

## From the Archives

### Dr Charles Herbert Gage-Brown – first named Member of the Club

Charles Herbert Gage-Brown appears as the first name elected to join Roehampton Club on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1901 on the same day as the meeting initiated by the Miller brothers in London to form the Club. His entry on the first form in the first volume of numerous membership application books comprising a total of approximately 50,000 names deserves special recognition. Thankfully, the membership application forms have remained intact since the formation of the Club highlighting the cream of high society amidst a growing list of accomplished sportsmen and women across many disciplines.

Although these early Members were predominantly polo players with a military background, the name of Charles Herbert Gage-Brown stands out from this list because of his occupation which is shown as a Doctor of Medicine. He was educated at St Andrews University and was one of the original founders of the Association of St Andrews Medical Graduates established for the purpose of looking after the interests of their members and to place evidence before the last Scottish University Commission. The Association dissolved after a few years, but Gage-Brown remained an advocate of retaining links with former students and was consulted in 1904 to form the St Andrews University Club in London.

The idea was set out in a letter to the *Scotsman* newspaper inviting former students to register their expression of interest with a Scottish expat based in Hounslow, West London. With various sports evolving at this time at Roehampton Club, Dr Gage-Brown would have been well placed to identify potential members for the newly formed Association. The significance of Dr Gage-Brown's status as our first named Member was more likely to come from his role as Director of Medicine for the Colonial Office.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Great Britain was at the height of its empire with military personnel despatched around the world finding themselves in different climates with associated diseases which had not been experienced before. In 1899, Joseph Chamberlain (pictured) established the London School of Tropical Medicine – Secretary of State for the Colonies when he

ROEHAMPTON CLUB.

No. 2

Date 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1901

Full Name of Candidate Charles Herbert Gage-Brown.

Address 85 Cadogan Place,  
London S.W.

Occupation (if any) Doctor of Medicine.

Clubs of which a Member Hyde Park Club.

Polo Player or Ordinary Member Ordinary Member.

Proposed by C. D. Miller.

Seconded by C. D. Miller.

ELECTED  
Date NOV 23 1901





presided at a banquet at which no less than £6,000 (equivalent to £821.5k in today's money) was raised. The money was intended to buy equipment for the school and to set up specific hospital wards for the treatment of tropical diseases. Of this sum, £3,500 (£479.2k) had been contributed by the Colonial and Foreign Office together with £1,000 (£136.9k) from the Indian Office showing that in the judgement of these Governmental departments that the work was of importance in the highest degree.

The amount from the India Office would not have escaped the attention of the Miller brothers – founding members of Roehampton Club returning home from their military experiences in the sub-continent. The school was originally intended for the instruction of surgeons in the Colonial and Indian Service; but the work had been extended to private students, missionaries, and doctors in the employ of trading corporations. It was first intended to have only twelve students, but experience had shown that the demand for instruction was much greater than was originally anticipated. These numbers expanded quickly thus making it necessary to refuse admissions despite the demand. This in turn resulted in the decision to increase the level of funding and to extend the enlargement of the school together with long term financial planning.

Campaigners pointed that the importance of good health in tropical countries could not be overestimated and in conclusion an appeal for no less than £100,000 (£13.692m) was regarded as appropriate. The appointment of Charles Herbert Gage-Brown as medical advisor to the Colonial Office was a consequence of this successful fund raising and the recognition of its importance. These events also represent a major step in our medical knowledge towards the understanding and treatment of tropical diseases which continues to this day. The London School continues its work unabated and is recognised globally for its research into the Coronavirus pandemic. It also continues to monitor the effects of vaccination programmes in various parts of the world.

Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist