Crafts and the more opulent had completely burst the narrow bounds of the old Gild. If they still did a large business in the wholesale trade in cloth, they did much more. They had become great merchants, dealing in every kind of article, both of export and import, and sharing with members of other companies the opportunities offered by the new ventures of the day.”⁴

In essence the company had become an association of City merchants, financiers and tradesmen and within the company, the Court of Assistants was the effective board of directors. In Valentine's time it had about thirty members, drawn from and nominated by the Livery, with the Master and four wardens as senior officers. Freemen – who had no say in the appointment of members of the Court – probably then numbered about twelve hundred.

The younger historian Girtin echoes Johnston, asserting that by the late seventeenth century most men on the Court were prominent in the City and had wide interests in the world outside⁵. The inner circle to which Valentine belonged included MPs as well as aldermen of the City, and the activities of the more prominent drapers at the end of the eighteenth century had little to do with the cloth trade. Richard Oliver MP, committed to prison when Master in 1771 for defying the authority of the Commons, was a West India Merchant⁶; Benjamin Cole, Master in 1782, was a stockbroker who was appointed by William Pitt's administration in 1786 as first Government Broker to work under the supervision of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt⁷; Sir James Sanderson, MP and Lord Mayor of London in 1792, was a hop merchant transformed into a London banker⁸; and Sir William Curtis, Tory MP for the City of London from 1790, was a sugar baker of Wapping who subsequently founded a leading banking firm. (Curtis, incidentally, is credited with coining the phrase “the 3 R's”⁹.)

Valentine began his career as a draper's apprentice to the Ellisons but the nineteenth century family tree records that he was “Clerk in the South Sea House” and he was apparently “chief clerk of the old annuities” for the South Sea Company¹⁰. This would have given him links

³ The main sources for information on Valentine are the records of the Drapers' Livery company and the Ames “Pedigree of the family Lawford”.

⁴ As quoted in “The Triple Crowns”, Tom Girtin, Hutchinson 1964, p.197

⁵ “The Triple Crowns”, Girtin, p.273

⁶ The History of the Worshipful Company of the Drapers of London”, Rev. A.H. Johnson, Vol. IV, p.652. See also Girtin p.289

⁷ “Government Broker, the story of an office and of Mullens & Co”, D. Wainwright, Matham, 1990, p.1 & 2 etc

⁸ History of Drapers, A.H. Johnson, Vol. IV, p.653

⁹ History of Drapers, A.H. Johnson, Vol. IV, p.653

¹⁰ Gentlemen's Magazine 1783/806 per Lawford Record 2014 by Jeremy Lawford

to the East India Company and the Bank of England. After the South Sea Bubble burst in 1720 the company was brought under the control of these two august bodies, who became owners of its capital, and it remained in business largely as a financial house until 1856. Having taken over part of the National Debt under its original owners, the company continued in a management role and Valentine's "old annuities" were government stock; in 1786 Benjamin Cole's first instructions from the Government's Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt included the purchase of "Old South Sea annuities" – at advantageous prices¹¹.

Valentine must have pursued a variety of different business activities at the same time as we find that even in the autumn of his career he still took on draper apprentices while in the year before his death his will was witnessed by three employees of South Sea House. With his connections he would have had the opportunity to participate in many of the great business ventures of the time and he accumulated considerable wealth by one means or another. When he died he left his children about thirty different properties in London including dwellings in Aldermanbury, London Wall, Tower Royal Court, Budge Row, and Monkwell Street in the City of London¹². His residence was in Basinghall Street and he lived, worked and invested in the City. He died in Peckham in 1783, probably at the house of his eldest son Samuel, and was buried in the neighbouring village of Camberwell. Born into the household of a Southwark lime man, he had placed the Thames between himself and the leather market and risen to the status of City merchant. His eldest son Samuel and descendants were to consolidate the family's position at the financial heart of the superpower of the nineteenth century.

Samuel I of Peckham and Clapham (1749 – 1835)

Samuel II of Clapham and Blackheath (1777 – 1865)

Samuel I was born in 1749 and his career has some similarities to his father's. He began by learning a trade and joined the Drapers' Company in 1773 as an apothecary of Cateaton Street, just round the corner from Basinghall Street.

He qualified for the Livery in 1775 and graduated to the Court of Assistants in 1796 as Junior Warden, remaining on the Court until his death in 1835. Like his father, he fulfilled the various warden roles and was crowned Master in 1809. His inheritance was rather different to his father's but it seems unlikely that he received the lion's share of his father's estate as the property portfolio was divided between all seven of Valentine's children. He too married an heiress – Ann Wright in 1775 – but perhaps went one better as his wife could claim royal descent from Meredith Tudor, great-grandfather of Henry VII. Ann's father Thomas was a partner in a firm of woollen drapers in the City. Marriage again brought financial advancement and it seems likely that Samuel was a wealthier man than his father although his will gives no impression of the scale of his property interests¹³.

In 1783 - the year of Valentine's death -- Samuel took up residence in Peckham and he was to remain there until 1820 when he moved to Clapham¹⁴. Peckham in the early nineteenth century was a small, quiet country village surrounded by fields just two and a half miles south of London Bridge - nothing like the urban sprawl of today. Since the sixteenth century it had provided homes for some of the gentry and by the eighteenth century it had developed agricultural trades linked to the needs of the capital. Market gardening was its speciality and melons, figs and grapes were among the fruits produced for the London market,

¹¹ "Government Broker", D. Wainwright, p.6

¹² Will of Valentine Lawford 15/5/1782

¹³ The main sources for information on Samuel I are the records of the Drapers' Livery company and the "Pedigree of the family Lawford" by Reginald Ames, c.1890. Meredith Tudor link per Valentine G. Lawford letter 28/11/1975.

¹⁴ Records of the Drapers' Livery Company: Peckham 1783 – 1819; Clapham 1820 - 1835

some reputedly destined for the royal table. It was an important stopping point for cattle drovers moving their livestock to market and there were special holding areas and hostelrys to accommodate them overnight. The larger village of Camberwell was its neighbour to the West, and so close that its Anglican church of St Giles provided a place of worship for both communities (and a burial ground for both Valentine and Samuel).

