





## LIONEL COOPER TESTIMONIAL

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The Committee of the Supporters' Club has  
arranged the following events, proceeds  
of which will be given to the  
Testimonial Fund

### ★ WHIST DRIVE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13th, 1955  
SILVIO'S CAFE, HUDDERSFIELD

### ★ SPORTSMAN'S EVENING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27th  
TOWN HALL, HUDDERSFIELD  
Compere: RONALD CROWTHER (Yorks. Evening News)

### ★ GRAND DANCE

FRIDAY, JULY 8th  
TOWN HALL, HUDDERSFIELD



LIONEL — A 1950 KEMSLEY STUDIO PORTRAIT





Lionel, Dave and Pat receive their Caps from Mr. J. Wood Beever, who was Chairman of the Football Committee at that time.

## Foreword

*I WELCOME this opportunity to give Lionel Cooper my best wishes for the success of his Testimonial Fund.*

*I have seen so many great wings in my playing days, but to Lionel Cooper I must give pride of place. He is the strongest winger I have ever seen, and he will be a great loss to our club when he retires from the game. Strong on the attack, running with the greatest determination, and seeming to find that bit of extra speed when needed, he also has a peach of a side-step. The great number of tries he has scored for Huddersfield shows how much Lionel has done to keep the name of our club one of the best in the League. He has everything that makes a great player—love of the game, a good team man and always willing to play the game.*

*I am sure the Football Committee are with me in wishing Lionel a great success with the Testimonial Fund.*

**BEN GRONOW**  
*Chairman, Football Committee*



# LIONEL COOPER

FOR as long as he can remember, Lionel Cooper has been very keen on all forms of sport. His early schooling was done at a country school called Cowra in New South Wales, and he confesses that many a time his tutors remarked that had he put half the effort into his studies that he put into athletics and cricket he would have been a far more satisfactory pupil! Lionel broke no records in the scholastic line, but at least he did have the honour of representing his school in inter-school matches at cricket, athletics and (strangely enough) soccer.

After leaving school at the age of thirteen, Lionel found that his sport was limited to cricket on Saturday mornings and this remained so until he moved from the country to live in Sydney in 1937. There, he found that the family residence was immediately opposite the Enfield Olympic Swimming Pool, and his attention was turned to swimming during the summer months and tennis during the winter months.

These two sports remained his firm interest until he joined the Australian Infantry Forces in 1942. As is usual with army life, the opportunity then presented itself to play at various times cricket or take part in athletics and in the early stages of the army he devoted his sporting interests mainly to athletics. In September, 1943, he was posted north but, due to a little mishap, was returned to Cloncurry in Queensland where, in one afternoon in Army and Air Force Sports, Lionel was successful in winning the hop-step-and-jump, the broad jump, coming second to Don Chadwick (a famous New Zealand high jumper and record holder) and winning the 100 yards, the 75 yards and 220 yards sprints. Quite an afternoon's work.

In the early part of 1944 he was returned to Katherine in the Northern Territory of Australia where he had joined a Commando unit. Little did he realise that events were to happen that would ultimately change the whole course of his life.

Despite his reasonable athletic ability, Lionel still maintained his very keen interest in cricket and by this time had developed into a useful all-rounder. His interest turned to football again during the winter months and the type of football was a game called Australian Rules. This is an 18-a-side game, played on an

oval field. In this game he played in the position of a rover, which is similar in effect to the forwards in Rugby League.

Ultimately, however, his unit decided to start a Rugby League football team, the idea being to enter into a competition which was to be run in the Northern Territory of Australia later in the season. Due to his other sporting activities with the unit, it fell to Lionel to be the representative of the unit at the Inter-Service meeting in Darwin and it was at this meeting that he met the man who was to be his tutor and chief introduction to Rugby League Football—Warrant Officer Ray Stehr, a well-known "Kangaroo," who has toured England with an Australian Rugby Touring Team. Lionel played in Sunday afternoon games against the Air Force teams and other unit teams, playing in practically every position on the field and being the chief goal-kicker.

During July, 1944, Warrant Officer Stehr picked a group side to play a representative side from the Air Force, and Lionel, to his surprise, was included at centre. He admits that the occasion was a little too big for him and that his showing left much to be desired. Shortly after this he was transferred to Wyndham over on the North West coast of Australia, leaving his football behind. January, 1945, brought 28 days very welcome leave at home in Sydney with never a thought for sport other than a day at the beach. On returning from leave to camp at Liverpool in New South Wales, he was lined up on a parade ground with a Sergeant Bill Dunn calling the roll. Now Sergeant Dunn had been the referee in the match in which Lionel had participated at the invitation of Ray Stehr. Sergeant Dunn took Cooper to see W/O Stehr and they, along with his former C.O., Major White, advised Lionel to revive his interest in Rugby League Football.

In Sydney, you have to play for the club for which you are residentially qualified and, having previously lived in the Western Suburbs, Lionel automatically qualified for Western Suburbs. On Ray Stehr's advice, he contacted Mr. Lew Moses, Secretary of the Western Suburbs club, and asked for a trial, only to be told that as he was still in the army and as there was every possibility of going farther afield shortly he should come back after the war if still interested.

Lionel returned to camp at Liverpool, not caring very much whether he played or not, and advised Ray Stehr of what had happened, whereupon he was told that his period of training, to



be converted from Signals to Gunnery, would take some three months and that he should take the opportunity of trying out with one of the other clubs in Sydney. As Ray Stehr was then Captain-Coach of the Eastern Suburbs club it was only natural that Cooper should turn his head towards Eastern Suburbs.

The result was that in March, 1945, he turned out on the Sydney Sports Ground for his first training night, complete with pumps and army jersey and a pair of football pants loaned by Ray Stehr. Due to Stehr's guidance and coaching—and it was he who suggested that Lionel should try playing on the wing—Cooper was chosen in the Eastern Suburbs side along-side his present-day colleague, Johnny Hunter. Johnny and Lionel played centre and wing for Eastern Suburbs, who won the premiership that 1945 season. Playing with a good side brought success, and it was not long before Lionel was successful in gaining representative honours to play for New South Wales against Queensland.

