

# Tales from Tynecastle

*A Short History of the  
Heart of Midlothian  
Football Club,  
1928-1929.*



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# Tales from Tynecastle.

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It is not within the province of the writer to attempt to give in chronological form all the happenings attendant on the rise of the Heart of Midlothian Football Club from its early and modest beginnings in 1873, or to attempt to augment the "History" so well written by Mr Wm. Reid, F.J.I., and published in the Jubilee year of 1924, but rather to dwell for a little on the past and to point with hope to the future. It is not too much to say that the Hearts have the most loyal supporters of any First Division team in Scotland, or in England for that matter. Whatever may be the reason, and many may be given, the faithful are there week by week, the first to praise and mayhap the first to blame, but each with a cherished corner in their hearts for the Hearts. It has been said that one secret is the fact that rarely has the team been without superlative stars such as Nick Ross, Russell, Bobby Walker, Thomson and a host of lesser lights, yet supreme artists in their own way. While this may to a certain extent be true, we are inclined to think it is a more intimate feeling and a higher regard for the club than that, which fills the stands and terraces and to which year in year out the players give of their best. Like the Hibs it was as a club playing in the public parks that the Hearts came into existence, but for 40 years the home has been at Tynecastle; and, taking a look at the enclosure to-day, at the abundant terracing, at the spacious grand stand, and well-equipped accommodation for teams, it looks something like a romance to read of the modest beginnings.

## RED, WHITE AND BLUE.

For the first five years of the club the colours were red, white and blue, but in 1878 maroon was adopted, and there has been no need to change, for the colour has become quite as distinct as the name, and that is saying something! Professional football



has had such a wide ramification, is so well governed, that it is difficult to reconcile one's thoughts to the idea that to pay wages for playing football was a sin in the eyes of those that carried on the administration of the game in Scotland. Yet it is on record that the Heart of Midlothian were the first Scottish club to be suspended for "professionalism." In 1884 the Scottish Football Association published a list of fifty-seven Scotsmen who had crossed the border to play for English clubs as professionals, and ten of these were ex-Hearts' players, who were suspended for ever from playing again in Scotland. Some time earlier than that N. J. Ross, perhaps the greatest player who ever wore a football jersey left the Hearts and went to Preston North End to become one of "the team of all the talents." Nick knew every trick there was worth knowing, and he is credited with being the pioneer of passing the ball back to the goalkeeper, which is, of course, now quite a commonplace episode in the game. In 1885-6 Hearts, along with Queen's Park, Rangers, Third Lanark and Partick Thistle, entered for the English Cup, but Hearts scratched to Padiham, owing it is stated to a fear of the powers that be. At this time the English Association had legalised professionalism, but it was not so in Scotland, and it was thought that by playing there would be retribution from the Scottish authorities. The following year, however, they again entered the English competition, as it was thought the dispute between the rival associations was at an end. Drawn against Darwin, one of the original members of the Football League, the Hearts journeyed to Lancashire to be heavily defeated. This was the first and last tie ever played by an Edinburgh club in the competition, the Scottish Football Association, in the summer of 1887 enacting a rule:— "That clubs belonging to this Association shall not be members of any other National Association." Coming down to a later period, viz., 1890-91, Hearts again achieved something that was to have a far-reaching effect on the game. Just as they were the first club to be suspended for looking with keen vision on professionalism so were they responsible for the inauguration of the penalty kick. The incident that led up to this was the fisting of the ball out of the goal



