

## THE BLUES AND THE REDS

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The thought that Liverpool is now more famous for its connection with football than for almost anything else is bound to give rise to somewhat mixed feelings. It is perhaps surprising therefore to discover that football was a little late in coming to Merseyside. The Lancashire Football Association had been formed by thirty clubs in 1878 but most of them were easterners from the cotton districts. The Liverpool and District Football Association did not appear until 1882. Similarly Birmingham newspapers mentioned 811 local football matches in 1879-80; Liverpool newspapers noticed only two in the same period.<sup>1</sup> It is not entirely clear why there should be this time lag. One factor might be the popularity of rugby among middle-class young men in Liverpool. The spread of football to working men in Liverpool may have been inhibited by the city's unique industrial structure in which manufacturing played a relatively minor part. Capital and enterprise had long been concentrated in port services and transport, providing a range of usually unskilled and casual employment with its accompanying characteristics of low pay and few and feeble labour organisations. The five and a half day week, with its free Saturday afternoon, did not benefit most Liverpool workers until well into the 1880s and beyond.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand Liverpool did have more than its fair share of clerks, 19,000 in 1872, and, according to the Census of 1911, 504 for every 10,000 males above the age of 10 employed compared with 264 in England and Wales as a whole. As a group clerks appear to have been keen games players and club formers. It is almost certain that several of the young men who began to kick a ball about in Stanley

Park in the mid 1870s were employed in the expanding administrations of the commercial sector. An interesting description of this early form of the game was provided thirty years later by a participant who, as The O'Whatmore, for many years wrote the 'Football Notes' column in the *Porcupine*. The churches were involved from the 'first day that a real game took place between sides which were picked on the ground', as 'amongst the selected were the Revs. W.E. Jackson and R.H. Marsh. . . Some of the players had donned special garments, but the majority wore their ordinary clothes, and piled their superfluous garments by the side of the goal-posts, enjoining the man in goal to keep his eye on them'. The standard of play was obviously variable. 'Of combination and dribbling nothing was known. The idea was to kick the ball as far as possible, and run after it in the hope of getting it again. It was sometimes difficult to decide whether a goal had been scored. There was no net and no crossbar - a thin band of tape doing duty for the latter.

Matches took place but infrequently, and there were not many people to look on. . . . In those days we clubbed together to buy the necessary materials. We put down the sockets for the goalposts in the park, and before and after the match carried those goalposts from the ground. Football cost money even in those days - and the players had to find it

St. Mary's, St Peter's, St. Benedict's and St Domingo's, among other church teams were playing matches on Stanley park during 1878/79. St. Domingo's Methodist Church was a recent foundation, having been opened in 1870 following the closure of three city centre churches.<sup>6</sup> A cricket club was formed some time during the 1870s and a football team in 1878. In 1879 St. Domingo's changed their name to Everton. At the same time they decided to locate the headquarters of the club at the Queen's Head public house in Everton village and mine host, for a time, acted as Secretary. These changes of name and headquarters probably reflected a wish to become independent of the church and recruit playing members from a wider constituency, a constituency clearly becoming available. Two football clubs in Liverpool in 1878 had become 151 by 1886, by which time Bootle, Everton, Liverpool Caledonians and Liverpool Ramblers occupied the premier places in the city.<sup>7</sup>

The eighties, then, were a decade when football really took a grip on the popular imagination and nowhere was

this expansion of fortune more astonishing than in the Everton club. By 1891 the team had become champions of the Football League in its third season and had appointed a permanent salaried Secretary to look after the day to day affairs. Since 1884 it had been playing on an enclosed ground fronting Anfield Road and gate receipts had increased ten times from about £600 to £6,000.<sup>8</sup> And of course by then, the club was paying its players. Even before professionalism it was attempting to corner the best local talent and had a reputation for being able to persuade the better players from other local clubs to throw in their lot with Everton. When professionalism was reluctantly accepted by the Football Association in 1885, Everton had wasted no time in signing their first paid players. A halfpenny Saturday evening football paper, the *Football Echo*, had devoted a good deal of space to the club's doings since the autumn of 1889.

But if everything on the field was lovely, everything off it was not and one man had much to do with both states of affairs. That man was John Houlding. Houlding was a real rags to riches figure. Beginning as an errand boy in a custom house he progressed *via* cow-keeper's assistant to brewery foreman before setting up on his own as brewer of Houldings Sparkling Alcs. He owned several public houses including the Sandon Hotel close to the future Anfield Road ground. Moreover by the end of the 1880's he was a well known figure in local political circles, frequently referred to in the press as King John of Everton. He was chairman of the Everton Conservative Association, of the West Derby Board of Guardians and from 1884 he had been member of the City Council for Everton and Kirkdale ward. He was to become an Alderman in 1895 and, after a certain amount of unsavoury politicking inside his own party, Mayor in 1897.<sup>9</sup> He was a Free Mason, Orangeman and a 'Parochial patriot' in Waller's neat phrase.<sup>10</sup> He was also president of the carters' union, dropped his aitches and was generally the kind of tory who found no difficulty in enjoying the more popular manifestations of the popular culture of which by the 1880s football was clearly one. It seems doubtful that he ever played organised football, he was fifty in 1882, but he had apparently turned out for the Breckfield Cricket Club.