His army career was still to be followed, however, and by this time he had been posted to Greta, near Newcastle, and approximately 150 miles from Sydney. He could only get one week-end's leave per month, but managed to get down practically every week during the 1945 season. However he managed to dodge the prying eyes of the Military Police, who were continually looking for offenders travelling to the city on local passes, Lionel still does not know. His life during April, May, June and July of 1945 was made up of playing Rugby League in Sydney on Saturday afternoons and returning to play Rugby League for his unit on Sunday afternoons. Probably it was by virtue of returning and playing for his unit that the C.O., who read in the papers that he played in Sydney each weekend, turned a blind eye!

August, 1945, brought the end of the war, and Lionel was posted to Victoria Barracks in Sydney with the result that he continued his football in the winter months of 1946. He enjoyed another very good season and was chosen for all the representative matches, including Tests. One of Lionel's happiest recollections and one of the most thrilling moments of his Rugby League career occurred at this time. It was the scoring of the try in the First Test at Sydney in 1946 which enabled Australia to make the game an eight-all draw. Lionel thoroughly enjoyed those games against the English Tourists and whilst it was evident that he still had a tremendous amount to learn about Rugby League

football he was rapidly gaining the experience that was to stand him in good stead in later years.

Towards the end of the 1946 season, after the English team had gone to New Zealand, Lionel was approached on the Sydney Sports ground, just prior to the commencement of an Eastern Suburbs versus Western Suburbs match, by "Dinny" Campbell, who was then acting as an agent for the Leeds Club. He offered Cooper a four years contract and a sum of money to sign for Leeds. After a considerable amount of deliberation, Lionel decided to do so providing the term of contract could be altered to three years and that Johnny Hunter would also be given the opportunity to come to England. Unfortunately, Johnny had not gained representative honours and the Leeds Club were a little loath to accept him. As a result of this the negotiations fell through.

A short time later, the man who was responsible for bringing Lionel Cooper into Rugby League football in Australia was to be the man who, in conjunction with Eddie Waring, was to take him from Australian football. In January, 1947, the Huddersfield club came along with an offer for both Johnny Hunter and Lionel with a three years contract which, after consultation with Lionel's wife, they decided to accept. Looking back, Lionel says that never has he made a more beneficial decision, and should he have the opportunity of making the same decision again he would not hesitate to do so.

The type of football played in England was, in the early stages, a little strange, but the coaching and training methods certainly provided every opportunity for development. Lionel admits that he owes the majority of his success to the training he received from the coaches and trainers at Fartown during 1947 and 1948; to the tremendous encouragement of the Huddersfield people; and to the consideration of the officials of the Huddersfield club.

That he did make a great success of his adventure is a fact well known to all who admire and respect Lionel. This short story about him has dealt with his Australian career—his feats and achievements in England will be found on other pages. Suffice it now to say here that the name of Lionel Cooper will never be forgotten where Rugby League men gather. He has put his name among the great ones who have graced our code and, when future generations talk about the immortals of Rugby League, Lionel Cooper will be one of the names that will fall from their lips.



## Personal Tributes to Lionel

### *Rich as the Colours of a Great Club*

by HARRY SUNDERLAND (the "Sunday Dispatch," and B.B.C. Commentator)

Rich wine and rich metal are represented in the colours of the great club that has its home at Fartown, and equally rich in merit have been the many great players who have come from the Dominions of the Commonwealth of Empire to help achieve many successes on the playing fields of England.

First among wingers, we had Rosenfeld, and later Mills and Markham—all great wingers who were prolific scorers. And now, with the post-war years, has come Lionel Cooper another great winger who shone as brightly as any of the Australians who preceded him. Great player, great sportsman, and great citizen. Could any better words be used in description of the merits of a man who will never be forgotten at Fartown—especially as a good citizen and sportsman. May his testimonial reward him as he deserves.

I first heard of Lionel when I flew out to Australia in 1946 for the "Sunday Dispatch" and the Sydney "Sun" to cover the tour of the British Lions led by Gus Risman. Cooper had come to the front very suddenly in the post war revival of football, and his success in that season in all the big games resulted in him being named as the player of the year. No wonder several English clubs sought his signature to a contract . . . Leeds were in the race, but he decided to come to Fartown where he has won almost every honour possible, even to the captaincy of the Other Nationalities team when they finished up victorious against England, France and Wales for the Jean Galia Memorial Cup.

Lionel had the distinction of playing for his State of New South Wales in 1945 after only six games of grade football.

Let me quote what Ernie Christensen wrote of him in his R.L. Annual after Cooper was named as "The Player of the Year" in Sydney in 1946.

"Australia's outstanding player last season in matches of all types was Lionel Cooper, left winger in all three test matches and in every match played by New South Wales.

"Cooper had the honor, with Joe Jorgensen, of being the only players in the State chosen for every representative match played. To add to this performance he scored in all these matches with the exception of the third test. His tries against England in the first test and against Queensland in Brisbane came from 80 yards runs and were regarded as amongst the best of the season.

"Cooper has been popular with League followers in both New South Wales and Queensland because he has all the attributes of a class athlete. He plays hard, yet always 100 per cent clean, never questions decisions and is always ready to learn from his coaches. His team spirit is such that he will play in any position he is asked and at any time . . ."

That was an Australian opinion before Lionel came to Fartown to serve the "Claret and Gold" in the excellent manner he has done for so many seasons.

We can all endorse it.

### *An Outstanding Captain*

by BRIAN BEVAN, Warrington

To pay tribute to as great a player and sportsman as Lionel Cooper in just a few lines is a near impossibility. A strong runner with a great burst of speed, he has proved himself a potential match-winner in many matches for Huddersfield during the past eight years.

I have had the pleasure of playing with Lionel and against him, but I think the most enjoyable matches were playing together for Other Nationalities. He is an outstanding captain, and always does his best on the field of play. A notable feature is his burst in from touch to make play for the right-wing, surely the essence of a great and unselfish player.

It was a big loss to Australia when Lionel left his native country, but a great gain for the Huddersfield Club and English Rugby League football when he arrived in England. May the future of this prolific scoring winger prove long and continue successful.

My sincere best wishes, Lionel, for a record-breaking Testimonial.



