

INTRODUCTION TO THE SAINTS HERITAGE WAY

Important considerations before you commence the trail

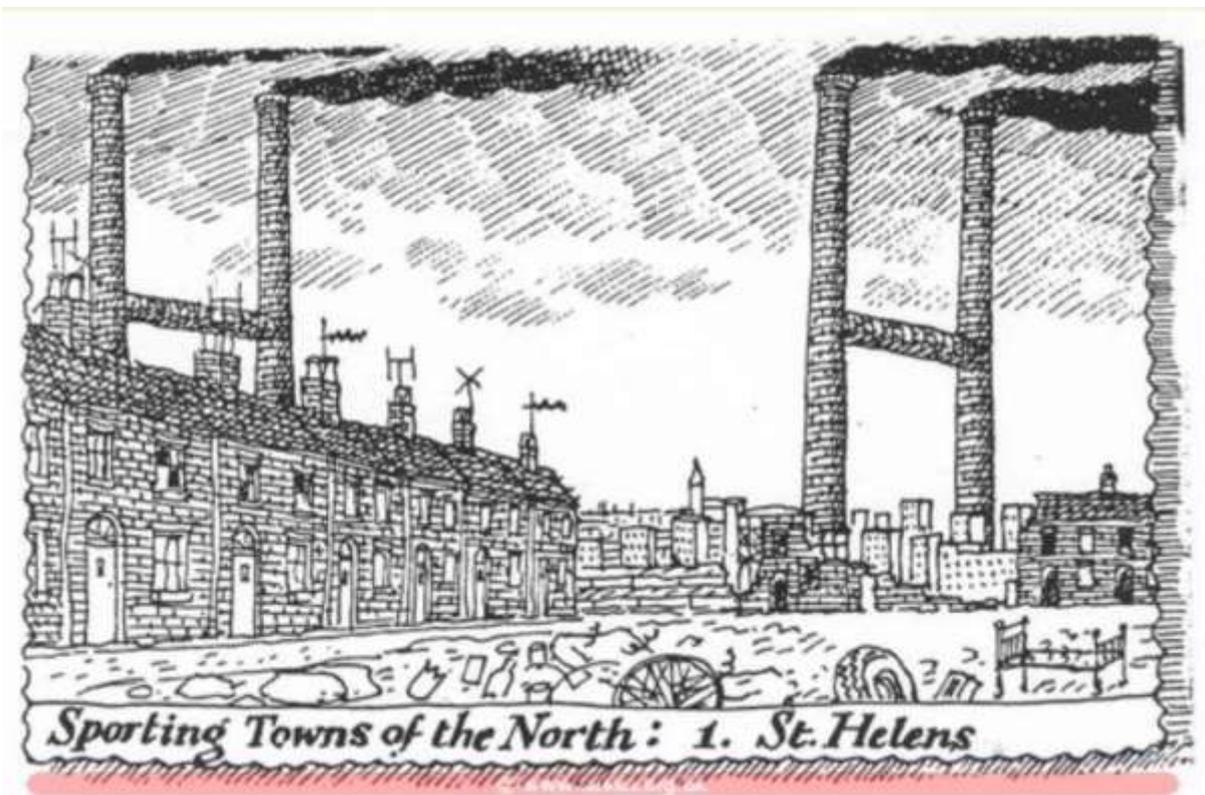
- 1. February 2021. Advice on the current situation relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic.** The Stadium is currently being used as a Mass Covid-19 Vaccination Centre by the NHS and people should not attend the Stadium unless they have a Vaccination appointment. In the light of this, we strongly advise walkers **to commence the Trail at point S2 - The Steve Prescott Bridge** and to **avoid the Totally Wicked Stadium completely**. On the trail you should **only walk with members of your own household** and **maintain social distancing keeping two metres** away from other walkers.
- 2. ROAD SAFETY – be vigilant** at all times. This is an **urban** heritage trail and as such you will traverse busy roads which are **heavily trafficked**. **Use the pedestrian crossings**, these are noted on the route guidance. Always remember to **halt on the pavement** in order to read the Trail notes
- 3. BEFORE YOU START THE TRAIL –** Read through the guidance and **familiarise yourself with the route**. Wear **sensible clothing** and **strong footwear** appropriate for the weather. Ensure you take some **water**.
- 4. The SAINTS HERITAGE WAY is a loop** and as such can be accessed at any point. There is **no need to complete the trail in one session**; the route and stopping points make it easy for walkers to stop and re-join the route as they wish. The trail is designed to provide insight into the great sporting heritage which our Club has created in St. Helens, it should not be viewed as a physical ordeal.
- 5. The trail can easily be downloaded as a PDF** onto a modern **mobile phone or I-Pad**. The latter is particularly useful for its screen size in following the maps and viewing the images.
- 6. Our great Players** are referenced throughout the trail. The references are **hyperlinked** using the **players' names** and their **Heritage Numbers**. These can be accessed online on the trail. Again always remember to **halt on the pavement** in order to read about players or Trail notes. Finally, **enjoy the SAINTS HERITAGE WAY** and let us know what you think about the Trail by emailing info@saints.org.uk

COYS

THE SAINTS HERITAGE WAY

A self-guided Walk through 150 years of St Helens RFC History

Dedicated to the players, officials and supporters of the mighty Saints



Produced by the Saints Heritage Society – hosting one of the greatest Sporting Heritage Websites in the World

www.saints.org.uk

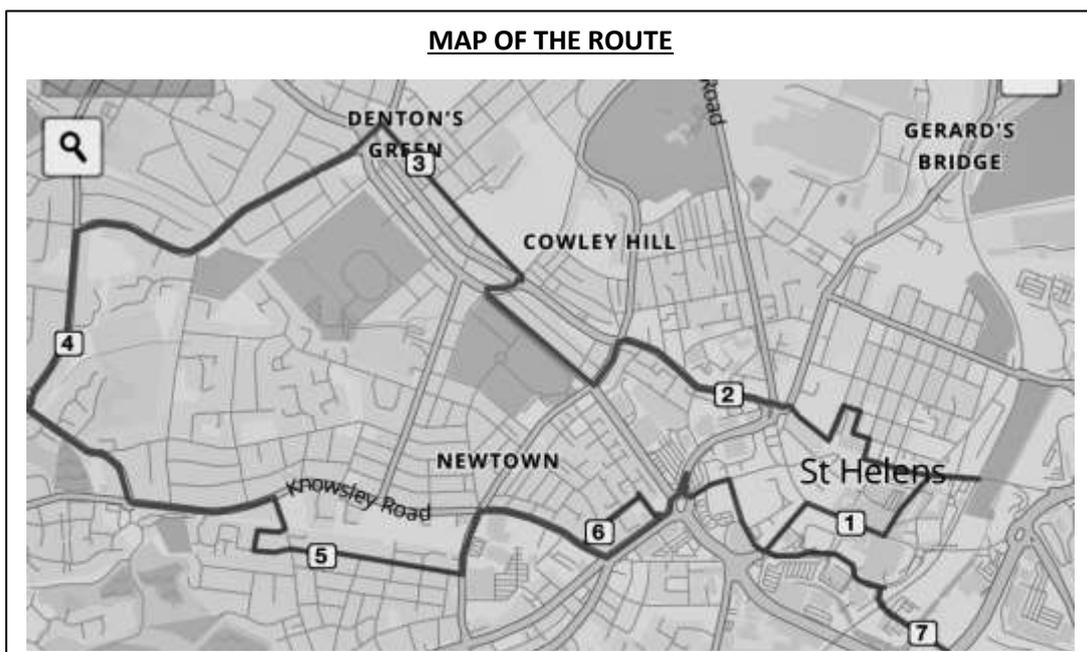
The Trail

The Trail starts at the fabulous modern home of St Helens RFC - **The Totally Wicked Stadium**, McManus Drive, St. Helens WN9 3AL.

Your exploration takes you from the Stadium across the **Steve Prescott Bridge** past our town's great industrial heritage into the town centre. You will soon realise that the history of our great Club is entrenched in our industrial past.

