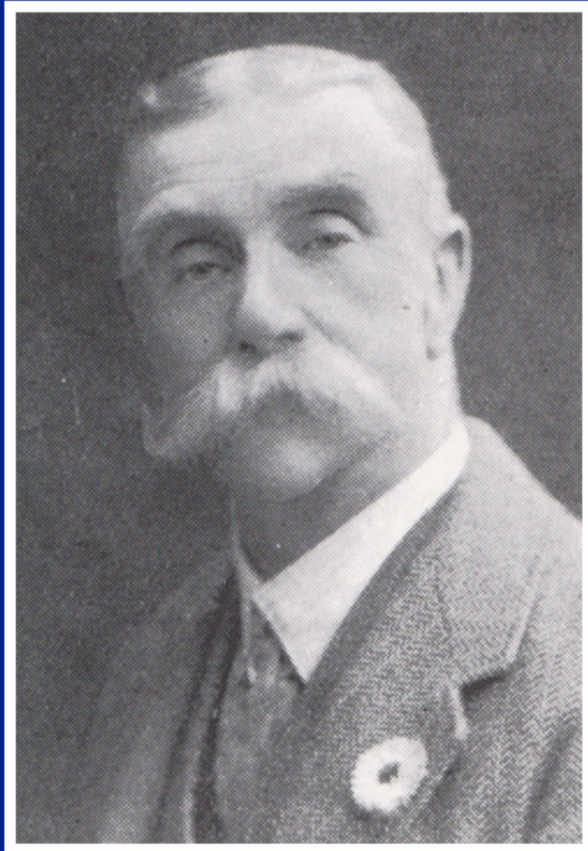


A celebration of the life of  
**THOMAS KEATES**

15 May 1850 - 13 October 1928



Director of Everton Football Club 1897-1901  
Author of the Golden Jubilee Club History  
Gentleman ; Raconteur ; Evertonian  
Proud resident of Anfield



1230hrs, Saturday 9 September 2023  
Anfield Cemetery, Priory Road, Liverpool, L4 2SL  
Please meet outside the lodge gates  
on Priory Road at 1215hrs.



ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome: Jamie Yates,  
Everton F.C. Heritage Society

Prelude: Hearts & Flowers by Alphons Czibulka  
(performed by Daniel Axworthy)

Introduction: Rev. Henry Corbett,  
Chaplain to Everton Football Club

The life of Thomas Keates: Ken Rogers,  
Chairman, Everton F.C. Heritage Society

Everton F.C. & Anfield Cemetery: David Prentice,  
on behalf of Everton Football Club

Excerpt from the History of Everton Football Club:  
Sarah Deboe, Everton F.C. Heritage Society

Prayer of Thanksgiving,  
Rededication of Grave & Blessing:  
Rev. Henry Corbett,  
Chaplain to Everton Football Club

Thanks: Jamie Yates,  
Everton F.C. Heritage Society

Outro: Johnny Todd (traditional)  
(performed by Daniel Axworthy)

Afternoon tea will follow at The Isla Gladstone Conservatory,  
1 Anfield Road, L4 0TD, on the opposite side of Stanley Park.  
Free parking is available to the rear of the building.

In August 2020, while attempting to catalogue all of the known Everton Football Club related grave sites at Anfield Cemetery, I located what I was sure was the grave of Thomas Keates, former Everton director and historian, someone I saw as the ‘godfather’ of Everton Football Club historians. Unfortunately, the grave in General Section 1, plot number 849, was lying face down on the turf. I wrote to Liverpool City Council Cemeteries and Crematoria department and was delighted when cemetery maintenance staff turned the stone over for me to check the inscription. It was indeed the Keates family plot, but the stone and lettering were in poor condition. I am grateful to my fellow Everton F.C. Heritage Society members for supporting me in seeking to have Thomas Keates’ grave restored; to Allen at E.F. Mackie stonemasons for help and advice and Thomas for his outstanding craftsmanship; to Alan Sheldon and staff at the Cemeteries and Crematoria department and Robert Bleakley at Liverpool City Council for his patience and assistance. Special thanks to Laura Horton, a three times great grandniece of Thomas Keates, for taking ownership of her ancestors’ plot on behalf of the Keates family.

