



Knighton-born **Ron Powell** joined Manchester City from his home-town club, signing professional forms in November, 1948. As a youngster at Maine Road, Ron waited patiently for his chance, turning in consistently good performances in the reserves and showing well on his occasional first-team outing. One can only imagine his frustration, then, upon seeing Frank Swift call it a day, only to find

Fleetwood's Bert Trautmann signed and plonked straight in, ahead of him.

Like many City players who could not quite call a first-team place his own, Ron found his way to Saltergate in the summer of '52 and, at first sight, it is somewhat difficult to understand Chesterfield's reputation for producing goalies, considering that the club only had this one for much of the next thirteen years. Powell played in the first ten games of '52-3, then missed two before returning on October 4th., 1952. From that point, he remained a fixture in the first team until being displaced by Gordon Banks (no shame in that!) on November 29th., 1958. In that run, Ron clocked up 284 consecutive League appearances and 301 consecutive appearances in all competitions. Scandalously, he was overlooked by his national side at all levels.

In 1960-1, competition arrived in the shape of John Osborne, and these two jostled for the first-team goalie's spot for the next five years. The battle was still going on when Ron was injured in the 1964 car crash that claimed the life of Ralph Hunt: Ron's leg was broken in two places and, although he stayed until the summer of '66 and fought for eighteen months to regain full fitness, he was forced to retire, never having regained his place after the crash.

After retirement, Ron ran a local newsagent's and grocery before returning to Lancashire to work for I.C.I. Ron passed away in May 1992, aged 62 in Rossall. His son Richard played for Blackpool.

**For Chesterfield:** 471 Football League appearances; 111 clean sheets, 733 conceded.

**Career:** 483 Football League appearances.