



# Historical Information Toronto Cricket Club

141 Wilson Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada was the permanent home of the Toronto Cricket Club for some thirty eventful years, 1926 - 1957

Application  
Heritage Toronto Plaques and Markers Program  
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Submitted by Joyce Hisey  
on behalf of the Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club



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## KEY

U.C.C.	Upper Canada College
T.C.C.	Toronto Cricket Club
Y.C.C.	York Cricket Club
U of T	University of Toronto
C.C.A.	Canadian Cricket Association (now Cricket Canada)
TCSCC	Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club
T.C.C.C.	Trinity College Cricket Club
M.C.C.	Marylebone Cricket Club
U of T.C.C.	University of Toronto Cricket Club

*Preamble:*

Cricket came to Canada with the English.

British immigrants to the New World and United Empire Loyalists, who moved north after the American Revolution, brought the game to the village of York in Upper Canada. The time – late 1700's to early 1800's.

There is considerable evidence that Cricket was played by English regiments assigned to the garrison of Fort York and elsewhere in Upper Canada during these early years.

There are also references to cricket activity in Guelph, Hamilton, Kingston and Woodstock during this period. However, few matches were arranged between cities as travel was difficult.

First recorded match: 1834 – Toronto C.C. vs. Guelph C.C.



Fig. 1 Toronto (formerly York) in 1878

## Significant Dates for Cricket in Toronto



Fig. 2 George Anthony Barber

### May 18, 1802

Birthdate of George Anthony Barber in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England. He subsequently became known as "the Father of Canadian Cricket"

### 1823-25

Barber, a teacher, assisted Reverend Thomas D. Phillips at a private school in England.

### 1826

Barber and Phillips emigrated to York. Phillips became the principal of a York Grammar school, Barber, a master, taught writing and mathematics. The school was located in the vicinity of Jarvis and Adelaide Streets. *NB. There is some evidence of an early Cricket field in that area.*

A devotee of Cricket, it was not long before Barber found space, prepared the pitch and organized teachers and students into a formidable cricket team.

### 1827

Barber established the first civilian cricket club – the York Cricket Club. He set the rules/bylaws of the club and officers were elected to run it.

The Toronto Patriot Newspaper "extolled the merits of cricket in Toronto and was delighted to hear of the newly formed club".

### 1829

Upper Canada College was established by Lt. Governor John Colbourne (Lord Seaton)

**Location:** King and Simcoe Streets  
(NB the Royal Alexandra Theatre is built on part of school's former site)

**Staff:** included Barber, engaged as writing master and fees collector

**Students:** from the Grammar School and local gentry

**Curriculum:** academic subjects and physical activity, i.e. sports such as cricket



Fig. 3 Upper Canada College, King Street

Once at U.C.C., Barber lost no time in organizing and training interested teachers and students into becoming skilled cricketers, worthy opponents for members of the Y.C.C. who had followed Barber to the new school.





Fig. 4 Celebrating the Annual T.C.C./U.C.C. Match (1957)

### 1836

U.C.C. Cricket Club established by Barber. That year saw the first annual cricket match between Barber's York Cricket Club and the Upper Canada College Cricket Club. Lt. Governor Francis Bond Head was in attendance and offered his congratulations at the end of the match.

Note: The 150th anniversary of this event was celebrated at the Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club (TCSCC) in 1977 with honoured guest Lt. Governor Pauline McGibbon in attendance.

This match, now in its 182nd year, continues to be played annually.



Fig. 5 TCSCC Honours 150 Years of Cricket

### 1836

Barber changed the name of the York Cricket Club to the Toronto Cricket Club. This reflected the government decision to change the name of the City of York to the City of Toronto. Toronto was the original Inuit name for this early settlement in Upper Canada.



Fig. 6 The Cricket Pitch at U.C.C.