*Nil Satis Nisi Optimum!*

Jamie Yates, August 2023



The following appears as a preface to Keates’ book, History of the Everton Football Club; 1878-1928 A Jubilee History:

THOMAS KEATES  
AN APPRECIATION

To the deep regret of the Directors of the Everton Football Club and to thousands of followers of football in this city, Mr. T. Keates, the compiler of this valuable and interesting history of the Club, passed away in his 79th year, while the volume was in process of publication.

The Directors would like to take this opportunity of placing on record their gratitude to Mr. Keates — a former Director of the Club, to whose best interests he devoted three years of sterling and honest service — for the infinite trouble he took in searching through voluminous records, and in presenting them to readers in such graphic and picturesque style.

They feel that this book, so full of information and reminiscence, will tend to keep his memory green among the army of supporters of the 50-year-old Everton Club.

## THOMAS KEATES

Thomas Keates was born in Cheddleton, Staffordshire, on 15 May 1850, the second son of John Keates and his wife Sarah (nee Rawson). The family relocated to the Scotland Road area of Liverpool around 1857 and by the time of the 1861 Census comprised John and Sarah, plus Thomas and his four brothers Harry, John junior, William and James, and a sister Mary. John Keates, senior, was employed as a railway porter, while Sarah raised the children.

Life in 'court' housing at this time was tough, with large families crammed into small dwellings, living cheek-by-jowl, with food scarce and sanitation poor. Remarkably, within a few short years, young Thomas Keates had dragged himself out of the slums and established himself as a successful businessman in Anfield.

Thomas' married Annie Williams, the daughter of William Williams, a Master Mariner, at St. George's Church, Everton on Christmas Eve, 1874. The marriage certificate lists Thomas as a coal merchant and, notably, his father John as a 'gentleman'. Only three years earlier, according to the 1871 Census, the Keates family were living in the humble environs of St. Martin's Cottages in Vauxhall. John still worked as a railway porter and Thomas was employed as a railway clerk. All things considered, by 1874, the Keates family had made something of a meteoric rise in both wealth and status - or at least were claiming so.

Page 197

1874 Marriage solemnized at <u>Everton</u> in the Parish of <u>St. George in the Hill</u> in the County of <u>Seacote</u>							
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.
393	24 <sup>th</sup> December 1874	Thomas Keates	Full	Bachelor	Coal Merchant	Everton	John Keates Gentleman
		Annie Williams	Full	Spinster		Liverpool	William Williams Master Mariner

Married in the Church of St. George according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by License or other by the

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Thomas Keates } in the Presence of us, { Spencer W. Williams  
Annie Williams } { G. J. Roberts } W. A. Spiller  
1874 Miss

Thomas and Annie soon started a family of their own, from their home on Woodhouse Street in Kirkdale. Daughters Jane Edith and Annie Elsie were born in 1877 and 1879 respectively, before tragedy struck. Having lost his father in 1878, Thomas' mother passed away in 1881. Neither loss could have prepared him for the death of his beloved wife, in July 1882, aged 30.

On 6 December 1883, Thomas remarried. His bride, Esther Mary Perks, was a fellow Staffordshire native, and the couple were wed at Holy Trinity Church in Anfield. The 1891 Census records the Keates family living at 58 Rockfield Road. Around this time Thomas began to take an active interest in the goings-on at Everton Football Club, who were tenants at the nearby Anfield ground. Champions of England for the first time in the 1890/91 season, major upheaval followed in the immediate aftermath of this success. A fallout with landlord, John Houlding, saw the Everton members vote to relocate to premises of their own. Solicitor George Mahon led the rebel contingent, and they secured a site across Stanley Park on Goodison Road.

A man of action, Thomas Keates had acquired shares in Everton by the early 1890s and would help arrange a series of meetings of irate Everton shareholders during May 1894, as discontent festered over how the organisation was being run. A stormy Annual General Meeting took place at the Picton Lecture Hall at Central Library on 25th June and Thomas Keates played a starring role, admonishing the Everton directorate for failing to manage finances appropriately and squandering money on players not fit to wear the famous blue shirt. Remarkably, given such outbursts in opposition to club authority figures, Thomas Keates would find himself voted onto the Everton Football Club board of directors three years later at the 1897 Annual General Meeting. He would serve the club diligently, before failing to gain reelection at the 1901 meeting.

