

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

1886-2021



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ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB 1886 – 1903.



The founder of Argyle,
William Hampton Pethybridge,
38 years later, Lord Mayor of Cardiff.

Why did Argyle choose green? For sporting teams in Devon, green was a popular football shirt choice, probably more so than elsewhere in Britain other than the clubs of Scotland and Ireland where it had religious Catholic significance. Green is an Anglo-Saxon word “Grene” meaning “grass” and “grow”. The colour, in the traditional “Argyle” shade, does look akin to the lush Devon countryside and it features on the Plymouth coat-of-arms. The Devon County Rugby Union football team chose green and white shirts; also adopted by the Devon County Football Association after it was founded in 1888. The Devon Regiment played Association football in dark green shirts.

One of the oldest football clubs in Devon, the Plymouth Football Club, founded circa 1869 wore a plain green football shirt. This club, which initially played both codes, became Devon’s most prestigious and influential Association football club, largely due to their elite middle-class, public school educated membership. Two Cornishmen learning their trades and living in “digs” in Plymouth, Francis Howard Grose and William Hampton Pethybridge, as keen footballers, wanted to join the Plymouth Football Club but it was not open to their membership as they were not former pupils of Plymouth College or Mannamead School. It was Pethybridge’s idea to form a new club. For all the former public school educated new members of the Argyle Football Club it was logical to chose Club colours as another variation on the theme. The Club name was suggested by a prospective member at the Borough Arms founding meeting. He had connections with Argyle Terrace. This was three years before anyone had heard of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders who had no connection with Plymouth.

Attending meetings leading up to the formation of the Argyle Football Club in 1886 was prominent member, Ernest Henry Babb. In a letter to the Western Morning News, published 24th March 1934, he writes of “**ARGYLE’S ORIGIN ... Colours!** *We had some lively discussions on that matter prior to the meeting but the green*

and black choice of 1886, though varying in arrangement, has I am proud to say, held fast”. Babb indicates the shirt design changed over the seasons, but the Argyle Football Club remained true to green and black shirts. He is writing almost 50 years after the formation, and from 1903 the professional League Plymouth Argyle did make, for the first time since 1886, green the dominant colour in the shirt. Pre 1903 the evidence suggests the two colours were at least equally proportioned in the shirt and early on that Black was the dominant colour.

In the Argyle Football Club’s second season, with Babb now captain, the 1887-88 official ‘Fixture Card and Members Rules’ shows, **RULES – 1. That this Club be called the “Argyle Football Club”, and that the colours be “Black and Green”**. This would fit in with the later edict that the earliest shirt combination was a ‘Black’ shirt with a ‘Green’ diagonal stripe. Members paid a subscription of five shillings, which would cover the cost of a football shirt. In 1886 the price of a shirt or jersey was about 3 shillings; as football became more popular the price had fallen from around 5 shillings in 1880. Argyle may have bought their first set of shirts at a discount from an up-country wholesaler/retailer who offered a reduction in price, per dozen, to clubs. They were close to the mills that manufactured the material or in some cases were the manufacturers themselves. In 1886 mass production by machine was only just taking off. It was also early days for a Plymouth retailer to sell football kit; in 1884, football shirts were available from G. A. Browse (Outfitters) of 53, Bedford Street, and from Popham & Radford (General Drapers) of 40/41, Bedford Street. A year later, in 1885, John Yeo (Draper) of 38, Bedford Street was also retailing football shirts. A few doors from these retailers the Argyle Football Club was founded in 1886 at the Borough Arms Coffee House situated at 35, Bedford Street.

It now begs the question “What did the first Argyle Football Club shirt or jersey look like?” It is not a question that can be answered by studying a black and white photograph as none are known to have survived, though a team photograph was taken during the first 1886-87 season. What we do have are two photographs of players from the premier rugby club in the district, the (Devonport) Albion Football Club, taken circa 1889 and 1892, they are wearing a version of the type of shirt Argyle would have worn. The Albion colours were a blue shirt with a black sash that went over the right shoulder; the sash is 4 to 5 inches wide. Both photographs show a closer fit than a woven shirt, they are knitted jersey that has the stretch properties of a woollen garment. Very much in the style that would have been worn by Argyle, the Albion player in 1889 is wearing woven serge/worsted knickerbockers, from the 1880s termed as “knickers”, either black or navy blue, and thick wool turned-over top stockings of black or blue. The older jersey has a round neck, which is contemporary to the style in the 1880s and the other collared neck is more contemporary to the 1890s. Of the 28 member clubs of the Devon Football Association in 1893, those listed as wearing a ‘sash’ are 5 clubs but this may be added to by Plymouth United, who were said to be “the wearers of the ‘Albion’ jersey” (i.e. blue with a black sash), and the Argyle Football Club, probably though not confirmed. If Argyle did wear the same coloured design from 1886 to 1894, when they temporarily became defunct, it is probable the neck style changed from round to a collar, as it did with Albion.



circa 1889



circa 1892

Albion Football Club, blue jersey, black sash.

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Reproduction of the Argyle Football Club kit, 1886-87.

A survey of all English Association football clubs on the Historical Football Kits website reveals that, whilst the 'Sash' was in vogue pre 1900, ten clubs wore the style, 1 in the 1870s, 6 in the 1880s, and 3 in the 1890s. The sash is depicted as going over the left shoulder in 7, and right shoulder in 3. Generally they are jerseys rather than shirts and have round necks until the 1890s when collar necks were more popular and these were buttoned rather than laced. Contemporary to the Argyle Football Club wearing a predominantly black shirt with a green sash 1886 to 1894, during the 1880s 3 clubs wore the same design, Bristol Rovers (black jersey/yellow sash with black knickerbockers) 1883-1885, Everton (black jersey/red sash with black knickerbockers) 1881-1882, and Leicester Fosse, later Leicester City (black jersey/light blue sash with white knickerbockers) 1884-1886. The sash design evolved from the football uniform of the 1870s when players wore a plain shirt but tied a coloured cord band over one shoulder to the opposite hip as team identification. After 1900 the sash style disappeared from England until being revived on rare occasions since 1960. The sash shirt is a popular style in South America; the Chile national side has worn a sash shirt since 1935.

From 1886 to 1903 it would make sense that the Argyle Football Club owned a number of shirts that were handed out to players for match day because so many of the Argyle F.C. players made only a small number of appearances (around 500 players in 15 seasons). This may be backed up by "Rule 8 – *That none but Members be allowed to play with the property of the Club without permission*". This, of course, may only refer to a ball? The retailers also offered knickerbockers (long shorts to the knee), priced with a bulk discount at about 2 shillings each. Therefore the shirt and shorts would have cost around 5 shillings a player, which was covered by the 5 shilling membership fee. Socks, then known as hose or stockings, were an individual players choice though it had become football tradition for players of all clubs to wear black or blue. Both knickerbockers and stockings were treated in secondary status and were not a feature of footballs Laws until years after the shirt.

The club would need footballs to practise and for matches; during the 1880s a leather, rubber bladder filled football would be priced from 5 shillings to 12 shillings, depending on quality. From 186 all the Argyle F.C. members were middle-class, ex-Public School pupils therefore buying their own football kit would not have caused great financial strain. Twelve years later, for the 1898-99 season, the Argyle Football Club annual subscription was still 5 shillings. In those years since 1886, the price of all items of football kit had stayed around the same price even though wages had risen by about 15%. By 1900 machine mass production had gradually replaced labour intense hand-

made football goods which kept the prices down, as in most other consumer industries, which added to a better standard of living above that afforded by small wage rises. In 1900 the average adult male wage of skilled workers was 39 to 42 shillings per week, the unskilled were paid less and those in higher employment were paid from £2 to £5 per week.

It was quite rare for Club colours to be mentioned in the Plymouth Press for any of the local amateur clubs, Argyle included, because colours had yet to have passionate significance to partisan supporters whose emotions had been stoked by official organised football competition. Even so, the Argyle fire had been kindled as the earliest noted newspaper reference to club colours regarding the Argyle Football Club indicates. It comes in a match report in the Western Daily Mercury on the 28th January 1889. In the match, away to Plymouth United, played at Longbridge, Marsh Mills, Argyle equalised and the report says, "... the supporters of the "black and green" were very jubilant ". Note 'Black' placed before 'Green'. In 1893 the first ever book on Association football in Devon was published, in Plymouth, named "Floyd's Football Guide: The Official Handbook of the Devon County Football Association". Within its pages are the rules of the Devon County F.A. of which the Argyle Football Club is a member. Rule 4 states that "Each club shall forward ... a statement of its distinguishing colours or costumes annually ...". Argyle is listed as "Black and green". In December 1894 the Argyle Football Club became defunct for two and a half years.

Whilst the Argyle Football Club colours were shown as Black and Green up to December 1894, after reforming in 1897 the order was reversed, being shown as 'Green and Black' on every listing without fail. First to show the change is the Argyle Football Club Members Card of 1897-98. On it is printed "Colours: GREEN AND BLACK". It is reported in the Press that new Argyle will wear their old colours. Whether this refers to the black shirt with a green sash is not known but as the official club colours are now reversed, then probably not.

It had been two and half years since Argyle last played and during that time there had been a significant style change from knitted woollen football jerseys to looser woven cotton shirts. It is probable a change was made then.

Clarence Newby Spooner cemented his long relationship with the Club in 1897-98 as a club official, then firmly taking over the helm in 1898-99 as the Argyle Football Club President. He was Senior Partner of Spooner & Co., the department store in Plymouth and he loved Association football. His business acumen, wealth and desire to raise the level of Association football in Plymouth immediately determined that Argyle would become a professional League club. He arranged everything for Argyle which probably also entailed supplying the football kit. Spooner & Co., in their Gentlemen's Outfitters Department, were advertising "FOOTBALL SHIRTS, &c., A SPECIALITY". In 1893 the store were advertising football shirts in the newspapers "Old fashioned jerseys are being replaced by a smart new style. A jersey from Messrs. Spooners 3 shillings and 6 pence, a liberal discount for larger orders". That was quite expensive as a jersey could be ordered for 2 shillings and 6 pence, with about 3d postage, from London and Northern retailers.

Spooner & Co.,
TAILORS,
 AND
Gentlemen's Complete Outfitters
 FOR
 SUITINGS, TROUSERINGS,
 SHIRTS, COLLARS,
 TIES, HOSIERY,
 Hats, Neckties, Gloves, Umbrellas, etc., etc.
 SAMPLES AND PRICES ON APPLICATION.
 FOOTBALL SHIRTS, &c., A SPECIALITY.
SPOONER & CO.,
 MARKET AVENUE,
 BEDFORD STREET, and
 OLD TOWN STREET } *Plymouth.*

Advertisement 1893

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The "Rules" printed on the Argyle Football Club Members Card for 1898-99 shows –
 "RULE 2. – That the Colours of the Club be Green and Black, and every Member appear in such when playing for the Club. Any Member transgressing this rule will pay a County fine." Subscription was still 5 shillings, as in 1886.

Whether or not Argyle had changed to a shirt during 1897-98 is not clear but the 1898-99 team photograph shows a major style change had taken place. The players are wearing a shirt made from flannelette, a woven napped cotton. They have buttoned fronts, with two



ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB 1898-99
 (with thanks to the photo's owner, pasoti.co.uk)

QUAIFE BROS.
 (Players of the Warwickshire County Eleven).



STEAM
TANNED
FOOTBALL
GOAL
NETS,
COMPLETE
"AQUA"
CARRIAGE
PAIRS.
BUT
FROM
THE
ACTUAL
MAKERS
AND
SAVE
20 PER
CENT.

2-IN. STRIPE.

Flannelette Shirts, halves, any Colours Per Doz. 2s.
 Leather Shirts, 2in striped, any Colours Per Doz. 3s.
 All-wool Shirts, any Colour w/ stripes Per Doz. 3s.
 Blue Serge Knickerbockers Per Pair 2s. 6d., 1s. 11d.
 Football Bags, all sizes Each 3s. 6d., and 4s. 6d.
 Football Bags, all sizes Each 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d.,
 Leather Shin Guards Per Pair 1s. and 1s. 6d.

PLEASE SEND POST CARD FOR ONE OF OUR NEW
 FOOTBALL CATALOGUES; IT CONTAINS A GREAT
 VARIETY OF ILLUSTRATIONS OF SHIRTS IN COLOURS.

ORDERS FOR SHIRTS EXECUTED PER RETURN.

OURZON HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

Western Evening Herald,
 17th September 1898

panels, one green one black, at the front and the same on the back, the shirts have a collar split into green and black, though not of the same configuration on all the players. The tall figure of goalkeeper, Percy Buchan, is wearing a white shirt. Argyle are following the trend set by the majority of Football League clubs who favoured this type of shirt from the mid 1890s. Argyle are also wearing serge knickers that look to be black. Serge is a high quality woven wool fabric. Its worsted variety was the material used for military uniforms. In the same 1898-99 season, the Western Evening Herald of 17th September 1898 carried an advertisement for sporting goods manufacturers and wholesalers to the Trade, Quaife Bros, of Birmingham, which listed the same flannelette style of shirt as that worn by Argyle at 31 shillings a dozen, and serge knickers at 2 shillings and 3 pence each.

With the advent of Cup and League competitions starting up in Devon during the 1890s, the County F.A. brought in legislation to prevent two clubs wearing the same colour shirt. Therefore it became necessary on the occasion of a shirt clash for one team to wear a change shirt. The first known instance of this affecting the Argyle Football Club occurred in a 'home' Devon League Division One match versus the Plymouth Football Club, played at Marsh Mills on Saturday 11th February 1899. Argyle's opponents were the oldest Association football club in Devon, founded circa 1869, and they wore a plain green shirt. Argyle gave way and it was reported played in "immaculate white shirts". Probably similar to Percy Buchan's in the 1898-99 photograph.

A photograph of the Argyle Football Club taken near the end of 1899/00 season appears to show most of the players wearing a different darker version of the shirt, with two players wearing the lighter shirt from 1898/99. The Club was still referred to as the "Green and Blacks" in the Plymouth Press during the 1899/00 season. On Saturday 28th April 1900 Argyle met Dawlish at the Rectory Ground in a match to decide the League Champions of Devon. As Dawlish shirt colours were also Green and Black, Argyle borrowed the Green and White half shirts belonging to the Devon F. A. It appears the

clash was not known until match day. When Argyle ran onto the pitch, amongst the cheering of the crowd were humorous shouts of "up Devon!" Argyle (West champions) defeated Dawlish (East champions) 8 – nil.

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DEVON COUNTY at The Rectory, Devonport, 1901.
Argyle borrowed these green and white halve shirts to play Dawlish in the Devon League Championship in 1900.



ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB 1899-00.

The 1900/01 season photograph, taken on Argyle's new ground at Home Park, shows various combinations of their darker Green and Black shirt, which seem to be halve shirts on at least some of the players. It will be noted that the tall player in the middle of the back row is the Argyle Football Club goalkeeper Percy Buchan who is wearing an outfielder's shirt. In the previous season's team photographs he is wearing a different shirt to the rest of the team, which looks to be white. This is because as yet there were no F.A.

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rules to govern that goalkeepers wear a distinctive alternative to the Club shirt. On Saturday 15th September 1900, playing Crownhill 'away', Argyle wore a White shirt.



ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB 1900-01

No photograph of Argyle F.C. is known for 1901/02 season but in the Western Weekly News of 19th April 1902, there is a roughly drawn illustration of Argyle playing Green Waves in the Devon Cup Final which indicates the shirt is the same as the previous season, Green and Black halve shirts, Black shorts, Black socks with a Green turnover at the top. In this match both goalkeepers are wearing the same shirt as the rest of their team and, due to the strong sun being a problem, both goalkeepers wore flat caps.



ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB 1902-03.

This final season saw a change from black to white shorts.

In the team photograph of the final 1902/03 season, the Argyle Football Club are wearing what looks to be the same Green and Black halve shirts of varying shades, but as they are all sitting with arms folded in front of them they could be quartered shirts. What is a first is

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that the players are wearing white knickers. The two cups won during the season are displayed which means the photograph was taken at the end of the season, just as the change was being made to Plymouth Argyle, a professional League club.

The Argyle Football Club did wear black knickers in their first 1886-87 season, and were still wearing what appears to be black in the Argyle team photographs of 1898-99, 1899-00, 1900-01, and in a 1901-02 newspaper illustration. Other than a newspaper reference to the first season and the black and white pictures from over ten years later, no reference is found in any publication of what colour knickers were worn. It is likely they were black in every season except the final 1902-03. There should be some caution as they look black but could they be navy blue? Navy is a very dark blue and may be mistaken for black in a black and white photograph. This question is made relevant by the fact that in a survey of football kit advertisements, no specialist manufacturer, wholesaler or retailer offers black knickers until well into the 1900s. Generally most Football League clubs chose white, many fewer chose navy, and the least favoured was black.



Vintage navy serge football knickers.



Navy Blue serge fabric.
Could it be mistaken
for black?

In the 1880s and 1890s the most common fabric used for knickerbockers is woollen serge. There was a Victorian propensity to wear navy blue serge even though black was available. A navy blue serge jacket and knickerbockers suit for boys aged from 3 to 14 was commonly worn day wear. A newspaper tailoring advertisement complained in 1882 that black serge of fast colour could seldom be obtained. Due to its tendency, more than any other colour, to absorb light it did suffer fading. New 'fast' black dyes that did not fade to light were invented in Germany but not until during the First World War. The conclusion is that whilst white or navy knickers were 'de rigueur' in football, the Argyle Football Club did wear black knickers in 1886-87 and probably continued to do so in the subsequent seasons. A local tailor rather than a sporting goods specialist retailer may have supplied them.



Advertisement 1891, for serge knickerbocker suits.

There appeared in the Football Herald of 22nd August 1903 the only known description of Argyle Football Club shirt history 1886 to 1903. It reported –


“The Argyle Football Club colours, pre-1903, were originally white shirts and black knickers. This was later changed to black with a green sash shirts. From there the next change was to black and green halves. The halves were later changed to green and black quarters”.

This short but precise paragraph needs some interpretation. It says the shirts were originally 'White' with 'Black' knickers despite the prospective members having chosen 'Black and Green' before the formation of the Argyle Football Club. Therefore an explanation would be that a 'Black' and 'Green' design had to be chosen, ordered and paid for, and then delivery awaited, possibly from an up-country supplier. Whilst waiting for the shirt delivery the Argyle members played matches in their own white cotton everyday working shirt, a common occurrence in Association football at this time. The football shirt wholesalers who advertised did promise prompt delivery by post so probably Argyle received their order within weeks. The 1903 report says Argyle wore a 'Black' with a 'Green' sash shirt after the white shirt so this must be Argyle's first shirt in the club colours. It is indicated that the next change is to 'Green and Black' halves, probably done so after Argyle reformed in 1897 when the description of the Club colours changes from 'Black and Green' to 'Green and Black'. The shirt certainly had changed by the 1898-99 team photograph. The 'halves' shirts are said to have been changed to 'Green and Black' Quarters at some time, though the photographs do not clearly show this.

FADED GREEN.

As can be seen from the 1893 club list of the Devon Football Association members, their shirts were often quite gaudy. This is partly due to the shirt dyes not being fast so they faded in sunlight and with each wash, which may explain why there is such variance of shirt appearance in the Argyle Football Club team photographs. When all the shirts look the same, as in 1898-99, the players must be wearing a new shirt that is yet to be faded by the sun nor scrubbed clean in the wash. This photograph was taken near the end of the season, when Argyle were on a Cup run.

The Millbay Dyeing Works, Plymouth placed an advertisement in the 1893 Floyd's Football Guide that showed "FOOTBALL COSTUMES. Cleaned or Dyed equal to New (SPECIAL TERMS FOR CLUBS)". As dyes became more reliable odd colour combinations changed for more modern styles and the sash jersey, as worn by the Argyle Football Club, lost popularity from the mid 1890s when the 'halve' shirt became very popular and was the design Argyle next wore.



The table is titled "Club Colours." and lists 28 member clubs of the Devon Football Association with their respective colors. The Argyle Football Club is listed as "Black and green".

Club	Colours
Albany	Chocolate and blue.
Argyle	Black and green.
Clifton	Maroon and navy blue.
Cooperation Grammar School	Maroon and yellow.
Carlton	White with Black sash.
Devon Regiment	Dark green with red sash.
East Devon Athletic	Cardinal and green.
Devonport Wednesday	White, with black shield.
Exeter	Chocolate and white.
Genova	Chocolate and blue.
Hobson	Red and blue.
Home Park	Chocolate and blue.
K.O.S.D.	Red shirts, blue knickerbockers.
Manacorned School	Red and blue.
Old Plymouthians	Red, white and chocolate.
Old Manacornians	Dark and light blue and crimson.
Oreston Rovers	Navy blue, with white sash.
Plymouth United	Blue and black.
Plymouth	Green.
Plymouth College	Red and black.
Plymouth	Green and gold.
Tin Co. W.D.F.A.	Red and blue jerseys, blue knickerbockers.
R.M.L.I.	Red and blue halves with yellow stripe down the centre.
St. James the Less	White, with blue sash.
St. George's United	Blue and black.
Saltram	Royal blue, with red sash.
Taunistock	Amber and blue.
Torquay Y.M.C.A.	Grey blue jersey with white Maltese cross on breast.

The registered Colours of the 28 member clubs of the Devon Football Association. Note, the Argyle Football Club is shown as 'Black & Green' not 'Green & Black'. (Floyd's Football Guide 1893).

Even though dyes improved in fastness after 1900, the fact that football shirts faded was still expected, without annoyance, it was accepted that every garment would not last in colour. If you go onto the greensonsscreen.co.uk website and choose 'GoS-DB', then 'season', to view Plymouth Argyle team group photographs, after the first 1903-04 season when all the players are wearing a new shirt, it is noticeable from 1904-05 that the players shirts vary in shade of green. The shirt fading evidence continues up to and including the 1936-37 season. From the following 1937-38 season football shirt fading stops. There is a reason for this. In the mid 1930s improved synthetic clothing dyes had been formulated that were fast. In 1935 the leading British football shirt manufacturer, Umbro, brought out their new "Tangeru" shirt, made of the finest 'Pima' cotton, coloured by 'Kuther' fast dyes, guaranteeing the garments maintained their colour and did not fade.

The pre-1937 problem of Argyle's fading shirt is inherent to the history of the colour 'Green' itself. Green is missing from surviving prehistoric and ancient art because it was a hard pigment to reproduce and those used either totally faded away or changed to another colour. In Chinese and Japanese culture green and blue are considered shades of the same colour, not two. The most widely available pigment in the natural world is from chlorophyll, the substance that makes plants green, but dyes made from it fade away, making it unsuitable for textiles. So difficult was the problem to produce attractive fast green dyes that 19th century chemists made some difficult choices and took extreme risks to produce attractive green dyes that were stable.



Football shirts and jerseys restored to new. (Floyd's Football Guide 1893)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, Laundry Room, Home Park, 1976-77.

"Our own laundry system to save time and, as importantly, money. In the old days, most clubs used to send them off to the local laundry. It was costly enough then."

(The Pilgrim 1st January 1977)



WHAT SHADE OF GREEN IS ARGYLE?



Umbro Catalogue 1935.



Bukta Catalogue 1960.



Fred Craig, Argyle 1922.

What tint of green the amateur Argyle Football Club shirts were from 1886 to 1903 is not recorded but the team photographs suggest the unfaded shirts are of a rich green; it is not a light green. It is known that the 19th Century Victorians liked dark, rich colours and they were not keen on pastel shades. When Argyle F.C. shirt colours are reported it is just as "Black & Green", or "Green & Black". Since Plymouth Argyle joined the Football League in 1920 two British manufacturers have dominated the football shirt market, Bukta and Umbro, and are the likely suppliers for many of the years up to 1976. Their catalogues both show the shirt to be "Emerald Green". Whilst colour printed cigarette cards over the years cannot be relied on, they individually concur when depicting Argyle. Having seen Argyle play in the 1950s v-necked, short-sleeved "Continental" shirt, the vivid "Emerald Green" shirt fixes into the memory.

When analysing the team photos of Plymouth Argyle, on the 'Greens on Screen' website from 1963-64 season moving backwards in time to the beginning, the shade looks to remain constant until fading shirts are a factor pre 1937. Over those years, if the club strayed away from the traditional green, as was the case in 1947-48, there was a cacophony of protest from supporters acting as 'Green Police' resulting in restoring shirts back to that green then etched in every Argyle fan's brain. If it can be accepted that Plymouth Argyle were "Emerald Green" from 1903 it must be highly likely that the Argyle Football Club green pre 1903 was of a similar tint.

The pigment "Emerald Green" has a very interesting history in the 19th century. Discovered in Schweinfurt, Germany in 1814 where it was named "Schweinfurter Grün". In English it was named "Emerald Green" after the precious stone, and also known as "Paris Green" from its French name. It became valued for its vivid tone and was favoured by Vincent van Gogh in his paintings. In England, from 1857, the alluring vibrant brilliance of "Emerald Green" made it amongst the most popular of all the shades of any colour, particularly in women's fashion and in the home where it was used for wallpaper, curtains and carpets. Unfortunately its popularity had dire consequences that started to become known from 1861. The "Emerald Green" dye was manufactured from verdigris obtained from copper and the chemical process involved adding arsenic which made it the most toxic of all the pigments and dyes.



Highly poisonous 'Paris Green' Paint, also known as 'Emerald Green'

The famous Victorian textile designer and manufacturer, William Morris, often used "Emerald Green" in his products, for which he used copper verdigris and arsenic from his families owned Great Consols Mine, near Tavistock. Investigations into many serious health problems and mysterious deaths of workers and in the home, discovered the cause was the toxic substance in the "Emerald Green" dye. Even after this was

known, the shade was so fashionable it still continued to be used. William Morris dismissed public concerns about arsenic pigments in his wallpapers. The fact that people superstitiously say green is unlucky is attributed to these times. The British government brought in regulations for the use of the poisonous pigment in 1883. A synthetic, non-toxic "Emerald Green" nitroso dye was discovered and used from 1884, named "Naphthol Green". Argyle, luckily, were not formed until 1886!



Emerald Green, the height of fashion.

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The dangerous toxic formula of “Emerald Green” paint was still used up to 1960. Paint Company, Sherwin-Williams, manufactured it for the American and Canadian market. This company invented a new modern safe shade of green they called “Argyle Green” which looks very much like “Emerald Green”. It was chosen as the Sherwin-Williams “Colour of the Year 2012”. It seems that history, by association, forces Argyle and Emerald Green together.



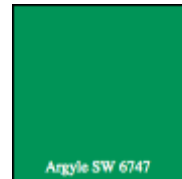
Vincent van Gogh, one of the ‘Green Army’.



Naphthol Green. A safer dye that replaced the toxic Emerald Green dye.



Emerald Green, a safe 20th Century Version.



Argyle Green, made by Sherwin-Williams.



(theguardian.com)



Jack Chisholm presented with a green and white bouquet from Miss Violet Hosking ‘Umbrella Vi’ in 1954



‘Umbrella Vi’ at Villa Park in 1984

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB From 1903.

The newly formed Plymouth Argyle Football Club decided to continue with the traditional colours, Green and Black shirts but in a new style. The Western Daily Mercury of Tuesday 14th July 1903 reports, "*The Argyle colours now are green and black and it is not likely that they will be altered. The jersey selected is green with black vertical stripes. The knickers are white*". This was updated in the edition on Friday 7th August 1903, "*There will be a slight alteration in the pattern of the jerseys for the coming season. Instead of green with black stripes, the men will wear green knitted jerseys with wide black bands*". In the event, Plymouth Argyle did not wear either combination and chose green with black collars and cuffs. What is evident, is that the choice of material and manufacture was a departure from the loose fitting, woven cotton flannelette shirt buttoned down the front with a pocket on the left breast, favoured by the Argyle Football Club from at least 1898, to a completely different tighter fitting woollen knitted jersey with laces to secure the neck. This jersey remained the same for many seasons until Plymouth Argyle were forced into changing it in 1946 due to wartime clothes rationing shortages. The shirt, worn by the Argyle Football Club during the 1902-03, was worn by Plymouth Argyle Reserves for 1903-04 season.

Such a change may be explained by the fact that retailers in Plymouth obtained the football shirts from wholesalers up-country close to where they were manufactured in the Midlands and Lancashire. Prior to 1903, the Argyle Football Club was totally in the control of Clarence Newby Spooner, the Club was called in the Press "*Mr. Spooner's team*", and his Spooner & Co store most likely purchased the shirts. When Plymouth Argyle was formed in 1903 it was as a Company Limited and no longer under his benevolent dictatorship. The shirts were still obtained in the same way, through a Plymouth retailer buying at trade rates from a wholesaler but Plymouth Argyle had changed retailer. From the many illustrations in the "Book of Football" published in 1905 it becomes clear that most professional League football clubs preferred jerseys to shirts, though players often removed the laces closing the neck opening. Whilst both jerseys and shirts were available in the 1890s, contemporary photographs indicate that professional clubs then preferred shirts.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1903-04.

The original intention was to wear a green & black striped jersey.
This then changed to green & black bands before settling for the green jersey with black collar and cuffs.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1904-05.

One year on from the evenly matched new dyed green jerseys of 1903-04.
Already it can be seen that various degrees of fading has taken place.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Charlie Clark, captain,
Plymouth Argyle
1907-08

In 1909 The F.A. made it compulsory that the goalkeeper no longer wear the same shirt as the outfield players and that he should wear a scarlet, royal blue or white shirt. Even before this law became compulsory, black and white Plymouth Argyle team photographs, from the first 1903-04 season, clearly show the goalkeepers wearing white shirts or white woollen jumpers with either a round neck or polo neck. The F.A. Law did not stipulate the style, only the colours. Individual photographs of the goalkeepers in the Plymouth Argyle handbooks did show them in the Club outfield shirt before the law came into force. From 1903 to 1909 the Plymouth Argyle goalkeeper could wear the outfield shirt without breaking any rules. In 1912 royal green was added as a fourth option and very shortly after it became normal for almost all goalkeepers to wear a green jumper, though probably not Plymouth Argyle as it would be the same colour as the outfield jersey. The Plymouth Argyle black and white team photographs taken in the seasons leading up the First World War show that the goalkeepers have switched from white to another colour. Of the F.A. official choices the luminosity suggests they are wearing scarlet, as royal blue is quite dark and green would break the 1909 rule.



F. A. Rule Book, 1920.

In front of the Home Park crowd, before kick-off on Saturday 18th February 1911, the Plymouth Argyle players were presented with new jerseys paid for by Mr. Waldorf Astor, the local Member of Parliament recently elected. Husband of Nancy, Mr. Astor of the Unionist Party had failed to get elected by the Plymouth electorate in January 1910 but in the December 1910 General Election was successful. Perhaps it was the culmination of a pre-election promise to buy Plymouth Argyle new shirts? If he did make the promise it was obviously a clincher. Resplendent in their new shirts, Argyle won the Southern League Division One encounter versus Crystal Palace 5-1.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1911-12.

This is the jersey presented by Waldorf Astor, M.P. 6 months earlier. For the first time a club badge is worn.



William Forbes sporting
the Argyle badge, 1913.

In 1911-12 season, for the first time a club badge was stitched onto the Plymouth Argyle football shirts. It was an oval representation of the shield in the centre of the Plymouth coat-of-arms. This badge featured on the Argyle shirt from 1911 to the suspension of the Southern League in 1915. It was rare at this time for any club to sport a badge on their shirt; in the Football League in the period from 1903 to 1914, the number of football clubs wearing a badge was less than 10%. Of the twenty clubs in the Southern League Division One for the 1911-12 season, Argyle were the only club sporting a badge on their shirt. The players certainly wore it with pride, finishing the season in 2nd place, and the following 1912-13 season as 'Champions'. After 1915, a Plymouth Argyle Football Club badge did not appear on the shirt again until 1949. As far as is known the amateur predecessor, the Argyle Football Club 1886-1903, never had a club badge.



Plymouth Borough crest, 1905, before joining with Devonport and East Stonehouse, 1914, and being made a 'City', 1928. The Plymouth Argyle badge is a representation of the shield.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1912-13.

A year on from being presented with new jerseys, the sun and soap has started its work again.

As Plymouth Argyle started training at the beginning of the 1919-20 season the club was finding it difficult to obtain football gear, which was very scarce after the War. In the season's team photograph, four of the players are wearing the 'change' white shirt, and two can be seen wearing navy blue shorts. The price of football kit items for sale at Nichols & Co. Limited (Sports Outfitters) in Union Street, Plymouth tripled between 1913 and 1919. The biggest rise was for football boots that went from 3/11d to 21 shillings a pair. Almost a week's wages for some; the lowest paid in the Dockyard were on 25 shillings a week. Shirts and Jerseys increased in price from 21 shillings per dozen to 54 shillings a dozen, and the cheapest knickers from 1 shilling to 3/6d a pair.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1919-20.

Despite the football kit shortages and hiked up prices caused by the War, Argyle are kitted out with new apparel. The boots look new too.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

During the 1920s Plymouth Argyle finished six Division Three (South) seasons in second place when only the top team was promoted. Some supporters said that this was because 'Green' was unlucky. They petitioned for a change to 'Royal Blue'. But Argyle did not fade, unlike their jerseys, and they were promoted to the second highest division in the land for the first time in 1930.

The faded jerseys were not thrown away when they became too shabby to be worn for match fixtures. The players wore them in training as a series of photographs taken at Home Park in 1922 and 1925 show.



James Smith 1922



Leslie Deacon 1922



Frank Richardson 1922



Jack Fowler 1922



Joe Little 1922



Moses Russell 1925
Wearing a training woollen sweater



Freddy Forbes & Jack Cock 1925

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

Plymouth Argyle wore new jerseys versus Tottenham Hotspur, at White Hart Lane, on Saturday 24th October 1931. Argyle director Mr. Ernest Harvey supplied them. The Football League Division Two match was won by Argyle 1-0, the goal scored by Raymond Bowden. He later became the supplier of the Plymouth Argyle shirt.

The 1935-36 team photo of Plymouth Argyle shows most of the players wearing a version of the long-standing design but the laced neck has gone, which appears to be a first since 1903. Players had previously often removed the laces. It was not until the 1937-38 season squad photograph that every one of the players had the round neck, no laces shirt. This is when the law regarding football kit became much more detailed.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1935-36.

Some of the players sport a new type of round neck jerseys without the lace.
Players did not like lace necks and often took them out.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE
circa 1937

In 1937, under the heading "CLUB COLOURS" the Football League rewrote their law to include football socks for the first time. *Regulation 31. Each club in the League shall register its colours (including stockings) with the Secretary. No two clubs in the same Division shall play against each other in the same colours. When the colours of two competing clubs are alike, or similar, the visiting team shall change. The goalkeeper shall play in scarlet, royal blue, royal green, or white shirt or jersey, but the goalkeepers' colours must in all cases be clearly distinguishable from the colours worn by all other players.*



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1936-37.

Just before the Football League required the stockings to be registered, along with the jersey or shirt, Argyle brought in a more elaborate design.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

When incendiary bombs completely gutted the main stand at Home Park in 1941 Plymouth Argyle lost much of its property but not their green and black shirts, as they had been stored elsewhere whilst football was suspended during the War years.



During 1944-45 season, Argyle wore the old 1939-40 jerseys.
(Western Morning News, 30th April 1945).

Argyle reformed in 1944-45 to play in the Plymouth & District Combination League, Division One. They took over the fixtures of the Plymouth City Football Club who amalgamated with Argyle after they had played one match. They handed all their equipment and finances to Argyle, who were able to wear the old 1939-40 jerseys that had survived the Blitz.

New jersey's, which are in short supply, have been presented to Argyle by Britons living in Argentina. The shirts are of a lighter shade of green than previously seen on Argyle teams and are edged in white not the traditional black much to some peoples consternation. (Western Independent, Sunday 25th November 1945).

CLOTHING COUPONS – Argyle now have enough clothing coupons to replace the untraditional green and white shirts given to the last season (Saturday 10th August 1946). Due to World War II shortages, austerity measures were brought in including rationing. Clothes rationing was introduced in June 1941 and continued long after the War had ended until the 15th March 1949. Some said clothes rationing was actually worse after 1945 than during the War. A man's shirt required 8 coupons, overcoat 18 coupons, and men's suit 26 to 29 coupons. Plymouth Argyle supporters had donated clothing coupons to the club.



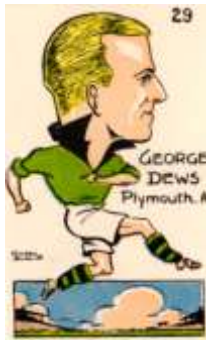
PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1945-46.
This is the team that faced West Bromwich Albion for the Football League (South) fixture on Saturday 23rd February 1946. They are wearing the gifted green and white collar shirts from Argentina.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1947-48.

These green shirts with a black collar were bought with the rationing clothing coupons given by supporters.



"Emerald Green" restored.
Argyle 1948-49 kit

Four months after the ending of clothes rationing, on Saturday 23rd July 1949 it was announced in the Press that Plymouth Argyle would wear new shirts this season with Plymouth's coat-of-arms on the left breast. The reporter in the Western Independent of 14th August 1949 wrote, "*I anticipate a gasp of surprise from the Home Park crowd when the Argyle players take the field next Saturday. They will be wearing new jerseys which are of striking appearance. They are green but with white sleeves and collars, and on the front is embossed the Plymouth coat of arms in yellow, black and white. They look neat and smart.*"

The registration of the club colours with the Football League has had to be changed of course. Instead of the old green and black they are now described as 'Green with white facings, white knickers, black stockings with green and white hoops.

I can think of only two other teams who wear badges on their jerseys – Blackpool who wear the town's coat of arms and Fulham, with a small representation of Craven Cottage in a badge."



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1949-50. Stan Williams and Bill Strauss at Tottenham Hotspur, 22nd August 1949, wearing a new green shirt with a greater proportion of white than had been seen before. A club badge returns after 34 years absence.

In 1949-50 season, for the first time since 1915, Plymouth Argyle wore a club badge on the team shirt. Again it was the Plymouth coat-of-arms but this time a full representation of it. Though more clubs in the Football League sported a badge after World War II than did after World War I, it was below 40% of the member clubs. Of the twenty-two clubs in Football League Division Two for the 1949-50 season, Argyle were one of only seven clubs wearing a badge. The Argyle shirt featured this badge up to and including the 1963-64 season with a break in 1955 and 1956.

When Home Park first acquired floodlights in 1953 the Football Association had yet to sanction their use for F.A. Cup matches, nor the Football League Management Committee for League fixtures by any club. Therefore Plymouth Argyle embarked on a series of matches bringing interesting opposition to Home Park to be met in, what was termed as a "Floodlit Friendly". They were a novelty and a wonder experienced by the Argyle spectator, especially a few matches in, when a new type of football shirt was introduced. On Monday 18th

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

October 1954 Plymouth Argyle played Chelsea from the top Division One of the Football League. Argyle wore a shiny silk style shirt made of Rayon, a man made fibre, which made the players stand out more, caught in the less than adequate floodlights by modern standards. Though man-made fibre had been around for years it was not used in the production of football shirts until 1953, made by Umbro. Other Football League clubs in 1954 sported the same Rayon shirt in their floodlight matches, including Millwall and West Ham United. Argyle's floodlight shirt was in the same style as their normal natural fibre style shirt. The club continued to wear the original set of green and white Rayon shirts for floodlight matches in the 1955-56, 1956-57, 1957-58 seasons, even after the new 'Continental' V-necked style, short-sleeved, green with black trimmings became the Plymouth Argyle jersey from 1955-56. The Home Park floodlights were improved in 1958-59 and the shiny Rayon shirt was no longer worn.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 18th October 1954.

For the first time they play in synthetic material shirts. The silky rayon shirt, made by Umbro, was specifically used for "Floodlit Friendly" matches.

ARGYLE TO WEAR GREEN & BLACK BY REQUEST – "Argyle chairman, Sir Clifford Tozer, announced last night that Argyle will be reverting to green and black shirts for the forthcoming season. It was revealed that Mr. Rowley (Argyle manager) had received numerous letters asking for the change to the original colours." (Wednesday 22nd June 1955). The shirt being talked about was of a radical new style. Whilst British club football shirts were buttoned, on the continent they did not which led to Umbro introducing the "Continental" shirt, featuring short sleeves and V-neck collars in the mid 1950s. There was also a radical change to the look of the goalkeeper's sweater. It was no longer of thick chunky proportioned all-wool with a turned-over polo-neck; the neck became less high and cotton either replaced wool or was mixed into it.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1955-56.

After numerous requests from supporters to return to green and black, Argyle probably made the most radical change of design in any season. The short-sleeved emerald green V-neck with black trim, that Umbro called the "Continental".



The beautifully embroidered club badge on the 1958-59 jersey.

From 1960-61 season Plymouth Argyle, began to opt for predominantly white socks and they look to be of a material less heavy than wool. Lightweight Terylene, a polyester knitted brand of football sock, was introduced in the late 1950s.

The "Continental" persisted until 1964 when long sleeves and crew necks made a comeback. Almost every team adopted the style including Plymouth Argyle. Umbro marketed it as the "Real", made in lightweight cotton, from 1962. The first season of the "Mayflower" emblem on the Plymouth Argyle shirt was 1964-65 season, in the "Aztec" style shirt. Before this the Plymouth Argyle shirt badge had been the Plymouth municipal crest (1911-1915, 1949-1964). Of the twenty-two clubs in Football League Division Two at the beginning of 1964-65 season, Argyle were one of thirteen clubs whose shirt bore a badge. Of the thirteen badges, nine were club related and four were 'Town' coat-of-arms.



Mayflower Club badge, 1964-65.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

For the first time since the original 1886 Argyle Football Club shirt, this shirt reduced 'Green' to a secondary role, behind 'White'. The 1964-65 shirt has made a big impression, particularly on 'non-Greens'. The website 'Historical Football Kits', which deals with all major clubs, says of the shirt "*The most elegant kit to have graced the Football League*". Further praise, in the book "CLUB COLOURS. An illustrated history of football clubs and their kits", by Bob Bickerton, published in 1998, the author says of this particular shirt "... *one of the great individual and stylish strips ...way ahead of its time*". Of all the many Football League club strips since 1888, he chose this shirt to illustrate the contents page in the front of his classic football book. What Bob Bickerton did not know was that the design was a revival of a shirt first worn in 1902, though not by Argyle. The radical new shirt was from a sixty-two year old design first worn by the Plymouth Rugby Club in 1902; founded in 1893, their first ground was Home Park. The club vacated the ground to move to South Devon Place allowing Argyle to move in. In 1920, Plymouth R.F.C. became Plymouth Albion.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1968-69.
This iconic jersey is a copy of a rugby jersey first worn over 60 years ago.



PLYMOUTH RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB, 1907-08.
The club jersey is a broad green band with narrower black band above and below.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



In 1975-76 Argyle wore a shirt and shorts that displayed the maker's logo on the outside for the first time. It is the horizontal diamond of Umbro.

In the late 1960s the F.A. required the 'away' team to change their shorts and socks where there was a clash, even if the shirts did not clash.

For the first time the shirt maker's logo was seen on the outside of a Plymouth Argyle match shirt in the 1975-76 season. It was the horizontal diamond trademark of the English manufacturer Umbro, which also appeared on Argyle's shorts. The Umbro trademark did appear on Plymouth Argyle tracksuit tops in 1974-75 but not the match shirts. The F.A. brought in regulations to set how big the mark or name could be on the front of any club shirt. In the 2017-18 "Guide To FA Kit Regulations" it was no more than 20 square centimetres.

The first instance of a sponsor's name being shown on a football shirt in England happened in 1976. Kettering Town of the Southern League had "Kettering Tyres" emblazoned on their shirt. Four days after they debuted their new shirt The Football Association ordered the logo be removed from it. In France and Germany the practice had been carried out from 1973. After lobbying, from 1977-78 season The F.A. allowed shirts to feature a sponsor's name, though none appeared until 1979 when the Everton's shirt carried the name of a sponsor. Plymouth Argyle's first sponsor displayed on the shirt was "Beacon Electrical" in 1983-84 season. As Argyle reached the Semi-final of the F. A. Cup that season the sponsor's name was seen by far more people than was ever imagined at the outset.

"Between 1964 to 1974, an average of 50% of the 92 league clubs changed their kit in any one season. For the period 1974/75 to 1979/80, the equivalent figure rose to over 60%, and continued to rise thereafter. This increase was mostly due to changes in styling, trim and minor patterning, as opposed to major patterning or primary colours. Clubs and manufacturers exploited the customer's desire to own an authentic replica by changing what constituted the accurate reproduction of the current strip, thereby creating a new market." ("From Sportswear To Leisurewear: The Evolution of English Football League Shirt Design In The Replica Shirt Era", page 172 – Sport In History, 2015)



("The Pilgrim", Tuesday 15th April 1975).

THE GREEN JOURNEY From 1960.

Pre 1960 there was little or no change in the tint of green; since then it has varied so much that nobody is sure what the traditional colour of green is Plymouth Argyle. The invention of a new Plymouth Argyle Football Club football shirt for every season has superseded traditional.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1961-62.



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1959 - 1964



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1966-68
(retrofootballclub.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1968-69

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1971-72



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1972-73



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1974-75

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1976-77



Exeter City versus PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 21st April 1981

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1982-83
(historickits.co.uk)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE versus Watford at Villa Park, 14th April 1984

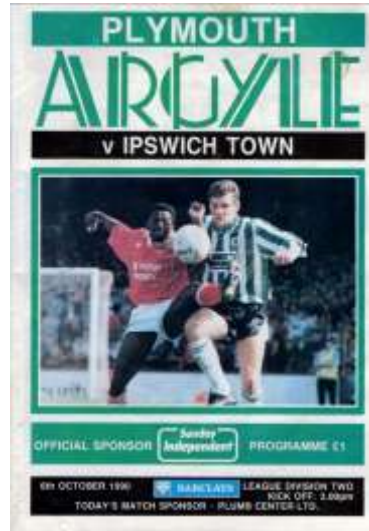


PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1986-87

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1989-90



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1990-91



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1993-94



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1994-95

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1995-96



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE versus Manchester City,
10th August 1996



Cambridge United versus PLYMOUTH ARGYLE,
25th November 1997 (plymouthherald.co.uk)



Brentford versus PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 31st January 1998



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1998-99

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1999-00



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2000-01



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2001-02



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2002-03



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'away kit'
2002-03.
(colours-of-football.com)

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2004-05



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2005-06



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE
'home' 2007-08
(colours-of-football.com)



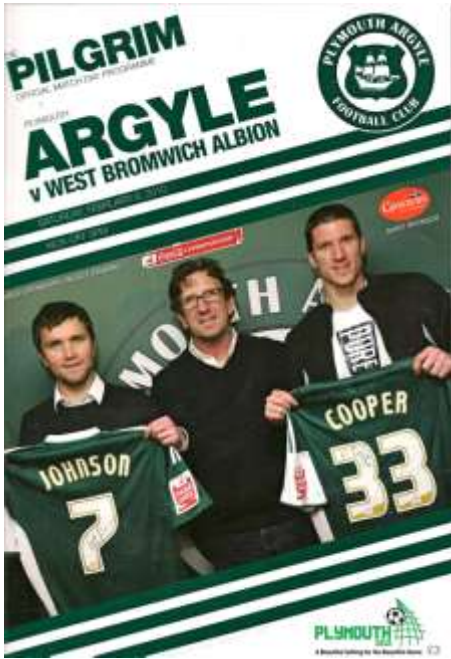
PLYMOUTH ARGYLE
'away' 2007-08
(colours-of-football.com)



Pilgrim Pete 2006-07



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2008-09



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2009-10



Southampton versus PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 7th August 2010
(Southern Daily Echo).

Note – Southampton are wearing a sash style jersey to commemorate their first jersey, worn 1885 to 1889. In 1886 the first Argyle jersey was of the same style, a black jersey with a green sash (see page 4).



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2010-11



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2011-12
(colours-of-football-com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'home' & 'away' 2012-13



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'home' & 'away' 2013-14

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



With thanks to Dave Rowntree photography and PAFC

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2014-15



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'away'
2015-16
(colours-of-football.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2016-17
The manager complained "it was too green"



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2015-16



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2016-17

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2017-18



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2017-18
(readrovers.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'away' 2017-18



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'away'
2018-19 (colours-of-football.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2018-19

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'home'
2018-19
(colours-of-football.com)



Barnsley versus PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 2nd October 2018
(barnsleyfc.co.uk)



Bristol Rovers versus PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 8th September 2018.
Argyle in 'home' shirt playing 'away'.
(bristolroversmemorabilia.weebly.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'away'
2019-20
(colours-of-football.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'home'
2019-20
(colours-of-football.com)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2019-20
(pafc.co.uk)

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2019-20



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'home' 2020-21 (argylesuperstore.co.uk)



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 'away' 2020-21 (argylesuperstore.co.uk)



Wembley on its 10th anniversary included a tribute to Plymouth Argyle, including lighting the arch green and white

THE NUMBERED FOOTBALL SHIRT.

Numbered shirts first appeared in South America around the early 1920s. The Scottish club, Third Lanark, toured South America in 1923, and on the 10th June, were photographed coming onto the pitch with their Argentine opponents, Zona Norte. Both teams wore numbers on the front of their shirts, including the goalkeepers who were number '1'. Plymouth Argyle toured South America a year later in 1924, but in photographs of their matches in Argentina, shirt numbers are not being worn.



Zona Norte (Argentina) v. Third Lanark (Scotland) wearing numbers on the front of their jerseys, including the goalkeepers, on 10th June 1923. (wikipedia.org)
Argyle played in Argentina a year later but are not known to have worn numbers.

Numbered shirts had been advocated throughout the 1920s and 1930s to assist the spectators and increase their enjoyment. Numbers were first used in Europe on the 25th August 1928 when Sheffield United played Arsenal, and Chelsea played Swansea Town. In both matches it was without sanction from the football authorities and done on the clubs own initiative. The numbers, in black on white squares, were assigned by playing position, 2 to 11 with the goalkeeper not wearing a number. Numbered shirts made another appearance at the 1933 Cup Final with the opponents Everton wearing 1 to 11, and Manchester City 12 to 22.

In 1935 a conference involving officials from all the Football League clubs rejected the proposal that the players shirts should be numbered. The Football League Management Committee thought shirt numbers would harm the game by lessening the importance of team and increasing that of

individual play, so they ignored the overwhelming opinion of the spectators who were voicing their desire to see shirt numbers become part of the game. After being put under pressure by lobbyists they agreed to shirt numbering being compulsory and not optional.

On the 5th June 1939 the Football League Management Committee, at its Annual meeting, decreed that players would wear numbered shirts assigned to their position. The vote was 24 for and 20 against. All clubs at the time played a 2 Full-backs – 3 Half-backs - 5 Forwards formation, thus they were numbered – goalkeeper (not numbered) – right-back (2), left-back (3) – right-half (4), centre-half (5), left-half (6) – outside-right (7), inside-right (8), centre-forward (9), inside-left (10), outside-left (11). Nine lady members of the Plymouth Argyle Supporters Club spent three hours sewing numbers on to fifty shirts. Their handiwork was seen for the first time in a 'Public Practice Match', Probables versus Possibles, at Home Park on Saturday 12th August 1939. Followed by a week later, on the 19th, in a F.A. Jubilee Fund match versus Exeter City at St. James's Park with the 'home' club sporting black numbers on their backs and Argyle, white. The first Plymouth Argyle numbered Football League Division Two match came on the 26th August, at Home Park versus West Ham United. The days were 'numbered' as War was declared on the 3rd September 1939 bringing the Football League 1939-40 season prematurely to a close.

After the War, in the years to come, teams changed to 4-4-2 and other formations but the numbering system remained the same in principle. The next full season was 1945-46 but Plymouth Argyle had to play the



League footballers will be numbered this season. Mrs. B. Scott (chairman), right, and right other members of the women's section of Plymouth Argyle Supporters' Club spent three hours yesterday sewing numerals on 50 jerseys. (The Western Morning News Photograph.)

The Plymouth Argyle jerseys having their new numbers sewn on.
(Western Morning News, 5th August 1939).

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



FIND THE GOALKEEPER—Kirkwood and Gorman, the Plymouth Argyle half-backs, and Eldon, the Exeter City inside-left, in a goalmouth tussle at St. James's Park.—"The Western Morning News" Photograph.

The first Argyle competitive numbered shirts fixture took place at St. James's Park on Saturday 19th August 1939 versus Exeter City. (Western Morning News, 21st August 1939).

These changes were of great commercial benefit by increasing appeal and desirability to own a particular shirt, increasing sales of football shirts, which increased revenue. From the 1990s replica shirts were worn and collected by adults whereas before this the market was largely for children. In fact it had been thought of as taboo for an adult to wear a football shirt as leisurewear until it became part of football fans' sub culture. So that every adult could be catered for, after 1992, the shirt sizes available increased way beyond that considered suitable for any athletic person. By 1993 Umbro's best selling shirt size was 'XL'. Football Club shops evolved as their supporters became consumers, not just of match tickets. To fuel and supply the demand, Football Clubs not only changed their shirt every season but also an 'away' strip, and even offered a third kit. Once upon a time Plymouth Argyle wore the same design outfit for season after season. Playing in the Southern League from 1903 to 1920 and in the Football League since 1920, wearing a green shirt meant Argyle probably clashed on fewer occasions than any other club.

first few weeks without shirt numbers because, due to wartime shortages, they couldn't get any. The reporter in the Western Independent of the 7th April 1946, in answer to an enquiring reader explained "...Inquiries were made all over the place, without success, but one day I heard of a firm in Liverpool which could supply them, and on the following Saturday the Argyle players were wearing them. They're such a help to spectators that one wonders why they weren't introduced years earlier."

The introduction of substitutes was first brought into the game for the 1965-66 season. One player could be named as substitute in F.A. Cup and Football League matches and was only to be brought on to replace an injured player. As this rule could easily be broken, from the following season it could also be a tactical move. This player was numbered '12' on his shirt. The first Plymouth Argyle player to actively play with number '12' on his back was Johnny Hore, brought on to replace number '9' Frank Lord, in a Football League match versus Charlton Athletic on the 31st August 1965. As legislation further allowed more substitutes, the shirt numbers accordingly went up, though number 13 could be ignored by the superstitious without breaking any rule.



Johnny Hore, 1965-66
The first Argyle team member to play in a match with '12' on his back.

All aspects of Association football were generally slow to change in the four divisions of the English Football League but the advent of the Premier League in 1992 considerably quickened the pace. Shirts displaying the name of the player on the back began to appear in International competition from the early 1990s and first appeared in the Premier League for 1993-94 season. Squad numbers completely revolutionised Association football but it was a long time between being first used in the 1950 World Cup to its first use in England, the 1993 Football League Cup Final. Squad numbers remained optional in the Football League until being made compulsory for the 1999-2000 season. From then a player could wear a shirt number from 1 to 99 as long as it was unique to them within the squad. Each individual player could not change that number in one season unless transferring to another club. Just as a shirt displaying the player's name altered and increased the significance of the shirt, so did the squad number which often had some personal importance attached to it.

THE PLYMOUTH ARGYLE CHANGE SHIRT.

Since the first professional League season Plymouth Argyle have had to register their club shirt colours but in addition to this also possess a change shirt in the case of a shirt clash in League or Cup. As Argyle's green colours have been so rarely worn by other opponents, cases of a clash have been a very rare occurrence. In the Southern League from 1903 to 1920 the only clubs known to potentially clash with Argyle were Queen Park Rangers and Exeter City. Q.P.R. played in green and white stripes and hoop jerseys into the 1920s. In 1904-05 the two clubs were photographed playing on Q.P.R.'s Park Royal ground wearing, what looks to be, their normal registered jerseys. This is the case also in a photo of the two clubs' Football League Division Three (South) fixture at Q.P.R. on Saturday 6th May 1922; whatever constituted as clashing shirts then was very relaxed. Exeter City entered into the Southern League in 1908-09 wearing green and white shirts up to 1910-11 season before adopting their red and white stripes the following season. When Q.P.R. switched to blue and white hoops for 1926-27 Plymouth Argyle were the only team in Football League Division Three (South) playing in a green shirt apart from Merthyr Town who wore a red shirt with varying designs that included green.



THE OPENING OF THE QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS' NEW GROUND AT PARK ROYAL.

Plymouth Argyle is the opposition in this Southern League fixture played on Saturday 3rd September 1904. At this time Q.P.R. played in Green & White hoops and Argyle are wearing their usual Green jersey with Black collar and cuffs. Both teams are wearing white knickers and possibly the same socks, Black with a Green turnover top. Note the stand roof is not completed.

The rarity of Argyle's green being considered as clashing with the opposition kit meant their change jersey/shirt is a bit of mystery, but it was seen for decades at Home Park in each season from 1903-04 to 1948-49 in the "Public Practice Matches", often two matches, played before the League fixtures started. The public was excluded for the first time in 1949-50 though it resumed in 1950-51. They were attended by up to 10,000 at the most. From these matches it is known what colour the change shirt was. Generally, the 'First XI' or 'Probables' would wear the green shirt and the 'Second XI' or 'Possibles' would be in the 'change' shirt. From the few newspaper photographs known, both teams would wear white knickers and the same Plymouth Argyle stocking in the style of that season, for many seasons black with a green turnover top. When Argyle purchased a different colour or style of 'change' shirt it appears both were held at the same time for a short period (1932-33, 1946-47, 1948-49), though the newer shirt held priority. The 'change' shirts or jersey are: -

White Jersey/Shirt: 1903-04 (Professionals v Amateurs. The 'Professionals' wore stripes, which may have been the green and black stripe shirt, that Plymouth Argyle announced would be worn in 1903-04 but was not. The 'Amateurs', who were mostly former Argyle Football Club players from the 1902-03 season, wore a white shirt); 1905-06 (described as a Jersey); 1906-07; 1907-08; 1908-09; 1909-10; 1910-11; 1911-12; 1912-13; 1913-14; 1914-15; 1919-20; 1920-21; 1921-22 (In Public Practice Match photo – White Jersey, and Knickers, Stockings probably black with green turnover top. The White Jersey looks to be in the same style as the club Green with white trim Jersey); 1922-23; 1923-24 (A pre-match photo of both practice teams shows the all-white jersey with long sleeves, a laced-neck and collar of a similar style as the club's green jersey. Both teams are in white knickers and the same black with green top turnover stockings); 1924-25.



Public Practice Match, "Greens" versus "Whites", Home Park, Saturday 20th August 1921.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



This Plymouth Argyle squad photograph was taken before kick-off of the Public Practice Match, "Greens" versus "Whites", At Home Park, Saturday 11th August 1923. (Western Independent, 12th August 1923).

Black & White Hoops Jersey: 1926-27; 1928-29 (worn Saturday 24th November 1928, 'away' to Yeovil & Petters United (of the Southern League) F.A Cup First Round. Argyle are in white knickers and probably the usual black and green stockings. Yeovil wore green shirts); 1929-30 (On the 12th October 1929 at Home Park, a Division Three (South) fixture was due to be played by Plymouth Argyle versus Welsh club, Merthyr Town. The referee unexpectedly decided that Argyle's green shirts clashed with Merthyr's red with green trimmings shirt. Usually the 'away' side was expected to change its shirt but in this case the only option was for Argyle to wear their black and white hooped, 'change strip' jersey. In theory it would seem that Argyle might have worn the 'change' strip again in the corresponding 'away' fixture at Merthyr Town, on Saturday 15th February 1930?).



Plymouth Argyle playing in the Black & White hoops 'change' shirt in a F.A. Cup First Round tie on Saturday 24th November 1928 at Yeovil. The opponents, Yeovil & Petters United, of the Southern League, as 'home' club, are wearing their Green jerseys. In theory, this could be the first time that Argyle were forced to change their jersey because of a clash of green. (Western Morning News, 26th November 1928).

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

Black & White Hoops Jersey & White Jersey: 1932-33 (The Public Practice Match was billed as “Greens” v. “Whites”, 10,000 attended. In newspaper photos the “Whites” are wearing both plain and the hooped shirt, white knickers and the usual black with green turnover top stockings).



Public Practice Match, “Greens” versus “Whites”, at Home Park, Tuesday 16th August 1932.

These two pictures were taken in the same match and they expose the oddity that the “Whites” wore both the new white ‘change’ jersey and the old black & white hoop jersey. As Plymouth Argyle had finished the 1931-32 season in their highest ever position in the Football League, 4th in Division

Two, the supporters were excited over the prospects of being promoted to the top division in 1932-33. The trial match was attended by 10,000.

(Western Morning News 17th August 1932).

White Jersey: 1933-34 (In a newspaper photo, laced-neck White Jersey, of similar style to the club green Jersey, and white knickers, the stockings are black with green turnover top); 1935-36.



Public Practice Match, “A Team” (Green) versus “B Team” (White), Saturday 12th August 1933.

(Western Morning News, 14th August 1933).

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

Scarlet Jersey: 1934-35 (On Saturday 18th August 1934 at Home Park, 'Public Practice Match', the 'A' Team played the 'B' team. In the second half the 'B' Team wore new brilliant scarlet jerseys).

Red Shirt/Jersey: 1936-37; 1938-39 (Public Practice Match billed as "Green & Whites" versus "Red & Whites", presumably the white referred to the knickers).

Blue Shirt/Jersey: 1945-46.

Yellow Shirt/Jersey: 1946-47; 1948-49 (White shirt/jersey also worn)

White Shirt/Jersey: 1948-49 (Yellow shirt/jersey also worn); 1949-50.

Red Shirt/Jersey: 1951-52; 1952-53; 1953-54.

Blue Shirt: 1957-58 (The second Public Practice Match was billed as "Green & Blacks" versus "Blues". The newspaper photo shows one team were wearing the Plymouth Argyle "Continental" style tighter fitting jersey whilst the other wore a long sleeve, though rolled up, looser Blue shirt, possibly with a white collar. Both teams look to be wearing Argyle's green with white turnover stocking).



Public Trial Match, "A Team" (Green & Black trim jersey) versus "B Team" (Blue shirt), Tuesday 13th August 1957.
Two players (middle) in the blue Argyle 'change' shirt with long sleeves rolled up. Both teams are wearing the same style shorts and stockings.

Unknown Colour Shirt/Jersey: 1954-55, 1956-57.



Public Practice Match, "Probables" (Green shirt, white sleeves) versus "Possibles" (unknown, possibly Red?), Saturday 14th August 1954.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Public Practice Match, "First XI" (Green & Black) versus "Reserve XI" (unknown), Saturday 11th August 1956. Unusually for a practice match both teams are not wearing the same stockings. The Reserves are in the hooped socks.