### 1839

Poor accounting practices at both U.C.C. and Kings College (U of T), whose finances were interconnected, resulted in Barber's resignation as fee collector, dismissal as writing master and a payment to cover shortages. As the scandal involved several prominent people, such as Bishop John Strachan, it still remains somewhat obscure. But Barber left U.C.C. and took the T.C.C. with him!



Fig. 7 Cricket in Action

## What Happened Next to George Anthony Barber

Fortunately, Barber had already established his own auditing company which he managed until his death.

### **1840-late 1870's**

Auditor of the City of Toronto

### **1841-1848**

Editor of the Commercial Herald

### **1844**

First superintendent of Common (public) Schools

### **1847**

First superintendent and secretary of the newly formed Board of Education for Toronto

### **1858**

Resigned as superintendent but remained as secretary until his death in 1879.

During his lifetime, Barber never lost his love of nor enthusiasm for Cricket. He continued to play, until age 58, officiate and promote the game when and wherever possible.

## What Happened Next to the Toronto Cricket Club



Fig. 8 T.C.C. Cricketers - circa 1850



Fig. 9 Entrance to Glen Grove Park - on left

No longer based at U.C.C., the T.C.C. began its nomadic existence. This continued for the next eighty-plus years (1839-1926).

Cricket, lacrosse, popular with the native Canadians, and horseracing were the sports favoured by early Torontonians.

Cricket fields sprang up as the city grew. For example, mention is made of Glen Grove Park (west side of Yonge St. at Glen Grove Ave) in the village of Eglinton where many journeyed to enjoy these pastimes. The village of Davisville also boasted of a cricket pitch.

The T.C.C., lacking a permanent home, no doubt made use of these facilities. The cricket field in Etobicoke near the Humber River, present site of Lambton Golf Club, also provided a base and matches with the nearby military garrison.





## The Toronto Cricket Club and Trinity College



Fig. 14 Trinity College - 1852

### 1852

Trinity College – Queen St. opens its doors

Trinity College officials determine that it would be appropriate to form the Trinity College Cricket Club.

Barber sent his son, George Anthony to teach, coach and to produce a team that could play on equal terms with members of the T.C.C.

During the peak years, fine cricket was played by the students at the college.

However, in the early 1900's and at the same time as cricket was losing its public following, Trinity students were experiencing problems with exam schedules, shorter terms and were not always available to play. Attendance waned. Then came the war years.

Sadly, the sport failed to make a comeback after war end. A special game between the T.C.C. and T.C.C.C. in May 1919 in which T.C.C.C. was soundly beaten, proved to be a signal of what was to come.

### 1925

Hope for revitalization finally ended when Trinity College moved to the present location and became part of the U of T.



Fig. 15 Trinity College - 1925

## The Toronto Cricket Club and the University of Toronto

### 1869

With cricket the number one sport on campus, U of T forms the U of T Cricket Club

The popularity of cricket peaked in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Then interest in the sports of the working class eg. baseball and lacrosse began to take over, evidenced by the shift in press coverage.

### 1906

U of T disbands its Cricket Club. Members of the club (students) were given honorary memberships in the T.C.C. as long as the club played its games on university grounds.

In 1926, the T.C.C. moved to Armour Heights. So, ended U of T student involvement with the Cricket Club.



## The Toronto Cricket Club and the Future

**1922**

T.C.C. leader Norman O. Seagram with fellow members Edward F. Seagram, Thomas W. Seagram, William G. Gooderham and Robert A. Laidlaw purchased 17 acres of land in the area of Wilson Avenue and Avenue Road for the express purpose of establishing a permanent home for the T.C.C. They invested \$65,000 in building the club house and preparing the cricket field.



Fig. 16 Under Construction

While active, these gentlemen personally covered the annual deficit. But by the mid 1930's, it became necessary for the club to sell lots around the perimeter of the property to cover these expenses.