By 1901 Keates, his wife and daughters had moved to 37 Lothair Road, nowadays long-since demolished and hidden beneath the footprint of the modern-day Anfield stadium. Jane and Annie would both train as teachers and work at local schools, while Thomas would serve on the school board and involve himself in local council matters. Annie would marry late in life, while Jane would remain a spinster. Neither daughter had children. Thomas and Esther would make one last move together, around the corner to 80 Anfield Road, in the mid to late 1920s.

In later years, Thomas devoted much of his time to writing and correspondence. He submitted opera reviews to the Liverpool press, often under the moniker 'The Old 'Un', wrote about marine lore and contributed to the sports pages with his memories of early football matches at Stanley Park, a stone's throw from his front door.

In the spring of 1928, Liverpool Echo writer 'Blackstaff' reported that 'Tom Keates is compiling a book of the old club', in time for the Golden Jubilee anniversary of St. Domingo's Football Club, which had been founded in 1878 and rechristened Everton in 1879.

The Everton Football Club minute books of the era report a dispute between the club and Keates as to payment for his work, with the club's token offer of 100 Guineas not up to muster. Alas, Keates' frustrations proved pretty much academic. He passed away, aged 78, on 13 October 1928, at the Robert Davies Nursing Home in West Derby, shortly after having undergone an unspecified operation.

Thomas Keates was buried at Anfield Cemetery, with his parents John and Sarah, on 17 October 1928. His 'History of the Everton Football Club 1878-1928: A Jubilee History' was published by Thomas Brakell Limited the following year, 1929. A gala jubilee banquet was held by Everton Football Club at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool city centre and graced by a host of names of St. Domingo and Everton legend. Surely, had he lived, Thomas Keates would have been among the guests of honour, given his knack for storytelling and invaluable contribution to recording the events and characters of the first half century of Everton Football Club in such loving detail.

**KEATES** Thomas of 80 Anfield-road **Liverpool** died 13 October 1928  
 Probate **Liverpool** 1 December to Jane Edith Keates and Annie  
 Elsie Keates spinsters. Effects £1831 5s. 2d.

I am informed by one of our old half-backs of the eighties (W. H. Jones), that Tom Keates is compiling a book of the old club. I hope he will remember the old names. He may remember the St. Benedict players, who joined Everton in 1884:—Charley Jolliffe, Authur Brown, Will Bolton, Fred Shiel, W. H. Jones, Walter Richards, Frank Richards, Willie Briscoe, J. Shears, Jack Whittle, Tom Whittle, Mike Higgins, Jimmy Higgins, Teddy Jones, Will Bolton, Arthur Bolton, also Walter Mowbray, Edwin Berry, J. A-bury, and T. Bargary. The matches played by the second team were: Oakfield Rovers, St. Mary's, Kirkdale; Linacre Gas Works, Linacre Bible Class, Brunswick Rovers, Fairfield Olympia, Birkenhead Argyle, St. Gabriel's, St. Peter's, Ormskirk Wanderers, Peasley Cross, Haydock, Prescot, Bromborough Pool, and Aigburth Vale.

(above) 'Blackstaff' writes in the Liverpool Echo of 11 July 1928.  
 (below) the Liverpool Echo obituary for Keates, 16 October 1928.

## A Liverpool Personality.



Mr. Tom Keates, who has just died at West Derby, was seventy-eight, and had just completed a history of the Everton Football Club, of which he was an original director. There was a law case between Mr. Keates and the club concerning this Jubilee Book. Mr. Keates was known by his works. Although in coal as a business affair, he concentrated upon sports, opera, sea lore, and writing for the newspapers. He had a fine flow of language, and a happy aptitude for gossip-cum-news.



The new headstone commissioned by Everton FC Heritage Society, crafted and installed by E. F. Mackie, Monumental Masons (founded 1887), August 2023.