

## STILL COMPETITIVE AT THE HALF CENTURY MARK

**T**he 50th anniversary of the club's founding took place in 1923. In 1923 S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike graduated with honours from Oxford and D.S. Senanayake, Ceylon's first prime minister, founded Ceylon's cooperative-society movement.

### Global events of 1923

Mount Etna erupted on 19<sup>th</sup> June and construction commenced on the Sydney Harbour bridge. The Eli Lilly company mass produced a highly refined insulin for use in the treatment of diabetes.

The republic of Turkey was established, and the Irish civil war ended in May. The unsuccessful beer hall putsch took place in Germany. Stanley Baldwin was appointed British prime minister.

TIME magazine was launched, Warner Brothers was established, the Walt Disney Company was formed, and the Hollywood sign was inaugurated at California. The first baseball game was played at Yankee stadium, the first 24 hours of Le Mans motor race was held, and King Tutankhamun's burial chamber was opened by Howard Carter.

1923 saw the birth of American writers Norman Mailer and Joseph Heller, film star Charlton Heston, and country music singer Jim Reeves. Albert Duke of York married Lady Elizabeth Rows-Lyon in Westminster Abbey.

In 1923 Bill Ponsford made 429 at the MCG playing against Tasmania. Yorkshire won the English county cricket championship. Patsy Hendren and Wilfred Rhodes topped the batting and bowling averages, respectively. Arthur Gilligan and Maurice Tate were amongst Wisden's five cricketers of the year. Don Bradman, 15 years of age, helped his father construct a house at 20 Glebe Street, Bowral, while working as a clerk for Percy Westbrook's real estate agency.

### Golden Jubilee

Foenander (1941: 6) explains what happened in 1923 –

“In 1923 the Colts attained their Golden Jubilee, and this occasion was also worthily celebrated in their new home at Havelock Park, where the guest of honour was Sir William Manning, Governor of Ceylon. One of the events commemorating that historic occasion was a cricket match between a team of Colts veterans and a team of veterans of other clubs, including well-known old players like Col. T.Y. Wright, Col. E. H. Joseph, CF.B. Elliot, H. H. Heinemann, O. G. de Alwis, Dr. Gerald de Saram, Fred van Rooyen, J.C. Weinman, O.S. Wickwar and D.B. Gunasekera.”

Then Foenander goes on to list the participants who had passed away in the intervening 18 years –

“Many of the twenty-two who figured in that Jubilee match have since passed away, namely, J.C. Weinman, Paddy and Michael Thomasz, Colvin Kelaart, D.B. Gunasekera, Dr. S.P. Joseph and Cyril Fernando, also Sir William Manning, who was the central figure in a group photograph taken on August 23, 1928. The two umpires, Dr. Garvin Mack and A.C. Solomonsz, have also passed away”

## The club competition

The SSC took out the club competition in 1924 and 1925. In 1925 the team was captained by Dr. C.H. Gunasekera and had players of the calibre of L.D.S. “Chippy” Gunasekera, M.K. Albert and R.M.M. de Silva in the side. The last named took over fifty wickets and headed the bowling averages. Both Albert and de Silva were named cricketers of the year.

What is most interesting is that the Colts was narrowly defeated for the top spot. The Colts were two runs short of victory in the return game against the Sports Club when stumps were drawn. Thus, they lost the championship by a fraction of a point. The club started the season off badly but made-up ground by winning seven of their last twenty matches. In 1925 the long and ongoing reign of the SCC would never have been predicted. But the SSC had demography on its side and were to enjoy the influx of burgherised Thomians and Royalists such as R.B. Wijesinghe, F.C. de Saram and Lucien de Soysa.