Wisely, in 1928, N. Seagram created a trust to hold title to the property in perpetuity, to ensure the survival of cricket. He named five independent cricket playing schools as beneficiaries - Appleby College, Ridley College, St. Andrews College, Trinity College School and Upper Canada College. *N.B. The terms of the trust were updated to reflect the necessary changes required at the time of amalgamation.*

*The "new" Toronto Cricket Club soon became a landmark in the fast developing North Toronto.*

Members enjoyed the lovely property and the social amenities now available in their first permanent home. Besides the outdoor activities, socializing, theatricals and parties provided many pleasant diversions for young and old.

The war years were difficult with many members serving in the forces. But, cricket was always the mainstay.



Fig. 17 In the Bar After the Game



Fig. 18 Ladies at "The Cricket Ball"



Fig. 19 Comedy, Drama and Music on Stage



Fig. 20 Aerial View of the T.C.C. - circa 1926



Fig. 23 The Fire!

**1952**

Fire destroyed part of the club house and many archives are lost.

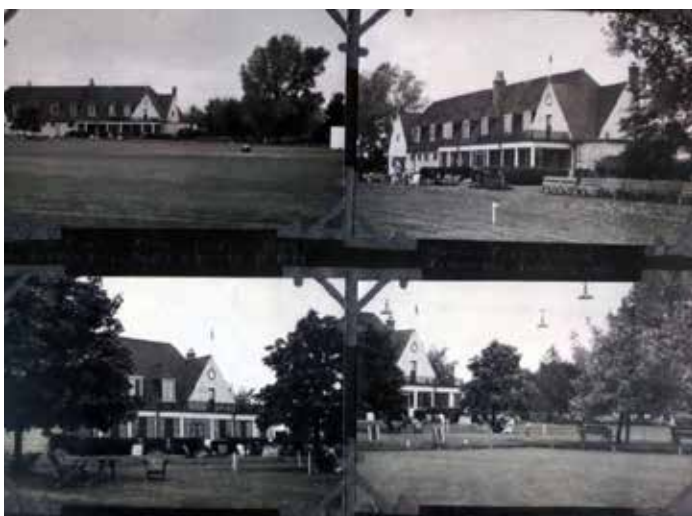


Fig. 21 The T.C.C. Grounds - circa 1926

When the T.C.C. moved to the premises on Wilson Avenue, tennis courts and lawn bowling greens were added to the facilities. T.C.C. hosted the Davis Cup tournament at the time of amalgamation.



Fig. 24 The New Club Under Construction

**1957**

Amalgamation – Struggling to survive on a seasonal basis, the Club welcomed the opportunity to join the Toronto Skating Club, another seasonal club, and the Toronto Curling Club to form the Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club – opening in 1957.



Fig. 22 First Permanent Home of the T.C.C.

The Toronto Cricket Club finds a permanent home in Armour Heights, 100 years after the arrival of G.A. Barber in York.



## The Toronto Cricket Club Goes International

It should be noted that not all members of the Canadian/Ontario teams who participated in the tours/matches mentioned in this document were members of the T.C.C. Whenever possible, they have been so designated. (see 1844 - Canada vs. U.S.A.)

### 1840

Members of St. George's Cricket Club, based in New York City arrived in Toronto expecting a match with the T.C.C.

It was a prank, perpetrated by a certain Mr. Phillpots, T.C.C. member, who was not to be found. After much discussion negotiating and paper work, it was agreed that a match would be played the following day (\$250-a side). The game was attended by Lt. Governor Lord Sydenham and a "goodly number of spectators". As a gesture of goodwill, the visitors were also invited to a dinner at Ontario House, hosted by Lord Sydenham. The British Colonial paper indicated "New York batsmen were better drilled and played with more unity."

### 1843

Members of St. George's C.C. of New York augmented by players from Philadelphia again arrived in Toronto hoping for a match with the T.C.C.

However, the club refused to play as all members of the U.S. team did not belong to the same club. The visitors had to be content with a match in Hamilton.

