

Captain of the Crowd

Albert Craig, Cricket and Football Rhymester
1849-1909

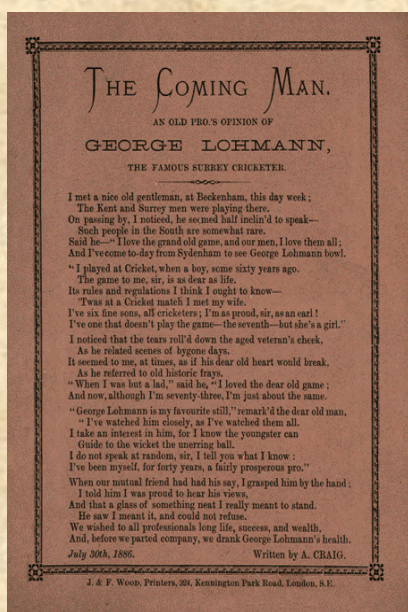
TONY LAUGHTON

FOREWORD BY DAVID FRITH


The MCC Cricket Library and Boundary Books are proud to announce an important new contribution to cricket, football and social history. Albert Craig, often referred to as *The Surrey Poet*, was a one-off. Born of illiterate parents in a remote Yorkshire community he travelled the country and became one of the most celebrated figures on the cricket and football grounds of London and the south.

“Tony Laughton has brought Albert Craig, the “Surrey Poet”, back to life . . . in this richly sociological volume with a wondrous selection of illustrations . . . heart-warming and evocative.” *David Frith*

Years of painstaking research have produced an unbelievably detailed account of Craig’s rise to become almost as famous as WG himself, simply by selling his printed rhymes at a penny a sheet. With his natural wit and spontaneous repartee, he was an integral part of the day’s entertainment on the cricket grounds of the Golden Age - and he was equally at home during the formative days of Arsenal football club.






TO LEWIS HALL,
 The rare old Yorkshire Favourite,

CHAMPION of a hundred fights,
 Reliable and true,
 It affords supreme delight
 To sing in praise of you;
 You have ever in the past
 Attended duty's call,
 May your unerring judgment last
 Sturdy Lewis Hall.
 Champion bowlers try their hand
 And yet you feel no shock,
 Calm and dignified you stand
 Just like some mighty rock.
 Wicket keeper, fielders too,
 Assist the man who bowl;
 Still you stand the innings through
 Patient Lewis Hall.
 Nobly in the present fray
 You face your friendly foe;
 Your matchless innings of to-day
 Brings back the long ago.
 Dear old byegones cross each mind
 As seasons onward roll,
 We prize past victories assigned
 To gallant Lewis Hall.
 Other Counties have their pride
 And so it ought to be;
 "Cracks" on whom they've oft relied,
 And so, old friend, have we;
 And when our County stands again
 Triumphant over all,
 We won't forget such Yorkshire men
 As honest Lewis Hall.

A. C.



Order Form

Captain of the Crowd is a magnificently produced 304 pp hardback volume with 173 illustrations, over 100 in full colour. Tony Laughton traces the life and times of Craig in fascinating detail and sets his life and work in the historical and social context of the time. The book is available at £28 including postage.

There is also a strictly Limited Edition of only 50 copies, signed by the author, and specially bound and boxed with 12 facsimiles of the rarest Craig compositions printed on art paper. This edition is £200 post free per copy.

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