## THE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

FIRST-CLASS CRICKET IN 1925.									
THE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP.									
	No. of matches	Won.	Lost.	Drawn.	Pts. scored.	Pts.	Percentage.		
Sinhalese S.C.	18	7	0	11	32	54	50.25		
Colts C.C.	16	8	4	4	28	48	38.33		
B.R.C.	16	5	2	9	24	48	50.00		
Notts C. & A.C.	15	5	4	6	21	45	46.66		
Nondescripts C.C.	14	4	4	6	18	45	40.00		
Galle C.C.	11	4	0	1	13	33	39.59		
Bloomfield C. & A.C.	16	3	3	10	19	48	39.5		
C.C.C.	17	3	3	11	20	51	39.2		
Tamil Union	19	2	4	13	18	51	31.20		
Sports Club	16	1	0	9	12	48	25.0		
Malay C.C.	15	0	8	7	7	45	15.5		
Less Than 10 Matches.									
D.A.C.C.	3	2	1	0	6	6	66.66		
D.M.C.C.	6	3	3	0	9	18	50.00		
Three points for a win and one point to each side in a drawn game.									
Summary of Results.									
Matches played	..	..	..	..	..	107			
Abandoned	..	..	..	..	..	4			
Completed	..	..	..	..	..	33			
Drawn	..	..	..	..	..	50			
No. of Centuries	..	..	..	..	..	13			
No. of Scores of 50 and over	..	..	..	..	..	101			
Totals of 200 and over	..	..	..	..	..	31			
Smallest Total in an Innings.									
Colts vs. N.C.C.	0	..	..	..	..	14			
Sports Club vs. Bloomfield	..	..	..	..	..	24			
Tamil Union vs. Colts	..	..	..	..	..	32			
N.C.C. vs. Colts	..	..	..	..	..	34			
Colts vs. C.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	36			
Centuries.									
M. K. Albert, Ceylonese vs. Europeans	..	..	..	..	..	175			
A. H. R. Joseph, Tamils vs. Sinhalese S.C.	..	..	..	..	..	144*			
A. E. Blair, Up-country vs. C.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	139			
C. C. Senaratna, Sinhalese S.C. vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	136*			
T. Cuming, Magpies vs. D.A.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	114			
Major F.R.R. Brooke, C.C.C. vs. Combined Colleges	..	..	..	..	..	113			
C. Vanderstraeten, B.R.C. vs. Sports Club	..	..	..	..	..	112*			
D. A. Wright, D.M.C.C. vs. Horn Club	..	..	..	..	..	109			
*Not Out.									

Scores of 50 and Over									
F. C. Speldewinde vs. Malay C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	55*			
H. C. Inman vs. Sports Club	..	..	..	..	..	87			
W. E. LaBrooy vs. Kalutara A.C.	..	..	..	..	..	91			
C. VanGeyzel vs. Malay C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	61*			
E. H. Joseph vs. do	..	..	..	..	..	36			
J. Murray vs. Bloomfield	..	..	..	..	..	51			
R. A. Crutchley vs. C.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	59*			
Against.									
E. C. W. VanGeyzel, N.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	61*			
R. A. Crutchley, B.C. & A.C.	..	..	..	..	..	52			
R. Gibson, Police	..	..	..	..	..	52			
N. S. Joseph, Combined Colleges	..	..	..	..	..	57			
*Not Out.									
Best Bowling Feats.									
L. V. Jayaweera vs. C.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 31			
W. E. LaBrooy vs. Bloomfield	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 33			
B. de Kretser vs. Notts	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 16			
W. Gunawardena vs. Sports Club	..	..	..	..	..	4 for 9			
B. de Kretser vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	7 for 40			
H. C. Inman vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	6 for 19			
B. de Kretser vs. Kalutara A.C.	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 23			
H. C. Inman vs. C.L.I.	..	..	..	..	..	4 for 6			
W. Goonewardene vs. C.L.I.	..	..	..	..	..	7 for 17			
H. Mayo vs. C.L.I.	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 23			
B. de Kretser vs. N.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	6 for 21			
Do vs. Malay	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 24			
Do vs. Tamils	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 14			
H. C. Inman vs. Tamils	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 14			
Do vs. Sports Club	..	..	..	..	..	7 for 30			
B. de Kretser vs. S.S.C.	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 59			
W. E. LaBrooy vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 32			
B. de Kretser vs. C.C.C.	..	..	..	..	..	7 for 32			
Do vs. Notts	..	..	..	..	..	5 for 40			

Courtesy of Foenander 1926

In its fifty-second year the club was still a force to be reckoned with. Foenander (1926: 37-39) summarises the season –

