

**THE CIVIL SERVICE  
ATHLETIC  
ASSOCIATION  
1864 - 2021**

## **Introduction and Overview**

This publication, with all its various documents, is an attempt to outline and record some of the glorious history of the Civil Service Athletic Association (CSAA) from its origins in the Victorian Age to the present day. From 1864 to 2021 there is a wealth of information covering the initial high profile “Sports Days” in London along with the introduction of the other disciplines in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the emergence of Women within the sporting sphere.

The earliest information has been obtained from contemporary accounts published in the many National and Local Newspapers of the day which have been scanned and stored for on-line posterity by the British National Newspaper Archive. Other sources are the extensive records held by CSAA and CSSC along with excerpts from athletic historians who have documented accounts of some of the early athletic history and which can be found on the Athlos Website. Athletics Weekly has also provided a useful source for Results and photographs from CSAA Championships.

At the time of writing the Covid-19 pandemic has prevented access to the Journals and Records held by the Civil Service Sports Council which will hopefully provide further detail to enhance the history and fill in some of the missing gaps.

What started as an attempt to document all the various winners in the CSAA’s long history has also become an attempt to find as many complete event records as possible, as it is those taking part who are just as important as those who finish first, but that is a much longer task and will perhaps never be fully completed. The various Sections of The History record as many winners and results as possible from 1864 – 2020 but it has to be acknowledged that gaps do and will exist for one reason or another as paper records have been lost through the passage of time.

The main Sections of The History provide contemporary accounts of the Annual Sports Days along with reports on the other Championship Events that came to be held from the 1920s onwards. Some events have survived the test of time whilst others have been added, especially the 10k as a consequence of the “running boom” in the early 1980s. Events for Women have increased over the period and at times the CSAA was at the forefront for the drive for equal opportunities on the sports field.

However, none of this could have been achieved without the sterling work of all those who provided their time and experience for free and continue to do so at the time of writing. Without the volunteers the sport could not continue and this is their history as much as anything else.

Grateful thanks go to Dave Evans OBE for his research into the archives along with colleagues on the CSAA Committee who have supported this venture,

Nick Hume

CSAA Secretary

## Historical Overview

The Civil Service Athletic Association is possibly the oldest Athletic Association in the world and has a long and illustrious history that can be traced back to 1864 and its very first Sports Day which was Track and Field based. Today's spectator would find many differences in the events held but also some obvious similarities as the Meeting developed and adapted through time.

**The noted sports historian, Peter Radford, wrote the following in his notes on the "AAA Coming-of-Age Dinner" booklet that can be found at the Athlos website [www.athletics-archive.com](http://www.athletics-archive.com) :**

"In October 1859 Guy Pym passed the civil service exams and was appointed a temporary clerk in the War Office; he was eighteen. In March, 1862 he passed more civil service exams and was appointed clerk in the Accountant General's Branch within the War Office, with a headquarters on Pall Mall. With his exams over, and now with a permanent job, Guy Pym became involved with the Civil Service Cricket Club. He was a lower-order batsman who didn't score many runs and he didn't bowl, so perhaps he was in the team because of his fielding. They were an ambitious outward-looking club and Guy Pym went with them to Ireland in 1864 and to a tour in the west country in 1865, and there was even talk of them going to Paris. Whilst in this club, in late 1863 or early 1864, he floated the idea of athletic sports for the Civil Service to Jacob Luard Patisson (Hon Sec of the CS Cricket Club) and the two of them got together a representative committee and in April 1864 the first Civil Service Athletic Sports took place at Beaufort House, Walham Green, under the secretaryship of Guy Pym\*. It was a major initiative and it is worth noting that Luard Patisson and Guy Pym were only 22/23 years old."

*\*Note: this is an error. The first secretary of the athletic club was William George Herbert (1841-1920) who, like Pym, was in the War Office. Born and brought up in Penobscot, Maine, USA, but of British parentage, he returned to the UK as a youth after both parents died and joined the civil service. By 1881 he had retired and was living in Kent. He became a JP for Folkestone and County Alderman for Kent.*

The full committee for the first sports was E Page (starter for the races), F F Gordon, J Wearne, Charles Guy Pym, and W G Herbert (Secretary). A well-known professional athlete, Charles Westhall, was umpire.

