



A COMMEMORATION OF THE LIFE OF
CHARLES FREDERICK PARRY



25TH DECEMBER 1869 – 4TH FEBRUARY 1922

EVERTON LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM 1890/91
ABERYSTWYTH WELSH CUP-WINNING TEAM 1900
WELSH INTERNATIONAL

FRIDAY 1ST MARCH 2019

OSWESTRY TOWN CEMETERY

ORDER OF CEREMONY

INTRODUCTORY MUSIC

Daniel Axworthy (violin)

WELCOME

Councillor Sandy Best, Mayor of Oswestry
Brendan Connolly, Chairman, EFC Heritage Society

THE LIFE OF CHARLIE PARRY

Rob Sawyer, EFC Heritage Society
Ian Snodin – Everton FC Ambassador
David Parry on behalf of the Parry family



1891 Football League Champions



CHARLIE'S EARLY LIFE AND SPORTING CAREER - OSWESTRY AND CHESTER ST OSWALD'S

Born on Christmas Day, 1869, to Ann and Frederick (a tinsmith), Charlie spent his childhood living on Arthur Street in Oswestry. He played for the town's junior team as a forward in his teens and his potential was spotted by William Nunnerley, future Secretary of the Football Association of Wales and international referee. Nunnerley saw to it that young Charlie signed for Chester St Oswald's – one of several teams competing for dominance in the county town of Cheshire.

His performances on the banks of the Dee led Everton to covet Charlie but he was, initially, reluctant to move – doubting that he possessed the talent to make the grade with the founder members of the recently-formed Football League. Eventually he was persuaded that he was 'class enough' and signed on for the Anfielders in the spring of 1889.



EVERTON

Charlie's debut for the Toffees came in a friendly match against Witton on 8 April. Playing at inside-right forward he scored in a 4-1 victory. The Liverpool Courier reported 'A new man was tried in the person of C. Parry (Chester St Oswald's), who seemed to satisfy the followers of the home club with his consistent and accurate passing to his right partner.' He would make several more appearances in friendly matches at the end of the 1889/90 season – impressing observers with his drive and passing ability. He took up lodgings - along with his elder brother, John, with the Young family in Flinders Street, Kirkdale – a short distance from the club's Anfield base.

Charlie's Football League debut, came on the opening day of the 1888/89 season. It was a memorable first outing for both good and bad reasons. His goal in a 3-2 victory over Blackburn Rovers was somewhat overshadowed, becoming the first Everton player to be sent off in a League fixture. He was given his marching orders by referee Crump on 82 minutes for persistently fouling Forrest of the Rovers.

A versatile player, Charlie found himself deployed as a forward, half-back and, eventually, a full-back during his two spells as a Toffee. He was noted by contemporary sports chroniclers

for his positional sense, pace, dead-ball accuracy and robust tackling – a reputation for ‘bashing goalkeepers’ was also remarked upon. A report noted that from free-kicks he could land the ball on a spot from 60 yards. An article published in November 1889 described him thus:

‘He is nineteen years of age, 5ft 8 inches in height, and weighs 12st, 2lb when in good condition. He is a robustly built young fellow, and has been extremely useful to the team, first as a forward, and more recently – since Weir was hurt at Wolverhampton – at half-back.’

In spite of his debut dismissal, Charlie was an ever present in the team during his debut season in which Everton finished second - an agonizing two points shy of Preston North End. In his second season on Merseyside, Charlie was out of the team until an injury made Alex Latta unavailable. For the title run-in, Charlie was deployed at centre-half. In spite of three consecutive defeats at the season’s end, Everton clung on to finish above Preston and claim the club’s first ever League title. The spring of 1891 was an exciting time for Charlie; as well as winning the League, he made the first of his 13 international appearances for Wales in a 4-1 defeat to England at Sunderland’s Newcastle Road ground. He also married Ada Mervyn, a Liverpoolian.

Having lost his Everton berth Charlie moved to newly formed Liverpool Caledonian. A month after joining Caledonian, Charlie came up against Everton’s reserve team at the Woodcroft Park ground - with a point to prove. According to the Liverpool Mercury: ‘Parry played in splendid form... for the Caledonians, who at one time had the game in hand, none played better than Parry, who gave a first-class exhibition of back play.’

Wavertree-based Caledonian failed in its bid for election to the Football League in the summer of 1892 (the club disbanded a year later) so Charlie sought fresh pastures. Rumours circulated that he would be enlisted by the new occupants of Anfield - Liverpool FC. In the event, he rejoined Everton in December 1892 at its new home, Goodison Park. He would make 10 appearances that season at left-back and centre-half but was not selected for the side defeated 1-0 by Wolves in the 1893 FA Cup Final, the only one staged at Fallowfield in Manchester.

First team opportunities in the 1893/94 season were restricted. A forthright character, Charlie would have several run-ins with the Everton Committee but, such was his value to the team, they were invariably smoothed over. After censure for his behaviour by the committee Charlie earned a reprieve in December. This was well-timed as Everton enjoyed successive 8-1 and 7-1 victories in which Jack Southworth scored 4 and 6 goals respectively. He was a regular selection at full-back throughout 1894 and the first half of 1895. His final two appearances came in the autumn of 1895. In all, he had made 94 appearances in the Football League and FA Cup for Everton, scoring four goals. In December of that year he was transferred to Welsh club Newtown on condition that Everton could call on his services again if required.



