

= George Headley =

George Alphonso Headley OD (30 May 1909 ? 30 November 1983) was a West Indian cricketer who played 22 Test matches , mostly before the Second World War . Considered one of the best batsmen to play for West Indies and one of the greatest cricketers of all time , Headley also represented Jamaica and played professional club cricket in England . West Indies had a weak cricket team through most of Headley 's playing career ; as their one world @-@ class player , he carried a heavy responsibility and the side depended on his batting . He batted at number three , scoring 2 @,@ 190 runs in Tests at an average of 60 @.@ 83 , and 9 @,@ 921 runs in all first @-@ class matches at an average of 69 @.@ 86 . He was chosen as one of the Wisden Cricketers of the Year in 1934 .

Headley was born in Panama but raised in Jamaica where he quickly established a cricketing reputation as a batsman . He soon gained his place in the Jamaican cricket team , and narrowly missed selection for the West Indies tour of England in 1928 . He made his Test debut in 1930 , against England in Barbados , and was instantly successful . Further successes followed in series against Australia and in three more against England , as Headley dominated the West Indian batting of the period . Following his tour of England in 1933 , Headley signed as a professional at Haslingden in the Lancashire League , where he played until the outbreak of war in 1939 .

The war interrupted Headley 's career ; although he returned to Tests in 1948 he was hampered by injuries and did not achieve his previous levels of success . Even so , he was chosen as West Indies captain in 1948 against England , the first black player to be appointed to the position , although a combination of injuries and politics meant he only led his team for one Test match . He did not play Tests between 1949 and 1953 , but resumed his career in English league cricket , first in Lancashire and later in the Birmingham League . His playing career ended in 1954 on his return to Jamaica , after a public subscription paid his fare from England . After retiring as a player , Headley was employed as a cricket coach by the Jamaican government until 1962 . He lived until 1983 ; his son Ron and his grandson Dean each played Test match cricket , for West Indies and England respectively .

= = Early life = =

Headley was born in Colón , Panama on 30 May 1909 , the son of DeCourcy Headley and Irene Roberts . Neither of Headley 's parents was from Panama ; his father was from Barbados and his mother from Jamaica , but they had moved to Panama while DeCourcy worked on the construction of the Panama Canal . By the time Headley was five years old the Canal was complete , and the family moved to Cuba in search of further employment . In 1919 , concerned by the amount of Spanish being spoken by her son , Headley 's mother took him to Jamaica so he could be educated in an English @-@ speaking school .

Headley moved in with his mother 's sister @-@ in @-@ law Mrs Clarence Smith , in Rae Town , Kingston , and remained with her until her death in 1933 . His mother returned to Cuba , but regularly exchanged letters with her son . He attended Calabar Elementary School , where he played for the school cricket team as a wicket @-@ keeper , although a meagre sporting budget meant he had to do so without gloves . Later , he continued his education at Kingston High School . Taking part in all @-@ day cricket matches at the local Crabhole Park , Headley began to attract local attention , and aged 16 , he joined Raetown Cricket Club . In 1925 he scored his first century , batting at number three in the batting order in a match for Raetown against Clovelly .

On leaving school , Headley was appointed as a temporary clerk in a magistrate 's court ; this enabled him to play competitive cricket for the St Andrew 's Police side in 1926 , in a cup competition . Some impressive performances for the club earned him an invitation to practice with the Jamaica Colts team . However , his job made it impossible to attend , and he was not considered for the Jamaican side against Lord Tennyson 's English touring side in 1927 . That year , Headley began working for Keeling ? Lindo Estates , in St Catherine . The firm were enthusiastic cricket patrons , allowing employees time off to play in matches , so that Headley was able to attend

practice with the Jamaica team on a regular basis . He also moved to the St Catherine Cricket Club , captained by his immediate superior in Keeling ? Lindo . To generate more income , Headley took a second job , working for the Jamaica Fruit and Shipping Company , but he wanted a secure profession . To this end , he planned to move to America to pursue a career in dentistry . However , he was now on the verge of the Jamaica team and a delay in the arrival of the application forms for his American work permit allowed him to make his first @-@ class debut for Jamaica against another touring team led by Lord Tennyson .

= = Early career = =

Headley made his Jamaica debut against Lord Tennyson 's XI at Sabina Park on 9 February 1928 , in a match won easily by the home team . Batting at number three , his first innings yielded 16 runs , but in the second innings , he scored 71 , reaching fifty runs in as many minutes . In the second game against Lord Tennyson 's XI which began in Kingston on 18 February , Headley scored his maiden first @-@ class century . Having scored 22 not out after the first day 's play , he reached 50 runs by playing very carefully but subsequently played more adventurous shots . He hit the bowling of Alan Hilder for four consecutive fours and twice hit Lord Tennyson for three fours in a row . At one point , thirteen of his scoring shots in a row went for four . He was finally out for 211 , the highest score at the time by a West Indian batsman against an English team . After the innings , Tennyson compared Headley to Victor Trumper and Charlie Macartney , batsmen considered among the best who ever played . Headley concluded the series against Tennyson 's team with innings of 40 and 71 , to give him an aggregate of 409 runs at an average of 81 @.@ 80 . He also took his maiden first class wicket .

