

# Nineteenth Century Notes



Newsletter of the Nineteenth Century Committee, SABR  
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2005:1  
Editor, Paul Wendt

## SABR35

It must be summer now, for SABR will convene this week in Toronto, chiefly on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The 19th Century Committee will meet in prime time, Saturday morning at 10:00, after almost everyone has arrived and before almost anyone has departed. Let me take this opportunity to promise a substantial open session and to say that I mean to welcome interaction on all points. Transacting business is not an important function of a research committee meeting. Giving nonmembers a flavor of what the 19c Cmte is or hopes to be should not be an important function for us now. Nor should the Chair spend time describing projects that are inactive or whose active participants are absent (read this newsletter for that).

More than fifty of our 358 members had registered before last weekend. Fifty is not unusually low, but the number of conventioners whom I know for their official roles, their 19cBB activity, their contributions to this newsletter, or their other publications is unusually low. No problem. I have met dozens of people this year by gleaning their names from the SABR directory based on their listed interests, and writing to them; or because they have contacted me. I have added most of them to the rolls, and a newsletter or three has at least crossed their virtual desks. I hope in Toronto to meet some of them directly, and to meet many others for the first time. When not at a presentation or committee meeting, I can often be found in a public area set aside for poster presentations or libations.

Conferring with people whom I already know is important, too. Don't depend on email unless we must; leave that to people who are not convening. Anyone: if you would like to confer for a long time, ask me about the baseball game or Sunday morning, or simply tell me and we will try to make a date. I am easy to recognize: too tall, with greying brown curly hair and wire-rim glasses, carrying papers.

## ORIGINS COMMITTEE

The Baseball in UK/Europe Committee has been renamed the Origins Committee. It is scheduled to meet in Toronto on Friday morning at 10:00. David Block, the author of *Baseball Before We Knew It: A search for the roots of the game* (2005) will present some of his recent findings during the hour.

For some background on the name change, see "Origins" in *19c Notes* (2004.1, 12). See the "History" and "Examiner" sections of the SABRUK website (<http://www.sabruk.org/>). In the 1990s, *The Examiner* published several articles on early baseball and on vestiges of its evolution in Britain.

Vice Chair Michael Olenick ([michael.olenick@tesco.net](mailto:michael.olenick@tesco.net)) recently moved from London to New York. We met at the NYC Chapter meeting the day after he sent the official notice whose first half is printed here. The second half concerned transitional administration of UK Chapter and Origins Cmte memberships.

### ORIGINS COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENT - 3/11/2005

This is an announcement to all members of the "Baseball in UK/Europe" committee. With the approval of John Zajc, Andy McCue, and the officers of the committee, we have decided to change the name of the committee to "Origins".

This change has been discussed for a few years and will hopefully serve two purposes:

1) To better distinguish the committee from the Bobby Thomson Chapter. The Bobby Thomson Chapter is the UK regional chapter of SABR. The Origins Committee is open to all members of SABR no matter where they live.

2) To make it clear that the focus of the committee is the search for baseball's origins wherever they may be found.

This number of *19c Notes* focuses on SABR's last Annual Convention, on the official 19c Cmte projects, and on research projects organized elsewhere in which it continues number 2004.1. Reading this number will improve your SABR35 experience or your participation in discussion of what the 19c Cmte should undertake. If you are new to baseball research and keenly interested, or you are a 2005 conventioner oriented to research, I cannot recommend any preparation more strongly than reading this number of *19c Notes*, number 2004.1, and the "Tidbits" and "Resources" sections of number 2004.2.

## THAT WAS BASE BALL THEN

### How Was Base Ball Played, a Very Long Time Ago? – a special session at SABR34, Sunday 18 July 2004

The Nineteenth Century Committee sponsored a special session on Sunday morning at the 34th SABR Convention in Cincinnati. Thanks to Paul Herbert of the local organizing committee, who read enough fascinating 19cBB email traffic to judge that we would provide good material for the general convention audience, and recruited us to do so. He asked me to provide plenty of time for discussion and I asked each of the four panelists to focus on concrete illustration, perhaps one illustration. With a fifth blind man we would have had a description of the elephant, eh?

Paul Wendt, the 19c Cmte Chair and session moderator, introduced the expert panelists Harry Higham, Tom Shieber, David Nemeč, and Bob Schaefer. Each conveyed a glimpse of base ball in the 19th century.

Harry Higham is an esteemed vintage base ball umpire who travels with the New York Mutuals (and a lawyer). He works games of many different 19c vintages but focused on the 1850s and 1860s as a panelist.

Higham opened by pronouncing that "the most important official in base ball is the scorekeeper" because without him no one would know what happened the day before. When the New York Knickerbockers played, "the scorekeeper had a table on the left side between home and third base, and not only took care of the tallies and the outs, but also kept track of who was up next, which was very, very important."

"North of the scorekeeper sat the team representatives to discuss any problem that came up regarding the rules. If they agreed, great. If not, the arbiter, who stood on the right hand side in top hat, tail coat, and sometimes sideburns" was there to consult and finally to decide. (Baseball's single "umpire" is descended from that arbiter, called umpire hereafter.)

The umpire was not allowed on the field but paraded back and forth in foul territory. He moved, ultimately to a regular position behind the plate, in order to be closer to the action as the action moved to the plate. A crucial early point was the realization by players that the pitcher *could* get people out. The contest between batter and pitcher sharpened and the shifting advantage of each was governed by new rules on called balls and strikes.

"The balls and strikes were put in" to keep the game moving, to prevent the striker waiting while the pitcher worked his arm off or the pitcher hurling bad balls that the striker could not hit. Because he must determine whether the pitch was hittable, the umpire moved closer, soon behind the catcher, who had no protective equipment and still stood far behind home plate. "That was a pitch that could be hit," he could tell the batter. "If you don't try to hit the next one like that, I will call it a strike." To the pitcher, he could caution, "If you don't give the striker something to hit, I will call the next pitch a ball." The warnings were eliminated in counting balls and strikes as the numbers of called balls and strikes for a base and an out were changed to 9 balls and 3 strikes (finally in 1879?).

Before leagues, teams decided who would officiate. Around 1860, many bestowed the honor on the mayor, the pastor, or another local dignitary. Players began to realize that it was best to have a man who knew the rules well; since players knew the rules better than most, they were sometimes used as umpires. By the 1870s, NA teams commonly agreed in advance; they scheduled an umpire as part of scheduling a game. Umpires were heckled and demeanor mattered. Both onlookers and participants tried to determine IF the umpire knew the rules, and IF he believed he had made a mistake.

Higham has two "rules" that he follows whenever he works the vintage game: never take your eye off the ball and never call a play until it is over.

Tom Shieber is a curator at the Hall of Fame. More than a decade ago, he founded SABR's Pictorial History Cmte and earned renown for his award-winning work on the history of the pitching mound. On this occasion, he traced the development of the base ball "diamond" that he prefers to call a square because a diamond has two acute angles.

"Why was there a path between the pitcher and the catcher?" Modern ballparks in Detroit and Phoenix have a path for nostalgia. There are some bad explanations of the old feature. . . . The path in 19c baseball was probably derived

from fields shared by cricket and baseball, both of which were called "national pastimes."

A cricket field requires a prepared "wicket" at its center, a rectangle 66 feet long. "Wickets" in another sense (targets for the bowlers, defended by the batsmen) are placed at both ends, which are used alternately. The ball must bounce before it reaches the batsman who defends the wicket and the preparation of the pitch provides a good bounce.

A cricket field was convenient for baseball in the 1840s and 1850s, not only in general—a large open space—but specifically for laying out the diamond on the pitch. With the baseball pitcher working from a fixed end of the wicket and the catcher at the other end, the 45 foot distance to home plate and the batter (standardized in the mid-1850s) leaves the catcher about 20 feet behind the plate, in a good position to field the pitch barehanded, on the bounce.