The journey will take you to iconic buildings, scenes of celebration and places for quiet reflection. Hopefully by the time you arrive at the site of our beloved former home, **Knowsley Road**, you will have a better understanding of our Club's progression from humble beginnings to being crowned World Champions in 2001.

The walk is about 7 miles in length. Before you start why don't you pop into our marvellous **Club Shop** and scoop up some Saintry apparel for your trek.



S1 The Totally Wicked Stadium This multi-event stadium is owned and professionally managed by the Club. It was opened on **the 10th of February, 2012**. Our first opponents on that night were the **Salford City Reds**. The match ball was carried out by our Legendary South African winger, [#747 Tom Van Vollenhoven](#). The crowd of 15,537 witnessed the Saints prevail by 38 points to 10.



The wonderfully designed façade – note the year 1873, our genesis

Our stadium is situated on **McManus Drive** named after our esteemed Chairman who for almost 20 years has guided the Club from financial dire straits to the most successful Club in the Super League era.



Eamonn McManus St Helens RFC Chairman

When the Club moved in 2012 it was important to complement our wonderful modern facilities with a respect for our glorious history. The concourses at the Stadium are adorned with marvellous mural tributes to some of our greatest players.



Concourse Mural celebrating [#1025 Kevin Ward](#)

[#1052 Keiron Cunningham](#) our legendary hooker played 496 matches for the Club. A local poll nominated Keiron to have a statue placed at the new stadium. Standing proud at the West end of the Stadium, it is testament to his heroics on the field. A rare honour – well earned.



Keiron reflects beneath his statue designed and created by sculptor Vanessa Marton

Directions to S2 Leave the Stadium at the **West end** and walk around the **Tesco Superstore** to the **Steve Prescott Bridge**.



S2 The Steve Prescott Bridge

Dedicated to the former Saints' full back who was diagnosed with a rare form of stomach cancer at an early age. In 2007 he set up a Foundation and quickly raised £500,000 for charitable causes. In 2009 he was awarded the MBE for his efforts. Sadly, [#1044 Steve Prescott](#) passed away in 2013 but his Foundation has thrived since then and proved to be a great boost to Christies Hospital, the people of St Helens and the Rugby League community in general, particularly people who are hard-pressed.



The Steve Prescott MBE Bridge lighting up the St Helens skyline

In **2021 the Steve Prescott Foundation** are holding a fundraising drive seeking supporters to walk 1000 miles over the course of the full year. This would mean walking an average of 2.74 miles per day. Perhaps these kind hearted folks might want to include part or all of our Heritage Trail as part of their efforts. Here is a link if you want to participate in this worthy venture.

<https://www.steveprescottfoundation.co.uk/events/official-events/>

**RAISE £50 AND RECIEVE
SPF 1000 MILE TSHIRT**

**NEW YEARS
RESOLUTION**

**CHEAPER
THAN JOINING
THE GYM**

THE BEST WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR FITNESS

1000 MILES IN 2021

**CAN BE DONE
DURING OR
AFTER WORK
OR PERFECT FOR
THOSE NEEDING
TO PASS TIME
DURING FURLOUGH
OR RETIREMENT**

JOIN FELLOW SPF SUPPORTERS

**AVERAGE 2.74
MILES A DAY!**

**365 DAYS
TO COMPLETE**

**SPF CERTIFICATE
ON COMPLETION**



S3 The Cannington Roundabout

Save your legs at this point. Standing on the bridge just look to your left (South West) at the **Cannington Roundabout**. In the centre of the roundabout is a statue commemorating the coal mining industry. The statue is named **“The Miner”** (also known as The Anderton Mining Monument) and was moved to St Helens in **December 1998** from Eastwood Hall, Nottingham. There have been many collieries in the St Helens district including pits in **Peasley Cross, Sutton Manor, Haydock, Broad Oak, Lea Green, Ravenhead** and **Bold**. In the first half of the twentieth century many Sintelliners were employed down coal pits. Rugby League at that time demanded hard, strong players and the pit cages of St Helens wound up no less than **110** miners to play for the Saints’ first team.

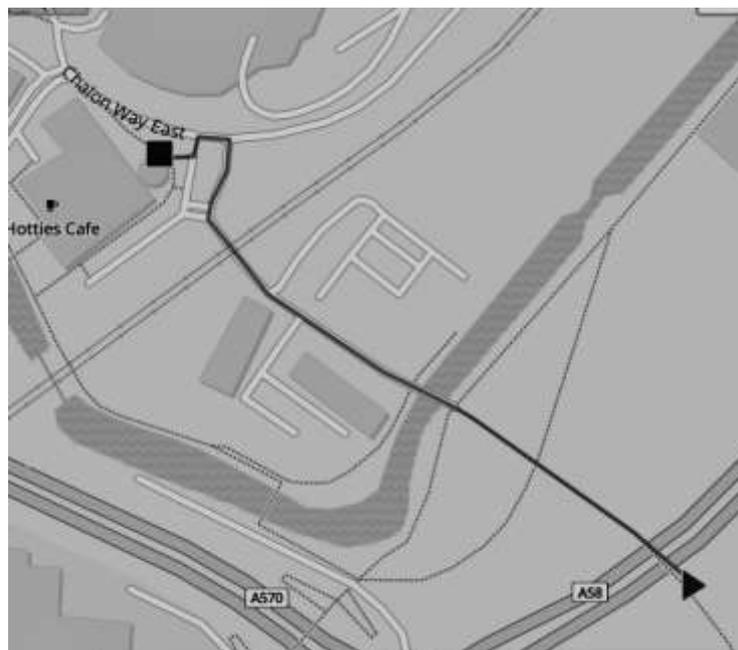


LEFT [#139 James ‘Butcher’ Prescott](#) a local miner from Silkstone Street who also worked in a glass works.

RIGHT [#302 George Lewis](#) Welsh coal miner, pre-war record points-scorer and captain of our first Championship side in 1932



Directions to S4 Continue over the bridge, walk straight on and drop under the **railway bridge** to our next stop – **The Glass House** which is situated on **Chalon Way West**.



S4 The Glass House Turn left and look at the glorious shape of the building and its fabulous brickwork. If you are making a day of it, it is well worth a visit to dig deeply into the History of Glass and its importance in St Helens. It serves us well to already reflect on two stages already visited. **'The Miner'** statue was situated on the **Cannington Roundabout**. The name comes from the firm of **Cannington Shaw** who set up the **Sherdley Glass Bottle Works** in 1866 using manual hand glass blowing. The process was mechanised in 1897. St Helens was once a **world leader** in glass production and the industry employed over **25000** workers at one point. Unsurprisingly, Saints' players could be found working in these glass factories five and a half days a week. We have counted around **80 players** up to **1939** who were glass workers but we are certain that **many more** found employment in glassworks.



#1 Tom Foulkes hailed from Thatto Heath and played full back in our very first Northern Union match on September the 7th, 1895. He was a real character and often played in his flat cap. Our club captain for seven seasons he led our side in the first ever Challenge Cup Final against Batley. Tom was the grandfather of Manchester United great, Bill Foulkes. He worked at the Sherdley Glass Bottle Works which remarkably was on the site of Saints' new stadium where you were not so long ago.



MAP FROM GLASS HOUSE TO SHEET WORKS AND NELSON HOTEL THEN ONWARDS TO PARISH CHURCH

Directions to S5 Continue along **Chalon Way West** past the Car Park and The Range. Keep on the left pavement. At the roundabout look left at the wonderfully rounded façade of the old **Pilkington Head Office**.



PB Old Head Office (Right)

S5 Old Pilkington Head Office At one point in time **one quarter** of the population of St Helens worked at **Pilkington Brothers**. The company had factories throughout the town manufacturing different types of glass. Rugby League was the town sport and remarkably Pilkington Brothers had a **league** of their own site teams. These were very useful rugby nurseries for the Saints. Moreover, the company initiated the **St Helens Recs Rugby League Club** which played in the league between **1919 and 1939**. They became the fiercest rivals of the Saints in this period. The Recs were also successful in the league and produced several international players. In the **1926 Lancashire Cup Final** the Saints defeated St Helens Recs by 10 points to 2 with the match being played in Warrington.

