

Leadgate Football - The Early Years

Football has a long and ancient history with its earliest images dating from Elizabethan woodcuts. The world's oldest existing football was found in the bedroom of Mary Queen of Scots and when she died Shakespeare would have only been 3 years old. By the time he was referring to Football in his plays it had become known as a bloody violent game of the lower classes. In the 18th Century it was classed as "mob football" played by neighbouring towns or villages in pitched battle between each other to force a ball over designated marks and this violent game passed down through the ages surviving as Shrovetide tradition. During the mid 19th Century however the Victorians developed concepts of sportsmanship in all sports and football was codified in the public schools of Southern England.

The Football Association was set up in 1863 and published a standard set of rules establishing the contemporary game as we know it. The FA secretary C W Alcock who instigated the world's oldest cup competition in 1871 was Sunderland born and a keen footballer who captained Wanderers the first side to win the FA Cup. In the 1880's this modern form of game developed rapidly, appealing both to the gentry of public schools in the South of England and the working classes of the industrial North of England and Scotland. There was however distinct divisions on the matter of players receiving payment. The affluent gentry controlled the FA so tried to regulate the game on its original amateur basis but it became obvious with the growing attraction of the sport to a public prepared to pay to see the best players, that the game was heading towards professionalism. In 1883 a threshold was reached when Blackburn Olympic beat Old Etonians to become the first professional club to win The FA Cup and from then on professional teams dominated, forming their own league in 1888. To try and maintain the amateur game the FA Amateur Cup was established in 1893 and this became popular not just in the SE where powerful amateur leagues were long established but particularly in the NE who supplied 7 of the first 10 winners.

In the last few decades of the 19th century football mania had swept the Northern Coalfields and County Durham in particular became a stronghold of the sport. In the NE cities prior to 1892 there was no dominant teams. Sunderland Albion had been formed in 1888 as rivals to Sunderland AFC and played in a Football Alliance that included Newton Heath, the precursor to Manchester United. Although Albion tended to lose their games against Sunderland they were good enough to beat Newcastle West End at St James Park then Newcastle East End in successive rounds of the FA Cup of 1891. The following year these two Newcastle teams merged to become United to try and compete against Sunderland, which for the rest of 1890's was the strongest side in the country winning the league three times and being runner up twice. Professional teams were also developing on Teeside but from the mid 1890's it was accepted that many teams in the Northern Coalfield were making payments or otherwise subsidising players who had to miss their workshifts to be available to travel quite long distances to away games. These village teams to survive had to become commercial enterprises with access to maintained football pitches requiring gate money. Nevertheless in County Durham most colliery villages developed an appetite for football. One of these, West Auckland won The Thomas Lipton Trophy often described as the first World Cup by beating Juventus in 1909 then again in 1911. Italy, Germany and Switzerland all sent their best professional teams to the tournament so it shows how competitive amateur football in Durham must have been for one of their more ordinary teams to win against the best in Europe.

Press coverage in the early years was a bit murky with but The Glasgow Evening Post recorded that on 2nd January 1880 A Scotch Canadian team played a Tyneside & District team in front of two thousand spectators despite the Association game being little known in the Newcastle district.

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION.—The above was formed last January, the object being to further the interests of the association game in the two counties. A considerable amount of success has attended the movement, there being now the following clubs playing the rules:—The Tyne (Newcastle), the Rangers (Gateshead), Corbridge-on-Tyne, North-Eastern (Newcastle), Burnopfield, Haughton-le-Skerne, Ferryhill, Darlington Grammar School, Derwent Rovers (Burnopfield), Sedgfield, Bishop Middleham, and Gainford Academy. Of these, the first eight have joined the association. A challenge cup, to be competed for this year, is now on view at Mr George Brown's, hosier, Grey-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The cup cost £50, and is a fine specimen of the silversmith's art. The entries for the cup do not close until October 25th, thus giving new clubs plenty of time to get into working order. The following are the officers and committee for the ensuing year:—President, Sir Hedworth Williamson, Bart.; vice-presidents—Sir M W Ridley, Bart, M.P., and Sir W C James, Bart; committee—J E Evans (Tyne), A S Eain (Rangers), F Knott (Corbridge), W Hurue (North-Eastern), J Bruce (Burnopfield), R Booth (Haughton - le - Skerne), J G Glover (Darlington Grammar School), and W Kitching (Ferryhill). Each new club as it joins has the right to nominate a member for the committee. Hon. treasurer—E A Simpson; hon. secretary—A J Harrison, 13, Westworth-place, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Local press cuttings from the same year however show the Northumberland & Durham Football Association being formed. Football must have kicked off before that as there were already 12 local known teams in existence including one in the Derwent Valley. We therefore can assume that by the late 1870's Association football was also being played on makeshift pitches in the growing villages of the NW Durham coalfield. Leadgate was one of these Durham colliery villages and by the late 1880's could boast two rival football clubs, each running several teams in matches attended by several thousand spectators. These clubs appeared to develop on sectarian lines as the new Catholic Church at Brooms attempted to persuade the mainly Irish young men in its congregation to take to sport rather than alcohol. Two of these men are now known to be the Costello brothers, left by their Irish father as 9 and 11 year old boys in Leadgate as he

wandered the North seeking work as an itinerant stone mason. Originally born in Wales, they seemed to have taken to the road when their mother died, possibly in childbirth. Why they settled in Leadgate is a mystery but it maybe they regarded themselves as as exiled so named the football team they founded as Leadgate Exiles around 1885 when they were in their mid twenties. They probably though had been kicking a ball around throughout their teenage years with other village lads when presumably the local Catholic Church at Brooms decided to provide a regulation Association Football pitch opposite their cemetery close to the Eden Colliery where most of the men worked. We know that the Exiles were formed in 1885 through an "american sketch" published in the Newcastle Chronicle naming its founder John Costello being regarded as "one of the most prominent pioneers of the Association code in the North of England". It confirms that John in the 1890's was secretary of he club and had played as their centre forward up to 1891. Press cuttings covering the Exiles teams from 1887 show William his younger brother as captain up to 1889 also playing regularly until about 1891 when he seems to have sustained a serious injury playing for the district. Both are however reported in the press as representing the Exiles at Durham FA meetings and John went on to serve on Durham FA referee selection committees.