### 1844

A team representing Canada, challenged the United States to a cricket match. On the Canadian team were 8 members of the T.C.C.

The first contest between the two countries took place in New York City, New York against the St. George's C.C. (\$1,000 a side). It was a two-day event. Playing for Canada were Barber, T.C.C., John B. Robinson and Fred French, T.C.C. professional. French's duties as Club professional included teaching, ground maintenance and some cooking. Bets placed exceeded \$100,000 and Canada won by 23 runs.



Fig. 25 The Oldest International Athletic Event in the World

The series ended in 1912 but was revived in 1963. The trophy awarded is named in honour K.A. Auty, a Chicago-based cricketer. The event is played annually, alternating between Canada and the United States.

*N.B. This event is the oldest international fixture in Cricket and is considered to be the oldest international athletic competition in the world. It predates the America's Cup (1851), the Ashes (1882) and the modern Olympics (1896).*

### 1851

Eleven "Gentlemen Canadians" born in Canada challenged eleven "Old Country Gentlemen" from England.

### 1859

G. Parr brought an English Cricket team to Canada. This team was considered to be the first team to travel internationally for sport.



**1867**

An English team, with member Dr. William Gilbert Grace, one of the "greatest players ever" comes to Toronto.



Fig. 26 The Famous Dr. W. G. Grace

**1868**

English XI returns to challenge the Canadians - Dr. W.G. Grace, again a member of the team.



Fig. 27 Cricket on the U of T Front Campus

**1872**

The Gentlemen of England return to face the Canadians.

This match played September 2-4, took place on the cricket field east of St. George Street and north of College Street (U of T front campus). The immortal Dr. Grace was again part of the team. His score of 142 runs against the T.C.C. stood for over 100 years. Highest individual effort by an English batsman in Canada.

**1878**

First visit by an Australian team. Team included Charlie Bannerman and W.L. Murdoch, Australian greats.

**1880**

First T.C.C. team goes to England, unofficially, with Manager Dale. The trip was a disaster. Mr. Dale was arrested as a deserter from the British Army. Dr. T.D. Phillips sailed to England to help but to no avail. The tour collapsed.

**1886**

First visit by a West Indies Team

**1887**

First official T.C.C. tour to the British "Isles". Manager, Dr. D.R. Ogden. This tour was considered to have been an "excellent experience" for the team.

**1912**

International Series with America cancelled

**1913**

Storm clouds were gathering in Europe. An Australian Team toured Canada and the United States. The team included Australian "stars" such as Herbert Collins and Arthur Mailey.

**1914-1918**

The 1st World War

Following the war, interest in cricket declined noticeably with baseball surging to the front.

**1922**

Norman Seagram, T.C.C. member, gathered together a strong side and led a successful tour of England.



Fig. 28 Marylebone Cricket Club Crest



Fig. 29 Looking East from the Cricket Field with Loretto Abbey in the Distance and NO Houses!

### 1932

Australian team toured Canada. This tour arrived as the country was experiencing the hardships of the depression. Nonetheless, it was a success. On the team was Arthur Mailey, returning for the second time and Donald Bradman. He was to break three Canadian records in play.

Canadian records broken by D. Bradman - 1932

- most centuries in a Canadian season - 15
- most double centuries in a Canadian season - 2
- highest individual score in a Canada season - 260 *N.B. This record stood until 1990 when York University student, Maxwell scored 280.*



Fig. 30 The 1936 Canadian Team

### 1936

Under the patronage of the Hon. R.C. Matthews, a former cabinet minister and cricket supporter, a Canadian side was assembled to tour England.

The captain was W.E.N. Bell. On the team were Norman Seagram, I. Clarke Bell and Lloyd Percival,

physical education expert. The team claimed a major victory, defeating M.C.C. at Lords by 16 runs. The first Canadian win over an English XI.

### 1937

Marylebone C.C. play at the T.C.C.