## *Through the Rugby League Text Book*

by ALFRED DREWRY of the "Yorkshire Post"

In the space of eight years Lionel Cooper has scored well over 400 tries for Huddersfield Rugby League Club. An outstanding memory for his countless admirers must be Nos. 400 to 404, which were chalked-up against Wakefield Trinity earlier this season. As though to celebrate the passing of a milestone he squeezed the achievements of those eight years into a 45-minute potted demonstration of the qualities which place him securely among the best two or three wingers who have ever played the game.

It was Opportunist Cooper who scored No. 400. Hirst the Trinity full-back, was better placed than he to reach the ball when Sullivan kicked it over the line, but it was the energetic Cooper who got his hands on it when they dived simultaneously.

No. 401, four minutes later, went to Sidestepper Cooper. He had Hirst to beat again after taking Griffin's pass. Hirst set himself for a hefty bump but found himself grasping shadows as Cooper's massive frame was flicked skilfully inside him off the left foot. (Incidentally, when Cooper gives the impression of running "through" a tackle it is as often as not this miniature, perfectly controlled side-step which beats the defender. Spectators are apt to miss it).

Two minutes after Everyman Cooper had been given an easy run to the line for No. 402 ("I could have scored it myself," said the man behind me). Bulldozer Cooper put on the party piece. He was challenged four times in a 40-yard run, but he kept going in a straight line for No. 403. The challengers might as well have tried to pull the Royal Scot off the rails.

No. 404 was a repetition of No. 400 on a rather grander scale, and Trinity were left wondering how they would have fared but for this superman. Well enough to have won, perhaps.

## A CAPTAIN'S REWARD



Mrs. Edgar Meeks, wife of the Yorkshire County R.L. President, presents Lionel with the 1950 Yorkshire Challenge Cup which he and his team had just won.





**"HE FLIES THROUGH THE AIR . . . ."**

Top Photo—At Wakefield, March, 1950

Bottom Photo—At Hunslet, Y.C. Semi-Final, October, 1950

## *Magnificent Temperament*

by **RUSS PEPPERELL, Huddersfield**

I have had many privileges in my Rugby career, most of them at Fartown. But the outstanding one has been that of associating and playing alongside one of Rugby League's most forceful and brilliant stars—Lionel Cooper.

Since this burly Australian joined the H.C. & A.C. along with Johnny Hunter, he has stormed his way into the annals of Fartown and the Rugby League in the most devastating style I have ever witnessed on a rugby field. His determined attitude in the face of overwhelming opposition, the speed and skill in which he disposed of the keenest defensive cover and his ability to pull out the match winning effort when urgently required, has always been a delight and source of admiration to me as captain and coach of the team for some years.

Lionel will live in my memory long after his playing days are over and his prolific scoring feats are already firmly inscribed in the records of Fartown.

I feel particularly indebted to Lionel as he has been a major influence in many honours that came my way. I recall that great day at Wembley, 1953, when we were being sorely pressed and Pat Devery was injured and resting on the wing. I called upon Lionel to take a kick at goal which would give us the lead at that critical time. The responsibility was tremendous but his calm acceptance and ease with which he kicked that goal was a great tribute to his magnificent temperament.

Thank you Lionel for the brilliant displays you have given us, for your leadership and inspiration, and I sincerely hope your testimonial is worthy of your great name and reputation.



## *Intelligent Change of Pace*

by SIDNEY H. CROWTHER ("Autolycus" of the "Huddersfield Examiner")

It is easy to imagine that nothing today is quite as good as it used to be, and to drop into the way of thinking "they were greater in the old days." The general standards of play today may not be as good as they were, but those who are watching the Rugby League game will be able to tell their boys as they grow up that the years that followed the Second World War were rich in great wingers.

"Cooper and Bevan" they will exclaim. "Why, lad, they don't breed men like that nowadays!"

It is not easy to understand why the greatest of the wing players have come from Australia—Rosenfeld, Horder, Harris, Mills, Markham, Bevan and Cooper.

Oh, yes, there have been some fine English and Welsh wingers, but none of them quite in the same class as the great Australians, except, perhaps, for Ellaby.

Lionel Cooper came into the game comparatively late in life for a footballer, and though he had gained Test match honours in Australia when the Huddersfield club persuaded him to travel to England, he was not then as great a player as he later became. After all he had been playing the game for rather less than two years.

He did not impress in his first game as did Hunter, who settled down immediately, and some Fartown followers were a little disappointed with him.

Cooper was in those days a straight runner with a powerful hand-off, and he ran himself in gradually. He came here with a reputation but he was very willing to learn new tricks, and since those days he has found a swerve, and developed a side-step.

It was at a match at the Boulevard that he first found his swerve. I remember the occasion because I wrote in the report for the Saturday evening 'Examiner,' that he swerved round Fred Miller, and on my return to Huddersfield was taken to task by Fartowners who said in effect, "Go on with you, Cooper can't swerve!"

He did then and he has done since. That particular one was a beauty, and the Hull spectators were cross. They said that Miller ought to have had him!

Although we are bound to class Cooper among the great wing men to be seen within a life-time, he has not all the gifts we expect of a man in that position—but then no-one has!

He is not, as wingmen go, very fast. He hasn't the power of taking evasive action such as that possessed by Brian Bevan, but in a dash for the corner he can beat as many men as Bevan.

He does it differently, of course. He has a stronger physique that makes him more difficult to hold, but though some of his tries may seem to be the result of sheer power, it would be entirely wrong to put down his qualities as a wing merely to personal strength.

He has a powerful and often precisely timed hand-off, he has at times an amazing way of disposing of a tackler, and he has also a shake of his thigh from which the opponent who has gone for him bounces off like a man thrown from a horse.

None of us, I imagine, have ever seen anything like the last attribute in football before.

Besides all these gifts he also beats opponents by intelligent change of pace. How often have we seen him start a try-scoring run at a trot, drawing the opposition before he tried to beat it. He can outwit an opponent by the movement of his feet as well.

Of some wings who score many tries we can say, "He ought to with such a centre!" But without in any way trying to belittle the centres who have played alongside him, the remarkable feature of Cooper's tally of tries is that so many of them have been entirely his own.

He hasn't been a mere finisher; he's made an opening where none seemed to exist, and got through against all odds and expectations.

The memory of some of his tries will remain with many a Rugby League enthusiast—and not merely Fartowners—for years to come, and the response to the Cooper Testimonial should be worthy of the innumerable thrills he has given to the Rugby League public.