It is not clear when he first became involved with Everton F.C. He was certainly President for the 1882-83 season.<sup>11</sup> In 1884 he played an important part in the club's move from a ground in Priory Road to Anfield. What happened after that

is well known and the details cannot be entered into here. Nonetheless, the events which were to give birth to the Liverpool Football club cannot be entirely ignored.

The Anfield Road site had been owned by another brewer, John Orrell, and when the club had moved in Houlding had arranged to be their representative tenant. When the club began to do well he ended what had been a nominal tenancy and substituted a sliding scale procedure so that as the club's income increased, so would their rent. By 188~90 this had increased from £100 per annum to £250, a sum a good deal in excess of that paid by other similar football clubs.<sup>12</sup> Members were further provoked by Houlding's attempt to sell to the club some land which he owned adjoining the Orrell holding, at what was considered an inflated price. When a meeting of the membership turned down his proposals, Houlding gave the club notice to quit and registered his own Everton Football Club and Athletic Grounds Company Limited. At a packed meeting of the club, all but a handful of members rejected the Houlding scheme and resolved to take their club to play elsewhere. Another blow to King John was the F.A.'s refusal to allow him to call his new club Everton. So he called it Liverpool instead. His money and the expertise of some of the Everton members who had gone with him built up the Liverpool team from scratch.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile the Everton club had formed a guarantee fund including subscriptions from W.P. Hartley the jam maker and Hudson the soap manufacturer. A limited liability company was formed and a rough piece of land on the north side of Stanley Park bought for £8,090. One of the members, Dr. J.C Baxter, put in an interest free loan of £1,000. Goodison Park was ready for the start of the 1892~93 season.

It is still not entirely clear why Houlding took the line he did. He could hardly have been short of money. Some contemporary suggestions claimed political differences to be at the root of it but as the *Liverpool Review* pointed out, the Everton club were 'Tory to the backbone'.<sup>14</sup> It is possible that some members disliked the club's reliance on the drink interest. By the end of the controversy there was clearly some personal animosity. But it seems that it was Houlding's commercial instincts and his determination to use his power which really provoked the opposition. Football might be a business but it was not there to make money for one man, particularly as it obviously already helped sell his ales and probably helped his political standing

in the community too. Houlding seems to have made a considerable misjudgement. But it's an ill wind and as contemporaries pointed out, it left Liverpool twice blessed with two professional football teams, "instead of one."<sup>5</sup>

Who were the kinds of people who ran these teams and to what purpose? If we take Liverpool first it remained something of a one-man band in terms of shares on paper and power in the boardroom for the remaining ten years of John Houlding's life. His shrewdest move was probably to persuade Tom Watson to transfer from Sunderland and become club secretary with full responsibility for the playing side. Watson was an ex-schoolteacher who had recruited the highly successful Sunderland team of the early 1890s. After the death of John Houlding in 1902 his son William sold out the Houlding interest and the 1,500 £1 shares became more widely distributed. In 1905 four of the Liverpool Board of directors had been formerly members of the original Everton club. The vaccination officer, brewery manager, solicitor and provision merchant had all been among the minority who had followed John Houlding in 1892. By 1905 they had been joined on the Board by a licensed victualler, relieving officer, schoolmaster, a gentleman and an undertaker. The continuity of personnel on the board from 1905 until the second world war is very striking. By 1914 the brewery manager and solicitor had gone, replaced by a coal merchant and a stone merchant. The licensed victualler and gentleman had also gone to be replaced by another licensed victualler and another gentleman. John Asbury, provision merchant, remained on the board throughout the inter-war years. Thomas Crompton, licensed victualler, remained a member until his death in 1934 as did Williams the undertaker, who died in 1929. Martindale the coal merchant was replaced by Berry, the original solicitor, in 1926 but came back to take Berry's place when he died in 1931. W.H. Cartwright, insurance manager, joined the Board in 1920 along with timber merchant W.H. Webb and both were still serving in the autumn of 1947 when Mr. Cartwright died. Furthermore the vaccination officer was John McKenna who probably only left the Board in 1922 because he found his duties as Football League President and F.A. Councillor sufficiently onerous and time consuming. To sum up 28 individuals served on a Liverpool Board of 9 or 10 strong between 1892-1939.

The Everton directorate shows a similar pattern. Three of the original subscribers to the new company in 1892 were

W~R. CTayton, described as a forwarding agent, J.G. Davies, a warehouseman and Dr. J.C. Baxter. They all remained on the board until their deaths in the 1920s. Dr. C.S. Baxter, son of J.C., was also elected to the board in the 1930s and served until he too died in 1954. A.R. Wade, a member of one of the older families who had worshipped at St. Domingos and who had himself played for Everton in the early days became a director in 1921 and stayed until his death fifteen years later. Ernest Green schoolmaster, joined the board in 1913 and was still on it at the outbreak of the second world war and Andrew Coffey, provision merchant, was a member from 1912 until 1942. But the club was dominated by Liverpool solicitor W.C. Cuff who was its Secretary from 1901 to 1918 and a Director from 1921 until 1946. During the inter-war years most retiring Everton Directors were returned unopposed by the annual shareholders' meeting. A total of 26 individuals were Directors at some time between 1892 and 1939 while the size of the Board was usually between eight and ten.