Samuel worked in the City like his father but his family grew to maturity in a country house. He had four sons who survived to adulthood – Thomas, Samuel, Edward, and John – and one daughter, Maria. All four sons joined the Drapers' Company and three made their careers in the City, Samuel as a banker with Curries & Co. of Cornhill, and Edward and John as solicitors in what became the family practice at Drapers' Hall. Thomas, the eldest, took up farming in Peckham then heeded the call of his ancestors from the West and transplanted himself firstly to Gloucestershire then to Wales not far from Llandeilo, opting out of city life to manage his father's properties in Carmarthenshire. Around 1809 he moved into a house called Carreg Cennen built for him a few miles north east of Llandybïe almost certainly under the direction of his father. A spacious country house with six or so bedrooms, originally set in an estate of over a hundred acres, it still stands today and its design would reflect Samuel's outlook, tastes and connections. The building is unostentatious – no Roman columns or portico, no balustrades - but elegant, well-proportioned and cleverly planned and it is thought to have been designed by the renowned architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell, who had close links to the East India Company and carried out some major works in the Carmarthen area for Sir William Paxton¹⁵.

Herbert's grandfather was the second son Samuel, born in 1777. Samuel II followed the same path as his father at Drapers and was the third generation Master in 1850. His career in banking was the picture of steadiness. A gentleman of Cornhill by 1799 - under training in the City - he became a partner with Curries, Raikes & Co., goldsmiths and bankers, in 1807 and remained so for at least the next thirty years, according to the partnership agreements. His initial partnership role seems to have been that of general manager, the junior of the six partners, and he was required to live on the premises and "lodge and board all the clerks and other persons employed inthe trade", whilst being reimbursed for the cost including coal and candles consumed. There must have been a merry throng at Number 29 Cornhill because Samuel was married in 1805 and had four children by 1811, the year in which his mother died. His wife Margaretta, daughter of linen-drapeer and grocer Gideon Acland of Tiverton, Devon, would have found it a mixed experience but although the Drapers' Company records Cornhill as Samuel's address from 1805 to 1836, the likelihood is that Margaretta moved to Peckham to live with her father-in-law reasonably soon after 1811 and the quality of her home life would have been dramatically improved. Their last five children were born in Peckham between October 1812 and February 1820 and the diary of Samuel's niece Maria Lawford covering the period from 1827 to 1832 indicates that by then father and son were living together in Clapham¹⁶.

¹⁵ Cockerell was appointed Surveyor to the East India Company in 1806 and to St Paul's in 1811 (ODNB 2015). For Paxton, he built a new mansion at Middleton Hall some seven miles south west of Llandeilo between 1793 and 1795. Paxton himself was in the service of East India Company for a time and made his fortune through an agency house in India. On returning to England, he became involved in a variety of business activities in London including banking (ODNB 2015).

¹⁶ For example: 11/10/1830: "In the afternoon we drank tea at Clapham with cousin Anne & Grandpapa (for Sam was at Hastings) & papa met us there on horseback." 25/10/1830: "Mamma took Grandmamma to Stockwell & brought Anne Lawford from Clapham to stay with us for a little while." Anne was Samuel II's eldest daughter. In May 1829 Samuel II's eldest son was admitted to Drapers "as a gentleman of Clapham" & Clapham was his Boyd's Roll address until 1837. The City Electoral Register for 1834 shows 3 generations of Samuels resident at Clapham Common (ACU).

The number of bank staff initially living in with Samuel and Margaretta would have been well under twenty (in the census of 1851 there were ten clerks, two porters and four female servants) and it is possible the family's accommodation was purpose-built to a standard befitting a gentleman. In his history of the City of London David Kynaston refers to the rebuilding of the premises of bankers Jones, Lloyd & Co in 1808 and describes how there was a separate entrance to accommodation on the upper floors for a partner, his family and servants. He goes on to give some idea of the staffing and ambience of the private banking companies of Samuel's time¹⁷.

“In 1815 the residential population of the City was some 122,000 (about a tenth of the population of London as a whole) and about 8,500 firms were operating there. The overwhelming majority of these firms were small, specialised and family-owned. Glyns, for example, was one of the larger banks, but still had only thirty-six staff in 1815; while Anthony Gibbs the same year employed only five men in its London office in addition to the three partners. The major exception was the Bank of England..... To cross the threshold of one of these firms was usually to enter an austere world. Take Prescotts in Threadneedle Street: massive oak doors opened into a dimly lit banking hall, as elsewhere known as ‘the Shop’, where clerks dealt with customers over an ancient oak counter and with quill pens and snuff boxes at hand to meet all needs; while beyond was the oak-panelled partners’ parlour, directly above the strong room in the basement.”

Samuel II would have been financially comfortable in his early banking role but far from rich. Though Curries & Co. was reputable and well established – in 1820 Samuel and two of his partners were confirmed by warrant of George IV as trustees for a royal pension arrangement¹⁸ - it was a single branch operation and of limited scale. The main business of the bank consisted of discounting bills of exchange and dealing in government securities and it acted as agent for a number of country banks¹⁹. In his *Recollections*, privately published in 1901, Bertram Wodehouse Currie offered this impression of the bank in 1846 – still at the same Cornhill address²⁰:

“It was in the month of June of that year [1846] that I began work as a clerk in the banking house at 29, Cornhill. The office or shop as we called it was narrow, low and not over well lighted, but it was of considerable depth, and extended from the entrance in Cornhill to a private door in Change Alley, opposite to Garraway’s coffee-house. The business was a small one, in spite of the absorption of that of Dorrien and Co., which had been effected in 1842, but the traditions of my grandfather had been respected, and it was perfectly sound and solvent. The partners were my father’s elder brother Isaac George, his cousin Henry, and himself. John Lawford, the son of a former partner [*Samuel*], was actively engaged in the management, and I was placed under his care.

¹⁷ “The City of London, Volume I”, David Kynaston, Pimlico 1995, page 30

¹⁸ RBS Group archives, Ref GM/1013, 02265 Glyn Mills & Co Scrapbook Vol 1, p.44

¹⁹ RBS website entry for Curries & Co., 2003

²⁰ Bertram Wodehouse Currie was one of the leading City bankers of his time and in the later part of the nineteenth century his firm Glyn, Mills, Currie & Co enjoyed the highest standing. After his death in 1896, Gladstone pronounced that he was “so entirely first among the men of the City, that it is hard to measure the distance between him and the second place”, but then Currie was a committed liberal and Gladstone was his friend (letter from Gladstone to Currie’s widow, 7 May 1897). In its obituary in 1896 the Times stated that “In Mr Currie the City of London loses one of its most prominent and respected men, and probably its first authority upon banking” (30/12/1896 p.4, TDA).

