

No.44 Frank James Corbett

Frank Corbett was born in Willenhall, 2 August 1903, playing his schoolboy football for Willenhall Council School. He joined Hednesford Prims in 1920, signing for Willenhall Swifts and then his first senior club (Hednesford Town) in August 1924. Frank's father, Billy, made the same move fifteen years earlier to become a member of our 1909-10 Championship winning team.

West Bromwich Albion bound, Bob Finch, was Hednesford's right full-back at that time and with Bob's departure in 1925, Frank made the position his. But for one season only.

In June 1926, First Division Albion paid £50 to take him to the Hawthorns where he would stay for the next five years as defensive cover for George Shaw, Bert Trentham and former 'Pitman' Bob Finch.

Frank made his debut for Albion, partnering Bob Finch, at Liverpool, 20 November 1926, in a 2-1 defeat. However, he held his position for the following Saturday, at home to Arsenal. The 3-1 defeat would be a disappointment to him.

It was 19 April before he had another chance, in a 0-0 draw at Blackburn Rovers. Four days later Frank eventually got a win under his belt with a 2-1 victory at home to Sheffield Wednesday.

However, the Baggies' inconsistent form relegated them to Division Two and Frank managed only one drawn game against Hull City in season 1927-28. With three appearances in 1928-29 and four in 1929-30, the writing was on the wall and he moved to Third Division Coventry City in May 1931. Twelve months earlier Frank, still living at Hill Top, had married local girl, Maud Richardson, of Green Heath; Albion's full-back, Bert Trentham, filled the position of Best man.

Frank played only seven senior games for Coventry, signing for non-league Burton Town before returning to Hednesford Town in July 1933. He had played 19 first-team Football League and FA Cup games and well over 200 second-team matches with Albion, 152 of them in the Central League, helping the reserves to win the championship in 1926-27.

He retired in May 1938 going on to employment with the Coal Board. Frank died of Leukaemia, 19 August 1956, at Walsall General Hospital, aged 52.



Frank, with his Albion colleagues, sitting third from the right in the third row. Bob Finch is sitting at the end of the row.



Frank pictured at 'The Keys' in 1924.