

8. RESURRECTION

1901— 1905

Grass grew in the streets of Johannesburg when the British entered at the end of May 1900 and it continued growing for a considerable time. Contrary to general expectation, the War did not end when Pretoria was occupied immediately afterwards nor when all the main towns and communications were controlled by the British Army. South Africa was full of troops and displaced persons and apart from the coast where business boomed, the economy had come to a standstill. In Johannesburg, the mines, saved from destruction by inspired Boer intervention, stood idle and flooded while commandos rode about the land maintaining a state of paralytic instability. Slowly the inhabitants were allowed to return to the strangely silent city—without newspapers, without service of any kind, without supplies and strictly under Martial Law. Only those citizens capable of assisting the reanimation of the town and the Reef were allowed to return and the remaining refugees loudly lamented their continued banishment. For more than a year, Johannesburg led a twilight life. Then Milner, newly appointed Governor of the Transvaal, came to live there with his entourage of young energetic men and the town slowly revived. A Town Council with Lionel Curtis as clerk replaced military control. A newspaper, the *Johannesburg Gazette*, was started. Shops began to open and civilian life resumed.

On the 5th July 1901, there gathered at the Rand Club (which had remained open throughout) a little Wanderers coterie—Harold Strange who took the chair, Llewellyn Andersson, W. T. Graham and Frank Hilner who acted as secretary and kept minutes in a beautiful neat hand. Milner had asked W. T. Graham to arrange for the Club to repossess its grounds but after consulting with H. A. Rogers and T. B. Parker, he had felt it inadvisable to do so and now the ad hoc committee considered the matter. They came to the same conclusion. They had no jurisdiction under the new regime and were without the authority of the members. The war in any case was not over.

The grounds, though covered with military tents and hospital installations, were in reasonably good order. The Club House, partially completed, had been used only for storage. The tennis courts, the new earthworks for the banked cement track, the levelled ground for the new rugby fields and other features had deteriorated. Milner was anxious to resume recreational facilities. Failing cooperation, Colonel Large, Principal Medical Officer of No. 6 General Hospital (Wanderers) asked for the loan of the Band's instruments and music for benefit of the Officer Commanding the Welch Regiment. The Committee stonily

told him tell the O.C. to communicate with them directly. They had in any case no idea where the band instruments were.

For nearly two months, the ad hoc Committee resisted pressure and refused to accept responsibility for any part of the Wanderers Club premises; but there was no gainsaying their returning sportsmen. As summer approached, the Cricket Section represented by J. H. Piton, approached Colonel Large for permission to play on the grounds and he both agreed to proposal and to the use of the tennis courts. Colonel Edge, Principal Medical Officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps, had urged on Graham and Hilner that the Club resume control of its whole property with the exception of the North West corner and certain buildings. Once again, Johannesburg was full of young and idle men—the officers and ranks of the occupying troops, demobilised local soldiers and the citizens who had returned to resume their business in a partially paralysed town. The pressure became irresistible.

On the 20th August 1901, the Committee, now swelled in number and meeting again at the Rand Club, agreed on four points of preliminary action—that a report be obtained from the Town Council on the sanitary condition of the grounds (they feared infection), that Andersson find the groundsman Fritz Wilhelm, that T. B. Parker find J. A. F. Pearson, the assistant secretary as Captain George Allsop was still on active service, and that Duval induce the Bank of Africa to finance the Club, previously its client.

Then things began to move, albeit slowly. Harold Strange remained in the chair and at a meeting early in October, his colleagues properly elected in 1899—Duval, Graham, Hilner, Parker and Ernest Lezard—agreed to elect as temporary members Charles Marx, J. G. Hamilton, T. M. C. Nourse, W. Beachy Head and C. Aburrow (already a Life Member). To this temporary committee, the resuscitation of the Wanderers Club was owing. They began by receiving the report of Dr Turner, Medical Officer of Health of the Town Council, who pronounced the grounds in sanitary condition and without menace to the public. Then they made an inspection *in loco* accompanied by local doctors. They found so little damage that no claim for compensation was made; but huge efforts would have to be exerted to get the great complex into running order again. By the end of October, the urgent young men—and women— of the new Johannesburg community with its strong military section, were applying for membership. They included Lord Brooke, Captain Panchaud and Mrs Andersson. Captain Allsop had been located and upon enquiry, had been informed that the secretaryship was being held open for him. In the meantime, Pearson at a salary of £25 a month and a house on the grounds (some of which had been repossessed and put in the care of Wilhelm) would do the work. The Club's lawyers were investigating its legal position in reoccupying its property under a new regime.

The decision had been made and the members of the Committee—elected and co-opted—worked strenuously to restore their Club. The need for recreation was even greater than in "the good old days" when it had been founded. The Hall was immediately used for Gymnastics and Concerts which the Commissioner of Police duly permitted (unauthorised gatherings were forbidden). Ernest Lezard strove mightily to resume entertainment and to trace the instruments of the Bands which, he had been told, had evidently been looted and were being sold in Johannesburg before Lord Roberts entered. There was no lack of artists prepared to perform at Sunday Night Concerts at five guineas a time and Lezard engaged Madame Emmy Miller. Early in 1902, James Hyde returned and offered to reorganise the Wanderers Orchestral Society and to present Sunday Night Concerts.

Pearson recovered all the Club's papers from Durban and with the office in order, the Club's proper business of organising Sporting Meetings could be resumed. New Year Sports were instituted and, as if nothing had intervened, there were immediate complaints about betting and "dirty riding", some cyclists being promptly suspended. New members joined by the dozen (including the musician-lawyer Willem van Hulsteyn and Louis Reyersbach of the Corner House) and, after consulting his aide-de-camp Captain Henley, the Committee ventured to make Lord Milner an honorary member. He thanked them appreciatively.

Pearson's main occupation was to produce schedules (still in existence) of the completed works with costs which the War had interrupted. He was greatly hampered by lack of a telephone (the town exchange was packed and none could be installed until new equipment came) and the clamour of the builders who wanted to complete their contracts. All building costs had rocketed but, with a manifestly insatiable demand for its facilities, the Club's temporary committee was determined to proceed. Abe Bailey was now in Johannesburg, receiving condolences on the death of his wife. Other office-bearers were returning and Captain Allsop, upon being asked to obtain his discharge from the South African Light Horse, replied that he anticipated about a month's delay before being free to resume the secretaryship. When he came on the 1st May 1902, it was on his horse Sonny from which he refused to be parted and which was stabled on the grounds for several years, earning its keep occasionally by dragging the coir-mat over the wicket but otherwise causing the Committee concern. Eventually Allsop sent it by road into retirement on Abe Bailey's farm at Rustenburg but, over-ridden in its old age, it died en route.

