

= Maurice Leyland =

Maurice Leyland (20 July 1900 ? 1 January 1967) was an English cricketer who played 41 Test matches between 1928 and 1938 . In first @-@ class cricket , he represented Yorkshire between 1920 and 1946 , scoring over 1 @,@ 000 runs in 17 consecutive seasons . A left @-@ handed middle @-@ order batsman and occasional left @-@ arm spinner , Leyland was a Wisden Cricketer of the Year in 1929 .

Born in Harrogate , Leyland came from a cricketing family . After playing locally , he made his Yorkshire debut in 1920 , and appeared intermittently in the following two seasons . Although not statistically successful , he impressed judges at the club , and was a regular member of the team from 1923 . He steadily improved over the following seasons to reach the fringes of the England team and made his Test debut in 1928 against West Indies . That winter , he toured Australia ? a controversial decision as he replaced the famous batsman Frank Woolley ? and scored a century in his only Test of the series . He remained in the side until 1930 , but a loss of form in the next two seasons called his place into question . He recovered by scoring 1 @,@ 000 runs in August 1932 to secure his inclusion in the team to tour Australia in 1932 ? 33 .

During that series , Leyland scored runs several times under pressure and by the time Australia toured England in 1934 , he was a leading batsman in the team . He held his place until 1938 when he was replaced in the team by younger batsmen for the series against Australia . Recalled for the final match , he scored 187 , his highest Test score in what became his last match . After military service in the Second World War , Leyland returned to the Yorkshire team for one season before announcing his retirement from regular first @-@ class cricket . He maintained his connection with Yorkshire , and served as the county coach between 1950 and 1963 . He died in 1967 .

Although he was neither aesthetically nor technically among the best batsmen , Leyland had a reputation for batting well under pressure . He performed most effectively against the best teams and bowlers , and in difficult situations ; his Test batting record is better than his first @-@ class figures , and against Australia his average is even higher . Outside of Tests , he had some success with the ball , and had it not been for the depth of spin bowling in Yorkshire , he might have been a leading bowler . He was one of the first to bowl left @-@ arm wrist @-@ spin , and may have invented the name to describe such deliveries ? " chinamen " . Very popular with team @-@ mates and spectators , Leyland had a reputation as a humorist , and many stories were told about him .

= = Early life and career = =

Leyland was born in Bilton , an area of Harrogate , to Mercy (née Lambert) and Edward (Ted) Leyland . He was registered at birth as Morris Leyland but his name was usually spelt " Maurice " . His father was a stonemason and a well @-@ respected professional cricketer for Moorside in Lancashire . Leyland senior also acted as Moorside 's groundsman , and in later years continued that role at Harrogate , Headingley Cricket Ground and Edgbaston . Leyland junior joined his father in the Moorside team in 1912 , and by the age of fourteen had graduated to the Lancashire League . After military service in the First World War , he became a professional cricketer for Harrogate between 1918 and 1920 . From there he made appearances for the Yorkshire Council , and Yorkshire 's second team , for whom he bowled regularly ; when he reached the first team , he bowled infrequently in his first seasons . Around this time , he also played football for Harrogate .

During the early 1920s , the Yorkshire committee was attempting to find players to replace those whose careers had ended with the First World War . Late in the 1920 season , Leyland made his first @-@ class debut for Yorkshire , having played several times in the second team that summer . He played once , against Essex , scoring ten runs in his only innings , but this was his sole appearance that year . He had never previously attended a County Championship game . The following year , Leyland played in five first @-@ team matches , scoring 52 not out against Leicestershire , averaging just over 19 for the season . In the latter part of the 1922 season he played more regularly , replacing Norman Kilner in the team . Although Leyland 's batting figures were unimpressive , the summary of Yorkshire 's season in Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack stated

that he " gave signs of promise as a forcing batsman and fielded very finely " . His highest score in 14 matches was 29 , but he was awarded his county cap , and critics within Yorkshire judged him to have great potential .

