



EVERTON

HERITAGE SOCIETY



# JOURNEYMAN JIMMY MILLER

Words // **Richie Gillham**

**Jimmy Miller's journey is a fascinating example of early 20th century English football life. A right winger blessed with exceptional pace, Miller carved out a long and varied career across the Football League and beyond with several teams including both Everton and Bournemouth.**

Hailing from Tyneside, Miller joined Everton in the summer of 1918, just as English football was emerging from the disruption of the First World War. Despite his limited pre-war Football League experience (only six appearances for Grimsby Town), the Blues saw enough promise to bring him into a highly-competitive squad.

He made his debut on the opening day of the 1919/20 First Division season against Chelsea, laying on one of the Toffees' goals but also getting knocked out after a heavy blow to the head.

Miller made eight league appearances and scored one goal, against Bradford Park Avenue at Goodison Park, before his Everton career came to a premature end. He had elected to remain living near North Shields and commuting to Liverpool, which was far from ideal and the November 1919 Everton Board minutes, available to view on the excellent Everton Collection website, duly recorded:

'That the Directors cannot agree to pay J. Miller's travelling expenses from Percy Mains; he is staying there temporarily to suit his own convenience'.

With the great Sam Chedzoy back in the team, it came as little surprise Miller was soon made available for transfer, with an asking price of £1,500. Blackburn Rovers, Sheffield United and Middlesbrough all made enquiries before a deal was concluded with Coventry City in December 1919.

Although Miller's stay at Goodison Park was brief, it represented the highest level of football he would ever play.

But if Everton was the pinnacle of prestige, Miller's time at Bournemouth and Boscombe FC was the peak



of his influence. He joined the club in 1923, just as they were entering the Football League for the first time. His experience and athleticism made him an essential figure in helping Bournemouth adapt to the professional ranks.

Miller took part in their first-ever League fixture, away to Swindon Town in August 1923, and played 38 matches during that inaugural campaign. His role was vital to the team's structure with Bournemouth relying heavily on wide players to create attacking momentum.

Jimmy Miller's football voyage took him to Newcastle United, Grimsby Town, Everton, Coventry, Preston, Pontypridd, Darlington, Chesterfield, Bournemouth and Boscombe, Swansea and Luton Town.

He died in 1957, in North Shields, at the age of 68.

@evertonheritage

efcheritagesociety.com