Following his success , Headley abandoned his prospective career in dentistry . Although some critics expected his selection for the West Indies tour of England in 1928 , Headley was not chosen . While West Indies played their inaugural Test series during that tour , Headley continued to play for St Catherine 's . He had another opportunity against English opposition in 1929 , when a team led by Julien Cahn arrived to play two first @-@ class games . Jamaica 's distance from other Caribbean islands made it difficult for their cricketers to gain good @-@ quality playing experience , so the frequent visits by English sides were important to the development of Jamaican cricket . These tours also served to build Headley 's reputation . In the first match , Headley played a slow , defensive innings of 57 , but he did not reach fifty in his other three innings . Even so , he was chosen by the Jamaican selectors for a West Indies XI , which included players from other islands , to play Cahn 's team in their final tour match . The home side lost the toss and had to bat in very difficult conditions following rain . Headley found the fast bowlers difficult , but survived the period when the pitch was most difficult to bat on before he was out for 44 . In the second innings , he attacked from the start and used a wide range of shots to reach 143 before he was run out . In three matches against the tourists , Headley scored 326 runs , averaging 54 @.@ 33 .

A change in the location of his job meant that Headley moved to the Lucas Cricket Club in 1929 . He visited America and played some exhibition matches for the Jamaican Athletic Club in New York , scoring a century against a touring team from Bermuda ; his parents had moved to America by then , which enabled Headley to combine the cricket with his first visit to his parents in ten years .

= = Test match career = =

= = Debut and first Test series = = =

In 1930 the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) undertook a tour of the West Indies which included four Test matches ? the first Tests to be played in the West Indies . The MCC side was not at full international strength ; it included players who were either just beginning or just ending their international careers , and several star English bowlers were missing . The first Test was played in Barbados and Headley was selected , making his debut for the West Indies on 11 February 1930 ?

to the disapproval of some Barbadians who thought his place should have gone to a local player . Batting at number three , he played aggressively in the first innings but the crowd barracked him and he was bowled for 21 . However , in the second innings he scored 176 , becoming the first West Indian to score a century on his Test debut and only their second centurion overall . He shared century partnerships with both Clifford Roach and Frank de Caires , but these were insufficient to force victory , and the match was drawn . Headley remained in the Test side for the rest of the series , the only home player other than Roach to appear in all four Tests . In Trinidad , during the second Test , Headley found the unfamiliar conditions difficult ? Trinidad was the only Test match ground in the Caribbean which was played on a pitch made from matting instead of grass . Headley scored eight and 39 as West Indies lost the match . The home side levelled the series with their first ever Test victory in the third match of the series , played in British Guiana . In this match Headley became the first West Indian , and only the fifth cricketer of any nation , to score two separate hundreds in a Test match . His first innings of 114 was played mainly in support of Roach , who scored a double century . In the second innings , Headley scored 112 as West Indies batted with a big first innings lead , attacking defensive English bowling .

While en route to the final Test in Jamaica , the West Indies team stopped in Panama and Costa Rica where official functions were held in Headley 's honour . In Jamaica , where there was widespread jubilation , Headley attended several receptions and celebrations . When the cricket resumed , Headley scored 64 , 72 and 55 in three innings against MCC for Jamaica . With the Test series level , it was agreed that the final match of the series would be played until one team won , regardless of how long it took ? the other Tests had been limited to four days each . On the first three days , England scored 849 . In reply West Indies could only manage 286 , with Headley out for ten runs . England batted again , to set West Indies an eventual victory target of 836 . This time , Headley batted for 390 minutes , faced 385 balls and hit 28 fours while scoring 223 . He and Karl Nunes added 227 for the second wicket . Headley played the hook very effectively and hit many short deliveries for runs . When Headley was stumped , he had made what was at the time the fourth highest individual score in all Test cricket and the highest in a second innings . When West Indies still needed 428 runs , rain fell for two days and the match had to be abandoned after its ninth scheduled day . Headley ended the series with 703 runs at an average of 87 @. 87 .

= = = Australian tour = = =

Headley was selected for the West Indian tour of Australia in the 1930 ? 31 season , under the captaincy of Jackie Grant . After a brief visit to New Zealand where they played a non @-@ first @-@ class match against Wellington , the tourists arrived in Sydney . Headley made a good start to the tour and attracted praise from the press in Australia and West Indies . The first match of the Australian leg was against New South Wales , where the West Indians were bowled out for 188 and Headley was stumped for 25 . However , his runs came in less than two overs and Learie Constantine later rated this as one of Headley 's best innings . In the second innings , Headley made 82 , the top score , but could not prevent the tourists losing . The next match was also lost , as Bert Ironmonger took thirteen wickets in the match for Victoria . In the first innings , Headley scored 131 out of 212 , regarded by one critic as one of the best centuries scored on the ground , and top @-@ scored again with 34 in the second innings . By this stage the Australian bowlers had realised that Headley excelled when hitting the ball through the off side , and they began to alter their tactics accordingly . In the final match before the Test series began , against South Australia , Headley had problems playing the Australian bowlers , particularly the leg spin of Clarrie Grimmett . The Australians bowled at Headley 's leg stump with fielders concentrated on the leg side , making it difficult for him to score runs . Headley scored 27 and 16 as his team were heavily defeated . These bowling tactics were used in subsequent matches , and Headley found difficulty in countering them .