= = Established county cricketer = =

Leyland played regularly in the 1923 season and reached 1 @, @ 000 runs in first @-@ class cricket , a total he exceeded in each of the seventeen seasons between 1923 and the outbreak of war in 1939 . In 1923 , he scored seven fifties and averaged 27 @. @ 89 ; Wisden suggested that he would become a leading left @-@ handed batsman and that " his future seems assured " . In his history of Yorkshire County Cricket Club , Anthony Woodhouse states that Leyland gained valuable experience as part of a successful batting side . During this period , Yorkshire won the County Championship in four successive seasons from 1922 to 1925 . A later review of Leyland 's career in Wisden suggested that this team was one of Yorkshire 's strongest , but sometimes became over @-@ competitive and aggressive . The review stated that this environment " was a hard school for a young cricketer , but Leyland thrived on such discipline , and he has never lost his laugh . "

By the beginning of the 1924 season , Leyland was recognised in The Times as one of the most promising young professional batsmen in England ; the newspaper 's cricket correspondent noted that Leyland " is fully expected , in Yorkshire , to develop into a first @-@ rate left @-@ handed batsman . " He continued to improve that season , scoring 1 @, @ 259 runs at 30 @. @ 70 . In August , he scored his first century in first @-@ class cricket , hitting 133 not out in a drawn game against Lancashire ; later in the month , he scored another century . Leyland further improved his record in 1925 , hitting 1 @, @ 572 runs at 40 @. @ 30 . Wisden commented : " Leyland still further increased the big reputation he had made in the previous summer and ought , if all goes well with him , to attain the highest distinction . " By the end of the 1926 season , in which he scored 1 @, @ 561 runs at 39 @. @ 02 and hit five centuries , Leyland had established himself as one of the most reliable batsmen in the Yorkshire team .

Following the example of Wilfred Rhodes , several Yorkshire cricketers in the 1920s spent English winters coaching in India for the Maharaja of Patiala . Leyland coached in the winter of 1926 ? 27 , along with Arthur Dolphin , the Yorkshire wicketkeeper . That same winter , a Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) team toured India ; although not chosen in the touring party , both Leyland and Dolphin played a handful of matches for the MCC . During the 1927 season Leyland scored 1 @, @ 625 runs at 41 @. @ 66 , and , against Middlesex , scored his first double @-@ century . Wisden suggested that he " was not so dependable as could have been desired " , but batted in an entertaining fashion . In August , he was selected in a trial game to assess players who might represent England in Test matches ? he played against the England team for a side named " The Rest " ? and scored 102 . In the winter of 1927 ? 28 , Leyland once more coached in India for the Maharajah of Patiala .

Shortly after returning from India , Leyland married Constance (Connie) Russell in Harrogate on 29 March 1928 . In later years , Connie looked after the children of Herbert Sutcliffe during Yorkshire matches at Harrogate when their behaviour became too much for their own mother . Sutcliffe 's daughter later recalled Connie as " very stern and cross " , and the only person who could control her and her brother : " I was frightened to death . "

= = Test match cricketer = =

= = = Test debut and selection for Australian tour = = =

Like Leyland , the Yorkshire bowler Roy Kilner coached in India during 1927 ? 28 . However , in doing so Kilner contracted a fever and died shortly after returning to England . With a weakened bowling attack , and affected by injuries and loss of form , Yorkshire pressed Leyland into service as an occasional bowler in the 1928 season . He had done little bowling for Yorkshire at this point ; the

team possessed two slow left @-@ arm spinners in Kilner and Rhodes , leaving Leyland with little opportunity . Having never bowled 50 first @-@ class overs in a previous season , nor taken more than four wickets , he bowled over 500 overs in 1928 and took 35 wickets at an average of 34 @.@ 20 . At this stage , the Yorkshire authorities thought that he might fully take on Kilner 's bowling workload , or succeed Rhodes in the senior spinner 's position . Leyland also had his most effective season with the bat . He scored 1 @,@ 783 runs at an average of 54 @.@ 03 , and scored another double century . At the end of the season , Wisden commented : " [Leyland] can play both the games ? the dogged defence when a bad position must be saved and a fine forcing game when it is necessary to make runs quickly . In the ordinary way his preference is for attack and he is a delightful batsman to watch . "

