

Christ Church Southgate

Our Cricketing History

The Walker Brothers



John Walker, Cricketer (1826-1885)

Right-handed batsman and an underarm right-arm slow bowler for Cambridge University (1846–1849), MCC (1847–1863), a Middlesex XI (1850–1863) and Middlesex CCC (1864–1866). Founder of the Walker Cricket Ground. Baptised, worshipped and buried at The Weld Chapel and Christ Church Southgate.

(Sketch from a painting by Mr N. Felix, criceter. Courtesy of Enfield Council Local

Few things in the history of the cricket of the brothers are more remarkable than the way in which they almost invariably failed in their first appearances, and almost invariably atoned immediately afterwards for their bad start. As a rule they failed absolutely, making a “duck’s egg” with a regularity which must have given them much amusement as time went on, and a new comer had to take his turn, with the family tradition facing him in all its baldness.”

The Walkers of Southgate - a Famous Brotherhood of Cricketers by W. A. Bettesworth, Methuen, 1900.



Alfred Walker, Cricketer (1827-1870)

Right-handed batsman and an underarm bowler in fourteen first-class matches for Cambridge University (1846–1848) and a Middlesex XI (1851–1859). Baptised, worshipped and buried at The Weld Chapel and Christ Church Southgate.



Frederick Walker, Cricketer (1829-1889)

Right-handed batsman and wicketkeeper for Cambridge University (1849-1852), MCC (1853-1856) and a Middlesex XI in 1859. Baptised, worshipped and buried at The Weld Chapel and Christ Church Southgate.

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The brothers founded Southgate Cricket Club in 1855, Middlesex County Cricket Club in 1864, and were instrumental in establishing the home of the county at Lords in 1877.



Arthur Henry Walker, Cricketer (1833-1878)

Right-handed batsman and a round-arm right-arm bowler for MCC (1855–1861) and a Middlesex XI (1859–1862).

Isaac Donnithorne Walker, Cricketer (1844-1898)

Right handed batsman & an underarm slow right arm bowler. Played for MCC (1862–1884), a Middlesex XI (1862–1863) and Middlesex CCC (1864–1884). He succeeded his brother as Captain in 1873 and served in the post for twelve seasons.



Russell Donnithorne Walker, Cricketer (1842-1922)

Right-handed batsman and a round arm slow right arm bowler for Oxford University (1861–1865), a Middlesex XI (1862), MCC (1862–1878) and Middlesex CCC (1864–1877). He succeeded his brother as President of Middlesex (1907–1922). Baptised, worshipped and buried at The Weld Chapel and Christ Church Southgate.



Vyell Edward Walker, Cricketer (1837-1906)

Right-handed batsman and an underarm slow right arm bowler. Helped to found the Middlesex Cricket Club & captain (1864–1872), also served as President of the Marylebone Cricket Club (1891/1892) and of Middlesex County Cricket Club (1899–1906). In 1859 Lillywhite's Guide to Cricketers described him as the best all-round cricketer in the world.

During his ownership of Arnos Grove, Southgate and Palmers Green began a period of significant population growth and development – the village beginning to turn into a suburb. There are several memorials to V.E.Walker in our church and elsewhere in Southgate. He was baptised, worshipped and buried at The Weld Chapel and Christ Church Southgate.

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The Jubilee Match at Lords, 1887. Eighteen Veterans (over 40) vs Gentlemen of the MCC. Isaac Donnithorne Walker (Middle Row left) pictured with Vyell Edward Walker (Middle Row third from right) and W.G.Grace (Middle Row centre)