The sports were originally announced in the press to be held on April 22/23, 1864, at the West London Cricket Ground, Brompton, the main venue for amateur athletics. However, a late change was made and Beaufort House was chosen. A grass track had to be prepared in three weeks by Jones, the groundsman. Although heavy rain curtailed the sports on the first day, some events were switched to the Saturday and fine weather ensured a success. The track was agreed to be in good condition for running. It was later converted into a cinder track of 3 laps to one mile and in 1866 was used for the first Amateur Athletic Club Championships after Guy Pym became secretary to the AAC.

The events over the two days included many that are still contested today in their metric equivalent: 100y, 440y, 880y, One Mile, High Jump, Broad Jump, Pole Leaping, Putting the Stone, Throwing the Hammer, 3 Mile Walk and 200y Hurdles. In addition, a number of events now less familiar were contested: a Hopping Race, a High Hop, a Sack Race, Standing High Jump, Standing Broad Jump, Throwing the Cricket Ball and a consolation 200y.

Pym, who was an outstanding runner, won the 440y and the mile and competed in the high jump, long jump and putting the stone.

From the beginning the Sports were an important social occasion that came to be known as the Ascot of Athletic Sports. Open carriages were brought onto the ground and parked around the track. Many ladies in bonnets and crinolines were present and gentlemen and officials wore top hats.

In 1870 the sports transferred from Beaufort House to Lillie Bridge, West Brompton. From 1885 they were held on the Stamford Bridge ground, now home to Chelsea FC who provided a T&F Programme from 1901 for the CSAA archives.

From early as 1866, the sports included "Strangers' Races", open to all gentlemen amateurs. These were usually handicap races and the runner at the scratch mark sometimes set a record. In 1874, Walter Slade, a member of the Stock Exchange, set a world best for the One Mile of 4:26.0., and in 1882, Walter George, the most famous distance runner of the century, set a world record of 4:19.4.

In the 1880s cycle racing was included in the sports but this did not remain on the programme for long. Races were also held for children of those competing but sadly not for women.

The club was known as the Civil Service Athletic Club for the first seventeen years of its existence but from 1882 the term Civil Service Athletic Association began to be used in the press.

The Illustrated Sporting News published pictures of the sports each year in the 1890s, originally engravings and later photographs.

**In a similar vein, another athletics historian, Peter Lovesey, penned the following**

"The CSAA was extremely prestigious in the Victorian era and the sports were certainly one of the most important occasions in the calendar. Charles Herbert (1846-1924), a winner at the sports in 1869, 1870 and 1875, became the Hon Sec of the Amateur Athletics Association and a member of the International Olympic Council from its foundation until 1906, when he fell from the top of an omnibus. He was regarded by Pierre de Coubertin, the creator of the modern Olympics, as one of the key figures who made the first Olympics possible."



There is a good report regarding one of the competitors in the 5 miles walk in the 1868 Meeting, who finished first, but was disqualified for running the last 20 Yards. He was Abraham Stoker, from the Chief Secretary's Office, Dublin, later known to the world as Bram Stoker, the creator of Dracula.

It was also common in the Championships up until the Second World War that up to Twelve of the 20 or so events on the Programme were restricted to "Members" (i.e. Civil Servants) whilst the others were open to "Strangers" (i.e. Non-Civil Servants) in which many of the famous athletes of the time competed. Sometimes there were events for the "Members" children and also Veteran's Handicap Races for the "older" athlete. Many famous Clubs took part including Cambridge University, the London Athletics Club (founded 1863) and Achilles AC (for Cambridge and Oxford University athletes who have competed in the annual Varsity Match and which was founded in 1920).