Within six months of the Rand Club meeting, the Wanderers had rehabilitated itself and become the recreative heart of Johannesburg. The citizens flocked to its Sunday evening entertainments organised by James Hyde who employed regimental bands at five guineas a time to compensate for the absence of his Orchestra and the Wanderers Choral Society. Whenever they had a moment, Milner's Kindergarten played tennis or performed free exercises with the officers and civilians who made use of the courts and the Gymnasium where a military instructor, Sergeant-Major McLeod had very successfully been installed. Sport of all kinds flourished. (When Abe Bailey had taken a cricket team to England in 1901, it had included four Wanderers members, L. Tancred, J. H. Sinclair, E. A. Halliwell and M. Hathorn.) Revenue was again forthcoming from the grounds and from non-Club sources. In April 1902, the unorthodox but always enterprising Mrs Dale Lace was charged five guineas for the front grounds to stage a Cricket Match between Ladies and Gentlemen on a Saturday afternoon to raise money for literature for the soldiers garrisoning lonely block-houses.

More important was the tacit tribute of the Town Council in sending William St. John Carr, Johannesburg's first Mayor, to seek the Club's cooperation in Coronation Festivities on the 26th June. The War was over and shaky though its structure, the Club promised all support including the staging of a Sports Meeting. It did much more. The like of the Procession was seldom again seen. Its Chief Marshal was Jacob Swart who directed the assembly and movement of a host of sections beginning with Foot and Mounted Police with their Band, examples of different forms of Transport, representation of the various races, Mining, 400 Cyclists in Fancy Costume, seventeen motoring cars, six Fire Brigades, many mounted troops and other military all interspersed with several brass bands. The now considerable public rejoiced exceedingly. Peace and Edward VII were feted and celebrated with dancing in the streets and great jubilation.

The focus was the Wanderers. The Coronation Sports Meeting, held after the Procession, was followed by a State Concert in the Club Hall for which James Hyde had organised a large orchestra of fifty (half professional and half amateur) with a Chorus of 200 which was so successful that it was repeated at a Monster Popular Concert on the Grounds two days later. In a technique that became standard for public jubilation, the Wanderers Gymnastic Section combined with the Johannesburg Amateur Gymnastic Society to give a Grand Open-Air Display with military band on the Wanderers Ground. Tens of thousands attended. That night there was a Torchlight Procession throughout the streets which ended in the Grounds where a Grand Pyrotechnic Display and Promenade Concert organised by the Club finally discharged its civic obligations.

Optimism was in the air—always a sign for the Wanderers to spend money profligately. It called on Julius Jeppe and Abe Bailey (represented by J. G. Currey who was appointed to the Committee) to purchase their promised debentures to defray the cost of building which, members complained, was proceeding too slowly. Bailey, back in England, sent out C. B. Llewellyn to work in the office (where he was not needed) but actually to await the coming cricket season when he would coach. D. J. Pullinger was about to get married in

England and the Committee voted £150 to pay for a model in silver of the Grounds with a cricket match in progress, and inscribed "D.J. Pullinger from the Wanderers Club 1902". (He protested against a public presentation when he returned and it was done privately.)

An even wilder proposition was that the Wanderers should guarantee £2,000 to enable a visit from the Australian Cricket Team then playing in England. Halliwell, who made it, was instructed to work out the details with Jacob Swart and Frank Hilner while Abe Bailey arranged with the team in England to play six matches in South Africa on their way home, All this was highly satisfactory and much better than "the good old days" but the committee felt unhappy about its lack of *locus standi* and called a Special General Meeting on the 26th August 1902 to regularise its affairs.

79 members attended (long a record number) and condoned the absence of annual reports due for delivery in March 1900, 1901 and 1902. They also confirmed the appointment and actions of the temporary committee of seven (Aburrow, Andersson, Currey, Hamilton, Beachy Head, Charles Marx and T. M. C. Nourse) which had performed the functions of the Committee elected in 1899 (A. B. Chauncey, Duval, de Jongh, Graham, Greathead, Hilner, Jeppe, Lezard, Parker, Strange, Swart and Sonn), now distributed by the fortunes of war all over the country and overseas or so deeply preoccupied in their local business that they were unable to serve. The temporary Committee had met 79 times and members had attended 67 sub-committee meetings.

Harold Strange was in the chair and delivered a long report on the interim period. 115 members had served in the war of whom two had been awarded the V.C. - Captain Robert Johnson and Surgeon-Captain T. J. Crean, and two the D.S.O.—George Farrar and P. H. Normand. Six had been killed. Since its first meeting a year previously, the Committee had wrought wonders. It could report that on the 30th June 1902, there were 38 Life Members and 460 members of the Parent Club, 30 ladies and 11 juniors. Six Sections were active of which Gymnastics (132 members) was the largest followed by Tennis (121 with 18 ladies), Cycling (94), Soccer (88) and Rugby (62). The sudden popularity of Soccer was largely due to the Imperial troops. The meeting agreed that members should not be expected to pay subscriptions for 1900 and 1901.

Money was needed for numerous alterations and improvements. In changed circumstances, the Rules printed in 1899 needed amending. Harold Strange moved the adoption of his report which Jacob Swart seconded and it was unanimously approved. The rank and file had boundless confidence in the selfless sportsmen who had restored the Club and now proceeded to elect new office-bearers, 22 candidates competing for the 12-member Committee. For the short period from August 1902 until March 1903 when the regular annual meeting would be held, the Club was represented by:

Honorary President: His Excellency Lord Milner

Honorary Vice-President: H. Duval

President: Abe Bailey

Vice-President: Percy Greathead

Patrons: C. L. Andersson, A. Bailey, G. Currey, J. F. de Beer, F. Hilner, J. Jeppe, S. B. Joel, C. Marx, H. Nourse, J. F. de Villiers, F. Eckstein, G. H. Farrar, W. Beachy Head, L. Phillips, D.J. Pullinger, R. W. Schumacher, H. F. Strange, J. Swart and J. L. van der Merwe, C. Aburrow, J. G. Currey and C. Marx (representing Life Members) and H. L. Strange, C. L. Andersson, T. B. Parker, F. Hilner, J. Jeppe, W. J. Blake, W. Dalrymple, H. Solomon, R. Cruikshank, Colonel Sir Aubrey Woolls Sampson, J. Swart and J. N. de Jongh (who resigned at the end of the year and was replaced by J. O. Hamilton).

Strange continued in the chair.

The first thing the new Committee did was to spend more money. In appreciation of past services, it gave Allsop a hundred guineas, Pearson fifty and Wilhelm £25. There were large numbers of new members and the prospects seemed bright. The Club's perennial

benefactors promised to underwrite its development and £29,100 in all was subscribed in debentures. Costly improvements were planned, notably the building of new stands for the visit of the Australian Cricket Team matches in October. Gratifying revenue would be forthcoming as the Imperial Liquor Commission granted the Club a license provided the Bar was open only when gate money was charged.

