

Going Back Home



Ernie Mills (right), wearing his H.C. & A.C. blazer with former Huddersfield R.L. full-back, Joe Brook, and Mrs. Brook, with whom he has been staying while teaching in Meltham.

Ernie Mills To Return To Australia

RETURNING home to Australia two days after the Coronation will be Ernest Mills, the former Huddersfield R.L. footballer, whose speed and dash on the right wing for the Fartowners made him one of the most prolific try-scorers of the Rugby League during the late 1920's and early 1930's.

Mills was signed by Huddersfield only a few hours after the Rugby League had lifted a ban on the signing of Australian players in June, 1927, and he came over for the start of the 1927-28 season. Mills, who was signed on the advice of Ben Gronow and Frank Burge, was then twenty-two years of age, and had the reputation of being faster than any player in the Rugby League.

He soon showed that the reputation did not belie his abilities, and in eight seasons with the Huddersfield club he scored a total of 288 tries.

For six seasons he was the leading Huddersfield try-scorer, and in season 1928-29 he topped the Rugby League try-scoring list with forty-five tries. He again headed the R.L. scoring list in 1931-32 with fifty-two tries.

BROKEN ANKLE

He was still playing fine football in 1934-35—in fact a report states he was playing better than at any time during his stay at Fartown—when in April, 1935, he had the misfortune to break an ankle in the match against Bradford Northern.

The injury proved a very serious one and he had to have an operation. It was thought at one time that he would again be fit enough to resume football, but these hopes were not realised and his career thus came to an unfortunate end.

Mills was a member of several cup-winning sides during his eight years at Fartown. He was in the side that beat Warrington in the never-to-be-forgotten R.L. Cup final at Wembley in 1933, was in the R.L. Championship sides of 1928-9 and 1929-30, and got a Yorkshire Cup winners' medal in 1931-32 and a Yorkshire League medal for seasons 1928-9 and 1929-30. He also played for the Other Nationalities against the Rugby League and Wales.

At one period from December 28, 1929, to September 5, 1932, he had a run of 123 consecutive matches with the Huddersfield side.

Mills will be remembered for his great partnership on the Huddersfield right wing with Stanley Brogden, and at that time the Huddersfield three-quarter line of Mills, Brogden, Parker and Markham was probably one of the fastest that has ever played in the Rugby League.

A schoolteacher by profession—he is now teaching at Meltham C. of E. and has taught in a number of Huddersfield schools—he is to take up a teaching appointment on his return to Australia.

The Huddersfield club have presented him with one of their football blazers to mark his association with the club.