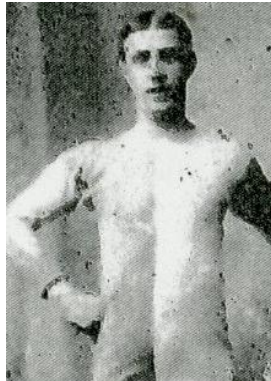


**Blackburn Rovers Player Pen-Pictures From 1880's to 1990's**  
**Rovers Players During the 1900s**

**WALTER ANTHONY**



Born in Nottingham 1879 he joined the Rovers as one of three players from Brighton and Hove Albion in 1908 after playing 80 games for them. He was an outside-left who quickly established himself in the team. He was a fast and tricky winger with a powerful shot. Walter played a total of 163 matches for the Rovers scoring 14 goals. He left the Rovers in 1914 to join Stalybridge Celtic.

**JIMMY ASHCROFT**



Born in Liverpool 1878 he joined the Rovers in 1908 from Woolwich Arsenal for £308 where he had won several England caps. He was a goalkeeper who made 129 appearances for the Rovers including 15 in the F.A. Cup, a very consistent player who coped well with shots and in the air. Jimmy left the Rovers in 1913 to join Tranmere Rovers. He was a Rovers and England goalkeeper. He was a member of Rovers First Division Championship side (1911/12).

### **WILLIAM BALL**



Born in West Derby, Liverpool 1876 he joined the Rovers in 1897 but left to join Rock Ferry in 1898 before re-joining the Rovers in 1901 before leaving to join Newton Heath in 1902. He made 20 appearances for the Rovers in total as a right-half as a hard-working defender but failed to re-establish a place in the team after returning.

### **JACK BIRCHALL**



Born in Prescott he joined the Rovers in 1903 from Blackpool. He made 41 appearances for the club scoring three goals as a left-half. Jack left the Rovers in 1907 when he was released. A good tackler and accurate passer he lost his place as left-half but later gained his first team place as centre-half. However, in 1905 he broke his leg and lost his first team place.

### **ARTHUR BLACKBURN**



Born in Blackburn 1877 he first joined Mellor and then Wellingborough in 1898 before joining the Rovers in 1899 but and left in 1900 to join Southampton but returned in 1901 before retiring in 1902. In total he only made four league appearances for the club. A full-back who failed to gain many first team games unlike his brother Fred. Later in life he became a coach in Holland.

### **ADAM BOWMAN**



Born in Forfar, Scotland he joined the Rovers from Everton in 1903. A forward he made a total of 104 appearances for the club scoring 43 goals. He left the club in 1907 to join Brentford, then Leeds in 1908, Portsmouth 1909 and Accrington Stanley 1912. He started as a bustling centre-forward but had the most success as an inside left and became the clubs leading goal scorer in 1904/05 1905/06.

### **BILLY BRADSHAW**



Born in Padiham 1884 Billy came from a well-known footballing family with other brothers playing for Burnley, Accrington Stanley, Blackpool and the Rovers. His first club was Padiham, and he joined the Rovers in 1903 from Accrington Stanley in Lancashire Combination and made his first appearance at Wolverhampton and impressed as left-half, a position he re-claimed and occasionally played outside-left. He had good positional skills and could move forward well. In total he made 425 appearances for the club scoring 39 goals. Billy made four international appearances and was a penalty specialist for his club. He left the club to join Rochdale in 1920 after having a benefit match in 1914 for £500.

### **WILLIE BRYANT**



Born in Rotherham 1874 he first joined Rotherham town in 1894, Newton Heath in 1896 and then joined the club in 1900 from Newton Heath. He was an outside-right who made 25 league appearances scoring eight goals. In play, he was a tricky winger but struggled to make the first team due to the form of the first team winger, so he was tried at inside forward and half-back. Willie left the Rovers in 1902 when he was released.

### **JOHN CAMERON**



Born in Kirkwood, Lanarkshire, Scotland he joined the Rovers in 1904 from Scottish club St Mirren, which he had joined in 1899. He was a left full-back who made a total of 67 appearances for the Rovers before he left to join Chelsea in 1907. He partnered Bob Crompton at fullback ever present in the 1904/05 season but replaced by Cowell. In play a quick hard tackling player who did not stay long in the reserves when he was displaced from the first team.

### **MILES CHADWICK**



Born in Blackburn he first joined a local youth league club and then joined the Rovers from Darwen in 1905. He was an outside-left who made 52 appearances for the club scoring seven goals. Miles left the Rovers in 1908 to return to Darwen. As a player, he was a speedy winger who used his pace to outrun defenders and make dangerous crosses. In stature, he was small and appeared mostly in the 1905/06 season.

### **LAWRENCE COTTON**



On 28<sup>th</sup> of March 1905 he was elevated to club chairman and helped turn round the club's fortunes. A local businessman in the textile trade he used his business brain and financial muscle to rejuvenate the ailing club. He started by upgrading the club's facilities, covered the Darwen End and oversaw the building of the Nuttall Street grandstand, which opened in 1907. He continued the upgrade until the ground could hold 40,000. Lawrence also ensured that money was available to strengthen the team including signing Billy Davies, Wattie Aitkenhead, Arthur Cowell and Eddie Latheron. In time, this led to the club becoming League Champions and led to increased attendance.

### **ARTHUR COWELL**



Born in Blackburn 1886, joined the Rovers in 1905 from Nelson whom he had joined in 1904. He made his debut at Derby County and went on to make 279 league appearances and 25 in the F.A. Cup. Arthur was one of the Rovers best left full-back forming a superb fullback formation with Bob Crompton. A speedy fullback and an excellent tackler despite his small size who distributed the ball well. He was a member of the team that won two First Division titles and two F.A. Cup Semi Finals and gained one international cap and on leaving the club joined its coaching staff.

### **BOB CROMPTON**



Born in Blackburn in 1879 and joined the Rovers from Blackburn Trinity in 1896 making his debut in the league against Stoke in 1897. In total the right back made 608 appearances for the club scoring 14 goals. At the Rovers he won two Division One Championships in 1912 and 1914 and 41 England caps. Bob was the first professional player to captain England. A dominant figure at Ewood he was an excellent tactician, leader and resolute defender with a powerful build and great physical strength. He retired from playing in 1920. He became Bournemouth manager in 1935 but eight months later returned to manage Rovers when it was struggling. Later in life in 1938 he became manager of the club and had been a director from 1928-1931.



### **ELLIS CROMPTON**



Born in Ramsbottom 1886 he joined the Rovers in 1905. As a forward he only made 36 appearances for the club scoring 20 goals after his debut game in 1906. At times he found it difficult to get into the team but his form persuaded Tottenham to sign him when he left the club in 1910.

### **BILLY DAVIES**



Born in Wrexham, Wales 1882 he joined the Rovers in 1905 from Wrexham F.C. as a centre-forward he made 143 appearances for the club with 11 in the F.A. Cup scoring a total of 70 goals and he also played for Wales, capped nine times. He played in the 1911/12 Championship winning team and was a natural goal scorer who used his pace well and was a power player. Tended to hang around the penalty box for goal opportunities. On leaving the Rovers in 1913 he retired from the game, and he went into business with Bob Crompton in a motor engineering company.

### **ARTHUR DAWSON**



Born in Rishton, Blackburn 1882, Arthur signed for the Rovers in 1903 from Blackburn Crosshill. He made a total of only 18 appearances as an outside-left. He left the club in 1907 for Nelson. He has the skill to cross the ball accurately whilst on the run as a speedy winger but struggled to make this place his own. After playing with Nelson, he moved to Burnley in 1908.

### **JACK DEWHURST**

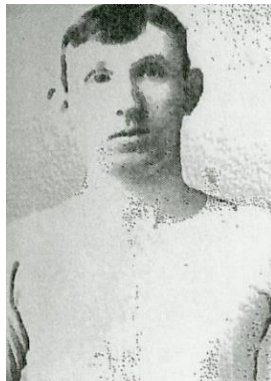


Born in Padiham 1877 he first joined Padiham in 1898 and then joined the Rovers from Darwen in 1899. As a centre-forward he made 182 appearances scoring 47 goals and was a regular centre forward in the early 1900s but was not a great goal scorer. His best season was 1901/02.

