

Frederick William Marsh



Born 1865 in Plymouth, Devon. Died in South shields
2/12/1921

Moved to Tyneside as a child with his family.

Qualified as a teacher at St Pauls College, Cheltenham where he was first introduced to rugby.

On completion of his training, he moved back to the North East joining Percy Park RFC in 1887. He then began a long association with Westoe RFC.

His teaching appointments from 1903 included the headship of Laygate Council School and later Stanhope Road School both in South Shields.

He was elected a member of the Durham County Rugby Committee in 1895 and Secretary of the Referees Society succeeding W H Humphries in 1898. He then became secretary of the County from 1906 to 1921 and was County president at the time of his death.

Prominent as a referee in the North East he took charge of many County matches, oversaw an England trial and officiated several times during the first Springboks tour of Britain in 1906 including their fixtures with Cambridge University, Cornwall, Gloucestershire and Llanelli. His pedigree had been well tested before being appointed to referee his only international which was the 1907 Wales v Ireland test at Cardiff Arms Park. Wales 29 Ireland 0

It would appear that this was not a great success. The report on the game was not very complimentary stating 'Wales too, were fortunate in having many palpably forward passes allowed through sheer inability on the part of the referee, Marsh of Durham, to keep up with the movements. He also allowed the Welsh halves considerable latitude.'