For many years the tradition was to "Handicap" the better athletes and even in 1923 this practice was common as the following article from **The Sportsman Saturday 09 June 1923** illustrates:

**CIVIL SERVICE A.A.**

**BIG PROGRAMME AT CHELSEA.**

Although the 56th annual sports of the Civil Service A.A. clash with the A.A.A. Championships, the entries are of a first-class character, and include such well-known performers as E D Mountain and W F Chambers, joint holders of the "Strathcona" Cup, A E Greening and H W Brockhouse, who are backmarkers in the Two-mile Walking Handicap. The Open Sprint has received an entry of 57, with C E Nicol (3½yds) on the backmark; the Quarter-mile attracted 54 entries, and the One Mile 36. The time-table of events is as follows:

- 1.30—200 Yards Championship.
- 2.35—100 Yards Championship (heats).
- 1.40—High Jump Championship.
- 2.40—100 Yards Open Handicap (heats).
- 2.40—100 Yards Championship (final).
- 2.55—50 Yards Ladies' Championship (heats).
- 3. 6—Inter-Departmental Tug-of-War.
- 3. 5—200 Yards Juniors.
- 3.10—100 Yards Open Handicap (Round II.).
- 3.15—120 Yards Veterans' Race (heats).
- 3.15—50 Yards Ladies' Championship (final).
- 3.20—200 Yards Handicap (heats).
- 3.30—One Mile Championship.
- 3.35—Long Jump Championship.
- 3.40—100 Yards Open Handicap (final).
- 3.45—120 Yards Veterans' Race (final).
- 3.50—200 Yards Handicap (final).
- 3.55—Two Miles Walking Handicap.
- 4. 0—120 Yards Boys' Race (heats).
- 4.15—440 Yards Open Handicap (heats).
- 4.20—120 Yards Boys' Race (final).
- 4.25—One Mile Relay Race (heats).
- 4.30—High Jump (Open).
- 4.40—120 Yards Open Hurdles Handicap (heats).
- 4.45—440 Yards Ladies' Relay Race (heats).
- 4.55—440 Yards Open Handicap (final).
- 5. 0—1000 Yards Handicap.
- 5.10—120 Yards Hurdles Handicap (final).
- 5.15—440 Yards Ladies' Relay Race (final).
- 5.20—One Mile Relay Race (final).
- 5.30—One Mile Open Handicap.
- 5.45—Presentation of Prizes.

### The Open Handicaps.

The following are the starts in the open handicaps:

100 YARDS.—Heat 1: C E Nicol, 3½yds; J Bowl, 7; H Grindall, 8; G F Bristow, 8½; H C Allsop, 8½; J G Evans, 9½. Heat 2: G H Lee, 4½yds; A V King, 7; G S West, 8; H Jackson, 8½; R E Dobie, 9; J Avis, 9½. Heat 3: R A Nicholas, 6yds; H J Shackleton, 7½; L Tennick, 8; R Jarvis, 8½; G Reavey, 9; W G Hawkins, 10. Heat 4: F W Mogridge, 6½yds; W Yates, 7½; H Earp, 8½; L A Fry, 8½; J Wakeman, 9; R S John Hooper, 10½.

Heat 5: A A Dolgin, 6½yds; L S Campbell, 7½; J R Williamson, 8½; E H Stephenson, 9. Heat 6: G Montgomery, 7yds; G E Maddon, 8; W H Thornhill, 8½; W A Harding, 8½; H F Newsom, 9.

Heat 7: J Grooms, 4½yds; A R Corley, 7; S G Eldridge, 8; W N Robinson, 8½; G W Hicks, 9; F R Day, 9½. Heat 8: F G Tanner, 5½yds; G C Bytn, 7½; W E Smedley, 8; D G Whisker, 8½; G A Holmden, 9; W G Barnett, 10.

Heat 9: C J Spanner, 6½yds; W J Hill, 7½; R E Lewis, 8; C Peters, 8½; C T Boys, 9; C T Mugridge, 10. Heat 10: T A Hart, 6½yds; E G Heale, 7½; S F Haynes, 8½; P A Gummer, 8½; F J Myhill, 9; J G Thurnell, 11.