MR. JOHN COSTELLO.

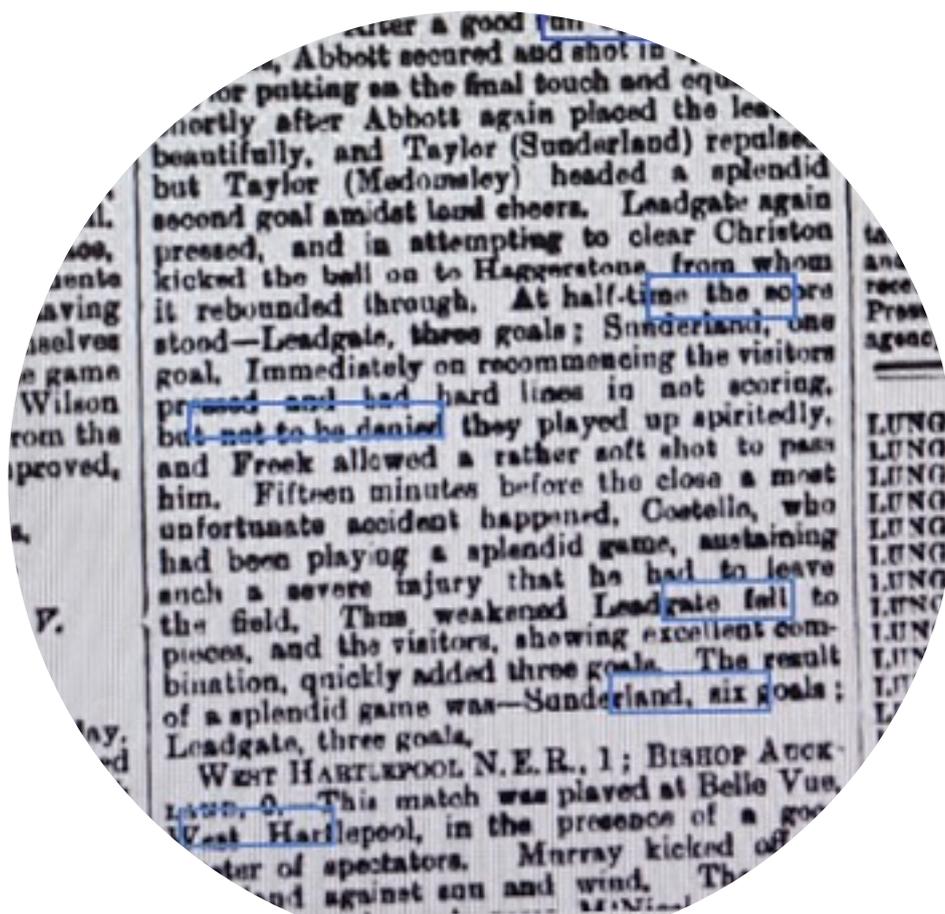


[Engraved from a photograph taken by Mr. W. G. Moore,
11, Upper Sackville Street, Dublin.]

One of the most prominent pioneers of the Association code in the North of England is Mr. J. Costello, the popular secretary of the Leadgate Exiles Club. Mr. Costello is a native of Neath, Glamorganshire, and settled in the district 23 years ago. He was one of the earliest members of the Consett Cricket Club, and ten years since started the Leadgate Exiles Football Club, and he has ever since been secretary. He played centre forward for the club up to the season of '91, in which year they headed the North-West Durham Alliance. He has been for some time a member of the Council of the Durham Football Association. Mr. Costello is also secretary of various other athletic organisations, and the founder of the Leadgate Dramatic Society. To these duties he adds the role of District Councillor, and he is also a leading member of the Roman Catholic body in Leadgate.

NORTH SANDS SHIPYARD ROVERS I v. LEADGATE I.—These teams meet at Aobs Field, Fulwell, to-morrow.—Teams:—Leadgate I. : Goal, M. Clare ; backs, W. McGee and P. Hughes ; half-backs, P. Quinn, T. Gaffney, and J. McDonald ; forwards, J. Argyle, W. Costello, J. Costello, M. McKeaver, and J. McGee. N.S.S.R. : Goal, G. Kirtley ; backs, G. Munday and W. Milburn ; half-backs, A. Munday, S. Plumpton, and J. Stonehouse ; forwards, T. Stafford, J. Laing, J. Hunter, T. Henderson, and T. Beck.

The Exiles featured quite a lot in the regional newspapers which often published reports and team lists although primarily focusing on their own local teams playing the Exiles. William Costello (Billy or mousey) is first recorded above alongside his brother in the Exiles teams in 1887 against North Sands Shipyard Rovers. He was captain by 1889, but suffered severe injury in 1891 whilst “*playing a splendid game*”



The only other Exiles player named in that District team was W McGee who seems to have taken over the captaincy for the next decade. The Exiles played against not only the top amateur teams but many professional teams such as Sunderland, Newcastle, Middlesborough & Darlington. Also very often they played the professional reserve teams so the Exile players faced on occasion some of the top players of the day. In 1889 for instance Leadgate Exiles hosted the Sunderland Reserve team containing players who would go on to be part of the most successful team of the 1890's. William Costello captained that Exiles team and the Consett Guardian press cuttings illustrate a captain's duties including after match entertainment such as concert singing in the local pub where celebrations normally went on into evenings.

SMOKING CONCERT AT LEADGATE.

