

No.18 Charles Arthur Crossley

Charlie Crossley was another Hednesford Town gem who, having missed out on the five years of World War One, still managed eight years in the Football League.

He was born in Short Heath, 17 December 1891, debuting for us against Birmingham Trams on Monday 2 September 1912, the same day as Jack Nicholls and Tosh Griffiths. We ended that season as runners-up to Stafford Rangers; they were the only team to take a point from the Cross Keys and the first team, the following season, to win at the Keys for two years.



Walsall, always on the look-out for a bargain to make a few quid, snapped-up inside-forward Charlie in 1913 and immediately shipped him out to First Division Sunderland in February 1914, where he made his debut at home against Tottenham Hotspur three weeks later. He scored eight goals in 19 games before the League shut down.

During the First World War, Charlie was a stoker on a submarine destroyer and played as a guest for Tottenham Hotspur, Clapton Orient and Huddersfield Town; He also guested for Hednesford Collieries, one of the strongest teams in the Midlands Wartime league.

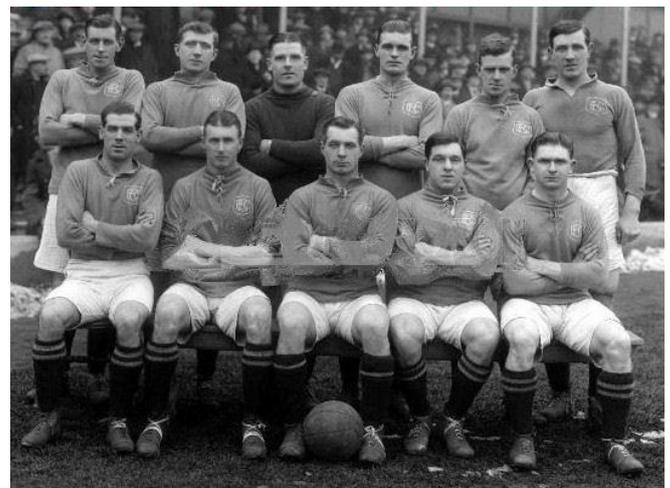
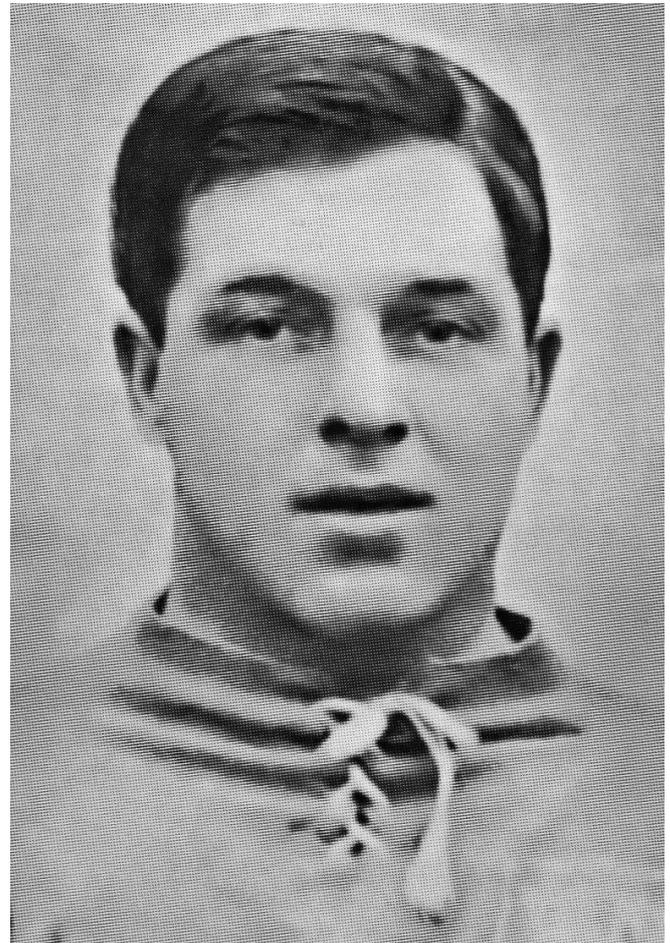
In February 1920, in an England trial, he represented the North versus England, but nothing came of it. Later that year he moved to Goodison making his debut 28 August 1920; heading Everton's scoring list in his first season.

Charlie Crossley was a short, thickset man whose broad shoulders in his 5'7"12st.2lbs. frame, could make his presence felt. He belonged to the foraging type with an eye for the scoring chance and was a player of recognised quality.

By June 1922, Charlie was at Second Division West Ham where he played in exactly one third of the Hammers' 1921-23 promotion-winning programme but did not make their Wembley cup final side that season and in July 1923 moved to Third Division Swindon Town for a two-year spell.

Outside the Football League, Charlie represented Ebbw Vale as player-manager in September 1925. He

died in Wolverhampton, 29 April 1965, having played 161 League and FA Cup games, scoring 52 goals.



The 1920-21 Everton team. Charlie is seated second from the right.

From the Dave Shaw archive.