## Devastating Hand-off

by JACK BENTLEY of the "Daily Dispatch"

The Huddersfield Club have long been renowned in Rugby League circles for providing their own supporters and, indirectly, followers of the game in general, with some of the brightest stars which the Rugby code has produced in this country or abroad. They could hardly have foreseen, however, the tremendous impact Lionel Cooper would make on our game, for he has been outstanding among even the great wealth of talent from the Dominions.

When the talk turns to Rugby League wingmen one immediately thinks of Brian Bevan, a countryman of Lionel's, but just as Brian shines with the adroit step and pulsating burst of speed so Lionel excels with the devastating hand-off and the powerful run. In different ways both are brilliant, both spectacular, and certainly rank as two of the finest wingers in the history of the game.

To recall one's outstanding memory of Lionel is indeed a difficult task. He has thrilled us so many times, scored so many remarkable tries and done so many wonderful things in our Rugby League games since he came here from Australia in 1947.

But I shall never forget two of his triumphs. The first was at The Boulevard, Hull, on November 3rd, 1951. On that day Lionel was captain of Other Nationalities and they defeated France for the first time. The score was 17-14—and what a battle it was!

Arthur Clues was taken to hospital after three minutes following a clash with Poncinet, later to be sent off; Peter Henderson was off for 20 minutes of the second half with a head wound which required five stitches; Jeff Burke had his nose broken; Dave Valentine got a kick in his back; Tony Paskins and Lionel himself were limping; and Bob McMaster's face was covered in blood.

The French pulled no punches and naturally some of "The Others" were wanting to "mix it" but captain Cooper's wise counsel: "Keep on playing football," prevailed, and so did Other Nationalities.

A headline I read: "Cooper's great leadership of 12 heroes" summed it all up. Lionel scored Other Nationalities' three tries that day, the last of them after a "tightrope walk" along the touchline, during which he brushed aside three defenders, and Pat Devery kicked four goals just to make it a real Fartown "do." At the end of the match Lionel was warmly congratulated by all his team-mates for a wonderful display.

The other triumph is more recent—and in it Lionel did not score a try, which is news in itself. It was at Wembley on April 25th, 1953, when Huddersfield won the Rugby League Challenge Cup with their 15-10 defeat of St. Helens. Johnny Hunter had just been carried off and Pat Devery was limping and unable to kick goals, but Billy Banks had just made the scores 8-8 with a grand solo try and it was vital that Huddersfield should obtain the goal—and the lead.

They did, thanks to Lionel, who calmly thumped the ball straight between the posts from a non-too-easy angle. That goal, I believe, was a tonic to the Huddersfield players and from then on they never looked like losing even though St. Helens got two more points.

Lionel got another goal before the end—just to prove the first was not a fluke—a remarkable achievement by a player who had not been kicking regularly and whose only two previous goals of the season were in the third game of the term.

The toast is Lionel Cooper who has so enriched the history of British Rugby League. Good health, good luck and best wishes to him.



## *What A Winger!*

by ARTHUR HADDOCK of the "Yorkshire Evening News"

So they are giving Lionel Cooper a testimonial. It may seem trite to say one is hardly surprised, for here is a player who has given great pleasure to countless thousands. I first heard the name of Li Cooper mentioned when his name was linked with that of the Leeds club. Leeds were certainly hot on his track, and I remember the late Mr. George Ibbetson, secretary at Headingley, telling me that Cooper was "more or less fixed up."

But they didn't land their fish—instead he was snapped up by Huddersfield, and as year after year he has run in his high quota of tries, many of them of the kind one remembers for a long time, so he has made the Leeds officials more and more regret the hesitancy that caused them to miss him.

With such a player we may all have different opinions, but the games distinguished by Cooper exploits that will stand out for ever in my mind were Hunslet v. Huddersfield, at Parkside, on October 6th, 1950, and Other Nationalities v. France, at Hull, on November 3rd, 1951.

The first of these was a cup-tie, the semi-final of the Yorkshire Cup, which Huddersfield won by 20-7. In the first half Cooper got the ball and there were at least five opponents in front of him. He beat two by side-step and swerve, handed off a third, "went through" the fourth and then, with quite the most spectacular and longest dive I've ever seen, sailed past the last bewildered defender like the man on the flying trapeze. So there, in one effort, you had everything it is possible to see in an attacking winger. Throughout that game, in which he scored two tries, Cooper demanded the attention of two or three players each time he got the ball.

Just over a year later I was sitting in the stand at the Boulevard. Very early on Arthur Clues, of Leeds, had been carried off in what we came to call "the Poncinet incident." Brian Bevan was having a rough time of it on the right flank as the Frenchmen tore about

the field, and things hardly looked bright for Other Nationalities since Cooper, on the left wing, had a thigh injury. It became a grim fight indeed, but, although short-handed, Other Nationalities won through to as great a victory as one could wish to see.

How so? Cooper did it. Scorning his injury he leapt to attack three times. On each occasion a trail of would-be tacklers was left behind, and the brilliant flanker from New South Wales scored all three tries which, with four goals by Pat Devery, enabled them to gain a 17-14 success.

These, then are the two matches I vividly recall. But big Li has given me many, many more thrills than those I have recounted—and I've never yet met a Rugby League fan who has not said of him, "What a winger!"

## *Power and Thrust*

by DAVE VALENTINE, Huddersfield

It gives me great pleasure to be able to pay tribute to a great footballer. I'm sure there will never be another player like him. No doubt we shall see some great wingers don the claret and gold in the future, but will there be one with the power and thrust of my long-time friend and team-mate, Lionel?

He has scored his tries in every conceivable way. His trump card has been his terrific power and neat side-step, but he has also run from his own "25" to touch down.

Lionel has been always first to help in other players' testimonials. He has driven his car literally thousands of miles to help at various dances, benefits, etc., and deserves every success in his own benefit.

We, his team-mates, shall miss him when he retires, as no doubt the Fartown supporters will.

I salute a great player and a good friend. Good luck, Lionel!



## *Delivers the Goods*

by **EDDIE WARING**

(Sunday Pictorial Columnist and B.B.C. & Television Commentator)

During the first post war tour of Australia in 1946 I saw a number of Australian players whom I realised would do well in English football. On my return home I was asked my opinion of certain players. The Leeds club were after Lionel Cooper, a strong winger who had scored tries against the British team in both the first and second Tests.