At the conclusion of the match between the Leadgate Exiles and Durham Medal winners on Saturday, the visitors were entertained to tea, and immediately afterwards a smoking concert was held at Mr Isaac Thirlwell's, Bradley Arms, Leadgate. The spacious room was packed. Mr J. McOurley (hon. secretary) was voted to the chair, whilst Mr A. Davison, of county fame, fulfilled the duties of vice-chairman.—The chairman complimented both teams for the pleasant and scientific game they had played that day, and remarked that although they had tried their skill with some of the best clubs in the two counties, it was the first time the Exiles had encountered the famous Sunderland Reserve. He expressed a hope that they would meet more frequently, and that the same unanimity which prevailed that evening would continue. (Applause). He wished "Success to the Sunderland Club." (Cheers).—The vice-chairman ably responded, and the health of both teams was drunk with musical honours. Mr Wm. Costello (captain of the Exiles) opened the programme. Songs followed gentlemen:—Mr Hogarth, "Call Mr J. Monaghan, "Cup of cold The famous Exiles team" (self-tanger, "True till death"; Mr "The lad of"; Mr O. Reilly, "Tie a bunch of"; Mr P. Daly, "Mewers Wm. Costello, Monaghan together "M'Manus's Band," with deafening applause. Mr A. with a recitation, "The grave dig- nks to the chairman and vice- most jovial and successful even- one expressing themselves highly hort.

LEADGATE EXILES V SUNDERLAND RESERVE.—This match, which has been the theme of discussion for several weeks past, was brought off on the Exiles' ground. Albeit there was considerable opposition, a large crowd assembled to witness the game. Sunderland won the toss, and elected to play with the breeze in their favour. On the leather being set in motion, Hogarth, assisted by his wings, made a faint run up, but was speedily dispossessed by Forrest, who gave to Quinn, the latter passing to Walton, who carried the ball right up to the corner flag, and then centred across the goal mouth, but the centre, in his endeavours to score, got rather high. From the goal-kick the Medal holders dribbled the ball well up, and Callaghan coming out to relieve, missed his kick, when the leather rolled through the posts. This was certainly hard lines, as it was the softest goal ever scored against the team. Shortly after the visitors got a corner. Davison took the kick, and sent in a beauty, which Hogarth headed through. Just as the ball was again re-started, half-time was called, with the score—

Sunderland Reserve.....Two goals
Leadgate Exiles.....Nil

On changing ends the visitors tried hard to get into the home territory, but McGuire and Monaghan stuck well to their work, and frequently sent the leather well into the visitors' quarters. Ultimately the Exiles' forwards passed down the ground, and P. Hughes scored the first point for the popular jerseys. The villagers then awoke from their slumber, and kept Potts busily engaged fasting out for a long time, but O. Quinn at length sent in a rather swift one, which he failed to stop. The final score was—

Sunderland Reserve.....Two goals
Leadgate Exiles.....Two goals

Teams:—Exiles—Goal, H. Callaghan; backs, J. McGuire and J. Monaghan; half-backs, T. Forrest, Wm. Costello (capt.), and P. Hughes; forwards, G. Walton and C. Quinn, right wing; P. Quinn, centre; J. Costello and P. Hughes, left wing. Umpire, Mr Thos. Kennedy. Sunderland—Goal, Potts; backs, Wishart (capt.) and Spain; half-backs, Wainwright, Ford, and Dickson; forwards, Hogarth, Andrews, Beaconbridge, and Davison. Umpire, Mr Smart.

THE CHARGES OF ROUGH PLAYING.

To the Editor of the Concert Guardian.

SIR,—In reference to the letter of Mr M. V. Steggall, concerning the Exiles' rough play, allow me to inform that gentleman that the Exiles are famed for their fair play, and to back my assertion I refer to such clubs as Sunderland Reserve (Medal holders), Sunderland Albion Reserve, Newcastle West End Reserve, Birtley, Gateshead, Newcastle Co-operative, and last, but not least, Darlington St. Augustine's (winners of the Cleveland Cup)—one and all of whom declare that they have never met a lot of finer fellows. As for their ignorance, I hope Mr M. V. Steggall will excuse them, as they have not had a college education, and remember the words of the poet—

"There's none so vile on earth doth live,
But to the earth some good doth give."

—Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS MCCURLEY.

7, West Street, Leadgate,
Dec. 23rd, 1889.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

In consideration of a handsome pecuniary inducement Darlington have agreed to play their tie with **Leadgate Exiles** in the second round of the Durham Cup at Leadgate, and are taking with them their strongest team. I have no doubt the local men will play the Skerneside professionals a good game, and that the visit of the Darlingtonians will draw an unusually large gate.

SATURDAY'S PLAY.
ASSOCIATION.
ENGLISH AMATEUR CUP—SECOND ROUND.

Willington Athletic.....	3	Kendal.....	1
THIRD ROUND.			
DIVISION I.			
South Bank.....	2	South Bank Blue Star ..	0
Whitby.....	2	Lofthouse.....	0
DIVISION II.			
Leadgate Exiles	2	Berwick Rangers.....	1



Prior to that the Newcastle Daily Leader of 5th November, 1888 records W Costello playing alongside his brother John in their 2-1 win home win over West Hartlepool whilst the Sunderland papers reported games against their top teams. Exiles in the 1890's were obviously very ambitious, evidenced by their participation in national cup competitions and hosting of professional sides to their ground.

Leadgate Exiles for most of the late 19th Century dominated the local leagues but in 1897 their rivals Leadgate Park came to fore reaching the FA Amateur Cup semi-finals putting out the champions Bishop Auckland in the process. Both McGee and Costello played for the Exiles in the great Leadgate riot match of 1890 before 4,000 spectators which matched or exceeded the crowds on that day attending the big professional matches. North East newspapers such as the Northern Echo and The Newcastle Daily Leader covered the game that sparked the famous Leadgate Riot of 27th October, 1890. The two reports suggest a fast and furious hard fought match of some violence both on and off the pitch.

