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History

## The 1905/06 'Originals', 8 November 2005

**Source:** [New Zealand Rugby Museum](#)

The tour of the British Isles and France by the 1905/6 All Blacks will always be important in New Zealand's sporting history for a number of reasons:

- It was wonderfully successful on the field, with 34 of the 35 matches won. It gave rise to the "All Black" name, one of the best known sporting names in the Western world.
- The pre-match performances of the haka gave the team a special quality, unique to New Zealand.
- The team brought a degree of specialisation and planning to the game far in advance of that in the country where the game originated.



**Back row:** G A Gillett, S T Casey, D McGregor, A McDonald, F Roberts.  
**Second row:** E T Harper, J O'Sullivan, C Seeling, R G Deans, W Johnston, G W Nicholson, J Corbet, W Cunningham, F Newton, J Duncan (Coach).  
**Seated:** H L Abbott, W J Wallace, G A Tyler, D Gallaher (Capt.), G H Dixon (Mgr), J W Stead (V. Capt.), W Mackrell, F Glasgow, W S Glenn.  
**In front:** J Hunter, H J Mynott, G W Smith, E E Booth, H D Thomson.

### Early Days in New Zealand Rugby

After rugby started in New Zealand in 1870 the game spread rapidly, if unevenly, throughout the country. There was somewhat similar growth in the eastern states of Australia, with trans Tasman tours starting in 1882 and continuing every few years for the next two decades. The first test match between the two countries was played in Sydney in 1903, New Zealand winning by a rather flattering 22-3.

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Yellow circle

However rugby contact with Britain, which many New Zealanders of the time thought of as "Home", was much less frequent. A privately promoted British tour of Australia and New Zealand took place in 1888 while later that year and into 1889 the New Zealand "Natives" tour, also privately promoted, took place. This remarkable tour of New Zealand, Australia and Britain involved over 100 matches, 75 (some records say 74) in the British Isles.

Great Britain made a privately promoted and successful 21 match tour of Australia in 1899 but did not play in New Zealand. Arthur Swan recorded without elaboration in his "History of New Zealand Rugby Football" that "An attempt to arrange a visit from the British team touring Australia did not meet with success". It was another five years before there was rugby contact with Britain, in 1904 when New Zealand played, and won, its first home test, beating Britain 9-3 at Athletic Park before a crowd of 20,000. That British tour took in both Australia and New Zealand and it was a sign of New Zealand's emergence as a rugby power that the British side of 1904 were unbeaten in fourteen games in Australia but won just two out of five in New Zealand. The British though were not greatly impressed by the New Zealand standard, prophesying they would struggle against the better sides when they toured the Home Countries in 1905/6.



### **Shipboard Training**

A tour of the Home Countries by New Zealand had been under discussion at least from 1902. But negotiations took some time, partly at least because of concern about the expense of moving a large group of players around the world for several months. The cost for a team of around twenty five players touring for thirty odd matches over three or four months was estimated at 5,000 pounds. Another issue was the simplifying of the rules as to professionalism, presumably so that an allowance could be paid to the players.

In fact an allowance of three shillings per day was paid during the tour. The allowance was important to some of the players. Prior to the tour Billy Stead wrote to the New Zealand Union asking if any special provision was to be made for married men (there wasn't) and if the allowance was to be paid for Sundays (it was).

Money seems to have been an issue for some of the players. Though most books about the tour do not mention it others report that each Monday Bob Deans, Jimmy Hunter and Eric Harper (Jim O'Sullivan and Billy Glenn may also have been involved), all from wealthy backgrounds, each contributed two pounds into a fund for tour members who needed it.

To protect itself the New Zealand Rugby Union sought guaranteed minimum gate receipts which eventually were agreed to by three of the Home Unions, both for test matches plus club and county games under their jurisdiction. Scotland did not agree to guarantees and that decision of their administrators, as we will see later, gave the NZRU a substantial windfall. The New Zealand Union also tried, with only partial success, to raise funds through debentures to be subscribed for by its member unions.