When compared with the great banking institutions of today, the firm of Curries and Co. was, as my father used to say, but a chandler's shop."²¹

Samuel had retired from the bank by 1846 and his third son John (born in 1811) had picked up the Curries' baton and was living above the shop. John's eldest daughter Sophie, born at Cornhill in 1853, recalled years later that her nursery windows looked out onto the Royal Exchange²².

The surviving portion of a family diary covers the period 1827 to 1832 (with gaps) and provides a flavour of the way of life of the three Lawford generations preceding Herbert – Samuels I & II and father Thomas Acland. The diarist was Maria Lawford, eldest daughter of Edward Lawford, solicitor to the East India Company, Clerk (general manager) to the Drapers' Livery Company and younger brother of Samuel II. Maria was just ten years old when she began the diary - a year younger than Thomas - but she was cultured and sharp-witted and her writing style was frugal - her most common daily entry was one short sentence. Her record shows close and regular contact between the families of the City brothers and their sister Maria Acland. While Uncle Tom of Wales barely features, his only child Thomas completed his training as a solicitor in London with Edward and was working for him at Drapers' Hall in 1831²³. Marriage had cemented the family relationships as Edward and John had married the Bowring sisters Maria and Sarah, and Samuel II and Maria had married the Acland siblings Margaretta and Gideon II. The family was large, supportive and affluent. Maria's diary entries for December 1831 illustrate the family's activities together and so I have set them out below in full with some additions in square brackets to assist with the identification of individuals, time and place (cousins are identified, siblings are unmarked).

There is a baffling collection of names because the families were so large and interrelated: Samuel II had 9 children, Edward had 9, John 10, and Maria 12 – 40 first cousins in all plus Thomas's one child. Christian names are duplicated between the families, to add to the confusion, and there is even one son with *Lawford* as his given name. Aunt Maria Acland was based in the West Country and only a few of her children lived within easy distance of London in 1831, through work or marriage. The family practice was to refer to the Lawford aunts by their husbands' names so "Aunt John" was Sarah, wife of John and resident of Hackney, and "Aunt Sam" was Margaretta, wife of Samuel II and resident of Clapham. "Grandpapa" was Samuel I, patriarch and resident of Clapham. Emily, Henry (16 years old), Charles (13), Fanny, Melville, Augusta and Baring were Maria's siblings. "Cousin Tom" (26) is the solicitor son of Uncle Tom of Wales. Cousin Emma is John's eldest daughter, born just a few months after Maria, and John Lindsay is his eldest son, born in the same year as Charles. Cousin Lawford, a son of Maria Acland, was then twenty and a year or two away from beginning training as a lawyer in London²⁴. Margaret is Samuel II's youngest daughter aged eleven. Herbert Lawford's father Thomas, then aged 15, escapes mention other than in the

²¹ BWC "Recollections", 1901, p.18

²² Per Valentine G. Lawford, grandson of John (Lawford Record 2008 p.21, by Jeremy Lawford)

²³ Formal documents suggest Thomas II began his legal training under articles to John Price of Swansea in February 1824 and then transferred to Edward in London. However, newspaper articles in 1855 state that he began his training with Edward and worked for him for 8 years before leaving London around 1834; Drapers' records show his address as Carreg Cennen from 1833. (Hereford Times 15/9/1855, p.6; Wiltshire Independent 22/9/1855 etc)

²⁴ Affidavit for articles to Edward Young dated 3/1/1834. Later Lawford was to emerge as a solicitor to the Supreme Court in Bombay, presumably through the contacts of his uncle Edward. He returned to England subsequently and branched out into commerce, becoming chairman of The Ceylon Company amongst other roles, and he was linked to business associates of City elder James Bruce and his family.

collective “Aunt Sam and my cousins” who dined at Maria’s home²⁵ on 15th December, but he must also have been present at the Christmas day celebration on 25th and the party at Clapham on 30th. Maria showed early talent as a pianist and the diary extract reveals that at the age of fourteen she was also learning the harp but was damaging her posture by her style of play; the family doctor recommends that she gives the instrument a rest and exercises with dumbbells (wise counsel).

“December.

.....The day after I was at Hackney [*being 18th November*] I was not very well & in the evening I had chicken pox. Mamma came to fetch me away the next day, & I went to bed as soon as I came home. I stayed in bed a good many days & Mr. Ridout said that I had it nearly as badly as smallpox. As I was in bed so long I could not write my journal but now I am going to begin.

6th. December.

This day was marked by three great events. It was Emily’s birthday. Henry & Charles came home [*from Eton*], & Parliament met. We all had a holiday, Emily had a great many presents. In the afternoon Mamma went to Hackney.

7th.

Mamma went to Clapham to see Grandpapa.

8th.

Little John from Hackney spent the day with us. Mamma went to the bazaar.

9th.

It was very wet all day so we did not go out.

10th.

The Miss Wakefields drank tea with us, after tea we had a very merry game at Speculation.

11th.

Mamma & papa dined at Clapham, I was not very well so Charles stopped at home with me.

12th.

Mamma took us to Hackney.

13th.

Mr. Brading came to teach Henry & Charles writing & mathematics, Mamma took Fanny & Melville out in the carriage. I forgot to mention the chief thing of this day so I skip a few lines M

14th.

Miss Bennett [*our governess*] went to Clapton. Emily & I drank tea with the Miss Wakefields.

On Tuesday the 13th Henry, Charles, & I went with Papa, Mamma & Mr. Joseph Smith to Covent Garden to see the opera of Artaxerxes. When the opera was finished, we saw Country Quarters in which Miss Pool a little girl of ten years old acted very beautifully, at the last was acted the Irishman in London, which we did not like so much as the two other things.

²⁵ This was presumably Drapers’ Hall, their City residence. The family attended a service at St Paul’s on 1st January. On 10th January “the Drapers’ Company dined with us” and on 17th “The rest of the Drapers’ Company dined with us”.

15th.

Aunt Sam & my cousins dined with us.

16th.

Mamma took Augusta & Baring to Hackney. Henry, Charles & I had a concert in the evening.