At the beginning of the first Test , West Indies were bowled out 296 as Grimmett took seven wickets , including Headley first ball . In the second innings , with West Indies 80 behind , Grimmett again attacked Headley 's leg stump . After having his scoring restricted , Headley lost patience and after

scoring 11 was stumped , trying to hit Grimmett . Bowled out for 249 , West Indies lost by ten wickets . After scoring only three in the following tour match against Tasmania , Headley contributed 14 and two in an innings defeat in the second Test . After two heavy Test defeats for the tourists , some critics believed that the series was too one @-@ sided and that some of the five Tests should be cancelled . Headley 's poor run of form continued in the West Indian victory over Queensland and , having put on weight , he was also struggling with his fitness . In an effort to overcome Australia 's leg stump attack Headley had altered his batting stance ; instead of standing at right angles to the bowler , he turned his body more front @-@ on , to enable him to improve his placement of the ball on the leg side . His quick footwork enabled him to alter his position if necessary to play the ball on the off side . He also eliminated from his strokes a risky cover drive he had developed on Caribbean pitches . During the third Test at Brisbane , Headley made his first substantial contribution to the series , after Australia scored 558 batting first . Facing Grimmett 's leg side tactics , Headley managed to score freely , and forced Grimmett to alter to an off stump attack . With ten fours in total , Headley became the first West Indian to score a century against Australia , and was left 102 not out when West Indies were bowled out for 193 . Forced to follow @-@ on , West Indies were dismissed for 148 of which Headley made 28 , the highest score of the innings . Ironmonger tricked him into playing the leg glance and he was caught by the wicket @-@ keeper who had moved across in anticipation of the shot .

Headley maintained his good form in matches against Victoria and South Australia after the third Test , scoring 77 and 113 in the first match and 75 and 39 in the second . Although neither match was won , the West Indians needed to take only one more wicket to win the first match when it ended drawn , and lost the second by a single wicket . However , the fourth Test was lost by an innings as Ironmonger again caused difficulties for the West Indies batsmen . Headley top @-@ scored with 33 out of the first innings total of 99 but made only 11 on his second attempt , being dismissed both times by Ironmonger . By now the tour was making a financial loss , forcing the tourists to take economy measures such as travelling by tram . In conversation with a member of the Australian Board of Control , Headley , Constantine and fellow tourist Tommy Scott suggested the authorities should produce faster pitches to enable the public to see more attacking cricket . It seems this advice may have been heeded ; the pitch was faster in a match against New South Wales , won by the West Indians , in which Headley scored 70 and two . In the fifth Test , West Indies won the toss and batted first , which proved an advantage in a match plagued by uncertain weather . Headley and fellow Jamaican Frank Martin scored centuries on the first day despite bowling from the Australians which the Jamaican newspaper Daily Gleaner described as good . Headley , playing Grimmett comfortably by now , batted for 146 minutes , and hit 13 fours . In the course of the innings he achieved the rare feat in Australia of reaching 1 @,@ 000 first @-@ class runs on the tour . Grant , the West Indies captain , declared the innings closed after rain had fallen to make the pitch more difficult for batting . Australia were then bowled out for 224 , 126 runs behind West Indies . The tourists scored 124 more runs in their second innings , of which Headley made 30 , before more rain fell and Grant declared for the second time in the match . Subsequently , the bowlers dismissed Australia for 220 to give West Indies their first win over Australia , although the series ended 4 ? 1 to the home side . Headley scored 336 runs in the Test matches at an average of 37 @.@ 33 , and 1 @,@ 066 runs at 44 @.@ 41 in all first @-@ class games .

On their return home , the West Indian players were well received by the public and officials ; Headley received praise and once again attended functions arranged in his honour . In Australia Donald Bradman , the star Australian batsman , praised Headley , particularly for the way in which he had overcome his problems against Grimmett . C. L. R. James , the writer and historian , later wrote that Headley 's success demonstrated his mastery of batting . Headley arrived in Australia as a primarily off @-@ side player which accounted for his difficulty against the Australian bowlers ' tactics . However , James notes : " What he did , under fire , so to speak , was to reorganise his batting to meet the new attack . " So successful was Headley that he was described by Grimmett as the best on @-@ side batsman against whom the bowler had played .

= = = Tour by Lord Tennyson 's team = = =

Headley resumed playing for Lucas on his return to Jamaica , attracting great crowds and high expectations . Once the cricket season ended , he embarked on another trip to America to play exhibition matches , visiting his parents on the journey . On his return for the 1931 ? 32 season , he was appointed captain of Lucas and began preparing for the forthcoming tour of Jamaica by another team led by Lord Tennyson . In addition to his regular practice , Headley began a programme of running and swimming to improve his overall fitness . After performing well in the trial matches for Jamaica , he was selected in the first match against the tourists . Jamaica made an uncertain start , losing five wickets by the time their score reached 215 but Headley had scored 130 . He then shared a partnership of 487 for the sixth wicket with Clarence Passailaigue ; 236 not out after the first day 's play , Headley went on to score an unbeaten 344 , after batting for 407 minutes and hitting 39 fours . Jamaica totalled 702 , and won the match by an innings . During his innings , Headley passed the previous highest score by any West Indian batsman , 304 not out by Percy Tarilton in 1920 , and the highest score in the West Indies by any batsman , Andy Sandham 's 325 in 1930 . His partnership with Passailaigue took 248 minutes , and as of 2015 remains a world record for the highest sixth wicket partnership in a first @-@ class match . The success of two home batsmen led to celebrations in Jamaica and praise from the English bowlers for Headley 's batting . Headley continued his success in the second game , opening the batting and top @-@ scoring with 84 in the first innings . In the second innings , opening again , he made 155 not out to guide West Indies to their victory target of 363 . In the final match , Headley scored his third century of the series after returning to number three , accumulating 140 of Jamaica 's total of 561 . Jamaica won the match to win the series 3 ? 0 ; Headley scored 723 runs at an average of 361 @.@ 50 . In the remainder of the season , Headley led Lucas to victory in the Senior Cup , scoring a century in the final .