### **The Tour Build-Up**

After the 1904 season the New Zealand selectors named 53

players from whom the team to tour Britain would be chosen. Inevitably there was criticism of the selection with a number of players considered unlucky not to be among those named. Over the summer it was also announced that George Dixon, Chairman of the NZRU Management Committee, had been appointed as manager of the team. The English born Dixon, outside of rugby was an accountant, then became manager of the newspapers NZ Observer and NZ Times and later was the founder of the NZ Free Lance.

Following the inter-island match on 3 June 25 players were named to tour Britain, with 18 to make a three game preliminary tour of New South Wales. The trip to Australia was an attempt to generate additional cash after the debenture issue fell short of expectations.

In Australia the team, captained by Taranaki five eight Jimmy Hunter, won two and drew its other match whilst four matches in New Zealand resulted in two wins, a draw and a 0-3 loss to Wellington Province the day before sailing when the players would have been conscious of incurring injury. So the results in Australia and New South Wales had been satisfactory but not outstanding.

When the team returned to New Zealand the experienced Aucklander Bill Cunningham was added to fill a weakness that had shown up in the specialist lock position. Finally before the match against Wellington it was announced that "Bunny" Abbott of Taranaki would join the side and that Dave Gallaher would captain the team with Billy Stead as vice captain.

#### The Final Selection

**Backs:** George Gillett (Canterbury), Ernest "General" Booth (Otago), Billy Wallace (Wellington), Duncan McGregor (Wellington), H D "Mona" Thomson (Wanganui), George Smith (Auckland), Eric Harper (Canterbury), H L "Bunny" Abbott (Taranaki), H J "Simon" Mynott (Taranaki), Bob Deans (Canterbury), Jimmy Hunter (Taranaki), Billy Stead (Southland), Fred Roberts (Wellington).

**Forwards:** Steve Casey (Otago), George Tyler (Auckland), Dave Gallaher (Auckland), Bill Mackrel (Auckland), Frank Glasgow (Taranaki), John Corbett (West Coast), W "Massa" Johnston (Otago), Alex McDonald (Otago), Fred Newton (Canterbury), Charlie Seeling (Auckland), George Nicholson (Auckland), Jim O'sullivan (Taranaki), Billy Glenn (Taranaki), Bill Cunningham (Auckland).

**Manager:** George Dixon (Wellington). Coach: Jimmy Duncan (Otago).

The side sailed on Sunday 30th July on the Rimutaka after a smoke concert in the Wellington Town Hall to farewell the team. The Premier Richard Seddon and Leader of the Opposition Joseph Ward were among the dignitaries who attended, but some observers noted that only ten tickets to the function were purchased by the public. However the team members would have been comforted by Seddon's assurance that their fares home would be guaranteed by the government if the tour was not a financial success.

On board ship the team was given a week off before training started, but at a meeting on August 5 Gallaher, advising he understood there was a feeling that the team rather than the NZRFU should appoint the captain, tendered his resignation. Billy Stead followed suit. An awkward situation was resolved when Frank Glasgow moved that the meeting "heartily endorse the appointments made by the (NZRU) Management Committee". The resolution was carried, but by seventeen votes to twelve, the dissenting votes indicating there had indeed been unhappiness with the appointments.

Earlier, before the team left on the preliminary tour in Australia, there had been another selection issue. A number of the senior players opposed the appointment of 1903 New Zealand captain Jimmy Duncan of Otago as coach, arguing that it would be preferable to take another player rather than a coach. The Auckland RFU was prominent in lobbying against Duncan's appointment, and the matter became serious enough for the NZRU to hold a Special Meeting on July 18 when Duncan's appointment was confirmed by a majority of a

little over two to one.

It is often contended that there was something of a North/South split in the team and that selections favoured the northerners. It would take a very detailed analysis of selections, taking into account injuries, illness (some of it self inflicted) and form, to confirm or refute the suggestion. For what it is worth, eleven players played in less than half the tour matches, six were from the the South Islanders, five from the North.

Selection issues were not the only storm encountered. On the eighth day out the Rimutaka ran into a storm with one freak wave, around nine o'clock in the evening, smashing portholes in the player's cabins, damaging skylights in a lounge ten metres above the waterline and ripping up a fifteen metre section of decking. Fortunately for all the monster wave turned out to be a one-off and by morning the sea had moderated.