Summing up, you can see from this what kind of people became Directors. Once John Houlding had departed, neither club's directors appear to have been drawn from Liverpool's wealthiest or most prestigious families. There were no Booths, Gladstones, Holts, Homby's or Rathbones among them. None of them appear to have matched Houlding in wealth at least up to 1929.<sup>16</sup> But they were comfortable and eminently respectable, the kind of men who had no difficulty in raising mortgages or bank loans. They were the solid citizens who got things done and believed in the value of experience. When John Houlding had been alive they had talked of making Liverpool more popular and of 'putting football in the hands of the people' but they did not mean the small shareholder let alone the sixpenny spectator. They meant themselves.<sup>17</sup>

If the social and occupational backgrounds of the Directors of the two clubs showed distinct similarities, so did those of the shareholders. Moreover, not surprisingly it reflected the structure of Liverpool's commerce and industry. The most numerous occupational groups among the small shareholders of both clubs were clerks, managers, bookkeepers and merchants. Everton in 1920, for example, had 111 clerks, most of whom had two or three shares each. 30 managers were the next largest group. Liverpool evinced a similar pattern with 53 clerks leading 18 managers and the same number of bookkeepers. By 1939 Liverpool's clerks had

gone up to 59 and interestingly the next two highest categories were married women 30, and widows 27, both perhaps reflecting the shorter life expectancy of men and the carnage of Flanders. One peculiarity of the Liverpool shareholders was the large number of policemen, 18 in 1914. Although it was down to 5 in 1939 one Police Sergeant had 170 shares. In general, individual shareholdings at Liverpool were much larger than at Everton. Both the nominal and actual capital was larger at Liverpool and it is possible that this reflects the more overtly commercial foundation on which John Houlding insisted in 1892. Everton, on the other hand, retained more of its original structure as a members club. Its roughly 500 individual shareholders in 1920 is close to the 431 who had bought shares by the annual General Meeting of 1892.<sup>18</sup> Liverpool had about 300 shareholders through the inter-war years.

Shareholders, of course, had certain privileges. The possibility of a 5% dividend before the first war - it was increased to 7½% after 1918 - and cheap admission to matches. In 1905, for example, Liverpool were offering a 7s. 6d. ground season ticket for one share and a free season ticket to the grandstand went with 20 shares. But shareholders, like directors, were more likely involved for the psychic rather than the material benefits although after a particularly good year at Goodison in 1907 one shareholder thought they should pay out more than 5%.'

There was certainly money to be made out of football, particularly in Liverpool. Liverpool made a profit in every year between 1900 and the curtailment of the professional football programme in 1915 and Everton only once failed to make a profit between 1890 and 1915. By 1907 Everton's assets totalled £30,000 and their income in 1906-07 had reached almost £22,000, a sum not equalled by any other British club. The inter-war years were not quite so spectacularly successful but dividends were nearly always paid. Everton had six profitable seasons out of the eleven years before 1939 and Liverpool appear to have lost money in only four of the inter-war years.

Most of this money was probably ploughed back into the clubs. Everton, for example, built Goodison Park from a virtual waste land in 1892. The club spent £41,000 improving it between 1906 and 1909.<sup>20</sup> Although Everton built the first double decker stand in 1909, improvements were not only designed for those spectators who could afford a seat. In the same year, for example, a vast ash banking was

terraced in concrete and both Liverpool and Everton were conscious of the need to provide cover for the 6d. and shilling spectator in a climate such as ours. Nonetheless it was 1928 before Liverpool put a roof over Spion Kop. The Anfield ground claimed a capacity of 68,000 with 45,000 shilling customers under cover. Such conditions were nevertheless rarely comfortable and did not always provide a good view of the game.<sup>12</sup>

The directors of both Everton and Liverpool probably did not make a lot of money out of it. Some of them may have sold goods and services to the club and it was probably club money that financed banquets such as the dinner and theatre party which celebrated J.C. Baxter's 21 years with Everton in 1912 and the 50th anniversary celebratory dinner when 600 guests sat down at the Adelphi in 1919.<sup>22</sup>

It is very easy, in the natural desire to place the development of football in its social context, to forget both the game and the players of it. But of course this would be a classic case of ignoring the crucial part of the whole phenomenon. The St. Domingo club, and Everton in its early days, seem to have had a fair sprinkling of middle class young players, schoolteachers, bank clerks, solicitors, sons of cotton merchants. But once professionalism became the norm then the players of middle class background became much rarer. Professional football before the second world war was an avenue along which a working man might travel in the hope of material betterment and occasionally even social mobility. How certain he was to reach these desirable destinations would depend on a variety of factors, on his being 'spotted' by a top club, on his ability to play regularly over a long career and avoid serious injury, on his judgement in both managing his money and coping with the trappings of fame.