Shieber used an easel to show the overlapping wicket and diamond of his story. Almost one-third of the wicket extends beyond home plate into baseball's foul territory, and that is crucial to the story. At the same time, almost *two-thirds* of the distance from home to second base lies beyond the end of the wicket. In that direction, baseball's field of play extends forever, but it is practically, severely limited in the other three directions by the foul territory rules. Cricket's field extends about equally in every direction from the pitch, so the marriage was convenient in a few respects only; the younger game used only part of the cricket space and required new space of its own. With the introduction of seating or shelter in baseball's foul territory near the field of play, the games became incompatible.

Shieber read from a primary source, a "document from the Excelsiors' Tour of New York State in July 1860." The Hudson River Club in Newburgh, New York, was the opponent. "It is requisite that the turf be removed from the pitcher's base to the position occupied by the catcher, a space six feet wide or more being usually cleared for the purpose in order to give the ball a fair opportunity to rebound behind the striker."

Therefore, the area carefully prepared to provide a true bounce in front of one wicket and its keeper at cricket (as required by the rules) also provides a true bounce behind home plate but well in front of the catcher at baseball (as required for adequate barehanded fielding of fast pitching).

As protective equipment for the catcher (glove and mask) was adopted in the 1860s and 1870s, the catcher was able to move up and the prepared path became less important. Ultimately the catcher took a regular position close behind the plate. The question is, "Why do we still have a path?" in the late 19th century? Somehow, it quickly became a standard adornment.

David Nemeč is the author of *The Rules of Baseball: An Anecdotal Look at the Rules of Baseball and How They Came To Be*. (He wears many hats including two as trivia "guru" and Great Encyclopedist.) *The Rules of Baseball* mimics the modern rulebook in structure but it is "anecdotal" in illustrating the selected rules by incidents of play, including some that evaded a rule and motivated a rule change.

Nemeč discussed the 1893 rules changes. By the end of 1892, only a few years after some very good times, the twelve surviving major league teams were not hitting or scoring much and not drawing many fans. The owners felt it necessary to change the rules for the immediate purpose of generating more runs. In the event, they increased the pitching distance by five feet but a great variety of changes were advocated.

Venerable player Cap Anson favored the abolition of bunting; Danny Richardson and Sam Thompson agreed. (Did they believe that bunting costs more runs than it gains?) Someone suggested that the batter be safe on a foul ball, even

if caught on the fly. Tim Murname advocated eliminating gloves for outfielders. Dean of writers Henry Chadwick recommended adding three feet between bases, 93 feet in place of 90, to spread the infielders and let more hits through. Davis Howley, the Cleveland owner, wanted to add a second foul line—a foul line three feet outside the baselines, the most direct method of adding hits. Ben Armstrong alone wrote from the perspective of the pitcher, "who would have to learn his art all over again" (Nemec). He observed that some pitchers might be ruined.

The owners discussed rules at the November meeting in Chicago, including flat v. round bats and credit for sacrifices. They managed to recommend outlawing the half-balk move and indicated that a change in the pitching distance was likely. Outsiders were skeptical, and generally disliked the suggestion, too. But the Rules Committee led by Charles Byrne, Brooklyn owner, pushed the distance successfully. In March the pitching distance was increased to 60 feet, 6 inches from the front edge of a new pitcher's plate "even with the surface" to the intersection of the baselines at home.

Hitting and scoring did increase in 1893, mainly because more batters were putting the ball in play. Three qualifying pitchers in 1892 achieved strikeout-walk ratios greater than 1.50, led by Bill Hutchison at 1.64. In 1893 Kid Nichols led with 0.99, not quite one strikeout for each walk, and Hutchison skidded to 0.51. Almost half of the qualifying pitchers in 1893 finished with strikeout-walk ratios below the minimum ratio for any pitcher in 1892.

Nemec closed with the question, "Why did hitting increase even more in 1894?"

Bob Schaefer is an expert on the history of baseball equipment, which he studies from objects, advertisements, and patent documents. (He is also thrice winner of the McFarland-SABR Award, one of the annual "best article" awards.) Today he focused on the design and construction of the baseball.

"Where is the ball" in 1845? Not for sale at a sporting goods store; the few stores specialize in cricket. One of the players must make the ball himself! The homemade ball was essentially a small piece of stone, lead, or cork wrapped in yarn. During the 1830s and 1840s, saddle-, harness-, and shoemakers were skilled workers with hide; sail makers were also skilled with needle and thread. One of these specialists was used at the last stage of ball production, the cover: cutting the hide and sewing it around the filling.

Increased demand made factory production pay. The first factory for the manufacture of baseballs opened in Natick, Massachusetts, in 1858, owned and operated by H.H. Harwood & Sons. That plant arranged a detailed division of labor and a production "line" in several rooms. One room for unrolling sheepskin, flattening it with a wooden mallet and a butcher's block, and so on, preparing pieces that would each be half of a cover. In another, 108 holes were punched by hand through each skin with an awl. "We talk about labor-intensive, folks!" In the third room, mainly women sewed the skins partly together with a saddler's needle and thread, leaving the cover partly open for the filling. Workers in a fourth room created the insides by winding yarn around a core, using a wooden mallet to help make it round and compact. The finished base ball met specifications for weight, size, and compactness.

During discussion, Shieber returned to the easel and showed how the 60 foot, 6 inch distance emerged historically. The preceding distance was 50 feet from the front line of the pitcher's box to the center of home plate. By 1887, pitchers were "no longer allowed to . . . do the 'Highland Fling' in the pitcher's box"; the back foot had to be on the back line of the

box. Because the box was then 5-and-one-half feet deep, that line was 55 feet and 6 inches from home. So the 1893 distance measured from home to the new pitcher's plate was an increase of five feet. The effective increase was not a round five feet, however, because the distance was measured from the outer point, not the center, of home base.

Most of the discussion concerned the contest between batter and pitcher. Speedy pitching is intimately related to the umpire's location behind the plate, the catcher's position back from the plate, and the pitcher's distance to the plate. Many believe players understood very early that the pitcher could retire batters in effect, and mainly by speedy pitching. Wendt observed that we should understand three strikes as three tries to hit a fair ball and run to first, with a miss on the third try treated as if it were a fair hit: batter out if caught on the fly, caught on the first bound, or thrown to first base in time.

The assembly agreed that cricket didn't capture the Americans because it required days to play. The new version with a 3-hour limit has a better chance of attracting U.S. fans. Shieber reported that there is a new professional league, started in July, and predicted that it would fail in August.

EDITOR'S NOTE. Evelyn Begley and Paul Wendt prepared this report, relying heavily on the videotape by Begley. The four panelists have consented to the coverage of their presentations that composes most of the article and retains much of the informality of the event. None of the four sections is limited to quotation and paraphrase of the panelists; each includes some editorial material

**Nineteenth Century Notes** is the newsletter of the Nineteenth Century Committee, one of 24 research committees in SABR—the Baseball Research Society. The three preceding numbers are 2003, 2004.1 and 2004.2. They are available in pdf format and in print from the editor and available in two electronic formats on the "19th Century Resources" website.

## In the Projects

The special issue "In the Projects" (2004.1) introduces twenty baseball research projects from a 19c perspective. Many of the articles illustrate the work completed or explain how to contribute. The dual purpose is to improve discussion of what the 19c Cmte should undertake (consider it required if you would like to participate) and to help researchers and ongoing projects find each other (recommended if you seek a group project to work on). For some projects, the researchers need not really "work" or join, as helpful people who are aware can contribute by sending tidbits or referring to sources discovered at leisure.

Only four articles are substantially obsolete one year later. The Biographical Research Cmte has completed compilation of Last Game (page 3), so the biographical database now includes both debut and last game dates for every major league playing career. David Nemec chased down most of the "few dozen players from 1876-1880" who were missing a year ago. The Business of Baseball Cmte has completed the group research on General Managers (8) and co-Chair Gary Gillette is working on the first edition for publication on the web. Front Office History (7) and 19th Century Spring Training (11) never really got started. Neither director remains a SABR member and neither has been replaced.

The Origins project (Baseball in UK/Europe, 12) now defines the renamed Origins Committee (q.v.).