Could also play centre-half when required. When he asked for a benefit match and the maximum wage, he was allowed to leave in 1905 joining Brentford but very shortly after arriving left to return to Lancashire with Bury F.C.



### **BOB ELLIS**



Born in Parkhead, Glasgow he first joined Vale of Leven then Workington and joined the Rovers from Workington in 1908. He was an inside-forward and scored on his debut match of the 1908/09 season against Bristol City. A tricky forward he was good with his head and hard working. However, it was his only senior appearance for the club before returning to Workington in 1910.

### **BOB EVANS**



Born in Wrexham, Wales in 1881 he joined the club from Wrexham F.C. which he had joined in 1898 and joined the Rovers in 1903 for £150. As a goalkeeper he made 133 appearances for the club with nine in the F.A. Cup. An agile keeper with confidence to stop all types of shot and dominated the area. In total he gained five Welsh caps, one whilst at Ewood. A serious knee injury led to him leaving the club. He left the club in 1908 to join Croydon Common.

### **BILLY GARBUTT**



Billy was born in Stockport and first played for Reading and then moved to Woolwich Arsenal. He joined the Rovers in 1908 as a right winger and proved to be a very good dribbler who could make accurate crosses. In 1910 he gained a place in the England team against Scotland playing in an Inter League game at Ewood. He made 85 appearances for the club scoring 10 goals and stayed with the Rovers till 1912 when he retired and went to Italy as a football coach for Genoa in 1913. Later he served in the Great war with the British army before returning to Italy then returned to England in 1939 and joined the army again but was then rejected due to his age.

### **BILLY GATE**



Born in Chorlton, Manchester he first joined Newton Heath in 1899, then Darwen in 1900 before joining the Rovers in 1901. As an outside-left he only made four senior appearances for the club scoring just one goal as he was the understudy to Fred Blackburn which kept him in the reserves. He left the Rovers in 1905 to rejoin Darwen F.C.

### **ALLAN HARDY**

Alan was born in Ilkeston in 1873 and first joined Ilkeston F.C. in 1898 then Wigan County in 1899 and then left to join the Rovers in 1900. He was signed by the Rovers as he had proved himself to be one of the best full backs in the Lancashire Combination. In total he made 42 appearances for the club as a left-back and retired from football after he left the Rovers in 1903 following a bad leg injury.

#### **ROBERT HAWORTH**



Robert was born in Blackburn in 1879 and first joined Christ Church playing in a local league before joining Darwen F.C. He left Darwen to join the Rovers in 1897 and established himself as a half-back but also played centre-half for the club. As a defender he had the skill to play out of trouble and could accurately find his attackers with accurate passes. His versatility also allowed him to cover full-back positions when required and in total he made 129 appearances for the club scoring five goals. Robert left the Rovers in 1904 after losing his first team place to join Fulham.

#### **B. HOLMES**



He was the club's trainer in the 1905/6 season.

#### **KELLY HOULKER**



Kelly was born in Blackburn in 1872 and first joined Blackburn Hornets then Oswaldtwistle Rovers then Cob Wall (Blackburn) and finally Park Road Blackburn from whom he joined the

Rovers in 1894. Although small in stature he was an athletic half-back who was versatile enough to play all three half-back positions but was best at left-half. He had the ability to read the game well and always gave of his best. Kelly had two spells with the Rovers first from 1894 to 1902 when he left to join Portsmouth returning in 1906 before retiring in 1907 then later joined Colne in 1909. In total he made 160 appearances for the Rovers scoring 1 goal. As an England International he was paid just 1s 6d (7½p) for his first club game in 1894.

#### **ARCHIE KYLE**



Born in Scotland he joined the club from Glasgow Rangers in 1908. He was an inside-left forward who made 38 senior appearances scoring 8 goals. He was a skilful player who was a good dribbler and had an effective shot and formed a good partnership with Billy Davies at centre-forward.

Archie left the club in 1909 and returned to Scotland to play for Bo'ness then Clyde in 1910 and St Mirren in 1911.