440 YARDS.—Heat 1: G Haynes, 21 yards; 1; W Wallis, 25; P T Russell, 28; H W Fox, 30; C A Richmond, 30; E H Stephenson, 33; B J C Hunt, 33; T F Russell, 34; T H F Weigall, 36; H J W. Baron, 36; G W F Claxton, 39. Heat 2: J Groome, 17yds; H K Williams, 23; F G Rainey, 26; A R Corley, 29; W H Willgoss, 30; J A Powell, 32; H Grindall, 33; S G Ereant, 34; F H Sawyer, 35; B S Isaac, 36;

**F J Myhill, 37.**  
**Heat 3:** E Boakes, 12yds; C S Constant, 23; H Earp, 26; G S West, 28; L C Smith, 30; D T Whisker, 32; F E Kirby, 33; H F Coleman, 34; G A Holmden, 35; A Garton, 36; A E Weedon, 36. **Heat 4:** F W Spackman, 21yds; A Rugg, 24; F W Mogredge, 27; J Lane, 30; W G Axton, 30; A D J McDonald, 32; G F Bristow, 33; M C Perrett, 34; S G Daskombe, 35; S M Dunstone, 36; J Aris, 37. **Heat 5:** J J Gilliam, 9yds; A J Lock, 23; A A Dolgin, 26; J F McGlennon, 28; W H Thornhill, 30; W Harding, 31; L J Gadsden, 33; L L Grant, 34; D H Paton, 34; H Cailon, 36.

**ONE MILE.—**R C Webber, 68yds; W T Marsh, 71; A J Lock, 75; J C Dixon, 75; A J Sullivan, 78; A D Pyer, 106; F C Rush, 110; R D Bell, 100; W G Axton, 120; J H A Banister, 125; J O Sullivan, 126; K P Barrett, 128; W G Dodkin, 128; L S Campbell, 130; F L Carpenter, 132; W C A Findlay, 132; R S Chisholm, 138; H Weber, 140; H I Price, 140; W G Gazeley, 140; R J Banister, 140; C S Chisholm, 142; J T Felstead, 144; F Wakeman, 145; G J Clarke, 145; T Harper, 145; P F Stride, 145; J King, 145; F G M Riley, 147; W E D Clark, 148; P J R Boulton, 150; W F Stagg, 150; P W Pugh, 153; A Dewars, 157; G T Pierce, 160.

**120 YARDS HURDLES.—**Heat 1: F R Gaby, owes 21yds; F A Brown, owes 5; W H Munrow, owes 2; H R Higgs, scr. Heat 2: R L Cole, owes 11yds; H E Bates, owes 2; W H G Winslet, owes 1; D W Morgan, scr.

This explains why the “Winner” might not necessarily be the athlete with the fastest time, depending upon how accurate the handicapping actually was and it was known for athletes to enter events under false names.

The History of the CSAA can also be viewed in a social context, especially with regard to the way in which a Woman’s place in society evolved during this period. It is interesting to note that when Women were first allowed to compete in 1920 it was only in a very limited range of events and then gradually building up to the modern day when they can compete in every event that a Man does. Indeed, it appears that some of the pioneer Civil Servant Lady athletes were amongst the early leaders in this field.

This then is a journey through the last 157 years and an attempt to recount some of the stories of the day using historical reports from the time and to document as far as is possible the Winners of each of the events. From the initial Track & Field Championships (Sports Day) the CSAA has held Championships for Race Walking, Cross Country, Road Relays, 10k, the Marathon which then became a Half Marathon Championships and a Masters Track & Field. For a short period, there was even an Indoor Track & Field Championships.

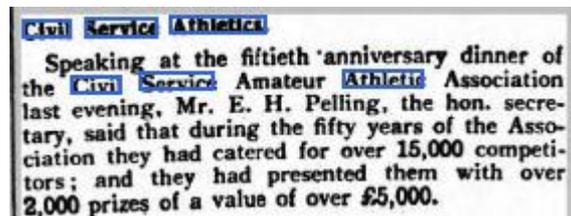
Representative Fixtures played an important part in the CSAA History, especially the Sir Sefton-Brancker Trophy for Cross Country and Track & Field between the Civil Service, the RAF and Middlesex and the Ryan Cup for Race Walking between the Civil Service, the Police and the RAF (which became a Combined Services Team later on). Some of the changes and the decrease in Representative Matches were because of the increase in Track & Field Leagues and then the huge explosion in Road Races from the early 1980s. In recent

years issues such as time off work for sporting events (from 2010 onwards) impacted the number of athletes competing.