Church Times Cricket Cup Final

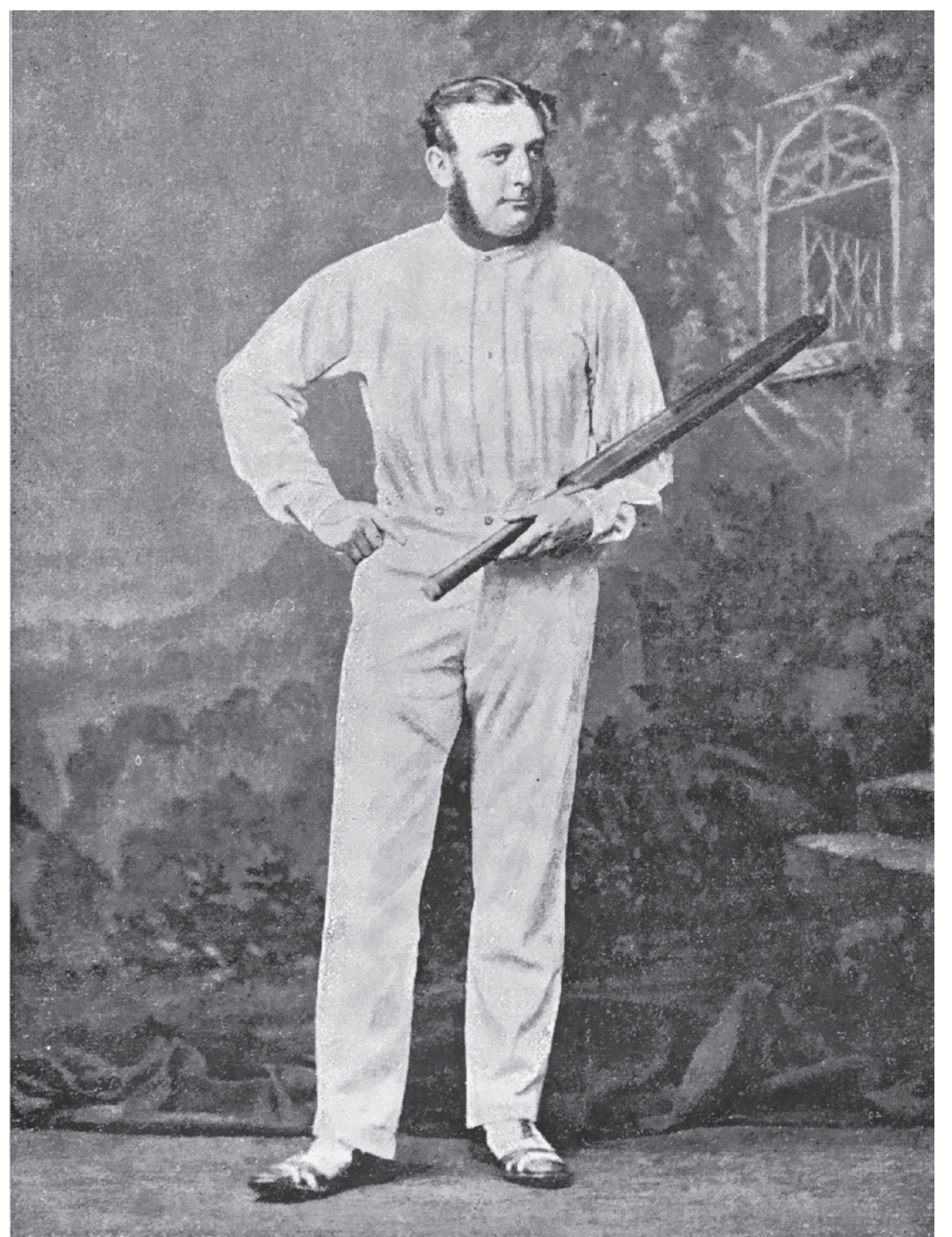
The Church Times Cricket Cup Final takes place in our parish each year on the first Thursday in September. The annual competition, in its 67th season (in 2017) sees teams of clergy and lay people from Dioceses across the Church of England compete for a place in the final, which is played at the Walker Cricket Ground. We work closely with the clubs and Trustees of the Walker Ground, who support our annual May Day Fair and generously allow our winter night shelter guests to use the washing facilities in the pavilion.



The Walker Family

Our cricketing connections are thanks to the Walker family. The Walker family lived in Southgate for 141 years from 1777 to 1918. Over four generations, the family acquired 600 acres of land across Southgate and Palmers Green. The Walker family home, Arnos Grove, still stands on Cannon Hill. The family were generous patrons of educational, religious and cultural organisations in Southgate. They gave much of the land and most of the funds towards the construction of our current church building, which was consecrated in 1862. They also founded the Walker Cricket Ground, opposite the church.

The last generation of Walkers to live in Southgate included the seven sons of Issac and Sophia Walker, who were all well-known cricketers. Perhaps the most famous was Vyell Edward “Teddy” Walker (1837-1906) who was described as the best all-round cricketer in the world. He served as President of the Marylebone Cricket Club.



Vyell Edward Walker (1837-1906)

Said to have been the best all-round cricketer in the world.

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Memorials to the Walker Family



The Walker Vault

In the churchyard within what was the chancel of the Weld Chapel, lies the Walker family vault. Here Isaac, Sophia and their seven sons are buried along with other members of the family.



Memorial to V.E.Walker

The sedilia (the stone seats for the priest on the south side of the altar) were installed in memory of “Teddy” Walker after his death in 1906 as a plaque next to the pulpit shows.

“To Mr V.E. Walker we gave, last season, the credit of being the best ‘all-round’ cricketer in the world. We have no reason to alter our opinion, as the figures in the batting and bowling department will justify the statement.”

Lillywhite’s Guide to Cricketers, 1860



The Lady Chapel

At the north eastern corner of the church is the Lady Chapel. The chapel is highly decorated with wall paintings by Percy Bacon & Brothers. The chapel was redecorated in the early 1900's, the work paid for by V.E. “Teddy” Walker in memory of his parents, Isaac and Sophia, and his brothers and sisters, as the dedication on the north wall shows.

The windows in the Lady Chapel pre-date the wall paintings and are some of the earliest examples of work by the company which became known as William Morris & Company (then Morris Marshall Faulkner & Co). The windows show the writers of the Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These windows date from 1861 and are unique. The image of St Matthew is said to be the only self portrait of William Morris in stained glass.