To play for either Everton or Liverpool was half the battle, as they were undoubtedly leading clubs rarely out of the first division in our period and always solidly supported through the turnstiles. As we can see from the simple contract drawn up between Everton and John Holt, their centre-half and a leading player in 1890, he was paid £3 per week through the year. Seven other players were receiving the same in 18~1~2.<sup>23</sup>

By the end of that decade, with the popularity of the game ever increasing and the competition between clubs for the best players getting fiercer, a good many players were doing better than £3 a week. Some clubs felt the situation was



getting out of hand. A free market for labour was all right so long as it worked in the buyers' favour: when it did not, talk of restriction was in the air, although Liverpool and Everton were non-restrictionists. In 1901 the F.A. finally resolved that there should be a maximum wage of £4 per week. Liverpool allegedly paid one of their top players, Alec Raisbeck, more by appointing him bill-inspector with the sinecure-sounding task of checking all the advertisements.<sup>24</sup>

Of course the maximum was raised after the First World War, in part due to the inflation that had accompanied that conflict. In 1920 a new player might begin with £5 a week which could rise to a maximum of £9 plus the famous bonuses of £2 for a win and £1 for a draw. With the collapse of the post-war boom these figures were quickly revised to £8 per week for a 37 week playing season and £6 for the remaining fifteen summer weeks. The Players Union accepted such figures with resigned reluctance.

This was good money so long as it was not compared to leading sportsmen in the United States or other kinds of entertainers. And it could be supplemented, at least among the leading players, by advertising products and allowing their names to be used for newspaper articles. Both had been common enough before 1914 and grew even more after the war. James Jackson, the Liverpool captain, for example, began a regular column in the *Liverpool Weekly Post* in 1928 and it is clear that many such columns were syndicated and appeared in a variety of local and national newspapers.<sup>2</sup>

But football playing was more than about money. Those men who regularly pulled on Liverpool and Everton shirts were local heroes and embedded in a life style far removed from anything most of them had experienced before, or perhaps would do again. As early as 1894 both sets of players went away to hotels for special training before the first league meeting between the clubs, Everton to Hoylake for the week, Liverpool to Hightown." Trips abroad to encourage the development of the game became a commonplace of the close season, Everton even making the long journey to Argentina in 1909. And when cups or championships were won, nothing was too good for the players. Lord mayors and M.P.s wanted to know them and sat down to eat with them and huge crowds would turn out to see the conquering heroes come back with their trophies, most notably when Everton won the F.A. Cup in 1906 and 1933. Lord Birkenhead realised it did him no harm at all to tell a story in which the punchline was that a Liverpool boy

who asked him for his autograph wanted it twice otherwise he had no chance of swopping it for one of Dixie Dean.<sup>27</sup>

To say that Dean was the most famous figure in Liverpool during the ten years 192~38 is to really say little about his achievements and the myths and legends which were built up around them. His qualities both as footballer and physical specimen were continually the subject of awestruck newspaper articles, particularly as a motor cycle accident, which left him with serious head injuries, had looked to have finished his career before it had really begun in 1927.<sup>20</sup> It is not clear how far his contemporary reputation for fearlessness and physical durability was buttressed by the knowledge that he had lost a testicle following a kick, admittedly while playing for Tranmere Rovers.<sup>2</sup> Yet this larger-than-life figure whose achievements even outdid the fantasies of the writers of boys' comics found life after football difficult. The traditional pub brought neither prosperity nor satisfaction and, like his successor in the Everton number nine shirt, Tommy Lawton, he was not able to discover a substitute for football. In this failure he joined many others who perhaps had no skill to fall back on, no head for business or no friends who could offer reliable advice. Public houses and small shops were a common resort of the old player but did not guarantee material or psychological comfort. Some old players managed to stay in the game at various levels. Andy McGuigan ran his shop and became a Liverpool scout. Dan Kirkwood astonished the *Athletic News* by becoming a director of Everton and for a short time, chairman in 1909 after four years as a player in the 1890s. He had been a shipyard worker and a professional for Sunderland and had a tobacconist's shop in Liverpool.<sup>0</sup> On the other hand Abraham Hartley, a Scot who played professionally for several clubs including both Everton and Liverpool, died of a heart attack on Southampton docks where he worked.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly even many of those who had successful careers as professional footballers did not always find it easy afterwards but that was hardly uppermost in the mind of those young men from Merseyside who stood on the terraces and hoped one day to emulate their gladiatorial heroes.

What does the social historian want to know about the spectators at football matches? Basically who went, why they went, how they behaved when they got there, and what it meant to them. Deceptively simple questions for which

the evidence to provide answers is difficult both to identify and once identified, to interpret. We do know that one Liverpool railwayman, David Brindley went, with two of his workmates and neighbours to see Everton play Dundee on Saturday, February 16, 1889 because he says so in his diary. A further entry for April 4, 1890 (Good Friday) reads: 'Mr. and Mrs. Murray (friends) at our house. Went to football match in afternoon'.~ In October 1907 a local weekly paper, the *Porcupine*, probably as part of a circulation drive, began to take pictures of spectators at Everton and Liverpool football matches in order to offer a prize of £1 to those lucky enough to have their faces ringed. Unfortunately they only seem to have kept it up for a few weeks in that autumn but long enough to publish the names and addresses of 36 lucky winners, 34 men and 2 women. A survey of contemporary directories produced ten for whom occupations could be identified and these were jeweller, warehouseman, mariner, clerk, plumber, manager, stationer and Post Office keeper, assistant overseer, provision broker and Postman. There were probably four sons of a marine engineer, printer, collector and commercial traveller and one daughter of a man.ner.~ This unscientifically random and very small sample nevertheless does fit with the view that pre-1914 football crowds were mostly male and mostly better off perhaps skilled or semi-skilled workers plus a fair sprinkling of what might be termed lower middle class. This is perhaps further supported by the areas in which they lived with artisan Everton providing five addresses, neighbouring Anfield four, Kirkdale and Kensington one each on the northern side and Sandhills two, and Toxteth one on the south. On the other hand lower middle class Wavertree provided four addresses and middle class Princes Park three.