During June 1928 , Leyland was selected for another Test trial , playing for " The Rest " against England ; then in mid @-@ July he played for the Players against the Gentlemen at Lord 's Cricket Ground . At the end of July , the MCC named the team to tour Australia for the 1928 ? 29 Ashes series . Leyland was included in the team ; according to The Times , it would have been difficult to leave him out and his presence lifted the fielding ability of the side . His selection was controversial in the south of England , and particularly in Kent , as he took the place that the veteran Kent batsman Frank Woolley was expected to fill . One Kent supporter wrote that Leyland was a " cross bat village @-@ greener " . Pelham Warner , a selector at the time , claimed that Leyland 's superior fielding influenced the decision , but the cricket writer Alan Gibson suggests that the real choice was between Woolley and Phil Mead , two batsmen of similar age . In 1928 , the West Indies toured England , playing their first Test matches . The team did not perform well , but the England selectors picked strong teams to provide practice for the players . Leyland was selected for the last of the three Test matches . Making his debut on 11 August 1928 , he was dismissed for 0 by Herman Griffith in his only innings .

The MCC team which toured Australia was extremely strong in batting , and Leyland served as back @-@ up to the main batsmen . The English batting line @-@ up was settled for most of the series , leaving little opportunity for the back @-@ ups ; although Mead played in the first Test , he was subsequently left out to strengthen the bowling . Playing in other first @-@ class matches on the tour , Leyland scored centuries against South Australia and Queensland . With England 4 ? 0 ahead in the series , Chapman stood down from the final Test ; although it is not clear why he did so , one possibility is that he wished to give as many members of the team as possible a chance to appear in the Tests . Alternatively , he may have felt that his batting form did not warrant a place in the team . Whatever the reason , Leyland took his place . England lost the match , but Leyland was successful . He scored 137 , his first Test century , and 53 not out . The report in Wisden stated : " [He] distinguished himself by two really delightful displays ... His exhibition of powerful , well @-@ timed driving past cover @-@ point will long be remembered by those who saw it . " Overall , in first @-@ class matches on the tour , he scored 614 runs at 43 @.@ 85 , but his bowling was ineffective on the hard pitches . Following his success in the last Test , Leyland was expected to become one of the leading English batsmen , and before the 1929 season he was named one of the Wisden Cricketers of the Year for his performances in the 1928 season .

= = = Test regular = = =

Leyland scored 1 @,@ 931 runs at 42 @.@ 91 in 1929 , and took 50 first @-@ class wickets in the season at an average of 30 @.@ 26 . In the match against Oxford University he took eight wickets and against Glamorgan he took five wickets in an innings for the first time in his career . Against Lancashire , in a match which Rhodes missed with injury , Leyland took the role of the main spinner and returned figures of seven wickets for 52 runs . After watching this performance , the cricket writer Neville Cardus judged that Leyland had bowled well and with spirit on a wet pitch which favoured spin bowling , but that he lacked the accuracy and flight required in left @-@ arm spin bowlers and exemplified by Rhodes . In another game , Cardus observed that Leyland seemed to be attempting left @-@ handed googly bowling . Following success in a trial game , Leyland kept his place in the Test team , playing all five matches against South Africa that summer to score 294 runs

at an average of 42 @. @ 00 . In the Second Test , played at Lord 's , he scored 73 and 102 .

