

ROOSE, LEIGH RICHMOND (1877 - 1916), Association football player

Name: Leigh Richmond Roose
Date of birth: 1877
Date of death: 1916
Parent: R.L. Roose
Gender: Male
Occupation: Association football player
Area of activity: Sports and Leisure Pursuits
Author: Thomas Richards

One of the greatest players of his generation, goalkeeper for Wales. He had been thoroughly grounded in the fundamentals of his art, and gave interpretation to them in the style and manner of a man of genius. Spectators could only gaze in wonder at his prehensile grip, the immense power of his punch, and the prodigious length of his goal kicks; they could only guess at the uncanny intuition by which he divined the aims of his opponents, the swift agile mind that worked behind the small, narrow eyes. His personality dominated everything and everybody; and he was human enough to be more than delighted with the acclamations of the multitude.

Roose was born at Holt near Wrexham on 27 November 1877, the son of the Rev. R. L. Roose, the Presbyterian minister; he was for a time at the Holt Academy before entering University College, Aberystwyth, in January 1895. He very soon became prominent in the Town and Gown matches, and in the skirmishes for the Welsh Cup. But it was not long before it became evident that the world of Town and Gown would not be enough to hold him; in February 1900, he was invited to play for Wales against Ireland, the first time out of six. Against England he appeared nine times, against Scotland, nine. His leisure moments were spent walking the London hospitals - 'this eminent bacteriologist' was the term used of him by 'Tityrus' of the *Athletic News* - but in his more serious intervals he was playing either for Wales or for Everton, Sunderland, Stoke, or the Glasgow Rangers, always as an amateur, and always with that wonderful combination of sound judgement with flashes of colour and the triumph of the unexpected.

He joined the Forces in the first World War, and was posted among the 'missing' in France in 1916. Thus passed away not only a great player but a highly picturesque personality.

Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

Sources

Personal memories

information from the Registrar of the University College of Wales and from G. G. Lerry, Wrexham (30 May 1949)

Association Football Annuals

files of *Athletic News*, 1900-11.

Further Reading

Spencer Vignes, *Lost In France: The Remarkable Life and Death of Leigh Roose, Football's First Superstar* (Pitch Publishing 2016)

[Remembering War hero Leigh Roose: The first playboy footballer and an Everton superstar](#), Liverpool Echo, 11 Nov 2015

SBNation: [Leigh Richmond Roose: The story of the ex-Sunderland goalkeeper and tragic hero of World War I](#), 10 Nov 2019

Wikipedia Article: [Leigh Richmond Roose](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q3830019](#)

Published date: 1959

Article Copyright: <http://rightsstatements.org/page/InC/1.0/> 

The Dictionary of Welsh Biography is provided by The National Library of Wales and the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. It is free to use and does not receive grant support. A donation would help us maintain and improve the site so that we can continue to acknowledge Welsh men and women who have made notable contributions to life in Wales and beyond.

Find out more on our [sponsorship page](#).