The enthusiasm of Liverpool working people for the game was considerable. Everton averaged about 16,500 people for each home match in the League in 1892-93 but special league and cup games drew many more. The first EvertonLiverpool league game in October 1894 was watched by around 44,000 people who paid what seemed the enormous sum of over one thousand pounds. mostly in sixpences. The tramcar was a crucial element in getting them all to Goodison park. When the 1910 F.A. Cup Final was replayed there the Liverpool tramways carried over 90,000 people to and from the ground on a midweek afternoon. After the First World War, when the minimum admission charge was

raised to one shilling, the crowds flocked in even more furiously. Few seasons would go by when Everton and Liverpool failed to average 35,000 people for league games. Games between the clubs rarely failed to top 50,000 and 66,000 crammed into Anfield to see Everton win there in

1939. 25,000 turned up for Everton's public pre-season practice match in August 1928 and Billy Meredith, the famous Welsh international who played all his league football in Manchester chose to play a mid-week friendly match at Anfield, the proceeds to go to his benefit, and almost 5,000 turned up for that.<sup>34</sup> Going to the match was an experience in itself rather like going to the pictures. For the big games especially the gates would open early, queues began forming at 11.30 a.m. for the Everton-Liverpool game in February 1928, and there were estimated to be at least 45,000 there an hour before the game was due to begin. Such matches might be preceded by a schoolboy game and almost certainly Hignett's Band or, after the First World War, the Edge Hill Silver Prize Band, would do their best to take the boredom out of waiting. Although watching football was in general a male pastime it was claimed, ~ not clear on what authority, that Everton and Liverpool had the highest percentage of 'Lady supporters' among league clubs in 1929.' Travelling to away matches seems to have been much less common before 1914, except for very special occasions, usually cup ties. Only about a thousand Liverpool supporters went to Bolton for a crucial championship match in 1906. By comparison it was expected that 15,000 would make the short trip to Blackburn for an F.A. Cup match in 1935.0

If you had been in town during the first week of September 1908 you could have gone to the Shakespeare Theatre and seen a play called *The Happy Hooligan*. But it wasn't about football crowds. How did they behave in Liverpool? The local newspapers always seemed rather surprised that they were so orderly. But large crowds needed controlling and as one was expected at Anfield in September, 1897 for Everton's visit 'a large body of police were engaged to keep order'. We don't know how many because there are apparently no police records. There was a tendency to be uncertain about the capacity of football grounds and to pack people in until overcrowding was inevitable. That produced pitch invasions as barriers broke or people could stand the crush no longer. Twice the barriers broke and spectators flooded onto the field of play in this

match but it was completed after two lengthy stoppages.<sup>37</sup> Although grounds were more commodious by the inter-war years, crowds were even larger. It took the break-in at Wembley in 1923 to persuade the authorities that some matches would benefit from being all ticket with a police limit hut crowd control was not taken very seriously in this country until the Bolton disaster of 1946. Swaying and crushing on the terraces, especially at the ends and at corners, were common as must have been damaged ankles and cracked ribs. Everton were involved in one spectacular crowd disturbance at their Cup-Semi-Final with West Bromwich Albion at Old Trafford, Manchester in 1921. 69,241 were let in and another 10,000 locked out. Barriers broke at some of the more congested parts of the ground and the original corps of four mounted policeman had to be reinforced to get the crowds back behind the touchlines so that the game could start.<sup>0</sup>

In such crowds climbing up pillars and onto roofs in order to gain a better view were common. Boys were sometimes caught climbing into both Goodison and Anfield. Few favours or colours were worn by the crowd when I~iverpool and Everton met in the F.A. Cup in 1905. *Porcupine* offered an unlikely explanation we in Liverpool are either more reserved or less enthusiastic than our bretheren up country. When Sheffield, Birmingham or Blackburn come to town we know it. . . . But Liverpoolians rarely wear their colours conspicuously even when they travel abroad .

A group of Blackburn supporters apparently thought nothing of standing on the Kop in 1907 and, *inter alia* singing part songs. Moreover when the Rovers team appeared they 'waved their colours to a set motion, and sent forth a wierd unearthly cry. . . But they were silent after Liverpool had scored'.<sup>0</sup> Journalists both in 1908 and 1929 claimed that most in the crowd applauded good play by either side in the annual Liverpool-Everton encounters.~

As against all that, the official programme complained about ft)ul language in the Goodison Park paddock in 1910 and about the barracking of players and obscene language by a minority at both grounds in 1913.~ There were also occasional outbursts against visiting players and the Referee which brought warnings from the Football Association. The Chief Constable believed that Saturday afternoon football in Liverpool had contributed to a diminution in drunkenness in 1896. Local magistrates did not take any chances and refused to grant extensions to public houses in

the area of Goodison Park before a home match with Manchester City in 1928. Superficially it would appear that crowds were robust but reasonable throughout most of our period. Perhaps a spot of oral history might fill in the gaps created by lack of police records and insufficient detail in the press.