The Committee, if it saw it at all, failed to recognise the writing on the wall. De Jongh and Currey, in an attempt to protect the Club from involvement, moved that no political meetings be held on its premises but were defeated and they duly took place. In October, the new Town Council valued the grounds at £25,000 and the buildings at £5,095 and taxed the Club accordingly. £710 had to be paid annually, legal appeal proving useless. A ghastly economic slump impended but for the moment, the Club was riding high and took no cognisance. As many as 41 new members would be admitted at one stroke (including some of the most influential men in the town such as the accountant-philanthropist Howard Pim, the American mining men Sidney Jennings and W. W. Mein, A. F. (Joe) Mullins of the Corner House, etc) and an increasing number of ladies. When a Basketball Team asked to become a Wanderers Section, it brought 29 new members. Hockey had thriven and a Wanderers Women's Hockey Team was already in existence.

The Australian team (including the immortal Victor Trumper and W. W. Armstrong) proved a resounding success. The Club had guaranteed £2,000 but so far from being called upon, it banked £2,849 from the matches. Not surprisingly, it entertained the Australians right royally, taking them to the Gaiety Theatre, down the Robinson Mine and to dinner with the Honorary President Lord Milner in the chair. In gratitude, the team presented a bat to Julius Jeppe inscribed: "With this bat, Trumper played the first ball in the Australian innings in the match Australia versus South Africa on October 11 1902" and every member of the team signed it. Jeppe kept it until 1906 when he presented it to the Club which preserved it as a prized relic. Similarly preserved is the cricket ball struck by Jimmy Sinclair from the wicket of the Wanderers Ground into a railway truck bound for the Cape at the same match which gave rise to the oft-repeated legend that he had hit a six to Cape Town.

When playing against the Australians in Cape Town, he in fact hit nine sixes in one innings. "I shall never forget that match", wrote one of South Africa's cricket immortals, A. D. Nourse. "I sat in the Pavilion with W. V. (Billy) Simkins who was manager of our first side to go to England and a well known and popular figure. An arrangement was made that Simkins was to call the waiter for a long whisky and soda whenever Sinclair hit a six. It so happened that Jimmy hit three sixes in one over so the going was fairly good when, almost immediately afterwards, he landed another beauty right over the trees and into a small field outside the Newlands ground. It came as something of a relief to Billy Simkins when it took over five minutes to recover the ball. It so happened that it fell close to a ferocious looking bull which looked down ominously at the ball and no one dared approach to pick it up. Several got on the fence but no one would go over. First one, then another player would leave the field to find out why the others did not come back. So Billy had a bit of a rest. He stuck to his arrangement but I think nine was really more than he bargained for.



The Wanderers Ladies Hockey Team of 1903 with their long black skirts and high laced boots

Allsop accompanied the Australian team during its tour while Dick Cruikshank ran the office in the absence of Pearson who was recuperating at the Coast with a solatium of £20.

Almost immediately the onset of financial stringency was impressed on the Club. Displaced persons, demobilised troops and a disorganised economy had resulted in severe unemployment and the Club did its share in alleviating mounting distress by employing the Rev. Kelly and his indigent men for all its "small works". The coming depression seemed remote from its own members whose numbers were constantly being increased, but such was far from the case. Elaborate and costly arrangements were made to open the New Dance Hall (now complete with band platform, retiring rooms, buffet, kitchen, offices for the secretary and a flat above the ladies cloakroom) on the 11th November 1902 with a Grand Ball. The outrageous amount of £65 was paid to Tommy Lloyds Ellis to decorate the 45 foot by 100 foot Hall with flowers and greenery. Only about 300 persons were present, the Press all but ignored the occasion and £90 was lost.

Revenue from letting the Halls, from the Bar and from the New Year Sports Meeting sustained the illusion that all was well. The artificial atmosphere was enhanced by hysterical excitement over the visit of the British Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain who, fulfilling his promise to the Boer generals, came to South Africa, personally to assess conditions. The Wanderers Club played a major part in making his controversial if not illustrious figure available to the Johannesburg public on Thursday the 8th January 1903.

The great man arrived from Pretoria at Park in a train whose engine bore a large sign "Joseph Chamberlain" and was met by "a reception such as no other man has ever received". It rained heavily and the roads were deep in slush and mud but the dignitaries had gathered in large number at the heavily decorated station which was "a poem in flags and evergreens". A vaster crowd numbering about 10,000 had assembled in the drizzle at the Wanderers Ground where "a commodious and artistically decorated grand stand had been specially erected". Many of the people had been standing in the rain for several hours

hut when Chamberlain, accompanied by Lord Milner, appeared on the dais, there was "loud and long cheering and waving of hats and handkerchiefs".

Additional sentimentality was contributed to the occasion when Mrs Chamberlain ("charming in a dainty frock of black and white, and a black toque, her face fresh and piquant and her interest in her husband very easily seen"), was presented with a bouquet of orchids from which her spouse selected one for his buttonhole. He received addresses of welcome from the Town Council and every kind of public and voluntary body before launching into a distinctly jingo speech. The sun intermittently appeared, Chamberlain seemed relaxed and genial and his voice carried over the whole ground, the people were assured by him that "the key to the South African situation is the Transvaal" and hysterical hero-worship was his reward.

The whole of the Club's premises (including the Rink Hall whose lease to the Poultry Club had hurriedly to be withdrawn) were taken by the Town Council for £50 to entertain the distinguished guest at a banquet on the 17th January 1903. Then he departed and in the absence of his august personality, the realities of the situation penetrated the evanescent clouds of glamour. A few days later, Wilhelm called Allsop to the cycling track to see the body of a soldier who had blown his brains out. Suicides had become commonplace. Many of the Wanderers members were ruined in the post-war depression.

Relief works of every kind were organised for the huge numbers of unemployed, some of whom were allowed to camp on the Wanderers Grounds. The Club made a policy of employing them through the Rev. Kelly who in 1903 coordinated his welfare work with the newly formed Rand Aid Association, the product of Lord Milner's desire to continue in Johannesburg itself the work of Refugee Committees at the coast. Wanderers members were on the first committee of Rand Aid, notably George Farrar and William Dalrymple, and Mrs Julius Jeppe and Mrs Dalrymple on its Ladies Committee. The Connection persisted during the many dreadful years through which Johannesburg then passed and continued into more prosperous times when the Club continued to supply its surplus foodstuffs to Rand Aid.

When the Wanderers reverted to regular routine and called their annual meeting in March 1903, only 37 members appeared and failing a quorum, the Committee followed the procedure of the Chamber of Mines and circularised each member for a date three weeks thence. 32 then attended and, in an atmosphere of deep depression which the new year had brought, it was paradoxically possible to inform them of a successful six months ending on the 31st December 1902.

There were now 596 ordinary members (consisting largely of the new administrative officials and a fresh wave of ardent young men come to make their fortune on the Rand), 40 Life Members and 118 Composite Members (Parent and sub-clubs). The Tennis Club led the field with 98 followed by Gymnastics (79), Cricket (77) in a state of decline in the usual reaction to the visit of an overseas team, Cycling (36—a steep decline owing to the secession of professional cyclists who had formed an "Athletic Committee" including the famous Passmore who, originally disgruntled by Wanderers suspension soon left it), Soccer (30) and Rugby (22). The Wanderers Soccer team had won all its matches and the Rugby had captured the Transvaal Senior Challenge Cup. Six of the Club's cricketers had distinguished themselves against the Australians and J. H. Sinclair had hit three centuries. The public had been able to watch the matches from the new stand, seating 4,000. The Club was fulfilling its functions as a sporting Centre.

