



# HANTS SOCCER IN THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: SOUTHAMPTON –A TIMELINE

- 1860s** Formation of **Portswood Park FC**, considered to be the first football club in the area, with play following a rulebook that was referred to as 'primitive rugby'!
- 1860s** **Southampton Rangers** were the next team in the area known to be playing under 'Soccer rules' but little is known. They did enter the Basingstoke Cup in 1879.
- 1880s** Records of a **Sholing FC** team have been found, later **Sholing Athletic** and **Sholing Sports**, a club that existed for over a century.
- 1881** **Southampton Harriers** formed. This club had a brief existence but are known to be beaten finalists in the first Hampshire Junior Cup competition in 1888. A merger with the Southampton Amateur Athletic club in 1893 saw them subsequently play as **Hampshire Athletic Club**.
- 1883** Driven by the headmaster Mr C G Ellaby, **Banister Court School** was formed and competed with local sides for many years, including in the Hampshire Senior Cup. Charles Miller, who went on to play for the famous Corinthians amateur team and is recorded to have taken the game of football to Brazil, also played for the team.
- 1883** The **Southampton Temperance** and **Freemantle** clubs were formed. The latter defeated St Mary's to win the Hampshire Senior Cup final in 1893, winning by a controversial late penalty. Freemantle (also four times Portsmouth & District Association Cup winners) briefly played Southern League football but when the St Mary's club (later Southampton FC) turned professional the Freemantle support migrated. This led to the Freemantle club falling into decline and disbanding.
- 1884** There is a record of clubs forming at **Winchester** and **Botley** (the game had been played at Winchester School for many years before).
- 1885** A team is formed by members of St Mary's Church which later became **Southampton FC** (with the famous nickname of 'The Saints').
- 1885** **Totton FC** is formed. That year appears to have moved on to 1886 since, but the Football Association did officially acknowledge the club's centenary in 1985.
- 1885** **Lyndhurst FC** is formed and became affiliated to Southampton FA competitions prior to World War II.
- 1886** **Romsey FC** is formed (on 16th October).
- 1886** **Woolston Works** is formed by a group of Scottish shipbuilders and were the last winners of the Hants & Dorset Senior Cup (when the two county associations were together in 1887) and then became the very first winners of the Hampshire Senior Cup a year later. The shipbuilding industry stagnated and the club had broken up by 1889, with efforts to bring it back under different names proving to be short lived. There is a link to the current Sholing FC.
- 1886** **Geneva Cross FC** is formed and was based at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Netley. The hospital, incidentally, was reputed to be the world's longest building on its completion and was mostly demolished in 1966. The club enjoyed success in the early years of the Portsmouth & District Association Cup (winners in 1889).
- 1891** Football became prominent at Eastleigh with the location of a new Carriage and Wagon Railway Works in the town. A team, known initially as **L&SWR (Eastleigh) FC** is formed, which subsequently became known as Eastleigh, Eastleigh Athletic and, much later, SR (Eastleigh) Athletic and then BR (Eastleigh) Athletic.
- 1894** A suggestion by **Queen's Park FC** is agreed by the Hampshire FA and a Southampton Junior Football League is formed. Clubs competing in the 1894/95 season included **St Paul's, Swallows, Gordon Avenue, Pear Tree Green, St Denys Star** and **Woolston**. It proved to be the forerunner to the Southampton Football League.
- 1895** **Warsash FC** is formed, initially playing at Fleet End Road before a later move to the Recreation Ground, Osborne Road. A Winchester & District League is formed.
- 1895** A new team is formed in **Bitterne**.