17th.

Henry is in prodigious joy today, for papa is going to send cousin Tom on some business to Paris & Henry is to go with him.

18th.

Most of the little ones are poorly so Mamma did not go to St. Paul's but papa & Henry did. We dined at Hackney.

19th.

Mamma took me to Walthamstow to stay a few days²⁶. On our way we called at Hackney for [*Cousin*] Emma and took her with us.

20th.

Henry set out with cousin Tom for Paris. As papa had a little business in Paris with Francis Baring²⁷ he sent Tom to do it though it would only take about five minutes, and he thought it a good opportunity for Henry's seeing a little of the world, so he sent him also.

21st.

I had a headache all day & a little cold. We had a game at cards in the evening.

22nd.

In the evening Emily Wansey, [*Cousin*] Emma, [*Cousin*] Margaret & I acted a play. First of all we acted *The Discreet Princess* & afterwards *Beauty & the Beast*. I was the Beast, Miss Davy Mrs Wansey's sister made a mask for me. After it was all finished we danced & played, had supper & went to bed.

23rd.

I had a very bad cold so I did not go out. In the evening Charles & my cousins from Hackney came as we had a little party. We acted a great many charades & we were very happy, in one of them I was a drunken cabman & amused them very much.

24th.

Mamma came to fetch us. As we were going home near Hackney we met Charles on Lewellyn & [*Cousin*] John on Roland. They rode on a little way as Mamma said she would wait at Hackney for them. When they came back Charles had been thrown by the vicious little animal, which made him look a little pale. Mamma brought back John Lindsay to stay a day or two with Charles. [*Cousin*] Lawford Acland dined with us & we played at Snapdragon. Miss Bennett went to stay with her Aunt for a few days.

25th.

It is Christmas day & so foggy that we were obliged to have candles at breakfast. Mamma has a worse cold than she has had these three years & so has every one in the house. We

²⁶ This appears to be the home town of the family of John Wansey (see report in *Gentleman's Magazine* of marriage of Emily Wansey in August 1842, p.200).

²⁷ Hon. Francis Baring (born 1800) was a partner of Baring Brothers & Co from 1823 to 1864 (www.baringarchive.co.uk). He was the second son of Alexander Baring (1st Lord Ashburton) and married Hortense de Bassano in Paris in December 1832. In a report of legal proceedings in 1837 Edward Lawford was described as solicitor to Messrs Baring & Co, "the merchants of Bishopsgate Street" (*London Standard* 24/11/1837, p.1). Edward's son Henry Baring Lawford (known as *Baring*) was born in 1829.

kept church at home. They all dined at Clapham except my sisters & myself. Mrs. Sommers dined & drank tea with us & the little ones made a feast. Papa, Lawford & Charles went to Clapham on horseback. I have forgotten to say in my journal that while we were at Brighton, poor Jacob (Henry's starling) died. Papa & Mamma & the rest did not come home till so late that I began to be a little frightened & when they did come home they said that they were very thankful they had not been upset for it had been so foggy that papa had been obliged to lead the carriage horses all the way; once when they were all standing still not knowing which way to go a man who was passing told papa that if he would lead his drunken friend he would lead the carriage in safety, but papa did not accept his offer.

26th.

The Miss Wakefields & the Miss Scrivners spent the day with us, we all played at cards in the evening & I am very sorry to say that a great deal of cheating was carried on by two of the gentlemen.

27th.

In the evening we all went to a little party at Aunt John's. It was a fancy ball & we had all made our dresses without Mamma's knowing any thing about it, she was very much surprised.

28th.

Miss Bennett came home. Mamma had fancied that I was not quite straight so as Mr. Ridout came to day he examined me & he told Mamma that I had better leave off learning the harp & use dumbbells to throw my arms about. Papa & Charles rode on horseback to Hampstead Heath.

29th.

In the morning Mamma, Emily & I went out with the intention of going to Mr. D. Egville's but when we got to Hanover Square he was not there so we were obliged to come back. In the evening Lawford Acland came.

30th.

In the afternoon we went to bed that we might not be tired & in the evening we went to a party at Grandpapa's. The carpet was taken up & there were a great many people."

At the time Samuel I – Grandpapa – was in his eighty-first year and had been a resident of Clapham for more than ten years. Family legend places him in the ranks of the Clapham Sect, the evangelical group centred on Clapham Common which supported William Wilberforce through his long battle against slavery, but there is no hard evidence and Maria's diary suggests a lightness of heart and sociability that seem at odds with the sober attitudes of this saintly group. Christmas in December 1828 was celebrated with an evening dinner at Clapham followed by blind man's bluff and dancing, and Grandpapa donated a half crown to each grandchild. In January 1829 there was a party for the young ones in Clapham and in December 1830 Christmas dinner was at Clapham again, although Grandpapa's tariff for the children fell to "a new shilling & 6d". Good Friday was also an occasion for family dinners. Maria rarely made personal comments about particular members of the family but in 1832 she included two observations which give brief glimpses of her grandfather's affectionate interest in the family around him. Her comment for the day on 10th March reads "I had my hair turned up for good to please Grandpapa and no one at Clapham knew me". Then in May she describes the wedding of Samuel II's eldest daughter Anne to the Reverend James Brown of Knighton. She was one of three bridesmaids, the others being Cousin Emma and Anne's younger sister Margaret:

“22nd.

Early in the morning we went to Clapham to Cousin Anne’s wedding; there was no crying in the church but after Anne had set off for Wales with Mr Brown, Miss Pickering cried a great deal. There was a great deal of kissing & Grandpapa kissed everybody. Emma, Margaret & I were the three bridesmaids & were all dressed alike.”

No breathless description of events and costume here, and not much interest taken in the bride and drama of the occasion, but we know for sure that Grandpapa kissed everybody.



2.1 Maria Lawford (13) with three young sisters and a parrot, by Daniel Maclise 1830

After his father’s death in 1835 Samuel II remained a resident of Clapham for three or so years then in 1839 he made his final move to a fine Georgian semi-detached villa in Blackheath - Number 13 The Paragon²⁸.

²⁸ Museumoflondon.org.uk , 2013: “The Paragon is a crescent of 14 semi-detached houses built by John Cator between 1795 and 1806..... They were joined by single story colonnades and were designed for wealthy Londoners who were looking for a quiet and more peaceful location away from the hustle and bustle of city life.....During the Second World War the houses were badly damaged by enemy bombing and were rebuilt by Charles Bernard Brown”.



