

John Edward Parris 'Eddie' (1911 - 1971)



Eddie was born to a white mother and black father in January 1911 in Pwllmeyric not far from Chepstow.

His footballing career started when he played for Chepstow Town FC, before being 'spotted' and signed for Bradford Park Avenue AFC in 1928. He made his debut in January the following year in an FA cup game against Hull City. Eddie scored his team's only goal in a 1-1 draw. Thereafter, he established a regular first-team place at left wing and nicknamed the 'Welsh Wizard'. During his career at Bradford Park Avenue, he scored 39 goals and made 142 appearances in League and Cup games.

On 5th December 1931 at just 20 years old, Eddie received his first and only international cap. He was selected to play for Wales against Northern Ireland in Windsor Park, Belfast, becoming the first black player to represent Wales in an international game. Unfortunately for the Welsh fans, Wales lost 4-0. Due to injury, this would be his only cap for Wales.

In 1932 the Daily Mail wrote of him, 'Parris is speedy, has ball control'.

Eddie's footballing career saw him play for Bournemouth, Luton, Northampton, Bath City, Cheltenham Town and Gloucester City.

Following on from his footballing career, 'Eddie' worked in a munitions factory and an aeroplane factory, work that he had previously undertaken during World War 2.

Eddie died in 1971 aged 60.

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