The Huddersfield club asked me if I could help them to get a winger to follow in the wake of other famous Australian wingers like Rosenfeld, Mills, Markham, etc., who had graced the Claret and Gold jersey with distinction. I pin-pointed Cooper and the Huddersfield committee asked me if I would do the deal for them. I contacted Ray Stehr, the former Australian Test forward who had 'found' Cooper playing in Army Rugby League. One of the conditions in signing Cooper was the attachment of a full back called Johnny Hunter. Of course Huddersfield were in the dark about both Cooper and Hunter but they believed in my judgement and authorised the signing of this pair at a price well under the £2,000 mark. What a bargain!

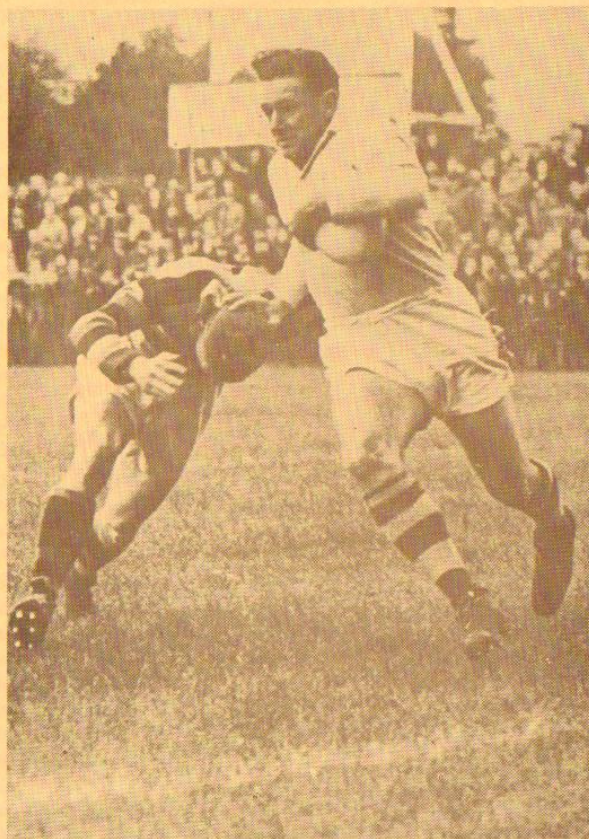
Lionel Cooper's success at Huddersfield is clearly indicated in his try-scoring records. Like his fellow Australian try-scoring machine, Brian Bevan of Warrington, many of Lionel's tries have had to be scored even when he got the ball.

Unlike Brian Bevan, Lionel Cooper looks the part with his fine physique but, like Bevan, proceeds to deliver the goods when in possession.

Many fine players have graced the famous Fartown jersey, Lionel Cooper takes his place amongst the best for excellent wing play and the provider of thrilling tries.

I feel I did Huddersfield a particularly good turn when both Cooper and Hunter were persuaded to join the Fartown Club. It also makes me feel what a pity that a ban is in existence and the likelihood of future Coopers in English football is a little remote.

## THAT TELLING HAND-OFF



An action shot taken in a game against Dewsbury at Fartown, September, 1950





#### AN AUSSIE RE-UNION

Fartown's Three Australians meet old friends among the 1952-53 "Kangaroos"



#### CONGRATULATIONS, LIONEL!

Albert Rosenfeld presents the silver statuette given by the Supporters' Club to commemorate the breaking of his own club record of 388 tries. October, 1954.

### *Lionel's Tries in All Matches since coming to England*

SEASON	League	Play-offs	Yorkshire Cup	R.L. Cup	Representative	Friendlies	Total
1946-47 .....	10	—	—	—	—	—	10
1947-48 .....	31	—	5	1	—	4	41
1948-49 .....	40	2	16	2	2	3	65
1949-50 .....	39	—	5	1	1	2	48
1950-51 .....	45	—	8	4	3	6	66
1951-52 .....	63	—	—	1	7	2	73
1952-53 .....	30	—	9	8	3	—	50
1953-54 .....	32	—	1	3	4	2	42
1954-55 .....	50	—	6	—	1	—	57
Totals .....	340	2	50	20	21	19	452

### *Principal Match Scoring Feats*

- 10 tries and 2 goals v. Keighley (h), 1951-52
- 8 tries v. Yorkshire Amateurs (Y.C.) (h), 1948-49
- 7 tries v. Yorks. Amateurs (Y.C.) at Dewsbury, 1948-49.
- 7 tries v. Hull K.R. (a), 1952-53
- 6 tries v. Doncaster (h), 1953-54.
- 5 tries v. St. Helens (h), 1951-52.
- 5 tries v. Keighley (Y.C.) (h), 1954-55.
- 5 tries v. Wakefield T. (h), 1954-55.

In addition to the above, Lionel has scored 4 and 3 tries in a match on 18 and 30 occasions respectively.



# Representative Honours

## In Australia

1945

New South Wales v. Queensland at Sydney Won 37-12  
New South Wales v. Queensland at Brisbane (3 tries)  
Won 30-19

1946

Australia v. Great Britain (1st Test) at Sydney (1 try)  
Drawn 8-8  
Australia v. Great Britain (2nd Test) at Brisbane (1 try)  
Lost 5-14  
Australia v. Great Britain (3rd Test) at Sydney  
Lost 7-20  
New South Wales v. Gt. Britain at Sydney (1 try)  
Lost 10-14  
New South Wales v. Gt. Britain at Sydney (1 try)  
Lost 7-21  
New South Wales v. Queensland at Sydney (1 try)  
Won 46-10  
New South Wales v. Queensland at Sydney (1 try)  
Won 24-6  
New South Wales v. Queensland at Brisbane (1 try)  
Won 30-14

## In England, Wales and France

1948-49

Empire Team v. France at Bordeaux (1 try) Lost 10-23  
Empire Team v. France at Albi (1 try) Won 38-12

1950-51

Rest of League v. 1950 Tourists at Wigan (1 try)  
Lost 16-23  
Australasia v. Great Britain at Leeds (1 try)  
Won 23-20

