

## William A. Brodie – A Pioneer

W.A. Brodie was a towering figure in the history of the Parramatta District Cricket Club during a career that commenced with the Club in **1870** and concluded with Central Cumberland in **1896**.



Away from the cricket field W.A. Brodie was a high profile figure in the local community – at various times he was:

- Chief Clerk of Parramatta Petty Sessions,
- First Town Clerk of Sherwood and Prospect (now Holroyd),
- Real Estate agent and Auctioneer,
- played an instrumental role in founding Cumberland Building Society – of which he served as manager and the first secretary,
- Seven times he was elected an alderman of the Parramatta Council and his name appears on the fountain erected at the junction of Church and Macquarie Streets Parramatta to mark the centenary of Australia in 1888 (the fountain remains in place in 2026).

As an administrator Bill Brodie played a monumental role in the advancement and shaping of the Parramatta Club. He was a tireless worker and for twenty years he occupied the important roles of either Club Secretary or Treasurer and in the process was an integral part of the management team that lifted the club's profile and instigated innovations such as the games against the All England touring teams in the 1880s. He was awarded Life Membership in honour of his outstanding service for the club.

The tall, robustly built Brodie was a gifted cricketer, a commanding allrounder and stronger leader, who in combination with star batsman Sydney Rundle Walford, upgraded the playing standards and reputation of the Parramatta Club. He captained the club for twenty years, highlighted by five matches against the England International teams:

- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> December 1881.
- 28<sup>th</sup> November 1884.
- 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> November 1886.
- 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> November 1887.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> December 1887.
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He regularly starred for the club in the 1870s but reached his peak as a player in the 1880s, as the quality of batting pitches improved. Although it is not possible to be precise about his individual career record due to the incomplete statistics of his early days, past club historians estimated that Brodie scored approximately 5,500 runs, captured about 1,100 wickets.

Some of his personal cricketing performance highlights were:

- in **1885** scored the Club's **first century** – 108 v. Warwick C.C.

- 109 v. Hawkesbury District - 1887.
- 123 v. Orientals C.C. – 1888.
- 100 v. Independents C.C. – 1893.
- Bowling – 4/40 & 8/42 v. Juniors – 1891; 4 wickets in 4 balls v. Carlingford C.C. - 1885 (all clean-bowled) and made 84 to boot.
- 1879/80 he captured 50 wickets @ 3.08.
- 1886/87 he scored 710 runs @ 21.52 (H.S. – 81) and snared 25 wickets @ 11.80.
- 1887/88 he scored 433 runs @ 19.00 (H.S. – 109) and claimed 65 wickets @ 9.48.

In a lead up to the 4/5<sup>th</sup> November 1887 game against the touring English eleven, the *Mercury* 26/10/1887 published a pen picture the Parramatta / Cumberland players. Of W.A. Brodie it said:

*“A very consistent all-round cricketer. As a bat he has for many years had a double figure average; last year he headed the list with 21.5 for 35 innings. He drives and cuts hard and hits well on the leg. He always gets runs. As a bowler he has also been successful. In season 1884-85 he was top average for Parramatta. He breaks from both sides and shows good judgement in placing his field. As a field he is particularly smart in the slips and a sure catch”.*

Three veterans of Central  
Cumberland Cricket Club

Renewed acquaintances -  
that were of sixty years  
duration

- At the Parramatta Oval  
last Saturday afternoon  
(1932).



From the left:

**W.A. Brodie, W. Eury and  
S.R. Walford.**

All former Club pioneers / legends.

*(Picture from the Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate – 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1932)*

**[By Tom Wood – Parramatta District Cricket Club Historian]**