BIOGRAPHICAL DATABASE, Biographical Research Cmte

This is essentially a numerical update (19cN 2004.1, p3). Last year the Biographical Research Cmte replicated its 2003 achievement of finding death data (date and city) for about 7% of the missing players, who number only 322 at year's end, less than 2% of all and 4% of deceased players. Each of those finds involves linking a particular major league career and a particular death, with good evidence. Congratulations!

The Biographical Database is nearly full of knowns, yet there are thousands of unknowns. Here is part of the end-2004 snapshot with a count of net progress during the calendar year, derived from the December reports.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATABASE  
END-2004 STATE AND 2004 ACTIVITY

	KNOWN: 2004 net		MISSING: 2004 net	
	end 2004	change	end 2004	change
Debut Dates	16323	+208	0	0
Names	16268	+209	55	-1
Births	15677	+241	646	-33
Assumed Alive	7859	+111		
Deaths	8142	+123	322	-26
Bats (hand)	15053	+231	1158	-23
Throws (hand)	15277	+215	934	-7
Heights	15376	+226	835	-18
Weights	15338	+228	873	-20

The number of missing debut dates (and last game dates, not in the table) is zero, so 16323 is the end-2004 number of major league players and managers or "players" for short.

The number who debuted during 2004 happens to be 208, but the increase of 208 debut dates reported in the table is the net of 2004 debuts, earlier players who were discovered during the year, and earlier pairs of players who were discovered to be the same person. The project in 2004 discovered two new players, James Lehan debut 1884 and George Winkelman 1883; and discovered that two old ones must be incorporated in another man's record, Edward Dresser 1898 and John Parsons 1884.

In 2003 also, two 19c players were added to the database and two old ones were dropped, with no change in the list of 20th century players.

PLAYER IMAGE INDEX, Pictorial History Cmte

In 2004 more than 10% of the missing players were found and thus added to the Player Image Index (2004.1, 7). Fewer than 900 major leaguers remain with no image known at year's end. Jim Holdsworth leads with 318 games played.

## PICTORIAL MISSING PLAYERS, Leaders in MLB Games

Games	Span	Name (fielding position)
318	1872-84	Holdsworth, Jim "Long Jim" (SS/OF)
250	1875-84	Foley, William B. "Will" (3B)
248	1879-84	Gross, Emil (Catcher)
202	1883-84	McCormick, John "Jerry" (3B)
189	1890-93	Harrington, Jerry (Catcher)
185	1890-91	Mayer, Edward (3B)

The project now emphasizes cataloguing "additional images for those players already represented" by at least one. I asked PHC Chair Bill Hickman ([bdhickmn@aol.com](mailto:bdhickmn@aol.com)) how to judge what is valuable.

The suggestion is to download the Player Image Index and browse its coverage. "We would particularly want additional images [in] cases where the only image catalogued in the Player Image Index is from a rare or expensive baseball card set like Old Judge, Obaks, Zeenuts, or rare team issues like photo packs from the 1940's. These are the kinds of cases where we can tell you that a player's image has been published, but you're not going to have a high probability of finding that item."

What about cases where the only known image is poor quality? For example, quoting the project webpage: "We strive to locate a high quality photo of each player, but sometimes we have to settle for a relatively small photo of him within a group setting." <http://sabr.org/sabr.cfm?a=cms.c.528.5.0>

When I sorted the Index by date of birth ("D.O.B.") and name, I found useful illustrations in the first four entries for 1861 plus the immediately preceding and following entries. Display of the long records is inconvenient. While breaking each one into two full-length lines, I have also abbreviated some fields and deleted a few. But people learn from examples (I hope). This one is tailored to make a little learning possible, with minimal commentary, from an example in a publication with traditional 8.5 x 11 pages.

Alberts and Cross must be two "players already represented" for whom "additional images" are especially welcome, as they are represented only with their teams. Contrast Wilson and Hellman.

## SIX RECORDS IN THE PLAYER IMAGE INDEX, ABBREVIATED

Name of Player	Lahman	POS	D.O.B.	Location	Publication	Issue Date	Page
Wilson, Geo 'Tug'	wilsotu01	OF	1860	NA	Lowell (MA) News (part of a syndic	1890 Sep 20	NA
Alberts, Gus	albergu01	3B/SS	1861	NA	BEER AND WHISKY LEAGUE, by	1994	150
Alberts, Gus	albergu01	3B	1861	M.L.King Lib	Washington Star Photo Collection	NA	NA
Cross, Amos	crossam01	C	1861	NA	GREAT 19th C ENCYCLOPEDIA	1997	814
Cross, Amos	crossam01	C	1861	NA	LEGENDS OF LOUISVILLE, by Ph	1993	56
Hellman, Tony	hellmto01	C	1861	NA	1887 Old Judge (N172)	1887-1890	NA

[ Name ]	Title of Photo	Shot Kind	Color	Uniform worn	Found for this project
[ Wilson ]	NA	Woodcut	B&W	NA	Bob Richardson
[ Alberts ]	Cleveland Ball Club 1888	Team	B&W	Civvies	Bill Hickman
[ Alberts ]	1889 Milwaukee Team Photo	Team	B&W	Milwaukee	Bill Hickman
[ Cross ]	Jim Hart (1), later .....	Team composite	B&W	Civvies	Bill Hickman
[ Cross ]	The 1885 Louisville Team	Team	B&W	Louisville AA	Bill Hickman
[ Hellman ]	NA	Pose	Sepia	Sioux City m.l.	Bill Hickman

### CURRENT BASEBALL PUBLICATIONS, Bibliography Cmte

Last year I suggested that we generate scope notes from a 19c perspective for all baseball books in some categories to be determined and I observed that one candidate format is annotation of *Current Baseball Publications* (2004.1, 6). The update is that each quarterly number of CBP is now published promptly on the web. The archive of annuals, which replace the quarterlies soon after the end of each year, is also available from 1995. <http://sabr.org/sabr.cfm?a=cms,c.274,5,0>

CBP uses this classification of baseball books.

1. Anthologies, Book Reviews, Essays
2. Biographies, Autobiographies, Personal Accounts
3. Adult Fiction and Poetry
4. History, Economics, General Works
5. Hobby
  - A. Card and Memorabilia Collecting
  - B. Rotisserie or Fantasy Leagues
6. Humor and Trivia
7. Instructionals, Fitness, Rules
8. Juvenile Works
  - A. Fiction
  - B. General Works
  - C. Biography
9. Statistics, Reference, Annual Works
10. Newsletters, Magazines, Newspapers
11. Movies, Videos, Computer Software
12. Articles (from non-sport magazines)

### CEMETERY DATA, Biographical Research Cmte

The Biographical Research Cmte now compiles data on cemeteries and other final resting places of major leaguers.

The basic information for each deceased person is the Name, City, and State of his burial cemetery or an alternative such as "Cremated; ashes retained by the family" or "Drowned; body not recovered." More information is welcome, such as the gravesite ("4633 Althaea Path").

Cemetery data has been incorporated in the Biographical Database (2004.1, 3) and in Bill Carle's bimonthly progress reports since SABR34. It is no longer a separate project, but it still warrants an article here. Cemetery is missing for several hundred people whose date and city of death is known, and with that information it is often possible to find the information locally. So there is both an opportunity and a need for researchers who are specialists because they live in the right places. Vice Chair David Vincent ([grandslams@aol.com](mailto:grandslams@aol.com)) will happily provide a list of local or regional deaths with cemetery missing. More than a year ago, I checked the three outstanding deaths in Waltham, Massachusetts, and found the basic cemetery data in the next day's newspaper.

### MILITARY VETERANS, Baseball and the Armed Forces Cmte

Baseball and the Armed Forces is a new research committee. Its charge is broad, "the relationship between professional baseball and the armed forces." That must cover such themes as the effect of war on North American pro baseball and the introduction of baseball abroad by occupying armies.

The first Armed Forces Cmte project is a database of baseball players who are military veterans. The veterans database already extends beyond major league players and US wars, but that remains the core and the focus of most email exchange by the 'SABRVets' egroup. Chair Ron Henry ([auricle99@aol.com](mailto:auricle99@aol.com)) maintains the master copy and he is also the person to contact about joining SABRVets.