### 1939-1945

The 2nd World War

### 1951

M.C.C., representing England, vs. Canada at the T.C.C. The Canadian team was chosen by the C.C.A. The captain: L. Gunn, T.C.C. member. It was a first-class match held over three days. Matches between these teams were also held in Calgary and Vancouver. The overall winner was England. This was the first of a series that continues today.

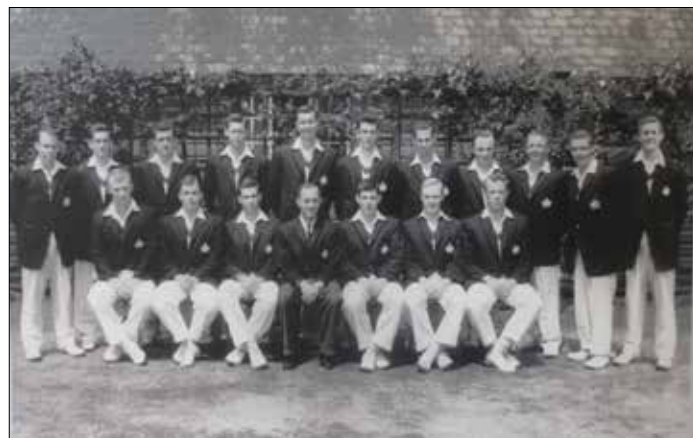


Fig. 31 The First Canadian Junior Team to go Abroad

### 1957

Canadian Junior Cricket Team tours England - Captain – E. Bracht T.C.C. member

In 1964, Donald King, secretary CCA wrote that Canadian involvement in International Competitions has been greater than realized by many Cricketers.

The T.C.C. and/or its members have played against almost every touring side to visit Canada according to E.A. Wigley, TCSCC member.

### Other Relevant Sporting Information

ODI – One Day International matches – until just recently, the T.C.C./TCSCC was the only field on which these events could be held.

Test matches – Canada is not permitted to host these events.

# The Toronto Cricket Club and Special Cricket Trophies



Fig. 32 The John Ross Robertson Trophy

## 1. John Ross Robertson Trophy

Philanthropist, John Ross Robertson was born in Toronto in 1841. Educated at U.C.C. and more interested in reporting than academics, he worked for the Globe (later Globe and Mail) after finishing school.

### 1866

Started his own paper – The Telegram. It subsequently failed.

### 1876

Went to work for the Evening Telegram. Always a supporter of sport, especially cricket, in 1910 he donated the John Ross Robertson Trophy for the Best Club in Canada.

#### Criteria:

No professionals were to be included on the side C.C.A. to make the selection.

Subsequently, this trophy became “Emblematic of the Club Cricket Championship of the Dominion of Canada”.

T.C.C. was awarded the honour of being the “Best Club in Canada” 23 times between 1910 and 1957 (amalgamation).



Fig. 33 The Atholstan Trophy

## 2. The Atholstan Trophy

Hugh Graham was born in Atholstan (now Hinchinbrooke) Quebec in 1848. He lived in Montreal and became probably the wealthiest newspaper publisher in Canada. He worked tirelessly for and supported numerous charities. He was created Lord Atholstan by King George V in 1917.

His close personal friend was Dean Charles E Moyse of McGill University. Dean Moyse also served as President of the McGill College Cricket Club. In 1936 Lord Atholstan donated a cricket trophy in memory of his friend and to perpetuate his efforts in the interest of cricket in Canada over a period of many years.

The trophy is for “Inter-Provincial Competition in Eastern Canada” - namely Quebec and Ontario.

Teams are chosen by the respective provincial cricket associations. No doubt there would have been T.C.C. members among the players on the Ontario teams.





Fig. 34 The K.A. Auty Trophy

### 3. The K.A. Auty Trophy

Karl Andre Auty was born in 1878 and educated in England. He moved to Vancouver, BC, 1909, then to Chicago in 1915.