How far did the reds and the blues symbolise other more serious differences? In particular how far did the two clubs stand for the two sides in the sectarian religious divide between Catholic and Protestant?<sup>44</sup> By the 1890s Liverpool was the largest Roman Catholic diocese in England with about one fifth of the country's total Catholic population. Many claimed that up to a quarter of the city's population thought of themselves as Irish because they had either Irish parents or Irish grandparents. These migrants were mainly unskilled and competed directly with Liverpool's home bred largely unskilled workforce for a whole range of jobs in dock work and transport. Moreover the Liverpool Irish tended to be residentially distinct, with half a dozen Catholic Irish wards to the south of Scotland Road able to send their own M.P. to Westminster from 1886. To the north and east lay the largely Protestant working class wards of Kirkdale, St. Domingoes, Netherfield and Breckfield who provided the members of the Protestants-only Conservative Working Men's Association controlled by a Conservative Party of brewers like John Houlding, small businessmen and professional people, perhaps just like the men who were directors of the two clubs. Certainly local folklore has it that the two clubs have clear religious affiliations, although I have detected a little uncertainty as to which club was associated with which religion. And of course the example of Glasgow football was there for all to see.

What evidence can be found which might throw light on this issue? We have seen already that there was nothing in the differences which produced Liverpool out of Everton which could remotely be classed religious. Everton was largely a protestant club although it was a Catholic doctor who provided an interest-free loan at a crucial moment and later served as a director and Chairman.~ But the split of 1892 was c~arly about rents not religion. It is true that the *Liverpool Daily Post* hoped there would be ~no demonstrations of ill-feding' before the first League match between the two sides and that the match programme of 1905 mentioned former ~sectarian bitterness' but it seems clear that sectarian was not meant to be understood in a religious

sense.<sup>4-</sup> Nor is there any support for the notion that one side or the other preferred players of a particular religious persuasion. Many players turned out for both clubs and Elisha Scott played for Liverpool, for example, and his brother for Everton. A survey of the birth places of the professional players of both teams for 1904, 1909, 1914, 1925, 1930 and 1935 revealed that recruitment was from such typical centres as Scotland, North East England and Staffordshire as well as Liverpool itself and other parts of Lancashire. Both clubs signed Irish players but not in large numbers and not particularly from either Southern Ireland or Ulster. Nor do players' autobiographies mention any sectarian connection.

The clubs also seemed almost to go out of their way to show the good and close relations each had with the other. From 1904 to 1935 for example, they sanctioned a joint match programme. the 'Everton and Liverpool Official Football Programme' produced by a local printer. The two boards of directors met for regular social events and both shared the triumphs of the other. When Everton brought back the F.A. Cup in 1906, the Liverpool directors were among those at Liverpool Central Station to meet them. There were no reports of Liverpool supporters interfering with the wearing of blue favours which apparently many Liverpudlians had done on Cup Final day. The year before Everton had worn black armbands on the death of John Houlding. The *Liverpool Daily Post* claimed that when the results board at Goodison Park showed Liverpool as winners of their F.A. Cup Semi-Final in London in 1914 against Aston Villa there was tremendous cheering all over the ground. From 1927 the two teams entered the playing area side by side for Derby matches and in 1929 the band played 'the more we are together the happier we will be'.<sup>4-</sup>

At least before the First World War, both teams contributed to a series of Protestant religious meetings called 'Football Sundays', like the one held at the Central Hall on February 9, 1913, in which the main speakers were one director from Everton and one from Liverpool, supported by playing members of both teams.' And both contributed to Catholic charities and social events. Everton, for example, in 1919 hosted the League of Welldoers 2,196th free 'food and fun' treat for poor children whereas the Liverpool Catholic Schools Boys and Girls annual sports in 1922 was held at Anfield.'~ *The Liverpool Catholic Herald* actually ran a regular football column from about 1909 and

apparently treated both clubs in a similar fashion. It made no mention of Everton's jubilee in 1929. All 'Scrutator' could say after the club had won the league championship in 1932 was that it had been due chiefly to its 'whirlwind start'. The concentration was on outstanding Catholic performers. Although there was no proper account of Chelsea's match at Goodison Park in 1932, it was stressed that O'Dowd, the visitor's centre-half had blotted out Dixie Dean. O'Dowd was a Catholic.~ A cursory glance through the *Protestant Standard* revealed no such levity. No football or any sport was mentioned at all. The shareholders of both clubs contained hardly a single clergyman and the religious disturbances of the summers of 1902 and 1909 brought no mention of the football clubs.

