

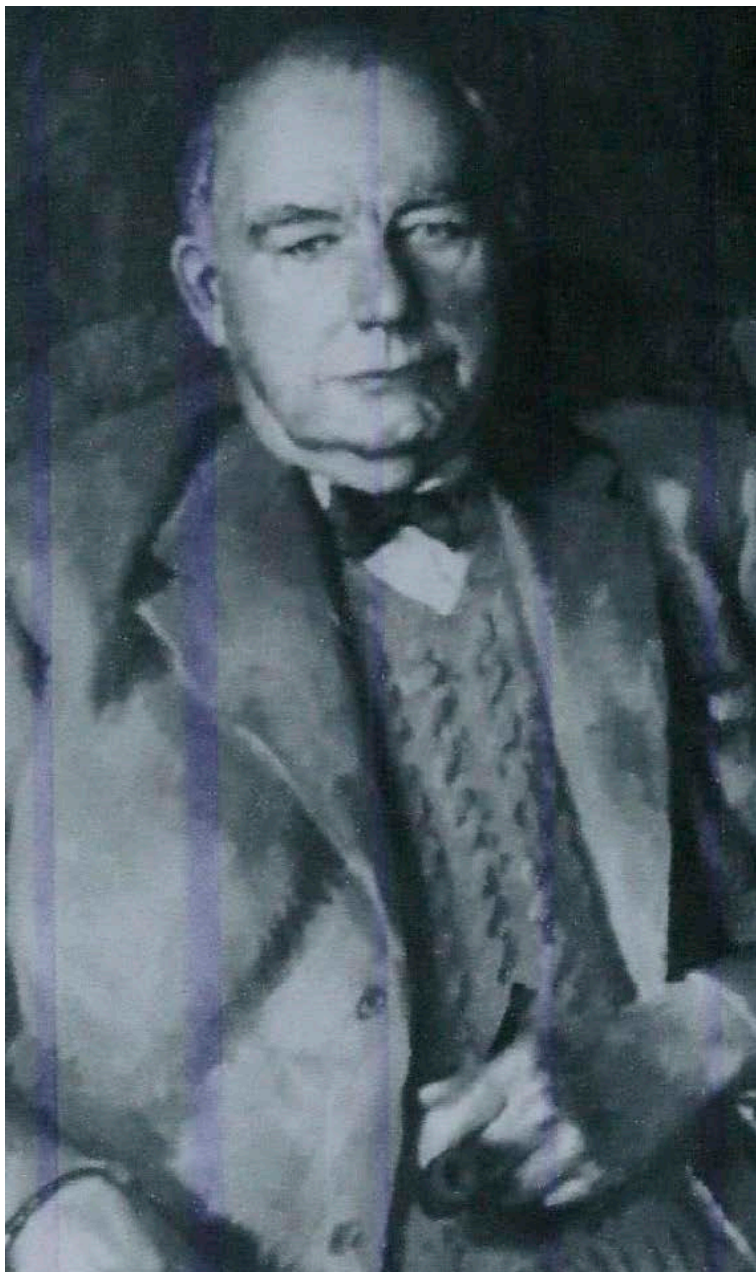


## Local History Collection

### 10 - Capt.O.G.N Turnbull of Fifield

Spring 2021

Researched & written by Sarah Grace



Capt.O.G.N Turnbull

In 2020, the local community should have been celebrating the centenary of both the Braywood Memorial Hall and Braywood Cricket Club, however circumstances worldwide changed that!

The land gifted for use by both Braywood Memorial Hall and Braywood Cricket Club in 1920 was originally owned by Fifield House but the background to the gifting is confusing. The legal documentation shows that the transfer of land for the hall was initiated (indented) in **1920 by Harold Dudley Clayton, the son of Sir Fitzroy Clayton** (who lived at Fifield House but died in 1913), however the house was sold in 1919 but it is not clear who to.

**Capt. Forester Cecil Robin Britten** who possibly owned Fifield House in the 1920's helped fund the building of the Memorial Hall in memory of those killed in the First World War. It is believed that he was playing cricket on the Fifield House Cricket Ground before 1920 and was involved with the cricket club until 1937.