by one of the Hearts' backs in a cup-tie against East Stirlingshire at Falkirk. In addition to provoking the spectators to riot, the incident helped to persuade leading members of the Scottish Football Association that something more than an ordinary free kick was needed to cope with such a flagrant infringement of the laws of the game. From this tie Hearts went on to defeat Third Lanark at Cathkin in a storm of wind and rain, and in the final defeated Dumbarton by one goal to none. For the first time in their career the Scottish Cup was brought to Edinburgh, and the following are the names of that great team, six of whom were natives of "Auld Reekie":—Fairbairn; Adams and Goodfellow; Begbie, Macpherson and Hill; Taylor, Mason, Russell, Scott and Baird. The three half-backs and three of the forwards all won their caps that year, and it has been stated that Robert Walker alone of later Hearts' players could have been introduced into the 1891 cup-winning eleven to strengthen it. Five years later, 1895-96, Hearts again won the cup, defeating their near neighbours Hibernians at Logie Green by three goals to one. It has been said that personality was not so marked in this winning team as that of its predecessor of 1891, but that may be merely a pious opinion. At anyrate we had the privilege of seeing it and it was just about as well-balanced an eleven as one could wish to see. Here are the names:—Fairbairn; McCartney and Mirk; Begbie, Russell and Hogg; McLaren, Baird, Michael, King, and J. Walker. Begbie, Russell and Hogg as a trio, to our mind, were as competent, as crafty, and as calculating as other famous lines who have been extolled, viz.—Gibson, Neill and Robertson, or Young, Loney and Hay, and it was half-backs like these that gave the cue to the managers to get three half-backs and then build the team. Michael in the centre was a veritable wonder, and although the Press in these days did not devote so much space to football as they do now he was one of the most paragraphed footballers of the time. Ubiquitous and ever on the move he was styled the "indiarubber man," as he bounded off the grass and off his opponents in such a way that the application of the name was something of a truism.



## BOBBY WALKER.

In 1896 Robert Walker first became associated with Tynecastle, and then began a partnership between club, player and country that needs no commendation. Walker first came into prominence playing for Dalry Primrose, a go-ahead Edinburgh junior club, and took the eye of the Junior selectors. He was capped against the Birmingham team, which at that time represented English juniorism, and Tynecastle agents came back singing his praises. He, along with two other youngsters, was given a trial and was promptly signed. After a run in the "A" team, Walker was promoted to the first eleven, being given the inside right berth, a position he never vacated till his retiral. Not long ago we were at a lecture on football given by Mr William Maley, of the Celtic, and he put on the screen a few photographs of old-time famous players. When showing Walker Mr Maley said: "There is Bobby. Perhaps the greatest player we ever saw. One hears so much of transfer fees now-a-days that it would be difficult to estimate his worth had he been playing. At anyrate, I'm safe in saying that money could not have bought him." At one and the same time a fine tribute to the spirit that existed between club and player and a testimony to his wonderful ability and personality. Here is his record of Honours gained against England:—1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1912, 1913; Wales—1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1908, 1909, 1912, 1913; Ireland—1900, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1912; English League—1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1909; Irish League—1899, 1900, 1904; Southern League—1911, 1912. Truly a wonderful record of 43 caps.

A few more uneventful years brings us to 1900-01. In this season everything seemed to go wrong for a time, and in the League tourney the record was something of a disaster—the team only scoring 22 goals and having 30 against them. Yet in the end they secured the custody of the premier honour and had their name once again inscribed on the cup. The final was played against Celtic,



at that time a masterly combination containing two old Hearts in Russell and Battles. The Hearts' team were :—Phillips; Allan and Baird; Key, Buick and Hogg; Porteous, Walker, Thomson, Houston and Bell. Writing of Buick (who was a product of Arbroath) in the "History," Mr Reid says, with regard to the second round against Queen's Park : " The feature of the cup-tie was the great form of the Hearts' centre half-back, Albert Buick. Less than a year before McColl, the Queen's Park centre, had materially contributed to an electrifying win over England at Parkhead, and he was still at the height of his fame. Buick bottled him up so effectively that he was never seen in the tie. Buick was a singular creation, spindle-shanked, thin-armed, pale and wan, full of tireless energy. With his long arms and legs going he looked for all the world like a huge spider attempting to engulf a monster fly." And so it was in the Final, with Bobby Walker the genius. If ever a match was won by strategy it was this one, and the credit in no small measure was due to the craft of Walker on the one hand and the tireless energy of Buick on the other.

### CHARLIE THOMSON.

At this time Charlie Thomson was being tried at centre forward, and he was eventually transferred to the right back position, only once again to be found in the forward line. It was not, however, until Buick left for the South that Thomson became his real self and took up the centre-half position, where he gained the highest honours, being capped against England in 1905, 1907, and 1908. He was also selected against Wales in 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908; Ireland 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908; English League 1904, 1905, 1906, 1908; Irish League 1904.

