



William Richard Evers, Edinburgh Northern, 8 caps, cap number 176

William Richard Evers was born on 13th November 1909 , the second son of Claude Pilkington Evers, a teacher at Rugby School, and his wife Jessie (nee Roberts). Dick (as he was known) was educated at Dragon School then Rugby School where he was Head of School in his final year. He excelled at sport and was in the Cricket XI in 1928, and in the Hockey XI in 1927 and 1928.

He went up to Corpus Christi, Oxford in 1928 as a Charles Oldham Scholar in Classics. He made the most of his time at Oxford. On the sports field, he made the freshman hockey team, was Captain of cricket 1932 , Captain of hockey in 1930-31 and 1931-32. Off the field he was President of JCR in 1931, editor of the Pelican Record and awarded the Haigh Prize for Classics in 1929.

On graduation, Dick became a master at Fettes College Edinburgh in 1932. He was a house master from 1938 until he joined up in 1941. In 1940 he married Anne Brint, another member of staff at Fettes. They had one son Michael born in 1942.

In Edinburgh he played hockey for Edinburgh Northern and cricket for Grange, he also found time to turn out for Edinburgh Wanderers at rugby on occasion.

By January 1934 Dick was representing East District, playing in midfield alongside his Edinburgh Northern teammate Rev. T.C. J. Sinton who was also to lose his life in WW2. He again made the East team in November 1934 and was selected for the Home Scots in the final trial on 2nd March 1935. His first cap came against Ireland in Belfast on 16th March 1935, an upset 3-2 win for the Scots meant the selectors had no difficulty in picking the same team to play England the following week. Dick gained his full set of caps in 1935 by also playing against Wales

In the first game of the 1936 international series Dick lined up in midfield with Sinton and Morrison (Surbiton) in what was regarded a strong team by the Scottish press. Sadly their optimism was misplaced and Wales ran out easy 8-1 winners at Neath.

Evers being one of the few players noted to have played well. Dick was again ever present in the 1936 Scotland side. Dick's final game for Scotland was at Belfast on 20th March 1937 when the home side ran out comfortable 5-0 winners and Triple Crown Champions.

Dick joined up in 1941, initially he trained as a signaller with the Royal Artillery, reaching the rank of Bombardier. He gained a commission in the Royal Armoured Corp and joined the 1st Derbyshire Yeomanry in North Africa. The Yeomanry were a reconnaissance regiment for the 6th Armoured Division, equipped with armoured cars. Dick was killed by a mine on 14th March 1943 and is buried at Medjez-el-Bab War Cemetery, Tunisia.

From Corpus Christi Pelican Record Vol. XXVI, No. 3:

"Memories of Dick Evers will always be memories of a charm and a vivacity which made his company a never-failing delight; memories of a modesty which belittled remarkable gifts; memories of entertainment on instruments as different as the oboe and the ukulele, of cheerful cricket tours made successful by his enjoyment of them, of a ready sympathy to which no-one appealed in vain."

From "The Fettesian", school magazine, in the July 1943 edition:

"What shall we remember of Dick? Will it be the seemingly effortless brilliance of his Hockey— or the easy polish of his Classical teaching which enticed rather than forced a form into hard work— or the horrid guile of his guileless-looking bowling at nets? Or will it be, perhaps, those slighter, yet even more memorable, traits— his skill on instruments as diverse as the oboe and the banjolele— his pride in his one 'piano-piece' 'The Merry Peasant'— his infectious enjoyment in reading or quoting Damon Runyon— or even, perhaps, his unvarying Sunday-afternoon retirement with a book and two Mars-bars? It will, I suppose, be none of these things by itself that we shall remember; it will be that compound of all these and much more which made up the Dick Evers whom we loved. For he was a man of so wide a sympathy, so deep a sincerity, that 'loved' is no whit too strong a word."

Acknowledgements:

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Sources:

British Newspaper Archive

Ancestry

Scottish Hockey Records

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Meteor, Old Rugieans

The Pelican, Corpus Christi, Oxford University

The Fettesian, July 1943