In the forthcoming career of the Wanderers Club, there were to be five *causes célèbre*—the maintenance of what its most distinguished chairman called "a permanent floating debt", expropriation by the Railways, the admission of non-whites, the provision of a swimming bath, and—although in 1903 utterly outside the realm of possibility and therefore not considered— a turf wicket.



Joseph Chamberlain addressing the crowd of 10,000 at the Wanderers grounds in January 1903

At the annual meeting covering 1902, it was thought necessary to mention only one. Julius Jeppe had reported to the Committee on the 10th December that he had seen surveyors of the new Central South African Railways at work on the grounds and had assured himself that their presence did not mean that the ground would be expropriated for Railway purposes. Their intention however had not been divulged. At the annual meeting held in April 1903, he was better informed. "It is believed", he said, "that extensive and important alterations to the Railway Station are being contemplated which may seriously affect your property and it will be incumbent on the new Committee to jealously watch over your interests.



D. Welge and his prizes, December 31st 1902

The new Committee consisted of himself, J. G. Currey and C. Aburrow elected life Members and J. H. Blake, Dick Cruikshank, J. Dalrymple, F. Hilner, J. G. Hamilton, H. J. Lamb (a tennis enthusiast), C. Marx, J. E. Orr (later principal of the Technical College), Harold Solomon, Harold Strange and Jacob Swart. Julius Jeppe became chairman. The meeting decided to limit Patrons to 10 and elected the newly knighted Sir George Farrar and Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, H. Duval, C. L. Andersson, T. B. Parker, A. B. Tancred and Friedie Eckstein. A triple tie for the remaining two places caused a further ballot and Solly Joel and Raymond Schumacher (of the Corner House) prevailed over the glamorous John Dale Lace.

The outgoing Committee had already dealt with some of the Club's chronic problems and the incoming continued. The eager earnest Abe Bailey had attended a meeting as president in 1902 and pressed the claims of a swimming bath as a suitable memorial to the fallen. He was confident, he said, that David Pullinger, Alfred Beit, George Farrar and others including himself would contribute. A sub-committee had been appointed to consider the matter and to all intents and purposes, it sat for almost fifty years.

Abe Bailey (and the other holders) had not been paid interest on debentures for years and he generously asked that the arrears be contributed to obtaining a cricket coach. Julius Jeppe tried to persuade the other debenture holders to waive their accumulated interest. The Club was in no position to liquidate its debts and soon slid into a bland acceptance of the impossibility, having no regard for the unfortunate holders, not all of whom remained rich men. Initially Bailey, Pullinger and the Corner House agreed to forego their interest from the 11th of October 1899 to the 10th October 1901 and were duly thanked.

It was Bailey too who struck an attitude in regard to the admission of "coloured persons" to the Wanderers Grounds when it was first raised early in 1903. To a very large extent, Johannesburg owed its existence to them. The Cape Coloured and Malay men, particularly drivers of every kind of vehicle and builders, carpenters, masons and craftsmen had been

the only labour available in the early days. When "Kaffirs" were finally induced to work the mines, the "Coloureds" built the town, living themselves in shocking slums. They were joined very early by "Coolies" or Indians from Natal who entered domestic service, laundered, traded and constituted a considerable and law abiding community with a traditional love of sport. When it was proposed at a committee meeting on the 6th March 1903 that these people be admitted to Sports Meetings and matches, all members voted against it with the exception of Abe Bailey. Like the other *causes célèbre*, the issue was raised again and again and Bailey subsequently revised his opinion.

Strong passions ruled Johannesburg at the time. Milner and the mine magnates were in favour of importing indentured Chinese to save the mines which, no longer able to obtain native labour, were critically unproductive. Liberals like Howard Pim and incipient Trade Unionists, were hotly opposed and in March 1903, leased the Wanderers Hall to hold an "Anti-Chinese Mass Meeting". They saw in the scheme the end of the white miner and when colour came in at the door, moderation flew out of the window. There was intense public feeling and, as always, the Wanderers provided a sounding board and was itself involved. "Only the marvellous tact, control and patience shown by the Johannesburg police" prevented irreparable damage to Club property at what Jeppe called "the most notorious political meeting held by the Anti-Chinese Labour Party". When the African Labour League staged a similar meeting in the Wanderers Hall on the 14th December 1903, damage assessed at £97 was done.

The issue of the admission of coloured persons remained extremely live during 1903 and tortured a Committee already strained by massive problems. Inspired by the Transvaal Rugby Union, John Orr and William Dalrymple moved that non-whites be admitted to all rugby matches provided that suitable accommodation could be found for them. The Grounds Sub-Committee to which it was referred, objected and John Orr then gave notice of calling a Special General Meeting to deal with the matter. The Rugby Union then made its own request in July which, being mid-winter, always reduced the number of members present at meetings and, in the absence of Orr to enhance the recommendation, the Committee advised the Union that it could not consider it. Their embarrassment was increased by promptly receiving a letter with the same request from a Lincoln's Inn barrister, M. K. Gandhi, recently arrived from India via Natal to work for his numerous country people in Johannesburg.

Gandhi was no common agitator but a cultured respected philanthropist-philosopher in whose conversation General Smuts was later to delight. He wrote on the 5th August 1903 and the Club consulted its solicitor, G. A. Mulligan. The Committee chose the easiest way out—Allsop wrote both to Gandhi and the Rugby Union stating that "want of space" prevented the admission of coloured persons.

The matter lapsed only temporarily and on the 16th January 1905, Gandhi wrote again, this time on behalf of the Transvaal Indian Cricket Union which desired facilities for its members to view matches. The Committee referred him to their successors to be elected at the annual meeting in March and duly on the 27th March, the new Committee, now chaired by Harold Strange, decided to inform him that the Club adhered to its previous decision not to admit coloured persons to its grounds.

The love of Indians for cricket, sustained by the current popularity of Ranjitsinhji among the English aristocracy and the whole cricketing public, inspired a further approach and in November 1905, a petition was presented by the solicitor A. Alexander to the Club seeking the admission of coloured persons to the forthcoming matches against an M.C.C. team. The chairman, seconded by Jacob Swart, moved that it be referred to the annual meeting in March, knowing full well that the M.C.C. would then be gone and the issue dead. The motion was carried by 7 against the 5 votes of Orr, Christopherson, Rogaly, Collins and Newton who immediately demanded that a Special Meeting be held on the 5th December to consider the proposal that "a special portion of the ground be set aside for the exclusive use of Coloured people for the purpose of viewing Sports and Games, and further that



M. K. Gandhi, at the time when he was practicing as a Barrister in Johannesburg

special entrances and exits be provided for the sole use of such Coloured people using those portions of the ground. Further that the Committee take such steps as they may deem fit to prevent any intermingling of Coloured people with spectators of European descent”.