Leyland did not play in the first two matches of the 1930 Ashes series ; Woolley replaced him in the team but was unsuccessful and Leyland came in for the final three games . Leyland was little more effective , and his highest score in the series was 44 ; England lost 2 ? 1 . More successful for Yorkshire , he scored five centuries for the county , and hit his highest score of the season against Lancashire ? the eventual County Champions for 1930 . At the time , Yorkshire v Lancashire matches were mainly dour , slow @-@ scoring affairs , but Leyland played freely to score 211 not out in around 270 minutes . He hit two sixes in one over , and , according to Cardus , played " great and beautiful cricket " . Leyland 's best bowling performance that year came for the Players against the Gentlemen at Lord 's , when he took seven for 94 in the first innings and nine wickets in the match . In all first @-@ class matches in 1930 , he scored 2 @, @ 175 runs at an average of 50 @. @ 58 , the first time he reached 2 @, @ 000 runs in a season , and took 53 wickets at 27 @. @ 92 . During the 1930 ? 31 English winter , he toured South Africa with an MCC team . Owing to the absence of a regular opening batsman , Leyland opened the batting on several occasions and performed consistently during the tour . In first @-@ class matches , he scored 774 runs at 36 @. @ 85 and took nine wickets ; in the Test series , he scored 300 runs at 42 @. @ 85 , twice passing fifty . In the second game , he took three for 91 , his best bowling performance in Test matches .

= = = Bodyline tour = = =

Leyland struggled in the following two seasons . In 1931 , he scored just one century as his aggregate and average ? 1 @, @ 228 runs at 38 @. @ 37 ? both fell , although his increasing habit of succeeding against the best opposition continued when he scored 96 for Yorkshire against the Rest of England . With the ball , he took 12 wickets at an average over 40 . Despite his loss of form , Yorkshire won the County Championship for the first time since 1925 ; the team were also champions in the next two seasons and went on to win seven out of nine championships before the Second World War . Leyland played for the Players against the Gentlemen , but was not selected for any of the Tests in the three @-@ match series between England and New Zealand . Wisden later suggested that he was " stale " ; at the time , in reviewing candidates to tour Australia in 1932 ? 33 , the Wisden editor believed that " no reason exists why Leyland should not regain his best form "

At the beginning of the 1932 season , Leyland continued to struggle . Although he was chosen in two Test trial matches and scored 189 against Middlesex , he was left out of the England team for the only Test of the summer , and had little success in the first three months of the season . However , in August he made 1 @, @ 013 runs at 84 @. @ 14 , scoring four centuries and two innings over 90 . During this spell , Leyland shared a partnership of 149 runs in 55 minutes with Herbert Sutcliffe against Essex . That county had chosen two fast bowlers in an attempt to intimidate the Yorkshire batsmen . Ken Farnes and Morris Nichols bowled a succession of bouncers ; Farnes attempted fast leg theory bowling , a tactic which developed into Bodyline during the MCC tour of Australia in 1932 ? 33 . Eventually , Sutcliffe began to hook the short ball and in six successive overs , he and Leyland added 102 runs , an unusually fast rate of scoring . Leyland faced little of the bowling , later remembering that he received only four deliveries in this period , hitting each for four . In total , he contributed only 45 runs to the partnership . Farnes was reduced to tears by the assault on his bowling , and these events possibly persuaded the MCC selectors to leave him out of the team for the 1932 ? 33 tour . Leyland , on the other hand , was among the last names added to the touring party in mid @-@ August . At the end of the season , he scored 105 against the Rest of England for Yorkshire , his team playing as County Champions . In total , he scored 1 @, @ 980 runs at 52 @. @ 10 and took 23 wickets at 20 @. @ 86 .

England won the 1932 ? 33 Ashes series 4 ? 1 , but the cricket was overshadowed by controversy over the team 's use of Bodyline tactics . Leyland was not particularly successful in statistical terms . However , assessing the tour in Wisden , Sydney Southerton wrote that Leyland " fared on the whole extremely well ... he had batted finely in the Test matches at Adelaide and Brisbane " . He scored 306 runs in the five Test matches at an average of 34 @. @ 00 ; he began and ended the

series with scores of 0 , but played innings of 83 and 86 in the decisive third and fourth Test matches , with his team under pressure when he batted . Gibson points out that both of his ducks came when England were in dominant positions . In all first @-@ class matches on the tour , Leyland scored 880 runs at 44 @.@ 00 , including two centuries against state teams . The former Australian batsmen Charlie Macartney suggested that , although " a useful player " , Leyland was hindered by his defensive approach . Going against his naturally aggressive approach made him seem " awkward " , and never allowed him to play at his best . Other Australian commentators had a more favourable opinion .