Henry reported the nose count to SABRVets, April 13. "Here on my computer I have (MLB only):"

Individuals 1953 [all major leaguers, US wars]  
 Mexican War 1  
 Civil War 38  
 Indian Wars 2  
 Spanish/American War 26  
 Boxer Rebellion 1  
 World War I 368  
 World War II 1359  
 Korean War 75  
 Peacetime 75  
 VietNam 55

The edition published at [sabr.org](http://www.sabr.org/sabr.cfm?a=cms,c.523) is dated 2004-09-17 (<http://www.sabr.org/sabr.cfm?a=cms,c.523>). It is now about 20% smaller than the master and for the four 19th century "wars" I found only 24 people marked as Civil War vets and 10 as Spanish-American vets. The *prominent* players who served in the Civil War are mainly those listed by Rich Puff in our first newsletter under the title *19c Notes* (1991, 1).

Beside wars of service, the vets database covers dates of service, unit, rank, medals, and so on. For the veterans of 19c wars, however, those other fields in the published edition are still all majority empty.

### SABR BASEBALL RECORD BOOK, Baseball Records Cmte

The Baseball Records Cmte is charged with improving major league playing records, both the "mosts" and "leasts" and the comprehensive season statistics. At its 2004 meeting, Chair Lyle Spatz ([spatzl@bellsouth.net](mailto:spatzl@bellsouth.net)) announced the project to produce a SABR Baseball Record Book. Spatz recently wrote to 19cBB, explaining the nature of the "Record Book" and inviting contributions.

*The SABR Baseball Record Book* is really just a working title. It will not be a record book in the sense that the Sporting News and Elias annual publications are record books. Nor will it be meant to compete with them. It will be a book of lists, much like the old Joe Reichler *Great All-Time Record Book*, but, I hope, more accurate. So where TSN and Elias might show the record for Most RBI in a season by a Rookie, we will have a list of every rookie who batted in at least 100 runs.

There will also be lists of things that SABRites and fans in general might wonder about, but would otherwise find difficult to locate. Things like Pitchers winning 20 games in a season they were traded, or the closest batting races, or every player to hit a pinch hit grand slam, or players who won a reverse triple crown (finishing last in their league in each of the triple crown categories). Lists have been coming in from many of SABR's best and brightest: Bill Deane, Dan Levitt, Pete Palmer, and David Vincent to name just a few. I urge anyone out there who has a list not generally available, one that interests them and they keep track of, to consider it for inclusion in the book.

Here is what Spatz would like, in Excel format if possible, including only columns that are relevant to the particular list. (1) the player's name in one column and natural order: Enos Slaughter; (2) the league to be AL, NL, AA, etc.; (3) the team capitalized in two or three letters: NY, SF, CHI, CIN; (4) the date in three separate columns, month (three letters), day, and year (four digits). "Use a comment column where you feel one is needed. I've used it to indicate Game 1 or Game 2, or 11 Innings, and so on."

For more information see the Baseball Records Cmte newsletter, Oct 2004. <http://sabr.org/sabr.cfm?a=cms,c.282,5.0> If you will contribute, yet more guidance is available from Spatz or project director Joe Dittmar ([dittmar5@aol.com](mailto:dittmar5@aol.com)) upon request.

#### BALLPARK PHOTO INDEX, Ballparks & Pictorial History C's

The Ballparks and Pictorial History Cmtees announced a joint project at SABR34, the Ballpark Photo Index. The Player Image Index (q.v.) is an inspiration and a model in many respects, but the new project will catalogue multiple shots of its subjects from the beginning, and the classification of shot types for ballparks must be more complicated than for people. The initial focus is major league parks—where major league championship games have been played since 1871—but the plan is to cover other ballparks, too. A written handout is available (other projectors take note). By the way, both catalogues include drawings and woodcuts in lieu of photos, commonly for 19c subjects.

Discussion at the Ballparks Cmte meeting (and I missed the other) revealed some of the challenges facing director Paul Healey ([paulhealey@yahoo.com](mailto:paulhealey@yahoo.com)) and other project leaders regarding how to organize the data. But a big part of the project must be the discovery and reporting of particular images by ordinary contributors. For example, an early high priority is to identify one image of each ballpark where none at all is presently known. Most of the missing ballparks are from the 19th century, of course, and local newspapers may be good sources.

### SABR34

SABR convened for the 34th time in Cincinnati, 15-18 July 2004. With Covington and Newport across the Ohio River, the Queen City was a baseball hotbed in the 1860s. Read more about that in Harry Ellard, *Baseball in Cincinnati*, 1907/08 and now a McFarland reprint.

#### RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Several research presentations concerned 19c subjects. Although a specific date in the title is not the rule, there were two of 30-odd with "1900" in their titles at Cincinnati. Somehow those two were scheduled at the same time on the parallel schedules for the two presentation rooms.

Title, Author, and usually an Abstract for every partly-19c presentation has been distributed to 19cBB in advance of each convention, 2002 to 2004. That material has been collected on one webpage for each year.

<http://world.std.com/~pgw/19c/abs32.html>

<http://world.std.com/~pgw/19c/abs33.html>

<http://world.std.com/~pgw/19c/abs34.html>

#### RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Annual Convention hosts the society's Annual Business Meeting and also the annual meetings for each of its 24 research committees and the neighboring corporation Retrosheet. Beside our own, covered in the next section, I attended seven that merit coverage here, which is limited to 19th century salients. Several times I must choose between both events on the two-track schedule, or I would have attended the meetings of five more database-building committees: Pictorial History, Bibliography, Scouts, Collegiate, and Armed Forces. For each of those but Armed Forces,

which is new and covered above, its principal data project if not others is featured "In the Projects" (*19c Notes* 2004.1).

Music & Poetry met in the opening time slot and approved the Early Baseball Music project, to be directed by Jeff Sackmann in consultation with Jeff Campbell, the M&P Chair, and John Thorn; and to be co-sponsored by us. We did approve the project in our meeting that afternoon.

Business of Baseball faced the loss its founder, chair, and principal worker Doug Pappas, deceased in May. (Pappas was also SABR's pro bono legal advisor, its parliamentarian, and the chair of its successful 2002-2003 Constitution and By-Laws Committee.) Andy McCue and John Zajc updated the assembly concerning succession and transition and McCue led the remainder of the meeting in lieu of a Vice Chair.

Joel Dinda and I each made two suggestions or pleas concerning the nascent project of digitizing baseball documents. Pappas personally transcribed a few documents from contemporary publications and posted simple digital editions on his website. The two earliest among them were the original Constitution of the National League (1876) and the Cincinnati Peace Agreement between the NL and AL (1903). Between us, Dinda and I called for help in setting priorities for further digitization and suggested some classes of documents that tend to be but should not be overlooked. Those may be called micro-documents. Examples are the contract cards filed by the National Baseball Library and particular contracts between a player and club (eg, for employment) or between two clubs (eg, for player purchase and sale).

Spring Training met early Saturday morning. The STC had an official "19c Spring Training" project but director Mike McCardel was not present and there was no report. (The project never really got started.)

Biographical Research followed. Chair Bill Carle called for comment on how place names should be handled. Many places have multiple names including one that was official when a baseball personage was born or died there and another that is official today. Beside simple name changes, incorporation provides a class of examples: once a town, now a neighborhood. Some places no longer exist and hence do not appear in modern references under any name. All this pertains not only to cities and towns but also to states and territories, not to mention sovereign countries. (See also the profile of Fred Lenger in *SABR Bulletin* 34.1. Lenger locates birth and death "cities" that are known by name.)

By the way, many birth dates have been revised with the help of resources that are newly available in the last year or two by internet. One is the birthday of Jack Glasscock, West Virginia's greatest player—no, make that Virginia's.

Baseball Records convened next. Steve Gietschier of *Sporting News* updated the assembly on the annual TSN Record Book, which nearly expired. Chair Lyle Spatz sketched the prospective *SABR Baseball Record Book* (q.v.). It will feature some lists of all-time leaders and some other lists judged to be interesting on a case by case basis.

