

= Massey Poyntz =

Edward Stephen Massey Poyntz ( 27 October 1883 ? 26 December 1934 ) was an English first @-@ class cricketer , who played for Somerset in the early twentieth century . An amateur , Poyntz was an aggressive right @-@ handed batsman . He generally played as part of the middle order , and though his batting was not exceptional , he was highly praised for his fielding ability . He captained Somerset in the two years prior to the First World War .

The youngest son of the Chief Constable of Essex , Poyntz made his county cricket debut in 1905 , hitting a half @-@ century to help Somerset win their only match of that season . He achieved his best batting average in that year , while each of the following four were of little note . In 1910 he captained Somerset for the first time , and scored over 300 runs in a season for the second of five occasions . His only attempts at bowling occurred during 1911 , when he claimed eight wickets at an average of almost forty . He was named as Somerset 's official captain in 1913 , and remained in charge for the following season . After serving in the Army during the First World War , Poyntz scored his only century in first @-@ class cricket in a match for the Army against Cambridge University in 1919 . He played two further matches for Somerset that year , after which he did not appear in first @-@ class cricket again .

= = Early life and career = =

Poyntz was born on 27 October 1883 in Chelmsford , Essex . He was the youngest of seven children born to Major William Henry Poyntz and Henrietta Laycock . His father had achieved the rank of Major in the Royal Marines , and having served as the Chief Constable of Nottingham from 1872 until 1881 , held the equivalent position in Essex at the time of his youngest son 's birth . Poyntz senior was a cricket enthusiast , and during his time in Nottingham , he ran the police team , and wrote effusively in his reminiscences about watching Nottinghamshire face Yorkshire and Surrey . Educated at Haileybury College , Massey made the school 's cricket team in 1901 . The family had moved to Gotham House in Tiverton , north Devon , and after leaving school , Poyntz followed his older brother Hugh into the Somerset side .

On his debut for Somerset , Poyntz batted strongly in the lower order to help secure Somerset 's only victory of the season . Poyntz 's score of 32 in the first innings could not prevent the follow @-@ on , but in the second innings , he hit 60 runs to widen Somerset 's lead to almost 150 runs , a total Gloucestershire failed to chase down . His success against Gloucestershire continued in the return fixture later that season , in which he scored 89 of Somerset 's total of 169 in the first innings , and 42 runs in the second innings , though their opponents won by an innings after amassing 521 runs in their only innings . In all , Poyntz played five matches in his debut season , totalling 307 runs . His season 's batting average of 34 @.@ 11 was the highest of his career .

In David Foot 's history of Somerset cricket , after the 1903 season he wrote that " it 's time discreetly to leap over undistinguished seasons . " Between 1903 and the cessation of county cricket due to the First World War , Somerset never finished higher than tenth in the County Championship . Poyntz himself struggled for runs between 1906 and 1909 : in thirty matches for the county , he failed to score a half @-@ century . Statistically , his worst season came in 1907 , when he averaged just 4 @.@ 66 runs per innings . His most notable incident that season occurred during the match against Middlesex at Lord 's . In his own benefit match , Albert Trott claimed two hat @-@ tricks ; Poyntz was one of the victims , falling for a second innings duck .

= = County captain = =

In 1910 , Poyntz captained Somerset for the first time , standing @-@ in during the absence of the regular captain , John Daniell . In that season , he struck his first half @-@ century since 1905 , scoring 50 runs in the second innings of a match against Middlesex at Bath . He followed that with another in his next innings , finishing on 52 not out against Lancashire , though Somerset lost both matches by an innings . He finished the 1910 season with 363 runs at an average of 16 @.@ 50 ,

and appeared in a representative match for the West of England against the East . In their summary of the 1911 season , Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack claimed that " the outlook for Somerset is cheerless . " The county finished bottom of the championship with only one victory , against Hampshire at Bath . Despite this , Poyntz had one of his most successful seasons : he scored 597 runs at an average of 22 @. @ 96 , and his five half @-@ centuries were the most in any year of his career . He began the season with half @-@ centuries in both innings of a drawn match with Hampshire in Southampton , and two matches later , he bowled for the first time in first @-@ class cricket . Facing Lancashire , Poyntz was called upon as Somerset 's ninth bowler in their opponent 's second innings : only the captain Daniell and the wicket @-@ keeper , Harry Chidgey , did not bowl . Poyntz bowled eight overs and three balls , and claimed five wickets ; his best analysis in first @-@ class cricket . He continued to bowl occasionally for the remainder of the season , but only claimed three further wickets , and finished his career with a bowling average of 39 @. @ 62 . Poyntz was unable to appear as often in 1912 ; he only played eight times for Somerset , six less than the season before . He scored 253 runs at an average 18 @. @ 07 that year , and did not pass fifty run in an innings .