= = = Peak years = = =

Returning from Australia , Leyland scored 2 @,@ 317 first @-@ class runs in the 1933 season , the highest seasonal aggregate of his career . Averaging 50 @.@ 36 , he scored seven centuries . With the ball , he took 37 wickets at 28 @.@ 13 . In a game against Leicestershire in August , he took ten wickets for 94 runs , the only time in his career he took ten wickets in a match . The West Indies team toured England that season , but Leyland played only in the first Test ; he scored one run in his single innings . Leyland also scored over 2 @,@ 000 first @-@ class runs in 1934 , at an average of 53 @.@ 55 . Playing all five Test matches of the series against the touring Australian team , he scored 478 runs at an average of 68 @.@ 28 . His three centuries were scored when England were in difficult situations . A Wisden review of his career written in 1943 stated : " In 1934 Leyland reached the height of his powers . Ripe in technique , rich in experience , like granite in battle , he was in this season England 's greatest batsman . "

England lost the series 2 ? 1 . The Australians were heavily dependent on the bowling of Clarrie Grimmett and Bill O 'Reilly . At the time , O 'Reilly was regarded as the best bowler in the world , and among the greatest of all time , but Leyland began a spell of relative dominance over him . In the second Test , Leyland scored 109 and shared a partnership of 129 with Les Ames ; in the next match , he hit 153 runs , sharing large partnerships with Patsy Hendren and Ames , and in the final Test , he played an innings of 110 . However , the rest of the England batting was unreliable ; reviewing the season , the Wisden editor Sydney Southerton wrote : " In nearly every match either Hendren , Leyland or Ames , instead of being able to go in and play a free , confident game , had to save or remedy a position seriously damaged by the quick fall of two or three wickets . " In addition to his batting successes , Leyland was generally the best outfielder in the England team . He also scored three centuries for Yorkshire , another for the Rest of England against Lancashire , the Champion County , and 80 for the Players against the Gentlemen at Lord 's . With the ball , he took 33 first @-@ class wickets . He was given a benefit match against Nottinghamshire ; his benefit eventually raised £ 3 @,@ 648 , at the time the third highest amount raised for a Yorkshire player .

During the winter of 1934 ? 35 , Leyland toured the West Indies with an MCC team which lost the four @-@ Test series 2 ? 1 . The English batsmen were overwhelmed by the pace bowlers of the West Indies team , and some MCC players complained that Learie Constantine , Manny Martindale and Leslie Hylton intimidated the visiting batsmen with short @-@ pitched bowling . Leyland played three Tests but scored only 36 runs in six innings . More successful in other first @-@ class games , he scored 347 runs at 21 @.@ 68 overall , and took 11 wickets . He scored 1 @,@ 815 runs at an average of 38 @.@ 61 in 1935 and took 32 wickets at 25 @.@ 46 . He played in four of the five Tests against South Africa ? he missed the third with lumbago ? to score 342 runs at 57 @.@ 00 . In the first and fourth Tests , he hit fifties , and in the final match scored 161 runs in 130 minutes , batting quickly throughout . However , England could not force a win , and having lost the second Test , were beaten 1 ? 0 in the series .

After taking part in a tour of Jamaica by the Yorkshire team , on which he scored 115 and 75 in successive games , Leyland scored 1 @,@ 790 runs at 45 @.@ 89 in 1936 . He hit seven centuries , including an innings of 263 runs against Essex in the season , the highest first @-@ class score of his career . He played in two of the three Tests against India that season ? he missed the second with injury ? but only batted twice . In the first Test , he scored 60 runs against a strong bowling attack when England were in a difficult position . The home side won the series 2 ? 0 . During the

season , Leyland was among the first players chosen to tour Australia with the MCC in the forthcoming winter .