Directions to S6 At the roundabout turn right to **Bridge Street**. Keep on the right hand side pavement and after a few metres you will be outside the **Nelson Hotel**.

****THIS AREA HAS VERY HEAVY TRAFFIC PLEASE USE THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS**



S6 The Nelson Hotel



The Nelson Hotel



Hubert Sidney 'Jum' Turtill

[Jum Turtill #190](#) was signed on NZ All Golds Tour of 1908. He was regarded as one of the best full backs in the world. Jum was the popular landlord of the Nelson Hotel, Bridge St. He was tragically killed in World War One having survived the hellish conditions at Ypres, Pilkem Bridge and Menim Bridge, only to be killed by shrapnel on the 9th of April, 1918 at Givenchy. When his widow returned to New Zealand, the tenancy was taken over by Oliver Ellaby, father of the legendary Saints' winger Alf.

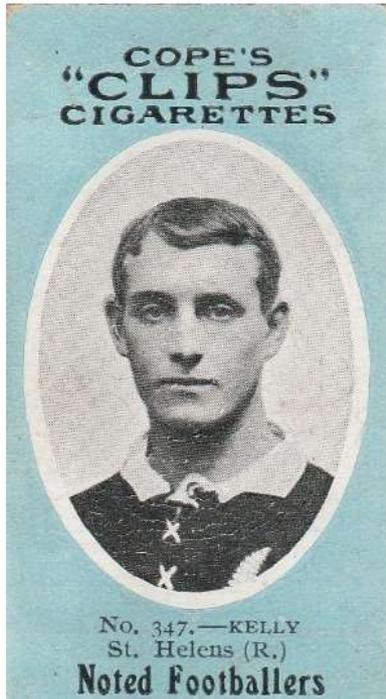
In 1908 the first Rugby League touring team from down under arrived on our shores. They were paid players and subsequently known as the **'All Golds'**. They emanated from **New Zealand** with one guest immortal player in the shape of Australian **Dally Messenger**. They received a very warm reception in the town, so much so that they arranged to play a second fixture against St Helens. The whole touring party were fed and accommodated to a high standard. Moreover, they arranged to visit the house of New Zealand's fifteenth Prime Minister who happened to be born in St Helens. They were so enamoured with the welcome that Saints signed two players full back [#190 Jum Turtill](#) and scrum half [#180 Arthur Kelly](#). Another Kiwi tourist, [#169 Joe Lavery](#), even played one match for the Saints before signing for Leeds. [#199 Archie Waddell](#) a good mate of Jum Turtill, later signed for the Saints in 1910.



Left: the Ivy Cottage on Eccleston Hill, home of Richard Seddon

Below left: [#180 Arthur Kelly](#) Kiwi scrum half signing from the All Golds touring team

Below Right: Richard Seddon the 15th Prime Minister of New Zealand



Directions to S7 Continue up **Bridge Street** to the beginning of the pedestrian shopping area. Turn right into **Church Street**. On your left after 150 metres is the **Clarks Outlet** which is on the site of the original **Fleece Hotel** where an important meeting was held in 1873 (more of that later). Walk down to the **Parish Church**, on your right after 200m.



S7 The Parish Church



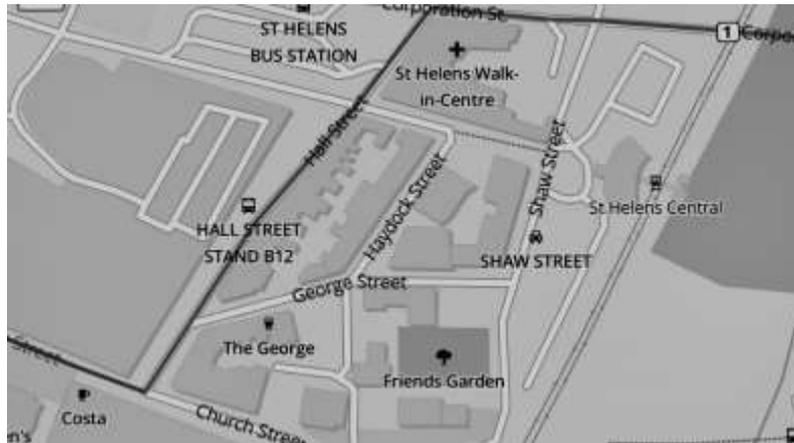
Left: **St Helens Parish Church**

Below: **Fleece Hotel – 1873 Club Meeting**



#207 Christopher Chavasse, was the son of the Bishop of Liverpool and known as the 'Flying Curate'. He was a graduate from Oxford University and competed along with his brother in the 1908 London Olympic Games. The winger was famous for taking a nap and missing the wagonette to the ground and the match. He was assigned a post at the St Helens Parish Church.

Directions to S8 Continue along **Church Street** then turn left into **Hall Street**. On your left after 100 metres you will pass the **Hardshaw Shopping Centre**, the site of the former **Greenall's Brewery**.



S8 The site of Greenall's Brewery

Before 1939 Saints' teams and supporters would travel to many away fixtures by train from St Helens **Central Station** in **Shaw Street**. This busy station on the Liverpool to Wigan line is just 150 metres to your right.



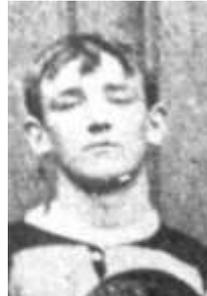
Early twentieth century image of the Greenall's Brewery. Up to 1975 departing or arriving passengers would be treated to the smell of warm hops and the sight of its iconic building. The scene would have included draymen clad in green overalls loading barrels onto beer wagons. The firm employed several Saints' players over the years with its distinctive tasting ales being served throughout the town.



[#774 Cliff Watson](#) with a broken arm sustained on the rugby field, not at work. He was an employee of Greenall Whiteleys' Brewery, Hall Street in the 1960s. The iron man was born in London and made 373 appearances for the Club, collected 30 Great Britain caps and won every honour in the game. He later emigrated to Australia along with [#830 Tommy Bishop](#) where they became legends with the Cronulla Sutherland Club.

Directions to S9 Proceed up Hall Street to its junction with **Corporation Street**. At this point turn right, cross over and walk 180 metres to the **bridge**. As you walk keep on the left side of the bridge. Look down from the bridge at the Canal and Railway line to the area which energised the **Pocket Nook** district.