After the week's break on board ship daily training took place, "physical drill" at 7.45am, a morning session with backs and forwards in their own groups, and in the afternoon a variety of drills, including boxing, wrestling and using the "Sandow developer" to build strength. The training that the team did, mostly with enthusiasm, may well have been a welcome relief from the monotony of shipboard life. At 5pm the players met to discuss rules, tactics and styles of play, something that was also done in informal brainstorming sessions throughout the tour. Gallaher (forwards, with Cunningham helping with scrum practice) and Stead (backs) took the training, with coach Jimmy Duncan sidelined. Usually other passengers watched the training and some, including two women, joined in.

Well as the team performed, not using Duncan's coaching skills may have been a mistake. He was by the standards of the day vastly experienced, an acknowledged deep thinker about the game, an astute tactician and as a non player would have been able to bring a more detached view than

could the player/coaches.

Montevideo was the first port of call (Tenerife was the other) and the team, few of whom had been further afield than Australia, spent the day sightseeing. Remarkably they found two New Zealanders, one an old school friend of Stead's, the other Jimmy Hunter's brother, a Salvation Army officer, who fixed them up with reliable guides to take them around the city. They were impressed by some of the architecture, put off by the smell of garlic and frustrated by the two hours taken over dinner "a la Spanish".

The team took a full part in on board social activities, with Glasgow (piano), Newton and Nicholson (both described by Manager Dixon as singing "really well") prominent. Nicholson (a tramp) took out the prize at a fancy dress ball, and on sports and competition day Harper won the men's potato race, Thomson the obstacle and egg and spoon events.

England was sighted early in the morning of 8 September and the team was ashore in Plymouth by 6 o'clock. They had time for breakfast before catching a train for the 32 mile trip to Newton Abbott. There was some initial disappointment among the team at being located in the the small inland town but it turned out to be an ideal choice. The team struck up a rapport with the locals, they had large crowds to watch them train and when they returned to Newton Abbott at 11.45pm after their first match, played in Exeter, they were met by a large crowd, with brass band, that accompanied them to their hotel.

The tour itself proved a triumph for New Zealand, with big and stylish wins in many games, defeats of Scotland (in a desperately close match), Ireland and England. Only a controversial 3-0 loss to Wales (after what appeared to be an equalising try to New Zealand was ruled out by the referee) spoilt a perfect record.

This was the first team to be known as the All Blacks and there has long been debate about how they came by the name. The common belief was that a printing error turned a

...the common belief was that a printing error turned a journalist's headline referring to the team playing as if they were "all backs" into "all blacks". But it is not so. The team started their tour against Devon in Exeter with a shattering 55-4 win. The next day the local paper The Express and Echo reported: "the All Blacks, as they are styled by reason of their sable and unrelieved costume, were under the guidance of the captain (Mr Gallaher) and their fine physiques favourably impressed the spectators".

It took a few matches for the "All Blacks" term to catch on but by the end of the tour everyone was using it. Few if any sporting nicknames have been as appropriate and widely used.

#### Success and More Success

The success achieved by this team was astonishing. They averaged 28 points a game, a big score in those days. The team emphasised their superiority by keeping the opposition scoreless in 23 of the 35 tour games, and in conceding an average of less than two points per match.

Their biggest wins were against Hartlepool Clubs, 63-0 (it would have been 93-0 under today's scoring) and Devon 55-4 with 40 points exceeded on a further five occasions in the British Isles. The crushing defeats rather got to the British and various explanations of the All Blacks' success were sought and offered. Former English international Leonard Tosswill asked:

Is the Colonial born and bred on a higher mental and physical scale nowadays as compared with that at home, as is so frequently urged by some travelled Britons? It would really seem to be the case. . . The writer has seen the New Zealanders play several of their matches, and the conclusion is irresistibly borne in upon him after every match that they are not only better men physically, but quicker in conception, possess much more initiative, and moreover, a greater amount of resolution. . . what is the reason? Has the decadence of the English athlete really set in?