Retrosheet at each SABR Convention holds the annual meeting that satisfies its obligation as a legal corporation. The Board does a marvelous job of completing that in half an hour, leaving half for the baseball research business that characterizes the SABR research committee meetings. President Dave Smith announced that daily logs covering many major league seasons will soon be delivered to Retro

headquarters from the Hall of Fame. Some are official dailies; others were prepared by ICI in 1968-1969 for the *Baseball Encyclopedia* project.

Early on Sunday morning, the Ballparks Cmte chaired by Bob Bluthardt covered a remarkable number of topics in a short hour—before departure of the Old Ballparks Tour that visited pre-1970s sites such as the Union Grounds. Director Paul Healey introduced the new Ballparks Photo Index (q.v.), a joint effort with the Pictorial History Cmte. The 19th Century Ballparks project (covering also the 20th century before concrete and steel) undertaken in the 1990s did not bear fruit. About a dozen essays on particular ballparks were submitted and some are available from Bluthardt for some purposes. Philip Lowry has completed most of the research for a revised edition of *Green Cathedrals* with intensive scope similar to the SABR first edition, greater than the Addison-Wesley editions. Some proofing by other experts is needed. Among new project ideas, Bluthardt urged one that concerns the 19th century: authoritative identification of the oldest surviving ballpark and oldest surviving parts of ballparks by various criteria --the Oldest Ballpark project, for short.

Much of each SABR Convention is videotaped by members led by Evelyn Begley. Coverage is not complete, for resources are limited, most crucially human resources. Convention videotapes will eventually be available from the SABR Research Library.

This year I was able to "attend" the entire Minor League Cmte meeting afterward, on tape. I appreciated the opportunity. Minor Leagues should be one of our closest cousins. It is especially Minor League and Biographical Research projects that merit considering whether to replicate them with different scope, such as pre-1871 and independent professional clubs, or club owners and executives.

#### VINTAGE BASE BALL by SHUTTLE BUS

Saturday late afternoon and evening, a bus shuttled to and from the Heritage Village Museum, Sharon Woods, which includes the home field of vintage base ball's Cincinnati Base Ball Club, the Red Stockings. (The 1869 club played home games in the city at Union Grounds.)

At Sharon Woods, dozens of SABRen and dozens of others, too, were treated to a doubleheader on an ungrouted lawn bounded by a picket fence outside the thirdbase line and by a line of trees outside rightfield. It would have been entirely inadequate for cricket and the catcher missed several balls because of bad bounces. The Atlantic Base Ball Club of Brooklyn played two matches, one against the local Red Stockings and another by 1860 rules against the Ohio Village Muffins from near Columbus. Greg Rhodes, a Cincinnati BBC founder and former player, worked the sidelines as umpire with top hat, tails and stentorian voice.

Larry Phillips of SABR and the CBBC organized the event, given the Atlantic tour, by arranging the shuttle bus and the second match. We spoke en route, where I learned about his club and its perspective on Vintage Base Ball. (Nobody does it like Cincinnati.) During the day, Phillips assists Rhodes in curating the Cincinnati Reds Museum, which was not yet open in July. Rhodes is also the author of several books on the Cincinnati Reds, 1867 to date. *Redleg Journal* by Rhodes and John Snyder won a 2002 Sporting News-SABR Award.

The shuttle bus made this distant event part of the SABR Convention. It departed the hotel every hour 4:30 to 8:30 and departed Sharon Woods every hour 5:00 to 9:00. Despite the dinner hours and numerous events on the program at the

hotel, many people including me were induced to take in some of the country program, who would never have departed the main site for all five hours or even three. The shuttle bus may be worth repeating at another convention for Vintage Base Ball or for something else.

#### "THE PERFECT SEASON" – a PERFORMANCE

Bob Kreidler of Akron, Ohio, plays Charles Harvey Gould of the original Red Stockings for a variety of local and regional audiences. On Saturday night, he performed a version of "The Perfect Season" for SABR conventioners. Dressed in full gear as the player he was portraying, accompanied occasionally by recorded music, he marched in, voiced an opening "Huzzah!", sang the team song, and then engaged us for more than an hour in a dialogue about the game he played and the game we know, mixed with some demonstration. His reactions of dismay, shock, and wonder both entertained and encouraged us. At the same time, he referred with a natural ease to cricket and other games in the baseball family.

Kreidler's Charlie Gould is an older man who speaks of his game and his career in the past tense, but he wears his original uniform well. He recognizes that his audience is from yet another time, neither his youth nor his present. Charlie presents much of his biography directly but presents the game of his youth mainly by playing off the audience's description of its own game. No doubt, his "game" thereby includes more or less of the baseball business and the fan experience depending on the audience.

For example, Charlie and his audience covered television and Questec, an electronic measure of the strike zone (SABRen!); the World Series, night games, numbered uniforms, the players union, artificial turf, and three hours; and how we sing at the ballpark. We learned something about the old business and old experience by contrast. We also brought out many features of his game more narrowly defined, such as Asa Brainard pitching underhand with arm locked from 45 feet, catching without protection and fielding without a glove (Gould played first base), determining who takes the field and who bats, and completing a game with one ball.

Charlie spoke of Cincinnati, where he grew up, called "Porkopolis. It was bigger than Chicago!" "Hippodroming was a fact of life. We were paid by the game, so in a 3-game series, it was convenient to lose Game One. We got paid but not openly. \$500 was a lot of money in an era when beer was five cents, and a day laborer made \$1.75 per day" in a six-day workweek. Charlie talked about his time in Cincinnati with Harry Wright and the original Red Stockings, and in Boston, again with "the great Harry Wright." They did a lot of traveling. "My most vivid memories were in Troy. The gamblers were crawling all over the park and the players, and the fellows from Troy were NOT gentlemen." It was often hard to find a level place and some games were played at an oval prepared for horses or pedestrians. Brooklyn was crazy about base ball, and even played it on the ice at Union Grounds. "The Union Grounds were the first to enclose the park with a fence so that people could not get away with not paying, if they wanted to see the game."

Charlie closed by recounting, "I was through at 30. I was a policeman, clerk, streetcar driver, store manager, sold insurance, moved to Flushing" (on Long Island, now in New York City, where he died). Kreidler was heartily applauded and he exited with a song, many of us joining in, off-key and on.

Notes.

This article is based on an account by Evelyn Begley that includes all of the quotations and much of the other material, a

draft prepared after the convention for possible publication by SABR in the *Bulletin* or on the web. Begley videotaped the event and I also viewed the videotape.

The Cincinnati Base Ball Club fielded a strong Western team under Harry Wright's management in 1867. Charlie Gould played for the Buckeyes, who lost all four matches with their biggest rivals but defeated other local foes and some regional ones. Next year he played for Cincinnati. Both clubs had imported new talent, mainly from the East, about ten players including three each who would be Reds in '69. They were compensated only covertly; pay for play was against Association rules. After the liberalization, all ten Red Stockings were paid salaries in 1869 and Gould played for a salary thereafter.

"The Perfect Season" was not an official event, not included in the printed Convention Program. It was scheduled opposite a penultimate Trivia contest and promoted with placards and an announcement at the 19c Cmte meeting, with the good will of the local organizers. At most times during a convention, SABR owns meeting space that is not in use. Its unofficial but prepared use for small working groups as well as fun events like "The Perfect Season" should be repeated.

#### 19th CENTURY SPECIAL SESSION

On Sunday morning we sponsored a one-hour special session for the general convention audience, invited by the local committee. "How Was Base Ball Played, A Very Long Time Ago?" featured panelists Harry Higham, Tom Shieber, David Nemecek, and Bob Schaefer. See the page one story.

## Annual Meeting

The Nineteenth Century Committee met on Thursday afternoon at 4:30, Paul Wendt presiding. (That's I.) About one hundred people were present for at least part of the hour. Severe logistical problems cost about twenty minutes at the start but the next meeting graciously yielded ten minutes at the end. Thanks to Tom Simon and the Deadball Era Committee.

