



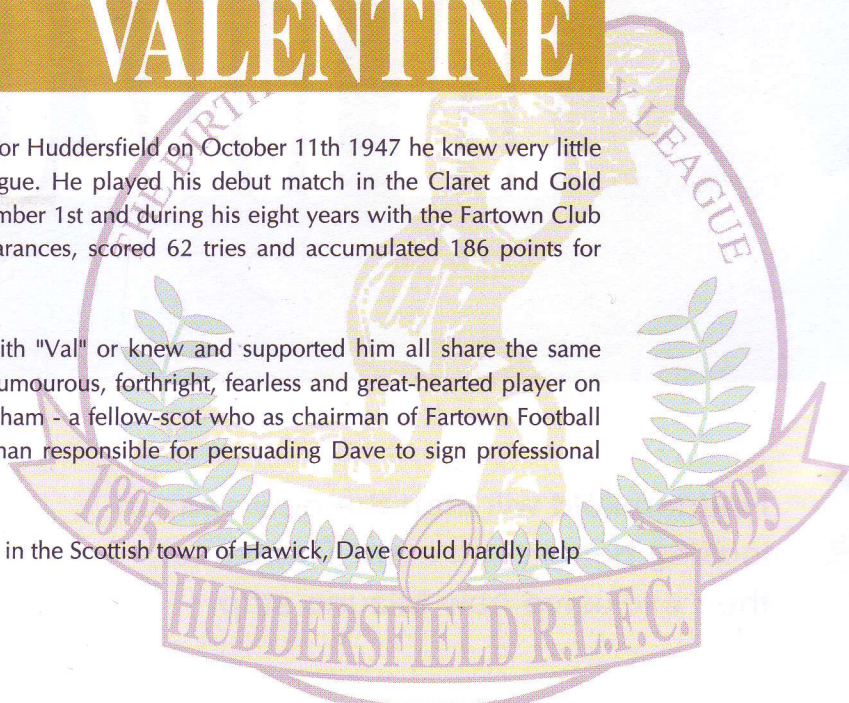
DAVE

VALENTINE

When Dave Valentine signed for Huddersfield on October 11th 1947 he knew very little about the town or Rugby League. He played his debut match in the Claret and Gold colours at Dewsbury on November 1st and during his eight years with the Fartown Club he made 318 first team appearances, scored 62 tries and accumulated 186 points for Huddersfield R.L.F.C.

Everyone that played rugby with "Val" or knew and supported him all share the same opinion of him as a "happy, humourous, forthright, fearless and great-hearted player on or off the field" (W M Cunningham - a fellow-scot who as chairman of Fartown Football Committee in 1947 was the man responsible for persuading Dave to sign professional forms.)

Born on September 12th 1926, in the Scottish town of Hawick, Dave could hardly help



being a rugby player and an all-round sportsman , primarily because of his father - Alec Valentine's remarkable sporting feats.

Dave began playing Rugby Union in the Hawick High School Second XV and from then, went on to much greater games. He was selected to play at the tender age of 20, for the Scottish International team who played against Ireland.

The 1946-47 season was a great one for this great player. He played again for Scotland against England at Twickenham, for the Army against the Navy, the RAF and the French Forces. He also represented the Combined Services against Australia and went on the Barbarians tour of Wales. Not unnaturally, quite a few Rugby League Clubs were becoming interested in this young forward, and it was Huddersfield who managed to obtain his signature.

Arriving at Fartown, Valentine had never seen a game of of Rugby League, but after watching an England V France R.L. International at Fartown he had his taste of what was to come.

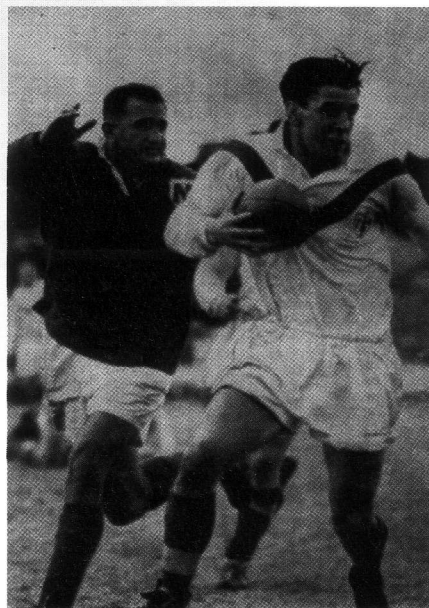
Dave made a good start with the Huddersfield team, he soon took over as loose-forward, a role which remained his own and he became an integral part of what developed into a great team.

The following season, Representative Honours came his way, as he was selected for all three Australian Test Matches. Huddersfield won the League Championship that season, beating Warrington at Maine Road, and also took the Yorkshire League Championship.