= = = 1933 tour of England = = =

After playing in two trial matches , Headley was selected to tour England in 1933 under the continuing captaincy of Jackie Grant . The English press speculated on Headley 's ability to cope with English conditions , while expecting him to perform to a high standard . In the event , Wisden believed he justified the expectations and increased his reputation . In the first match of the tour he scored 52 out of a total of 129 against Northamptonshire , in difficult batting conditions on a wet pitch . He scored fifties in each of his next three matches before scoring a century against the MCC during his first appearance at Lord 's Cricket Ground . In the second innings of this match , a short ball from Bill Bowes struck Headley on the chest , and as a result of this injury he missed three games , but when he returned to the team he scored 129 against Glamorgan and 224 not out against Somerset . A quieter match followed against Middlesex , but Headley reached his second double century of the tour in the match against Derbyshire , which took him past 1 @,@ 000 runs for the season . Despite Headley 's contributions , the West Indians won only one of these matches and subsequently lost the first Test against England by an innings . Headley scored 13 in the West Indies first innings , and his 50 was the highest score when West Indies followed @-@ on . Critics were impressed by Headley 's second innings performance , in which he scored his runs out of 64 added while he was batting . Between the first and second Tests , in matches where conditions were difficult for batting and ideal for spin bowlers , Headley scored three fifties and achieved his side 's highest score in each of four innings .

West Indies drew the second Test , avoiding defeat for the first time in a Test in England . Headley scored 169 in 375 minutes with 18 fours , sharing a partnership of 200 in 205 minutes with Ivan Barrow ? who became the first West Indian to score a Test century in England , minutes before Headley became the second . When the innings ended , Headley was still not out and the crowd gave him an excellent reception . Wisden described Headley 's batting as magnificent , displaying " a ready adaptability and perfection of timing . " The West Indies bowlers used Bodyline tactics in the England innings ; England 's Nobby Clark used the tactic in the West Indian second innings , in which Headley scored 24 runs . He was one of the few of his side 's batsmen able to resist the

bowling tactics .

After scoring an unbeaten 257 in a minor match against Norfolk , Headley scored 89 in his team 's victory over Glamorgan and 182 against Warwickshire . However , he failed in the third and final Test , scoring nine and 12 as West Indies were defeated by an innings . The tourists thus lost the series 2 ? 0 ; in the three Tests Headley 's aggregate was 277 runs at an average of 55 @.@ 40 , the best figures for the team . After the Test matches were over , Headley had an operation to remove a sebaceous cyst from his forehead and missed several games , before returning for an end @-@ of @-@ season festival match in which he scored 167 against an England XI . When the tour concluded , Headley had scored 2 @,@ 320 runs with seven hundreds , at an average of 66 @.@ 28 . This was over 1 @,@ 000 runs more than any other tourist and placed him third in the English first @-@ class batting averages for the season . Ivan Barrow believed Headley reached his batting peak during the tour . He recalled how many bowlers tried to hit his pads with the ball but Headley simply flicked the ball away . Headley 's performances earned him selection as one of Wisden 's Cricketers of the Year . The accompanying article called his tour " almost a triumphant march " and described him as " the best batsman the West Indies have ever produced . " Wisden editor Sydney Southerton also described him as a giant in the team and wrote : " From what we had been told by English players who had been to the West Indies , we were fully prepared for Headley 's success , but even so , he astonished most of us . " Headley bowled more than he had previously : prior to the tour , he had taken three first class wickets , but took 21 wickets in England at an average of 34 @.@ 33 , bowling off spin .

During the tour , Headley received news that his aunt had been killed by floods in Kingston which had also destroyed his home . Headley was greatly affected by the news , particularly the nature of her death . Although not able to attend the funeral , he wanted to leave England on an earlier ship than the rest of the team , but this could not be arranged in time .

