

Kenneth L Hutchings - Kent & England Cricketer

By Maxwell Macfarlane

Location of plaque - 71 London Road, Southborough.

Kenneth Lotherington Hutchings was born on 7 December 1882, the youngest of four sons of Dr and Mrs E.J.Hutchings of "Highbury", 71 London Road, Southborough. His father and an uncle had played with some success for Southborough Cricket Club and another uncle played for Oxford University in 1880.



All four boys went to Tonbridge School. The eldest, William, was in the 1st XI for three years, and captain in 1898. He played for Kent in 1899 and then, until 1906, for Worcestershire. He was seriously wounded twice in the Great War. The second, Frederick, was in the 1st XI for four years and played three times for Kent. He was invalided out of the Army in 1915 after a severe traffic accident. The third, John, was in the 1st XI in 1900. He was seriously wounded twice in the Great War.

Kenneth, however, outshone them all. He was in the 1st XI for five years, and captain in 1901 and 1902. His highest score was 205 in 1902, and his average that year was 63.3. Although he played for Southborough CC in several memorable matches over the years, he first played for Kent in 1906 when he became a regular player. He made nearly 1600 runs including four centuries in that year.



In 1907-08 he went with MCC to Australia for the Ashes, and was selected to play in all five Tests. In the second Test, at Melbourne, he scored 126 runs in the only match MCC won. In 1909, he was selected for two Ashes Tests in England. In twelve Test innings he made 341 runs for an average of 28.41, and took 9 catches. Altogether he made 22 centuries in first class cricket.

The President of Southborough Cricket Club Mike Rusbridge, assisted by Mike Dunn, unveiling the Kenneth Hutchings Commemorative plaque in July 2013.

When the Great War broke out, he was in business in Liverpool and immediately volunteered for service. He was commissioned in the 4th Battalion, The King's (Liverpool) Regiment. He went to France in Spring 1915 and was wounded on 19 July 1916. On recovery, he returned to France on attachment to the 12th Battalion, The King's Regiment, but was killed by machine-gun fire at Ginchy on 3 September 1916. His home was still at 71 London Road, Southborough.

Sources:

Hinds, A. & Riley, P. 1994. Southborough Cricket Club 1794 – 1994.
Tonbridge School Register.
Tonbridge School and the Great War.