



George Hillyard: The Man Who Moved Wimbledon

Bruce Tarran

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This is the story of George Hillyard, one of the most important and influential figures the game of lawn tennis has known. In 1887, aged 23, Hillyard married Wimbledon Ladies champion, Blanche Bingley, and based at their country home in Thorpe Satchville, Leicestershire, with its own golf course and two perfect tennis courts, they influenced the world tennis scene for the next forty years. Hillyard was a close friend of royalty, an Olympic champion, an international sportsman and much more. He presided over successive Wimbledon finals as umpire and helped found the Lawn Tennis Association (wresting power over the rules and running of the game from The All England Club). His stance was severely criticised by members of the Wimbledon Committee yet he was appointed as their Secretary in 1907. In this position he oversaw the move from Wimbledon's original venue (Worple Road) to their current home (Church Road), where he helped design the layout of the grounds, resolving to make the courts 'the best in the world'. The story of the early years of tennis, and the life of George Hillyard, intertwine in this fascinating volume of tennis history. Stunning photographs transport the reader into a different age - when tennis was a new and rapidly evolving sport.

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