He was an active cricketer until well in his 60's, president of the Chicago C.C. and Illinois Cricket Association for 25 years.

This trophy was awarded for the first time in 1963 when the series between Canada and the United States resumed after a hiatus of some 51 years (1912-1963).

The inscription honours the first match in 1844, making it the oldest continuing international sporting competition.

It also honours the memory of the late K.A. Auty, a builder of cricket.

The matches alternate between Canada and the U.S.A. Players are amateur and chosen by the respective Cricket associations.



Fig. 35 The Totem Ashes Trophy

### 4. Totem Ashes Trophy

This trophy is awarded for the series between Canada and England (represented by the Marylebone C.C.) in the years when M.C.C. tours Canada.

It was initiated in 1951. The matches were played at the T.C.C., Calgary and Vancouver that year. See page 13.

The C.C.A. chose the Canadian Team. England won the series in Vancouver. To emulate the famous Ashes Trophy awarded for the England vs. Australia series, a totem pole from Stanley Park was burned and the remaining ashes placed in the silver cigarette box. Hence the trophy name "Totem Ashes".

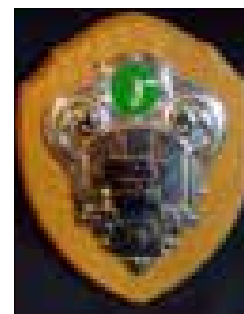


Fig. 36 Typical Plaque

### 5. Potters Bar C.C. vs. Toronto Cricket Club July 1878

This plaque is representative of those awarded when clubs challenged each other to a match.

*Trophies 1 - 4 are presently displayed at the TCSCC.*

## Toronto Cricket Club and Cricket Greats

To name every player, administrator, supporter or member of a sports club that has existed for 130 years would be impossible. Thus, it is with the Toronto Cricket Club.

The individuals acknowledged here are but a very, very few of all those who made Cricket the #1 sport in Canada, saw its decline and worked to ensure that it remains part of Canadian sporting life.

Also, included are several Cricket greats from other countries who played a significant role in the life of the T.C.C.

Significant too, is the consistent support and participation of the government officials over the years.

### \* **George Anthony Barber**

The Father of Canadian Cricket

### **L. Clarke Bell**

Considered to be one of the finest batsman in Canadian history, T.C.C member, C.C.A. president, member 1936 Canadian Tour to England.

### \* **Edgar A. Bracht**

T.C.C. member, Honourary Member of the TCSCC and Captain of the first Canadian Junior Team (1957) to tour England. He continues to play important administrative roles with Cricket Canada, the Cricket Trust and the TCSCC and is largely responsible for the continuation of the annual T.C.C./U.C.C. match.

### **Joel Bradbury**

T.C.C. member and spectacular bowler. In 1854, he defeated the U.S. team taking 9 wickets for 6 runs leading to the lowest innings total in the Canada vs. U.S.A. series to date.



Fig. 37 TCSCC Cricket Wall of Fame

### **Sir Donald Bradman**

Australian and "world great" batsman, played at the T.C.C. in 1932. It is said in his memoirs that "the best players we met were in Toronto".



Fig. 38 Sir Donald Bradman  
"To the Toronto Cricket Club in remembrance  
of Armour Heights 1932"

**Dr. William Gilbert Grace**

Immortal English Cricketer – one of the greatest players ever!

**\* Lewis Gunn**

T.C.C. member and player, responsible for the revival of the Auty Cup event in 1963, contributed to the advancement of cricket in Canada.

**Frederick James Heather**

T.C.C. member, Canadian cricket builder, instituted a school for umpires and developed a junior league for aspiring players

**\* Donald King**

T.C.C. member, with L. Gunn, was responsible for the revival of the K.A. Auty Cup event in 1963, contributed to the advancement of cricket in Canada

**\* John Laing**

T.C.C. member and world class cricketer whose skill on the field helped maintain cricket popularity in matches with the United States – late 1890's/early 1900's

**George G.S. Lindsey**

Part of the 1887 Canadian Tour to England to learn about the game on English fields, opened a new era for cricket at home – making it a game for everyone, not just the elite.