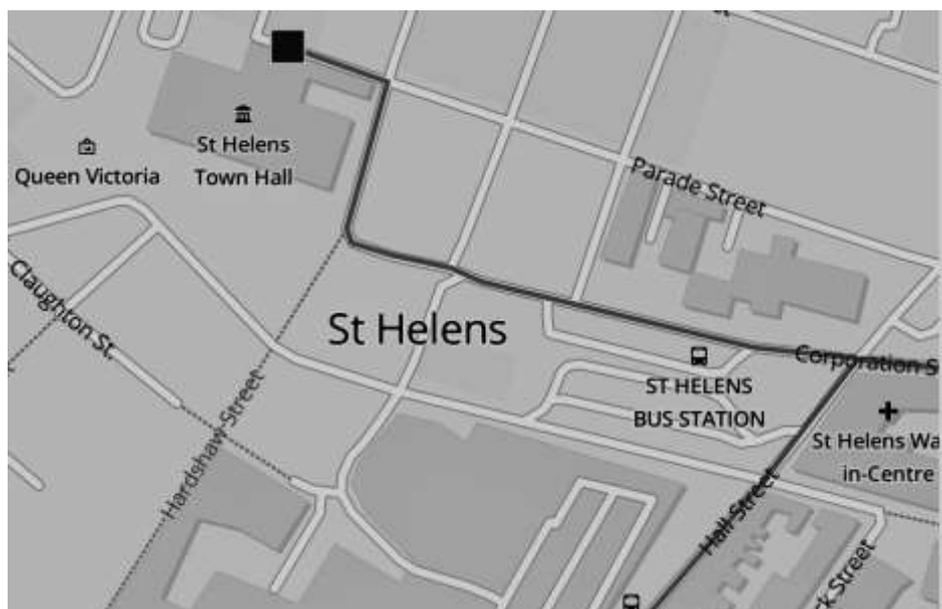
S9 Pocket Nook



From left to right:
Pocket Nook area
Pocket Nook Street
Matt Creevey

The **Pocket Nook** community grew up in a vibrant industrial area close to the key transport links provided by the Sankey Canal, Britain's first industrial Canal, and the Liverpool to Wigan Railway. The back to back housing engendered a tight knit community, full of characters. The streets also produced some classy rugby players, indeed it had its own team – the **Pocket Nook Shamrocks** who recruited from the families of Irish immigrants in the area. [Tom Hall #110](#) and [Ralph Banks #111](#) were a half back partnership emanating from Pocket Nook. The **Creevey family** produced three first team players - [#99 Charlie Creevey](#), [#113 Jimmy Creevey](#) and [#153 Matt Creevey](#). The brothers uniquely played together against Wigan in March 1907 with the Saints winning that day. [#153 Matt Creevey](#) was a world champion standing jumper and Music Hall artist of great repute.

Directions to S10 Turn back and walk 400 metres into **Victoria Square** containing St Helens Town Hall, the **Central Library** and the **Cenotaph**.



S10 The Town Hall, Gamble Institute and Cenotaph



Traditionally the players of Saints teams who had played in major Finals were invited to a Civic Reception at the **Town Hall**. Thousands of fans use to fill Victoria Square to greet their heroes – win or lose. When the team lost to Huddersfield in the **1953 Challenge Cup Final**, the crowds turned up in huge numbers to applaud their efforts. Two weeks later the team returned to the scene to attend a **Civic Reception** thrown for the newly crowned **Champions**. [#667 Steve Llewellyn](#)'s invitation can be seen in the right hand picture above.

The **Gamble Institute** incorporating the Central Library was set up by the Gamble family who operated Chemical Works in the town. **William and David Gamble**, gentlemen players participated in the Club's first outing on **January 31st. 1874** against **Liverpool Royal Infirmary**.

Directions to S11 Leave **Victoria Square** heading North West past the **Police Station** along **Corporation Street**, across a **mini-roundabout** to a larger roundabout. Cross carefully heading directly ahead to **Duke Street**. **The Duke of Cambridge** is on your left after 100 metres.



S11 The Duke of Cambridge Public House



Billy Cross

The ultimate clubman.

The Duke of Cambridge was a significant hostelry in the History of the Saints. In the 1890s Mine Host was the enigmatic [#6 Billy Cross](#) (see above with ball and county cap) who appeared to be the supreme organiser. Not only did he run this popular establishment but the star County player from **Kendal** also captained the team for most of the 1890s. Furthermore, the Duke of Cambridge was also the effective Headquarters of the Club. Remarkably Billy played as an **amateur** throughout his career.

Directions to S12 Continue along **Duke Street** on the left hand side of the pavement and after 300 metres you will arrive at the **Talbot**.

S12 The Talbot Public House

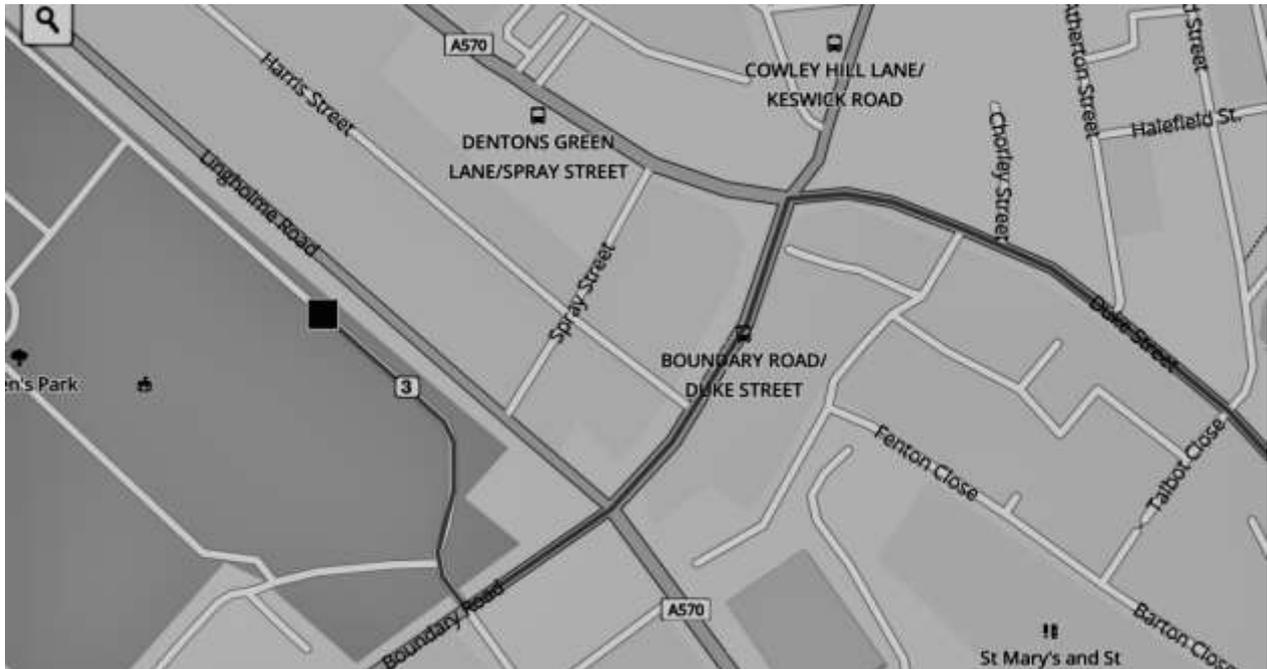
In the early 1900s team business had graduated along **Duke Street** to the **Talbot**. The team picture indicates that **changing facilities** were far from salubrious. Teams transferred from here to the Knowsley Road ground by **wagonette**, doubtless receiving tactical advice and encouragement from supporters taking the same route!



Left: The team outside their 'salubrious' dressing rooms behind the Talbot Hotel. Holes in the dressing room windows and the team wearing red, black and amber jerseys.

Right: This photo shows a charging [#639 Duggie Greenall](#) who played 487 matches for Saints, scoring 188 tries in the process. A 1954 GB tourist down under, Duggie was landlord at the Talbot for many years.

Directions to S13 Continue along **Duke Street** up to the traffic lights at **Boundary Road**. Cross over and turn left up **Boundary Road** to the traffic lights at **Lingholme Road** and halt. Turn right along **Lingholme Road** and halt by **Queens Park**.



S13 Origins and Old Stomping Grounds

Look to your left at the expanse of **Queens Park**. These grassed areas mark the site where gentlemen friends first kicked and passed the rugby ball in the early 1870s as part of some informal exercise. Out of these interactions **William Douglas Herman** had the notion of forming a Rugby Football Club. He was supported in this venture by the **Gamble** brothers who were introduced to you at the Town Hall Stop –**S10**. William Herman was a young **chemist** who was recruited by **Pilkington Brothers** from the Royal College of Chemistry in London and employed at the Crown Glass Works in St Helens on a handsome salary. Herman was able to overcome several production stumbling blocks which had dogged the company. In the Glass Industry world, Herman's signing was of [#1064 Paul Newlove](#) proportions. Importantly, Herman was a driven organiser and a talented sportsman with experience of rugby at school and for the Crescent Club in London.

Prior to establishing itself at Knowsley Road the fledgling Club played in several locations around the town. The area around **Queens Park** and **Dentons Green** was the site of **four** of these playing grounds.