Somerset 's difficulties were not confined to the pitch . In 1912 , the club made a loss of £ 327 , and they could not persuade Daniell to remain at the club rather than travel to India . Initially the county asked Arthur Newton , who was at that time 50 years old , to serve as captain , but after consideration he declined the role , and Poyntz was appointed instead . The team that he inherited remained a poor one : the Wisden summary in 1913 stated that they had , " no temptation to deal at any great length with the doings of Somerset " . During a season in which his side had finished bottom of the championship with only two wins , Poyntz scored 363 runs at an average of 15 @. @ 12 , with a single half @-@ century ; 50 runs exactly scored against Derbyshire . The club once again recorded a loss during the season , and at the club 's annual general meeting , the mood was negative . Despite this , Poyntz was reappointed as captain for 1914 after a proposal made by Bruce Hylton @-@ Stewart and seconded by Newton . Rare optimism was shown by Newton and Poyntz , with the latter claiming that it was due to " a lot of bad luck that they [ Somerset ] did not finish half way up the table instead of at the bottom . "

That optimism was not reflected in Somerset 's results the following year . Further financial losses were made , and the county finished second @-@ bottom of the championship . On a personal level , Poyntz scored more runs than in any other season , accruing 642 during his 19 matches at an average of 18 @. @ 34 , and scored three half @-@ centuries . The start of the First World War during the summer of 1914 resulted in the cancellation of some matches , along with a number of players joining the armed forces , disrupting the end of the cricket season . Although Somerset fared poorly under his charge , David Foot claims that Poyntz received " more praise than criticism " for his captaincy .

= = Wartime career and later life = =

In September 1914 , Poyntz was appointed to the 3rd Battalion , Bedfordshire Regiment . He received promotion to Lieutenant , and then Captain in 1915 , before being transferred to the 2nd Battalion in December of that year , serving in the Somme under the command of his brother , Major Hugh Stainton Poyntz . He was shortly thereafter assigned command of " B " Company . He continued to command B Company during the Battle of the Somme . Poyntz commanded the 2nd Battalion for a while in 1917 during his brother 's leave , but spent most of the remainder of the war in reserve with the 3rd Battalion . He completed his military service as a Major .

Poyntz only played three further first @-@ class cricket matches after the war . He made his highest total during a match for the Army against Cambridge University , at Fenner 's . Batting at number eight , he struck 15 fours and 3 sixes to reach 114 runs in the second innings . The Army lost the match by 10 wickets . Later in the season , he his final appearances for Somerset , playing against Sussex and Hampshire under the captaincy of Daniell , averaging 10 @. @ 00 from three innings . In all , Poyntz scored 3 @, @ 127 runs during his first @-@ class career at an average of 17 @. @ 08 . He died on 26 December 1934 in Minehead , Somerset .

= = Style and technique = =

Although not highly thought of as a batsman , Poyntz was known for being able to hit the ball hard . A right @-@ handed batsman , he is described as lacking " technique and consistency " by David Foot , but obituaries suggest that his shortage of talent was offset by application of effort . Wisden declared him " an excellent fielder " , but Foot is more reserved , describing him as a " passable slip fielder " . Sammy Woods was Poyntz 's godfather , while Poyntz in turn acted as a godfather to John Daniell 's son Nigel . David Foot portrays an element of caricature about Poyntz , describing him as , " a tall man who slammed his hair back with a distinctive parting in the middle . " He also related a story from a Somerset teammate in which Poyntz claimed that he could trace him family all the way back to William the Conqueror , and had a massive coat of arms in his Bristol flat .