**Part of the crowd at Gloucester**

The first test of the tour was against Scotland on November 18 and it was not a happy occasion. The Scottish RFU did not extend an official welcome to the New Zealand team, did not award caps for the match and did not entertain the All Blacks afterwards. Relations were not improved when the New Zealand party declined to use the seats at the theatre which the Scottish Union had booked for the night before the match.

The composition of the Scottish team was affected when selected threequarter A Nolan Fell, an ex Nelson College and Otago medical student, withdrew, much to the annoyance of the Scots, rather than play against his countrymen. He was not selected for Scotland again.

Financially the Scottish test was a bonus for the tourists. The New Zealanders had asked for a guaranteed sum from their two matches in Scotland but the Scots, faced with a hefty Debenture Debt and Bond on their new ground, even before the tour started, decided they had to decline that request. Instead the New Zealanders were offered the nett gate, after deduction of expenses, which, with big attendances at the games in Scotland, returned them 1,700 pounds about

the games in Scotland, returned them 1,700 pounds, about four times what the guarantee would have provided. The Scots felt justified in their attitude and offered the same terms to the South Africans for their visit the next year. They also had concerns about the amateur status of the New Zealanders and, after the South African tour, asked for copies of the accounts of both tours. When the accounts arrived they took exception to the 3s per day paid to the All Blacks for expenses and cancelled a Calcutta Cup match against England when they found the payment had been authorised by the Rugby Football Union.



**The ragged end to the haka against Scotland**

The match itself, played on an icy pitch (the Scots had neglected to cover the ground with straw to stop it freezing and cancellation of the match was seriously considered) was a tight one. Scotland led 7-6 at halftime but tries in the last five minutes to George Smith and Bill Cunningham saw New Zealand home 12-7. In keeping with the feeling that had developed between the two camps there was no post match mingling of players or any joint social function. This may not have been the fault of the Scots, the Scottish Rugby Union archives include a letter from George Dixon declining an invitation to a post match function. However the failure of the Scots to cover the pitch, their bizarre request that the New Zealanders provide the match ball (eventually the Scots found a ball but it was lighter and shaped differently to other balls used during the tour) and the complete absence of contact by Union officials reflect little credit on the Scottish administrators.

It seems to have been a day when nothing went right for the Scots. Their chabanc was late arriving at the ground so a pre match team photo could not be taken. A subsequent photo, with superimposed heads of several players, has become accepted as the official team photo for this side.

Ireland and England were both beaten, and by the same score, 15-0. Captain Dave Gallaher had to miss the Irish test through injury, and so many of the the backs were said to be carrying injuries that Simon Mynott, a five eight, made his test debut on the wing. Some critics saw a chink in the All Blacks' armour as the Irish forwards matched them for much of the game. It may be relevant that before the Ireland match some of the team weighed themselves at a "speak-your-weight" machine and found that all had put on weight, half a stone in some cases, Bill Cunningham around two stone.

The England match, played before a crowd of 45,000 paying and an estimated 30,000 non paying spectators, was a benefit for All Black wing Duncan McGregor who scored four of the team's five tries. His test try scoring feat was not matched until Craig Green and John Gallagher equalled it against Fiji in 1987 and Marc Ellis surpassed it with six tries against Japan in 1995.

The Welsh test provided what must have been one of the great emotional moments in sport. The All Blacks were applauded by the capacity crowd as they came onto the field but the Welsh got a much greater reception. The "Lyttelton Times" reported the All Blacks had got half through their Maori chant before they could be heard above the voices of the onlookers. The war cry went well, and the crowd listened and watched in pleased silence and thundered their approval at its close. But for dramatic effect it was far surpassed by what followed. The Welsh team, led by 'Teddy' Morgan, started the Welsh national Anthem, 'Hen Wlad fy Nhadau' (Land of my Fathers). Their singing was somewhat weak in volume, and it was some seconds before the eager crowd could hear its melody. Then suddenly forty thousand Welsh voices caught up the noble strain, and from every corner of the ground rose the deep swelling heart-stirring chorus

