

# Barclay Wallace Farquhar - The Stylist

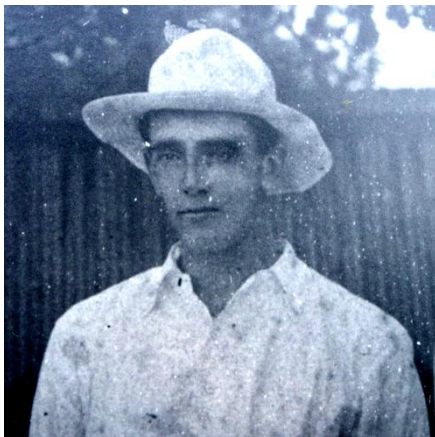
'Wally' Farquhar was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1875 at Maitland, NSW and was educated at the Sydney Grammar School, he died on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1961.

He was already a batsman of repute when he arrived at Central Cumberland in **1895/96**, because of a job transfer to the Commercial Banking Company's Parramatta branch, a lucky break for the club. His performances and the glowing reports about his ability over the ensuing nine seasons place him within the realms of the greatest batsmen and run scorers in the history of the club. His Central Cumberland batting statistics stand the test of time and testify to his eminence within the club:

**4,195 runs @ 53.78, highest score 223, 12 centuries, including 4 in the 1903/04 season.**

These statistics are outstanding, especially considering that they were achieved on uncovered wickets and that the most innings he ever played in one season was eleven. Over 120 years later he still holds second place to International Frank Iredale (58.72) for the highest career average of batsmen who have scored more than 1,000 runs in 1st grade for the club.

Barclay was very much a key player in the golden age of Central Cumberland, greatly complementing the ability of the club's galaxy of stars in the 1890s – early 1900s, Howell, Pye, Wilson, E.L. Waddy and Cranney. He was a right-handed batsman of charm and brilliance, often opening the batting and was described as a big man physically whose long reach assisted his power. He bowled slow mediums of modest skill but could be a handy change bowler and he snared **43 wickets @ 34.0** during his time with Cumberland.



A very athletic man, Wally Farquhar was universally referred to as an exceptional fieldsman in all positions, which befits a former **GPS All-Schools 100 and 200-yards** sprint champion, and Sydney Grammar School first fifteen Rugby wing three-quarter.

The following newspaper extracts bear testimony to his batting ability:

- **"Not Out"** in *The Referee* - 1<sup>st</sup> December 1897:

*"Farquhar played beautiful cricket in compiling his 114. He drove with splendid power, cut very hard, with strong wrist action evident, and his pulling and glancing were alike graceful and*

*vigorous"*.

- *Cumberland Argus & Fruitgrowers Advocate* – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1899", 117 v. East Sydney –

*"Farquhar is in magnificent form, and his play on this occasion was of the very highest order. It was brilliant, yet restrained and resourceful. He hooked beautifully and generally played in a manner which won the highest encomiums from all present, including his opponents"*.

- **"Not Out"** in *The Referee* – 28<sup>th</sup> October 1903:

*“Whenever he lets himself go, he plays truly beautiful cricket. Were he possessed of greater confidence in his punishing powers, he would rank as one of Australia’s greatest batsmen, even at a time when Trumper, Hill, Duff and Noble are in their prime”.*

Some of the highlights of his Cumberland career were:

- Twice *carrying his bat* through a completed innings. On a bad, spiteful wicket v. North Sydney in 1898/99 he scored **117 \***, in a team total of **159** runs – reaching his century with the team total then only 130. On another wet wicket against North Sydney in 1899/00 he batted right through the innings, remaining undefeated on **55** out of a team total of **104** runs, he was the only player to record double figures.
- His mastery of ‘sticky wickets’ was again evident in 1903/04 v. Leichhardt-Balmain, when he scored **108 \*** in a team total of 150. This was on a pitch that during the afternoon saw twenty-one other batsmen dismissed for 111 runs. In the second innings, Farquhar scored 92, narrowly missing the unique honour of achieving a century in each innings.
- He shared many great partnerships with his renowned batting colleagues, the best being **333 runs** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> wicket with Frank Iredale vs. Burwood in 1895/96, **230** for the 4<sup>th</sup> wicket with L.W. Pye v. North Sydney 1903/04.
- The first batsman to score a double century in 1st grade for the club, **223** v. Burwood 1895/96. Amongst his **12** 1st grade centuries he compiled another two innings of 150+ (**156** in 1901/02 and **153** in 1902/03).

For all his brilliance and consistency at 1st grade level, he was unable to regularly produce his best in first-class cricket. He played 11 matches for **NSW** spanning from **1894/95 – 1903/04**, but like his Cumberland team mate Les Pye the NSW State selectors only sporadically chose him, and he never really settled down at that level. As a result, his **first-class** career consisted of a series of typically brilliant but short innings – **466 runs @ 31.06** (H.S.110), and 2 wickets @ 41.50. The high point of his representative career occurred at the SCG in a match for NSW against New Zealand in 1899, when he scored a dazzling 110 and, in the process, shared a **224-run** 3<sup>rd</sup> wicket partnership with the legendary Victor Trumper. He also turned on the fireworks for NSW against Queensland in Brisbane the same year when he played with power and precision to smash 85 in 90 minutes.

In 1904/05 he was transferred in the Commercial Bank to North Sydney, and in the days of residential qualifications for grade cricketers severed ties with the ‘two-blues’ and played for Norths. In a long career as a Bank Manager, he resided in several NSW country towns and became a well performed competitive golfer and lawn bowls player.

The Cumberland icon former NSW representative player and state selector Harold ‘Mudgee’ Cranney, who played with or watched all the club’s top batsman from 1901 to the late 1960s, stated that Barclay Wallace Farquhar was the best he witnessed play for Cumberland.

Representative selection has always been a ticklish proposition, opinions on the merits of specific players is often subjective. An interesting article that appeared in the famous old sporting newspaper *The Referee* on 11th October 1899 discussing the exclusion of brilliant Central Cumberland batsman Barclay Farquhar from a rep team of the era is worth reading:

*“The exclusion of Farquhar is inexplicable. It is on a par with the making of Trumper 12th man in the team which played at Brisbane in 1897. Farquhar was selected 12th man in the team which visited Brisbane in 1895. He was afforded a most excellent chance of distinguishing himself by looking on from the pavilion. His first chance of performing in inter-colonial cricket was given him last February, against New Zealand, four years after his original selection as 12th man, and during the interim his performances were most brilliant. Farquhar made one great error in the New Zealand match. He scored only 110 - He should not have been satisfied with fewer than 310. Since playing against New Zealand Farquhar has made 141 (this season), 117 \*, 94 and 86, in Premiership matches. He is a superb field and averaged in senior cricket during the last two seasons over 67 runs per innings. In the eleven selected there are few better bats than Farquhar”.*

This was a nice ‘tongue in cheek’ dig at the NSW Selectors by the *Referee’s* journalist.

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