2.2 The Paragon crescent, Blackheath, 2009. No.13 is out of the picture to the right²⁹.

Thomas of Tunbridge Wells and Kenley (1816 – 1884)
and the Turing Bruces of Lee, Kent

Thomas Acland Lawford grew up in Clapham needing for nothing and in the proximity of a large number of rather rich evangelical Christians. Although the sixth of seven sons he followed an individual path and his career inclinations were in some ways closer to those of his forbears Valentine and Samuel I than those of his father and brothers - he was drawn to trade rather than the professions. Elder brother John, as we have seen, continued the line with Curries Bank. The eldest brother, Samuel III, also worked for Curries³⁰ until around 1843 but then lost his way, investing heavily in a Thames wharfage partnership which was on the road to collapse³¹ and then in 1847 moving to Carmarthenshire to link up with the Thomas Wright Lawfords, bent on turning his hand to farming³². Alfred, the fifth son, entered articles to train as a lawyer with Edward Lawford at Drapers' Hall but died at the age of twenty in 1835 before completing his training³³. The other three sons all made the most of the family connections to the East India Company and signed up to the military becoming officers in the Indian Army³⁴.

²⁹ Picture courtesy of Jeremy Lawford.

³⁰ Census for Samuel & John for 1841 – both resident at bank premises Cornhill.

³¹ Morning Advertiser 13/11/1848 p.4 & Daily News 15/12/1848 p.4. Samuel's partners – the Redmans – were bankrupted. See also reference to Redman and Lawford's Platform Wharf, Rotherhithe (Public Ledger 9/4/1847 p.1).

³² Boyd's Roll gives Carreg Cennen as his address from 1847 to 1850. The census of 1851 records him as a farmer of 28 acres on a property called Cwmcoch, Llandybie – close to TWL II's property of Tirydail (census 1851). Boyd shows this address for 3 years to 1853. He died in January 1859, "late of the East India Company's Naval Service" according to newspaper reports – having added yet more variety to his CV (Morning Post 6/1/1859 p.8).

³³ Affidavit of articles dated 15/1/1831. For death: Lawford Record 2008, p.22

³⁴ Lawford Record 2008, p.21 to 22. Edward (Royal Engineers), Henry (Madras Artillery), Francis (Infantry).

Thomas elected to earn his living in the City and his first venture was into the wine trade. When he followed family tradition and joined the Drapers' Company at the age of twenty-three it was as a wine merchant of Fenchurch Street and he was still gainfully employed in this trade at census time in 1841 (which found him comfortably accommodated with his parents at *The Paragon*). This employment, though, was a blind alley and soon afterwards he joined the long established firm of Capel Cuerton & Cundy to train as a stockbroker. His progress was rapid and in April 1842 the three partners of the firm - Richard Cuerton, John Capel and John Cundy - registered him with the Stock Exchange as a clerk authorised to do their business³⁵. Two years later he was admitted to membership of the Stock Exchange³⁶ together with fellow authorised clerk Henry Cuerton, who had been with the firm for at least fifteen years³⁷. 1845 saw the departure of both John Cundy and Richard Cuerton and Thomas and Henry were elevated into partnership³⁸. The company name was amended to *Capel Cuerton & Lawford*³⁹ but the change was short-lived as John Capel shuffled off this mortal coil⁴⁰ at the end of the next year and George Steer arrived in 1847⁴¹ to usher in nearly forty years of Steers, Cuertons and Lawfords as each generation was replaced by a blood relative⁴². George had been a member of the Stock Exchange since 1824⁴³, and had stood surety for Henry Cuerton's admission in 1844⁴⁴, and it was presumably because of twenty years' seniority that he was given pride of place in the new name of *Steer, Cuerton & Lawford*. In the late eighteenth century a stockbroker at the Royal Exchange by the name of John Bruckshaw had taken on John Capel at his Cornhill premises and by 1795 their working relationship had blossomed into the stockbroking partnership of *Bruckshaw & Capel*⁴⁵. This firm had acquired its first Cuerton - Richard - by 1807⁴⁶ and over fifty years it evolved into *Steer, Cuerton & Lawford*. It was to provide Thomas Lawford with a livelihood for the rest of his days - in fact until *The Standard* had to announce regretfully that on 4th November 1884 Mr Lawford had dropped dead in Shorter's Court close to his offices in Drapers' Gardens⁴⁷. Like his forbears he spent all his working years in the City.

Maria Lawford's diary ended in 1832 and it is not until 1841 that we can open another small window onto Thomas's private life. Maria's brother Melville now fulfils the role of family diarist - at the age of fourteen - with support from his sister Jane, but his account of family life is more sporadic than Maria's because he was boarding at Eton for much of the time. In

³⁵ Richard Cuerton's application for re-election to the LSE dated 20/4/1842; see also for Cundy yr ending 25/3/1843 & Capel yr ending 25/3/ 1844.

³⁶ TAL's application to join the LSE with his election recorded as 18/3/1844. His address is 13 Paragon, Blackheath.

³⁷ HC's application to join the LSE with his election recorded as 18/3/1844. HC was recorded as an authorised clerk by Richard Cuerton & John Cundy from March 1829 (LSE re-elections 1829/30).

³⁸ TAL's application for re-election for yr ending 25/3/1846.

³⁹ Leeds Intelligencer 21/6/1845, p.8 (Messrs Capel Cuerton & Lawford named for issue of shares re. Paris & Strasburg Railway); Hertford Mercury 27/9/1845 p.1 (Messrs C, C & L of 7 Pope's Head Alley, Cornhill, named for issue of shares re. Metropolitan Railways Junction Company)

⁴⁰ Morning Post 23/12/1846 p.4. Capel was born in 1767, MP 1826 to 1832 and died in December 1846 ("historyofparliamentonline.org" 2017); first cousin of James Capel, who worked for the firm briefly before joining with Marjoribanks to found the leading firm of stockbrokers which became *James Capel and Co*.

⁴¹ "Government Broker, the story of an office and of Mullens & Co", D. Wainwright, Matham, 1990, p.64. GJS's re-election to LSE for year ending 25/3/1849 (assumed submitted by March 1848)

⁴² See below Chapter 4, p.5 et seq. Granville Farquhar became a partner in 1875/76 (p.5).

