

From "The Citizen" Saturday 12 January 1935:

H. BOUGHTON'S SELECTION FOR ENGLAND

BIG SURPRISE FOR LONDON CRITICS, BUT HONOUR WELL MERITED

CONSISTENT CLUB FORM GAINS RECOGNITION

BOUGHTON NO STRANGER TO TWICKENHAM

REMARKABLE GOAL-KICKING RECORD

FROM "W.B.'S" NOTEBOOK

HAROLD BOUGHTON'S selection for England against Wales, at Twickenham next Saturday, came as no surprise to London Press critics, but the failure of the three players tried out in the final Trial paved the way for the entry of the Gloucester full-back into International football. It is a distinction thoroughly merited.

The honour paid Boughton is rather belated. He has been in the front rank of custodians for the past five years, but always just failed to gain the coveted recognition. Now he has secured the favour of the selectors without being called upon to appear in the Trials – a significant appreciation of his ability.

Boughton's consistent form for the past six weeks has won general commendation, and if he plays up to club standard England will be well served at Twickenham. He has the big match temperament, and some of his best performances for Gloucester and the county have been given at the Rugby Union headquarters.

One notable instance was in the semi-final for the County Championship against Middlesex, when he gave a splendid all-round display and won the match for Gloucestershire by kicking three penalty goals.

In the matter of goal-kicking, few Rugby Union players can boast of a better record than that possessed by Boughton. As a boy he was regarded as a phenomenal kick, and when with Archdeacon, the school team recorded some prodigious scores. Honours came the way of Boughton early in his career, and he captained the England boys in one of the few victories gained over the Welsh boys.

In Senior Football At 16

When only 16 years of age, Boughton, then a hefty youth, appeared for the Gloucester A team, and before the season (1926-7) was over, he made his debut in senior football. And his first match was a testing one – against Llanelly, at Stradey Park. But the youngster showed his mettle. Gloucester, as usual, were defeated, but Boughton gave a fine display, and earned full marks from sound Welsh judges.

From that moment Boughton was definitely marked for promotion, and the following season (1927-8) he took over the duties at Full-back for Gloucester, a position he has held ever since, with credit to himself and the club.

Early Honours

Honours duly followed. He gained his county cap for Gloucestershire in his first regular season for the city – one of the youngest players to gain the distinction – and he subsequently appeared in three County Championship finals – v. Lancashire, at Blundellsands; v. Warwick, at Gloucester; and v. East Midlands at Northampton, besides playing in England trials.

Some critics, I notice, have referred to Boughton as a “veteran.” The actual date of his birth is September 10, 1910, not much of a veteran at 24 years of age! Boughton has certainly played a lot of football in his career, but to-day I rank him in the first flight of full-backs in club football for soundness, reliability, and length and judgement in kicking either foot. A certain slowness in movement is one of his failings, but wonderful anticipation and positioning make up a good deal for this deficiency. Under pressure, perhaps, Boughton is seen at his best, and his performance against the Cornish forwards, at Camborne recently, on a terrible playing pitch, was outstanding.

Tom Voyce’s [word illegible]

It was at the request of Mr. Tom Voyce that one of the England “Big Five” visited Kingsholm three weeks ago to watch Boughton, and although no information was sought after the Northampton match as to the selector’s views, it was generally agreed the Gloucester man had made a good impression. The fact that Boughton was not included in the final trial did not mean that he was out of the running, and with Gerrard, Ronald and Barr failing to give satisfaction last week, the way was open for Boughton’s inclusion. And I feel pretty certain he will justify his selection.

Remarkable Record

I have referred to the value of Boughton as a goal-kicker. His record of successes for Gloucester is more remarkable than I had imagined. Including his goal kicks for Gloucester A in 1926-7, he has to-date scored an aggregate of 786 points, made up of 284 conversions, 66 penalty goals, and five dropped goals! Here is a table giving Boughton’s record of goals for each season.

	Con.	Pen.	Drop.	Pts.
1926-7 (Glo'ster A)	19	1		41
1927-8	38	6		94
1928-9	42	15	1	133
1929-30	44	11		121
1930-1	18	5	2	59
1931-2	23	9		73
1932-3	26	4		64
1933-4	39	8	2	110
1934-5	35	7		91
	284	66	5	786

Eight New Caps

[comments on the other new caps]

The Teams

England

BACK: H. Boughton (Gloucester)

THREE-QUARTERS: L. A. Booth (Headingley), P. Cranmer (Oxford University), J. Heaton (Liverpool University) and R. Leyland (Waterloo).

HALF-BACKS: P. L. Candler (Cambridge University) and J. L. Giles (Coventry).

FORWARDS: R. J. Longland (Northampton), E. S. Nicholson (Oxford University), D. A. Kendrew (The Army and Leicester), J. Dicks (Northampton), A. Clarke (Coventry), W. H. Weston (Northampton), D. T. Kemp (Blackheath) and A. N. Other.

Wales

BACK: V. G. Jenkins (Bridgend)

THREE-QUARTERS: B. G. V. Cowey (Newport and Army), Claude Davey (Swansea and Sale), captain, W. Wooller (Cambridge University), A. Bassett (Aberavon)

HALF-BACKS: A. N. Other (inside half), Cliff Jones (Cambridge University)

FORWARDS: Edgar Jones (Llanelly), H. Truman (Llanelly), T. Day (Swansea), D. Thomas (Swansea), A. Skym (Cardiff), J. Lang (Llanelly), A. M. Rees (London Welsh and Cambridge University), C. Murphy (Cross Keys)

Appreciation of Boughton

“T.L.J.” (“Birmingham Post”), one of the few critics who advocated Boughton’s claims as full-back for England, had the following appreciation of the Gloucester player in his notes this week:-

Boughton, one suspects, is a player who became forgotten. It is true that he has received an international trial, but that was a long time ago, and most followers of the game, even in the West, must have arrived at the conclusion that his chance had come and gone. It was Boughton's misfortune to come into prominence at about the same time as T. W. Brown, of Bristol, and, as everyone knows, Brown got the preference of the selectors.

It is unlikely that Boughton will let England down. He is a full-back of considerable experience by this time, and it will be in his favour, when making his international debut, that he is thoroughly accustomed to facing Welsh forwards. There is nothing spectacular about Boughton's style. Neatness and accuracy are his watchwords, and his sense of position is so well developed that he never appears flurried. His play has no ragged ends, for his instinct for tidiness borders on the fastidious. Boughton will not thrill the crowd like Owen-Smith nor compel their admiration in the manner of Brown, but he will be on the spot all right.

[Other comments on the selection of Boughton:]

"Nobody, so far as I can gather, was prepared for the selection of Boughton as full-back for England. Six players have been tried in the trials, Kinnersley, Baillon, Parker, Ronald, Gerrard and Barr, and the first-named was, to my mind, the best of the lot, and should have been given his cap."

"Boughton, who gets in without even being tried, is a very fine full-back, and probably has no equal as a touch-finder and goal-kicker. He is very adroit in the art of positioning, and his experience of three county championship finals for Gloucestershire should serve him in the more important occasion of an international game." - "Astral" - "News Chronicle."