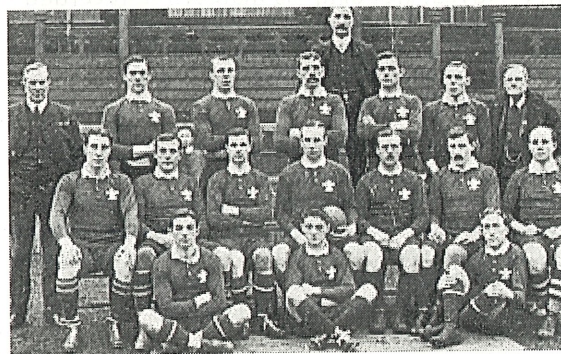
the ground rose the deep, swelling, heart stirring chorus. The effect was intensely thrilling, even awe-inspiring.

This was the first time a national anthem had been sung before a sporting fixture, and it didn't happen by chance. The Welsh had perceived the psychological effect of the All Black haka and one of their selectors, Tom Williams, came up with the idea of the Welsh players singing "Land of my Fathers" in response. The Welsh union agreed, the local morning paper the Western Mail took up the idea, advising that the Welsh

Union hoped "the spectators would join in the chorus" and the rest is history.

The singing of the national anthem was not the only example of the Welsh preparing well for the All Black visit. There was a large Welsh contingent, including some selectors and senior players, at the New Zealander's third match, in Bristol and a bigger one, including the complete Welsh Rugby Union Committee, at their game in Gloucester .

The Welsh test was lost 3-0, so the "Originals", without some of their stars and with players possibly affected by the emotional atmosphere, lost their unbeaten record. Wales deserved their win, narrow as it was, for the Welsh had done their homework on All Black methods and tactics. And on this Day of Days the New Zealand backs, especially McGregor and Mynott, were well below their usual standard. The game though is especially remembered for the try that wasn't awarded which would have saved the All Blacks. During the second half star New Zealand wing Billy Wallace made a run, then passed to centre Bob Deans who raced to the goal line and scored (New Zealand version), was tackled a few inches short of the line (Welsh and referee's version). That non try has been argued about endlessly since but whatever the argument Wales still won 3-0. Fields of Praise the Welsh Rugby Union history looks at the disputed try in depth and their examination makes it clear how difficult it is to work out quite what happened.



**The victorious 1905 Welsh team**

Sad as it is that the "Originals" so narrowly missed a perfect tour record the loss to Wales and the circumstances around it have in a special way added to the Wales v New Zealand rivalry and to the All Black story.

One can only speculate, though it is pointless to do so, on what the result would have been if the Welsh test had been earlier in the tour, before a degree of staleness set in, if the itinerary had been shorter, if there had been no midweek match before the test, if the team had been quartered out of Cardiff or if Stean and Cunningham had played.

There were four more matches in Wales (all closely contested and New Zealand were lucky to win two of them) and a test against France in Paris on New Year's Day 1906. This was France's first test match and though well beaten 38-8 the French, helped by a little New Zealand chivalry, were delighted to score two tries, more than any of the Home Countries achieved. The weather was bad for this match and the attendance of 8/10,000 was fewer than hoped for but the gate taking of 480 pounds were still a record for French rugby.

The team was back in London on the 4 th January to discover the New Zealand government, with Premier Richard Seddon the prime mover, had offered to pay for their return via North

America. The NZRU was in favour and the team agreed though not unanimously. George Dixon recorded

"This trip (to America) is a confounded nuisance. Would much rather have gone aboard the steamer to enjoy a six-week rest and immunity from letters, callers, newspapers and worries generally. Billy Stead wrote Also heard with disgust that we have to play three matches in America and we think it rather hard of our union to call us into the field.