Pen pictures of some of the key figures in the CSAA's History and development are included along with those for some of the Civil Service athletes who have had distinguished athletic careers, even winning Olympic Gold Medals. Also included are those for some of the "Strangers" (non-Civil Servants) who took part in the track and field right up until the 1930s.

Numerous sources have been used for writing this history and they are acknowledged where possible but many of the results will be from records maintained by CSAA Committee Members and information held by the Civil Service Sports Council. Many of the early Track & Field accounts are from the Newspapers and Publications of that era who took great delight in sending reporters to the Civil Service Athletic Sports Day. The Results illustrated from 1864 – 1901 are taken from the original Programme produced for the 1901 Championships and kindly sent to the CSAA by Chelsea Football Club.

**The Pall Mall Gazette - Friday 31 October 1913** reported on the Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner as follows and it would be interesting to know what the Report would say today on the number of competitors and the value of the prizes. However, today it is medals rather than trophies that are awarded to the winners.



**Civil Service Athletics**  
Speaking at the fiftieth anniversary dinner of the Civil Service Amateur Athletic Association last evening, Mr. E. H. Pelling, the hon. secretary, said that during the fifty years of the Association they had catered for over 15,000 competitors; and they had presented them with over 2,000 prizes of a value of over £5,000.

The Daily Herald on Friday 24 April 1925 ran the following piece on its Sports Page regarding the Race Walk Championship and how inclusivity was being welcomed into all the events:

**CIVIL SERVICE WALK**

**Fourth Annual Contest to be Decided To-morrow**

**By "HARRIER"**

Until a few years ago the activities of the Civil Service Athletic Association, which was founded in 1864, consisted for the most part of holding an annual athletic meeting, the events at which were confined exclusively to the clerical staffs.

Nowadays, however, a more progressive and democratic system of management prevails, and every effort is made by the Executive to move with the times.

Civil servants in all parts of the kingdom and of all grades are eligible for membership, and nearly every kind of sport is promoted.

A cross-country championship was instituted in 1921, and in the following year a road walking competition on the team system, carrying championship titles, was also initiated.

Both events are now firmly established annual fixtures and attract more than ordinary attention.

For the fourth walking contest, to be decided over ten miles at Regent's Park to-morrow afternoon, the entry of 12 teams has been received, the Ministry of Health nominating two contingents, and over 80 walkers are down to compete.

As stated above the CSAA Committee has always endeavoured to move with the times throughout its history and this can be illustrated by the following which provides a very good summary of the first 75 years of the CSAA's history:

## Seventy-Five Years of Athletics

This year the C.S. Athletic Association staged its 75th annual sports. Seventy-five; that is a good number.

As the meetings were suspended during the two wars, it sends the Association back over the 75 years. Indeed, the Service annual sports is one of the oldest established sports meetings in the world. The first regularly organised athletic meetings of modern times were promoted about a century ago.

### Woolwich Academy Was First

Woolwich Royal Military Academy was about the first in the field in 1849, and one of the Oxford colleges followed in 1850. From the latter the Cambridge sports of 1857 followed, and the Oxford sports in 1860. From the universities this taste for athletics spread to the schools, particularly to Harrow and Cheltenham. As the lads left school and went into business, they took their athletic interest with them. A club, therefore, of young business men was started in London in 1863, known as the Mincing Lane Athletic Club, later to become the London A.C., to which so many civil servants have belonged.

### Service Body Formed in 1864

In 1864 a number of civil servants from the leading departments got together and decided to inaugurate a body to promote regular athletics contests in the service. Among these men were J. Pattison, the hon. secretary of the C.S. Cricket Club, Guy Pym, who himself performed on track and field, and Charles Hawker, of the War Office.

