

Football!

1900-1909

I'm finally out of Bonner Road. At first I was in a hostel run by the Methodists. Now I've moved into digs with a nice family. It's almost like a real home.

My cricket and football are being noticed. A friend suggested I write to **CLAPTON FOOTBALL CLUB** to ask for a trial. That was a hard letter to write. I wrote it over and over again until I got it right. Then it took some nerve to post it. But I have been given a trial and. . .



My record at Clapton F.C.

October 1908: first trial match. We win 6-1.

December 26th 1908: I play for the first team.

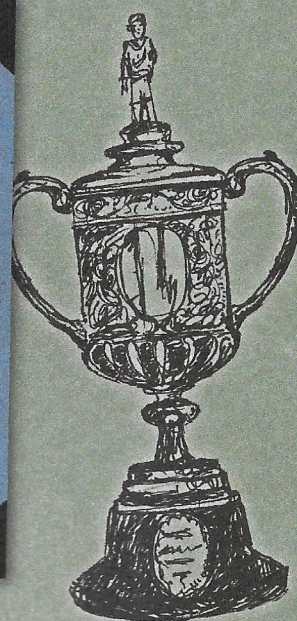
1909: I am now a regular player and we win . . . EVERYTHING! We win the Football Association Amateur Challenge Cup, the London Senior Cup and the County Amateur Cup. An incredible record!!!

THEY WANT ME!

Six weeks ago I was playing in the Park for the Bonner Road School team. Now I am playing for **CLAPTON F.C.** – one of the best amateur teams in the country. I am training hard and making lots of progress.



Clapton F.C. cup-winners



The newspapers are beginning to notice me and some of the big football clubs have noticed me too. . .

In April, **Tottenham Hotspur** asked me to try for their reserve team against **West Ham** and then **Brighton**. What a chance!

"Walter Tull... with his clever footwork is undoubtedly the catch of the season."

From the LONDON FOOTBALL STAR

I did well, so then I played for Spurs again in a friendly, and they have asked me to go on tour with them – to South America! For two whole months!!!

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In 1909 I set off on an enormous ship for a football tour of South America – Argentina and Uruguay.

Imagine me – a big star on a big ship going to Argentina!

Tottenham Hotspur F.C. have just asked me to sign for them. I wasn't sure about becoming a professional

and taking money for playing sport. I think sport should build your character and make you stronger in body and mind.

But in the end I did sign. It is better to be paid out in the open rather than pretending to be an amateur and taking money under the table, which some clubs have offered me. It is always best to be honest.

My football kit

Shirt – thick, warm and good for a cold day – but when it's wet it's like wearing a heavy, damp sponge

Shorts – we call them "knickers". They are long and loose and they soak up the mud

Boots – heavy leather with great big studs. They can really hurt if you get kicked

Ball – made of thick leather with a big strong lace. It soaks up water and weight. When it's wet, it's like heading a brick. Ouch!

