

Professional Sportsmanship and Character: Remembering George Geary

George Geary was born on the 9 of July 1893 as the eldest of a bootmaker's sixteen children in the Leicestershire village of Barwell. His professional cricketing career with Leicestershire spanned 1912-1938. While Geary's long-time Leicestershire team-mate, Ewart Astill, has been noted as the first professional county captain in 1935, George has been largely overlooked. He was nevertheless to become one of the most widely travelled cricketers of his time, including touring abroad with S. B. Joel's unofficial Test side to South Africa captained by Lord Tennyson in 1924-5; benefitting from a career saving operation at the personal intervention of Lord Harris in 1928 and going on to coach, among others, future England cricket captain, Peter May, at Charterhouse. Whilst playing for England he scored the winning runs of the 1928-29 Ashes campaign. In spite of being well-travelled Geary always kept a home in the city and raised two daughters here with his wife Florence. Force of personality and past experience, particularly of foreign travel, were among the tools Geary used to coach and earn acceptance in a social milieu to which he would not otherwise have been admitted.

Dr. Jean Williams
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“ Apart from what we learned from George on the technical side, we had the great joy of listening to him talk. We sat there on wet afternoons and listened to tales of Australia 1928-29, of the fourteen Tests he played between 1924 and 1936, of the great players of those years, of characters like George Brown of Hampshire, of hospitality from maharajas on tours of India, of even bigger elephants and tigers there. Some of the stories may have improved with age but, with their fascinating glimpses of an exotic world, they taught us a lot about cricket and what it stood for. ”

Peter May



G Geary
(Courtesy of Leicestershire County Cricket Club)