### Why Beaufort House Was Chosen

The last-named was a captain in the War Office Company of the South Middlesex Volunteers, and when the first sports of the new body were being arranged, Captain Hawker arranged that Beaufort House, Walham Green, should be lent for the occasion by his unit of the Volunteers. From 1864 the sports continued to be held there until 1870, when they were staged at the old Lillie Bridge; from 1886 until 1932 they were run off at Stamford Bridge, being transferred to the White City in 1933.

### Fashionable Crowds Attended

The early Service sports in the 1860's attracted, we are informed, considerable interest and great fashionable crowds of people. From the reports of the day we learn that the events "consisted of running, high and broad jumping, pole leaping, hurdle and hopping races, throwing cricket balls, throwing the hammer and stone, sack races, and a consolation race, open to those who had been previously unsuccessful." From the very start the meetings were well supported and attended, and

"brought down to Walham Green a great concourse of people, carriages and equestrians." The experiment of 1864 was repeated in 1865, on the same ground, which "drew together one of the largest and most fashionable attendances" that had ever attended these events.

### Too Many Competitors

On the athletic side they were just as successful. The entries were so unexpectedly heavy that the sports had to be made a two-day meeting, preliminary heats being run off on the Friday and the main events on the Saturday. The entries for the 200 yards, so we learn, were as high as 20, and as "there was no room for a quarter of that number on the course at once," the event had to be made up into five heats. Socially, the sports were a great success. All round the enclosure was a dense crowd, "and the background was closed in with deep groups of carriages and equestrians." There was, however, this wrong with the sports—"there were so many fellows actually performing!" The atmosphere of the time can best be recovered by reading the report in *The Times*:—

"Something, however, as far as regards the sports was detracted from the interest of the meeting by the number of competitors who ever entered for almost each event, and which necessitated a number of heats."

The worst of heats, it is explained, is that they are not really final. Therefore, "the interest is lessened by the fact that almost all the competitions gone through yesterday have to be tried again to-day." Competitive athletics have moved a long way since those days.

In general, reports are very scant about performances (but "in the high jump Mr. Guy Pym cleared 5 ft. 4 ins. in beautiful style"), but have very full accounts of all the titled gentry in attendance. *The Times* had a verbatim report of the speech at the prizegiving, concluding with an apt quotation from "As You Like It," Rosalind to Orlando—"So, you have wrestled well, and have overthrown more than your enemy."

### The Birth of the A.A. Club

All this contributed more and more to the rising interest in the athletic game, and in 1866 a club was formed "to supply the want of an established ground upon which competitions in athletic sports might take place between gentlemen amateurs." It was called the Amateur Athletic Club, and the first English championship meeting was held that year. In 1864 Cambridge met Oxford at Oxford, and these sports were removed to London in 1867. In the latter year the Civil Service held their fourth annual sports, and these, we learn, "vied in interest with the varsity sports." Notable, too, in the Service meeting, a race for "strangers" was introduced into the programme, precursor of the great "open" events of later years.

### The First Hurdle Race

A hurdle race also was included, of 200 yards over 12 flights. "This excited a good deal of interest, and was one of the most exciting events of the day. Mr. G. C. Emery gave his three rivals 24 yards start, but notwithstanding this subtraction from that gentleman's chance of success, he won magnificently by about four feet, having cleared all the obstacles before him in splendid style." It is, perhaps, interesting to note that M. E. Jobling, one of the best of the early athletes, ran in both the 100 and the mile! Interesting also is the fact that in the longer handicap events, e.g., the mile walk, the handicap was not in the form of yards given, but seconds start, that is to say, every competitor completed the full course.

### Service Help to Found the A's

Athletics, however, had its growing pains. Before long two rival sets of open championships were being held, one sponsored by the Amateur Athletic Club and the other by the London A.C. On Saturday, April 24, 1880, the leading bodies in the game met at the Randolph Hotel, Oxford; the Oxford University Athletic Club, Cambridge University A.C., the Amateur A.C., the London A.C., the Civil Service and one or two other bodies, and as a result the Amateur Athletic Association was formed. The Civil Service A.A., therefore, has the honour of being one of the select few who called the now famous governing body into being. The Service representatives at this historic meeting were G. Herbert and H. Tomlinson. The new governing body was declared to have for its objects "the improvement of the management of athletic meetings and the adoption of uniform rules for athletic competition in all parts of the country." The contentious clause on amateurism, which excluded "any mechanic, artisan or labourer" from the charmed circle, was dropped.

