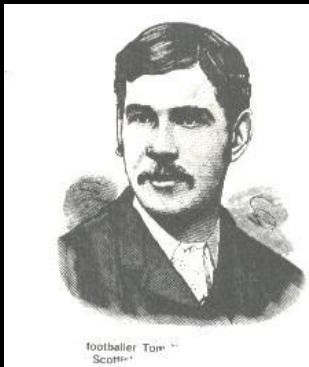


# The Clydesdale Football Connection



## Tom Vallance

Tom Vallance joined Rangers on their formation in 1873 and was club captain for seven seasons and club President from 1883 - 1889. He played at left back and won seven International caps: four v England and three Wales. He was also a noted athlete and set a Scottish Long Jump record of 21 feet 11 inches (6.68 metres). Bearing in mind the lack of proper preparation and the jumping conditions of the time, this was a quite exceptional leap and held the record for fourteen years. Although this was set in the Queens Park Sports of 1881, when the Clydesdale Harriers was formed in 1885 he joined up immediately and remained a member until 1888.

A real all rounder, Vallance was an oarsman before joining Rangers and was also a talented enough artist to have two pictures accepted by the Royal Scottish Academy.

In the 1880's and 1890's sportsmen took part in several sports and there was no sectarian aspect to the football scene in Glasgow at the time. This was exemplified in the make up of the Clydesdale Harriers: Moses McNeill and his brothers were founder members of both Rangers and Clydesdale Harriers and rubbed shoulders in the Club Rooms in Dundas Street with such Celtic luminaries as Willie Maley and his brother Tom. The club also had a boxing section (with a world champion in Ralph Erskine), a cycling section (with a world champion in RA Vogts) and a 'natatorial' (swimming) section. But football was the big connection with members from clubs as far away as East Stirling. Several of the more prominent ones are profiled on this page.



Above is a photo from the football days: This is of the Rangers Team that competed in 1876/77. Four of them went on to be founder members of Clydesdale Harriers: William McNeil, Moses McNeil, Tom Vallance and A Marshall. In addition the Rangers President of the time was Peter McNeil (the third brother) who was also a Harrier.

Names are:

Back Row: George McNeil, William McNeil, Tom Vallance, J.M. Watt.

Middle Row: William Dunlop, David Hill, Peter Campbell, Moses McNeill, Sam Ricketts; Front Row: James AK Watson and A Marshall.



#### **Tom Maley (1864 - 1935)**

"Speed, stamina, dash - all three were mine". Known as "Handsome Tom" Maley was one of the first players signed for Celtic FC by John Glass and Brother Walfred in December 1887. The 'Scottish Soccer Internationalists Who's Who' written by Douglas Lamming in 1987 lists his clubs up to that point as Partick Thistle, Third Lanark Rifle Volunteers and the Clydesdale Harriers Football Section. The club handbook of that year said: "A Football Team has been spoken of but the time is not yet considered ripe for keeping up a permanent organisation. We have been able, among other successes in this department, to overcome such strong bodies as the Preston North End, 3rd LRV and Celtic FC although the former team last month succeeded in wiping out their previous defeat."

As an athlete, though not so well known as his brother, he won many prizes - in 1887 he won six first, three second and one first prize, the following year he won one first, two second and one third but also took third place in the NCU 100 yards championship. His attention was turning more and more to football and after a very brief spell at Celtic he moved to Preston North End and his career with the club was over.



#### **William Maley (1868 - 1958)**

Willie Maley and Celtic were synonymous - after two spells there as a player he was their secretary - manager from 1897 - 1940. His football career is well documented but we quote here from his chapter in "Fifty Years of Athletics" published by the SAAA in 1933.

"Tell how I got mixed up in athletics? A short story. We lads in Cathcart village used up all our spare time in athletics. My strong suits were football, quoiting and running. One of the chiefs in my office further advanced me. He was a big noise in the Clydesdale Harriers - Andrew Dick. My all round abilities convinced him that I was a suitable subject for his club which had fast been gaining fame for the number of its activities. I found myself among the starters in a Junior cross country race. I enjoyed the novelty and was rather pleased in being placed. Despite the fact that I touched wood and issued the water! I was soon able to walk normally.

To the track was the next command. On the Abercorn Ground, Paisley, I appeared with other sprinters and carried off the prize. Pot-hunting I always abhorred, so I confined myself to the odd prizes here and there. I kept on doing that sort of thing until one breezy afternoon I varied things by winning the 100 yards championship (SAAU). As I had been pushed into it, so I pushed my brother Tom, and right well he responded. He made his debut at the Queen's Park Sports and collared the Open 100. That is how we celebrated the Jubilee year. Celtic, the new football club, absorbed me and my time ever since."

Not entirely - even after becoming Celtic manager he promoted many Sports Meetings from the Westmarch Ground (then the St Mirren FC ground) to Celtic Park in Glasgow. As a runner he had been an excellent sprinter over 100, 220 and 440 yards. He won the SAAU 100 yards title in June 1896 at Hampden Park in 11 seconds dead having effectively retired from running to concentrate on football. A natural athlete a contemporary described him thus: "Did you see Maley? He ran like a deer, dodged like a squirrel and shot like a catapult."