I announced that a special issue of the newsletter called "In the Projects" (19cN 2004.1) was available on the website, which was not available during the meeting. The complete run of newsletters since 1987 would soon be available in print, about 200 pages at \$15.

Index cards (too few?) were used, in effect, for some in the assembly to describe their 19c baseball interests, some to order the newsletter archive, and some to say how they might help the 19c Cmte. For example, I observed that a Chairman's Advisory Cmte might be useful for consultation on this and that, now and then. I repeated a call issued to 19cBB in the spring for "internet reporter/columnists" who would each regularly cover for newsletter publication one of 19cBB itself, the SABR-L email list, and the web from our perspective. What it to be done about major clubs outside the major leagues, perhaps 1853 to 1870 or to 1883? Pages 4-5 of the handout show what one person once thought should be done. (That is Rich Puff's 1993 introduction to the Pre-1871 Rosters project. It is admirable in its clarity, a model for other projectors.)

Our official projects are covered at length in the next section. There were two before the meeting, American Association History and Early Rules and Practices. The AA History director resigned before the convention; the bulky research notes should be assessed rather than a new director recruited. The Early Rules director is Chip Atkison, who was not present. People interested in the theme must envision the

fruit of that project. I spent perhaps one-third of available time on Early Rules, vainly for itself and hopefully in order to show what it means to envision the fruit of a project.

Jeff Sackmann ([jeff\\_sackmann@hotmail.com](mailto:jeff_sackmann@hotmail.com)) presented Early Baseball Music, a joint project with the Music & Poetry Cmte that had been discussed on 19cBB in the winter and approved by M&P at its meeting that morning. We approved it, too, so it is covered below.

(There may have been a time when SABR research committees formally transacted business at their annual meetings, as the society did. No longer. In this case, Sackmann and others had generally persuaded 19cBB readers, a subset of the email users, that some project on 19c music related to baseball, including production of a CD recording, is feasible and worth doing.)

Al Blumkin ([ablumk2@nyct.com](mailto:ablumk2@nyct.com)) proposed that we give a "best book award" annually, modeled on the Larry Ritter Book Award by the Deadball Era Cmte. Blumkin has been a member of the Ritter Award committee throughout its four years. The main features of the model are (1) books qualify by their publication during the preceding calendar year and their focus on events of the deadball era, 1901-1919; (2) contenders are identified relatively early and Paul Rogers, who chairs the award committee, arranges for its five members to get a complimentary copy of each one; (3) the Deadball Era Cmte raises money to fund the award of a trophy or plaque.

(One person expressed dismay to me privately. One strongly endorsed the idea in a noisy lobby, audibly within the huddle. Blumkin and I discussed it at the New York chapter meeting this winter. Four years ago, he advocated giving Ritter Awards to the best books of the few years recently passed. The DEC rejected that and it no longer appeals to him. At the time we met, he felt that we should begin with a 2006 Award to the best book of 2005.)

It's clear in retrospect that the handout outlines all and illustrates some of what would be covered in a two-hour meeting with 80-minute lecture. I tried to indicate what could not be covered. For example, what components of the newsletter under Fred Ivor-Campbell's editorship (1991-1999) should be resumed? Pages 6-7 list the recurring components and illustrate some of them. The handout also alludes to some bibliographic projects—concerning scope notes, indexes, and reviews, mainly for books—that I had suggested a year earlier on 19cBB and in the 2003 Annual Report (see the website).

A section of the first page gives a simple "general classification" of projects that have been suggested for the 19c Cmte by someone in surveys, in 19cBB traffic, or more "lively." Some of the nine listings are obscure. Here they are lightly revised; indeed, each one now includes a verb!

19c Cmte projects, suggested, general classification  
 narrative history - research & write a book  
 collected profiles - research & write a book  
 (re)score some league-seasons from box scores  
 compile some more particular MLB playing data  
 do something fun, promotional, remunerative  
 develop a database, authoritative in its domain  
 contribute to projects organized elsewhere  
 (as Minor Leagues has done officially)  
 digitize!  
 augment or improve particular published articles

There was time to develop two.

What is fun, promotional, remunerative? SABR and its committees or chapters have sometimes enjoyed surveying themselves regarding retroactive annual awards, centennial celebrities, and so on; some surveys have been conceived as

promotions. The Deadball Era Cmte has raised money to pay for the Ritter Award by producing a t-shirt each year. That is promotional, too, and some who don't buy enjoy the designs (2004: <http://world.std.com/~pgw/Deadball/FedShirts.gif>). Rather than t-shirts, we might produce replica scorecards, defunct club buttons, or whatnot.

Digitize! There is general agreement that some print and manuscript material should be digitized and that we should do some of it, even by laborious methods. What documents should be digitized and how, and how should we set priorities? There was some discussion of this before the convention on the 'businessofbaseball' egroup, Business of Baseball Cmte.

## 19c Cmte Projects

### AMERICAN ASSOCIATION HISTORY

The AA History project was approved at the 1993 meeting, conceived and for two years led by Bob McConnell. A written introduction available from the start (N.B.) explained the project clearly. (It does not make the project seem feasible to me but that is another matter and maybe my idiosyncrasy.)

The central idea was to produce a narrative history in stages, with one volunteer researching each club or city season or year in local newspapers during the first stage and a few people synthesizing their notes and writing a book later.

Just over half of the 85 seasons (for short) were covered by someone during the first several years under McConnell and Bob Bailey; about half of the remainder were covered under Jon Dunkle, who resigned as director in Spring 2004.

At our annual meeting, I indicated all that, proclaimed that the material submitted should be assessed by a few people rather than a single director recruited, and called for volunteer assessors. Several people volunteered at the convention or soon after and I appointed five: David Ball, Cliff Blau, Irv Goldfarb, Jack Little, and Paul Olubas. Ball of Cincinnati covered more seasons than any other contributor of research notes. Blau and Goldfarb of Greater New York are also first stage contributors. Little of Ohio is an original 19c Cmte member; Olubas of Ohio is a brand new one and an experienced writer.

This February I prepared and delivered five photocopies of a selection from the material I had received from Dunkle. The selection may be 10% of the material submitted and it may represent 40% of the material by shared authorship. The researchers retain copyright to their notes except for use by the AA History project.

The AA History research materials might bear other fruit than originally planned, a narrative history of the league from 1881 preparations to 1891/92 merger with the NL. That is crystal clear to me, and I have made the point at the meeting and in writing, but I don't want to push that now. It was perhaps a mistake to charge the assessors albeit informally with more than assessment for the original purpose, completion of a narrative history book.

The AA History project continues. Beside the assessment of research materials, one other need is clear to me. Meeting it will have broad value and everyone may participate. That is, we should **take stock of what has been done** on the American Association.

General baseball histories cover the AA, of course. So do biographies and club histories such as (this one is both) J.Thomas Hetrick, *Chris von der Ahe and the Saint Louis Browns* (1999). Most important is David Nemeč, *The Beer and Whisky League: The Illustrated History of the AA --Baseball's*

*Renegade Major League* (1994). That 260-page book is a narrative history of the league; there was none in 1993. It was reviewed here by Scott Flatow (*19cN* 95.3; the first seven pages of that number compose a special issue on the AA). But we need a different assessment of that work in order to take stock of what has been done for the purpose of advancing. Also, what do we have in David Pietrusza, *Major Leagues* (1991), on the formation, absorption and demise of 18 pro baseball organizations? And what do we have in the various encyclopedias of MLB clubs or teams?

### EARLY RULES AND PRACTICES

The Early Rules and Practices project was approved at an annual meeting five to seven years ago. There was no written introduction and the functions of such a document have never been satisfied. Chip Atkison and Al Dieckmann (deceased) volunteered to direct. I have been told that Dieckmann was the principal researcher associated with the vintage base ball program at Old Bethpage Village Restoration, Long Island. He died before conferring much with Atkison and John Husman, then 19c Cmte Chair, and we did not receive any of his papers.