#### **EDDIE LATHERON**



Born in Grangetown, Middlesbrough 1887 he joined the Rovers in 1906 from Grangetown F C. for £25. His debut match was against Middlesbrough. He played as an inside right although sometimes as inside left and even though he was only five foot five inches tall he had the speed of thought and quickness of eye that enabled him to open up defences. An accomplished goal scorer and gifted playmaker, although not tall he was good in the air and possessed a good touch on the ball. who was capped twice for England and was a member of Rovers Division One Championship sides 1911/12 and 1913/14. In total he made 303 senior appearances and scored 120 goals. Eddie played his last game for the Rovers in March 1917, five days later he entered the war and seven months later was killed in WWI, he was only 28 when he died.

### **TOM McALLISTER**



Born in Govan, Scotland he first joined Castleford Town and then joined the Rovers in 1904. however he made only two senior appearances in the two years he was at the club. He left in 1906 to join Brentford where he gained more success eventually ending as left-half. An inside left of ability but mainly a utility player as he was kept out of the first team due to First Team players form and discipline problems.

### **SAM McCLURE**



Born in Workington in 1878 he joined the Rovers in 1899 from Black Diamonds, a local side in Workington. He made 152 senior appearances for the club scoring 12 goals as a centre-half back. A natural athlete who first played as a goalkeeper. As a utility player at the Rovers, he made the centre-half position his own. He was a powerful, aggressive player who was popular with the fans. Sam left the club in 1906 and died the same year, from an infection on his brain.



### **JOHN McDONALD**



Born in Ayr, Scotland in 1882 he joined the club from Ayr F.C. in 1903 for a fee of £90. However, he only made one senior appearance and left the club in 1905 to join Leeds City. Although he gained success at Ayr F.C. in the Scottish Second Division, he didn't make progress at his position of right-back. He was both tall and strong being mostly understudy to Bob Crompton. He later gained more success with Leeds City and Grimsby Town.

### **BILLY McIVER**



Born in Whittle-le-Woods in 1877 he first joined Whittle-le-Woods F C. then Darwen and then the Rovers in 1901. As a goalkeeper he made 154 appearances for the Rovers and was a Scottish international. A very small goalkeeper who proved very reliable over seven seasons and coped well with high and low shots. However eventually his lack of height led to his being replaced with Jim Ashcroft, so he left the club in 1908 for Brentford. After leaving he continued to 1916/17 playing for West Hartlepool, Stockport County, Darwen, Nelson and as a Rovers guest played during the First World War.



### **RICHARD MIDDLETON**



Was the secretary for the Rovers in 1905/06, he was first appointed to the Rovers in 1903 after jobs at Rotherham United, Darwen and Blackpool.

### **JIMMY MOIR**



Born in Box Hill, Dunbartonshire, Scotland in 1880 he joined the Rovers in 1900 from Celtic who he had joined in 1898. In total he made 80 senior appearances for the club over two separate spells as a right-half. An unknown youth when he first joined the Rovers and swiftly moved up into the first team. During his second spell he wasn't as successful. He left the club after one year to rejoin Celtic and returned to the Rovers in 1903 and was released by the club in 1906.

### **ALBERT MONKS**



Born in 1879, Albert joined the Rovers in 1902 from Everton. He first played in Glossop in 1899 then Stalybridge Rovers and Bury in 1901 joining Everton in 1902. Skilful on the ball with a powerful shot but failed to make the First Team at Everton. Supported Rovers other

forwards well. He made 27 senior appearances for the club scoring five goals as an inside-right. In 1904 he left the club to join Nelson and later Swindon Town.

#### **HUGH MORGAN**



Born in Shott, Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1869 he joined the Rovers in 1900 from Liverpool. He previously played for St. Mirren in 1896 and Liverpool in March 1898.

A small dapper Scotsman he was skilled on the ball with tricky footwork, hardworking and always looking for a goal. As an inside-left he scored 18 goals in 79 senior appearances. He left the club in 1903 when he was released and retired from the game.

