



**Colin J. Abbott
Debra A. Abbott**

In Safe Hands

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"It's fair to say that Nigel was held in very high esteem by the fans and many from my generation would say that Nigel Sims remains to this day one of Aston Villa's most prominent post war goalkeepers"

Sir Doug Ellis
President Emeritus

IN SAFE HANDS recalls Nigel Sims' vivid football memories. From his start at Coton Swifts as a youngster, then at Stapenhill Football Club before signing professional terms with Wolverhampton Wanderers in 1948. Nigel stayed at the Wolves for eight years making 39 appearances as understudy to Bert Williams. However his next move was the one that defined his career. In March 1956 Eric Houghton – himself an ex-legend – signed Nigel for the Villa.

He was an immediate success winning the FA Cup in the following season. Nigel stayed at Aston Villa until the end of 1963/64 season making 310 appearances picking up a Second Division championship and inaugural League Cup winners' medals amongst his many successes while at Villa Park.

In the summer of 1964 he played for Toronto City in the Eastern Canadian Professional Soccer League, under manager Malcolm Allison, before returning to Peterborough United for a short spell between September and December 1964. Nigel then emigrated to Canada a few years later playing for Toronto Falcons and then Toronto Italia.



In Safe Hands

COLIN ABBOTT watched his first Aston Villa game in 1972. A fourth-generation Villa fan who could recite the Villa '57 Cup Final team at four-years-old, he named his son after his hero Ray Graydon (he added Daley to it – after Tony Daley) Graydon Daley Abbott.

Colin's wife Debra has the writing skills and know-how after being an active member of the Shropshire-based Wrekin Writers and her ability helped to put all of the facts, figures and interesting tales Colin had stored away since his childhood into an enjoyable read.

This is their first book and is a fitting tribute to the great Nigel Sims.



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NIGEL SIMS'
FOOTBALL MEMORIES



Nigel Sims' Football Memories

Foreword by
Charlie Aitken