RIVAL FOOTBALL CLUBS.

SERIOUS DISTURBANCE AT LEADGATE.

The feeling existing between the rival football clubs—Leadgate Exiles and Leadgate Park—who played in the second round of the Durham County Challenge Cup Competition on Saturday afternoon, culminated at night in a rather serious disturbance. A good deal of badinage had been indulged in both before and after the match, and about half-past ten at night a regular melee broke out at the Bradley Arms, Leadgate, the headquarters of the Leadgate Exiles Club. The local police, headed by Sergeant Nicholson, were called inside to quell the disturbance, and in the course of the scuffle a man named Joseph Carr was arrested, the handcuffs being placed on his wrists. A brother of the person in custody thereupon armed himself with a stout stick, and, it is alleged, smashed in the window frames, panels, and glass in front of the public-house. The police came again, and essayed to take him into custody, but the man attacked the sergeant, and hit him two blows with the stick, and then ran off in the direction of Dipton. Sergt. Nicholson and P.C. Crisp set off in pursuit, but were unable to capture him, and the chase had to be given up. Meanwhile the uproar continued in the public-house, where P.C. Lambert was left in charge of the person arrested. Some of his companions, however, seized hold of the officer, and throwing him down held him on the ground, and Carr effected his escape with the handcuffs still upon his wrists. The disturbance still increasing and several fights occurring in the main street, word was despatched to Consett, and Inspector Benzies, accompanied by three or four constables, hastened to Leadgate. They found a great deal of disorder and excitement in Front Street and some of the back thoroughfares, the yells and shouts which rent the air being deafening. The female portion of the community seemed to be the worst offenders in this respect. The police made several charges on the turbulent mob, and eventually succeeded in dispersing the crowd, two of the ringleaders, Wheatley and Curry, being taken to Consett lock-up. The people were decrying the various clubs, and some stones were thrown at each other by the opposing factions. About midnight the place quietened down. It is believed that some of the other parties concerned in the affray will be summoned before the justices.

TEAMS.

STOCKTON.—Goal, McEachlan; backs, Shaw and Welford; half-backs, Gillies, Chatt, and Rothwell; forwards, Wood, Gray, Strachan, Evans and Deak; Umpire, Mr Glover, of Darlington.

IRONBOLDS.—Goal, W C Chalmers (international); backs, T Anderson and G Miller (capt); half-backs, W Hopewell, J Matthews, and T Seymour; forward, T Cronshaw, D McLaren, W McRoddie, H Galbraith and C Dickson. Referee, Mr J R Douglas, Gatehead. Umpires, Messrs Glover and O'Hara, Darlington.

LEADGATE EXILES.—Goal, H Callaghan; back, Wm M'Gee (capt) and P Hughes; half-backs, Pat Hughes, W Thompson, and J Monaghan; forwards, M'Gee, Wm M'Kie, P Quin, Wm Costello, C Quin. Umpire, Mr J Costello.

LEADGATE PARK.—Goal, Bendling; backs, Hewi and Cairns; half-backs, Walton, Wilson, and Stephen; forwards, Robinson, Bunnhope, Haggerston Hunter, and Wallsford. Umpire, Mr F Jackson. Referee, Mr J R Douglas, Gateshead.

THE CUP TIE AT LEADGATE.

"A Spectator" writes:—

This game was the most outrageous affair it has ever been my lot to witness. If such games as the one I saw are allowed to take place then the sooner football is done away with the better. From the very commencement of the game it was quite evident the Exiles meant to win, and the manner in which they knocked the Park men about let the spectators see that they had not come to be beaten. Football was not shown at all. One team could not and the other would not.

RIOT NEAR CONSETT.

A Public-house Wrecked.

Two Prisoners Escape.

The feeling existing between the rival football clubs—Leadgate Exiles and Leadgate Park—which played in the second round of the Durham County Challenge Cup competition on Saturday afternoon, culminated at night in a rather serious riot. For the past week the tie has been the principal topic of local conversa-

DURHAM CUP.—SECOND ROUND.

LEADGATE EXILES, 2; LEADGATE PARK, 1.—On the ground of the latter, before fully 1,000 people. At the outset the game was fast and ferocious, and the greatest excitement prevailed, the teams being formidable local rivals. The Exiles notched the first goal, and before half-time the Park equalised matters. In the second half the Exiles registered another goal to their credit, ultimately winning by two goals to one. Mr Bell, Sunderland, was referee.

EXCITING SCENES.

The feeling existing between the rival football clubs of Leadgate Exiles and Leadgate Park—who played in the second round of the Durham Challenge Cup competition on Saturday afternoon—culminated at night in an unfortunate riot, which assumed a rather serious character. It is supposed that the partisans of both teams must have come in contact with each other. The local police, headed by Sergeant Nicholson, were called upon to quell the disturbance, and in the course of the scuffle a man was apprehended, and the handcuffs were placed upon his wrists. Another man thereupon seized hold of a stick, and it is alleged smashed in the window frames, panels, and glass in front of a public-house. The police came up, and essayed to take him into custody; but the man assaulted the sergeant by striking him some blows with the stick, and then took to his heels in the direction of Dipton. Sergt. Nicholson and P.C. Crisp set off in pursuit, but were unable to capture him, and the chase was given up. In the meanwhile the uproar continued in the public-house, where P.C. Lambert was left in charge of the person arrested. Some of his companions, however, seized hold of the policeman, and, throwing him down, held the officer there, and the prisoner effected his escape with the handcuffs on his wrists. The disturbance increasing, and several fights having occurred in the streets, word was despatched to Consett, and Inspector Benzies, accompanied by three or four constables, hastened to Leadgate. They found a great deal of disorder and excitement in Front-street and some of the back thoroughfares, the yells and shouts sent up being something deafening. Two men were apprehended and taken to the Consett lock-up.