The Club's **first match** was played on the **Recs Cricket Ground, Queens Park, Boundary Road**. In the 1870s the Saints did a moonlit flit moving, posts and all, from their ground between **West Park Road** and **Boundary Road** to the area to your right, where **Lingholme Road** and **Harris Street** are now situated. The land was owned by a certain **Ralph Smith** and the teams used to change in a **barn** near **Dentons Green** where we head next.

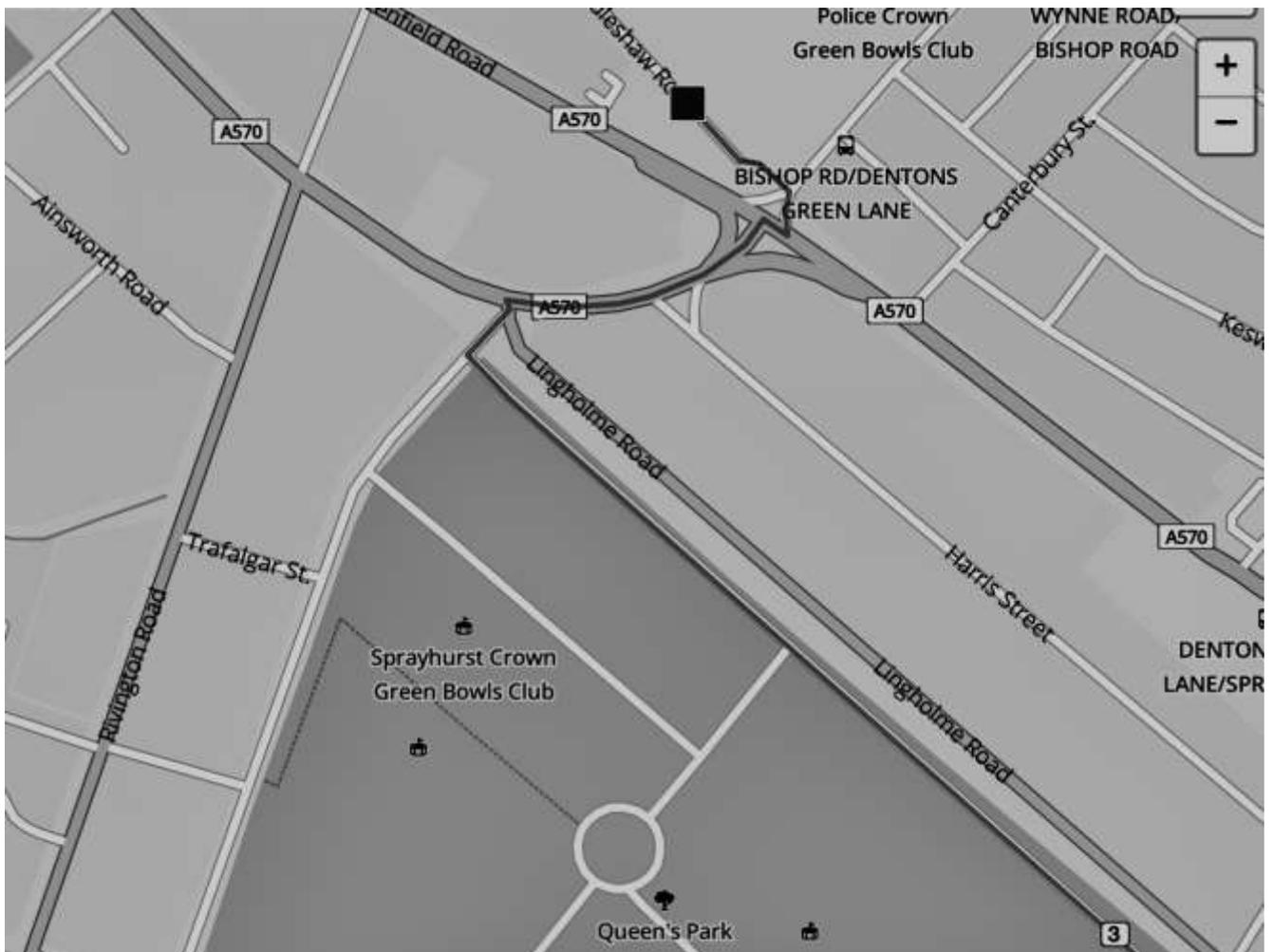


Queens Park – informal origins of the Club and site of early grounds

Advertisement in the St Helens Newspaper

“It is proposed to form a football club for St Helens and neighbourhood. Gentlemen taking an interest in the game are invited to attend a meeting to be held at the Fleece Hotel on Wednesday the 19th of November, 1873 at 7.30 p.m.”

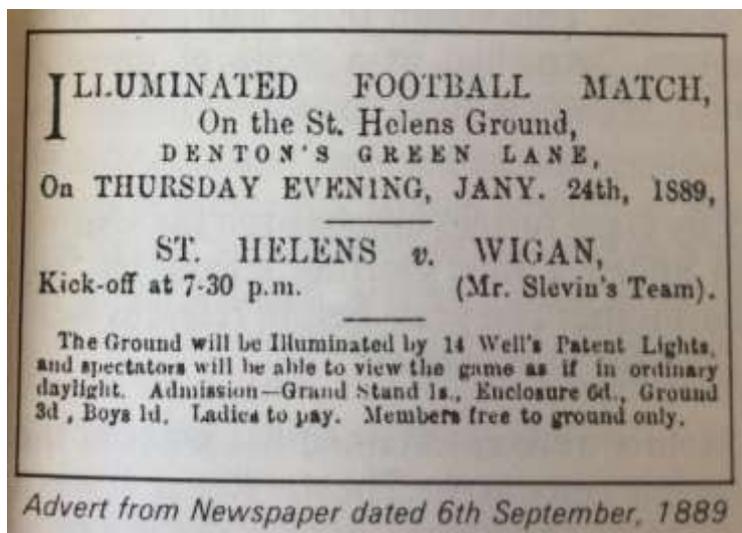
Directions to S14 Turn right after the Park at the junction of **Lingholme Road** and **Dentons Green Lane**. Cross **Greenfield Road** with care and then take a left turn up **Windleshaw Road**. The Cricket Ground is on your right after 100 metres.