The MCC team was captained by G. O. B. Allen who added Leyland to the team selection committee during the tour . The team won the first two Tests , but lost the next three to lose the series 3 ? 2 , and Wisden blamed a weakness in batting for the defeat . Leyland was one of the few batsmen excused : " Leyland , though very restrained , was one of the mainstays of the batting " . Before the series , England were expected to struggle severely against the bowling of O 'Reilly . According to Cardus , Leyland told O 'Reilly before the first Test : " Ah can tell thi one thing now for certain ... Ah 's got thee where Ah wants thi , Bill ? and Ah thinks tha knows it . "

In the first Test , Leyland scored 126 after the team lost the first three wickets for 20 runs ; many critics judged this to be his greatest innings . At this point , he had scored four centuries in seven Test innings against Australia . He played an effective defensive innings in the second innings , and another in the second Test , when he was criticised for slow scoring . Then in the third Test , on a pitch made exceptionally difficult for batsmen by rain , England could only score 76 for nine ; Leyland scored 17 of those runs and according to Wisden , " was the one real success for England ... [He] never seemed in difficulties " . In the second innings , he scored a century In total , in five Test matches , he scored 441 runs at an average of 55 @.@ 12 . Australian critics viewed Leyland as one of England 's best batsmen , and gave him credit for England 's strong showing early in the series . In all first @-@ class games on the tour , he scored 902 runs at 50 @.@ 11 ; he was unsuccessful in three games the team played in New Zealand on completion of the main tour .

= = = Last years as a cricketer = = =

Leyland missed a substantial amount of cricket in 1937 with a broken finger , barely playing in July , and missing the Test series against New Zealand . He scored 1 @,@ 306 runs at 36 @.@ 27 and took 19 wickets . Injuries continued to trouble him in 1938 . He scored 1 @,@ 884 first class runs at 43 @.@ 81 , but a shoulder strain early in the season adversely affected his form . He was not selected for the first three Tests against Australia , not least as the England side contained several promising batsmen . However , he had his best season with the ball . A succession of hard , dry wickets gave fewer opportunities to orthodox spinners and Leyland took 63 wickets at 19 @.@ 32 . Early in the season , he took eight for 63 against Hampshire , the best figures of his career . Just as his batting form returned , and when he was likely to be recalled to the England side , Leyland broke his thumb in a match against Middlesex . However , he recovered in time to play in the final Test of the series . Australia 's victory in the fourth Test had given the team a 1 ? 0 lead .

Wisden commented : " The inclusion once again of Leyland was a move which yielded splendid results . " Coming in to bat at number three , Leyland shared a partnership of 382 with Len Hutton , at the time a record English Test partnership for any wicket ; as of 2013 , it remains England 's highest partnership for the second wicket , and the highest for any wicket against Australia . As there was no time limit on the match , Leyland batted very cautiously and scored 187 in around six @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half hours before he was run out . Hutton went on to score 364 , at the time the highest score in Tests . England had batted deliberately slowly to frustrate the bowlers , and Cardus expressed his frustration to Leyland during an interval in play . Cardus wrote : " ' And even you , Maurice , ' I complained , in sorrow not anger , ' even you won 't hit the ball and give us some cricket . ' ' Hey , wait a minute , Mr Cardus , ' expostulated Leyland , as though pained at my protest , ' wait a minute ? tha must remember that Ah 'm playing for me place in team . ' " England went on to win the match and level the series . Leyland 's innings was his highest in Tests , but this was his final match for England . In 41 Tests , he scored 2 @,@ 764 runs at 46 @.@ 06 and took six wickets .