Some years ago we met " Ab " Buick, and he recounted the tale of his going South. At that time no transfer fees were payable by the teams in the Southern League, and in a fit of pique Buick signed a form in the morning, but remorse took him in the afternoon and he asked the club to release him as his heart was still at Tyne-



castle. The manager of the Southern team was too pleased with his bargain, and so a great player was lost. Buick was responsible for bringing G. C. McWattie to the Hearts. They had been boon companions in Arbroath, and when McWattie, who was an amateur, came to Edinburgh he, if we remember rightly, played first for Hibs. Harry Rennie was keeping guard for the Hearts, and was quite unorthodox in his ways. Rennie was originally a half-back with Greenock Morton and perhaps it was this early training that gave him the confidence to leave his goal so often. There was method in the apparent madness, however, and H.G. was rarely caught unprepared. Rennie went to the Hibs and McWattie came to the Hearts—a change over that apparently pleased everyone. McWattie was capped against the English League in 1902 and then transferred his services to the Queen's Park, where further honours awaited him—all except the English cap. Rennie eventually played for Rangers, but while at Tynecastle he was capped against England, Ireland and the English League.

Season 1904-5 was something that tried the patience and the resource of those in charge. No fewer than four first team players were lured south. Bell went to Fulham and "Sailor" Hunter to the Arsenal, while a big strapping and promising centre-forward in David Axford, another Arbroathian, joined Buick at Portsmouth. We learned the other day that Axford has been appointed Town Missionary at Arbroath and is doing good work there. In 1905-6 the club was floated into a limited liability company, and with the added resources new players were procured. That this policy had shrewd judges behind it one has merely to add that the team finished second in the League and won the Scottish Cup, defeating Celtic in the third round and Third Lanark in the final. The team that appeared in the final reads:—G. Philip; McNaught and D. Philip; McLaren, Thomson and Dickson; Lindsay, Walker, Menzies, D. and G. Wilson. George Wilson scored the only goal of the match. At the end of that season the Wilsons were transferred to Everton.



In 1909 Charlie Thomson severed his connection with Tyne-castle and was transferred to Sunderland, and then began another building up process. George Sinclair was secured as outside right and struck up a great partnership with Walker. Sinclair was capped against Wales 1912; Ireland 1910, 1912; Irish League 1919; Southern League 1913.

### Mr JOHN McCARTNEY.

In the following season a fresh change was made in the position of manager. Mr John McCartney came in February 1910 from St Mirren, and had his work cut out to rebuild on a somewhat slender foundation, but the fruition of his labours were seen in the great 1914 eleven which, had not the war intervened, would have been:—Boyd; Crossan and Currie; Briggs, Mercer and Nellies; Low, Wattie, Gracie, Graham and W. Wilson. Here let us add a word of our regard for the unfailing courtesy and the ever ready helping hand which Mr McCartney always extended to those who sought his aid. In 1912 we had occasion to want the loan of a player. When I say we, you can take it that I mean a struggling minor club. The writer was deputed to go and interview the Hearts' manager and ask for the loan of Mercer! Mercer at that time was merely figuring in the second string. "Why do you want Mercer?" queried the genial John with a twinkle in his eye. "Because I think he is just the man to help us," I replied. "Aye, laddie," came the answer. "That's an international ye're speaking about; and he's no for you or any other body." However, I did not go home empty handed, and my club got the loan of a player who served us well. But what I meant to convey is the manner of my reception. Many a manager would have turned me down with a frown and an insinuation they had enough to do with their own troubles.

The present stand was begun ere the war period and was in partial use the first Saturday in August 1914. When completed it was the last word in stand construction in Scotland, and to-day it



is one of the finest structures of its kind in existence. The estimated cost of the 1914 stand was £8500, but ere it was complete over £12,000 had been spent.

We do not propose to deal at any length with the doings of the club during the war period, because that has been covered by a booklet published in 1918 "The Hearts and the Great War," by John McCartney, and is a worthy tribute to worthy deeds. If anything further were required to vindicate patriotic footballers who wore the maroon colours it will be found in the War Memorial at the Haymarket erected to the memory of those who gave their lives.

When Peace was once more with us, it was evident that football had taken an added interest for the average man in the street. It was something of an eye-opener that when the "Victory Cup" competition was run in the semi-final tie at Tynecastle against Airdrieonians there was a gross attendance of 42,000, constituting a record attendance for a football match in Scotland outside Glasgow.