A few years later however in 1895 the two teams came together in a fund raising benefit match instigated by John Costello who was by then the secretary of the Exiles. By this time Leadgate Exiles received national recognition because they were one of first teams to enter the FA Amateur Cup. This was established in 1893 to promote the game and its first draw shows many household names such as Tottenham Hotspur, Ipswich Town and Middlesbrough alongside Leadgate Exiles who are therefore referenced in many Football Books or Team websites recording their histories. Books about the early Midland teams record that in the 1894/5 competition only a handful of their teams took part one of which was Berwick Rangers who reached Round 2 and played "host to the unknown Leadgate Exiles who went away with the 2-1 victory to put an end to Berwick's attempt on the Amateur Cup".

Few, if any, Midland clubs bothered* with FA Amateur Cup when it was started in 1893 from the desire of the Southern amateur clubs to have a national cup for non-professional teams, which, by the 1890s, were monopolising national football events. Berwick Rangers were one of only a handful of Midland sides who took part, apart from Bournville Athletic, Shrewsbury Town, Leek, and Atherstone. They were drawn at home to Darlington from County Durham in the 1st round of the 1894/5 competition, and the northern side promptly withdrew on the grounds of distance. Round 2 saw Berwick play host to unknown **Leadgate Exiles**, who went away with the 2-1 victory to put an end to Berwick's attempt on the Amateur Cup.

1895.

FOOTBALL

ASSOCIATION.

Presentation to the Consett AFC Secretary.—The members and supporters of the above club met at their headquarters, the Burton Hotel, Consett, for the purpose of making a presentation to the secretary, Mr A E Kempster, on the occasion of his recent marriage. The room was packed to excess. The popular captain (Mr J Carruthers) occupied the chair, and made the presentation, which consisted of a carved butter-cooler and knife.—Mr Chas Tennent, in a flattering speech, spoke of the ability displayed by Mr Kempster as secretary to the club.—Mr Kempster replied in suitable terms, remarking that he had always endeavoured to make the club a success, and he felt greatly indebted to them for the useful present he had received that evening. He would always cherish the gift, and it would spur him to do his very utmost for the welfare of the club. (Applause.)—Other speeches followed.

North-West Durham Clubs and the Local Distress.—On account of the very large amount of distress prevalent in the Consett district the local football clubs intend to show their practical sympathy with the large and increasing army of the unemployed. Mr J. Costello, the secretary of the Leadgate Exiles AFC, has kindly offered the services of his team and the ground for a benefit match for the above object. The Leadgate Park AFC have also intimated their willingness to assist, although owing to the number of Tyneside League engagements they have yet to fulfil, they will be obliged to play on a Wednesday. At the instigation of Mr J Ross, jun, of Leadgate, the well-known referee, a meeting will be held at the Coach and Horses Inn, Leadgate, on Monday night first, to which the representatives of the following clubs have been invited:—Dipton Wanderers, Leadgate Exiles, Leadgate Park, Hobson Wanderers, Consett Town, and others. The sanction of the Durham County Association has been obtained for playing these benefit matches.

Lomb, half-backs; G Lambert, Wm Waller, J Forrest, and H Marshall, forwards.
Referee—Mr W J Watson. Linesmen Westmorland and Halliday.

DURHAM CUP.

Sunderland A v. Rise Carr Rangers.—Sunderland A—Thompson, goalkeeper; English, backs; Dowe, Dale, and Hogbacks; Goodchild, Hunter, Brand, Le Call, forwards.

Dipton Wanderers v. Hebburn Argyle. 2.30.

Dipton Wanderers—Walker, goalkeeper and Coates, backs; Beckwith, Buck, and half-backs; Crooks, Ellis, Temple, V Walker, forwards.

Referee—Mr Buckton, Darlington.

DURHAM JUNIOR CUP.—Second

Hobson v. Cornsaw Rovers.—Hobson; Hobson—Brown, goalkeeper; W Henderson, Weedy, backs; Smith, E Henderson, and half-backs; Evans, Bell, Muirhead, Mad Low, forwards. Reserve—Gibbon.

NORTHERN ALLIANCE.

Blyth v. Southwick.—Blyth.

Blyth—Vickers, goalkeeper; Delaney and backs; Taylor, Carr, and Manners, 1 McNally, Murton, Nicholson, Patten, and forwards.

Southwick—R Cleet, goalkeeper; A O'Connell, McLarny, backs; D Fenton, J McLarn Bell, half-backs; A Reed, J Smith, T L Lawson, and F Owens, forwards.

Jarrow v. Willington Athletic.—Jarrow

A match that is causing a considerable excitement in mid-river football circles between these keen rivals at Jarrow to the auspices of the Northern Alliance. The committee are making every arrangement. The following will represent the Blyth:—J Cassidy, goalkeeper; J Wood and backs; Alex Jones, J Donald, and J V half-backs; C Harling, J Stenton, J Ca

1895.		Y'S COMMERCIAL.		FOOTBALL.	
2 p.c.				SATURDAY'S PLAY.	
SUMMARY OF RESULTS.		ENGLISH CUP—QUALIFYING COMPETITION—		PRELIMINARY ROUND.	
DIVISION I.		DIVISION I.		DIVISION I.	
Bishop Auckland	2	Howden le Wear	1	Howden le Wear	1
Gateshead N.E.R.	4	Ryeh	1	Ryeh	1
Jarrow	1	Shankhouse	1	Shankhouse	1
Newcastle East End	2	Arwell Rovers	1	Arwell Rovers	1
Stockton	3	Saltburn Swifts	1	Saltburn Swifts	1
South Bank	3	Hebburn Arnyll	1	Hebburn Arnyll	1
Tow Law	3	Darlington	1	Darlington	1
Willington & Blisdon	7	Branton Rovers	1	Branton Rovers	1
Willington & Blisdon	7	Newcastle United a bye	1	Newcastle United a bye	1
DIVISION II.		DIVISION II.		DIVISION II.	
West Manchester	3	Accrington	1	Accrington	1
Howden le Wear	3	Clayton	1	Clayton	1
Charley	3	Newt	1	Newt	1
Dewaldsworth Rovers	3	Carlisle City	1	Carlisle City	1

NEWCASTLE UNITED v. LEADGATE EXILES.