In 1939 , the last season before the Second World War , Leyland scored 1 @,@ 238 runs at 39 @.@ 93 and took 23 wickets . He served in the army during the war : first as a sergeant instructor , and was later commissioned as lieutenant . Between his army duties , he played cricket in the Bradford League , and played for various wartime teams , including ones representing the army . In 1945 , he played some non @-@ first @-@ class games for teams representing Yorkshire and a

first @-@ class game for Yorkshire against Lancashire . Choosing to continue his career after the war to help the Yorkshire team become re @-@ established , Leyland played a last full season in 1946 when he scored 632 runs at 21 @.@ 06 , with a highest score of 88 , and took 16 wickets at 14 @.@ 70 ; against Warwickshire , he took seven for 36 . During August 1946 , he announced his retirement , but in the following two seasons , he appeared in some end @-@ of @-@ season first @-@ class games . He ended his first @-@ class career in 1948 with 33 @,@ 660 runs at 40 @.@ 50 and 466 wickets at 29 @.@ 31 .

= = Later life = =

After his retirement from the Yorkshire team , Leyland returned to play for Harrogate until 1950 , when he became chief coach , along with Arthur Mitchell , at Yorkshire . Mitchell was a dour , serious man but the contrast with the cheerier Leyland made an effective partnership . Leyland also served as a representative of the paper manufacturers Thomas Owen . In 1949 , he was among the first group of former professional cricketers to be awarded honorary membership of the MCC . He continued as a respected coach of Yorkshire until illness forced his retirement in 1963 . Suffering from Parkinson 's disease , he maintained some connections with Yorkshire cricket and always tried to attend matches played at Harrogate . In recognition of his achievements , the Harrogate grounds erected new gates which were named in his honour . Leyland died in a hospital at Knaresborough on 1 January 1967 .

= = Style , technique and personality = =

As a batsman , Leyland generally batted in the middle order or occasionally opened the batting . Early in his career , commentators suggested that his batting technique was faulty , even when he was statistically successful . His use of the cut shot was mistrusted by some Yorkshire critics , and they suspected that his preference for attacking play would be unsuccessful ; he was a faster scorer and more aggressive batsman than most of his Yorkshire contemporaries . Cardus suggested that , instead , he was in the line of " humorous Yorkshiremen which the broad nature of his county produces from time to time as a contrast to and leavening of the generally dour lump . There was a twinkle in his eye and there was a twinkle in his bat , no matter how grimly and straight it may occasionally be obliged to defend a difficult situation in Yorkshire . " The cricket writer E. W. Swanton observed that Leyland 's bat was often not straight when he played his shots ? contrary to orthodox technique ? but the speed of his footwork and his ability to watch the ball closely made up for any lapses . Opposing bowlers suggested that the impression was an illusion and that his bat was straight when he hit the ball .

Although Leyland was not a stylish batsman , he was effective . Cardus described him as " a sturdy cricketer , not tall , but his sloping bottle @-@ neck shoulders seemed to add inches to him and he had long arms of impressive thickness , veined with strength at the wrist ; also he was broad in the beam , with a rubicund smile on his cheerful open countenance . " He was a good driver of the ball , with a high backlift , and moved quickly and economically to reach the pitch of the ball . Cardus thought that his style of batting was representative of his character : " He put his nature into every stroke , and as soon as he had ' got bowling where he wanted it , ' he didn 't merely hit or drive it ? he walloped it . " At times , Leyland 's desire to score quickly brought about his dismissal . However , when necessary , he defended strongly and used his pads as a second line of defence if he missed the ball with his bat .