= = = Lancashire League = = =

Following his success in England in 1933 , Headley was offered a two @-@ year contract to play professional cricket for Haslingden in the Lancashire League for £ 500 per season , the highest of several offers . The money was far more than he was earning from working as a fruit picker in Jamaica , and after consulting the Jamaican Cricket Board , who advised him to accept , he signed with the club on 8 September 1933 . There was a special provision which allowed Headley to be released to play for West Indies . Living in Haslingden where there were few , if any , other black people , Headley faced some prejudice from residents . However , he was generally welcomed and accepted . His first season was in 1934 and his first match was against Nelson , for whom Headley 's West Indian Test colleague Learie Constantine played . Headley had a difficult match . As the professional , he was expected to open the bowling although , as a spinner , he would normally have bowled later in an innings . When he batted he was run out for a duck by Constantine after facing one delivery , and Haslingden lost the match . After this poor start , Headley scored 1 @,@ 063 runs in the season at an average of 50 @.@ 62 , with three centuries . He changed his bowling style to medium pace and took 59 wickets at an average of 16 @.@ 59 . In 1935 he scored over 900 runs at an average of 61 @.@ 13 , and took 34 wickets ; his contract was renewed for another two years . In 1936 he again scored over 900 runs , and took 54 wickets . In 1937 he broke the record for most runs scored by any player in a Lancashire League season , accumulating 1 @,@ 360 at an average of 97 @.@ 15 , with five centuries ; he also took 41 wickets . Headley 's final two @-@ year contract with the club covered the seasons 1938 and 1940 , since he was expected to tour England with the West Indies team in 1939 . The war prevented him playing in 1940 , so his last season with Haslingden was 1938 . Although in that year his overall batting performance declined , to 677 runs at an average of 37 @.@ 61 , he took 76 wickets at 9 @.@ 70 and had success in the Worsley Cup competition , including one innings of 189 not out in a match played over five evenings .

= = = Career in mid @-@ 1930s = = =

Headley did not play any first @-@ class cricket in the West Indies in 1933 ? 34 , but returned to Jamaica in readiness for the 1934 ? 35 MCC tour . The visiting team , under the captaincy of Bob Wyatt , was stronger than English teams that had previously toured the Caribbean ; despite some shortcomings , Wisden and other critics considered it strong enough for the task in hand .

The first Test in Barbados was badly affected by rain which made the pitch almost impossible to bat on . West Indies batted first and were bowled out for 102 ; Headley 's 44 was the highest score of the match . In reply , England had scored 81 for seven when Wyatt declared in an attempt to make West Indies bat while the pitch was difficult . In the second innings , Headley was out for a duck and Jackie Grant declared when West Indies had scored 51 for six , so that England required 73 to win ; they did so after losing six wickets . In the second Test , Headley scored 25 in his first innings ; in the second , he adopted a cautious approach as his team led by 44 , hitting 93 in 225 minutes . West Indies subsequently bowled out England to win the match and level the series . The rain @-@ affected third Test was drawn , with Headley 's 53 his side 's top score .

The MCC went to Jamaica for the final leg of their tour . Headley played two matches for Jamaica against the tourists ; he failed in the first game but scored 127 in the second . The teams went into the fourth and final Test with the series still level at one win apiece . West Indies batted first , facing accurate bowling . The local press criticised the West Indies batsmen for slow batting on the first day , but Headley scored 132 . The Daily Gleaner noted that Headley maintained the controlled approach he had established in the season . On the second day , he took his score to 270 not out , and the Gleaner described him as " the genius we all know , scoring with all his old freedom and audacity . " In total , he batted for 495 minutes and hit 30 fours , recording the highest score by a West Indian batsman . It remained a West Indian record until Garfield Sobers scored 365 not out in 1958 , and was the team 's highest against England until Lawrence Rowe scored 302 in 1974 . West Indies scored 535 for seven and bowled out England twice to record their first victory in a Test series . Headley contributed 485 runs at an average of 97 @. @ 00 .

Headley returned to England to play for Haslingden in the 1935 English season , and played a single first @-@ class game , scoring a century for Sir L Parkinson 's XI against Leicestershire . In the 1935 ? 36 season , the Yorkshire team toured Jamaica , playing three first @-@ class matches , winning one and drawing the others . The touring county considered Headley the key batsman , and targeted him by bowling defensively in an attempt to frustrate him . Headley lost his wicket through impatience in the first match , although he scored a pair of fifties , but scored a century in the third game . In total , he scored 266 runs at an average of 53 @. @ 20 , but Yorkshire won the series after winning the first game , Jamaica 's first defeat at home in a first @-@ class game for ten years . The matches were played in a very competitive atmosphere , but scoring was slow and Yorkshire played attritional cricket . During the series , Headley demanded expenses , which were not normally granted to the players . The Jamaican Board were reluctant to pay but Headley pointed out that , as a professional cricketer , he was entitled to the same treatment as the Yorkshire players , whose expenses were provided . The Board eventually relented before the series ended .

= = = Second tour of England = = =

In 1936 Headley returned to England , and played no more first @-@ class cricket until the two trial matches for the 1939 tour of England . These matches were played in Trinidad where it was believed the matting pitches would most closely replicate English conditions ; Jamaica played Trinidad and a combination team . When Jamaica 's captain , Crab Nethersole , withdrew from the tour due to political commitments , Headley led Jamaica in both matches and scored 160 and 103 . Subsequently , he was chosen for his second tour of England , under the captaincy of Rolph Grant . Headley opened his tour with fifties in his first two matches and by the time the Test series started , although the tourists had lost three matches , he had scored three centuries ? 103 against Cambridge University , 116 not out in a victory over Essex and 227 as the tourists defeated Middlesex .