#### **FRED PENTLAND**



Born in Wolverhampton in 1883. He first played in youth teams before joining Birmingham in 1900, then Blackpool in 1903, then onto the Rovers. A speedy skilful player after scoring goals for Blackpool had a good first season then lost his place then returned as centre-forward and outside-right and a goal scorer. He made 52 senior appearances for the Rovers scoring nine goals as an attacker. Fred left the club in 1906 to join Brentford then Queens Park Rangers 1907, Middlesbrough 1908, Halifax Player-Manager 1913, then Stoke and coached in Germany, France, Spain, Brentford 1936/37 and Barrow manager 1938/39

### **GEORGE ROBERTSON**



Born in Glasgow in 1893 he joined the Rovers from the Scottish club Clyde in 1902 having played for a short time at Rangers. However, he failed to make much of an impression resulting in only 14 senior appearances and one goal. A left-back who lacked experience and after nine games in the First Team lost his place. As a result, he left the club in 1903 to return to Clyde, later moving on to Birmingham in 1910.

### **GEORGE SMITH**



Born in Preston in 1879 he first joined Leyland then Preston North End in 1899, Aston Villa in 1901 and New Brompton in 1902. He joined the Rovers in 1903. First played at inside-right for the Rovers but failed to make progress, later switching to right-half and proved a skilful defender. However, he was in and out of the first team and made 61 senior appearances scoring four goals. He left the club in 1906 to join Plymouth Argyle then moved to Southampton in 1907.

### **PETER SOMERS**



Born in Avondale, Scotland he first played for Motherwell then Hamilton Athletic in 1897 before joining Celtic in the same year. He then joined the Rovers from them on a loan deal in 1900, then signed for £200. As an inside-right attacker he made 78 senior appearances scoring 13 goals. In 1902 he returned to play at Celtic where he helped them win six Scottish Championships before he returned to Hamilton Academicals and later became a director.

### **JOSEPH WALMSLEY**



A native of Blackburn and manager of a Blackburn cotton mill he became the club secretary in 1896. In his younger days he had played football for Blackburn Olympic and became an excellent judge of football. In 1903 he had the license to run the Florence Hotel following on from Bob Crompton's father. He was an able administrator, however, in 1903 a conspiracy theory was put forward by the Lancashire clubs that he had conspired with results to prevent the Rovers being relegated. An official enquiry found no evidence of collusion but suspended Joseph from football and he and people who knew him continued to plead his innocence. He insisted any remarks he had made had been of a jocular nature. In 1903 Robert Middleton replaced him.

### **ARNOLD WHITTAKER**



Born in Blackburn in 1880 he joined the Rovers from Accrington Stanley in 1899 having played for Queens Park, Blackburn. In the early days he was a full-back, but Accrington moved him to the wing as he was very speedy. Fastest player at Ewood he had good dribbling skills and a powerful shot and scored a hat-trick on his debut for Rovers against Preston North End. He was an outside-right and made 265 appearances scoring 57 goals. He left the club in 1908 after losing his place following an injury to re-join Accrington Stanley.

### **WALT WHITTAKER**



Born in Manchester in 1878 he first joined the local Manchester leagues, then Buxton before joining Newton Heath in 1895 and Grimsby Town in 1897 before joining Reading in 1898. He left to join the Rovers in 1900. As a goalkeeper he made 53 senior appearances for the Rovers. Not always consistent but capable of making great saves. He struggled with the local climate and bouts of ill health but kept his first team place. He left the club in 1901 to join Grimsby Town for £150.



### **JOE WILSON**



Born in West Houghton, Wigan in 1884 he first played for Wigan County then Darwen and then joined the Rovers in 1904. He was signed as cover for the centre-half position moving up to the first Team in 1906 but lost out in the next season. A tall player who controlled the central area he made 43 senior appearances for the club scoring four goals as a centre-half. Joe left the Rovers in 1908 to join Brighton and Hove Albion then moved to Millwall in 1909, Rochdale 1910, Fleetwood player-coach in 1921.

### **SAM WOLSTENHOLME**



Born in Little Leaver, Bolton in 1878 he first joined Farnworth in 1897 and then Everton in the same year. He joined the Rovers in 1904 from Everton. Sam was a right-half who made 105 senior appearances and scored 2 goals. He left the club in 1908 to join Norwich City and later Chester in 1913. While at the Rovers he got two England caps in 1905. On arrival he moved straight into the First Team as right-half due to experience and reputation although not a strong tackler he also played right-back and centre half.