



By Richie Gillham

Everton's Joe McClure - the rock star's uncle!



Joe McClure is on the back row, far left in this Everton team photo from the 1930/31 season

JON McClure, the lead singer of Sheffield-based rock group Reverend and the Makers, first revealed his Toffees' connection on Sky TV's Saturday morning Soccer AM show.

Jon is a passionate Sheffield Wednesday supporter, but has a soft spot for the Blues as his great-uncle, Joe McClure, played alongside Dixie Dean at Everton.

Joseph Henry McClure hailed from Cockermouth and his father, Sam, had a trial at Everton in 1898 before enjoying success at Blackburn Rovers. McClure junior was scouted by Everton whilst playing for Wallsend against Hartlepool reserves in the North-Eastern League and he was signed in November 1929 at the age of 22. He had been training to become a welder before embarking on his full-time football career.

A versatile and wholehearted player, who was popular with supporters, Joe started his Everton career at right-half for the reserves in a 7-3 win against West Bromwich Albion.

On Boxing Day 1929 he made his First Team debut and acquitted himself well, but unfortunately the team lost 4-0 away to, ironically, Sheffield Wednesday. The local newspaper reported that he was 'an intrepid tackler who broke-up play well'.

Joe was soon back in the reserves where he kept delivering fine performances and Tranmere Rovers approached Everton about a possible transfer, but it was rejected.

Joe's next chance came in an FA Cup tie at

Plymouth Argyle in January 1931. He was chosen over Cliff Britton as his playing style was seen as ideal for the match. The Toffees won 2-0. Joe had an excellent game and he held down the right-half position for the second half of the 1930/31 promotion-winning season. He assisted with several of Dixie Dean's goals and also represented the English FA when they toured Canada.

The following season – when Everton were crowned First Division champions – he made seven appearances but after starting the first five matches of the 1932/33 season he lost his place.

After 34 games for the Blues, scoring one goal in a 4-2 win against Bradford City at Goodison almost exactly 90 years ago, he moved to Brentford in the summer of 1933. He later finished his playing days with spells at Exeter City and Nuneaton Borough, whom he also managed for a brief spell.

When the Everton FC Heritage Society found out about Jon's Everton connection, its members drew on Billy Smith's Blue Correspondent website (bluecorrespondent.co.uk) and Brendan Connolly's memorabilia collection to produce a 119-page book, chronicling Joe's four-year spell at Goodison.

The Reverend and The Makers singer was thrilled to be presented with four copies of it.



Jon McClure