In the first Test , West Indies suffered their only defeat of the series . However , Norman Preston , the editor of Wisden , wrote : " the match provided a personal triumph for Headley " , as he became

only the second cricketer after Herbert Sutcliffe to make two hundreds in the same Test match on two separate occasions , having previously done so against England in 1930 . He became the first player to score two hundreds in a Lord 's Test , a feat not repeated until 1990 . In the first innings , Headley scored 106 with 13 fours . After sharing a big partnership with Jeff Stollmeyer , he received little help from the other batsmen . He played cautiously during his 250 @-@ minute innings , as he was aware that his team were relying on his success . By the time West Indies batted again , England had established a lead of 127 . Headley again batted defensively to score 107 , taking two hours to reach 50 , as West Indies needed to bat for a long time to secure a draw . However , he scored runs from any loose bowling and batted in all for 230 minutes , hitting eight fours . Preston , writing in Wisden , believed the West Indians relied too much on Headley 's batting . He also noted that Headley had to play cautiously for his team and although he hit powerful shots , " he was not the same dashing batsmen that England knew in 1933 . " Headley had scored three centuries in consecutive Test innings , but he could not prevent England winning this first Test by eight wickets . He continued to score heavily in the tour matches , making an unbeaten 234 in an innings win over Nottinghamshire , followed by 61 against Yorkshire on a sticky wicket , one of the best innings Neville Cardus had seen .

The second Test was drawn , after being badly affected by rain . Headley , although troubled by the English bowling on a difficult pitch , top @-@ scored with 51 in West Indies ' first innings but the other batsmen contributed little . Headley scored just five in West Indies ' brief second innings , bringing to an end a sequence of six fifties in successive Test innings . After the Test , Headley scored 93 against Surrey but failed to reach fifty in his next three games , which included three single figure scores . West Indies needed to win the final Test to level the series and the team established a first @-@ innings lead of 146 . Headley played cautiously for 140 minutes , attempting to tire out the bowlers , but was run out for 65 in a misunderstanding with Vic Stollmeyer . The remaining batsmen played well , attacking the English bowling . Preston believed this match demonstrated West Indies ' ability to compete at the highest level . However , England were able to bat long enough to secure a draw . In the Test series , Headley scored 334 runs at an average of 66 @.@ 80 , but did not play again on the tour after the final Test , as the team were advised to abandon the last seven matches because of the deteriorating political situation in Europe . They arrived in Canada on the day that Britain declared war on Germany . In all first @-@ class matches during the tour , Headley scored 1 @,@ 745 runs at 72 @.@ 70 , placing him at the top of the season 's first @-@ class averages .

Wisden judged Headley to be the best batsman of the 1939 season , while other critics rated him among the best batsmen in the world , with favourable comparisons to Bradman . C. B. Fry , a former England captain turned journalist , wrote that Headley 's " middle name should be Atlas " , suggesting that he carried the team on his shoulders .

= = Later career = =

= = After the war = =

Following the outbreak of war , the Lancashire League clubs cancelled professionals ' contracts , meaning Headley did not complete his final year with Haslingden . Having returned to Jamaica , he worked in the Labour Department for the government and played cricket for Lucas , enjoying batting success and captaining his team to victory in the Senior Cup on three occasions . Headley continued to play for the team until 1947 , when he left to play for the Kensington Club . Unlike other Caribbean teams , Jamaica did not take part in inter @-@ island competition , and although Headley played some exhibition matches in America in 1945 , it was not until June 1946 that he took part in his next first @-@ class match . Trinidad played three matches in Jamaica and Headley scored 52 in the second game but only reached his best form when he scored 99 in the third . However , he was successful as a bowler , taking five for 33 in the first game , the only five wicket return of his career . This included a spell of three wickets without conceding a run in 14 deliveries , prompting a

pitch invasion by the crowd . Headley also captained Jamaica in the final two matches of the series against Trinidad after the official captain was injured during the home team 's win in the first match ? the other two were drawn .

Prior to a visit by Barbados in March 1947 , Headley was officially appointed as Jamaican captain . Previous captains of island teams had been almost exclusively white . Around this time , Headley requested the Jamaican board provide support for low income players with their kit and transport costs . In the first game against Barbados , Headley scored 203 not out and 57 not out , took four for 40 in the tourists ' first innings and another wicket in the second . Although the game was drawn , he had recorded Jamaica 's highest score in a match between the Caribbean islands . The second match was also drawn ; Headley made 79 before he had to retire when he fell and injured his knee . Another American tour followed , in which Headley was accompanied by promising young players , before he led the Jamaican team to British Guiana in October 1947 . He played only two innings in the two matches , scoring 36 and 4 not out . A thumb injury in the first match meant he could not bat , although he bowled 44 overs in the game . Headley was verbally abused by a section of the crowd , who disapproved of a black captain ; he was also dissatisfied with the impartiality of the umpires . Crab Nethersole , the Jamaican manager for the tour , reported that injuries to key players and the poor attitude of the crowd made the tour difficult , although Headley 's captaincy was universally praised .