In fulfilment of an agreement come to last season, the above teams met on the Broons ground at Leadgate last evening, in the presence of about eight hundred spectators. Unfortunately, the visitors found on their arrival at Leadgate that the bag containing their football attire had gone astray, and this necessitated a general hunt through the town in search of knickers, jerseys, &c. The Leadgate Park Football Club supplied the players with the necessary articles, although they had to play in their ordinary boots, and this adversely affected their play on the somewhat greasy ground. The players lined up as under:—

Newcastle United—Watts, goalkeeper; White and Foyler, backs; Miller, Graham, and Stott, half-backs; Lennox, Thompson, Adams, Aitken, and Wardrope, forwards.

Leadgate Exiles.—Callaghan, goalkeeper; W. McGee and Haggan, backs; P. Hutton, McGrath, and Rafferty, half-backs; J. B. Robson, J. McGee, Doyle, Taley, and Brunnen, forwards.

Referee.—Mr B. Rodgers, Leadgate.

Adams commenced for the United, towards the entrance goal. After some even play the Exiles assumed the aggressive and attacked incessantly, but Watts saved grandly. The visitors then raced away to the other end, and from a pass by Thompson, Aitken got past. This was followed by Wardrope shooting just over with a scorching shot. McGrath cleared the home lines after some pressure, and Brunnen and Haley ran the ball well down, the former getting in a rare shot, and Watts was nearly caught napping, but he managed to get the ball out of danger. Still the Exiles maintained the upper hand, and after a scrimmage in the goal mouth, the ball did not re-emerge, and from the rebound was Wolverhampton Wanderers' numbers from the produce very keen struggles.

The Northern Echo however reports this result as being on 4th December, 1893 and so it seems the Exiles reached the third round of the very first FA Amateur Cup.

The same paper records them being knocked out the following year in 1894 by Middlesbrough and a Liverpool FC website (Lancashire Evening Post, 04-08-1897) records their team participating alongside Leadgate Exiles in 1897. (<https://playupliverpool.com/1897/08/02/participating-teams-in-the-fa-cup-189798/>). At this time the Exiles were drawing large crowds which allowed them to fund payment of professional visiting teams. Probably the greatest of these was Newcastle United who the national press reported as having been drawn away against Leadgate Exiles in September 1895, although mysteriously Exiles scratched to give the professionals a bye. The following year it emerged there had been an agreement which Newcastle United fulfilled to visit Leadgate and they played a 1-1 draw although they left their kit on the train and had to be loaned some from Leadgate Park. This game got a special mention at the AGM which confirmed the club had a healthy bank balance. The Exiles goalkeeper against that Newcastle side was H Callaghan who would later go on to play for Derby County at a time when it was one of best teams in the country. Another notable player in that match was W McGee who played alongside Billy from 1888 and seemed to have played for over a decade if the medal below was presented in 1899. We know from press reports that by 1895 that John Costello was the Exiles secretary and that by then Billy had probably hung up his boots because he is no longer reported on the team sheets but from 1896 appears to be part of their management whether alongside his brother John.

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CUP.

The undermentioned ties in the preliminary round of the competition are to be played to-day, on the ground of the first named Club:—

DIVISION I.

Jarrow v. Shankhouse.
 Swallowwell Arwell Rovers v. Newcastle East End.
 Howden le Wear v. Bishop Auckland.
 Gateshead N.E.R. v. Ryeh.
 Stockton v. Saltburn Swifts.
 Tow Law v. Darlington.
 South Bank v. Hebburn Arnyll.
 Willington Athletic v. Branton Rovers.
 Leadgate Exiles v. Newcastle United.

capacity comes up to
 of 35,000. Forty thousand is the
 amount of, but five thousand fewer will suffice.
 In their match with Burton Swifts last week
 Derby County gave a trial to H. Callaghan, the
 Leadgate Exiles' goalkeeper. So satisfactorily did
 he perform that the directors of the Derby club have
 since permanently engaged him.
 Charlie Hogan, the well-known Irish cross-country
 hockey, has now quite recovered from the serious
 injury he met with at Tralee last month.
 of Driffield, the Yorkshir



Newspaper articles reported that Billy by 1896 was representing them on Durham FA cup committees although he may have been deputising for his brother John who is cited in Newspaper articles as being a referee and on Durham FA's referee assessment panel. William and his brother John were therefore involved in the Exiles most ambitious years from 1893 to 1897 when they travelled far and wide to meet the great and good. For a teams like Leadgate Park and Exiles to get into the late stages of the FA Amateur cup suggests that financial support and organisation being well developed and we know from contemporary newspapers that these local football matches were attended by thousands, They also ran up to 3 teams each so were significant commercial operations.

LEADGATE EXILES v. GATESHEAD.
 Played at Leadgate before a large number of spectators. The ground was soft and slippery, but a fast and exciting game was played. With the incline in their favour in the first half the Gateshead men scored once, but after change of ends the home side put on two goals, and won as under:—

LEADGATE EXILES.....	TWO GOALS.
GATESHEAD	ONE GOAL.