⁴³ GJS's application for admission to LSE dated 3 March 1824 - admitted 17 March. His cousin Benjamin Cole IV - citizen and draper - was one of the two members who recommended him for admission.

⁴⁴ HC's application to join the LSE - admission dated 18/3/1844.

⁴⁵ Biography of John Capel 1767 - 1846, "historyofparliamentonline.org" 2017

⁴⁶ RC's application to subscribe to the LSE for 1807, dated 14/2/1807.

⁴⁷ The Standard 5/11/1884, p.6

August 1841 three separate groups of the City cousins set off for trips to the Continent. Maria, now married to Robert Wrench (seed merchant and future master of the Drapers' Company), entrusted her baby of fourteen months to the willing care of her parents and siblings at Eden Park, Beckenham, and formed a holiday party of four with her husband, sister Emily (17) and Melville. Thomas and his brother John of Cornhill ("John and Tom"⁴⁸) formed the second group of travellers, and Melville's eldest brother Henry and cousin William Acland formed the third (two young lawyers from the Drapers' Hall firm travelling together, with William destined for the Bombay Judicature like his brother Lawford Acland⁴⁹).

The Wrench party travelled from London to Ostend by steamboat, arriving on 19th August, then proceeded by train and diligence⁵⁰ via Antwerp to Cologne, where they embarked on a steamboat on the Rhine for a trip of some four days taking them to Bonn, Coblenz, St Goar and finally Mainz. After disembarkation at Mainz they made their way to Frankfurt where they stayed for nearly two weeks – possibly longer than expected because the diarist had rendered himself incapable of walking.

“Just as we were nearing Coblenz, I met with an awkward accident. I was walking across deck, & by some means upset a pail of boiling water over my leg. When we got to Coblenz the porter carried me to the hotel.”

Melville's description has a reassuring insouciance to it – a *Just William* quality for those familiar with the writing of Richmal Crompton - but the burns were serious and it was seven weeks before he walked again. A rescue party was eventually sent out from England in the shape of family retainer Sapsted and his wife and they arrived in Frankfurt soon after the 8th September, by which time Melville had left. It took another three days before they made contact and were able to relieve the Wrenches of their amiable burden.

Henry and William Acland embarked on their holiday at least a week after the Wrench party and met up with them in Frankfurt on 4th September, before departing for Heidelberg and taking in Paris before landing back in England on the 23rd. John and Tom joined the Wrenches on the 9th at Cologne and travelled back to England with them, a journey of six days. It was they who discovered the Sapsteds in Aix-la-Chapelle on the 11th vainly combing the streets in search of Melville. The diary account of the last five days describes a shared experience – fleabites on the railroad, light relief at the Customs barrier and a nineteen hour crossing to London on the overcrowded, livestock-laden old steamboat the *Earl of Liverpool*.

“**Saturday 11th** [*Aix-la-Chapelle*] At a little past five I turned out of bed with the assistance of Robert to get into a buss which was to take us to the diligence. While getting up John & Tom came to us & told us that Sapsted and his wife were at the

⁴⁸ Melville had two Lawford Cousin Toms – Thomas Wright of Wales and Thomas Acland of Blackheath. TWL had married in 1832 and by 1834 had left London and was earning his living in the Llandeilo area; by August 1841 he was father to four children, with a fifth due in October, and had recently joining a new (ill-fated) legal partnership in Brecon, so was not a likely participant in this continental holiday. Melville also had two Cousin John's – John of Cornhill and John Lindsay Lawford of Downhills (Tottenham) a lawyer who trained with and joined the Drapers' Hall legal partnership. Both Johns were London-based and unmarried; Cornhill John was 30, Downhills John 23, and as there is no clear identification from other diary entries both are candidates for the holiday. However, logic says the two brothers were the item “John and Tom” – there was no reason for lawyer John to holiday with his cousin Tom.

⁴⁹ Lawford Record 2008 p.24, by Jeremy Lawford. William was 26. He entered articles in Bristol in 1832 and then transferred to the Drapers' Hall partnership – articulated to John Lawford senior – in 1835 (affidavit dated 3/1/1835 for transfer of articles).

⁵⁰“A solidly built coach with four or more horses...a public conveyance, especially in France, with minor varieties in Germany...”

diligence office & had been going all over the place looking for us. We were very much surprised & when we got to the office, found them there. We started for Liege in the diligence at 1/2 past six & after a tedious journey of seven hours arrived at the filthy town. On our way the luggage was examined at the barrier & we got over pretty well, but a lady who did not declare anything had everything turned out, & the man wanted to make her pay for a doll, because he said it could not have been used as its shoes were not dirty. She was very angry & amused us very much by the way she talked to the people. After dinner at Liege, we went in a buss to the rail-road. I had two places & was in a carriage full of strangers. The rest went in other carriages. We started at past five, were detained some time on the road, by the want of a screw, & did not arrive here, Brussels till 1/2 past nine. When we got to the Terminus we took a buss which drove all over the town, & at last brought us to the Flanders hotel, where there was only room for John & Tom. So we came to this hotel "La Belle Vue" where we have a saloon & three rooms besides one for Sapsted & his wife. After having some tea, & my leg being dressed, I got into bed. In the railroad Maria caught a flea in Robert's whiskers & we caught several hopping about in the diligence, and as it is I am all covered with bites.

Sunday 12th We had breakfast at a little past nine & whilst we were having it, John & Tom came. I had dinner at five & tea at 9 & soon after went to bed.

Monday 13th After breakfast to day some woman came with lace & gloves. Emily bought a pair of gloves of her, soon after another one came with boxes, paper knives &c. I bought two little boxes. At 20 minutes past eleven, Sapsted, his wife & I went about the town in a carriage. We saw the monument where the people who fell in the revolution were buried, it is very fine indeed. We next saw the "Hotel de Ville" which is extremely handsome; they were repairing the spire & the scaffolding went up an immense height, the market was in front. We next saw the cathedral & in going up the chief street we stopped at a shop & I bought some things for the twins.

Tuesday 14th At 1/2 past ten we started in a carriage for the railroad, where we arrived at eleven. We soon got into a carriage for Ostend. We changed trains at Ghent & after a journey of more than six hours, arrived there (Ostend). We had dinner soon afterwards & Sapsted then went out & bought me two pair of wooden shoes. At nine in the evening, Maria & their party came. After having tea I went on board at ten o'clock & got in my berth, the cabin I found was the eating room. I did not go to sleep much as the vessel made a great noise & it was very hot.