S14 St Helens Cricket Club Windleshaw Road

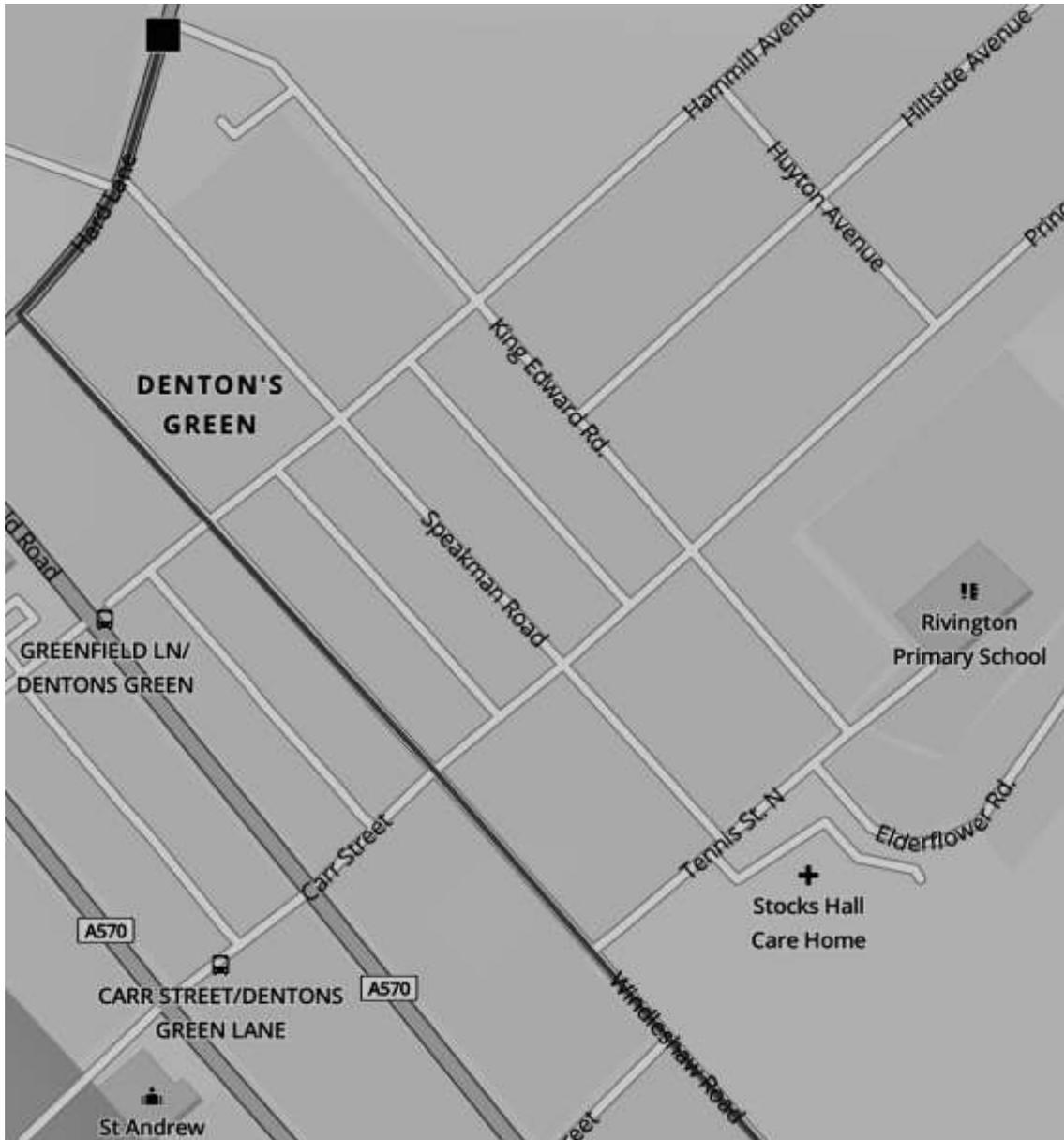


Around 1880 **Ralph Smith** sold his land near Queens Park for housing development. This prompted the Club to move to playing fields close to **St Helens Cemetery**. We will be going there after our next stop. Needless to say that the Club's residence at the dead end of St Helens was short lived and the Club headed back towards town to play on the **St Helens Cricket Club** ground. Furthermore, the Club also decided to change its name from **St Helens Rangers** to **St Helens Rugby Club**.



The years at the Cricket Club provided some much needed stability and rugby standards improved considerably over the next eight seasons. Two matches in the early months of **1889** demonstrated their progress. On **January 31st**, **9000** spectators witnessed the Rangers play **Wigan under floodlights**, some **76 years** prior to the first floodlight match at Knowsley Road! In **March** the Saints entertained the **New Zealand Maoris** before a crowd of **5000**.

Directions to S15. Proceed 400 metres up **Windleshaw Road** to its junction with **Hard Lane**. Opposite the junction and to the right lies the **Abbey Hotel**.



S15 Abbey Hotel



Before the team moved to the Cricket Club, they played on land close to St Helens Cemetery. **The Abbey Hotel** allowed the team to change on their premises and hosted after-match receptions. Also, the Club decided to change its name from **Eccleston Rangers** to **St Helens Rangers**. The team picture above is taken outside the pub. You can get a flavour of playing kit with long britches and long sleeved tops.

Directions to S16. Go down **Hard Lane** towards the **Gerrard Arms** (home of the Gerrard Songsters). Cross the two main roads carefully and walk past the Gerrard on the left pavement and continue right to the end of **Kiln Lane**. At the T-Junction turn left and soon you will arrive at the **Seven Stars**.



16 Seven Stars



The pub's name was already established by 1900 and most probably named after the constellation of Ursa Major. However, according to St Helens folklore, it was rededicated as a celebration and tribute to the **seven star** players from St Helens who were selected for the England Team to tour Australia and New Zealand in **1928**. **Four** players were from the **Saints** and **three** from local rivals **St Helens Recs**.

1928 The Four Saints' Tourists Records on 1928 Tour to Australasia

HERITAGE NUMBER	PLAYER	PLAYING POSITION	OCCUPATION	P	T	G	PTS
345	Alf Ellaby	Wing	Hotel Landlord	14	20	2	64
284	Les Fairclough	Stand Off	Publican	12	11	0	33
312	Alf Frodsham	Centre	Steel Erector	17	15	0	45
352	Ben Halfpenny	Second Row	Engineer in Chemical Works	10	8	0	24



You will note the great try returns from the Saints' contingent. Notably [#345 Alf Ellaby](#) kicked **two goals** on Tour, that's exactly two more than his total for the Saints in 289 matches.



Alf Ellaby, Albert Fildes, Alf Frodsham, Ben Halfpenny, Frank Bowen, Oliver Dolan, Les Fairclough

Directions to S17. Continue 100 along **Millbrook Lane** in the same direction and look at the splendid traditional houses on your right.

S17 Midnight on Millbrook Lane

#735 Alex Murphy was the outstanding schoolboy Rugby League player of his generation. Every club in the league would have moved heaven and earth to capture his signature. This fact had not gone unnoticed at the Club. Alex Service recounts. “On the eve of his sixteenth birthday Murphy was playing in a local Schoolboys Final. After the game Alex was whisked up to the Saints’ Boardroom by Chairman **Harry Cook** and fellow directors **Lionel Swift** and **Joe Harrison**. He was offered a **£80** signing on fee which Alex gladly accepted. Cognisant of the fact that at least four other Clubs were waiting for Alex outside the ground, the Directors smuggled him away to **Joe Harrison’s house** on **Millbrook Lane**. The deputation played snooker until Alex finally signed the necessary forms after the Witching Hour.”

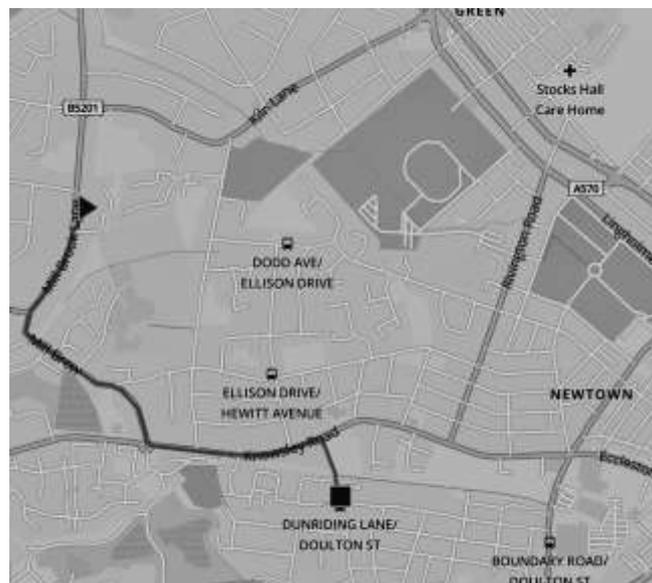


Millbrook Lane - No ghost story!



Mercurial Murphy on attack

Directions to S18. Continue along **Millbrook Lane** in the same direction until you reach a **sharp bend** to the right. Keep left and go straight on down the dip and up to the T-Junction at **Knowsley Road**. Cross over and turn left. You are now walking parallel to **the Knowsley Road Stadium** – Home of the Saints for **120 years** from **1890 to 2010**. At the next junction turn right into **Newlove Avenue**. Follow the road through the Cunningham Grange State and emerge on **Coslett Drive**. This leads to Dunriding Lan.



S18 The site of the former home of St Helens RFC – Knowsley Road



You can imagine that the Stadium changed considerably over the years as new stands were added, facilities were developed and one of the poshest ever Scoreboards was erected. When the Club first moved there in 1890 it had little to commend it. At the first match played on **September 6th, 1890** against **Manchester Rangers**, spectators had to pay their admission money through **pigeon holes** in the fencing. There were no stands for the spectators and no changing rooms for the players. You will recall that players were changing in **Duke Street** 20 years later and travelling up to Knowsley Road by **wagonette**. At times Saints did try temporary measures like the hut below but the level of comfort must have been shocking.