1951-52

British Empire v. New Zealand at Chelsea (3 tries)  
Won 26-2

1953-54

Combined Nations v. France at Lyons Lost 15-19

1954-55

Rugby League XIII v. Australasia at Bradford (1 try)  
Lost 12-25

## For Other Nationalities

1949-50	v. England at Workington	Won 13-7
	v. Wales at Abertillery (1 try)	Won 6-5
1950-51	v. France at Bordeaux	Lost 3-16
	v. Wales at Swansea (1 try)	Won 27-21
	v. England at Wigan	Won 35-10
1951-52	v. France at Hull (3 tries)	Won 17-14
	v. Wales at Abertillery (1 try)	Won 22-11
	v. England at Wigan	Lost 18-31
1952-53	v. England at Huddersfield (1 try)	Won 31-12
	v. France at Marseilles (1 try)	Won 29-10
	v. Wales at Warrington (1 try)	Lost 16-18
1953-54	v. Wales at Bradford (3 tries)	Won 30-5
	v. France at Bordeaux	Won 15-10
	v. England at Wigan (1 try)	Lost 22-30

Lionel shares with Dave Valentine the distinction of having been chosen for all the Other Nationalities matches in the post-war International Championship. Dave turned out on all fifteen occasions, but Lionel had to withdraw from the 1949-50 fixture against France at Marseilles owing to business reasons.

## Lionel's Fartown Playing Records

	Appearances	Goals	Tries	Points
1946-47 .....	12	...	—	10 30
1947-48 .....	43	...	1	38 116
1948-49 .....	48	...	4	63 197
1949-50 .....	42	...	—	47 141
1950-51 .....	45	...	14	58 202
1951 Blackpool Comp.	2	...	1	— 2
1951-52 .....	40	...	8	66 214
1952-53 .....	40	...	4	47 149
1953-54 .....	39	...	6	38 126
1954-55 (to April 8th)	34	...	7	56 182
	345	...	45	423 1359



## Press Cuttings

Huddersfield's Australians will long remember their baptism of mud and cold at Craven Park. The ground was inches deep in mud, and as the players became plastered with it the cold so benumbed them that they could hardly have felt their extremities . . . . It was not a day on which a wingman can shine, but every time Cooper had the ball he looked dangerous. He is difficult to hold, he is quick off the mark and he has a variety of resource.

(Hull K.R. v. Huddersfield, March 15th, 1947)

Cooper's try was his best effort since he came to the club. He went fifty yards from the touch line to the post and beat half-a-dozen opponents with speed, swerve or hand-off before finishing.

(Wakefield T. v. Huddersfield, May 24th, 1947)

Cooper gave another great display. His determined running was one of the brightest features of the game.

(Hallifax v. Huddersfield, September 23rd, 1947)

Despite close marking, Cooper gave the best exhibition of wing play I have seen in a season so far not notable for it. Besides running powerfully, the Australian showed ability to work in little room and was never afraid to try the out-of-the-ordinary move.

Cooper delighted with his forceful running, which brought four tries.

(Huddersfield v. Castleford, October 11th, 1947)

Cooper was left more or less in a state of starvation. This big Australian will get many tries—when he is given the ball!

(Huddersfield v. Dewsbury, November 8th, 1947)

Cooper sprained his ankle slightly in the first few minutes, which reduced his effectiveness, though he gave the crowd one or two thrills.

(Huddersfield v. Widnes, January 17th, 1948)

The game was a personal triumph for Cooper. He scored four tries and rounded off his day with a lovely goal from near touch—a fitting celebration for the birth of his daughter a few days previously.

(Huddersfield v. Workington T., October 16th, 1948)

Cooper could always beat Bevan, but Bevan could like-wise always pass Cooper, and as they both scored honours were even between them.

(Huddersfield v. Warrington, December 11th, 1948)

The try was Cooper's 50th of the season and his 98th for the club. It may have been noted that Cooper has gained with his experience of English football. He still makes good use of his powerful hand-off and his forceful running, but he has also developed a useful sidestep with which he frequently gets his opposing winger on the wrong leg.

(Hunslet v. Huddersfield, March 26th, 1949)

The tit-bit was the Cooper-Bevan dual. Each, in his own style, gave of his best and contributed many thrills. As wingmen they are as different as chalk and cheese, yet it would be difficult to say which is the more effective or where there is a better.

(Huddersfield v. Warrington, September 3rd, 1949)

Cooper scored two grand tries to justify his reputation with the Lancashire crowds, who hold him in great respect. Obstacles are made to be overcome, according to Lionel, and half-hearted tackling will certainly never stop him.

(Wigan v. Huddersfield, September 17th, 1949)

Cooper was neglected for half the game and had to warm himself up to his work in the second half. He got two vital tries before the end, however, to show that he will trouble any opposition provided that he is given the ball with a reasonable running chance.

(Hull v. Huddersfield, December 17th, 1949)

Cooper brushed two players out of his way to score at the corner, and a couple of minutes later he again left a trail of baffled tacklers on the ground before sending Bawden over.

(Wakefield T. v. Huddersfield, March 29th, 1950)

As to Huddersfield's determination, none provided better indication than Cooper. No need for Cooper to fly through the air each time he scored his two tries, but with the skill of a baseball runner he left the ground each time in thrilling dives for the line. But more indicative was the way he banged down the ball each time with a "that's definitely that" determination.

(Leeds v. Huddersfield, April 17th, 1950)

Cooper was the outstanding figure on the field and scored an amazing try when he seemed to be held by three or four Hunslet men.

(Hunslet v. Huddersfield, October 6th, 1950)

Cooper's ability to burst through a tackle and leave the full back floundering with a side-step inside were well demonstrated in the "hat-trick" of tries he scored in the last twenty minutes.

(Huddersfield v. Bradford N., September 15th, 1951)



Cooper has been in rare form this Easter. He had a couple of tries at Keighley, three at Fartown in the mud on Monday, and four more at Featherstone. He has never played with greater assurance than he is doing now, and the beauty of his tries at Featherstone was not, as sometimes, that they looked to be the result of the endeavours of a superman, but that they looked easy. He went through once without a finger being laid on him, running straight, with knees up, making as fine a picture of a runner in action as we may see in many a long day.