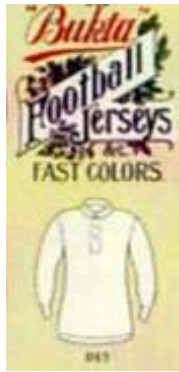
The last billed "Public Practice Match", in which the Plymouth Argyle 'change' jersey or shirt could be viewed, was played on Saturday 13th August 1960, thus Argyle ended a tradition going back to 1903-04. It was a fixture or fixtures looked forward to by the supporters at the start of each season, as can be seen by the (below) 'Dollery' cartoon when Argyle played the match behind closed doors in 1949-50.



(Western Independent, 14th August 1949).

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

Possible Plymouth Argyle 'Change' Shirt/Jersey.



1920s.
Bukta – White D17,
plain jersey, button neck.



1920s.
Bukta – White D46,
plain jersey, lace neck.



1935.
Umbro – 474 Scarlet, 475 White,
plain jersey, lace neck



1957.
Umbro – 423 Royal Blue,
Plain shirt, button neck.



1957.
Umbro – 425 Scarlet, 426 White,
plain shirt, button neck.



1957.
Umbro – 427 Amber.
plain shirt, button neck.



Jack Chisholm at Home Park in 1952-53 season. He could be wearing the Plymouth Argyle red change shirt? Argyle's 'change' shirts were of this style in the 1950's and as in the Umbro catalogue of 1957, shown above.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Argyle in the Adidas all yellow with green trimmings 'away' strip at Millwall on Tuesday 20th April 1982, and they donned it again at Bristol Rovers on Saturday 8th May, but it was not worn in every 'away' match.



Geoff Crudgington in Bukta top.

"Argyle will be wearing a new change strip when colours clash away from home next season. Argyle, who have been swapping white shorts and socks for black to avoid colour problems, will now plump for an all-yellow outfit with green stripes on the sleeves.

The switch follows a new deal with Adidas which will entail a slightly amended first team strip with three white stripes on the sleeves of their familiar green shirts." (Sunday Independent, 13th July 1980).

What was once a 'change' shirt to be worn when Plymouth Argyle's kit clashed with their opponents ceased to be after direct deals were made with manufacturers from 1975. In the deals made with Argyle, they provided both a 'home' and 'away' coordinated kit that were specially designed to be worn whether there was a clash or not. In the 1981-82 season, Adidas provided Argyle with an all-yellow with green trimmings kit. It was not worn in every 'away' match but what constituted a clash with Argyle's green shirt with white collar and cuffs gradually became a wider consideration. In that season, Plymouth Argyle wore the all-yellow kit at Millwall (see photo above) and two weeks later at Bristol Rovers, two blue and white shirt teams. Eventually a clash became null and void. It has been an issue over the seasons especially for Argyle whose green is rarely worn by any other League club. As time has moved on the 'away' strip has become part of football culture and a source of much needed revenue.

Occasionally the rules were broken as with Geoff Crudgington (left). He was the first Argyle goalkeeper made captain for many years. He is leading the players onto the pitch at Home Park for the Football League Division Three match versus Portsmouth on 7th November 1981. The Argyle captain is wearing a 'Bukta' top of the style worn in the 1978-79 season, but this is the 1981-82 season when the kit deal was with Adidas. The three-leaf logo of Adidas is on his shorts and on the shorts of the player behind him. It may be the case that the colour of his Adidas jersey clashed with the blue shirts of Portsmouth and the only available alternative was his old Bukta top.

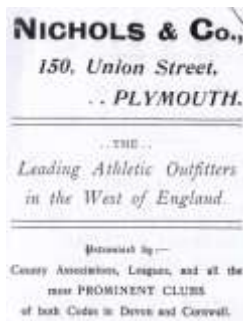
(photograph courtesy of Harley Lawer).

THE PLYMOUTH ARGYLE SHIRT SUPPLIERS, 1903 to 1975.

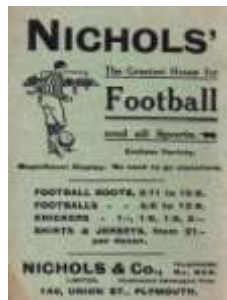
The 1905-06 Plymouth Argyle Official Handbook includes within its pages an advertisement for Spooner & Co.'s Tailor & Outfitters Department but no longer proclaiming to sell Football shirts. Also within the pages is an advertisement for "NICHOLS & Co., 150, Union Street, PLYMOUTH. THE Leading Athletic Outfitters in the West of England. Patronized by: - County Associations, Leagues, and all the most PROMINENT CLUBS of both Codes in Devon and Cornwall". The manager of the store was William Newton Kelsey who was a member of Argyle and had played cricket for the Club. The fast rising interest in Association football in Plymouth led to the opening of the Nichols & Co. Sports Depot at 11, George Street, Plymouth in 1898. In 1903 they became Nichols & Co. Limited and moved to 150, Union Street, Plymouth. By 1910 their address was 148, Union Street. They advertised in various early Plymouth Argyle programmes and handbooks and did proclaim to be "Suppliers to Plymouth Argyle". Nichols & Co. Limited traded in Plymouth up to the 1960s; the company was wound up in 1969.



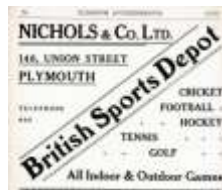
Nichols & Co, Sports Depot, 1901. The shop at 11, George Street, Plymouth opened in 1898.



Plymouth Argyle Hand Book, 1904-05.



Plymouth Argyle Hand Book, 1913-14



Kelly's Directory of Devon, 1919.



"Suppliers to Plymouth Argyle". Plymouth Argyle Hand Book, 1952-53, 1953-54.



Ray Bowden, 1931-32.

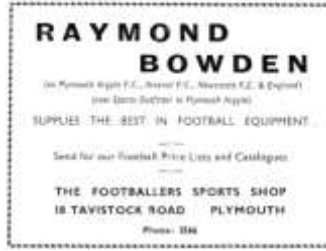
Nichols & Co. were succeeded by Bowden Sports Limited of 51, Mayflower Street, Plymouth, who advertised in the Plymouth Argyle Handbook of 1970-71 that they were "Sports outfitters to Plymouth Argyle F.C.". The founder, Raymond Bowden was a very well known Plymouth Argyle footballer who transferred to Arsenal in 1933 and went on to become an England International. He opened his "Raymond Bowden - Sports Outfitter" shop, at 59, Cobourg Street, Plymouth on the 29th March 1932, running it with the assistance of his brother. He retired from football in 1939, returning to Plymouth to concentrate on running his business. After World War II, the shop was situated at 18, Tavistock Road, Plymouth. From 1963 to 1996 the business was known as Bowden Sports Limited in Mayflower Street, of which Ray Bowden was a Director. He died in 1998. In the 1940s Argyle match tickets could be bought from both Nichols & Co. Limited and Raymond Bowden's premises.

Whilst it may be known who the retail suppliers of the Argyle shirt were up to the 1970s we do not know the manufacturers in the days before a trademark was part of its exterior decoration. Early on, manufacturers' competition was not intense and they were almost anonymous but from the 1920s to 1973, Bukta and Umbro controlled the British football shirt market. It is said that all the Football League clubs were with one or the other. From the 1950s Umbro became particularly innovative and dominant over its main rival. In the days before exclusive manufacturer shirt deals it would be possible to wear more than one manufacturer's shirt in the same season and even in the same match. Shirt design was very standardised and looked the same in each manufacturer's catalogue.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Newspaper Advertisement, 1946



Plymouth Argyle Hand Book,
1954-55.



Plymouth Argyle Hand Book,
1970-71.

THE PLYMOUTH ARGYLE SHIRT MANUFACTURERS.

The first known Plymouth Argyle shirt deal direct with the manufacturer was with Umbro for the 1975-76 season. From this time exclusive deals made it very important to display the maker's trademark clearly on the shirt and for the designs to become less and less standardised. Just before the Umbro deal Argyle had worn the green and black striped shirt (1973-74) made by their British rival, Bukta. Foreign manufacturers entered the market to challenge Umbro and Bukta and introduced new ideas in football shirt design. Plymouth Argyle's long-standing traditional 'Emerald Green' shirts were changed for other shades, and are now a much darker green variation. The shirt launch for 2019-20 described the Puma jersey "Argyle Green" to be pine needle green.

Bukta (England) – Founded in 1879 as a clothing brand name by Edward Robinson Buck in Stockport, Cheshire. Mainly producing shorts for soldiers they produced their first football kit for Nottingham Forest in 1884. Bukta was the very first mass producer of football shirts. The Buck family sold the company in 1982 to the owner of House of Fraser. The brand, now owned by the Cavden Group, has since 2005, supplied up-market fashion clothing.

Plymouth Argyle - pre 1973, 1973-74, 1978-79, 1979-80.



Bukta Catalogue, 1920's.



Bukta Catalogue, 1960.
The Plymouth Argyle jersey is "235 Emerald/White",
on the right, second row from bottom.



The Bukta factory.



Wilf Carter, Plymouth Argyle in Bukta jersey, 235,
Emerald/White, "Two Colour Trim V And Cuff".

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Sewing the Bukta football jersey. (gracesguide.co.uk)



Plymouth Argyle 1978-79
BUKTA



Plymouth Argyle 1979-80
BUKTA

Umbro (England) – Founded in 1924. Umbro was the trademark, taken from the name of Humphreys Brothers Clothing Limited (Harold and Wallace Humphreys). Their factory was at The Heather Works, Wilmslow, Cheshire. In 1958 they became the first manufacturer to produce replica shirts for children so they could feel like their heroes. Umbro dominated the English football shirt market for many years and were often the innovators of new ideas. By 1966 Umbro made the football shirts for 85% of all British football teams. As the major British clubs turned away from Umbro to foreign brands, the company was bought in 2008 by Nike for £285 million. In 2012 Nike sold Umbro to another American company, Iconix Brand Group.

Plymouth Argyle – pre 1975, 1975-76, 1978-89, 1989-90.



“Umbro” the trademark of Humphreys Bros., 1934-35



PLYMOUTH ARGYLE, 1934.
Is the jersey Umbro '482 Emerald-Black' (right) and hose (below) '604 Emerald' ?



The Umbro Catalogue, 1935.

The possible Plymouth Argyle jersey is 482 Emerald-Black, right, second row from bottom. (whoateallthepies.tv)



The Umbro Catalogue, 1935.
The Football Hose stocking '604 Emerald', bottom row, third from left,
Is identical to that worn by Plymouth Argyle. (whoateallthepies.tv)



The Umbro Catalogue, 1935.
The goalkeepers' sweaters. Note the use of the term
'Football Knickers' and 'Football Shorts'.
(whoateallthepies.tv)



The Umbro Catalogue, 1957.



Umbro established their first factory in Wilmslow (Image: Manchester Evening News)

Making the shirts in the Umbro factory.



The Umbro Catalogue, 1957.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Plymouth Argyle 1975-76
UMBRO



Plymouth Argyle 1987-89
UMBRO



Plymouth Argyle 1989-90
UMBRO

Pilgrim Sports (England) – Plymouth based. First supplied Plymouth Argyle in 1976.
Plymouth Argyle – 1976-78, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1984-86, 1986-87.



Plymouth Argyle 1976-78.
PILGRIM SPORTS



Plymouth Argyle 1983-84
PILGRIM SPORTS



Plymouth Argyle 1986-87
PILGRIM SPORTS

Adidas (Germany) – Founded in 1949 by Adolf Dassler, in Herzogenaurach, Germany. He and his brother Rudolf ran the Dassler Brothers Sport Shoe Factory (founded 1924) until they went their own ways after World War II. The company name is a combination of Adolf's nickname "Adi" and 'das' from his surname. It concentrated on athletic footwear until it began making sportswear around 1965. The company, who first entered the British football shirt market in 1974, became the first foreign supplier to Plymouth Argyle in 1980. Adidas is the second largest sportswear manufacturer in the world, after Nike.
Plymouth Argyle – 1980-81, 1981-82, 2009-10, 2010-11.



Plymouth Argyle 1980-81
ADIDAS



Adolf "Adi" Dassler in the shoe factory. He formed 'Adidas' in 1949 after falling out with his business partner brother Rudolf, who formed Puma. (adidas-group.com)

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Plymouth Argyle 2009-10
ADIDAS



Plymouth Argyle 2010-11
ADIDAS

Ribero (England) – Established in 1987. The Ribero Organization, Woodham, Surrey. They entered into Football League club deals for the first time in 1989 supplying 9 clubs, one of them being Exeter City.

Plymouth Argyle – 1990-91, 1991-92.



Plymouth Argyle 1990-91
RIBERO

Admiral (England) – Founded 1914 by Cook & Hurst Limited of Wigston, Leicestershire to manufacture quality underwear. By the First World War they started to make exercise sportswear for the Royal Navy from which the "Admiral" trademark came, registered in 1922. During the 1930s the Royal Navy required them to make rugby shirts; they continued supplying the R.N. into the 1970s. Their football shirt production expanded in the 1960s to assist the **Bukta** brand. Admiral first supplied under their brand name to Leeds United in 1973. It is said to be the first kit direct deal between a club and the manufacturer (Leeds United received an initial fee of £10,000 from Admiral). Since 1980, as a football brand they have declined but branched out into other sports, particularly cricket and cycling.

Plymouth Argyle – 1992-94, 1994-95, 1995-96.



Plymouth Argyle 1992-94
ADMIRAL



Plymouth Argyle 1994-95
ADMIRAL



Plymouth Argyle 1995-96
ADMIRAL

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

Super League – First supplied Football League clubs in 1993.

Plymouth Argyle – 1996-97, 1997-98/



Plymouth Argyle 1996-1998
SUPER LEAGUE

Errea (Italy) – Founded in 1988 by Angelo Gandolphi in San Polo di Torrile, near Parma, Italy. They entered the English market in 1994 by signing a deal with Middlesbrough.

Plymouth Argyle – 1998-99.



Plymouth Argyle 1998-99
ERREA

Patrick (Belgium) – Founded in 1892 by Patrick Beneteau in Vendee, France, initially making shoes and football boots. Based in Oudenaarde, East Flanders, Belgium. Their first association with an English club was Southampton in 1980. The company stepped back from football after the 1990s due to the strong supremacy of Nike and Adidas in the English sponsorship market.

Plymouth Argyle – 1999-00, 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03.



Plymouth Argyle 1999-00
PATRICK



Plymouth Argyle 2000-01
PATRICK



Plymouth Argyle 2001-02
PATRICK

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

TFG Sports (Scotland) – Factory in Wishaw, Scotland. Took over Olympic Sportswear in 2000. First known as supplier to Crystal Palace in 1999.

Plymouth Argyle – 2003-05.



Plymouth Argyle 2003-05
TFG

Puma (Germany) – Founded in 1948 by Rudolf Dassler, in Herzogenaurach, Germany. He and his brother Adolf ran the Dassler Brothers Shoe Factory (founded 1924) until they fell out and went their own ways after World War II. The bitter rivalry between the two brothers is heightened by both Puma and Adidas being based in the same small German town. When Rudolf and Adolf died they were buried at opposite ends of the town cemetery. Puma were a footwear manufacturer and particularly known for their football boots. They first entered the English football kit market with Sheffield Wednesday in 1993. The company is the third largest sportswear manufacturer in the world, after Nike and Adidas.

Plymouth Argyle – 2005-07, 2007-09, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21



The Dassler brothers, Rudolf “Rudi” (left), and Adolf “Adi” (right) in 1930 with the German Sports Minister.
The brothers fell out after the War and Rudi formed “Puma” and Adi formed “Adidas”.
Since 2005 the Plymouth Argyle supplier has been either of the two.
(theguardian.com)

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Plymouth Argyle 2005-07
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2011-12
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2007-09
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2012-13
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2013-14
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2014-15
PUMA

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Plymouth Argyle 2015-16
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2016-17
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2018-19
PUMA



Plymouth Argyle 2017-18
PUMA



The 2018-20 Plymouth Argyle home shirt is predominantly 'Argyle Green', the pine needles green which appears on the club crest.