Critics judged Leyland a better Test than county batsman . His first @-@ class batting figures were not exceptional compared to other cricketers who played far fewer Test matches , but in Tests , his average is six runs an innings higher ; against Australia , the strongest of England 's opponents during his career , he averaged 56 , a further increase of ten runs . Gibson suggests that he rose to the big occasions , and that he performed best against the toughest opponents . According to Leyland 's obituary in The Times , " He was essentially a man for the big occasion , a batsman at his best in a crisis , and his favourite game was a Roses match or an Australian Test . England 's

supporters often breathed a sigh of relief to see his burly figure purposefully striding to the wicket . " The writer R. C. Robertson @-@ Glasgow suggested that Leyland in a Test match was like the " four @-@ squarers of ancient or romantic times . He was Horatius on the tottering bridge ; Hector , who alone stood between Troy and destruction . He was born to rescue . But he is more dangerous than those who are stubborn or grim . He has something of D 'Artagnan in him ; there is a gaiety besides the simplicity and strength ; seen in the slight list of the cap , and in a certain jauntiness and optimism of gait . "

Although he did not have to face top @-@ class fast bowling in Test matches , he was successful against English fast bowlers such as Harold Larwood in county cricket , and he established his ascendancy over O 'Reilly , the world 's best bowler at the time . On one occasion , O 'Reilly held his head in his hands when he saw Leyland come out to bat , and was heard to say : " Oh , it 's that bloody Yorkshireman again ! " In later years , O 'Reilly vigorously denied that Leyland held the upper hand , responding to such suggestions by saying " You just check how many times I got him out ! " The cricket historian David Frith points out that " the answer is nine times in 16 Tests , but with decreasing frequency . In their Test encounters Leyland made 1 @, @ 412 runs at an average of 56 . " Robertson @-@ Glasgow noted that Leyland was almost anonymous in good batting conditions under little pressure ; he came to life in more difficult circumstances : " His element was foul weather . He would disappear into the haze of Bramall Lane , where a sterner sort of game was being played under the name of cricket , and entrench himself among the sawdust and smoke and off @-@ breaks and appeals , and do his raw , tough work in silence . "

Leyland was regarded by critics as a good fielder in almost any position . He bowled left @-@ arm spin , but contrary to the orthodox practice for a left @-@ arm spinner to use his fingers to spin the ball , usually bowled the ball from the back of his hand ? the delivery known as the chinaman . He did not take bowling seriously , but enjoyed it . In this role , he was effective at times , but other players were used in the main spinner 's role for Yorkshire in preference to him , and he was generally used as back @-@ up , for example when the other bowlers had failed to dismiss well @-@ set batsmen . His Wisden obituary suggests that , had he played for another county , he might have developed into a world @-@ class all @-@ rounder . His lack of opportunity prompted him to experiment with wrist spin , and he later claimed that he originated the term " chinaman " to describe the delivery . Wisden suggests : " Whenever two batsmen were difficult to shift or something different was wanted someone in the Yorkshire team would say , ' Put on Maurice to bowl some of those Chinese things . ' Roy Kilner explained , ' It 's foreign stuff and you can 't call it anything else . ' " Another version was the Leyland believed that the particular delivery was only good enough " to get the Chinese out " . However , there are several theories over how the delivery came to be named .

Leyland was noted as a humorist in his playing days ; many stories are associated with him , although some are probably apocryphal . He told stories against himself . One story concerned his dismissal during a wartime match , in which he was out to a terrible delivery from a bowler who was badly out of practice . Leyland hit the ball in the air and was caught . He ruefully commented : " You know , I don 't get much practice against that stuff " . Another time , he described how he faced an over from O 'Reilly , as related in his obituary in The Cricketer : " ' First he bowled me an off @-@ break , then he bowled me a leg @-@ break ; then his googly , then a bumper , then one that went with his arm ... ' ' But that 's only five , Maurice . What about the last one ? ' ' Oh , that , ' said Maurice deprecatingly . ' That was a straight ' un and it bowled me . ' " Among his team @-@ mates , Leyland was known as " Tonnip " , or " Turnip " , possibly a reference to his country upbringing . Robertson @-@ Glasgow and Cardus wrote prolifically on Leyland ; Gibson suggests that these pieces are among their best work . Leyland was popular with team @-@ mates , opponents and spectators around the world . Swanton concluded his obituary of Leyland : " No more courageous or determined cricketer ever buckled on pads for England . "