(Featherstone R. v. Huddersfield, March 27th, 1951)

Ten great tries, every one a Cooper "special." One occasionally felt sorry for the Keighley defence which was hopelessly at sea. The Australian's powerful running seemed to mesmerise them and from the first try to the last they had no answer and no counter to the determination shown by Cooper.

(Huddersfield v. Keighley, November 17th, 1951)

There was no argument when Cooper next got his hands on the ball, from a long pass by Paskins. He went in, and the eleven Other Nationalities led by three well-earned points. But the next time he had the ball there was a happening in which Poncinet was concerned. Cooper was back in a minute or two after the referee had spoken to the big French forward while the crowd roared wildly. It is a long time since I heard such a demonstration, or that which came when Cooper got his next try, one of the greatest I have ever seen. It was scored with absolutely no room in which to work.

The 16,000 spectators were lucky to see three flashes of majesty by the incomparable Cooper. All his three tries were splendidly taken: the best, for which he beat four men in 15 yards with his left foot no more than six inches inside the touchline, was sheer magic.

(Other Nationalities v. France, at Hull, November 3rd, 1951)

Cooper scored four great tries and had another, the best of the lot, disallowed. This was the old, magnificent Cooper, dauntless of the odds barring his way to the line.

(Huddersfield v. Castleford, February 7th, 1953)

McKinney and Ward combined to give the big Australian his first sight of the line, and a look usually means a try to Cooper. He thundered past White to score at the corner. Next time there were three men to beat, but Cooper got there again when any other man would have been pushed in to touch . . . The Kiwi

rally was killed by Cooper, who snapped up a dropped pass on his own "25," beat White, and held off all pursuit in a run of 75 yards.  
(Empire XIII v. New Zealand, at Chelsea, January 23rd, 1952)

Principal factor in the Huddersfield victory was Lionel Cooper. They keep saying that Cooper is "done" and that he isn't the power of old, but I doubt if the Bradford players subscribe to that view. The Australian's three tries were real match-winners, and the last two were reminiscent of his palmist days in the manner in which he beat the several defenders opposing him.

Cooper scored all three tries, all of them the result of seizing promptly on what was at the start much less than half a chance and pursuing it with resolution. None was an easy try. None, in fact, ever looked like becoming a score until in the last split second it became clear that it was, and many of us who saw his final try in the failing light from the other side of the field are likely to think that no Cooper try ever looked better. He had forty yards to go and he covered the distance taking the shortest line, leaving behind him a trail of what appeared to be corpses.

(Bradford N. v. Huddersfield, December 12th, 1953)

Cooper's powerful shoulders and hips can still brush opponents aside with ease and the telling hand-off has lost little, if any, of its power. While he has never been acclaimed a speed merchant, he has, even this season, run in tries from half-way with opponents vainly trying to catch him from behind.

(Huddersfield v. Keighley, September 11th, 1954)

It was left, as it has often been left before, to Lionel Cooper to pull the game round in his team's favour with one of his non-stop tries. He opened the Fartown scoring after fifteen minutes, to the obvious delight of his colleagues and the crowd alike, for this try took him past Rosenfeld's record.

(Huddersfield v. Hunslet, October 2nd, 1954)

Lionel Cooper's strong finishing played a great part. He had five tries in all and at least two of them were snatched against all the probabilities. Whether Cooper, Bevan or Rosenfeld is the greatest winger is a matter for an argument that could be taken along a long time. The other two wings have (or have had) their own "specials" but some of those scored by Cooper on Saturday could have been accomplished by neither of the other two.

(Huddersfield v. Wakefield T., November 27th, 1954)



# Lionel's Playing Records Against Other Clubs

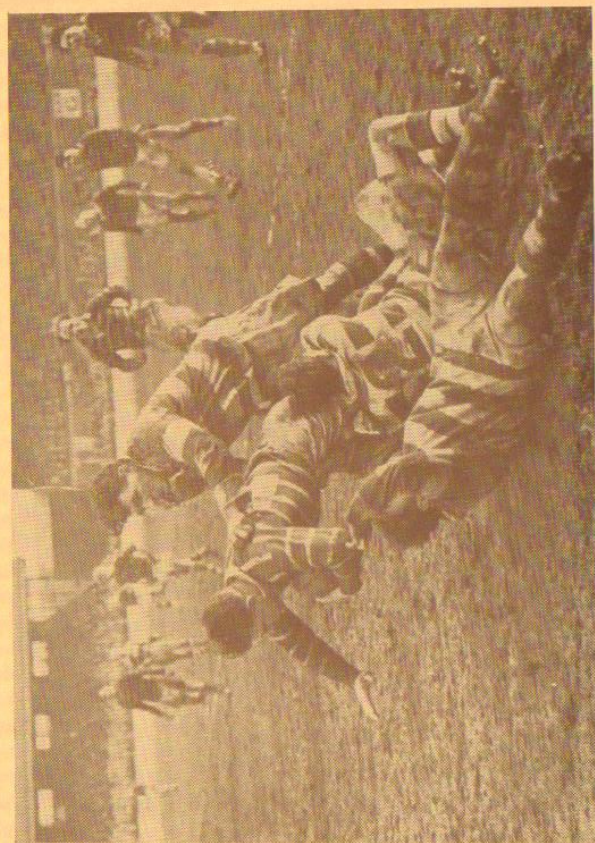
Opponents	at Fartown			Away			Total		
	App.	G.	T.	App.	G.	T.	App.	G.	T. Pts
Barrow .....	2	—	4	...	2	—	4	—	4 12
Batley .....	8	1	15	...	7	—	15	1	25 77
Belle Vue R. ....	1	—	1	...	2	—	3	—	3 9
Bradford N. ....	10	—	8	...	13	—	23	—	16 48
Bramley .....	7	3	15	...	8	4	15	7	29 101
Castleford .....	9	4	21	...	10	—	19	4	31 101
Dewsbury .....	8	—	9	...	8	1	16	1	11 35
Doncaster .....	3	—	9	...	3	—	6	—	13 39
Featherstone R. ..	6	—	12	...	6	—	12	—	22 66
Halifax .....	13	2	9	...	14	—	27	2	20 64
Hull .....	8	2	12	...	13	1	21	3	30 96
Hull K.R. ....	10	—	26	...	9	1	19	1	43 131
Hunslet .....	8	—	10	...	10	1	18	1	20 62
Keighley .....	8	3	20	...	6	1	14	4	27 89
Leeds .....	9	1	10	...	11	—	20	1	18 56
Leigh .....	5	1	6	...	6	—	11	1	9 29
Liverpool C. ....	—	—	—	...	—	—	—	—	—
Oldham .....	1	—	1	...	1	—	2	—	1 3
Rochdale H. ....	1	—	—	...	1	—	2	—	1 3
Salford .....	2	1	1	...	2	—	4	1	3 11
St. Helens .....	5	4	8	...	8	2	13	6	11 45
Swinton .....	2	5	2	...	1	1	3	6	2 18
Wakefield T. ....	11	—	12	...	9	3	20	3	19 63
Warrington .....	4	—	4	...	5	2	9	2	7 25
Whitehaven .....	2	—	5	...	2	—	4	—	6 18
Widnes .....	2	—	1	...	2	—	4	—	2 6
Wigan .....	5	—	3	...	8	—	13	—	9 27
Workington T. ...	3	1	4	...	3	—	6	1	7 23
York .....	8	—	10	...	6	—	14	—	18 54
Australia .....	2	—	—	...	—	—	2	—	—
New Zealand .....	2	—	—	...	—	—	2	—	—
Yorks. Amateurs .	1	—	8	...	1	—	2	—	15 45
Carcassonne .....	—	—	—	...	1	—	1	—	—
Italians .....	1	—	1	...	—	—	1	—	1 3