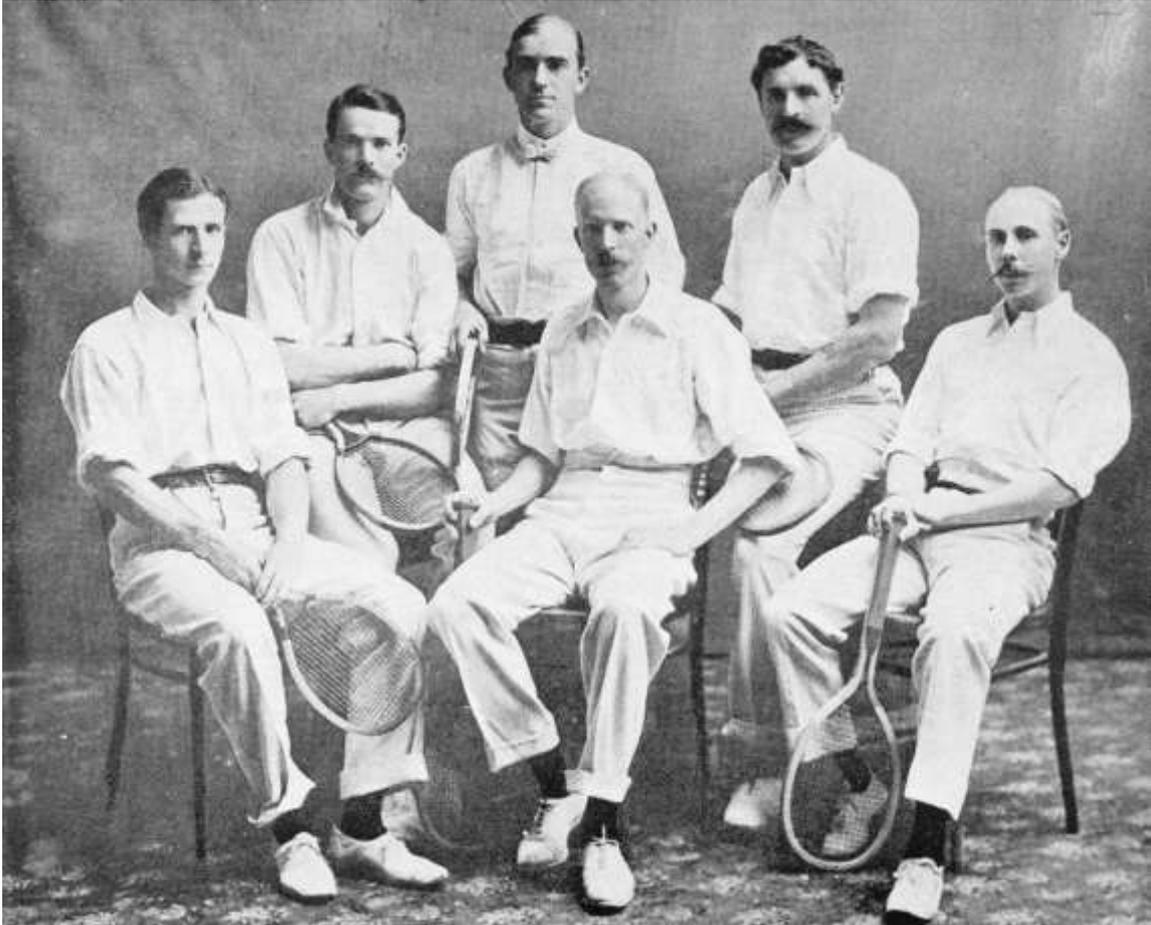
The special meeting of the full committee divided as might be expected: the older and more conservative members—Julius Jeppe, Jacob Swart, John Reid, Harold Strange, C. Aburrow, Harold Solomon and H. J. Lamb—opposed the motion which was carried by one vote by the younger chairmen of Sections and its original proposers J. H. Sinclair, Frank Hilner, S. C. Thompson, A. G. Newton, L. Rogaly, John Orr, Collins and Christopherson. They could therefore demand a Special General Meeting and Allsop was instructed to summon it on the 21st December 1905—before the M.C.C. visit.

That the issue should be forced at a time when the Chinese question was at its height and violent expressions of opinion (not to mention assault and battery) characterised the politics of the day, inevitably produced excited consternation and discussion. The president, Abe Bailey, immediately telegraphed from Cape Town and the situation became so tense that the Committee met specially at the last moment to consider the advisability of holding the meeting at all. It was decided to proceed and on the 21st December 1905, a record number of 92 members assembled under the chairmanship of Jacob Swart. He read the president’s telegram—“I consider it advisable to postpone this meeting, the question being too important to be hastily decided.” H. J. Lamb proposed and John Reid seconded a motion that the meeting be postponed until the 18th January (when the M.C.C. would have left) but it was defeated. Christopherson seconded by Bernard de Malraison (foundation member of the Wanderers Cricket Club) then proposed a trial arrangement until the 30th June 1906. It was lost by 51 votes to 29 and the red-hot coal was dropped—only temporarily.

(Gandhi made another approach to the Club in September 1906 when he applied on behalf of the British Indian Association for the use of its Hall for a public meeting of Indians but the Wanderers were wary and refused.)

Making no effort to reduce its debenture indebtedness of £27,100 (though it did refrain from exercising its full borrowing powers of £30,000) and tipping its hat only perfunctorily to “the depressed times Johannesburg is experiencing” as Jeppe put it, the Wanderers Club proceeded energetically during 1903, not with its resurrection but with its recreation into a

far finer thing than it had been before. The mining and administrative officials, the professional men and entrepreneurs, and the new young men who constituted its revived membership were comparatively unaffected by the appalling slump and all clamoured for sport. The Tennis Club overflowed (it had 320 members but only 160 belonged to the Parent Club and were full members) and was dominated by the figures of R. W. G. Clark (South African Champion) and H. A. Kitson (Transvaal and Natal champion). Extraordinary versatility continued to characterise the sportsmen. Percy Sherwell, outstanding cricketer, was also no mean tennis and football player. Jimmy Sinclair, famous with bat and ball played Rugby for South Africa in 1903 with two of his Club colleagues, C. J. Jones and Dr A. Frew. At the Sporting Meetings of which eight were staged at the Wanderers during 1903, any single man might be adept in several events. Even the junior members would play several games, including the newly-instituted hockey.



Wanderers "A" Tennis Team, Winners of the 1904-1905 Inter-Club Senior Competition; Paul Selby, P. H. Sherwell, R. C. Warriner, J. E. Orr, R. H. A. Clarke, P. M. Robbs (Captain)

One of them, Luke Green, recollected more than sixty years later that when he arrived in Johannesburg early in 1904, a friend "took me to see some Rugger at the Wanderers and introduced me to Charlie Jones, captain of the Wanderers. He told Jones I played Rugger as well as Soccer. Charlie said they were about to play a friendly and as they were short, would I like to turn out for the game . . . I was very lucky to catch his eye—as scrum-half I managed to slip round the blind side and give the wing a neat pass from which he scored. Later I was lucky to dive over and score a try. That was my introduction to the Wanderers and I played for the Wanderers First until 1910.