Glasgow makes an obvious and interesting comparison. The Celtic club originated as a group which would play matches in order to raise money for Catholic charities. It quickly broke away from that straight jacket and was soon an extremely professional club paying dividends, unlimited in Scotland, of 25%. But it retained its strong connection both with the Church and Ireland, played in green and white and mustering a lot of priestly support. Priests were let in free. Rangers had more orthodox origins and there are relatively few signs of religious bitterness before the first world war. 1912 seems to be a key date when Harland and Wolff established a new shipyard at Govan and brought over with them some skilled Ulster Protestants right in the middle of the Home Rule crisis. Glasgow Rangers played at Ibrox Park, very close to Govan and provided the focus for these militant Protestant immigrants. The Rangers-Celtic rivalry was further buttressed by 1916, the civil war in Ireland and the formation of the Irish Free State. As is well known Rangers refused to sign Catholic players and mutual insults and out and out gang warfare had characterised the relationship between a section of each side's supporters right up until today. In fact it could be argued that it was the rivalry of the football teams which kept sectarianism going in Glasgow after the second world war before another period of Irish troubles gave it a fuel injection.

Liverpool and Everton therefore are not Celtic and Rangers. Neither of them were set up as clubs for a particular community and in fact, it could be argued, played a role, albeit a minor one perhaps, in the diminution of religious tension. Why then support one rather than the other? Accidents of residence, parental attitudes, the



standing of the clubs when they first impinge on the individual consciousness, the club that has a favourite player. Strangely enough both clubs have been credited with certain styles which appear to have changed little over time. Liverpool organised, robust, fast and powerful: Everton clever, imaginative, scientific. Perhaps it was factors such as these which decided red or blue. And we don't really know how many people went to both. Perhaps there is a role for an oral history project here too, to investigate the myths and legends of the football spectator in this city.

One thing is certain for Liverpoolians their football was important. When the Pilgrim Trust reported on the unemployed of Liverpool in 1938 they noted that the unemployed men, who usually couldn't afford the shilling to get in, still used to turn out on a Saturday afternoon just to watch the crowds going to the match. The biggest public demonstration in Liverpool bar one in the whole of our period was the crowd that welcomed Everton and the F.A. Cup in 1933.

#### NOTES

- 1 R. Rees, 'The Development of Physical Recreation in Liverpool during the nineteenth century', University of Liverpool M.A. (1968) p.329. I should like to thank Richard Foster and Mrs. Holbrook of the Merseyside County Museum Service for their help with the preparation of this paper. I am also grateful to Professor Richard Lawton for his advice on the changing residential patterns of the city.
- 2 Dock workers did not gain the Saturday halfholiday until April 1890. R. Rees, *op.cit.*, p. 57.
- 3 The 1871 figure is quoted in R. Rees, *op.cit.* p.55. 1911 Census of England and Wales. Relative proportions per 10,000 males aged 10 and upwards engaged in certain group occupations. The figure for Urban Districts and County Boroughs was 317. The group was entitled Commercial or business clerks. Liverpool also had a greater proportion of workers in the Merchants, Agents, Accountants, Banking and Insurance group, Dock Labourers, General Labourers, Conveyance on roads. Conveyance on Seas, Rivers and Canals and Conveyance on Railways.
- 4 *Porcupine*, December 26, 1908.
- 5 Rees estimated that 22% of 112 clubs in Liverpool in 1885 had religious connections R. Rees, *op.cit.*, p. 203.
- 6 P.M. Young, *Football on Merseyside* (1964 ed), p. 13
- 7 R. Rees, *op.cit.*, p. 135.
- 8 *Liverpool Football Echo*, November 7, 1891. See also P.E. Richardson, 'The Development of Professional Football on Merseyside 187~94', University of Lancaster MA. (1983).
- 9 For Houlding's political activities see P.J. Wailer, *Democracy and Sectarianism. A political and social History of Liverpool 1868-1939* (Liverpool 1981), pp. 63-5, 12025, 495.
- 10 P.J. Wailer, *op.cit.*, p. 63.