Surprise filled the Fartown Club when Valentine was not selected for the Great Britain Team tour to Australasia during the summer of 1950. "Val" was regarded by most rugby league supporters as a certainty for the Tour, one R.L. paper ran a Tour selection competition and 220 out of 252 entries named Valentine as the touring teams loose-forward. However, the selectors were obviously not as certain and he was overlooked for this particular tour. Ironically enough, near the end of that season he broke a bone in the bottom of his back and wouldn't have been able to play anyway.

There were however many compensations to follow. In 1953, Huddersfield reached Wembley again and Valentine was a notable member of the Claret and Gold team.

In 1954, Valentine was this time chosen for the Australasian tour and he showed his appreciation by being one of the tours' most outstanding players. He played in all three tests in Australia and two of the three tests in New Zealand.



Dave in action for Great Britain V Newcastle during the 1954 Tour.

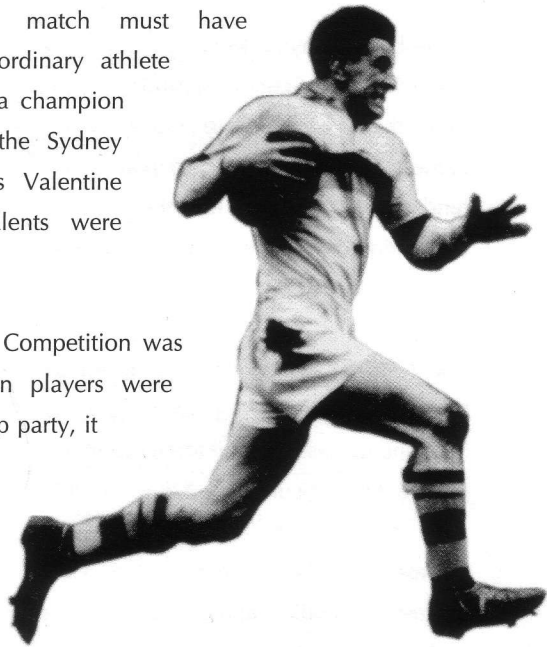
DAVE VALENTINE

He made a great impression on the Australian critics, many of whom rated him as one of the greatest lock-forwards ever to visit Australia. "It is probably not exaggerating to say that he was the best player on the pitch in all three test games... Any Australian supporter watching yesterday's match must have shuddered each time this extra-ordinary athlete swooped into the attack... He is a champion sportsman." These quotes from the Sydney papers show that not only was Valentine praised in England but his talents were paramount in Australia too.

Back in England, the World Cup Competition was looming, and when the eighteen players were selected to make up the World Cup party, it was with the delight of the Fartown supporters that Valentine was chosen to Captain the Great-Britain team.

Dave showed his qualities of leadership and the team that had been criticised as 'no-hopers' by many national papers proved themselves worthy winners of the First Rugby League World Cup Trophy. It was a great moment for Valentine when he was chaired from the field at the end of the final game against France in Paris, to receive the magnificent World Cup Trophy.

Valentine's enthusiasm and determination is never in question and as part of Huddersfield Rugby League Footballs history he will remain forever respected as one of their most loved players.



HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM

In 'Forty-seven the Fartown need
Was one loose-forward, all agreed.
Officials then went North to sign
A Scotsman called Dave Valentine.

This lad, who comes from Hawick way,
Soon proved that he had come to stay,
And quickly he achieved renown,
This man who packs the last man down.

He made a rapid rise to fame
On coming South to play our game;
And quickly honours came his way.
A fitting tribute to his play.

Our Dave was classed among the best
And soon selected for the Test
Against the "Aussies," played at Leeds.
And here he answered England's needs.

He was retained that season through,
Though only learning, that's quite true.
But his defence was very good,
This kept his place, that's understood.

As for the Nineteen-fifty Tour,
Most people thought his place was sure;
But soon a disappointment came
The team was picked without his name.

This seemed to have a marked effect;
His name was dropped from the select.
His play then suffered for a while,
On him "Dame Fortune" did not smile.

And so to Nineteen-fifty-four,
That year he struck his form once more.
This time he got his tourist's berth,
And soon was on his way to Perth.

He led Great Britain's World Cup side,
And filled all Fartown hearts with pride.
Though no one thought they had much
chance
They triumphed when they played in
France.

This was beyond his wildest dream.
He then was held in high esteem.
Before that glorious year was through
He was the Fartown captain too.

His efforts still are bearing fruits,
But, when it's time to 'hang his boots,'
Supporters still will talk of Dave
And of the service that he gave.

BRIAN DONALDSON.