## THE COLTS C. C. IN 1925.

The Colts C.C., famous in the eighties, nineties and the next decade as Ceylon's premier club, have a notable history of over half a century of years behind them. Their record in the past twelve months is one of which even so famous a club might well be proud, for it was by the narrowest of margins—a decimal fraction—that they were deprived of the honour of heading the club championship table for 1925. The past year has been a noteworthy one for the old champions. Their President, Dr. Allan Raffel, one of the greatest cricketers ever produced by Ceylon, had the honour of being elected President of the Ceylon Cricket Association for 1925. The Club won more matches last year, than any other first-class club and had, perhaps, the best array of bowling talent among the Ceylon clubs. That they did not win the championship was due to the fact that they made a draw with the Sports Club instead of winning that return match easily as they deserved to. In the first meeting with the Sports Club they trounced their opponents by 139 runs on Galle Face. In the return game, when stumps were drawn, the Colts needed only two runs for victory, with two wickets to fall. Had play been continued another over the Colts would have won maximum points and finished up champions for the year.

The Colts started the year badly, losing to the Nondescripts, after having collapsed for 14 runs in their first innings. This was the smallest total ever made by the Colts against their famous old rivals, but years ago they dismissed the N.C.C. for only 11 runs. They were beaten by the C.C.C. chiefly owing to some deadly bowling by Greswell. In their first six matches they were beaten thrice and won only one victory. After that they began to do really well, beating the Galle Club in Galle by 112 runs, the Tamil Union, the C.C.C. and the Notts (twice) the Nondescripts the Malay C.C. and the Sports Club. In their last twelve first-class matches they were beaten only twice, but they won 7 matches.

In B. de Kretser they had one of the most successful bowlers of the year. This left hander once again captured over a hundred wickets—not all for the Colts. In Inman, W. E. LaBrooy, the Captain, R. Crutchley, C. D. Mayo, L. V. Jayaweera, E. H. Joseph, J. Murray and W. Ludovici the club had an excellent array of bowlers, possessing more variety than their rivals. Inman proved himself to be a real acquisition to the Colts, both as a batsman and bowler, but he has not yet shown his best form in first-class games and ought to be a bigger success in the coming year. W. E. LaBrooy had a very successful year as captain and also as a batsman and bowler.

The Colts eleven at full strength were a young side and very keen in the field. This was how they won all their matches. In E. H. Joseph they had one of the finest fieldsmen in the Island. In A. E. Schoorman they possessed one of the four best wicket keepers in the Island. One could place Schoorman in the same class as Major Brooke, D. A. Wright and V. Scholman, who have been recognised as three of the best keepers in the Island. If Schoorman continues to "keep" as well as he

has done in the past three months he should have a strong claim for representative honours. In July last against the Malay C.C. Schoorman caught two batsmen, stumped 1 and ran one man out. This is a record for one innings of a first-class match in Ceylon. In November he dismissed five batsmen in the match between the Colts and Mr. S. P. Foenander's XI.

While the fielding of the Colts has been so reliable the bowling has been rendered more effective than it would otherwise have been. In April Inman performed the "hat trick" for the Colts vs. the C.L.I. The latter were dismissed for 83 in their two innings.

In July B. de Kretser performed the "hat trick" for the Colts against the Tamil Union at Havelock Park. This was the first time de Kretser had performed this feat in a first-class match. It is noteworthy that not a single century was scored during the past year against the Colts and only four batsmen were able to get over fifty against them. This is ample testimony to the bowling strength of the old premier club. R. A. Crutchley, one of these four, afterwards joined the Colts and proved himself a very useful member of the team. F. C. W. VanGeyzel, who scored 61 not out, for the N.C.C. is the son of well known old Colts Captain, the late Dr. C. T. VanGeyzel. The highest individual score made for the Colts was 91 by their captain against the Kalutara C. & A.C. Inman's 87 is the highest in a first-class match. Among the other members of the Colts, who worked hard for the side, were C. W. VanGeyzel, T. C. VanRooven, who joined the club in the past year and proved himself a promising all round player, and C. D. Mayo, who has still to show his best form for the Colts. The splendid all round record of the Club in 1925 ought to prove very encouraging to the members of the Colts and act as an incentive to them to gain further success in the coming year.

The following is a summary of the results of matches played and short record of the best batting and bowling performances.