- il Everton F.C. Members Card 1882-83. I am grateful to Dr. J.K. Kowlands for drawing this to my attention.
- 12 The struggle can be followed in all the local newspapers for the period but a clear account can be found in T. Keates, *History of the Everton Football Club 18789 - 19289* (Liverpool 1919), pp. 37-43.
- 13 Two others similarly put together were Sheffield United and Chelsea.
- 14 *Liverpool Review*, March 19, 1892.
- 15 *Liverpool Review*, June 30, 1894.
- 16 Houlding left £45,000 whereas the next biggest I have found was Sharp leaving £24,000. Cartwright, for example, left £15,000 and Coffey £9,000. P.J. Wailer, *op. cit.*, p. 121; P.M. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 95; *Liverpool Evening Express*, March 13, 1948; *Liverpool Post*, July 14, 1942.
- 17 See Everton and Liverpool Official Football Programme February 11, 1905.
- 18 For Directors occupations and shareholding records see Registry of Companies, Files no. 36624 (Everton) and 35668 (Liverpool). *Liverpool Daily Post*, August 30, 1892.
- 19 *Liverpool Courier*, May 28, 1907.
- 20 On pre-1914 Football Grounds see B.W. Prowse, *The Control and Accommodation of Lancashire Football Grounds 1885-1914*, University of Manchester MA. (1981).
- 21 *Liverpool Weekly Post*, August 25, 1928
- 22 See the whole page that was devoted to a report of the event. *Liverpool Football Echo*, April 27, 1929.
- 23 T. Keates, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- 24 J.A.H. Catton, *Wickets and Coals* (1926). p. 186. On the whole question of players' wages before 1914 see Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society 1863-1915* (1980), pp. 9-107.
- 25 See *Liverpool Weekly Post*, September 8, 15, 22, 29 1928. He was training for the Presbyterian Ministry and eventually ordained in 1933, one of only 3 inter-war footballers to be so translated.
- 26 *Liverpool Daily Post*, October 13, 1894.
- 27 *Liverpool Weekly Post*, February 11, 1928. It is interesting to note the residential upward mobility of the players over time. In 1906 Alec Raisbeck lived in Everton close to a cotton porter, glass worker, postman, planer, tailor and a clerk. By 1924 Ephraim Longworth had moved out to Brookbridge Road and his neighbours included a warehouseman, carter, two foremen, two ladies, a painter and a dock labourer. In 1930 Warneford Cresswell lived in Birkenhead close to a civil servant, cabinet maker, police sergeant, shipping clerk and insurance clerk. In 1938 John Coulter lived in Wallasey close to a physical training instructor, sorting clerk, bus driver and haulage contractor. See *Core's Directory*.
- 28 *Liverpool Weekly Post*, January 7, 1928.
- 29 Nick Walsh, *Dixie Dean: The Lift Story of a Goal Scoring Legend* (1977), p. 33. 40,000 people turned up for a testimonial match for Dean 25 years after he finished playing in 1964. Walsh, p. 213.
- 30 *Athletic News*, July 19, 1909. He was the first of three former professional players who became directors. Jack Sharp, who also played professionally as a cricketer for Lancashire and had a successful sports outfitter's business in Liverpool, leaving £24,000 when he died in 1928, and Matt McQueen who was on the Liverpool board for a very short time in the early 1920s.
- 31 *Athletic News*, October 11, 1909.
- 32 I am grateful to Professor Richard Lawton for permission to quote

- from David Brindley's diary which is in his possession.
- 33 *Porcupine*, October 5, 12, 19, 26, November 2, 9, 7, 16, 23, 30, December 7, 1907. No occupations were traced for eight of the winners and three of the addresses could not be located. Nine of the men are almost certainly in lodgings.
  - 34 *Liverpool Daily Post*, October 13, 15, 20, 1894; *Liverpool Football Echo*, April 30, 1910, P.M. Young, *op.cit.*, p. 122; *Liverpool Daily Post*, November 19, 1925.
  - 35 *Liverpool Football Echo*, October 19, 1929.
  - 36 *Liverpool Daily Post*, April 17, 1906, January 26, 1935.
  - 37 *Liverpool Daily Post*, September 27, 1897.
  - 38 *Liverpool Football Echo*, March 14, 1931. A policeman who drove his horse into some spectators was booed. People in the stands threw down newspapers for the crowd around the touchline to sit on.
  - 39 *Porcupine* February 4, 1905.
  - 40 *Porcupine* September 21, 1907.
  - 41 *Porcupine*, October 10 1908; *Liverpool Weekly Post*, September 14, 1929.
  - 42 Everton and Liverpool official programme October 22, 1910, Marelli 29, 1913.
  - 43 Quoted in Tony Mason, *op.cit.*, p. 176; *Liverpool Daily Post*, September 15, 1928.
  - 44 For Catholic and Protestant in Liverpool see Tom Gallagher (Bradford University), 'A Tale of Three Cities: Communal Division in Glasgow compared with Liverpool and Belfast 1820-1939', unpublished paper 1984.
  - 45 W.C. Cuff, however, who dominated the club for so long was a Protestant.
  - 46 *Liverpool Daily Post*, October 13, 1894; Everton and Liverpool Official Programme, September 30, 1905.
  - 47 *Liverpool Daily Post*, March 18, 1902, March 30, 1914; *Liverpool Football Echo*, September 7, 1919.
  - 48 Everton and Liverpool Football Programme, February 8, 1913.
  - 49 *Liverpool Catholic Herald*, May 13, 1922, April 27, 1929. Everton, alleged by some to be the Catholic club, published a list of charities between whom the proceeds of their public practice matches were divided in 1935. None of them appear to have been Catholic charities. Everton F.C. Official Programme, September 1935. One former Catholic altar boy remembers playing football in the school yard attached to the Church after High Mass on Sundays. The easiest way to select the teams was to divide ourselves into Evertonians and Liverpoolians. In 1933 when Everton won the F.A. Cup we had near neighbours who were avowedly "Orange". They possessed a wireless which we did not. My brothers and I were asked in to listen to the match; and at half-time, with Everton leading 1-0, a one-legged member of the family, "Uncle Percy" went out briefly and returned by way of celebration with large ice creams for his own nephews and us. I am grateful to Tony Ryan for these recollections.
  - 50 But for a more substantial discussion see Bill Murray, *The Old Firm (Edinburgh 1984)*; *Liverpool Catholic Herald*, May 4, 1929, April 23, 30 May 14, 1932.
  - 51 It was an Evertonian conceit that visitors to Goodison were told by their managers now lads, if you can play football at all, Everton will let you'. *Liverpool Daily Post*, October 1 1910; *Liverpool Weekly Post*, September 5, 1928.
  - 52 *Men without Work* (Cambridge 1938), p. 98-9.