By the time the official **Braywood Memorial Hall Trust was set up in 1927**, the cricket club had been known as Braywood Cricket Club, The Turnbull Ground for four years.

**Capt. O.G.N. Turnbull, known as Noel, was certainly living in Fifield House by 1939**, however I am unable currently, to trace what date he moved there. Noel was born in London in 1890, his father was part of a well-known shipping family in Whitby called Turnbull, Scott and Company.

Noel was educated at Charterhouse and during his time at school he played and excelled in many sports including tennis, golf and cricket. After finishing his education Noel joined the family firm and was made a partner in 1913. He was to travel to France in 1914 in support of the British Expeditionary Force while a member of the R.A.C. He then transferred to the Royal Army



Noel Turnbull

Service Corps, reaching the rank of Captain and was awarded the Military Cross for his services in 1918. Noel survived the war and returned to the family shipping business and made his mark as a top class tennis player. He represented Great Britain in the Davis Cup in 1919, on the team that beat France in the final. At the Antwerp Olympics in 1920 he represented G.B. in tennis, playing in the mixed doubles, singles (lost in the semi-final) and men's doubles. Noel won the Gold Medal in the men's doubles with his partner Max Woosnam, beating the Japanese pair in 4 sets. He continued to play top level tennis into his late 30's and made his 6th and last Davis Cup appearance in 1926 and 2 years later won the Portuguese Open.

Noel also played off scratch as a golfer, was a member of the Berkshire Club in 1928 and played in the English Amateur Championships in the 1930's. Whilst the Cricket Club records show that Noel was involved in the club during the 1920's and 1930's, it is not recorded until 1937, when a letter was sent to Noel to thank him for the 'loan' of the cricket field, that we can place him living at Fifield House. Noel also built the Memorial Cottages after WW2 by the village Memorial Hall for workers on his farm and estate.

**In 1955 Noel Turnbull was elected President of Braywood Cricket Club** and remained in post until his death at Fifield House in 1970. From **1971 until 1974 his wife Anna was President and then Noel's son Mr.M.T.Turnbull (Tommy) was President from 1975 until 1992**. Tommy also served on the Braywood Memorial Hall Trust until 2008.



President Tommy Turnbull (centre) presents awards to Gordon Barker, Geoff Shurley, Hugh West & Frank Turner at Braywood Cricket Club's Annual Dinner

**During the 1970's Noel's grandsons ,Simon and Jonny**, would bring a cricket team to the club for the annual President's X1 game at the Turnbull Ground. I spoke to Simon Turnbull in February this year, to ask if he knew the reason for his grandfather's generosity in donating the land, particularly as there is another Turnbull Ground in Whitby for Football (gifted before 1900). We had to guess that the gift of land to **Braywood Cricket Club in 1965** was possibly due to his family's previous gifting but the main reason could be as simple as 'he was in a fortunate position and was able to'. As an outstanding sportsman himself, it's easy to see why Capt. Turnbull was keen to support local sport. **The Turnbull Cricket Ground Gift of Deed by Noel Turnbull reverted to the Braywood Memorial Hall Trust after 25 years in 1991**, and the Cricket Club currently leases the land from the Trust.

If any local resident wishes to support the Braywood Memorial Hall Trust there are vacancies on the Hall Committee and new members would be very welcome. Please contact Rod Ball the Chairman whose email address is [roddieball@hotmail.com](mailto:roddieball@hotmail.com).

Braywood Cricket Club these days is open to all ages and ability of cricketer. The Juniors train on Sunday mornings and the Senior teams play 1st X1, 2nd X1 league games as well as Sunday afternoon friendly games at home. Social members are also welcome for those who do not play. Please contact Brett Carter, Chairman, see below for details.

I welcome any further news and information about Capt. Turnbull and Capt. Britten as my story about them is not complete, please send via Alison Brayshaw OGAFC A Newsletter Editor.