### Results of all Matches.

Colts 14 and 41 for 7 beaten by Nondescripts C.C. 118 for 3 by 104 runs.  
Colts 105 for 7 drew with Sinhalese S.C. 200 for 8.  
Colts 40 and 69 for 2 wickets, lost to C.C.C. 158 by 122 runs.  
Colts 103 for 5 wickets, drew with Bloomfield C. & A.C. 203 for 7 wickets.  
Colts 115 for 1 wkt. beat Notts C. & A.C. 67 by 48 runs.  
Colts 200 for 3 wickets, drew with Malay C.C. 88 for 6.  
Colts 126 and 149 beat Galle C.C. 108 and 54 by 112 runs.  
Colts 221 beat Sports Club 82 by 139 runs.  
Colts 242 for 7 beat Kalutara A.C. 55 and 43 for 3 on 1st innings.  
Colts 122 for 4 beat C.L.I. 43 and 49 by an innings.  
Colts 98 for 8 drew with Combined Colleges 164 for 8.  
Colts 103 for 3 wickets, beat Nondescripts 34 by 69 runs.  
Colts 172 for 3 wickets, beat Malay C.C. 54 by 118 runs.  
Colts 119 for 6 wickets, beat Tamil Union 32 and 54 for 2 wickets.  
Colts 107 for 8 wickets, drew with Sports Club 108.  
Colts 74 lost to S.S.C. 115 by 41 runs.  
Colts 158 for 4 drew with Bloomfield 118 for 2 wickets.  
Colts 67 and 93 lost to Galle C.C. 87 and 73 for 3 wickets, by 7 wickets.  
Colts 135 for 5 beat C.C.C. 84 by 51 runs.  
\*Colts 56 for 8 drew with Police 157 for 7 wickets.  
Colts 104 for 4 beat Notts 98 by 6 runs.  
Played 20, won 8, lost 4, drawn 8.

\*Not first-class matches.

## THE COLTS C. C. IN 1925.

39

### Scores of 50 and Over

F. C. Speldewinde vs. Malay C.C.	..	..	55*
H. C. Inman vs. Sports Club	..	..	87
W. E. LaBrooy vs. Kalutara A.C.	..	..	91
C. VanGeyzel vs. Malay C.C.	..	..	61*
E. H. Joseph vs. do	..	..	56
J. Murray vs. Bloomfield	..	..	51
R. A. Crutchley vs. C.C.C.	..	..	59*

### Against.

F. C. W. VanGeyzel, N.C.C.	..	..	61*
R. A. Crutchley, B.C. & A.C.	..	..	52
R. Gibson, Police	..	..	52
N. S. Joseph, Combined Colleges	..	..	57

\*Not Out.

### Best Bowling Feats.

L. V. Jayaweera vs. C.C.C.	..	..	5	for	51
W. E. LaBrooy vs. Bloomfield	..	..	5	for	53
B. de Kretser vs. Notts	..	..	5	for	16
W. Gunawardena vs. Sports Club	..	..	4	for	9
B. de Kretser vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	7	for	46
H. C. Inman vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	6	for	19
B. de Kretser vs. Kalutara A.C.	..	..	5	for	43
H. C. Inman vs. C.L.I.	..	..	4	for	6
W. Gunawardena vs. C.L.I.	..	..	7	for	17
H. Mayo vs. C.L.I.	..	..	5	for	23
B. de Kretser vs. N.C.C.	..	..	6	for	21
Do vs. Malay	..	..	5	for	24
Do vs. Tamils	..	..	5	for	14
H. C. Inman vs. Tamils	..	..	5	for	14
Do vs. Sports Club	..	..	7	for	30
B. de Kretser vs. S.S.C.	..	..	5	for	59
W. E. LaBrooy vs. Galle C.C.	..	..	5	for	32
B. de Kretser vs. C.C.C.	..	..	7	for	32
Do vs. Notts	..	..	5	for	40



Bertram de Kretser, who failed to obtain representative honours because of Cecil Horan, was outstanding and was made a cricketer of the year. Indeed, their bowling had more variety than that of other clubs. De Kretser was backed up by Inman, W.E. LaBrooy, the captain, R. Crutchley, C.D. Mayo, L.V. Jayaweera, E.H. Joseph, J. Murray and W. Ludovici. E.H. Joseph was considered one of the best fieldsmen the country and A.E. Schoorman one of top four wicket keepers.

