



# Peter Meechan

**Peter Meechan won League titles either side of the English-Scottish border and played for both this evening's teams...**

**M**eechan was born 1872 in Broxburn, West Lothian, and worked as a shale miner while playing football for local teams Broxburn Shamrock and Broxburn FC. His ability earned him a move to Hibernian and then Sunderland came calling in 1893. It was on Wearside that he won the League Championship in 1895 and later that year he returned north to join Glasgow Celtic. He settled well into the Hoops side, adding the 1896 Scottish League title and the Charity Cup to his honours list. His solitary Scotland appearance was made against Ireland in March 1896.

However, his Celtic career ended in controversial fashion when, in November 1896, he refused to play against Hibs due to a players' strike. They objected to the presence of a journalist who had been critical of Celtic the previous week! Other issues led to his suspension and subsequent transfer to Everton in January 1897 for a then record-breaking fee of £450 (Celtic had to split this money with Sunderland as the latter still held his English registration). He signed on with wages of £6 per week.

Meechan played 28 times for the Toffees at full-back and featured in the 1897 FA Cup final which Everton lost 3-2 to Aston Villa at the Crystal Palace. Mid-way through the following season he lost his place at right-back to Billy Balmer and was transferred to Southern League Southampton for £200. He helped his side to win three successive Southern League Championships and he reached his second FA Cup Final in 1900 - Southampton lost 4-0 to Bury and



● FA Cup final against Aston Villa in 1897



● FA Cup final programme with Peter Meechan's name on the team sheet.

one of Meechan's team-mates was former Everton hero Alf Milward. Brief periods with Manchester City and Barrow preceded a return to play for Broxburn FC in 1902.

Suffering from knee injuries, Meechan sought a better way of life in Nova Scotia in 1905. He had hoped to become involved with Canadian football but ended up going back to mining. Tragically, in June 1915, with his wife expecting a child, he died at the age of just 43 in Port Morien.

The cause of death is shrouded in mystery and conjecture. Appendicitis, black-lung and disease have been mentioned but another version of events has been put forward by a relative: "A story goes that my great uncle Jim was lost in the snow when he was just six years old. Peter went out to look for him and ended up with pneumonia, from which he never recovered."

**By Richard Gillham  
(EFC Heritage Society).**