The central idea of Early Rules and Practices was methodological or epistemological. SABR members generally hit the books; vintage base ball association (VBBA) members generally play the game. Husman personally hit the books and played the game hard, and his vision was that the generally separate readers and players would cooperate fruitfully under the leadership of 19c Cmte members such as Atkison and Dieckmann, who were also in both groups. Think of theoretical and experimental physics or blackboard and laboratory science. The vision is widely if not generally shared. For example, vintage umpire Harry Higham has argued that period baseball is the laboratory of scholarly baseball history, where theories may be generated or tested.

The phrasing is all mine but I think Husman and Atkison agreed with the interpretation in phone conversations last spring. In Atkison's absence at the annual meeting, I presented the interpretation, proclaimed that we need to envision fruit as well as method, and called for "Early Rules visionaries" who would brainstorm "prior to general recruitment" of researchers. (As far as I know, no one did so. I didn't help in any sensible way as by distributing a "business card" for Atkison or asking Husman to serve for a while in some assisting role.)

### POTENTIAL FRUIT

By "fruit" I mean more specific than a book or a website. As an illustration I presented something Atkison contributed to the 19c Cmte archive several years ago. Pages 2-3 of my "Handout 2004-07-15" and about one-third of the meeting time featured that untitled work. It is a transcription and markup of several official editions of the rules of base ball ("rulebooks" for short), chiefly 1856-1872. Each was published in a newspaper or in one edition of *Beadle's Dime Base Ball Player*, edited by Henry Chadwick, which was the "annual guide" from 1860. In Atkison's edition, each rulebook is marked up quite simply to show changes from the preceding one.

Briefly, one page of my handout is a coarse table of contents for the Atkison work, with some notes. The other is an illustration, a photocopy of the first page of his edition of the 1864 rules. Only two features indicate differences between successive rulebooks: all text that differs from the preceding year's text is highlighted and every change in section number is explained in parentheses. (The section numbers provide the overall organization of each rulebook.) The scheme is too simple; its single typographical highlight does not show what is deleted between editions and it does not distinguish mere rewording, substantive change in a rule, and a wholly new rule.

But it is easy to improve, even in black and white. For example, another typographical *highlight* might show all text that will be deleted in the next edition. (It is probably necessary to use shading or color to show all kinds of revision that it is useful to distinguish.)

Anyway, Atkison's draft is sufficient to illustrate one fruit that Early Rules and Practices might bear, albeit one purely in the rules family without strains of practice. Namely, that one is a complete variorum edition of the rules from 1845 to 1900, or perhaps to the 1903 peace.

We need more illustrations of potential fruit. Should other genres be compiled and published in part, such as descriptions of play from game stories? How might a practice such as sliding into bases be presented? What about the relationship between a particular rule and its interpretation (practice)? Should source material from different times and places be reflected in plural publication? Should some reports of vintage base ball play be solicited? Should they be objects of study in themselves? If not, how used? (I believe in a variety of fruit, which ripen on different schedules and end up on different plates.)

#### TAKING STOCK

I suggest that we act as if we have no capital-p Project on playing rules or practices. Instead, we should this year try some pilot projects, to try some components of a Project. We should also **take stock of what has been done** or is clearly underway by others.

The Vintage Base Ball Association now has a website and an Education & Interpretation Committee led by Dean Thilgen ([vbbdeano@myinfmail.com](mailto:vbbdeano@myinfmail.com)) that has published many articles there. Some of those are editions of eleven 1858 to 1887 rulebooks "commonly used by VBBA members" (<http://www.vbba.org/rules> "V.B.B. Rules and Customs"). Are they annotated? How are rules and customs integrated and what should be done differently if we undertake that? Are there others rulebooks in the pipeline? Has anyone else published historical "rules of base ball" or related commentary on the web?

Jim Evans is a former umpire who now heads an umpires school or training program. I understand that he uses a print edition of the official (NL?) rules from 1876 as a text. Has anyone seen it? Is it available for sale or distributed only to tuition paying umpires? Eric Miklich ([ddejm@msn.com](mailto:ddejm@msn.com)), one historian of the Mutual Base Ball Club of New York, the vintage Mutuals, completed an edition of 19th century rules a few years ago. I saw a sheaf of papers at SABR32 and I have been told that that or its successor was published on CD-ROM. Ed "Pigtail" Elmore is a member of the Atlantic Base Ball Club (<http://www.geocities.com/atlanticbbc>); he pitched against the Cincinnati Red Stockings at SABR34. Elmore and a teammate have completed their own book on the rules through 1884, he told me at the game. They are both seeking a publisher and forging ahead on volume two. Are the Miklich and Elmore works available? What is their structure? What have they achieved and what left undone?

The books by Evans, Miklich, and Elmore may concern rules only. Even so, they should be reviewed before a Project is designed. (But dig in to a pilot project with a small p if you have an idea to try.)

One book does cover both rules and practices, and integrates them in a way. That is David Nemeč, *The Rules of Baseball: An Anecdotal Look at the Rules of Baseball and How They Came To Be* (1994). Fred Ivor-Campbell reviewed it here (19cN 94.1), usefully, but his standpoint was not someone designing or advising a neighboring project.

Nemeč's *Rules* mimics the modern rulebook in its overall organization. (Does Evans, Miklich, or Elmore follow any particular rulebook in that respect?) The anecdotes of his subtitle are accounts of play, particular incidents that evaded a rule, that probably or possibly motivated a rule, and so on. I think I know some ways that any 19c Cmte book or website on rules and practices would differ from Nemeč's book. I think I know, too, that listing such differences, with reasons, would be a valuable exercise for people interested in working on rules and practices. Even a list may be the kernels of a vision.

#### EARLY BASEBALL MUSIC

The Early Baseball Music project was approved by the Music & Poetry and 19th Century Committees at their 2004 meetings. It is directed by Jeff Sackmann in consultation with Jeff Campbell and John Thorn. Campbell chairs the M&P Cmte, where he holds the "M" portfolio. He is the head of Hungry for Music (<http://hungryformusic.com/hfm>), which produces CD recordings, including seven volumes of "Diamond Cuts" to date. Thorn has catalogued much baseball music, or compiled the catalogues prepared by others.

A few months earlier, much 19cBB email discussion of recording early baseball music revealed much enthusiasm. Sackmann may have been the most active participant and he took an early initiative in organizing some of the ideas and making an informal proposal. On the other hand, November to May I have been unable to get a written description of the project, or an explanation of how others may contribute, for publication in this newsletter. That is still expected.

Recording early baseball music on CD-ROM and distributing copies to everyone interested, or to all SABRen, is the component of EBM that clearly sparked interest during the advance discussion on 19cBB. Two other components may be writing scholarly articles and cataloguing works in a way compatible with *The Baseball Index*. The latter, at least, would require volunteers to rearrange and enter catalogue data that is at hand.

It is possible that Early Baseball Music offers no opportunities for new researchers to make small contributions (one desideratum for a group project), possible that all of the research has been done, even possible that it needs nothing from the 19c Cmte or from SABR except perhaps funding.

#### Conferences and Chapter Meetings

Let's briefly cover presentations on 19th century baseball at SABR Chapter meetings and at conferences. This winter I was in attendance for two.

**Peter Mancuso** presented "Jim Mutrie's 'Giants'" at the New York City (Casey Stengel) Chapter meeting, March 12. Many people have attributed the nickname 'Giants' for the New York NL club to Manager Jim Mutrie, often in Spring 1885, without citing a contemporary source. Mancuso has found the nickname used in newspaper coverage of the team as early as 14 April 1885, in a *New York World* story on yesterday's game in Jersey City. The headline: "Gotham Giants in Jersey." It was remarked that "the new nickname . . . is as expressive as 'Ponies' for the Mets."