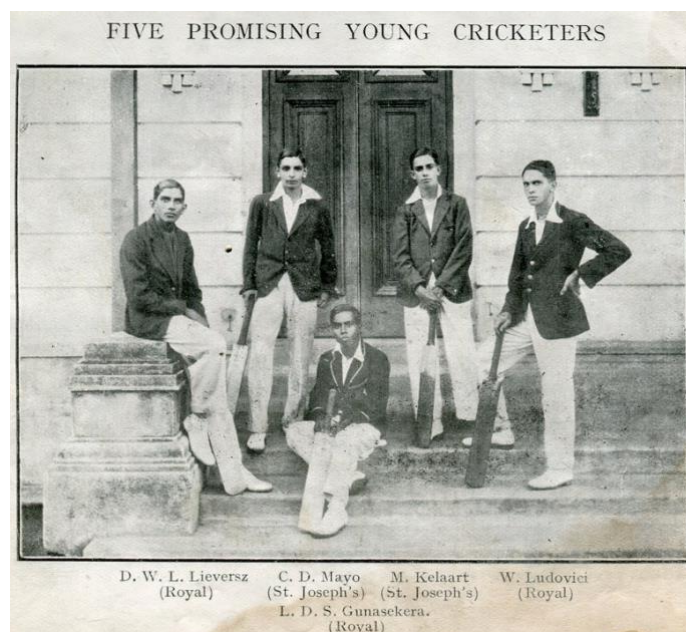
**E.H. JOSEPH**



Courtesy of Foenander 1924

### **Future Colts cricketers**

Interestingly, four of the five promising young cricketers of the year either had Colts connections or were to throw in their lot with the club. Mervyn Kelaart (St. Joseph's) was the son of Colvin Kelaart. Douglas Lieversz (Royal), C.D. Mayo (St. Joseph's) and W. Ludovici (Royal) were to throw in their lot with the Colts.



Courtesy of Foenander 1926

All five of the above played against each other in a school game. L.D.S. Gunasekera fared the best, scoring 194 for Royal. J.R. Jayawardene, the first president of Sri Lanka, played for Royal and did very little.

- 1925 -			
St. Josephs vs. Royal on B.R.C. Grounds on 24th and 25th February, 1925.			
P. Halahackoon bowled Meedeniya	1	LBW bld C.L.Perera	1
H. Sproule " "	4	bld Wijetunga	42
M. Kelaart ct C.L.Perera bld			
F.L.Gooneswardena	22	ct Meedeniya bld Wijetunga	30
C.D.Mayo St. Dharmaratne bld			
Ludovici	98	St. Dharmaratne bld Wijetunga	15
C.M.Fernando ct. N.Joseph			
bld. Meedeniya	1	ct. Gunasekera bld Ludovici	8
H.Halahackone st. Dharmaratne			
bld. Ludovici	91	" W.Gooneswardena " "	0
L.de.Croos Retired Ht.	27	" J.R.Jayawardena " "	7
T.H.Kelaart ct. Gunasekera bld			
Meedeniya	44	bowled N.Joseph	6
F.R.de.Zoyza bowled C.L.Perera	19	Not out	17
Arthur Silva Not out	0	ct. Gunasekera bld Joseph	22
G.Senanayake ct. F.Gooneswardena			
bld Meedeniya	5	Not out	1
Extras	17		10
Total for 9 wickets declared	329	for 9 wkts	159
(10-54-83-94.95 102 109 114 142) ----- (1-10-46-141-142-265.319 323 329)			
<u>Bowling</u>			
F.L.Gooneswardena	14 - 6 - 48 - 1	3 - 0 - 16 - 0	
H.Meedeniya	24.5 - 5 - 86 - 5		
H.E.Wijetunga	20 - 3 - 68 - 0	12 - 0 - 34 - 3	
D.Lieversz	5 - 0 - 40 - 0		
W.Ludovici	20 - 7 - 53 - 2	11 - 2 - 26 - 3	
C.L.Perera	4 - 1 - 17 - 1	4 - 2 - 10 - 1	
N.S.Joseph		9 - 0 - 32 - 2	
W.Gooneswardena		4 - 1 - 7 - 0	
L.D.S.Gunasekera		1 - 0 - 18 - 0	
<u>Royal</u> <u>Drawn in favour of St. Josephs.</u>			
L.D.S.Gunasekera & ct. P.Halahackone bld M.Kelaart		194	
H.C.Dharmaratne ct. F.R.de.Zoyza bld T.H.Kelaart		31	
D.W.L.Lieversz bowled H.Halahackone		25	
W.Ludovici bowled M.Kelaart		21	
H.E.Wijetunga LBW bld H.Halahackone		0	
N.S.Joseph ct. Sproule bowled H.Halahackone		8	
W.Gooneswardena Run Out		8	
F.L.Gooneswardena bld. M. Kelaart		0	
H.Meedeniya st. Senanayake Bld. M. Kelaart		21	
J.R.Jayawardena Not Out		2	
C.L.Perera LBW bld M.Kelaart		0	
Extras		13	
		323	
94 - 248 - 264 - 268 - 281 - 290 - 294 - 305 - 323 - 323			
<u>Bowling</u>			
A. Silva	5 - 1 - 24 - 0	1 wide 1 no ball	
M. Kelaart	29.5 - 4 - 89 - 5		
C.M.Fernando	15 - 2 - 63 - 0		
G.D.Mayo	13 - 3 - 21 - 0		
T.H.Kelaart	8 - 2 - 35 - 1		
F.R.de.Zoyza	4 - 0 - 25 - 0		
H. Halahackone	16 - 3 - 54 - 3		