Charlie Jones was the finest Rugger man ever. Not only was he Sprint Champion 100 yards, 220 and 440 of South Africa—he was also Champion Gymnast and had a wonderful tenor voice, often singing at the Wanderers Sunday evening concerts. At that time, he was Mine Secretary to the Geldenhuys Mining Company at Germiston. At seventeen he played full back for South Africa against the first English team after the Boer War. He dropped a

goal at the Newlands Test from the half-way line with his left foot and repeated this at the Wanderers Test with his right foot. I played with him for three years and never saw him mull a ball. His touch-finding was phenomenal.



Lord Harris, G.C.S.I., treasurer of the M.C.C. who visited the Wanderers with his son in 1903

Several of Lord Milner's Kindergarten - Lionel Curtis, John Buchan, Richard Feetham, John Dove—used to say on Saturdays - 'We are going to see Charlie Jones play Rucker'. Even when we had to go to Pretoria, they would go to see him play.

My dear old friend Victor Kent used to ask me after a Rucker game if I would play Soccer as they were short so I would turn out and play for the Wanderers First. At Easter, the Wanderers would often take a team to Heilbron or Potchefstroom, playing Hockey and Tennis and shocking some people by playing on Good Friday. Joe Noonan and I played left-wing-forward and also at Hockey...

After Hockey on Sunday mornings, Frank Findlay and I would take our golf clubs and cycle from Yeoville to Kensington for 18 holes but battling up the Observatory Road later in the day was the limit of endurance—we had to be fit...

Luke Green spent intervening time coaching the juniors like Jimmy Sinclair who taught them Cricket and Rugby and was idolised by them. Mild and soft-spoken, Sinclair was nonetheless a stern disciplinarian. He loved the Wanderers with an abiding passion and in his own great distinction, contributed incalculably to lifting it into unexampled prominence. When Jeppe spoke at the end of 1903 of every member being "filled with the one desire of maintaining the proud distinction the Club has already gained of being the premier sporting Club in South Africa and keeping it as a centre of good sport and sportsmanship", he was probably thinking particularly of Sinclair. Not every member could claim his loyalty and some indeed played one game for the Wanderers and another for Pirates or other Clubs.

Tribute to the eminence of the Wanderers Club was gracefully paid in 1903 by the coming grand panjandrum of the M.C.C., Lord Harris who ultimately held office as Treasurer, President and Trustee as well as Chairman of the Cricket and Finance Committees. He came to Johannesburg with his son and was suitably honoured by the Club "with the most flattering welcome I have ever had in my cricketing experience". He had never, he said, been made to feel more at home and upon his return to England, he sent a solid-silver inkstand with cut-glass wells inscribed:

*Presented to the Wanderers Club,
by Lord Harris and his son G. S. Harris
in grateful recollection of their courteous hospitality*

Unmindful of its historic charm, the Club put it to use so that its inscription became worn and blurred. Lord Harris had more sense of history. In 1930 when he had attained his great stature as a cricket administrator, he presented a signed portrait-photograph to the Club which was framed at the expense of Mr Christopherson. Both objects were ultimately retrieved as precious sporting relics.

In their negligence of finance and their wholehearted devotion to the promotion of sport, the Committee decided on the suggestion of H. J. Lamb to establish a Reference Library on Sport at the Club at an initial outlay of £50, later greatly increased. From the middle of 1903 onwards, outstanding works were collected including the Badminton Sporting Library, a run of fourteen bound copies of *The Field* costing £30 (which became too expensive an item), a continuous run of *Wisden's*, *Whittaker's Almanac*, James Lillywhite's *Cricket Annual*, from 1882 onwards, books by Grace, Ranji, Plum Warner and others, and numerous other valuable publications whose periodic disappearance at unauthorised hands were duly reported. There were also portfolios of portraits of famous cricketers which were framed and hung on the Club's walls.

The Committee also felt in 1904 that it should commemorate the Club's meritorious members and each Section drew up a list who were duly photographed by J. Duffus. Their likenesses were hung in the Club House corridors and elsewhere, constituting an unrivalled gallery of Rand pioneers. Similar photographs of members killed in the Boer War have disappeared but the Club's contribution to the memory of George Lohmann who died of tuberculosis on the 1st December 1901 in the care of J. D. Logan in the Karoo endures in a form as fresh today as at the time of its erection.

About nine miles south of Matjiesfontein on the national road, a small cemetery in the open veld is notable for the tomb of the gallant Highlander, General Wauchope, killed at Magersfontein during the Boer War, and his splendid monument on the kopje above. It contains also the grave of George Lohmann surmounted by a magnificent white marble tombstone decorated by bat, ball and broken wicket and inscribed most feelingly in the name of the Surrey Cricket Club and friends. One of them was the Wanderers Club which resolved on the 1st May 1903 to contribute one guinea to the cost of the memorial. Industriously tidying its affairs as soon as the winter was over (attendances at meetings always diminished in cold weather and often there was no quorum in the chairman's office in Jeppe Arcade), the Committee decided to make a fundamental revision of the Club's Rules with the advice of its solicitor, G. A. Mulligan and after consultation with all the sub-clubs. The original rule of 1888 that membership of the sub-clubs was open only to members of the Parent Club with a heavy entrance fee and annual subscription, had been annulled and persons could join only the sub-clubs at low outlay. The motive had been to encourage poorly-endowed but sporting young men, particularly in slump years, but the result had been disastrous. Members of the revived Wanderers Club now found themselves shoved off their own grounds by a host of clamant players who were not even members of the Club proper. Only half of the Tennis Club were full members and they hardly got a game in the face of the waiting horde of sub-club subscribers.

At a special meeting on the 12th November 1903 with 69 members present, all this was changed. Everyone had to belong to the Parent Club at an annual subscription of three guineas but those persons already members of sub-clubs only need pay no entrance fee. Further, the chairmen of every sub-club or Section would automatically have a seat on the General Committee. This important principle endured without variation.

Despite the influx of what some members considered "undesirables" (there were some very rough types in some sections) which the waiving of entrance fee entailed, the Wanderers Club continued to represent the *bon ton* of the town and exerted itself to

accommodate them. The formidable figure of George Allsop moved among the sporting crowds and there was proper deference to age and rank, the junior members addressing the seniors diffidently as "Mr" or "Sir".

The Sunday Concerts were discontinued in the winter and Firework Displays were abandoned as the Hospital objected but there was a constant programme of other distractions and all premises were continuously let for various displays including amateur boxing and sporting events. In summer, the Club offered manifold attractions. When admission to the Sunday Concerts—with regimental bands and the best available artistes—was reduced from 2s to 1s, annual attendance increased to 36,000 including 4,500 members.