Plymouth Argyle 2019-20
PUMA



HOME SHIRT ADULT 20-21

Plymouth Argyle 2020-21
PUMA

THE HISTORY OF THE FOOTBALL SHIRT/JERSEY & KIT.



Association football ten years before the formation of the Argyle Football Club. (Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic News 1875).

In this middle-class match, the players are sporting jerseys that were usually hooped, they are not shirts, with knickerbockers buttoned below the knee, some are wearing short socks and some the longer stockings. The boots are without studs or bars. Some are wearing caps, one of the caps has fallen off and is in the foreground; this was such a common occurrence that the practice was discontinued by 1900. The referee is in his day clothes wearing a top hat. The leather, bladder filled football is a lot bigger than later designs and the goal (far left) is narrow poles with tape across the top. Goal-nets were not in use until the 1890's, therefore it was very difficult to know whether the ball had passed between the posts and under the tape; it led to many disputed goals that were decided by umpires, one from each side. The Argyle Football Club's very first match in 1886 has a disputed score. Even when the game was reduced to eleven players it still had the group-rushing element of the massed ancient game. The ball was dribbled, not purposely passed. And it was not a spectator sport until organised competition, i.e. the F.A. Cup and Leagues.

Football as we know it began at the public schools and universities during the 19th century and was a middle-class sport until around the 1880s. The players would wear apparel made for them by their own tailors. Stripes became more common than hoops because they were cheaper to tailor. When 'The Football Association' formed in 1863 the only part of football kit that was covered in the rules were the boots. The need for team coloured shirts grew in importance at the time of the first organised football competition in England, and the world for that matter, namely the F.A. Cup in 1871. Though more and more people wanted to play football, very few watched it until organised Cup competition, followed by League competitions from 1888. Association football grew massively as a spectator sport, attracting crowds who needed to be able identify the two teams to take in and enjoy the game. The responsibility for the team shirt moved from the individual to the club.

In 1871 the Secretary of The Football Association and founder of the F.A. Cup, Charles William Alcock, wrote, *"It is desirable in matches that a uniform should be worn by each side, and here the primary colours, such as blue and red, are most useful in rendering the two parties easily distinguishable, and thus preventing the confusion which otherwise ensues. A tight fitting woollen jersey is better than a flannel shirt, being less liable to tear, and moreover is warm and comfortable. Knickerbockers, or knee-breeches and long woollen stockings, too, are generally worn, as they allow freedom to the legs ..."* (page 35, Book: "The Playing Rules of FOOTBALL"). These are the words from which has grown the modern day football shirt or jersey. The word 'Knickerbockers' originated in the United States and referred to the short trousers to the knee or calf worn by Dutch immigrants.

Shirts were an article of apparel worn by Arabs and later adopted by Europeans. The English name comes from Anglo-Saxon "sceort" which was the name for the undermost garment worn by both sexes. Jersey was a close fitting woollen vest first worn by sailors and fisherman from the Channel Island of Jersey. During the history of the football, both shirt and jersey have been concurrent and have come to be the same but originally a shirt was looser and a jersey tighter to the body. In the 1870s, as coloured tops started to be worn by Association football teams, they were referred to as "uniform".



Charles W. Alcock

(Book "The Father of Modern Sport" by Keith Booth, 2002). As Secretary of The Football Association from 1870, he proposed the founding of the F.A. Cup, which began in 1871. Structured competition created spectators to a crowd level and the need for coloured designed football shirts and jerseys.

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Advertisement 1874.

Richard Daft was a retired Nottinghamshire County cricketer.

From the early 1870s businesses that already supplied cricket requisites branched out to do the same for football. The owners were often retired County cricketers based in the North, Midlands, and London. Some manufactured at least some of their goods, though a nearby specialist may have made football shirts for them. Football shirts and other kit were ordered by mail from catalogues, each supplier would make up the order, package it, and send it by the railways who appointed road carriers in each town to deliver to the customer. There were a number of instances of these packages being pilfered from the Great Western Railway and the stolen football shirts being sold in public houses. As towns acquired their own local sports retailers, usually within drapers' stores in the 1880s, and more often sports specialists from the 1890s, football clubs ordered their football kit from them. They had stock purchased from wholesalers or manufacturers. Bucking the trend from 1898 to 1912, Tottenham Hotspur had their shirts made by local tailors.

In 1887 The F.A. set down RULE 4. "Each affiliated Association or Club shall annually forward to the Secretary the name and address of its Secretary and its distinguishing colours or costume.

Clubs and affiliated Associations changing Secretaries or Secretaries changing addresses, must notify the same immediately to the Secretary of the Association."

Though the Argyle Football Club was formed in the previous year 1886, none of the F.A. Rules applied to them until the Devon Football Association formed on Wednesday 8th February 1888. Argyle became one of the eight founding clubs and are the only one of the eight still playing Association football. From that date, the clubs 'Black & Green' colours were, for the first time, officially registered. During the 1880s specialised football shirt manufacturers started to appear and the shirts acquired designs specific to Association football, which have since evolved to the present. Simple buttoned-neck jerseys were a common style in the 1880s.



An F. A. Cup match in 1887. Note the difference between this and the previous match illustration of 1875. After fifteen years of the F.A. Cup, football had become an established spectator sport, there are many lined up on the touchline. The football kit had hardly changed but in this match the lighter coloured team are wearing round-neck jerseys and the darker team attire is collared shirts. The spectators can easily tell the two teams apart.

In 1891 all clubs in the Football League were made to register their shirt colours to avoid shirt clashes. Each club had to register a design combination that was unique to them; no two clubs could be the same. Bright kits were chosen to avoid clashes. A year later when a Second Division was added the Football League relaxed the rule, instead calling for all clubs to play in a plain white 'change' shirt in the event of a clash. From this date both the Argyle Football Club and Plymouth Argyle after wore a white 'change' jersey/shirt on occasion until the mid 1920s.



During the 1895-96 season this team photograph was taken in front of the old rustic Plymouth Cricket Club pavilion, backing on to Embankment Road, at South Devon Place. The photograph can be found on the Getty Images website.

Getty Images have labelled it as “Plymouth Argyle” but it is not because the Argyle Football Club was temporarily defunct from 1894 to 1897. There are known persons pictured here. The short older man in the flat cap is Francis Bennington Palmer, a schoolmaster at Mannamead School, and he was an official of the Plymouth Cricket Club. Two persons to his right in front of the “E” of the “Enclosure” sign is a young Percy Buchan who, from 1898-99 as the Argyle Football Club goalkeeper, is recognisable in the team photos standing furthest back (see pages 5, 6, 7). In 1895-96 he played for the Plymouth Football Club (and their cricket team) and Devon County who both used this ground. Both football teams played in green shirts of varying designs. As at least three players in the photograph are wearing cricket pullovers on top of their football shirts the most likely seems to be the Plymouth Cricket & Football Club, the same club that would not allow Pethybridge and Grose to become playing members in 1886 so they decided to form their own club, Argyle.

Note: this team in 1895-96 is wearing the same style of apparel as the Argyle Football Club in 1898-99.

Many of the earliest football clubs evolved from cricket clubs and the players wore their long cricket white flannel trousers in their winter sport. In the late 1860s members of the Plymouth Cricket Club began the earliest local football club, the Plymouth Football Club and the two shared the field at South Devon Place, now the Astor Playing Field. It was in the cricket pavilion on their ground, which backed on to Embankment Road, that the Devon F.A. formed in 1888. In the 1870s the first type of football shorts, known as knickerbockers, were worn; they reached down to the knee. Early versions needed a belt and were made of swansdown and lambskin whilst from the 1880s knickerbockers were made from serge or thin flannel. From circa 1890 the name became knickers or even, colloquially, “knicks”. The Plymouth Argyle handbook changed terminology from “knickers” to “shorts” in the 1964-65 season, when the supposedly modern white “Mayflower” badge kit was brought in by the Club Directors.



In the early 1900's The F.A. became very concerned by players hitching their knickers up. (pinterest)



Plymouth Argyle 2020-21 (argylesuperstore.co.uk)

In the mid 1890s gathered elastic waists became a feature as cotton knickers began to replace the heavier belted woven serge/worsted variety. This enabled the practice carried out by some players circa 1900, to make their movement freer, of hitching their long knickers up to make them shorter, inches above the knee rather than on it. The F.A. became quite concerned by this lack of modesty and decreed in 1904 that they must reach the knee but then relaxed this a year later when the rule was taken no notice of. After World War II football shorts became more lightweight using special cottons, sateen (Rayon), and nylon. They gradually became skimpier and tighter fitting, reaching its zenith in the 1980s. In 1991 Umbro reversed the trend by returning to long baggy shorts not too dissimilar from the knickerbockers worn a 100 years before. Tottenham Hotspur first wore them and quickly every club wore the style including Plymouth Argyle by 1994.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

Football socks were retailed as "Hose" from 1870. It was a commercial word and applied only to the article exhibited for sale. Once purchased and the owner put them on they become "Stockings". Therefore retailers sold them by either term. They were long and met the Knickerbockers at the knee. The word "Socks" was around but only applied to items shorter than a "Stocking" and socks were worn by some footballers. Early in football kit history the middle-class, public school educated teams wore coloured stockings that matched the colours of their jersey but into the 1880s this changed as the working-classes became the dominant force within the sport.



Plymouth Argyle Stocking
1936 – 1939.

Probably the most elaborate thick woollen variety ever worn by the club.



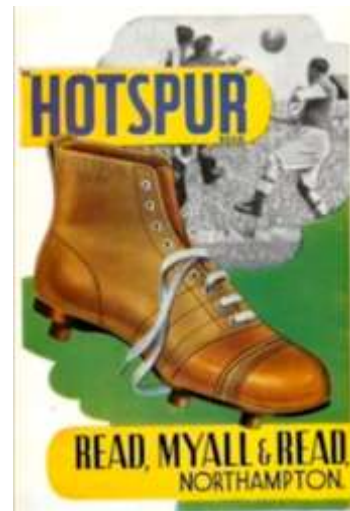
In football, the stocking, whilst being as necessary as a shirt to wear, was not given the same visual importance. Kit manufacturers catalogues mostly offered the standard black or blue stocking, which may have been cheaper than one to match your shirt. They were knitted from thick wool. The restricted colour availability of black or blue lasted up to the 1930s, though a club's main choice colour could appear in the turnover top, often as two rings around the top or the whole top of the sock. How the same stocking with a coloured top looked on a player varied by where he turned it down and how many times it was turned; the deciding factor being whether you had short or long legs in relation to the manufactured length. As the fashion for knickers became shorter, the distance between them and the stocking increased. In the photographs of the Argyle Football Club taken from 1898 to 1903 the players knees are clearly exposed. Football socks were not treated with any great significance and teams did not always have 11 players all wearing the same design socks.

For 1936-37 season Plymouth Argyle wore stockings with added green and black to a higher level of variance than had been seen before. In 1937 the Football League required the colour and design of the socks for each club to be registered each season. Since then Argyle have varied their stocking design on a regular basis. Another factor enabling and encouraging new design was the introduction of lightweight stockings. The long time traditional thick knitted wool began to be replaced in the late 1950s by wool and nylon mixes and then by Terylene, a brand of polyester. By 1969 woollen football socks had all but gone but the terms "Hose", "Stocking", and "Sock" still remain and are interchangeable.

Football boots, made of leather, evolved from the everyday working boot that covered the ankle. As time went by they became lighter in weight and more streamlined. With the progress of new design they lost their resemblance to the humble working boot. They were by far the most expensive part of the personal football kit. At the time of the founding of the Argyle Football Club in 1886 football boots had become particularly dangerous in the days before studs. To stop themselves slipping on muddy pitches players drove nails through their boots that were exposed underneath. The Plymouth based Army team, the South Staffordshire Regiment, had breezed through to the final of the inaugural Army F.A. Cup at the Kensington Oval in London on the 27th March 1889 and were hot favourites to win. The kick-off was delayed because the referee ruled that the one and a half inch nails sticking out of their boots would have to be removed first. Losing their advantage proved costly and they were beaten 2-0 by the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders Regiment. The winners triumph led to the myth that the Argyle Football Club was named after them, first mooted 45 years later. Without the win, the link would never have been nailed!



Plymouth Argyle Home Sock 2020-21
(argylesuperstore.co.uk)



Advertisement 1930's



Puma Super Atom 1952.
The first football boots with screw in studs.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



Leather nail in studs

From 1891 the laws of Association football allowed both studs and bars made of leather to assist the grip of the boots.

Shin guards, first patented in 1874 adapted from cricket pads, were strapped to the leg on the outside of the sock. They were essential to prevent injury from the kick of a solidly built boot, especially for amateurs with livelihoods. Football boots were a slightly lighter in weight version of sturdy leather day-to-day working wear. The outside shin guards did restrict movement so some players stopped wearing them. By circa 1900 shin pads that fitted inside the stocking were available. In the Argyle Football Club photographs some of the players are wearing outside shin guards but not in 1900-01 or 1902-03.

Another item of clothing worn by footballers for identification was a coloured cap and sashes tied around the waist. This was an early tradition still, on occasion, to be seen in the Argyle Football Club matches in Plymouth. On Saturday 1st March 1890 on their 'home' Cattedown Road ground, Argyle were playing another Plymouth club, Woodland. During the match an Argyle forward was dribbling the ball toward

the Woodland goal, but a defender marked him. The wind blew the defender's cap off and as he bent down to pick it up the suddenly freed Argyle forward scored a goal. The final score, 19 goals to 2, was the Argyle Football Club record victory. The custom to wear a club cap had all but gone by 1900 and the only person who wore a hat from then on was the goalkeeper, usually a flat cap



A typical 12 panel leather, laced football with an inflatable rubber bladder inside. (kraveantiques.co.uk).

The laces were pulled tight shut, tied and, as can be seen, the knot and spare lace was tucked underneath. This sometimes worked itself out, causing eye injuries.

Football, from the earliest days of Association football had traditionally been made from panelled and stitched tanned leather. Leather footballs were much heavier than today's synthetic types, and became even heavier on absorbing water in wet conditions. Its bladder, originally from pigs and later made of rubber, was encased in the leather which had a bladder access opening tightly laced shut. These laces could partially unravel during a match and become extremely dangerous to the eyes of



Jack Leslie.

A serious eye injury from a football ended his Argyle career.

players heading the ball. This happened to Argyle's renowned player and club captain Jack Leslie in a Football League Division Two match at Lincoln City on Saturday 21st October 1933. The lace caught him in the eye and caused a serious injury that kept him out of the team for well over a year. He was treated at the Plymouth Eye Infirmary. The

Plymouth Argyle directors would not re-sign him for 1934-35 season until they received a favourable report back from a London eye specialist. Jack Leslie did not return to training until November 1934, making it back into the Plymouth Argyle first team again on 29th December 1934 but this was his only appearance before being transferred to Truro City in May 1935. He had served Argyle from 1921, his displays drew the attention of the England selectors who called him up to play Ireland in 1925 but withdrew the selection when they saw that he had black parentage. He is now legendary as the first black person who would have played for England but was stopped by racism.

THE FOOTBALL SHIRT/JERSEY & KIT MATERIALS.

Early on football jerseys were knitted from wool before being replaced by lighter in weight cotton shirts in the 1890s. Dyes could bleed so much that on a very wet day the players could be dyed the same colour as their shirt by the end of a match and, particularly in rugby matches, be ripped off the wearer by a heavy tackle.

WOOL – It was a fibre used in so many different fabrics and early on most football garments were all wool. It was in shirts, shorts and socks. All wool was offered as a choice for stockings and goalkeeper's sweaters into the 1950s but increasingly they were wool mixes that brought the price down.

