



Dave Gallaher: The Original All Black Captain

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A brilliant rugby player and a war veteran, Dave Gallaher symbolizes the two elements on which New Zealand formed its identity: our wartime triumphs and disasters, and our peacetime success on the football field. Dave Gallaher was an Irish immigrant who became one of the most famous people in his adopted land, a man whose skills and character were crucial in shaping rugby and our national team. Gallaher captained the 1905 All Blacks team - the first New Zealand national rugby team to tour the United Kingdom and North America. It is still considered the most important tour undertaken by the All Blacks, with only one game controversially lost out of 35 played. Historians point to Gallaher as the template for All Black captains: tough, uncompromising, letting his deeds on the field do his talking, never asking anyone to do a job he wouldn't do himself, and having an astute mind for the way the game is played. But Gallaher was much more than a brilliant rugby player. Like many of his teammates, he served in the First World War. this was an age when a sense of loyalty to the Empire meant men chose to serve on battlefields 12,000 miles from home. He lied about his age to volunteer for more war service at the age of 43. this is the story of Dave Gallaher's peacetime success on the football field and his wartime service in the New Zealand army. His influence and inspiration live on in the contests named in his honour.



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