"Johannesburg was very deeply interested in sport of all kinds", Julius Jeppe's niece (who lived at "Friedenheim" at the time) recalled, and we all used to flock to the Wanderers, for cricket especially. We took lunch baskets and made a day of it. In those days, it meant being driven there in a dog-cart or carriage which curbed one's activities as very often, the carriage was used again at night to a dinner party or dance. The dances at the Wanderers were great fun and, as girls were so few, there were no wallflowers. We each had a dance programme and when one emerged from shedding one's cloak, one was instantly surrounded by a seething mass of men all ready to pounce on one's programme to book a dance. This practice sometimes led to trouble when you found yourself dancing with a complete stranger! The Wanderers was a godsend to the bachelors of those days. The music was always good and so were the suppers and one very rarely saw anyone the worse for wear. I know it is not easy to picture people enjoying the Polka and the Mazurka but we really did!"

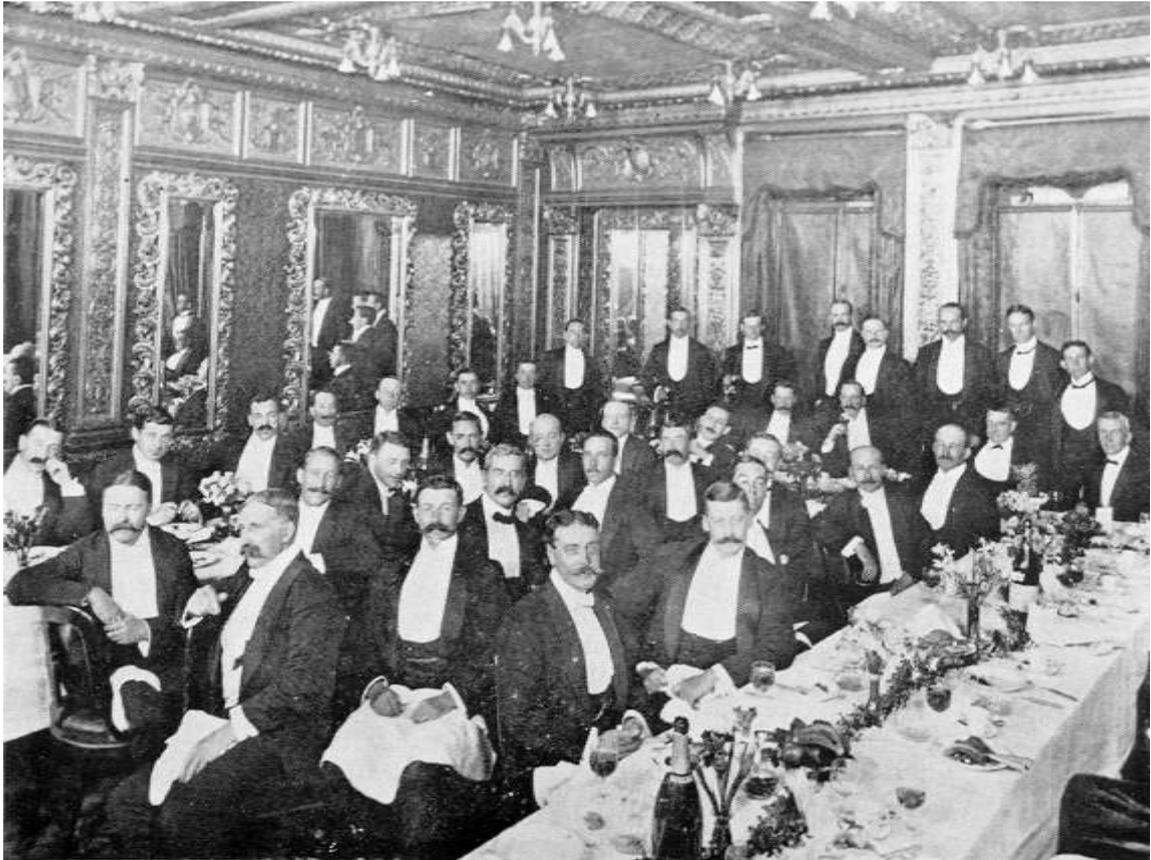
The tiny exquisitely-decorated programmes with their little pencils on tasselled silk cords were preserved carefully by George Allsop in large number for every dance held at the Wanderers, and mounted in his Scrapbooks.

The catering was leased to Pizzighelli but upon occasion, he would be compensated for retiring in favour of special arrangements made for august occasion. When Lord Milner returned from leave at the end of 1903, a special committee arranging a Welcoming Banquet co-opted Julius Jeppe and Jacob Swart to assist with the facilities at the Wanderers Club. It went without saying that the town's high feast days should now always be celebrated there but the apogee was reached when Lord Milner himself, through his Comptroller Colonel Lambton, engaged all the Club's halls for a State Ball on the 16th February 1904. The Club hurriedly took out special insurance "for cover against any liability on account of its insurance policies being affected by the decorations for Lord Milner's dance". There is no record of their particularly inflammable nature.

The vice-regal occasion was the source of great pride to the Club which at the same time was exalted by ten of its members—F. Mitchell (captain), R. O. (Reggie) Schwarz (Abe Bailey's secretary who became, during the visit to England a famous googly bowler), O. White, Maitland Hathorn, J. N. Sinclair, Barberton Halliwell, O. H. Shepstone (he died in 1966 after serving a Administrator of Natal), Louis Tancred and W. A. Shalders - being included in the South African Cricket Team assembled by Abe Bailey to tour the United Kingdom. The Club gave George Allsop special leave on full salary to manage the team and he provided it with a problem on his return.

The team also played in Ireland and upon accompanying one of its members to a photographer there, the eye of the 40-year-old bachelor fell upon a beautiful young lady who served as receptionist and artist for touching-up. On emerging from the establishment, Allsop informed his astonished companion that he intended marrying the girl. During the four months of his absence, he crossed the Irish Channel frequently to press his suit and was married in Ireland before he left. Upon his return in 1905, the members of the Club gave him a purse containing £74 pounds as a wedding present. Mr and Mrs Allsop lived at first in the flat on the first floor of the Club House and in due course

it became necessary to build a house for them on the grounds on which the Committee expended £800 (Allsop's horse seemed to worry them far more).



Edwardian Opulence: The South African Cricket Team of 1904 being entertained to dinner by members of the British Rugby Football Teams who visited South Africa in 1891, 1896 and 1903 (George Allsop in centre)

In the bleak and disheartening desert of a town crawling out of depression and dragging its industry with it, the Wanderers provided almost the only public oasis. The comparatively well-to-do enrolled by the score and at the end of 1904, the membership totalled 942 and steadily increased, topping 1,000 in 1905, when it was thought that it should be closed. They swamped the tennis courts which were constantly overcrowded but the Club considered itself too poor to incur the comparatively minor expense of constructing more. There were considerable social stresses. A body of new lady tennis players complained that they had sat around the courts all afternoon and been unable to get a game because they were strangers. The Committee disapproved of members disporting themselves to the disgruntlement of valuable acquisitions but referred the matter to the Tennis Club, then bringing great honour to the Transvaal. Kitson won the South African Singles Championship and with Tottie Hathorn (better known as a cricketer) the doubles. Hathorn and Mrs Kirby won the mixed doubles and, overcoming its habitual wariness of women, the Club conferred honorary membership on Mrs Kirby (as it did on all meritorious or promising sportsmen).