Wool, unlike cotton, was often adulterated. It has excellent qualities, its warmth, ability to keep its shape, and it absorbed dyes easily and retained it. To appeal to the Victorian customer wool was marketed as 'healthy'. The demand for woollen cloth by far exceeded supply; in 1912 one third of all woollen cloth on the market had old cotton rags woven back into the fibre and re-spun. Cheap wool still had warmth but did not look as rich or last as long and could unravel. Manufacturers were often not willing to admit their woollen products contained cotton; the cotton percentage could be as low as 10% or as high as 90%. Poor grades of wool, when wet, suffered shrinkage and dyes leaked out. The higher the quality of wool was evident in its price.

JERSEY – At least from 1870, the knitted material was commonly used in the manufacture of sporting shirts but also became the term for a closer fitting football shirt that made it different to a woven and looser shirt. As it is knitted the jersey had stretch properties not noted in woven shirts.

Jersey was originally made from very fine wool but over time it has been made from cotton and synthetic fibres. Cotton brought the price down and synthetic made it more durable. The outside of a jersey knit is smooth on the outside and looped on the inside. As the word 'jersey' became to mean a shirt, it may not be made with a jersey material. 'Cole's Dictionary of Dry Goods' (1892) – "*Jersey and guernsey were names given to woven, close-fitting vests of coarse wool or worsted worn by sailors and fishermen. They were afterward adopted for athletic and other sports ...*"

WORSTED – It was used in the manufacture of football jerseys from circa 1890 to 1905. In Canada it was still being used in the 1920s for Association football shirts and stockings, perhaps due to their colder winter climate.

Worsted is a type of high-quality wool yarn. The process involves combing the wool so its fibres are all parallel when it is spun which makes the yarn stronger. The natural crimp of the wool fibre is removed in the process of spinning the yarn. It is resilient and quickly returns to its natural shape.

SERGE – Probably the most popular choice for football knickers from 1890 to 1910 but football retailers, in a survey of the period, only advertised it in navy blue. Umbro were still offering serge as top of the range knickers in 1935 and again it was still only in navy blue.

Serge is a durable high quality twilled (a type of textile weave) woollen or worsted that gives diagonal lines or ridges on both sides of the fabric. Generally plain dyed. 'Cole's Dictionary of Dry Goods' (1892) - "*This fabric, known as wool serge, has for 600 years been almost exclusively used for men's clothing*". The dyeing process can be undertaken at any stage of manufacture; with serge it was 'piece-dyed' which means after weaving.

MERINO – Advertised as a football jersey fabric in 1904 and was very expensive.

The finest wool-bearing breed of sheep in the world, of Spanish origin. It is also the name of a thin woollen fabric made of the fine wool of the male Merino sheep. When it was first made in Bradford in 1826 it was one of the most expensive varieties.

CASHMERE – Available in top of the range football jerseys and shirts in the early 1890s.

Cashmere is a fine woollen fabric, first imported from Cashmere. By 1824 imitation manufacture was carried out in Yorkshire and Paisley, Scotland. These were twilled fabrics of a fine worsted yarn made from prime wool.

CASHMERE – Available circa 1890 as a football shirt fabric.

Its origins are as an old time material for fancy waistcoats.

JOHN PIGGOTT, FOOTBALL OUTFITTER.
In Touch with all Requirements.

THE "J.P." MATCH BALL.
Each one is stamped with my Trade Mark, and is manufactured from the finest quality of Cowhide.

RUBBER-FACED GOAL-KEEPER'S GLOVES, No. 5 Match, 93
Postage 4d.
5/6 and 5/- per pair. Case 7/6.

OTHER FOOTBALLS.
No. 3, 4/6; 4, 5/3; 5, Match Size, 6/3 and 7/6; 6, 7/9; Postage, 4d.

FOOTBALL KNICKERS.
Extra Quality Swansdown 1/4
Best Lambskin 2/2 3/3
Navy Blue Serge, best goods only 1/4 1/9 2/9 3/9

SPECIAL BELTLESS KNICKERS.
Elastic Grip at both Sides, and Patent Clip, 2/3 each, 26/- per doz. Postage 3d. per pair.

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1/11, 2/6, 3/6, 4/11.
Postage 3d.

GOAL NETS,
42/-, 46/6.

FOOTBALL CASES,
3/3, 3/9, 4/6, 5/9.

BRASS INFLATORS
1/6, 1/9, 2/3, 3/3.
Postage 4d.

SHIN GUARDS.
1/-, 1/6, 1/11, and 2/11.
Postage 3d.

THE FOOTBALL BAG.
When ordering Footballs please mention Association or Rugby.
12 in. 3/6 14 in. 4/1 16 in. 4/9 18 in. 5/4
Postage 6d.

FLANNELETTE FOOTBALL SHIRTS.
Flannelette, 2-in. stripes as sketch, 1/11 and 2/5 each. For quantities of 1 doz. a reduction of 2/- and 3/- respectively. Flannel, 7/3 each. For quantities of 1 doz. 4/- reduction. Patterns post free. Postage 3d.

THE SHUREKIK
Men's Russel Calf, Fluted Toe Cap, Single Leather Pads, Price 8/6. Postage 6d.

Please send for Illustrated Price List, Post Free.
117 & 118, CHEAPSIDE & MILK ST., E.C.

Advertisement circa 1900

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

MELTON – Used as a football shirt material in the mid 1890s. It was also in the Umbro range of shorts in 1935, and 1957.

Heavy fabric made of all wool used for men's clothing. It is dyed in solid colours, usually black, or shades of brown.

SWANSDOWN – Used for football knickerbockers/knickers in the 1880s and up to the early 1900s.

Thick soft fabric wool or cotton.

FLANNEL – Carried over from cricket, white flannel trousers were worn by footballers up to circa 1880 when white knickerbockers became more popular. It was used as a material option for football shirts from circa 1890 to circa 1900. Umbro featured all-wool flannel shirts as the most expensive option in their 1935 catalogue.

Flannel is a loosely woven lightweight soft cloth that was originally made from carded wool or worsted yarn. It has been used since the 16th century. Over the years of its development it can now be made from wool, cotton or synthetic fibres. During the 19th Century it became a popular material for sports clothing, particularly cricket. In the manufacturing process cricket flannel is pre-shrunk to enable it to be thoroughly cleaned after use to regain whiteness. To shrink the new cloth it is kept wet for 24 hours. *"The pieces are then hung upon rails to dry in rooms heated by hot pipes. They are bleached by the steam of burning sulphur to improve whiteness"*. 'Cole's Dictionary of Dry Goods' (1892).

COTTON – Some football jerseys being described for sale were referred to as 'cotton' from around 1890. At first cotton jerseys were considerably cheaper but the quality was often poor. It was usually constituent in woollen mixes. The English manufacturer Bukta were still offering 100% cotton football shirts in 1972.

Cotton was one of cheapest fibres and could be woven into many types of fabric to suit the type of use required. Its quality was varied by the price to be charged for the goods. It was not generally adulterated with other fibres or chemicals as they could harm its qualities rather than improve it. It was a fabric that did not hold dyes well unless it had been mercerized (treated with caustic soda solutions). Cotton materials could be made to imitate other fabrics such as Linen, Wool, and Silk.

FLANELETTE – The cotton flannelette football shirt was the most popular alternative to the woollen football jersey from the 1890s to 1920.

Flannelette refers to napped cotton imitating the texture of flannel. The surface of the material is raised and slightly fluffy. 'Cole's Dictionary of Dry Goods' (1892) – *"These fabrics are finished by the simple process of teasing on a machine ... to raise the nap on both sides ... the feel is softer and warmer to the skin"*. Another name for a similar material is winceyette.

DUCK – Generally not found in English football retailers advertising but is in Canada in the 1920s as football knickers.

A heavy, strong, plain-woven linen or cotton fabric similar to, but of lighter weight than, canvas. It can be used for men's summer clothing.

LAMBSKIN – Offered for sale as football knickers by one manufacturer/retailer, John Piggott of London, from the 1880s to around 1900.

A very closely woven cotton fabric.

SATEEN – This was advertised as available for a football shirt in 1896-97 and would have been a novel choice for the time due to its glossy appearance. It was advertised as available for football knickers in 1922 and 1957.

Popular from 1900, sateen is a fabric that is made using a satin weave spun with yarns, such as cotton or rayon. It has a sheen and smoothness.

AERTEX – Incorporated into football shirt design from around 1970.

Aertex is a British clothing company founded in 1888 that owns the trademark for Aertex fabric, a lightweight, loosely woven cotton used to make shirts and underwear. By 1960 the material began being used for sports clothing. Umbro began using it for football shirts and England wore these shirts in the 1970 World Cup in Mexico.

CANVAS – Used for the covering on football shin-guards, invented in 1874 from cut down cricket pads. The more expensive shin-guards, in the 1890s, were covered in leather.

Originally made from hemp, canvas evolved into being made from cotton or linen. A stiffening material, usually unbleached, used in tailoring.

LINEN – Used as an alternative to canvas in covering football shin-guards in the 1890s.

The fibre is obtained from the insides of the outer-bark of the Flax plant (*Linum Usitatissimum*), also known as Linseed. Linen is similar to cotton in chemical structure though very different in physical characteristics. In many cases cotton has replaced linen in usage or is blended with it, though linen remains superior for the manufacture of some items, and for clothes it is of finer appearance. Linen fibre is stronger than that of cotton and has more lustre. Linens in plain weaves are available for clothing.

RAYON – The material was made available in football shirt and shorts design from 1953.

Rayon is made from cellulose, the substance found in the walls of plants to keep them upright. It was a man-made fibre known as artificial silk from its invention in the 1880s until named Rayon in 1925 by the manufacturer Du Pont. Its properties were not strong enough to make clothing until a new type of stronger Rayon began to be produced in the 1950s. This coincided with the introduction of floodlights at football grounds. The sportswear manufacturer Umbro realised football shirts made of this shiny silky material would catch the light thus making players better visible to the spectators under the insufficient floodlights. They made it in the same style as the normal daywear natural fibre shirts they produced. For the football clubs that purchased it, including Plymouth Argyle, it was the first time they had worn man-made synthetic fibres.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

NYLON – It was introduced into football kit as a mix in woollen football stockings from the mid 1950s and has gradually ousted natural fibres since then. Both major British manufacturers, Bukta and Umbro, were offering lightweight nylon football shirts by the early 1970s.

From their discovery of Rayon produced from plant cellulose, Du Pont worked on developing and marketing Nylon, a man made polymer produced from oil. Patented by Du Pont in 1939, it has multi uses including being made into fabric for clothing. Some of the properties of Nylon made it uncomfortable to wear as clothing and particularly unsuitable for sport. Experiments began to make it suitable for sportswear by blending with other fibres and polymers such as cotton and polyester. In 1958 the British Nylon Spinners Company established the trademark 'Bri-Nylon'. In the Bukta 1971 catalogue, the football shirt manufacturer heralded the arrival of "NEW FOR 71 – nylon soccer jerseys - containing Bri-Nylon". Plymouth Argyle changed their shirt manufacturer to Bukta for 1978-79 and the first tell-tale sheen of Bri-Nylon appeared on the club shirt.

POLYESTER – It was introduced into football shirts, usually as a mix with cotton. By the mid 1970s polyester was available as the 100% material of football shirts.

Polyester is durable and lightweight ideal for manufacturing man-made textiles that are non-creasing and resistant to absorbing water. The fibres carry water away from the body and it evaporates on the surface. It is quick drying but even when wet its strength is not affected. The first synthetic polyesters were made in chemical process from substances extracted from oil and invented before the 1914-18 Great War by W. H. Carruthers, a research scientist working for Du Pont in the U.S.A. Some years later a group of British scientists working for the Calico Printers Association in Manchester developed it further. In 1941 they created the



Advertisement 1971

THE CHEMISTRY OF A FOOTBALL SHIRT

SHIRT MATERIAL - POLYESTER

Polyesters are a group of polymers commonly used in textile applications. The polymer is a very large molecule built up from smaller molecules. The basic synthesis of polyesters involves a condensation reaction between an alcohol and a carboxylic acid; there are several methods through which this can be accomplished.

O=C(O)c1ccc(cc1)C(=O)OCC

POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE (PET)
Most common type of polyester used in textiles.
Occasionally combined with cotton (below) to form poly(cotton)

OC1C(O)C(O)C(O)C1O

COTTON

Polyester is durable, lightweight, resistant to creasing, and only absorbs 0.4% of its weight of water. It has a good 'wicking' effect - most sweat is carried along the fibres, rather than absorbed, and can evaporate.

SHIRT MATERIAL - ELASTANE

Also known as spandex or lycra, elastane is another polymer often incorporated into football shirts. It can resist approximately 600% elongation before rupturing, so it is useful for adding strength and elasticity to football shirts. However, it is not as 'breathable' as other materials.

*CCN(CCCNC(=O)OC1=CC=CC=C1C(=O)NCC)C

ELASTANE

NAME & NUMBER - POLYURETHANE

The name, number, and sponsor logo on the shirt are often made of polyurethane. These are thermally bonded to the shirt using a heat-press.

*NC(=O)OCCOC(=O)NCC

POLYURETHANE

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(compoundchem.com)

first polyester fibre, which they called 'Terylene'. The yarns tend to have lustre and can be stretched to become very fine for weaving and suitable for blending, particularly with cotton and wool to give it a nicer more comfortable feel. This is the basis for modern hi-tech materials. (olorum-sports.com). Nobody is quite sure when polyester came into common use but by the 1990s most football clubs wore shirts made of the material. A glance through the brochure of Plymouth Argyle's kit manufacturer from 2011 shows their shirts are made from 100% polyester or various polyester/elastane/spandex/nylon/cotton mixes.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY

ELASTANE - First invented in 1958 but not incorporated into football kit until much later.

Elastane is a synthetic polymer, also known by the brand names Spandex and Lycra, which is often incorporated into football shirts. It gives them strength and elasticity but is not as 'breathable' as polyester. Some shirts can be 100% polyester but generally they are blended with other fibres to improve its qualities. Elastane blended with the polyester greatly increases its stretching properties and easily returns to its original shape, which is useful in the modern game where shirt tugging is an everyday occurrence.

POLYURETHANE – Another man-made polymer, it is water resistant and is used for the printing on a shirt. The numbers, letters etc are thermally bonded onto the football shirt using a 'Clam Sublimation Heat Press'. Polyurethane is also used in the manufacture of footballs. Synthetic leather footballs appeared from the 1960s, having the advantage over real leather in not absorbing water and subsequently not going out of shape. They were constructed in the same way with stitched panels and a bladder inside. The modern football continues to be made in the same manner, though materials change, but also footballs with thermally bonded panels rather than stitched became available, first used in 2004 European Championship. Stitched leather "vintage style" footballs are still produced. In recent times attention has been given to the surface texture of the synthetic football to improve its aerodynamic properties. There have been frequent changes to the overall design look of the ball.



Clam Sublimation Heat Press.

They have one of these in the Argyle Superstore at Home Park to bond on the polyurethane numbers and letters to personalize your football shirt .



Josh Widdicombe, Argyle supporter, comedian , TV and radio personality, in the Argyle Superstore at the clam sublimation heat press. (sky bet EFL on youtube.com 25th February 2020 'Josh Widdicombe | My Club | Plymouth Argyle').

IN THE DRESSING ROOM.



1948-49 'Home'
The dressing room was in a temporary hut after the grandstand was destroyed in the War



circa 1952 'Home'



2017 'Home'



1959 'Home'



2019-20 'Home' (pafc.co.uk)

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



2016-17 'Away'

GREEN SHIRT CONCLUSION.



Of the ninety-two clubs in the top four English Divisions, at the start of the 2019-20 season, seventeen of them had worn green as a major colour in their football shirt in at least one full season since that club was founded. They are Aston Villa, Brighton & Hove Albion, Bristol Rovers, Burnley, Chelsea, Coventry City, Exeter City, Forest Green Rovers, Leyton Orient, Lincoln City, Manchester United, Norwich City, Peterborough United, Plymouth Argyle, Queen's Park Rangers, Swindon Town, Watford. In addition to these, Tranmere Rovers and Wigan Athletic have worn shirts that featured green as a minor colour in their scheme. Walsall, had at some time, worn green socks but not green in their team shirt.