= = = Resumption of Test career = = =

For reasons related to class and race , it had been unthinkable before the war for the West Indies to appoint a black Test captain , but the postwar world saw social and political changes in the Caribbean . Although opinion was still divided over the merits of a black captain , Headley was appointed as one of the West Indian captains for the series against the England team which toured the Caribbean in 1948 . Crab Nethersole , the former Jamaican captain and member of the Board of Control for cricket , argued Headley should be outright captain but a compromise was reached . Headley was scheduled to captain the first and fourth Test matches , played in Barbados and Jamaica , and the white players Gerry Gomez and John Goddard were given the captaincy of the second and third matches . In the event , Headley only played in the first Test . In the first innings , he scored 29 but strained his back while fielding . Batting towards the end of West Indies ' second innings , he scored seven not out . Rain helped England to draw the match . Headley 's back caused him to miss the second and third Tests , but he was fit enough to play for Jamaica when the tourists arrived there to play two games against the island before the fourth and final Test . After the first island game , in which he scored 65 , Headley 's request to miss the second match to rest his back was refused by the Jamaican Board . He scored 36 not out , but aggravated his back pains and he withdrew from the final Test . West Indies won this game under the captaincy of Goddard , who had earlier led West Indies to victory in the third Test . He was subsequently chosen to captain West Indies in India in 1948 ? 49 , despite Headley 's availability and apparently superior claims to the position .

Selected for the Indian tour after a specific request by the Indian cricket authorities , Headley did not have much success in the early matches and in the drawn first Test he scored only two in a total of 631 . West Indies then moved to Pakistan ; in a non first @-@ class game Headley took six wickets as a bowler , but then in a match against a representative Pakistan XI he fell and injured his side while attempting to take a catch . He batted in discomfort , scoring 57 not out . This injury meant that he played no further part in the five @-@ match Test series against India . Although he continued to travel with the team , he was unable to play in any further matches until the final game of the tour , when he scored 100 against Ceylon Schools as the tourists travelled home via Ceylon .

Headley played for the Kensington Club until 1950 , when he resumed league cricket in England ; he returned for a final season with Kensington in 1955 before retiring from Senior Cup cricket . Meanwhile , he took a new job as an insurance agent . This affected his availability for cricket as he was no longer able to take leave when playing for a team ; if he did not work , he received no wages . Consequently , he did not accept the captaincy of Jamaica during the Test trials for the 1950 tour

of England and did not travel with the team . Press reaction was unfavourable towards Headley but the West Indies Board still wanted to select him for the tour . However , Headley accepted a contract with Bacup in the Lancashire League , to replace Everton Weekes who was in the touring party .

For Bacup Headley scored 909 runs and took 20 wickets in 1950 , before signing to play for Dudley in the Birmingham League in 1951 . He and his family moved to Birmingham , and in each the next four seasons Headley averaged over 65 with the bat and under 17 with the ball . In his second season , the club topped the league . In total , he scored 2 @, @ 878 runs for Dudley and , resuming off spin bowling , took 102 wickets . While in England during this time , he played several first @-@ class matches for a Commonwealth XI against an England XI ; he scored 20 in 1951 and accumulated 98 and 61 in 1952 .

= = = End of Test career = = =

Headley 's success for Dudley was watched keenly in Jamaica and commentators began to discuss his availability for the 1954 series against England . A public subscription to finance his travel to Jamaica , opened by the Daily Gleaner , raised over £ 1 @, @ 000 , and despite his reservations , Headley returned to Jamaica . Playing in a fund @-@ raising match , he sustained a hand injury and playing for the Combined Parishes in a minor match against the MCC , a short ball from Fred Trueman struck Headley 's arm . The latter injury kept him out of the first @-@ class match between Jamaica and the MCC , but he played in the second where , although hampered by his injury , he scored 53 not out . The Test selectors had seen enough to include Headley in the team for the first Test . Reaction among critics was mixed , and Headley , nearing his 45th birthday , remains the oldest man as of 2015 to play a Test match for West Indies . Headley batted at number six , and it appeared that England , under the captaincy of Len Hutton , let Headley score an easy run to begin his innings , which Hutton later confirmed to be the case . However , Headley later argued that the run was given to ensure that he was batting at the beginning of the next over , so that England could try to get him out before he settled down .

Headley scored 16 and 1 in the match , his final Test appearance . He used his experience to influence the captain , Jeff Stollmeyer , advising him not to enforce the follow on and to use leg theory bowling to slow down the tourists ' scoring . These tactics helped West Indies to a 140 @-@ run win in a match they might have lost ; Stollmeyer followed a similar approach in the following match . In 22 Tests , Headley scored 2 @, @ 190 runs at an average of 60 @. @ 83 .

Headley finished his career at Dudley at the end of 1954 ; his son Ron played for the club from 1957 , having already played for its second team in 1952 as a 13 @-@ year @-@ old . After his final Test match appearance , Headley 's only other first @-@ class match was in the Commonwealth XI fixture in 1954 , when he scored 64 in his final first @-@ class innings . In a career total of 103 first @-@ class games he aggregated 9 @, @ 921 runs at 69 @. @ 86 , with 33 centuries , and took 51 wickets at 36 @. @ 11 .

= = Style , technique and legacy = =

Headley is regarded by critics as one of the best batsmen from the Caribbean and one of the greatest batsmen of all time . In his history of West Indies cricket , Michael Manley described Headley as " the yardstick against whom all other West Indian batsmen are measured " . In 1988 , The Cricketer magazine placed him in an all @-@ time West Indian team , as did a panel of judges for another such team in July 2010 , while in 2004 , another panel of experts named him among the top five West Indian players . He was given the nicknames " the Black Bradman " and " Atlas " by commentators , and was the first world @-@ class batsman from the West Indies who was black . According to historian Gideon Haigh , his role was made harder by the weakness of his colleagues , as few outstanding players find it easy to play in teams which lose frequently . Although he was a naturally attacking player , Headley felt the need to play cautiously owing to the way his team depended on him . C. L. R. James believed that no other great batsman had to carry such a burden for so long . In the years before the war , Headley scored 25 @. @ 61 % of the runs scored in Tests

by West Indies , more than twice as many as the next best batsman , and two @-@ thirds of the team 's centuries , scoring ten of the team 's first fourteen centuries in Test cricket . Headley usually batted at number three and as the opening batsmen were often dismissed quickly , he frequently began his innings early .