A side effect of the American diversion was that the team had two weeks holiday in London before leaving for New York. In that time a British publisher asked that Gallaher and Stead write a rugby coaching book for him. The payment was to be 100 pounds, a considerable sum in 1906, to be shared between the authors. Each was given a room and a stenographer, and made absolutely no progress. After discussion it was decided that Stead, with a secondary education and some writing experience, would produce the text himself. Starting at lunchtime on Monday, he had by the following Saturday evening completed, longhand, 80,000 words, a huge achievement. Meantime Gallaher had organised diagrams and photographs and in time a fully indexed hardback work of 322 pages *The Complete Rugby Footballer* was published. It covers nearly every aspect of the playing and organisation of the game, was well reviewed at the time and still contains material relevant today. That Stead, a bootmaker, was able to dash off such a comprehensive work in a week seems incredible. The achievement though becomes more understandable after the recent publication (*Billy's Trip Home*, published 2005 by the New Zealand Sports Hall of Fame) of the tour diary that Stead wrote for the *Southland Times*. This shows the Southlander to be not only a competent writer but a remarkably well informed young man with a keen interest in the world and its workings.

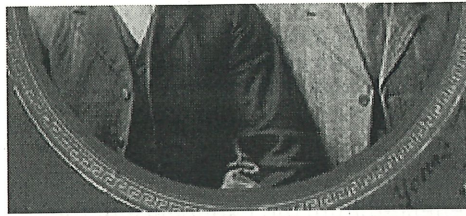
Dixon, born in Huddersfield, spent some of the fortnight catching up with relatives, including his mother. He recorded in his diary on 16 January Stayed in with Mother all morning and after dinner started for station. The poor old mater didn't like me leaving at all nor did I like leaving her – in all probability never to see her again.

Four of the team did not make the American leg of the trip. "Massa" Johnston was too ill to travel and Charlie Seeling stayed to look after him. Eric Harper and Billy Glenn decided to tour Europe and then return home via Suez. It may or may not be relevant that the latter two, both of whom had played in the 1904 test against Britain, were among those who played less than half the matches, though neither is recorded as suffering a significant injury.

In America the team played an exhibition match, refereed by George Dixon, against a scratch New York team strengthened by six of the All Black party. Then it was onto the train for six days and eight nights before reaching the Pacific coast at San Francisco. Two matches were played against British Columbia, both refereed by Jimmy Duncan and both won comfortably. These games were played at least partly as a promotion of the rugby code (Dixon referred to it as missionary work) at a time when American football was under some threat.





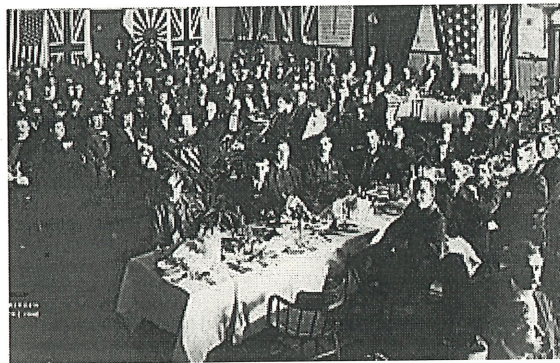


### **Bronco Seeling and Massa Johnston**

The team, minus Freddy Roberts who was too ill with a throat infection to travel and Wallace who stayed as his minder, arrived in Auckland on 6 March 1906 (two days later than expected and after a false alarm when what turned out to be a naval ship was seen entering the harbour) to a huge and deserved reception. The Premier, the Mayor of Auckland and the president of the NZRFU were all on hand to greet the team who received an official welcome at the Municipal Chambers and a banquet that evening in the Drill Hall in Wellesley St. The team then left for their homes, more welcoming functions and keen interest from the media about the tour.

The large scale welcome and the tributes received were appropriate, for that 1905/6 tour was important, not only in establishing New Zealand, and New Zealand methods and techniques, as a major player in world rugby but confirming very strongly that this very small developing country could produce world ranked sportsmen and administrators. The New Zealanders brought specialisation to forward play e.g. set scrum positions, that did not come to Britain for some years. The backs had variations to their attacks that were little known throughout the British Isles. The players had a greater understanding of tactics, were generally fitter and certainly faster than their opponents and as a touring team enjoyed the benefits of combination. Their achievement was huge and all the more meritorious because they were the first team to make such a long tour and more than any other side had to learn by experience the pitfalls of touring.