DURHAM FOOTBALL
THE SENIOR AND JUNIOR CUPS.
 A meeting of the Challenge Cup Committee of the Durham Football Association was held on Thursday night at the Three Tuns Hotel, Durham, when the draws for the second rounds of the Durham Senior and Junior Cups were conducted. Mr A. Grundy, Whitburn, presided, and there were also present Messrs J. Mover, Haughton-le-Skerne; T. B. Swinburne, ...; J. R. Douglas, Gateshead; Cor ... Southwick; R. P. Croughton, Bish ...; W. Costello, Leadgate; A. Ste ... Hartlepool.—A protest by ... in the first

The Exiles attracted top teams and large crowds with reports from 1880's suggesting they must have had facilities for after match evening entertainment. Although the exact location of the Leadgate Exiles pitch has not been confirmed it was known to be at The Brooms which is the name given to the properties in an around the Catholic church of Our Lady & St Joseph. It is known that several thousand spectators attended certain matches so there must have been a decent walking route for them to get there. Also other newspaper reports an inclined pitch and the Exiles playing in Green so their name possibly derives from Irish Catholics "Exiled" from their homeland (although at the time Ireland was still British). The 1896 OS plan shows an odd enclosure within a field 187 yards long by 73 yards on a NW/SE axis and this would easily accommodate a 100 x 60 yard senior football pitch with ample space around it for spectators. As records show up to 4000 people attended these matches and gate money was needed to attract some of the professional teams. This OS plan actually shows an outbuilding abutting the road which possibly served as an entrance gate to the ground and being 20-30 yards long also probably provided changing rooms. As previous OS maps of 1857 shows no such outbuilding or enclosure, other than a football pitch it is difficult to see any alternative land use for such a rectangular shape so close to the road.





The Billy Costello photo above of the Exiles in the early 1900's shows Cannon McGill who according to a Northern Echo Report was the Exiles president in 1897. He is behind the team with his back to the distinctive church wall so it must be presumed that their pitch was close by probably just north of the cemetery abutting the Leadgate/Dipton Road East of the Eden Colliery. The photo outside Brooms Church probably is of the successful Exiles team reported below in the Athletic News of 1904.

LEADGATE EXILES, F.C.

The twelfth general annual meeting was held in the Brooms R.C. Schools, Leadgate, under the presidency of the Rev. A. Magill.—The Secretary reported that the first eleven had maintained its reputation as one of the strongest organisations in North-West Durham, and although not members of any of the various Leagues or Alliances, they had met and defeated the best teams amongst these combinations. Their most praiseworthy performance, however, was in the opening game of the season, when they played a draw with the Newcastle United League eleven. The Exiles had not been fortunate in any of the cup ties, and in common with all football clubs in the country had suffered from the miserable weather on the Saturdays during the past season. Happily, they had a balance on the right side of the ledger, and their prospects next season were of the rosier character.—On the motion of the Rev. D. O'Kelly, seconded by Mr O. Marren, the report and balance-sheet were adopted.—It was resolved to enter for the English Cup, the English Amateur Cup, and the Durham Cup, also to run a junior team for the Junior Cup, and a second team for the Derwent Valley League. The election of officers for the coming season resulted as follows:—President, Rev. A. Magill; vice-president, Rev. D. O'Kelly; executive committee, Rev. D. O'Kelly, Messrs J. McGracian, and J. Hughes; ordinary committee (in addition to the foregoing), Messrs T. Doolan and P. Hafferty; treasurer, Mr P. V. McGuckien, and secretary, Mr E. Batey.

A FINE RECORD.

The **Leadgate Exiles**, a North-West Durham organisation, have just finished the season with a record of which any club might be proud. In all they figured in 45 games, which 36 were won, 4 drawn, and only 5 lost, and they scored 157 to 39. They easily carried off the championship of the North-West Durham Alliance, scoring 123 goals and losing only 29. In the Durham Senior Cup competition they won three games, and were then thrown out of the contest on a protest. They reached the final of the Durham Amateur Cup after playing ten games, and then suffered defeat by a goal. During the last fortnight of the season the **Exiles** played 11 matches, of which they won 9, lost 1, and drew 1.

THE DURHAM ASSOCIATION.

At the Council meeting of the Durham Football Association, the rules were also revised, and the annual meeting next Saturday, changes being that for

John Costello continued his managerial development going on to chair Leadgate Council but Billy seems to have channelled his creative talents into photography. His glass plate collection includes a small photographic studio portrait showing him standing arms folded in his football strip and alongside him out of shot seems to be the arms of a teammate. This raises a few questions - why would an impoverished coal miner in his scarce free time take trouble to visit a photographic studio in the 1890's. It may be in celebration of him being selected for the District or because the team had just won a trophy but it establishes that Billy valued the negative enough to acquire it from the photographer so possibly marks the start of Billy's development as a photographer. Billy's trademark deep eyebrows and moustache evident here of him when he was in his late 20's possibly just before he got married or at the end of his career on turning 30 with a growing young family increasingly demanding his attention. Another studio portrait has Billy (TL) in a suit alongside what must be a Leadgate Exiles team from the mid 1890's when Billy had some sort of management role with them alternating with his brother John in representing them at Durham FA meetings in Durham. As this photo was taken just a year or two before Billy acquired his own camera he must have taken a keen interest in the process and retained the glass negative. The cost, time and absurdity of hard working men having to go to the trouble of changing into their



football kit in a small studio may well have persuaded Billy to get a field camera and take photographs of teams outside just before their matches. Certainly the largest category of his photos were of football teams so that may have been a little income to offset his costs. The high proportion of Billy's photos showing local football team photos confirms that he kept his football connections. When he took up photography in the late 1890's Leadgate teams were particularly prominent. Although Leadgate Park and Exiles were the big local clubs running several teams playing on their own grounds attended by thousands of supporters there were many other local teams many without their own pitch. Dipton Wanderers like Hobson Wanderers were named as such because they didn't have a home ground. It is not known where Consett Swifts, Medomsley and Hamsterley played but they too are frequently mentioned in press cuttings from the 1890s.



