

Ronald Cardwell and Thos. Hodgson, *A Cameo From the Past - The Life and Times of H.S.T.L. Hendry*. Cricket Publishing Company for the Australian Cricket Society, Sydney, 1984. Illus., stats., pp.137. \$32. Available from the author 82 New St., Balgowlah, NSW.

Prominent Australian Cricket Society member Ronald Cardwell's fascination with Australian cricket just after the First World War is continued in this book, assisted by fellow-member, Thos. Hodgson. Cardwell has previously written on the AIF cricket team.

This book, like the first, is a slim and attractively produced card-cover volume, printed entirely in green on good-quality cream paper. The result is most pleasing to the eye, the photographs especially assuming much charm and character through this particular medium. The cover, with its gold lettering on a dark green background, is pleasantly embellished with the Australian coat-of-arms, as it appeared on the caps of the Australian team that toured England in 1921.

All too many biographies are attempted after the subject has passed on, and the authors are to be congratulated for tackling 'Stork' Hendry's life story during the delightful character's lifetime. Having said this, it must be stated that a wonderful opportunity to provide a thorough and definitive account of Hendry's life, both cricketing and otherwise, has been missed. Too much of the book is taken up with bland match summaries of first-class games in Australia between 1918 and 1931, material that is readily available in *Wisden*. Even if it was the intention of the authors to provide top-scorers and best bowling performances in every first-class game in the 1920s, then they have failed, because most of the matches played by Western Australia and Tasmania in that era are ignored.

The value of attempting the task of documenting summaries of all first-class matches in a book of this nature is dubious, in any case. Although perhaps not a key member of the Australian team in the 1920s, Hendry played enough cricket at the highest level to surely have accumulated a large store of cricketing memories. Appearances by Hendry on television and radio substantiate this, but there is little evidence of it in this book. From a cricketing point of view, there is virtually nothing that is identifiably

Hendry's in the way of memories. There are no revelations about the characters who were his colleagues and opponents, very little about the important and noteworthy games in which he participated. The only elaboration of Hendry's one Test century comes for instance, not from Hendry but from B.J. Wakley's book on Test match centuries. Similarly, the description of Hendry's 325 not out against New Zealand is based on a newspaper report.

The most original, and therefore the best, parts of the book are the all-too-brief recollections of off-the-field activities, mainly whilst on tour. Thus we learn of Spofforth's unusual presentation to the Australian team at Trent Bridge in 1921, and that during Hendry's hospitalisation for scarlet fever in 1926, only one team-mate ever visited him in seven weeks.

The book is unfortunately plagued with spelling mistakes. Cricketers don't escape, either: on one page, two different spellings of Wendell Bill are given, both incorrect. There are factual errors too; E.A. McDonald, for example, is mentioned as playing for South Australia, and scoring 94. He did neither.

The statistics that appear at the end of the book are, with one exception, unoriginal. All the first-class statistics produced here have appeared elsewhere, and, perhaps as a consequence of this reliance, a season-by-season first-class record for Hendry is unfortunately not attempted. The best statistics are those concerning Hendry's club career in both Sydney and Melbourne, and indicate a cricketer (batting average 37.84, bowling average 18.14) who would be much sought after in these times. The book concludes with the scorecards of three important matches for Hendry: his first Test, his '325 not out' match, and the second Test in 1928-29, when Hendry hit 112 in the second innings. There is, sadly, no bibliography or index.

The book has appeared in a limited edition of 325 (Hendry's highest score), but even so, the price tag of \$32 is difficult to justify. For the reviewer the subject of the book seems disappointingly remote from his biographers.

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