### **1905/06 Tour Summary**



### **The Welcome Home Banquet**

**Played 35, won 34, lost 1, points for 976, against 59.**

In the British Isles alone the team's record was: 32 matches, won 31, lost 1. Points for 830, against 39.

The Springboks and Wallabies toured Britain over the next three seasons, with rather less success than "The Originals". Their results were:

**1906-06 Springboks:** Played 28, won 25, lost 2 drew 1. Points for 553, against 79. The losses were to Cardiff and Scotland and the test against England was drawn.

**1908-09 Wallabies:** Played 31, won 25, lost 5, drew 1. Points for 438, against 149. The draw was with Abertillery and the losses were against Llanelli, Midlands, Wales, Swansea and Cardiff. England was beaten 9-3 and there were no tests against Ireland or Scotland, apparently because those countries objected to the three shillings daily allowance the players were receiving.

The Wallabies did though enjoy a huge bonus. Their tour coincided with the Olympic Games in London and Australia

coincided with the Olympic Games in London and Australia was one of two teams that entered the rugby competition. They beat English champions Cornwall 32-3 to take what could be considered one of the softer Olympic gold medals.

#### Tour Odds and Ends Learning By Experience

The 1924/5 All Blacks benefited from the experience of the "Originals" and the recommendations that Dixon made on his return. These included:

- No more than 25 matches in Britain (the "Invincibles" actually played 28, still less than in 1905).
- That tests should be spaced throughout the tour rather than all towards the end, as in 1905.
- A week's spell i.e no midweek match, before each test.

In general these recommendations were implemented in 1924 and probably contributed towards the success of that tour.

#### Tour Books

There is absolutely no shortage of material about the 1905/6 tour. Two books were published immediately after it:

- **The Triumphant Tour of the N.Z. Footballers** by Manager George Dixon, published 1906 by Geddis & Blomfield.
- **Why the All Blacks Triumphed** edited by J A Buttery, published 1906 by the Daily Mail
- **Complete Rugby Footballer** by Gallaher & Stead, published 1906 by Methuen & Co. Contains 32 pages specifically about the tour.

THE match of the tour was covered in a limited edition (300 copies) The Wales Test produced in 1983 by The Nag's Head Press in Christchurch .

Dixon 's book was reprinted in 1999 by David Ling Pub. Ltd with larger print and pages but without alteration.

The tour is also the subject of a well reviewed novel The Book of Fame by Lloyd Jones, published in 2000 by Penguin and since made into a stage play.

To coincide with the centenary of the tour the following have been published this year:

- 1905 Originals by Bob Howitt and Dianne Haworth, publisher Harper Collins.
- The Originals 1905 All Black Rugby Odyssey by John McCrystal, published by Random House.
- The Original All Blacks by Chris Tobin, Publisher Hachette N Z Ltd.  
The Greatest Game Ever Played by Philip J Grant of Neath. Limited edition of 500 copies.

In addition we understand Canterbury historian Greg Ryan has a tour book due out which will see the tour in a somewhat different light than the above publications.

#### The Haka

The first team to bear the All Black name were also the first to regularly perform the haka, the Te Rauparaha haka in their case. It was performed before some matches, possibly not very well by modern standards and as something of a party trick/gesture of appreciation at social functions. At the latter it was frequently combined with "Tenei te tangata parawai atu", the Maori version of "For he's a jolly good fellow".

#### Aftermath

Despite the success of the tour and the reception the team received on its return home, by the end of the following year four of the side (George Smith, Bill Mackrell, "Massa" Johnston and Duncan McGregor) had switched codes to Northern Union (rugby league) and toured Britain again with the "All Golds". A fifth, George Nicholson, it seems was within a smidgeon of switching also but stayed with rugby and made a huge contribution to the Ponsonby club. George Tyler, whose brother was one of the "All Golds", may also have been close to joining them. By 1911 two more team members, George Gillett and superstar forward Charlie Seeling, had also changed codes. The Northern Union scouts who had seen some of the All Black matches and approached several of the players had to wait but met with some eventual success.

New Zealand rugby was much more successful at retaining its players than was Australia. Fourteen of the gold medal winning Wallabies switched codes at the end of their tour.

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