In 1919 Mr John McCartney resigned and was followed by the present manager, his son, Mr William McCartney. What we have said of the father is likewise true of the son. Urbane and courteous, keen in business, and quick in action, one feels the destinies of the club are safe with men like that at the helm.

So too is it with the Directors, and led by a chairman of the acumen of Mr W. C. P. Brown, J.P., with Mr E. H. Furst, J.P., as his deputy there is every reason for unbounded confidence. The names of the other directors are :—Messrs J. W. Brown, Peter Lawson, W. C. Simpson, Jas. G. Robertson, T. Waterston, Harry Anderson, and David Baird.

## THE FUTURE.

That, for the past—one might say the glorious past. What of the future? Well, a visit to the ground will wipe away any fears that may lurk. There will be found 26 capable exponents all



waiting for the whistle. It may not be that the management had in mind the days when Hearts had a few personalities, but they have not been lacking in securing that desideratum for the coming season. To secure Harkness for goalkeeper was a piece of great work, and when it was announced that Airdrie had been induced to part with Bob Bennie, the most brilliant left half in Scotland, one had visions of a better balanced side than has appeared for some time. These players need no introduction to Tynecastle, nor to any ground in either country. Nay, they would have been welcomed anywhere! The only other change from last year is at centre forward, where a real surprise has been sprung by the inclusion of Barney Battles, surely a name to conjure with!

The Hearts' recruit was born in Musselburgh, some months after the death of his father, which closed a distinguished career with Bathgate, Heart of Midlothian, Celtic, Dundee and Kilmar-nock. When he was six years old young Barney and his mother moved from Musselburgh to Edinburgh, and in time the boy's football ability found an outlet in his school team at Holy Cross Academy. Unlike his father, who was a left back, and a superb one at that, Barney the second played centre forward. He figured twice on the losing side in the final for the Colonel Clark Cup, and had no better luck when he led the Edinburgh School-boys' attack against a Glasgow team in a representative match at Tynecastle. It is a fair assumption that young Barney's preference for Tynecastle was not unconnected with his exploits as a schoolboy footballer quite as much as the sentiment that his father first came into prominence there.

After a couple of seasons as a first class juvenile with Edinburgh Emmet A., young Barney went off to America. At Boston he was playing in junior football when Tommy Muirhead sought him out and signed him for the Boston professional team. Since then he has played four seasons, and if his scoring feats in America are an earnest of what we may expect here he is surely the man we have been looking for.



There is another son of a famous father on the ground staff in the person of Somers, a son of the famous Celtic Player, Peter Somers, and it will be something remarkable if these two youngsters find themselves playing together in a Hearts' eleven.

All the tried and trusty ones of last year have been fixed up, and the team is likely to read:—Harkness; Herd and King; Peter Kerr, Johnstone and Bennie; Roger, Miller, Battles, McMillan and Murray. Who will say but that is a likely combination. It will not do to don the mantle of prophet at this stage, but one has the feeling that here is a very fine blend of youth and experience, of craft and courage, and that other thing that cannot very well be diagnosed but answers to the name of personality!

J. D. Harkness, Scotland's goalkeeper for the past two seasons, needs, as we have already said, no introduction, but the following particulars may be of interest to a few who like particulars ladled out. The Hearts' new goalkeeper stands 5 ft. 11 in., and weighs about 12 stone. He has been goalkeeping since, at ten years of age, he held the fort for Mount Florida School. During four years in the school team he was capped twice against England and twice against Wales in schoolboy international games. Later he was in the Queen's Park Secondary School team for a year, and he had a season in Churches League football before joining up at Hampden. Harkness had not long to wait for promotion with Queen's Park. He had only played a few games for the Strollers when he was asked to fill the vacancy in the first eleven caused by the departure of T. S. Gibbs to Dunfermline. Since then he has never been out of the Queen's Park team, and his "caps"—one against Ireland, two against England, and two in the amateur internationals—reflect the rapid progress he has made in first-class football. His first League game for the Queen's was played at Falkirk in December 1925, when he was only 18 years of age. On that reckoning Harkness, having begun so early, is likely to remain in the forefront of goalkeepers for many years to come.



## THE OTHER PLAYERS.

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GILFILLAN, the reserve goalkeeper, is a product of Inverkeithing Juniors, but has been at Tynecastle for 7 years and is an under-study that many clubs would like to have as a principal.