LATER FOOTBALL CAREER: NEWTOWN, ABERYSTWYTH AND OSWESTRY

The Wrexham Advertiser reported on the transfer to Newtown: ‘Charlie Parry, the Everton full-back and Welsh International, has decided to throw in his lot with Newtown. He has obtained his release from Everton, and taken with him one, if not two, of the most promising junior football players in the Liverpool district. With such an addition, the holders of the Welsh Cup should stand a good chance of retaining the trophy another season.’

In his new home town Charlie juggled football with being licensee of the Oak Vaults pub in Shortbridge Street. Management of the pub was not without its problems. Struggling financially, Charlie was aided by his old club, Everton, coming to play a benefit match in November 1896. The match ended in a 5–1 victory for the visitors with Wilfred Oldham notching a hat-trick.



Aberystwyth FC Welsh Cup Winners 1900 - Charlie back row third from left

Charlie continued to play for and, sometimes captain, Wales during this period. On 29th February 1896, with Billy Meredith in the line-up, Charlie led his team to a 6-1 victory over Ireland. His 13th, and final, appearance for his country was in a defeat to England in March

1898. With Newtown he reached the final of the Welsh Cup in 1897, losing to Wrexham in the tie staged in his home town of Oswestry.

Upon leaving the Oak Vaults in 1899, Charlie moved to play for Aberystwyth FC. His debut, in a friendly, was against his former team, Newtown. He became a vital cog in the team which upset the odds to defeat Druids 3-0 in the Welsh Cup final, staged in the familiar setting of Newtown. Alongside him in the team was goalkeeper, Leigh Richmond Roose, the Wales and future Everton goalkeeper who would lose his life on the Western Front in 1916.

After just one season with Aberystwyth, Charlie returned to his roots in the borders. In the absence of a specialist goalkeeper, he turned out between the sticks for Oswestry United (forerunner of Oswestry Town and today's The New Saints). In April 1904, he was the beneficiary of a second fundraising match when Liverpool FC visited Park Hall to play Oswestry (winning 4-0). Two years later he retired from football but maintained his links to the local football club by acting as groundsman. Charlie went on to referee in the Birmingham and District League until ill-health forced him to step down.

LATER LIFE

Away from football Charlie worked as a general labourer and was later employed as a sawyer at a railway works. He lived on Smithfield Road, and subsequently at 12 Coney Green, with Ada and their six children.

In 1921 word reached Everton via Oswestry's mayor and vicar that Charlie was ill and struggling to support his family. A donation of £10 was made by the Toffees and a team was sent to play in a further benefit match - staged in April of that year. 'Wanderer', writing in the local newspaper, reported that Charlie had fallen on 'evil days' and he hoped that the cash raised might 'give him the means to regain his strength.' In a game blighted by a biting wind with hail and snow showers, the Oswestry and District XI, bolstered by two guest players from Aston Villa, beat the visitors by a goal to nil.

Charlie passed away on 4 February 1922 from tuberculosis, aged just 52. He was laid to rest in an unmarked grave in the town's cemetery. Ada would pass away just four years later. In 1940, their grandchild, Mavis, died in infancy from diphtheria and was laid to rest alongside them.

Charlie was not forgotten in Oswestry; a road was named after him and, in 2003, a plaque was erected in his memory in the market hall.





INTERNATIONAL CAREER

Charlie made 13 appearances for Wales between 1891 and 1898, captaining the team on four occasions.

DATE	OPPONENTS	VENUE	RESULT	
7 March 1891	England	Newcastle Road, Sunderland	L	1–4
21 March 1891	Scotland	Racecourse Ground, Wrexham	L	3–4
13 March 1893	England	Victoria Ground, Stoke-on-Trent	L	0–6
12 March 1894	England	Racecourse Ground, Wrexham	L	1–5
18 March 1895	England	Queen's Club, London	D	1–1
23 March 1895	Scotland	Racecourse Ground, Wrexham	D	2–2
29 February 1896	Ireland	Racecourse Ground, Wrexham	W	6–1
16 March 1896	England	Arms Park, Cardiff	L	1–9
21 March 1896	Scotland	Carolina Port, Dundee	L	0–4
6 March 1897	Ireland	Solitude Ground, Belfast	L	3–4
19 February 1898	Ireland	The Oval, Llandudno	L	0–1
19 March 1898	Scotland	Fir Park, Motherwell	L	2–5
28 March 1898	England	Racecourse Ground, Wrexham	L	0–3



Wales v England 1895 Charlie front row on ground on left



THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Parry Family

Oswestry Town Council

Arren Roberts (Oswestry Town Clerk)

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Aberystwyth Town FC

Everton FC

The New Saints

The FA of Wales

Shropshire Star

The Everton Collection

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Daniel Axworthy

