

No.45 Charles Patrick Wood

Throughout his life, Charlie Wood put in several stints at local coal pits and managed two sporting careers. He was born in Rugeley, 2 June 1904, spending his childhood in Elmore Lane, Rugeley, dreaming of a future that he hoped would include at least one of his sporting interests: football and boxing.

His football career began in 1920, at the closure of World One, with Trent Valley Rangers and progressed through other local teams: Rugeley Villa and Brereton Social before arriving at Hednesford Town in the summer of 1925. Charlie (nicknamed 'Woggan') made his first appearance for us, 4 September, and banged in 26 goals, from inside-left, in his only season at the Cross Keys ground.

Those goals, along with his performances throughout the season, earned him a junior international cap, against Scotland 16 April 1926. Charlie occupied his customary inside-left position and scored one of the goals in a 5-1 victory on the Wolves' Molineux ground: junior international games pitched players who's clubs were affiliated to Birmingham County FA against players from the equivalent associations of Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

At this time, Charlie was also participating in his second sporting love where, fighting in the welterweight division, he toured the midland's boxing booths earning cash to supplement his miner's income. However, this was about to end.

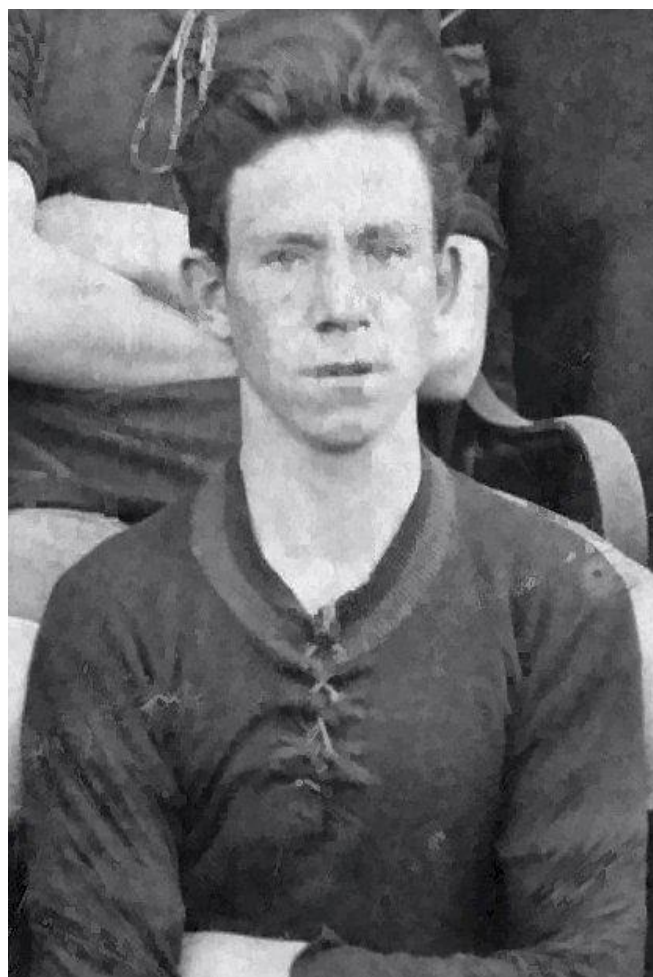
Attracted by his goal-scoring talent, second division Portsmouth signed him, 9 April 1927, one week before his junior international game, for a fee of £250. Nevertheless, frustrated not to be given a chance in the First Division club's senior team, he requested and was given a transfer, heading back north to Non-League Burton, 7 January 1928.

At the end of the 1927-28 season, he decided he had had enough of the professional side of the game as he returned to Rugeley and renewed his association with Brereton FC.

Charlie lost his wife in the early 1940s, leaving him single-handedly to raise their four sons and three daughters. The sons inherited the boxing gene as, in one way or another, they all became involved in the sport: His eldest son, Jack, became an excellent amateur winning, amongst others, the National Coal Board's Middleweight Championship, he also represented England at that division, before retiring to become a coach; Jack's brother, Ron, was a Territorial Army Champion.

They were all involved with Rugeley's Lea Hall Boxing Club and responsible for giving many young lads a start in the game.

Charlie died 15 September 1981.



Charlie with Trent Valley Rangers and Brereton Social in 1922/23.

From the Dave Shaw archive.