HERD has developed into one of the most consistent right backs in the League. Originally a half-back, neither Dundee nor Dunfermline could see any future for him, but perseverance has brought its own reward.

KING was originally a half-back, and a junior with Dalkeith Thistle. He has been five seasons with the Hearts, thus we have two half-backs who have found their true position a step further back.

TOM REID was formerly with Rangers, and is also a young man of considerable promise. He was unfortunate enough to have a leg broken last year, but is now his old self again.

A. C. PRATT is another of the younger school merely waiting an opportunity. A big strapping fellow, he was with Tranent Juniors ere taking the senior ticket. Right back is his favourite position.

TOMMY McNEILL is a Coatbridge product and a left back only waiting for the polish that comes with experience.

PETER KERR. Everybody in Edinburgh who knows anything about football knows Peter Kerr. He served so long at Easter Road that the powers that be there thought his time was up. His work at Tynecastle last season was a good answer to that. Peter has many days yet. A serviceable, resourceful half-back, with the right idea of offensive as well as defensive.

JOHN A. JOHNSTONE. Perhaps the greatest "find" of the past few seasons. He was identified with Ardeer Thistle ere coming to Edinburgh. He has been five seasons in the Maroon jersey, and seems destined for the highest honours in the game.

HUGH SHAW is another Easter Road old-timer. He got to Gorgie via Ibrox, and can fill any of the half-back positions with distinction.

CHAS. COWIE. Another half-back of the big, bustling type, who stands five foot ten. Originally with St. Ninian's Thistle, he comes from a good school and ought to make good.

WILLIAM CURRIE is a centre-half of the six foot type. He came from Wallyford and awaits the opportunity that will assuredly come his way.

BRUCE HARLEY has been in and out of the first eleven, and is a more than useful left half-back. He has been four seasons on the staff.

WM. BROADFOOT is another promising youngster from Coat-bridge, and adaptable as a left-half or inside forward.

T. ROGERS. A Pumpherston boy and one of the best. Picked up when in his teens he has developed amazingly. Injured in the trials he has not been able to take his place so far.

J. B. SMITH, understudy to Rogers, originally a centre forward with Clydebank he was transferred to Dunfermline, thence back to Clydebank and Tynecastle. A first-class player when in the mood.

A. B. MILLER. A Larkhall Thistle youngster who was for a season with Dundee United. Cool and clever he looks like developing as his experience ripens.

T. MORGAN is a centre-forward who made good with Armadale and was reckoned to have a future. Ere Devlin came last season he led the van with a fair amount of success.

J. McNEILL, a product of Inverkeithing and full of pep. He only awaits experience and toning down to fit into the proper order of things.

P. CARRUTHERS came from Galashiels and is another promising young blood.



LACHIE McMILLAN. A well-known figure in Scottish football. Was for a few years the strong man in the Hamilton Academicals attack, and has lost none of his power. In fact has increased it. A goalgetter and full of tricks.

SOMERS. A boy from Coalburn Juniors. Son of a famous father, and, one hopes, destined to add lustre to the name.

W. MURRAY. The only Englishman on the books. Hails from Durham County. Fast and clever—is a great favourite.

W. McWATT, outside left. A big boy of only 17 from Denny. Never played as a junior, coming straight from the ranks of the juveniles. Has time to wait.

JOHNNY EDGAR. Has been a few years at Tynecastle after a term with East Fife. Dapper and neat he has had a good few runs with the First team.

Battle and Somers, both sons of famous fathers, carry another coincidence with them, the father of the latter having been groomsmen at the marriage of the parents of the former.