As *The Times* said:—

#### Gentlemen of the Civil Service

"Artisans and mechanics have, by almost general consent, been shut out from the privileged inner circle and have been counted in every case as professionals. The reason for this rule is at least intelligible. Their muscular practice is held to give them an unfair advantage over more delicately nurtured competitors."

The "gentlemen of the Civil Service"—for all competitors in the Service in those days were "gentlemen" and were always referred to as "Mr."—were apparently among the "more delicately nurtured" competitors. "Artisans, mechanics and labourers" were now to be admitted to amateur athletics. *The Times* was "glad that some body of athletes, or quasi athletes" (that was a nasty one—wonder what they meant by

that?) "has been bold enough to incur the risk"

Since those days athletics has never looked back.

### Service Diamond Jubilee

In 1930, the "parent" body of the sport, the A.A.A., staged its "Jubilee Championship Meeting" in celebration of the half-century that had passed since 1880. A few years before—namely, in 1927—the Civil Service A.A., a father of that "parent," celebrated its own jubilee. The Service—accurate, as ever—reckoned in terms of annual meetings actually held rather than in mere years past—and counted not 50, but 60. The Service A.A., then, celebrated its Diamond Jubilee Meeting in 1927, three years before "the A's."

I well remember in 1930, those of us who ran in the open championships at the A.A.A. meeting received a special jubilee badge as a memento of 50 years of the A.A.A. (As a fellow-competitor said to me at the time—himself another civil servant—it was the only thing any of us ever got out of "the A's" without having to win it.) The badge showed "the A's," surmounted by a lion and crown, over the red rose of England, with the legend, "1880-1930. Jubilee Championships." But those of us who had a medal to come at the Service Jubilee three years before, did not get anything very special (only a "Jubilee" box to put it in!) but at least we could—and *did*—feel proud that it was *our* Association that was the first in the world to celebrate its diamond jubilee.

And this year it is 75. Only another 25 to the full century!

Those who look back over the years will see each his own "high spots"—any selection is bound to be individual and any choice invidious. So far as the last century is concerned, in 1880—the year of the first A.A.A. meeting—the Service 150 yards handicap was won in 15 seconds, and the general standard was high enough to attract entries from the New South Wales team in England at the time.

### A Memory of W. G. George

In 1882, W. G. George, in the open mile handicap, ran through the field in what must have been a really great mile to win in the amazing time of 4-19 2/5 secs. I never saw Turner in the opening years of this century, but I have run often enough with L. J. de B. Reed—although not exactly "in his day." He must have been running some wonderful quarters just before the first war, and one remembers how he dead-beated a quarter in the A.A.A. open championships. I recollect how pleased we all were to see him win the veterans' twenty years ago.

### The Recent Olympians

One remembers also Roughley, before the first war, and Hayes, of the M/Labour, before and after. Then there was the period of the Olympians;

Fred Gaby, Edgar Mountain and Dan Crowley; the internationals, Jack Gillis and B. C. V. Oddie; and more recently, G. J. Pallett—who just won't die, nor will he merely fade away. One looks back to the days when Fred Gaby ran, jumped and hurdled, and looks back in particular to that wonderful exhibition of hurdling in 1925, when in the "open" he owed no less than 25 yards—the handicapper could not "pull" him any more without sending him off the ground altogether—and Fred won in 18 seconds dead. Then there was that amazing race for the Strathcona, the mile championship, when W. F. A. Chambers, Inland Revenue, and Edgar Mountain, the "open" half champion of the year, came down the straight neck for neck, to finish in a dead-heat. There was also that other Service institution, W. E. Straker, grey haired and game, winning the veterans', himself in the sixties. One recollects, too, the introduction in 1925 of the triangular contest between Achilles, the Inter-Varsities Athletic Board and the Dominion students. Feasts of athletics!