**Hon. R.C. Matthews**

T.C.C. member whose continued patronage and support was invaluable to cricket in the 1930's.

**Robert C. McCullough**

T.C.C. member with John E. Hall, secretary CCA, wrote 60 Years of Canadian Cricket - Introduction by G.S. Lindsey.

**Ross McKenzie**

T.C.C. member, hurled a ball 140 yds, 9". 1872, record stood for 20 years until English cricketer Percival made the distance of 140 yds, 2 ft!

**Dr. T.D. Phillips**

Came to Canada with George Barber as grammar school principal, later a master at U.C.C., involved with cricket in the developing years, edited the Canadian Cricket Guide for three years.

**\* Members of the Cricket Wall of Fame**

Fig. 39 Dr. T.D. Phillips - Publisher

**Dyce Saunders**

"Wicked" T.C.C. wicket-keeper, known as the Dean of Cricket, player of note, sat on committee at the time the C.C.A. was established, C.A.A. President, Honourary Vice-President of the T.C.C. and the Toronto District Cricket Board.

**\* Norman Seagram**

T.C.C. member and player whose foresight, wisdom and drive allowed for the purchase of property and the building of the club house on Wilson Avenue that finally provided a permanent home for the Toronto Cricket Club. Honourary President – Toronto and District Cricket Council. He was also responsible for establishing the trust that protects the Cricket grounds in perpetuity.

**John Ross Robertson**

Philanthropist who loved sport especially cricket. Donator of the trophy for the Best Club in Canada.

**John B. Robinson**

U.C.C. cricketer in 1836, played in the first T.C.C./U.C.C. match, influenced and ensured cricket remained an important part of U.C.C., a contemporary and supporter of George Barber. He also encouraged the T.C.C. to become part of the Toronto Athletic Club in the 1890's. This club was situated on College St. near U of T and the cricket fields. The membership is unconfirmed.

**Charles D. Wilson**

A keen supporter of Cricket in Ontario for over 50 years, Charles worked with L. Gunn and D. King on the revitalized U.S. vs. Canada series (1963) and the Canadian National Cricket Championships established in 1947.



## Other T.C.C. Highlights



Fig. 40 The "Old" Canadian Flag

**1867**

Confederation! Sir John A. McDonald, first Prime Minister of Canada, declares Cricket Canada's National Sport.



Fig. 41 Toronto Celebrates Queen Victoria's Birthday

**1879**

The City of Toronto celebrates Queen Victoria's birthday with cricket, lacrosse and races.



Fig. 42 The Daft Team

**1879**

Richard Daft brought his team to Canada in 1879. All the players were professional. Several matches were played in Toronto and London and a fifth in Hamilton against 22 Native Canadians in each case. It would be 85 years before Canada would face another professional team (1964) on the former T.C.C. grounds.



**1892**

Canadian Cricket Association formed (C.C.A.) now Cricket Canada (based in Toronto)

Fig. 43 Canadian Cricket Association Logo



Fig. 44 Olympic Games Belgium

**1920**

Cricket at the 1920 Olympic Games, Antwerp, Belgium. Cricket was an official sport at these Games. Norman Seagram, T.C.C. member played on the Canadian Team.

## Other T.C.C. Highlights



Fig. 45 Cricket vs. Baseball

**1937**

The Toronto Maple Leaf Baseball team visits the T.C.C. to learn what cricket is all about.

**1947**

Canadian National Cricket Championships were instituted in 1947. Teams to be chosen by the respective Provincial Associations. Ontario won the first event and have captured the title 10 times in the ensuing years.



Fig. 46 Cricket Canada Logo

**1957**

### Toronto Cricket Skating and Curling Club



Fig. 47 The Second and Final Home to the Toronto Cricket Club

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