## LEAGUE FIXTURES for 1928-29.

Date.	Opponents.	Goals.		Pts.
		For.	Agst.	
1928.				
Aug. 11—	Queen's Park ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 18—	Hamilton Academicals ...	H	.....	.....
„ 25—	Clyde ... ..	A	.....	.....
Sept. 1—	Ayr United ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 8—	Raith Rovers ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 15—	Rangers ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 22—	Airdrieonians ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 29—	Dundee ... ..	A	.....	.....
Oct. 6—	Falkirk ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 13—	Cowdenbeath ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 20—	Hibernians ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 27—	Aberdeen ... ..	A	.....	.....
Nov. 3—	St. Johnstone ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 10—	Motherwell ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 17—	St. Mirren ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 24—	Kilmarnock ... ..	A	.....	.....
Dec. 1—	Third Lanark ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 8—	Partick Thistle ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 15—	Celtic ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 22—	Hamilton Academicals ...	A	.....	.....
„ 29—	Queen's Park ... ..	H	.....	.....
1929.				
Jan. 1—	Hibernians ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 2—	Aberdeen ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 5—	Clyde ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 12—	Ayr United ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 19—	FIRST ROUND SCOTTISH CUP		.....	.....
„ 26—	Celtic ... ..	H	.....	.....
Feb. 2—	Rangers ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 9—	Airdrieonians ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 16—	Dundee ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 23—	Falkirk ... ..	A	.....	.....
Mar. 2—	Cowdenbeath ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 9—	St. Johnstone ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 16—	Motherwell ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 23—	St. Mirren ... ..	H	.....	.....
„ 30—	Kilmarnock ... ..	H	.....	.....
April 6—	Third Lanark ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 20—	Partick Thistle ... ..	A	.....	.....
„ 27—	Raith Rovers ... ..	H	.....	.....



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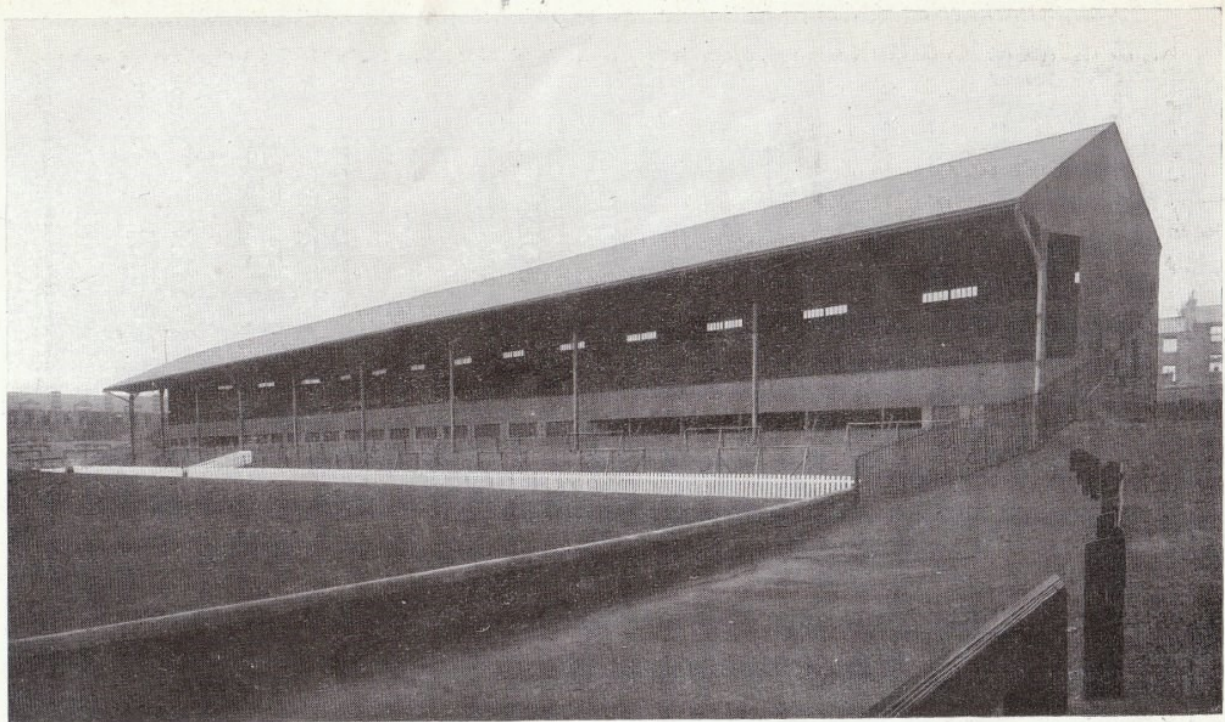
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THE NEW STAND.



TEAM, SEASON 1928-29.

[Photo by "Evening Dispatch,"





HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN F.C. WAR MEMORIAL AT HAYMARKET.