During the last 25 or 30 years there has, of course, been much development in the game. Firstly, in 1921 the events were thrown open to all civil servants—how the ghosts of "Gentlemen" stalked the dressing rooms that year!—irrespective of official rank or establishment status; permanents and temporaries competed on equal terms!—and the winners, therefore, of the level races were in a real sense Service champions.

#### The International Contests

The Association launched out from the track into cross-country and road walking, and on the track, teams were sent to Dublin and Glasgow in 1928 and 1929 to compete against teams from the Irish and Scottish Civil Service.

During the next 25 years, that is to say, between the 75th and the 100th meeting, I have no doubt there will be many new developments, many new times set up and many great races run. If I am knocking about these parts 25 years hence, I hope the Editor will ask me to write a note on the Century. If we keep going, we are fairly sure to get there before anyone else—but I am sure we shall do more than merely keep going.

There will be a lot to say in 25 years' time.

R. C. JARVIS.

Former athletes also promoted the popularity of the Meetings such as F A Knott (former CSAA Mile Champion in 1902 & 1903) writing in **Athletic Review in 1951 on the subject of "50 Years Ago"** who stated:

There were many other big meetings during these years, but the foregoing remarks will suffice to indicate what they were like. They were mostly all cast in the same mould. Most popular in London, apart from the Oval meetings, were the Civil Service Sports, the Kildare A.C. meetings, and the Fire Brigade Sports. These attracted large entries, and there were a certain number of inter-club events in the form of team races, at 1, 2 or 3 miles, and many relay events, but meetings in their present form were practically unknown.

In terms of being at the forefront of athletic opportunities **Athletics Weekly** published the following Notice in its edition dated **18<sup>th</sup> June 1955** which sees the CSAA adding the Women's 880 Yards to the Programme:

#### **CIVIL SERVICE WOMEN'S 880 YARDS**

In the hopes that it will eventually lead to the provision of a greater number of events for ladies in the Civil Service Championships, the Board of Trade Social and Sports Association is including in its Sports Day programme a Ladies' 880 yards Scratch Race. This event will be open to all Civil Servants and will be held on the C.S. Ground, Chiswick, on Wednesday, 20th July. Any lady wishing to take part in this event is asked to contact the Sports Day Secretary, Mr. T. F. Brown, Board of Trade, Room 3383, Horse Guards Avenue, London, S.W.1 (TRA 8855, Ext. 7806) giving details of Department, etc. There will be no entry fee, but entries close on Sat., 2nd July.

**Athletics Weekly 11<sup>th</sup> March 1963** highlights the other events added to the Programme:

The Civil Service A.A. will include in their Championships for the first time this year a hammer throw, 3,000m steeplechase, junior 100 yards, women's 440 and women's 80m. hurdles. If sufficient hurdlers (120 yards) write to Hon. Sec., A. F. Whiffen, H.M. Treasury, Gt. George Street, London, S.W.1, stating their intention to compete if this event is included at the Championships at Hurlingham on July 29th, this, too, will be added to the programme.

In 1995 Neil Hornsby (CSAA Secretary) invited Civil Servants from European Countries, particularly the Embassies to participate in the Cross Country Championships thereby adding an International element to the proceedings. In the first year a good number toed the start-line but numbers dropped in the coming years, though a loyal contingent came across from The Netherlands for a few years which did result in opportunities for CSAA runners to compete in the prestigious Twin Piers Half Marathon.

Hopefully these developments will continue but in 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact upon society and sport is causing a re-think amongst governing bodies as to how to continue to provide sport in its traditional format and in a safe and healthy environment.

For those with an interest in athletics history and the CSAA in particular, and for those who like to delve, the many various sections of The CSAA History will provide something of historic and social interest. Indeed, it might even lead to some more “athletics memorabilia” coming to light and being saved for posterity rather than being thrown onto the proverbial scrapheap.

The Sections have developed as the research found more and more items of interest and has been arranged by “event” for ease of reference.