

## THE STORY OF THE TEST CRICKET "ASHES"

The Test "Ashes", for which Australia and England battle, are of course, mythical in the sense of being a trophy. The term originated after the Test match at Kensington Oval, in 1882, when England, needing only 85 runs to win the game, were routed for only 77 runs.

Disappointed at the surprise result, an English newspaper printed a mock obituary notice, which was written by the son of the editor of London "Punch":

"In remembrance of English cricket which died at the Oval on August 29th, 1882. Deeply lamented by a large circle of sorrowing friends and acquaintances. The body will be cremated, and the ashes taken to Australia".

Soon afterwards, Ivo Bligh, at 23 years the youngest Test captain, led an English team to Australia and, after the second match of the tour at Melbourne, a number of Melbourne women presented him with an urn containing the ashes of the stumps which had been used in the Melbourne match.

Many years later, on his death, the urn passed to the Marylebone Cricket Club, and these are the "Ashes" we speak of. However, they will remain at Lords cricket pavilion whatever the result of Australian and English Tests.

The "Ashes" were not all that Ivo Bligh, later to become Lord Darnley, was presented with in Melbourne. One of the ladies who made the presentation later became Lady Darnley.

"I'm delighted that that obituary appeared in our English paper", he said, after the wedding. "Look at the treasure it has brought me". The nobleman was certainly a ~~XXXXX~~ likeable character.