As of 2014 , Headley 's average in Test matches of 60 @.@ 83 is third highest among those with 2 @,@ 000 runs , behind Bradman and Graeme Pollock , and but for the Tests he played after the war , he would have been above Pollock . In all first @-@ class matches , he has the third highest average with 69 @.@ 86 , behind Bradman and Vijay Merchant among those who played 50 innings . He averaged a century every fourth innings in which he batted , second again to Bradman , and did not suffer a poor series in his career before the war .

Manley describes Headley as just under medium height with sloping shoulders . His movements were precise and economical on the cricket field ; his cap was usually at a slight angle and his sleeves were buttoned down to the wrist . Wisden noted in 1933 that his timing and placement of the ball was perfect . Exceptionally quick on his feet , he watched the ball onto the bat more than any other batsman . According to Wisden , all his shots were equally good but most notable was his on drive played from the back foot . He hit the ball hard and was very difficult to get out . He faced criticism for playing off the back foot so often , but R. C. Robertson @-@ Glasgow believed his square cut , late cut , and hook were exceptionally good . Headley was particularly effective on bad batting wickets . C. L. R. James calculated that Headley averaged 39 @.@ 85 and passed fifty on seven occasions in thirteen innings on difficult wickets . According to James 's reckoning , Bradman in similar conditions passed fifty once , and averaged 16 @.@ 66 in fifteen innings . Headley himself preferred batting when the odds favoured the bowlers as he had to go for his shots and play his natural attacking game . He stated : " On a bad wicket , it was you and the bowler ... no nonsense . "

Beyond cricket , Headley 's success was regarded as important . Of Headley 's meeting with the king of England in 1939 , the West Indian writer Frank Birbalsingh said : " That one of us ? a black man ? could shake the hand of a king introduced possibilities formerly undreamt of in our colonial backwater of racial inferiority , psychological subordination and political powerlessness . " Manley notes that Headley rose to success at a time of political awakening in Jamaica , when the black majority of the population were increasingly determined to end the minority rule of landowners and challenge the racism of the time . According to Manley , the middle classes saw in Headley " the reassurance which they needed . He demonstrated black capacity . " The white upper classes were proud of his achievements as a West Indian , but Manley writes " it was to the black masses that Headley had the deepest significance ... [He] became the focus for longing of an entire people for proof : proof of their own self @-@ worth , their own capacity . Furthermore , they wanted this proof to be laid at the door of the white man who owned the world which defined their circumstances . " Manley sees the title of " Atlas " not just in sporting terms , but in his carrying " the hopes of the black , English @-@ speaking Caribbean man ... He was black excellence personified in a white world and in a white sport . "

= = Personal life = =

= = = Coaching career = = =

Following the 1955 cricket season , Headley was invited to become a national coach , a post created by the Jamaican government , which involved working mainly with young people . Headley and his second son travelled back to Jamaica , while the rest of the family remained in England . Headley had a heavy workload , particularly in rural areas ; together with his assistant Dickie Fuller his role involved encouraging school children to watch and play cricket , and trying to improve standards and facilities throughout the country . Headley became involved in the selection of teams , taking some of them overseas . At this time , he discovered the future West Indian Test player Roy Gilchrist and future Jamaican cricketer Henry Sewell . However , critics in the 1960s complained that

there were not enough Jamaicans in the Test side and blamed Headley and Fuller , although the government remained supportive of their performance . In 1961 , Headley coached for six months in Nigeria and earned praise from the Nigerian Cricket Association . His official coaching role in Jamaica ended after a new government withdrew funding for coaching in 1962 .

= = = Family and retirement = = =

Headley married Rena Saunders in 1939 . He had nine children in total , including Ron Headley who was born two days after the end of the Lord 's Test of 1939 . Ron Headley went on to play professional cricket for the English counties Worcestershire and Derbyshire , and represented Jamaica before playing two Tests for West Indies in 1973 . Another son , Lyndie , reached the semi @-@ finals of the 100 metres and came fourth in the 100 metres relay at the 1964 Olympics ; he also won a gold medal with Jamaican sprint relay teams in the Central American and Caribbean Games of 1966 and silver with the relay team at the Commonwealth Games of the same year . Ron 's son Dean , Headley 's grandson , played Test cricket for England ; the family thus became the first to have three generations play Test cricket .

After his retirement from coaching , Headley remained associated with cricket , presenting awards and playing in friendly matches . He was the official representative of the Jamaican Cricket Board at Constantine 's funeral in 1971 . Official recognition came Headley 's way when he was awarded the M.B.E. in 1956 and was made an honorary life member of the MCC in 1958 . In 1969 , a bronze sculpture of his head was unveiled in Jamaica 's National Stadium , and in 1973 the Norman Manley Foundation gave him the Award for Excellence in Sports . In the latter year , he also received the Order of Distinction . He died in Kingston on 30 November 1983 .