

Recognised Clubs offered their opposition and games against Queens, B.A.C., Raylton, Stragglers and Old Miltonians became regular features of Milton's cricket.

During the war years (1939 – 45) Milton's cricket again suffered a lean period as a result of many boys leaving school earlier than they would have done in normal times. It had been necessary to put boys of U.15 and U.14 in the 1st XI, so that the junior teams had also to suffer from the weakness of the 1st.

Yet in 1944, the cricket season saw Milton's U.13 team, captained by W. Harris, and (her) U.14 team, captained by W. Sprague, come through without having lost a game. Her U.15 team in that year lost all its games.

This lean period in Milton's senior cricket was somewhat compensated by the arrival of "Scratch" Batchelor, who for years devoted himself wholeheartedly to the betterment of Milton School cricket.

The Milton/Plumtree game in March, 1948, which ended in a very exciting and fair draw, saw W. Sprague perform the rare feat of taking four wickets in four balls. His final figures for the first innings read 8.5 – 2 – 28 – 7.

The November game of the same year (the 71st), was also drawn, but more important, it witnessed a presentation to Mr. Mac. W. Ingram, who was umpiring his 50th Milton/Plumtree match; a truly magnificent record to have achieved.

Walshe and Ault followed in the footsteps of Sprague and those many others who represented Rhodesia at the Nuffield tournament in South Africa. Walshe, who played for the S.A. schools as wicket-keeper, gained special praise from that famous South African cricketer, Dudley Nourse.

Ault distinguished himself as a batsman at school after scoring two fine centuries, one of which was against Plumtree.

It was at this time that Plumtree, Milton's greatest cricket rival, was such a tower of strength in schoolboy cricket. In 1951, November's game witnessed A. Pithey score 125 and Dave Napier take nine wickets in the match. The following March, A. Pithey made 108 runs in two innings and Napier captured 11 wickets. Despite these performances, Milton fell short by a mere two runs.

In November, 1952, the Pithey brothers amassed 196 runs between them and Plumtree declared its innings closed at 270/6. Milton replied, more than admirably, with 332/7, Wilson scoring 116 and Thompson 93; 602 runs had been scored for the loss of only 13 wickets!

What a difference in scores to the Guinea Fowl game of the same year when Guinea Fowl could only muster 98 in both innings (Ferendinos 11/24), and Milton could only reply with 115 in both knocks!

The year prior to this saw Percy Mansell gain selection for the Springboks to tour Australia. He scored 90 in his first Test and in subsequent years, distinguished himself as the finest slip fielder in the world.

1955 produced very little cricket in the first term, due to a polio epidemic on the one hand, and incessant rainfall on the other. However, the one inter-school game played was a memorable one for Milton. Two records were established — the first; the highest individual score by a Rhodesian schoolboy in a first team inter-school fixture, namely 210 by Bland against Guinea Fowl. The second was the school's score of 337/6 wickets declared, the highest score made by a Milton XI in an inter-school fixture.

Colin Bland went on to greater heights, for in his last year at school, he represented the Rhodesian provincial team that played Peter May's M.C.C. team. He performed magnificently and achieved top score in both Rhodesia's innings!

Bland and E. Parker both represented S.A. Schools at Nuffield week in 1956, and Parker distinguished himself by being selected for the Rhodesia Nuffield XI for four consecutive years. In the years that followed, both played regularly for Rhodesia and Bland went on to gain his Springbok colours, tour Australia and England, and eventually earn his place in the World XI.

In the history of Milton's cricket, there have been three tours, all of which took place in the north. Two tours, one in 1958 and the other in 1961, were staged in what was then Northern Rhodesia. All in all, 10 games were played, against both schools and clubs. Six of these were won, two lost, one drawn and one tied. The Broken Hill game in 1961 witnessed a "slashing" century by M. London which contributed very considerably to a Milton win by an innings and 99 runs.

The third tour took place in "Nyasaland" in 1959, where Milton won two of the four games, lost one, and the final game was drawn. "Tinker" Beets and P. Kelley were the stars of this year's team, and both gained Nuffield selection.

As the number of boys increased through the years, it became very necessary to have more land available for cricket grounds. In the late fifties, Milton acquired the "Thompson Fields" to the north of Selborne Avenue, and these fields accommodated all the junior sides.

With more facilities for cricket, and with "a cricketing staff", Milton's standard of cricket throughout the school rose to great heights. The school was fortunate in having Harry Birrell, a Rhodesian Currie Cup player, Mike Clarence, an Old Prunitian who represented Matabeleland in the Logan Cup, Gordon Todd, who scored many runs for Chaplin as a schoolboy, and N. Robertson, an Old Boy of the school who played excep-