## ONE FOR THE RECORD



Lionel on his way for one of the ten tries he scored against Keighley at Fartown, November, 1951.





Sometimes three, sometimes more, but rarely did a less number manage to stop Lionel. This action shot was taken in an away 1950 Cup-tie against Belle Vue Rangers.

## My Sporting Life

by LIONEL COOPER

**A**LTHOUGH I played most of the sports under the sun way back in Australia, I feel that my sporting life really began in earnest when I joined Huddersfield. Having been asked to pinpoint my more memorable moments, I must say that I will always remember the wonderful spectacle of treading on the Wembley turf for the first time and the tremendous thrill of having obtained a winner's medal. None the less will I remember having captained the Other Nationalities' side in the year they won the International Championship, having the honour of captaining the British Empire team when playing at Stamford Bridge, Chelsea, against the New Zealand side in 1952, and the occasion when, as Captain of the Huddersfield side, we were successful in winning the Yorkshire Cup at Headingley.

My best game for the Huddersfield Club? One in particular stands out in my mind—the semi-final of the Yorkshire Cup at Hunslet in 1950 when I was successful in scoring two tries. Then, of course, I can look with a tremendous amount of pleasure on the wonderful team spirit which existed on the day that I scored 10 tries against Keighley to break the club record held by Ray Markham.

Speaking of records, and referring to more recent events, I am proud, very proud indeed, to have had the honour to be the one to break my fellow country-man, Albert Rosenfeld's record of scoring the record number of tries for the Huddersfield club. In the eight years that I have been with Huddersfield my efforts on the field and the tries that I have scored, whether they have been walk-ins or something a little more spectacular, could not have been achieved without the co-operation of the other twelve members of the side. It is a team game and as a team game the whole thirteen men are responsible in every way for the achievements of the team.

Reverting to international matches and speaking of team spirit I would like to recall what was later termed the "Battle of the Boulevard," Other Nationalities v. France at Hull. What a game that was and what spirit!



Rugby League has opened up many avenues in life for me and in some instances has been responsible for the opportunities to meet leading sportsmen in Athletics, Cricket, Golf, Soccer, Swimming and Rugby League. What a great maker of friendships sport is.

In my own game I have played against many great players, and having been asked to name a post-war team in which I would have liked to play, I would select the following:

K. GEE      J. EGAN      F. WHITCOMBE  
A. CLUES      T. FOSTER  
D. VALENTINE

G. HELME      W. H. T. DAVIES  
L. COOPER      P. DEVERY      E. WARD      B. BEVAN  
M. RYAN

Reserves—I. OWENS, M. SULLIVAN.

I mention Mick Sullivan as a reserve because in my eight years in English football I feel he is the best prospect I have seen. Speed, brains, courage, determination and, above all, a willingness to learn, in fact all the essentials of a great player.

My sporting life has indeed been full and has provided me with opportunities I would never have dreamed of; a trip to England and visits to France, together with the chance to shape my life for years to come. My success can be attributed to so many factors and my thanks are due, firstly, to the officials and players of the Huddersfield club for the encouragement which they have given me over that period; to the members of the Fartown Supporters' Club, and to all Huddersfield "died-in-the-wool" Rugby League enthusiasts for the wonderful support which you have given me, and to the Press for their encouragement.

Now Anno Domini and the middle age spread is unfortunately catching up with me, I know that my sporting life is gradually drawing to a close, and I would like to finish by saying on behalf of my wife and myself, "Thank you Huddersfield for having us, for making us welcome, and may I, in return, wish in the future years that Huddersfield will still be a household word wherever good, open Rugby League football is played."

## *The Mighty Lionel*

Who is this man called Cooper,  
This man all wingers fear,  
This man who's always dangerous  
Whenever he gets near?

This sturdy-built Australian,  
Since visiting our shores,  
Has proved to be a man of power,  
A man for making scores

Every team opposing him  
Are put into the "blue,"  
Not one of them who plays to-day  
Can this big man subdue.

"We know just how to deal with him,"  
They all say that at first,  
But he's quite difficult to stop  
When once he's on the burst.

Opposing wingmen make their vows  
That he'll not score again,  
But, somehow, it's beyond their powers,  
Their efforts seem in vain.

Half of the team can wait for him,  
He is afraid of none.  
It's nothing new to see him cross  
With three men hanging on.

If they decide to tackle him  
By going for his knees  
Just when they think they've got him taped  
He'll hand them off with ease.

But these are not the only ways  
In which he scores his tries.  
His side-step baffles many teams  
And takes them by surprise.

Who is this man called Cooper?  
Spectators well might ask,  
The man who has to keep him marked  
Receives no easy task.

BRIAN DONALDSON



Edgar Woffenden,  
Cliffe Works, Birkby

Lionel

Huddersfield  
1947—1955

Australia's  
"Player of  
The Year"  
1946



1/-