

= Charles Ollivierre =

Charles Augustus Ollivierre (20 July 1876 ? 25 March 1949) was a Vincentian cricketer who represented the West Indies in matches before they attained Test match status . Born in St Vincent , Ollivierre initially played first @-@ class cricket for Trinidad ; he was selected to tour England with the West Indies team in 1900 . He later qualified to play first @-@ class cricket for Derbyshire between 1901 and 1907 , becoming the first black West Indian to play for an English county . Ollivierre was reasonably successful in county cricket and had a reputation as a stylish batsman . However , he dropped out of first @-@ class cricket after 1907 owing to eye trouble .

= = Early life and career = =

Ollivierre was born in St Vincent on 20 July 1876 . His family were enthusiastic cricketers , although the region had little history within the sport , and his two younger brothers Richard and Helon went on to represent the West Indies in first @-@ class cricket .

Initially , Ollivierre played for Trinidad ; he made his first @-@ class debut against an English touring team in March 1895 at the age of 18 . He took two wickets , scored 7 runs in his first innings and 12 runs in the second . In non @-@ first @-@ class cricket , he continued to represent St Vincent , and impressed critics when Barbados played the island in 1897 . In 1899 , he played two first @-@ class matches for a team selected by A. B. St Hill against a team representing Trinidad . In the first game , he took 11 wickets and scored 67 in the second innings ; in the second game , he took a further five wickets in Trinidad 's first innings .

= = West Indian tour of England in 1900 = =

During the 1900 English cricket season , Ollivierre travelled to England with a West Indian team . Invited to tour England by Lord Hawke following the success of English tours to the Caribbean , the team was the first from the West Indies to visit England , and matches were not first @-@ class . The team improved steadily throughout , and by the end of the tour were judged to be playing well . Although predominantly made up from white players , the team contained several black cricketers ; at the time , the dominant teams in the West Indies were exclusively white . Ollivierre was the most consistent and successful batsman in the team , scoring 883 runs at a batting average of 32 . His highest score , and only century , came against Leicestershire , when he scored 159 runs and shared an opening partnership of 238 with Pelham Warner . He also shared an opening partnership of 208 with Percy Cox against Surrey . He bowled occasionally in the early part of the tour , although with little success , but did not bowl at all in his last eight games .

According to the review of the tour in Wisden Cricketers ' Almanack , Ollivierre was the team 's best batsman , and his innings against Leicestershire was one of the best of the season . The article observed : " He has strokes all round the wicket , and in some ways reminds one of Ranji " . During the tour , Ollivierre agreed to play for Derbyshire and remained in England to begin the two @-@ year process of qualification for the County Championship . It is unlikely that Ollivierre ever returned to the West Indies .

= = Derbyshire cricketer = =

Throughout his career in England , Ollivierre played as an amateur cricketer . He was employed by Samuel Hill @-@ Wood , a businessman and politician from Derbyshire , to work in his office in Glossop , where Ollivierre lived . During the 1901 season , he played three first @-@ class games for Derbyshire in non @-@ Championship games : twice against London County Cricket Club and once against the touring South African cricket team , hitting two half @-@ centuries in the process of scoring 247 runs at an average of 41 @.@ 16 . After further appearances in 1902 , while waiting to qualify , against London County and the Australian touring team , he became eligible for county matches in July and made his Championship debut against Essex . Later in 1902 , he scored 167

against Warwickshire , his maiden first @-@ class century . In all first @-@ class matches in the season , Ollivierre scored 524 runs at 34 @.@ 93 . The following season , Ollivierre played in 19 games and scored 721 runs , but his average fell to 20 @.@ 60 .

Ollivierre 's most successful season was 1904 , when he scored 1 @,@ 268 runs at an average of 34 @.@ 27 . Against Essex , he made the highest score of his career , when , according to his obituary in Wisden , " he was the dominating figure in a remarkable match " . Essex scored 597 runs in their first innings ; Derbyshire replied with 548 , of which Ollivierre made 229 . After Essex were bowled out for 97 , Derbyshire hit off the required runs to win by nine wickets . Ollivierre was left on 92 not out , and had scored 321 runs in the match . The match report in the 1905 edition of Wisden noted : " In defeating Essex , Derbyshire accomplished the most phenomenal performance ever recorded in first @-@ class cricket ... [Their] achievement has no parallel in the history of the game . " Over the following seasons , Ollivierre 's form faded . In 1905 , he scored 759 runs at an average of 18 @.@ 07 . He improved his average with 752 runs at 25 @.@ 06 in 1906 , including his final first @-@ class century . During that season , he played against a touring West Indian team which included his brother Richard ? Ollivierre scored 0 and 64 not out . In 1907 , he managed just 417 runs at 12 @.@ 26 . In these later seasons , he began to have problems with his eyesight , and was forced to retire from first @-@ class cricket after 1907 . In total , he played 114 first @-@ class games , scored 4 @,@ 830 runs at 23 @.@ 56 and hit three centuries . However , he continued to play club cricket in Yorkshire and , annually between 1924 and 1939 , spent time in the Netherlands coaching in schools . Ollivierre died at Pontefract in Yorkshire on 25 March 1949 .

= = Style and impact = =

According to Wisden in 1901 , as a batsman Ollivierre " was particularly strong in cutting and playing to leg " . J. N. Pentelow , a cricket writer , suggested in 1928 that " there was something about Ollivierre that reminded one of the great Ranji . He was a more heavily built man than the slim Ranji of the days when we were young ; but his strokes and his movements had real grace . " A correspondent in the Observer in 1931 remembered Ollivierre as a " great batsman " , while Neville Cardus , writing in 1920 , named Ollivierre among a list of top @-@ quality batsmen who did not do themselves justice at the highest level : " Geniuses who have just lost their way ... every one of them in possession of an excellent enough record in county cricket , but every one of them really intended by nature to wear the most precious laurels the greatest of games has to offer " .

Ollivierre was the first black West Indian cricketer to play county cricket , and the first West Indian cricketer to establish a cricketing reputation outside of that region . Other West Indians looked to follow his example , and several were approached by English counties with a view to qualifying . At least one of Ollivierre 's Derbyshire colleagues was unhappy playing alongside a black cricketer ; Bill Storer , according to the cricket writer E. H. D. Sewell , believed in " England for the English " and specifically objected to presence of black people . However , there is no evidence that Ollivierre experienced any difficulties from spectators , and the historian Jack Williams suggests that despite racism inherent in English cricket at the time , Ollivierre 's presence may have " created goodwill towards non @-@ whites among [Derbyshire 's] white supporters " .