Wednesday 15th I was taken on deck at about eight in the morning & sat there the rest of the voyage. John & I had breakfast at a little past ten & it was very acceptable. Sapsted & his wife were very sick. I saw the wreck of a brig in the river, we also saw a great many steam-tugs towing men of war up the river. Our vessel was so heavily laden we were nineteen hours coming across. The deck was covered with pigeons, ducks, chickens &c which made a great noise. At six we were safely landed by little boats at the custom house stairs & as we could not get our luggages, tonight came to Drapers Hall directly in a cab, where, after having tea, we came to the Croydon railway & from Annerly here (Eden). After the diligences &c, the easy close carriage with a platform for my leg was very comfortable. I found all well & ate tea in the drawing room. Our steam boat was the "Earl of Liverpool" - a nasty old boat & unable to stand a rough sea."

Maria, Robert and Emily arrived at Eden Park the day after and sister Jane wrote that all the family were delighted to see them again and happily baby Marian remembered Maria. Jane's

delight turned to sadness a few days later when the Wrench family returned to their own home:

“Saturday 18 To our great sorrow Maria left us, we were really quite grieved at losing dear little Baby who had been an inmate of our house for nine weeks & during that time had become much attached to us all⁵¹.”

Safely returned to England, Thomas could apply himself to his new trade as a stockbroker and close to the time that he went into partnership with Capel and Cuerton his social life also bore fruit. About a mile south west from *The Paragon*, Blackheath, set well back from Belmont Hill road in the village of Lee with extensive grounds, was a villa called *Belmont*⁵². Lee was only sparsely populated in those days and the tithe map of 1839 shows just a scattering of houses amongst fields - the modern suburban sprawl was many years away. A walk from *The Paragon* would have been a pleasant ramble across parkland and fields, at least until just before 1849 when London to Blackheath railway services commenced on a line cutting from west to east at the rear of the Lawford residence. *Belmont* was the country house of James Turing Bruce, fifty two years old at the time of the census in 1841 and principal partner of City bill-dealing firm Bruce Buxton and Co. of 34 Abchurch Lane⁵³. In the early forties he would have been a wealthy man as his discount house was one of the dominating “big four” which enjoyed the support of the Bank of England, even if it was the smallest of the four⁵⁴. However, the trade was risky and market turbulence in the late forties forced the firm to suspend payments and then some ten years later the business failed during the financial crisis of 1857 (although it was refinanced and relaunched in the sixties)⁵⁵.

The three Lawford bankers – Samuel II and his sons Samuel and John - would inevitably have come into contact with James through their business, and either work or the proximity of their houses (and perhaps joint participation in the congregation of St Margaret’s church in Lee) led to an introduction for Thomas to James’s eldest daughter Janet. Tom was smitten and in October 1848 the two were married in Lee a few weeks after Janet’s twentieth birthday. Needless to say James Bruce was from Scotland, with a father based in Lanarkshire and a mother born to the Turing family of Oyne, Aberdeenshire⁵⁶, and this blood link would

⁵¹ Maria, Robert Wrench and their baby Marian arrived to stay at Eden Park on 14th July and remained there until their departure for Ostend on 18th August – accounting for the nine weeks that Baby stayed (Jane’s diary)

⁵² www.lewisham.gov.uk “Belmont Conservation Area” 2015. Includes maps for 1839 & 1863.

⁵³ “History of the London Discount Market”, W.T.C. King, 1936, p.119 & p.120. (See also JTB’s probate record of 28/2/1862 and also that of JTB’s wife Eliza of 12/8/1871 for linkage to Bruce Buxton & Co.) The terms “bill-broking” and “bill-dealing” seem sometimes to be inter-changeable, but strictly a broker received a small commission for trading in bills while a dealer discounted bills and was at risk if the bills were not met. In the censuses and trade directories JTB described himself as a “bill broker” (1825, 1841 & 1845), and a “discount bill broker” (1851).

⁵⁴ “The City of London, Volume I”, David Kynaston, Pimlico 1995, p.87 & 88

⁵⁵ “History of the London Discount Market”, W.T.C. King, 1936, p.142, 187, 190, 233

⁵⁶ With a name as common as *James Bruce*, JTB’s birth records are not as clear-cut as they might be but his age in the English census records and his chosen family names of Turing, Archibald and James point firmly in the direction of the family of Archibald Bruce, Minister of Shotts, who married Forbes Anne Turing in 1780 (“The succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland etc”, 1915, Vol.3 p.278). Forbes’ sister Janet married Robert Duff in 1785 and TAL named his third son Archibald Duff Lawford in 1858 (JTB named his third son Robert). Janet’s grandson, Charles William Gibbon (1820 – 1899) was a bill broker’s clerk who was employed in 1872 by the United Discount Corporation of 34 Abchurch Lane (per admission to Joiners Company 7/11/1872); he was uncle to Sir Hartley Williams (1843 – 1929).

explain in part Herbert's affinity to the northern territory (although the shooting and fishing would have been a powerful enough attraction in themselves).



2.3 A miniature portrait of Herbert Lawford's mother Janet in 1852, a year or so after his birth.

The City's discount houses were an important part of the banking system and in effect both Herbert's grandfathers were pillars of the banking establishment, even if the foundations to Samuel's pillar were rather sounder than James's. Although the Bruce family business survived the financial storms of 1857, James retired soon after⁵⁷ and in 1861, the year of his death, he described himself in the census as a "hop-grower" - humorously one concludes as the family address was Hyde Park and it looks very much as though census officials disapprovingly added a reference to Independent Means (which must have been considerable as his household included Housekeeper, Butler, Footman and five other servants). The family had moved out of Belmont by 1851 and by 1861 two sons – Archibald and James – had joined Bruce & Co. Archibald, an old boy of Rugby School, was thirty one and had entered the business in advance of his father's retirement⁵⁸. James, a youngster of twenty six, had joined by 1860 together with Horatio Coulson⁵⁹. The other surviving partner from 1857 was James Freeling Wilkinson and when he departed in 1860 it was left to the two brothers and Coulson to guide the firm through the early years of the next decade. For a time Thomas therefore enjoyed City connections through two of his brothers-in-law as well as the Lawford clan but

⁵⁷ London Gazette 8/1/1858, retirement wef 1/1/1858

⁵⁸ London Gazette 8/1/1858 (per Morning Post 9/1/1858), ATB is a continuing partner

⁵⁹ London Gazette 1/1/1861, Wilkinson retires wef 31/12/1860, Archibald, James and Coulson continue

Archibald seems to have left the discount business altogether in 1864⁶⁰ and only James II stayed the course with banking until his premature death in 1882⁶¹.