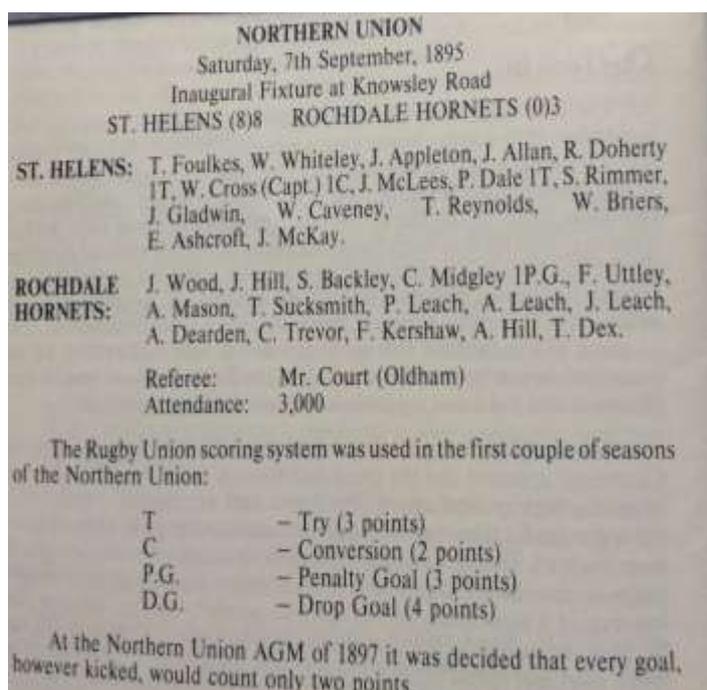
Proud to be Saints!

Billy Cross and the Lads wearing their blue and white striped jerseys in front of the dressing hut at Knowsley Road circa 1894/95.

*Back row l to r:— Mr. T. C. Wilcock (Chairman), J. Appleton, E. Ashcroft, W. Whiteley, J. Brownbill, W. Wilson,
J. Gladwin, T. Sudlow, J. Edwards (Official).*

Middle row seated:— T. Foulkes, R. Doherty, F. Little, Rennie. Front row:— P. Dale, W. Cross, Jones, Grahams. Boy Mascot:— J. Garrity.

(Photo courtesy St. Helens Library)



The team-list to the left contains several names that you have met previously on this trail. [#1 Tom Foulkes](#) with his flat cap, [#2 Bob Doherty](#) living in Lyon Street and captain [#6 Billy Cross](#) still pulling pints at the Duke of Cambridge.

We would draw your attention to two other Saints. Cumbrian [#5 Bill Whiteley](#) who played 320 matches for the Saints and [#10 John McKay](#) who had emigrated to Canada only to return to Europe in WW1 to meet his death on the battlefield.

The Saints played **2158** home first team matches at **Knowsley Road**. In addition there were many **A Team** matches, **Internationals**, **Finals** of Local Amateur Cup competitions and local school's games. It also served as a neutral venue for **Lancashire Cup** and **John Player Cup** Finals. The stadium also hosted the **Harlem Globetrotters**, **Wrestling bouts** and **rock concerts**.

The Saints' Record at Knowsley Road

<u>RESULTS</u>	<u>MATCHES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
PLAYED	2158	100%
WON	1592	74%
LOST	487	22.5%
DRAWN	79	3.5%

In addition 8 matches concluded with **NO RESULT** – these were either abandoned or the opposition team objected to the result.

KNOWSLEY ROAD PHYSICAL LEGACY

The **small estate** which was built on the site rightly commemorated 120 years of Saints' history. The development was called **Cunningham Grange Estate** after [#1052 Keiron Cunningham](#) and streets were named after **five** of our former star players.



Coslett Drive of course is named after our record Appearances, Goals and Points record holder, [#797 Kel Coslett](#). The Drive follows the entrance to the Stadium near the railway bridge on Dunriding Lane.



Kel Coslett supporting an attack with a timely intervention.

531 matches, 45 tries, 1639 goals and 3413 points.

Player, coach and team manager over 30 years at the Club.

Multiple record-holder and Legend!

Newlove Avenue commemorates centre [#1064 Paul Newlove](#) who was not only a game-changer on the field but also a catalyst for the fortunes of the Club. His Avenue takes you through the Eccleston end turnstiles and up to the Edington Stand.



Paul Newlove demonstrates how to fend off a tackler on his way to the tryline.

Sculthorpe Close leads you from the Dunriding Lane entrance opposite Gladstone Street to the Main Entrance and Turnstiles. This thoroughfare remembers [#1083 Paul Sculthorpe](#), our former captain and complete footballer.



Paul Sculthorpe (left) showing off the Rugby League Challenge Cup with Sean Long (right)

Wellens Walk is where the iconic Pavillion used to be and celebrates the contributions of the great international full back [#1087 Paul Wellens](#) who played almost **500** matches for the Saints.



Paul Wellens launches another Saints' attack.

Yet again, we get to talk again about [#1052 Keiron Cunningham](#), our inspirational player for **17 seasons** from 1994 to 2010. **Cunningham Court** rests upon the hallowed turf of Knowsley Road, our home for 120 years.



Keiron celebrating on the Knowsley Road pitch where, no doubt, a residents of his Court later planted trees and bushes.

On the site is a superb monument which rightly celebrates the Club's home for some 120 years.



Directions to S19. Head across **Dunriding Lane** and turn left into **Doulton Street**. Many streets in St Helens were home to the 554 hometown players who have played for their premier Rugby League team. Our journey back to the town centre will give you a flavour of the community and our great sport.

S19 Doulton Street

A quick glance at the playing positions in the table below will probably raise a question in your mind. What was it about Doulton Street that generated so many speedsters? Was it something in the water or did the neighbour engender a need to escape tricky situations quickly?

HERITAGE NUMBER	PLAYER	PLAYING POSITION	OCCUPATION	P	T	G	PTS
204	Fred Barton	Wing	Labourer	19	2	2	10
103	Francis Bowen	Wing	Corporation Labourer	1	2	0	6
241	John Briscoe	Scrum Half	Labourer	3	1	0	3
122	Fred Jones	Centre	Tram Livery Worker	68	12	33	102
510	Micky Joyce	Wing	Glass Machinist	2	0	0	0
518	Gerald Waring	Wing	Glass Labourer	8	2	0	6
497	Jackie Waring	Centre	Skilled Labourer	68	34	0	102
600	Tom Waring	Centre	Unknown	34	5	0	15
322	Walter Wright	Wing	Police Sergeant	102	32	0	96



A pacey pair indeed. Left is **Jackie Waring** an England international whose career was blighted by World War Two. Living at the top end of 'Doulty' he could probably have punted a ball from his back yard onto the training pitch.

Right is Police Sergeant **Walter Wright** – criminals had little chance of escaping this leg of the law.



Directions to S20. Walk all the way down **Doulton Street** and turn left into **Boundary Road**.



MAP FROM DOULTON STREET TO LYON STREET

S20 Boundary Road



Elliot Street ran parallel to Boundary Road and housed a very parochial set of families. Its cul-de-sac nature lent itself to street games and community spirit. The rumour that the kids 'used to play tick wi' hatchets' was sheer hyperbole, I am led to believe. Left Ab Terry and Right Fred Terry.



If **Doulton Street** represented rugby league in the fast lane then **Boundary Road** was all about hard graft in the forwards. The **Prescott family** supplied three brothers who all played for the Saints in the early twentieth century. All three were **coal miners**. [#79 William](#) and [#126 Joseph](#) played in Saints' teams before forwards developed specialist positions. Their brother [#139 James](#) was nicknamed '**Butcher**' played 254 matches for the Saints, scoring an impressive 66 tries in the process Close by was the very lively Elliot Street the residence of two more sibling forwards international tourist [#728 Ab Terry](#) and [#762 Fred Terry](#).