The tennis courts provided a meeting place for active ladies but there remained a great and increasing body of others who, coming to the reviving Johannesburg, knew no one at all and were socially isolated. For their benefit, the famous Ladies Social Calling Club was instituted which hired the Wanderers Dance Hall on the second Monday of every month, beginning in February 1905, for the sum of £5 plus the cost of cleaning, firemen, lighting, attendants and, surprisingly, police. Boxes were provided into which ladies dropped their visiting cards and by some system which the mists of time have clouded, they thereby got to know each other. In August 1905, under the chairmanship of Mrs Sidney Jennings, the Club aspired to entertain Lady Selborne, wife of the Governor of the Transvaal, in the Wanderers Hall, music being discoursed by Miss Ethel Gordon's orchestra. The Ladies

Calling Club was despised by the socially-secure but during the short period of its existence, was much appreciated by newcomers. When it made application in 1906 for a croquet court, it was refused - the Club was too poor. In 1907, Mrs William Dalrymple, a scintillating hostess, became its chairman and the Club deserted the Wanderers and held its high occasions elsewhere. A proposal that the Wanderers should revive its own Social Club was defeated owing to its failure in the nineties.

At that time, women who were greatly to benefit Johannesburg were members of the Wanderers Club, such as Miss B. O. Alexander of nursing fame and Fanny Buckland and her sister who were pioneers of education. For financial favours rendered, the Club also made Life Members of Mrs A. H. Reid, Mrs A. Kuranda, Mrs H. Nourse and Mrs S. Taylor, a policy which it did not later pursue. (Henri Bettelheim was also made a Life Member in 1905 for donating five of the original £5 debenture shares.)

To the vast bulk of the public who were not members, the Wanderers had become indispensable. It was the scene of every kind of entertainment purveyed by the impresarios to whom it let its premises (although the Hospital was adamant in preventing Brocks from letting off fireworks). J. C. Williamson presented the singer Ada Crossley and B. & F. Wheeler, the cellist Jean Gerardy, the Westminster Glee Singers and other promotions. Joseph Tressi with his Choir and Orchestra gave concerts. The Wanderers Band and Orchestra had ceased to exist but regimental bands were hired in great number to give regular Sunday Concerts with local artistes. 36,000 members of the public and 5,640 Club members attended them during 1904.

Although the Club had refused to renew the lease of the South African Biograph Company after the War, from 1903 onwards it let its Hall to Wilhelm Wolfram, the pioneering purveyor of "Bioscope" which became a regular and popular entertainment despite occasional trouble with the electricity. The lights went out indiscriminately and after a concert audience had spent a night in darkness, Rogaly plaintively suggested to the Committee that they might buy a few lamps. There were times when the current was so weak that pictures could not be projected but all such misadventures were accepted as part of current disabilities.

During the winter months of 1904, the famous Cinderella dances were inaugurated and maintained for many years, remaining still a beloved memory easily recaptured by the scores of dainty programmes which George Allsop, who had to organise the dances, preserved in his books. The Club was very insistent on the preservation of decorum but the dances were immensely popular.

The Grounds provided vulgar amusement on a grand scale. Motorised transport had a lethal effect on athletics and cycling which now utterly failed, the single Sports Meeting held in 1904 showing a loss of £40. But the spectator sports began to flourish. In 1904, 27,700 persons and 10,000 members watched Rugby and 14,000 persons and 4,500 members watched Soccer. The change was significant. The Club could look increasingly for its revenue, not on the track, but on the playing field. Its character began to change from a promoter of sports and sportsmanship to a concomitant commercial purveyor of sporting spectacle. It never lost sight of either aim. Satisfactory revenue was now forthcoming from professional boxing contests (Such as Pedlar Palmer versus Williams in the Gymnasium Hall) but at the same time, while Jeppe was chairman, he moved with the support of Jacob Swart that the Club present a twenty-guinea Floating Trophy for competition by Government schools for running, the Combined Schools to present a medal to the winner. Young athletes who would respond to encouragement were made honorary members. Meanwhile the two new games, Hockey and Baseball were rejoicing the hearts of esoteric Sections of the Club's members.

The public use of the Grounds had become varied and habitual. They were granted free of charge for the presentation of War medals by Lord Roberts provided that no mounted men on horses were allowed to ut up the surface but these initial scruples were overcome and

later Major Beresford and his 7th Hussars were permitted to stage their successful "Wild West" Show and repeat it. In 1904, the Witwatersrand Labour Council held the first of the processions and Sports Meetings which for many years were a feature of Labour Day.

The Wanderers Club had in fact become a restless, constantly-developing institution, continually adapting itself to public and private demand. Julius Jeppe retired from the chair in 1904, receiving a presentation for his devoted service during the dreadful years since he had first held it in 1896, and Harold Solomon took his place. Committee meetings were no longer held in Jeppe's office but, at the instigation of Jacob Swart, at the Johannesburg Turf Club. Fundamental changes were in the air. Responsible Government would soon be granted the Transvaal and political alignments were forming which would alter the nature not only of the new Crown Colony but of the sub-continent itself. Typically the Wanderers Club reflected them. Its Gymnasium Hall began to be let for meetings of the Transvaal Progressive Association and other incipient political parties.

As a new order emerged from the chaos of the Boer War, there arrived with a pomp and ceremony equal to that recently accorded to Cecil Rhodes, the body of Stephanus Paulus Kruger on its way to Pretoria from Switzerland for ceremonial burial in the land which he had governed for nearly twenty years. The men of the Wanderers were not lacking in their duty. They instructed Jacob Swart, friend and protégé of the old President and Life Member of the Club, to attend the funeral on the 16th December 1904 in the company of the secretary George Allsop, and to lay on the grave of the first Patron and founding benefactor of the Wanderers Club a wreath costing the considerable sum of five guineas. Almost immediately, the new order impinged itself vitally on the Club and its tenure of Kruger's Park. In the Gazette of the 6th January 1905, Government Notice No 5 of 1905 declared the Wanderers Grounds a Public Reserve for Recreation in the township of Johannesburg and under the jurisdiction of the Town Council. The Ground, said the Proclamation, "shall forever remain dedicated for the purposes of or incidental to the recreation and amusement of the inhabitants of Johannesburg". The Club immediately sought an opinion from its solicitors Frost, Mulligan & Routledge who pronounced that the change of ownership of the land in no way affected its lease of Kruger's Park. It would have a new landlord for the remaining 74 years of its tenure. Like the rest of South Africa, the Wanderers Club stood on a threshold. Confronting it were threats and dangers that could be fatal.

