

## No.56 William Evans

Born in Cannock in 1914, Bill progressed to Hednesford Town via the Cannock Chase Colliery team in 1933 and transferred to Walsall in 1934.

Normally a centre-forward or inside-left, Walsall played Bill on the left-wing during his first season with them, but he still managed two goals from his eight senior games in the same Third Division North team as his former Hednesford Town colleague, full-back Jack Shelton, who had moved to Fellows Park around the same time.

Bill was given the top striker's number 9 shirt for the 1935-36 season and responded with 24 goals from 34 games, including five against Mansfield. Thus, he entered the record books as one of only two Walsall players ever to score five goals in a League game.

Walsall did not have the collective talent, or the finances to obtain that required talent, over the next three years and had to rely on re-election at the end of 1937-38 and 1938-39 to survive in League football. Consequently, it was no surprise when Tranmere Rovers, also operating in the Third Division, obtained Bill's services in 1939.

Unfortunately, he managed only three outings before World War II intervened to end Bill's senior career and put League Football on hold for the next six years. He had played 137 senior games and scored 63 goals.

However, his football days were far from over as he was one of the many players who represented Hednesford Town in the Midland Wartime league during the hostilities, being a member of our team which shared the Wednesbury Charity Cup with a 2-2 draw against Darlaston in the final.



Bill is sitting fourth from the left; Jack Shelton is standing second from the left.