

# Victorian Tottenham Hotspur



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## Introduction

This book tells the story of Tottenham Hotspur's formation as a boy's cricket club in 1880 and the football club of 1882. It also explains the successful combination of these two amateur ideals as well as the new force of professionalism in the 1890s and the club's great victory against the odds in the 1901 FA Cup Final. It is more than a sketchy chronology, and is filled with anecdotes of continuity and change with causes and reasons for the club's development, year by year. This is because I've focused on people and how they experienced everything. Hopefully it will enable future historians to produce an even more in-depth story than this 'big picture'.

Many people want to know about the origins of Tottenham Hotspur FC and how it developed in the late Victorian era. It is this story which gives rise to the club's great success as well as its legacy which we still experience today. This unique mystery has now been unravelled in some depth for the first time.

Certain details still seem murky because of a lack of confusing or contradictory primary sources.

Furthermore, there have been, and will continue to be different ways of interpreting them. I've selected details and issues, examples to explain themes and to illustrate general developments. For many readers photographs bring people, teams and places to life, even when Victorian photographs lack modern quality.

We see how football developed into the national sport as a result of the industrial revolution when the lower classes preferred football to cricket and other middle class sports. In the late Victorian era, football developed into a business when salaries created an imperative to win. This became part of many clubs' business acumen, replacing mid and late Victorian middle class Corinthian values.

I believe these very early years of Hotspur cricket and football clubs had the personalities which set the values and traditions for the rest of the century: some of which can even be glimpsed today, well into the twenty-first century. These pioneering personalities became the core of an organic group



Tottenham Hotspur supposedly wearing blue, not white shirts.  
From my collection.