Of all these ninety-two clubs, sixty-seven have completely abandoned all their founding colours in at least one full season during their history. Plymouth Argyle are one of the twenty-five that have remained 'True' to at least one of their major founding colours. In the 2019-20 season only two clubs wore green, but one of them, Forest Green Rovers for the majority of their history had black and white shirts, which leaves Plymouth Argyle as the only major English club to stay 'True' to green. (Researched from *historickits.co.uk*). Whilst many of today's big clubs have swapped around their registered colours, since 1886 Argyle has stayed loyal to GREEN, if not BLACK.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL SHIRT WEBSITES.

classic-shirts.com
colours-of-football.com
footballshirtculture.com
historickits.co.uk
hullcitykits.co.uk
kitbliss.co.nz
nationalfootballmuseumstrip.com
nostanding13.wordpress.com
oldfootballshirts.com
truecoloursfootballkits.com
unitedkits.com
vintagefootballshirts.com

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL SHIRT BOOKS.

"Soccer Crests" – Frederick Compton Avis – published 1969.
"The Observer's Book of Association Football" – Albert Sewell – published 1972.
"Soccer Club Colours" – Martin Tyler – published 1976.
"Football History Map Of England And Wales" – John Carvaso – published 1976.
"The Scottish Football Map" – George Ashton – published 1977.
"Club Colours" - Bob Bickerton – published 1998.
"True Colours. Football Kits From 1980 to the Present Day" – John Devlin - published 2005.
"True Colours, Volume 2. Football Kits From 1980 to the Present Day" – John Devlin - published 2006.
"Tops of the Kops: The Complete Guide To Liverpool's Kits" – Peter Crilly – published 2007.
"The Worst Football Kits Of All Time" – Dave Moor – published 2011.
"1000 Football Shirts: The Colours of the Beautiful Game" – Bernard Lions – published 2014.
"The Arsenal Shirt. The History of the Iconic Gunners Jersey ..." – James Elikin & Simon Shakeshaft – published 2014.
"Shirt Tales & Short Stories. The Lost World of Football Kits" – Derek Hammond & Gary Silke – published 2015.
"Kit: Fashioning the Sporting Body" – Edited by Jean Williams – published 2016.
"The Football Shirts Book: The Connoisseur's Guide" – Neal Heard – published 2017.
"The Beautiful Badge. The Stories Behind The Football Club Badge" – Martin Routlege & Elspeth Wills – published 2018.
"The Colours Of The Rams. The Shirts of Derby County Football Club" – Ellis, Lowe & Shardlow – published 2019.
"The Spurs Shirt: The Official History Of The Tottenham Hotspur Jersey" – Shakeshaft, Burney & Evans - published 2019.

THE RISE & FALL OF THE FITTED FOOTBALL JERSEY INVENTOR.

Prior to 1887, the mass production of the woollen football jerseys and their style was limited to the capabilities of the machine it was made on. In 1886 William Rothwell of Bolton, Lancashire patented the "Rothwell Patent Healing and Splicing Machine" which, he claimed, could produce knitwear of "quantity, quality, and variety". He promised 100 guineas to charity if anyone could prove of another machine that could match it. His was the first machine that could knit vertical stripes; previously only possible in weaving. All items on this machine could be fashioned and finished complete in one operation. With 13 needles to the inch it could produce fine detail, and was capable of using more than one colour of thread.

William Rothwell set up the Rothwell Hosiery Company Limited, of Market Street, Bolton in 1886, with himself as chairman, to produce various garments including football jerseys. The release of the new "ROTHWELL FOOTBALL JERSEY" for the 1887-88 season was heralded as a revolution, "... exceedingly neat in appearance, and being very elastic they set off the figure to advantage, and at the same time afford every comfort". The fact that it was knitted and ribbed, rather than woven as loose fitting shirts were, gave it those qualities and it obviously appealed to the vanity of young Victorian men. All his garments were sold via another company he had set up, William Rothwell & Company Limited which recruited Wholesale Agents in England, Scotland and Ireland to directly approach retailers.

THE LATEST NOVELTY!!!

THE NEW

"ROTHWELL"

Elastic, Ribbed, Vertical-striped

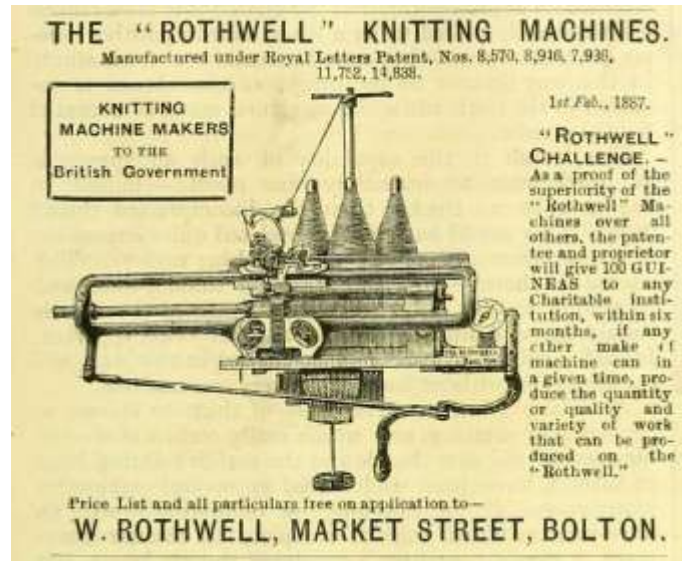
FOOTBALL JERSEY.

WHOLESALE AGENTS wanted in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

W. ROTHWELL,
Market Street, BOLTON.

This football jersey was heralded for its neat appearance and elastic qualities that gave it a perfect fit. For the first time, on William Rothwell's machine, football jerseys with vertical stripes could be knitted rather than stitched on.

cotton mill when aged only 8. In 1871, aged 19, he was a cotton spinner and, in that year, married Eliza Thornley, who also worked in the mill. In the 1881 Census he has gone through a very pronounced change of occupation, now a farmer of 32 acres at Hollin Hey, Halliwell. He turned his attention to knitting machinery and he was employed in the knitting of stockings. He soon, however, perceived that the knitting machine was capable of a far greater extension of work than merely that of covering the feet and legs. "He visited the Amsterdam Exhibition, then he travelled through France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, examined the manufacturers in Saxony, all the time with his mind bent on the production of a machine which would turn out knitted woollen fabrics of all kinds. The machine he designed and now bears his name has become so universally famous" (Journal of Domestic Appliances). From a lowly working class background, as his ideas made money, he and his family were able to afford a big house "Hollywood" in the most affluent part of Bolton. He made more machinery improvements and took out more patents as he widened his ambitions. Mr. Rothwell has brought refined, good looking woollen goods to the English market, including the new era football shirt that for the first time was a fashion icon and brought about reform, benefiting men, women and children. The "Journal of Domestic Appliances & Sewing Machine Gazette", in 1892



The knitting machine patented by William Rothwell in 1886. (Journal of Domestic Appliances, 1st March 1887)

William Rothwell first exhibited his new and improved knitter at "The Health Exhibition" at South Kensington, London in May 1884 and it won two silver medals. Buoyed by his success, he patented the machine in 1885 and began to manufacture it, selling them through his William Rothwell & Company in the United Kingdom and the United States. The patent was challenged and the case went to Court claiming Rothwell was not the true inventor of the new type of knitting machine. It was alleged that, after he had made a visit to Chemnitz in Germany, he came up with the idea for his machine that was patented by the 'Chemnitz Knitting Machine Company' more than a year before. The case was dismissed with costs. In 1890 William Rothwell claimed his 'W. Rothwell & Co. Ltd.' was the largest makers of knitting machines in the U.K. He built them in all sizes, big machines for factories, and smaller for shop premises at his Albert Works, Bolton. In 1893 he went to the United States to promote the sales of his knitting machines. He also represented other manufacturers as their agent.

The demand for high quality knitted wool garments increased greatly in the late 1880s, at a time when Association football was fast changing from a amateur middle class pastime to a beloved sport of the working classes spurred on by an interest in professional clubs. William Rothwell of Bolton was congratulated for his ingenuity and enterprise. His improved machines enabled mass quality production that also brought the price of a football jersey down and enabled more people to be able to afford the cost. In 1874 a jersey cost 8 shillings, by the early 1890s they were around 3 shillings each. In a pamphlet entitled "The Reasons Why", he extolled the advantages of his well fitting graceful garments over the ugly bulkiness of flannel. It was a time for expansion for William Rothwell and bigger investment in business.

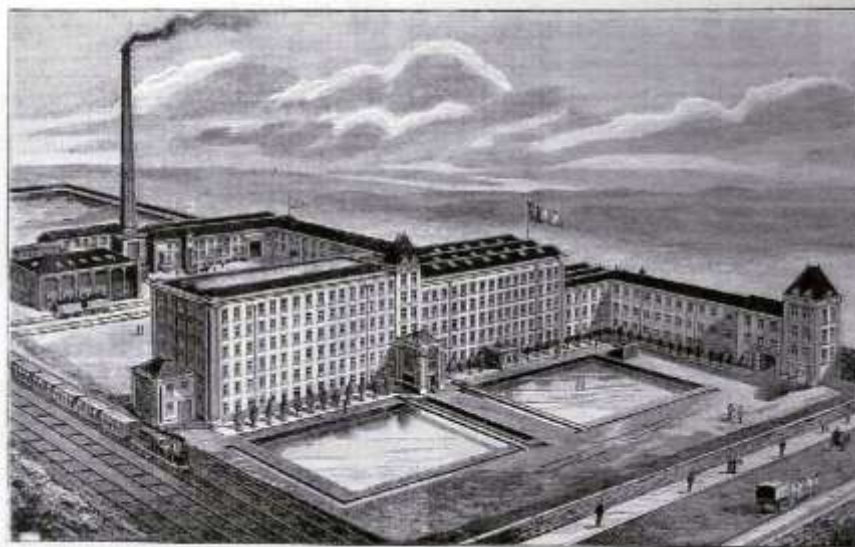
William Rothwell had a remarkable life. He was born 1852 in Heaton, Bolton, Lancashire into a family of cotton workers. He started work in the



The aspiring William Rothwell, from a lowly childhood to a meteoric rise, bought this residence “Hollywood” in the most affluent part of Bolton, before he fell from grace. His former home is now part of the Beaumont Hospital.

says, “ ... that one of the great national benefactors of this final decade of our century is Mr. William Rothwell, of the Rothwell Hosiery Company”. It was such a shame that it all was going to go horribly wrong.

In 1890 he bought the large empty Victoria Spinning Mills, Bridgeman Street, Bolton that had 6 acres of floor space to accommodate the 'Bolton Botany Wool Spinning Company' who would produce the worsted yarns required by the Rothwell Hosiery Company Limited. William Rothwell was now the force of three companies who, between them, manufactured and sold the knitting machines, manufactured the woollen yarn, knitted the woollen garments and were wholesalers and retailers. Unfortunately this heralded a reverse in fortune. Earlier in the year a fire at the Rothwell Hosiery Co. had put 400 staff out of work, and in August some of his staff were arrested for systematic robbery of immense quantities of goods. In 1891 the dividends paid out by Rothwell to share holders faltered and his eldest son died. At this time William Rothwell, with the assistance of his manager, William Entwisle, began to enter into fraudulent practices.



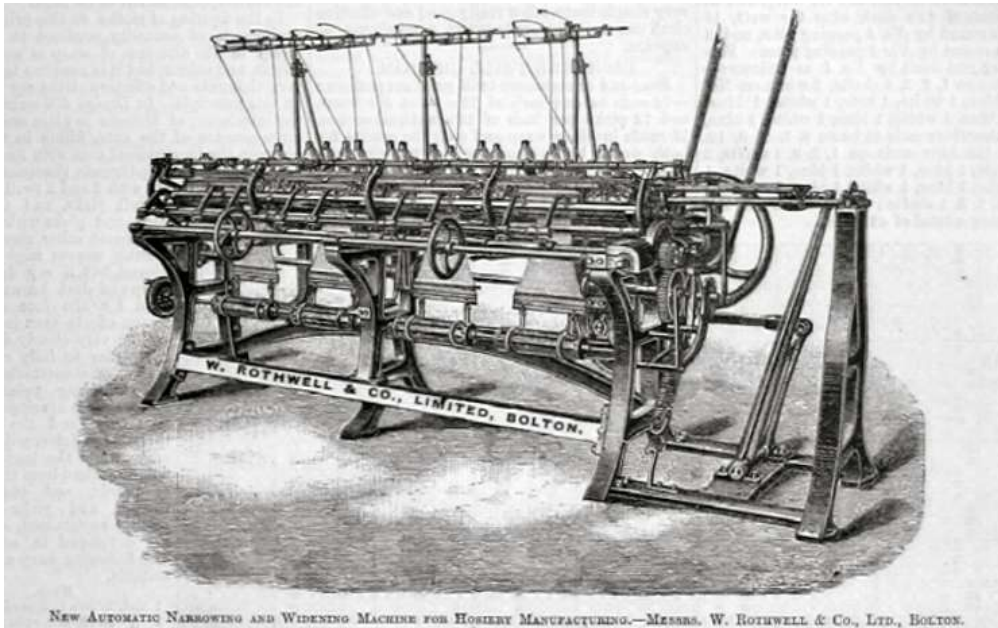
Victoria Spinning Mills, Bolton, bought by William Rothwell in 1890. (Textile Mercury 19th July 1890).



These advertisements appeared in newspapers all over Great Britain. Local agents were recruited and they sold the football jerseys to retailers. (Rhyl Record & Advertiser, 20th August 1892).

The struggling Rothwell Hosiery Company was eventually liquidated in 1894. At the Bolton Bankruptcy Court on the 14th January, 1895, William Rothwell, hosiery manufacturer and knitting and sewing machine dealer said he entered into the fullest investigation having nothing to fear. He gave his working career as being engaged as an operate cotton spinner until 1872 when he commenced business as a sewing machine agent and dealer. Subsequently he took a shop in Market Street where he carried on a hosiery business. William Rothwell formed the Rothwell Hosiery Company in 1886. During the hearing it was alleged that he altered stock lists and over-valued it. He had filtered cash out of the business as he falsified balance sheets and cooked the books. He lived on his creditors money. As a result of this hearing, William Rothwell, managing director of the Rothwell Hosiery Company, appeared on May 6th, 1895 at Bolton Police Court charged with 19 indictments of falsifying balance sheets amounting to thousands of pounds. The magistrates committed him for trial at the next Assizes.

THE GREEN JERSEY JOURNEY



(Textile Mercury, 18th October 1890).

The trial of William Rothwell and William Entwistle began at Manchester Assize Court on the 19th July 1895. They pleaded "Not Guilty". Evidence was given that in 1891 stock they valued at £103,795 had a real value of £85,000. Rothwell had told a prospective director, on showing him around the works, their knitting machines were exceptional and offered an advantage over rivals. The new Director later found the statement untrue. He said he did not know that Rothwell was the Managing Director of the company that made them. The fraud that started in 1891 continued through 1892. During the trial the prisoner, Rothwell, took the "Right to silence" which meant he was not entitled to speak on his own behalf, nor was he entitled to submit himself to be cross-examined.

In the summing up, the Judge said the motive was for personal gain and not to protect the company. The jury found both men guilty. William Rothwell was jailed for 18 months with hard labour, and Entwistle received 9 months. Mr. Rothwell's hosiery shop and his 'Rothwell Machinery Company' continued as it was separate from the mill business. Whilst he was in prison his advertisements for "The New PREMIER KNITTER" continued in the Press but giving the name as 'E. Rothwell', which was probably his wife, Eliza. Such a fall from grace meant that he, after completing his sentence, and his wife had to leave Bolton and they settled in Leicester where he found employment as a hosiery mill manager. Such a rise and fall may have been the cause of his early death in 1904, aged 52.