Courtesy of Richard Kelaart

The T.H. Kelaart, who scored 44 for the Joes at No. 8, was the son of Tommy Kelaart. He joined the Police and scored runs against his father's former team.

Douglas Lieversz led Royal to victory in 1926 and went on to have a long association with the club including a long stint as president. He had been brought into the club by his uncle the club wicket keeper, and to him and others, the Colts was the club to be in.

Mervyn Kelaart had joined the BRC, not his father's old club. And it appears that neither of his elder brothers, Bertram, Carl and Edward, played for the Colts. Similarly, the sons of Dr. C.T. Van Geyzel, the former Colts captain, F.C.W. and C.T. junior, had thrown in their lots with the NCC.

## T.Y. Wright reminisces

In 1951 Colonel T.Y. Wright released a book called *Ceylon in my time, 1889-1949*. Born in 1869 he arrived in Ceylon in 1889 and commenced a career in tea planting. He was involved in cricket and rugby. He played against the Colts in the late eighteen eighties during the club's heyday. He recalls the time the Colts were hard to beat and how over time it struggled to attract the best players as more cricket clubs opened.

**The Colts.** When I first remember them, they played on the racquet club ground near Pettah, and afterwards moved to the ground, they now play on at Havelock Park. The Colts seldom lost a match in those days, mainly owing I think to that magnificent pair of bowlers, Tommy Kelaart and Raffel, and some fine batsmen, such as, Laurie Thomasz, McHeyser, S. P. Joseph and C. E. Perera. I don't think there are many Clubs which can boast of so many wins and so few defeats in so many years as the Colts did. Owing to the number of Clubs which have sprang up in recent years, the Colts now don't get most of the best cricketers in the island like they used to do. I was proud to be asked to play in a match when they celebrated their fiftieth year, I think it was. I have played in several matches against them, but I think the most exciting was when they came to Matale in 1896. The Colts went in first and we had 9 of their wickets down for 18; Dr. Van Geyzel had gone into Matale town and had to be sent for quickly; he just turned up in time and in his first over had two or three narrow escapes. However, he managed to make 11 not out, out of the score of 40; even then we thought we had a good thing on, but Paternott and Kelaart knocked us all out for the measly total of 25. They went in again and made 137 for 3 wickets, Raffel and Thomasz making 66 and 52 respectively. We only made a few in the 2nd innings, and they beat us easily in the end. I managed to get 6 wickets for 20 in this match. The Colts were a great side and very difficult to beat.



Colonel T.Y. Wright and  
Dr. Alan Raffel

Courtesy of T.Y. Wright

In 1924 the new Colts pavilion had been completed. In many ways the club had better facilities than it had in its heyday. It was a time of renewal in an increasingly competitive club environment where the Colts were no longer guaranteed to attract the cream of burgher talent, although many non-burghers had become mainstays of the club's cricket team.