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The changing fortunes of one of London's oldest hockey clubs came to light recently when a former secretary of Hampstead discovered the earliest records, which had long since been considered lost.

These show that the club was started in 1890 as a section of the Hampstead Cricket Club at Lymington Road and joined the Hockey Association in 1893. During the following year, the ground at Hampstead proved too wet and a new ground was found at Acton. Unfortunately this ground was not satisfactory and in 1895-6 a move was made to the Richmond Athletic Ground and the club played there until the outbreak of war in 1939.

In the early days many well known Hampstead and Middlesex Cricketers were associated with the club. The most famous of these were A E Stoddart, an international cricketer and rugby footballer, H D Hayman, S S Pawling, E L Marsden, F W Orr, and F R D Munro.

The earliest fixtures were with Staines and Ealing and these were followed by games against Bromley, Tulse Hill, Teddington and Southgate in 1894. In the days of Staines's supremacy, Hampstead became their great rivals and defeated them in the season of 1901-2. From that match Staines remained unbeaten until December 1905, when Hampstead won again.

In 1899 S H Shoveller, who won 29 caps for England joined the club and the succeeding 10 years were the most glorious in its history. In 1903-4 only one match was lost and in 1907-8 and 1910-11 Hampstead was undefeated by any other London club. In 1910-11 there were five English internationals in the side: G R Ashton, J H Bennett, C H Eiloart, Shoveller, and G Logan. J H Bennett, who was secretary from 1919 to 1924 won 31 caps for England. In 1920, Hampstead achieved the record of having four¹ representatives who won gold medals in the Olympic Games at Antwerp. Shoveller (who had with Logan played for England in the 1908 Olympic Games' final) Bennett, C S W Marcon and C T A Wilkinson.

Almost every member of the club was engaged in some form of active service during the Second World War. Though an attempt was made to continue by amalgamating with Teddington, hockey had to be abandoned for the 1940-44 seasons. During the war it was not possible to rent the ground at Richmond and at the beginning of the 1945-6 season, Hampstead were without a home.

In an endeavour to keep together and eventually re-form the club, a number of members joined Purley Hockey Club and in fact in the 1946-7 season R L Milsted and J C Sankey were captains of the Purley first and second elevens respectively.

These two players, together with S J Saunders, were instrumental in re-forming the club in the 1950-51 season at the old home in Lymington Road. From one team, amid innumerable difficulties, the club expanded and for the 1954-55 season moved to the Brondesbury Cricket Ground at Harman Drive, Farm Avenue, Cricklewood. The move to Brondesbury was necessitated by the old trouble of wet ground at Lymington Road.

¹ In fact, it was three: C S W Marcon joined Hampstead after the Olympic Games

A number of members have given invaluable service to the game off the field and these include Bennett, Shoveller and Wilkinson, Vice Presidents of the Hockey Association and K H Ingledeu, late Secretary of the British Hockey Board and international umpire. R L Milsted was for many years treasurer of the Southern Counties Hockey Association and is now vice-president.

Now in 1955-6, Hampstead members can reflect with pride on the achievement of their predecessors. The club is most grateful to its pre-war opponents for restoring old fixtures, and this has been justified by the impressive record so far this season. With five teams in the field each week the results to the end of January were:

1 st XI	15	12	0	3	57	18
2 nd XI	15	10	1	4	41	26
3 rd XI	15	10	1	4	52	26
4 th A XI	15	10	1	4	61	34
4 th B XI	14	8	1	5	34	27