Soon after their marriage Thomas and Janet Lawford set up home in London and by the time of Herbert's birth on 15th May 1851⁶² they were living at 98 Gloucester Terrace, W2, looked after by four servants (nurse, cook, housemaid and footman) and with a baby daughter aged one⁶³. By 1857 two more children had arrived and the family moved out to Tunbridge Wells, taking up residence in a house named *Kenley* in Calverley Park Gardens⁶⁴. Here three more children were born and Herbert grew to manhood⁶⁵.

Standing in about an acre of grounds, *Kenley* was a substantial and elegant villa in the classical style, probably designed and erected by the eminent local builder William Willicombe in the mid 1850's⁶⁶. Tom may have been its first resident. Stucco-faced it had many ornamental features including a low balustrade above part of the ground floor and Willicombe's much-favoured rusticated quoins⁶⁷. It was double-fronted and roughly square in shape to give internal space some 43 feet by 40 on the ground floor (ignoring window bays). The accommodation was on four floors and included a high basement which opened onto the garden at the rear with the ground sloped down to floor level to give light and access. The ground floor rooms were airy - on a grand scale, with the high ceilings of the time, and the largest reception room was 18 feet by 27 including a wide bay⁶⁸. By 1861 the household featured both governess and nurse, with six children ranging in age from six months to eleven years, and the staff included butler, cook and housemaid as witness to Tom's prosperity⁶⁹. Father-in-law James Bruce died that year and despite having sons aged twenty-eight and twenty-four when he drew up his will in 1858, he nominated Tom and Harry George Gordon as his executors, suggesting an unusually close relationship with Tom. Gordon was chairman of the Oriental Bank Corporation from 1847 until 1869⁷⁰, based in London, and like James was a son of Scotland having grown up in Banff, Aberdeenshire⁷¹. He held a variety of directorships⁷² and was highly regarded by the shareholders of the Oriental Bank, but he earned a special place in City history by joining the board of the discount house Overend Gurney less than a year before its spectacular collapse in May 1866 (rather like parachuting onto the *Titanic* to

⁶⁰ "History of the London Discount Market", W.T.C. King, 1936, p.233; The Times 30/11/1863 (James & Coulson directors Discount Corporation, Archibald absent); London Gazette 8/7/1864, dissolution wef 5/7/1864

⁶¹ Censuses for 1871 & 1881, probate 1882 ACU

⁶² Lawford Record 2008 p.38 (51b), "Wimbledon Gentlemen's Singles Champions 1877-2005", p.11, etc.

⁶³ Census 1851, Thomas Acland Lawford

⁶⁴ The Drapers' Boyd's Roll shows TAL as resident in "Kenley, Tunbridge Wells" from 1858 to 1873.

Evelyn Lawford was born in London on 4 September 1857 (Morning Post 8/9/1857 p.8), christened in Tunbridge Wells 18/2/1858 (ACU 2017).

⁶⁵ Lawford Record 2008 p.38. Archibald D. Lawford was born in Tunbridge Wells on 10/9/1858 (Drapers' admission)

⁶⁶ "William Willicombe (1800 – 1875), The "Cubitt" of Tunbridge Wells", Philip Whitbourn, 2009, p.9.

Date of development per Local History Group story on HFL 13/12/2009.

⁶⁷ "William Willicombe (1800 – 1875)", Philip Whitbourn, 2009, p.22

⁶⁸ Savills' sale details for ground floor flat, Calverley Park Gardens, 10/12/2015. The house is now divided into four flats each on its own floor.

⁶⁹ Census 1861, Thomas Acland Lawford

⁷⁰ Morning Post 3/8/1847 p.4, 27/5/1870 p.8 etc.

⁷¹ Census 1851, Harry George Gordon; marriage 1835 in Banff; birth of son Harry Panmure Gordon 1837 Bombay (& see census 1891 for HPG). Address of 1 Clifton Place, Hyde Park reported in Census 1851, Harrow register entry for Panmure, & reports giving his address as a director of the Ebbw Vale Company in 1864 & 1876 etc.

⁷² Inter alia he was a co-director with Lawford Acland of the Ceylon Company (Daily News 10/4/1862). LA was a cousin of Tom's.

join the complement of officers soon after the collision with the iceberg)⁷³. More felicitously he is also remembered for his role as father of the eminent stockbroker Panmure Gordon⁷⁴.



2.4 Kenley, Calverley Park Gardens, Tunbridge Wells, in 2009

For Herbert's education Thomas chose what was becoming a conventional upper middle-class path of preparatory school, public school and university, and in 1863 when he was almost twelve he packed him off to boarding school in Brighton⁷⁵. The favoured academy was Windlesham House, a feeder school for Harrow in particular but also for Eton and the other "name" public schools. In his volume "The Rise of the English Prep School", Donald Leinster-Mackay described a top layer of prep schools "to which dukes would be pleased to send their sons" and he named them The Famous Five: Cheam, Eagle House, Temple Grove, Twyford and Windlesham House⁷⁶. Whether any dukes were patronising Windlesham in Herbert's time is doubtful but there was no questioning its society credentials.

⁷³ Standard 13/7/1865 p.7, Daily News 27/5/1870 p.4, Morning Post 27/5/1870 p.8 etc. "The City of London, Volume I", David Kynaston, Pimlico 1995, p.236 to 239

⁷⁴ ODNB 2016, Panmure Gordon; obituary Evening Post 3/9/1902 p.4 BNA

⁷⁵ Email 3/11/2009 from Dr Tom Houston, historian to Windlesham House School - HFL competed in the 1863 sports days. In 1871 the spring term ended on 25 March (GH Wilson's history of Windlesham House School, p.45).

⁷⁶ "The Rise of the English Prep School", D. Leinster-Mackay, Falmer Press, p.40