***Directions to S21.** Walk down Boundary Road to the traffic lights at Fiveways. Turn right and proceed along Eccleston Street on the left hand side pavement until you reach our penultimate stop Lyon Street. Walk down Lyon Street to the Cricketers Pub.*

S21 Lyon Street

Lyon Street abounded with Saints' talent in the early twentieth century.



The Cricketers was CAMRA National Pub of the Year in 2017. This superb hostelry has served many a player and supporter over the years. A real community centre for Lyon Street. It remains an immensely popular meeting up point for supporters prior to Saints' matches.



Historic Lyon Street replete with Gas-lamps and puddles

LYON STREET SAINTS

HERITAGE NUMBER	PLAYER	PLAYING POSITION	OCCUPATION	P	T	G	PTS
246	Charles Collins	Full Back	Bottle Maker	21	3	11	31
411	Joseph Riley	Scrum Half	General Labourer	17	2	0	6
633	Danny Carter	Prop Forward	General Labourer	3	1	0	3
257	Peter Molyneux	Second Row	Glass Blower	85	8	0	24
338	Bill Mercer	Centre	Blacksmith	311	75	0	225
235	Henry Greenall	Wing	Glassworks Clerk	63	24	0	72
2	Bob Doherty	Wing	Plumber	225	38	0	114
33	William Harper	Full Back	Bricklayer	1	0	0	0
189	John Gallagher	Second Row	Brick Setter	1	0	0	0
306	Herbert Hilton	Second Row	General Labourer	52	12	0	36

Directions to S22. Turn right at the **Cricketers** and turn immediately left. Walk down to the **large roundabout** and turn left into **Kirkland Street** to the **pedestrian crossing**. On crossing turn right, back to the Roundabout and then turn left to cross the dual carriageway at a second **pedestrian crossing**. Turn left into **Westfield Street**, and right to the **Beecham's Building** with its iconic Clock Tower. At the **Beecham's Building** turn right into **Water Street**.

****THIS AREA HAS VERY HEAVY TRAFFIC PLEASE USE THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS**





S22 Water Street



In 1926 the landlord of the George Hotel was Oliver Ellaby the father of our great international winger, [#345 Alf Ellaby](#). Alf Ellaby lived here when he signed for the Saints and grew up in the area close to Beecham's pharmaceutical works, specifically round the corner in New Cross Street. Alf was lightning fast and in the Saints greatest ever 17, selected in 2010. The Great Britain tourist was a winger who attracted large crowds to see his try-scoring exploits. Alf was an exceptional finisher scoring 280 tries in 289 matches for the Saints.



Above: **Water Street in the 1930s looking towards the Clock Tower.**

Below: **The Ellaby family managed the George Hotel on Water Street. The houses and the pub have long been demolished. Alf was brought up in nearby New Cross Street.**



Photograph courtesy of St Helens Library

Well folks – well done for completing the **Saints Heritage Trail**. You can return to the Stadium and browse in the Club Shop. The town centre Bus Station and Train Station are a short stroll away for your safe journey home.

You can read more about the players and matches referred to on the trail and much more, on our comprehensive website the **Saints Heritage Society**

www.saints.org.uk

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photographs:

Bernard Platt

Alex Service

FURTHER READING

“Saints in their Glory – The History of St Helens RFC 1874-1939” by Alex Service

“The March of the Saints – St Helens RFC 1945-1985” by Alex Service

“Nomads and Ruffians” – by Alex Service explores the fascinating history of the Club from 1873 to 1895. You can find further details of the book and how to obtain a copy on our final page.



COYS

DISTANCES BETWEEN STAGEPOINTS ALONG THE TRAIL

#	<u>STAGEPOST</u>	#	<u>STAGEPOST</u>	<u>APPROX DIST MILES</u>	<u>CUM DIST MILES</u>
1	Saints' Stadium	2/3	Steve Prescott Bridge/Cannington Roundabout	0.3	0.3
2/3	Steve Prescott Bridge/Cannington Roundabout	4	Glass House Museum	0.2	0.5
4	Glass House Museum	5	Old Pilkington Bros HQ	0.2	0.7
5	Old Pilkington Bros HQ	6	Nelson Hotel	0.1	0.8
6	Nelson Hotel	7	Parish Church	0.2	1.0
7	Parish Church	8	Old Greenall Brewery	0.1	1.1
8	Old Greenall Brewery	9	Pocket Nook	0.2	1.3
9	Pocket Nook	10	Town Hall Square	0.3	1.6
10	Town Hall Square	11	Duke of Cambridge	0.2	1.8
11	Duke of Cambridge	12	Talbot Hotel	0.2	2.0
12	Talbot Hotel	13	Queens Park	0.3	2.3
13	Queens Park	14	St Helens Cricket Club	0.4	2.7
14	St Helens Cricket Club	15	Abbey Hotel	0.3	3.0
15	Abbey Hotel	16	Seven Stars	0.8	3.8
16	Seven Stars	17	Millbrook Lane	0.2	4.0
17	Millbrook Lane	18	Knowsley Road	0.7	4.7
18	Knowsley Road	19	Doulton Street	0.1	4.8
19	Doulton Street	20	Boundary Road	0.2	5.0
20	Boundary Road	21	Lyon Street	0.6	5.6
21	Lyon Street	22	Water Street	0.4	6.0
22	Water Street	1	Saints' Stadium	0.8	6.8
			TOTAL	6.8	6.8

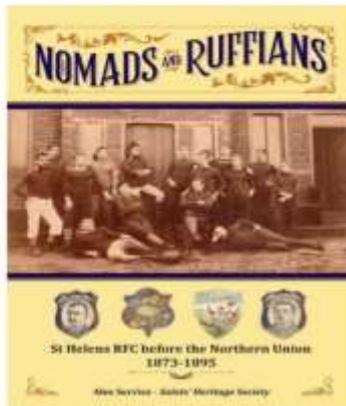
NO NEED TO DO A VOLL!

Take your time and listen to your body. Enjoy the Trail and reflect on our great heritage.

Share your thoughts on our SHS Facebook or Twitter pages.

Email your feedback on info@saints.org.uk





Nomads and Ruffians

St Helens RFC 1873-1895

The Early Saints – as you've never seen them before!

St Helens RFC in the 21st century is the result of those early, challenging years before the game adopted professionalism in 1895. It is a thriving entity, with a loyal supporter base and its history and achievements are ingrained into the local and national sporting populous. If you are born in St Helens, you are a Saints' supporter - end of. It's in the blood, the DNA of the locality. It gives us our unique identity and for thousands over the years, such an important part of growing up in the town we call home.

Founded by a London-born Chemist at the local glassworks, the team has consisted of Cambridge graduates and coal hewers; future local dignitaries, budding entrepreneurs and men who came down to St Helens from Westmorland and the north country to find work in the local factories. Many remained on the local scene and were able to put something back into the club they had so proudly represented.

Backed up by a band of enthusiastic 'movers and shakers' and supporters, the club kept going in sometimes ultra-challenging circumstances. Establishing and sustaining a club base and infrastructure threatened to overcome anyone's hopes of success in the early days, with several temporary 'homes' adopted. Finally, by 1890, the club was to put down roots at Knowsley Road, which remained the focus of development for the next 120 years, before the latest stage in an eventful journey, with the move to the magnificent stadium at Peasley Cross in 2012 – a whole universe away from those formative years at Queen's Park, Boundary Road!

NOMADS AND RUFFIANS BY ALEX SERVICE is available now for £10 [postage and packing £2] from Alex Service, 14, Gunning Avenue, Eccleston St Helens, Merseyside. WA10 5DL. Cheques/postal orders payable to *Alex Service*, with your name and delivery address. Copies can also be purchased in person from Wainwright's Newsagents, Boundary Road, St Helens – 200 yards from where Saints played their first-ever match!

Proceeds from the book will be used for the distribution of St Helens RFCs Player Number Certificates, by Saints' Heritage Society.