The following photographs by Billy possibly include Leadgate Park (who played in stripes and also a two tone strip). In 1893 Leadgate Park faced Tow Law in a Durham Cup final attended by a 3000 crowd and in 1897 Leadgate Park achieved some fame in beating the previous champions Bishop Auckland to get to semi-final of FA Amateur Cup and then finishing mid-table of the 1899-1900 Northern Alliance. This league contained Sunderland, Middlesbrough and Newcastle United A teams perhaps bringing some of the best players in the country to Leadgate. In 1904-05 they were The Durham Challenge Cup Winners, whilst that season Exiles lost only 3 times in 45 games winning the NW Durham Alliance league and were losing finalists in the Durham Senior Cup. By 1921 when they beat Hartlepool in the final of the Durham Senior Cup Leadgate Park were attracting Football League professionals. Most were born locally Jack Pattison (b 1887) being one playing for Leadgate Park before going on to Newcastle United, Derby County and Bristol Rovers before returning to the Park in the 1920s. Austen Campbell (b1898) was another who made "the famous footballers collection". He played for Leadgate Park in 1918 then joined

LEADGATE PARK V. TOW LAW.
 [DURHAM JUNIOR CUP.—Final.]

Played at Bishop Auckland before a field estimated at some 3,000, crowds travelling by the duplicated excursion from Consett, &c. Leadgate Park had the services of its curate, Rev. R. S. Hay. In previous meets between these teams Tow Law had won decisively, and the "T.L.'s" were the favourites at the start, playing westward against the sun in the first half. Play showed Tow Law somewhat superior, as they were the heavier team, but the Leadgate custodian was rather smart. Within ten minutes of half-play, however, Tow Law, through Robson, scored, the Leadgate goalist being rushed through very decisively, amid deafening cheers. Half-time:—

TOW LAW.....1 goal.
 LEADGATE PARK.....Nil.

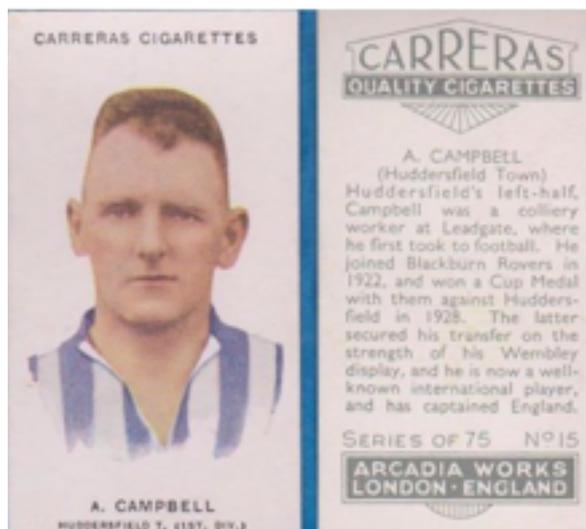
On the cross-over the sun was dead in the face of Leadgate. The latter, however, played much better, did much more pressing, and eventually scored per Forman. Excitement was now supreme, and Tow Law made some desperate attacks; but the saves were marvellous, and the score ended—

TOW LAW1 goal.
 LEADGATE PARK1 goal.

The crowd then rushed on the field. A report was circulated that extended time would be played, but it appeared from a statement by Mr Glover that the teams could not agree to this course, and the game therefore stood as a draw. It appears Tow Law have another fixture for next Saturday, but as that is the only available Saturday for play this season the teams must play then or forego all claim to the cup.



Coventry City before returning to the Park in 1921. In 1923 he established himself as a regular with Blackburn Rovers being a member of their 1928 FA Cup winning team. He went on to win 8 caps for England and was part of the successful Huddersfield Town team of the 1930s. Peter Mckinney born in Leadgate in 1897 played for Liverpool in 1920 before going on to play for New York Giants until 1929. James McGrath born 1898 began his career at Leadgate Park before leaving to play for Lincoln City, then football management. Ernie Young (b 1893) and Robert Mitcheson (b1901) as Darlington professionals were both persuaded to join Leadgate Park in the 1920s.



Leadgate born Benny Craig played for Huddersfield and Newcastle United but his career was curtailed by the war. Bill Stoddart born in Leadgate in 1907 joined Manchester City in 1926 before moving to Coventry City and then Southampton.

Another Leadgate player of this period was Bill Smith born in 1897 who played for Leadgate Park in 1921 in between spells with Hull City in 1919, York City in 1923 and Stockport County in 1925. The records also show that the infamous Cyril Hunter played for Leadgate Park. Born in 1898 he was recorded to be one of the hardest men in British Football having received football's longest ever suspension when playing for South Shields against the league leaders Middlesbrough in 1927. Hunter was a professional at Brentford and Lincoln City but he must have started his playing days at Leadgate Park prior to 1920. John Charlton born in Leadgate in 1908 played for Liverpool in 1930s. Many of these Leadgate born professional footballers born before 1914 would probably have known William Costello the football photographer and although they may not have seen him play for the Exiles would have known of his team. Whether Billy knew them as local lads is doubtful but he probably would have been aware of a Will Stewart who was born in 1895 the same year as Billy's son Jonny and also served in the First World War. Some photos date from 1899 /1900 when perhaps Billy was taking his first photographs and others show Will Stewart as an Inside Left for St Ives Football team in 1913/14 and again in 1918 when he played for Leadgate Park and Leadgate United. The 1918 strip shows remarkable similarity to one of Billy's more iconic team photos so may well represent the famous Leadgate Park. Will Stewart was an inside left for St Ives in 1913/14 when he was a teenager which would make him a contemporary of Jack Wilson who the records show also played for St Ives and Leadgate United before joining Newcastle United in 1919 becoming the becoming player manager of Leadgate Park in 1920-22 but ending up captain of Manchester United where he played for Manchester United for six years between 1926-32 making 140 appearances for them.