**Joanne Hulbert** presented "Fast Day: Boston's Original Opening Day" at the Boston Chapter meeting, March 26. The first Fast Day was declared in 1623 Plymouth when food was short—a day to "humble ourselves before God by fasting, humiliation and prayer." It remained occasional, at need, until

secular government set the first Thursday in April as annual Fast Day in the 19th century. Soon it became the traditional opening day for outdoor recreations such as cockfighting, boating, and base ball. After the Red Stockings were established in 1871, it served as a one-day exhibition for the city's major team, when the public could first see them in action after weeks of indoor workouts. Fast Day was eventually seen as a farce of feasting and play rather than fasting and prayer, and it was replaced by the secular Patriots Day about two weeks later. Patriots Day inherited its role in opening the outdoor season.

## Resources

### SABR RESEARCH GUIDES

Mainly in the 1980s, the Bibliography Cmte prepared fourteen typescript *SABR Research Guides*. All have now been reprinted electronically in pdf format. Most are indexes, broadly defined. Six cover 19th century subjects:

5. Author Index to *Guide to Baseball Literature* (1975)
6. Baseball Figures in *Dictionary of American Biography*
8. Daguerrotypes of the Great Stars of Baseball
9. Collections in the History of American Baseball
10. Baseball in History Journals (1980-1988)
14. Box Scores of Major and Minor Leagues in *Sporting Life* and *The Sporting News*

Patricia Palmer wrote the descriptive "Collections in the History of American Baseball" (no. 9) as a graduate student in library science. It comprises an introduction and four sections on the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, National Baseball Library; the New York Public Library, General Research Division; the Cleveland Public Library, Cleveland Baseball Collection (Mears and more); and the Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.

"Collections" and "Box Scores" are the two that I would have cited several times each year as 19c Cmte Chair, if I had known them. They answer some recurring direct questions and they provide vital background information for some projects that are in the air, or that individuals have undertaken.

## Tidbits

### THE MASSACHUSETTS GAME

Who is interested in the Massachusetts game, so-called in contrast to the New York game of the Knickerbocker rules and the NABBP? It was codified in Dedham MA, 1858, when the New York game had already reached Boston and had been adopted by the local Tri-Mountain Club. Who has researched the Massachusetts Game systematically, either in multiple cities and towns or year by year in one locale or one publication? (Joanne Hulbert is one.) Has anyone logged game scores or richer game reports?

"Who gives a fig?" about the Massachusetts game, John Thorn asked 19cBB this spring and again this summer. But the main point was whether material on the Massachusetts game should be severely limited on 19cBB (which distributes everything contributed by any subscriber; it is not "moderated" except by scolding and pleading). A flurry of replies and several deeper responses clearly demonstrated that many people enjoy reading about the Massachusetts game in their email, not merely getting references (*The Boston Globe*

published an article by Thorn on the Massachusetts and New York games, July 10.) Several are interested in competition between the Massachusetts and New York base ball in itself, or for what it may reveal about the nature of New York base ball's appeal, or because they are keenly interested in New York dominance of US American culture. A few are interested because the findings pertain to their own local research on early ball, for the town ball and base ball games played in other regions before adoption of the New York game were closer to the Massachusetts game in several respects.

Less than half of the 19c Committee subscribes to 19cBB. Here I hope to reach others, and especially to hear from anyone who has worked on the Massachusetts game.

### MAJOR LEAGUE SEASON SCHEDULES

Paul Rivard has gathered all major league season schedules. That is 1877 to date, since the NA and NL did not schedule games before then. Among the recently missing NL 1877-1879 and AA 1882 (Help Wanted, 2003, 11), David Ball provided at least the last holdout, which was the historical first. It was published in the *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer* 27 April 1877, the day after approval of amendments by a meeting in that city.

Rivard continues to digitize the schedules. Retrosheet has proofed many, in turn, and published them in its own format.

<http://retrosheet.org/schedule/index.html>

### "MINOR LEAGUERS" IN THE AMERICAN LEAGUE, 1900

Under this title in the last number, I listed thirty AL 1900 players who never played in the majors (2004.2, 7).

Lefty Blasco knows at least six of those players by nicknames that I did not provide (lowercase in column two): Jim Bandeline, Ed Fertsch, Jake Jameson, Arch Kern, Al Smythe, Jim Tamsett. The first of these suggests the given first name James for J. Oscar Bandeline.

One addition to the list is E.J. Hooker (Cy). Previously, the Buffalo pitcher has been identified as William E. Hooker (Buck), a major leaguer. Bob Hoie and Reed Howard agree that he was E.J. "Cy"; the clincher is that Hoie discovered Buck Hooker pitching in Richmond at the same time Hooker worked for Buffalo. Who can be in two places at one time? Well, two AL clubs, Buffalo and Milwaukee, both reserved "E.J. Hooker" for 1901, according to the official lists published in *Sporting Life* 6 Oct 1900. Perhaps that was corrected elsewhere.

### PRESTON OREM, *BASEBALL* SUPPLEMENTS

The SABR Research Library has obtained Preston Orem's season-by-season accounts of Baseball 1882 to 1891. Those are sometimes called "annual supplements" to Preston D. Orem, *Baseball (1845-1881) From the Newspaper Accounts*, self-published in 1961.

Any SABR member who needs "photocopies of any specific season or league" should contact Research Library maintainer Len Levin ([lenlevin5@hotmail.com](mailto:lenlevin5@hotmail.com)). The price, which covers the cost of copying and mailing, will be 12 cents a page or 11 cents for 100 pages or more. Some of the copyright restrictions have not yet been determined, so we say "needs" and "any specific season or league."

*Baseball (1882) From the Newspaper Accounts*, self-published in 1967, covers the organization of the AA, the 1882 baseball season mainly in "specific league" articles, October 1882 to March 1883, and April 1883. The tables of contents indicate similar May to April scope for each "year" except that *Baseball (1891)* ends with the last days of the AA, October to December 1991.

## ARTICLES AVAILABLE IN PRINT

A few articles are available to 19c Cmte members in print from me. We have a fund replenished by donations. One that I mentioned in the last number is "1880 National Association" by Bob Tiemann, one page of narrative and two pages of playing statistics compiled from scratch. Here is its cousin.

The 1879 National Association, presented by Joseph E.

Wayman and Art Cantu, *Minor League Baseball Research Journal 2* (1996), p97-102. Official standings and statistics published in the 1880 NA Guide. Batting (all players) and pitching (12 or more games).

**19c Cmte newsletters.** The entire run is available on paper at cost of copying and mailing. 232 pages or so. The cover guide to contents is available on the web: "Newsletter Archive" (<http://world.std.com/~pgw/19c/19cN.archive.htm>).

The master set is unmarked but not original; a few items have been lost in copying. Much of the set will probably be scanned (photographed digitally) and made available by internet in pdf format. Something will be lost in scanning, too.

Price: SABR members \$15; nonmembers \$25. Send a check or money order payable to Paul Wendt (64 Riverside St #3, Watertown MA 02472-2652).

## Help Wanted

Please send Help Wanted items, interpreting "Help" broadly. This may be the most valuable material to submit quickly. –Ed.

At least two Help Wanted from 19cN 2003 have been fully satisfied: David Vincent's call for Last Game Data, 1876-1880 (In the Projects, above), and Paul Rivard's call for the 1877 National League Schedule and Others (Tidbits, above).

## CONTACT DATA, continued

SABR no longer distributes a print membership directory. By policy, 19c Notes provides contact information that enables both email and no-email readers to communicate with people named (in some contexts). The "Help Wanted" and "Help Offered" articles alone include full contact data. This section fills the gap.

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 Cliff Blau ([brak2.0@verizon.net](mailto:brak2.0@verizon.net)), 16 Lake St #5D, White Plains NY 10603 (914-948-8406)  
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 Jeff Campbell ([hungryformusic@att.net](mailto:hungryformusic@att.net)), c/o HFM Arts Center, 65 Eye St SW, Washington DC 20024 (202-479-2810)  
 Joe Dittmar ([dittmar5@aol.com](mailto:dittmar5@aol.com)), 3112 Hayes Rd, Norristown PA 19403-4018 (610-584-5988)  
 Paul Healey ([paulhealey@yahoo.com](mailto:paulhealey@yahoo.com)), 5 Braemore Rd #13, Brighton MA 02135-7043 (508 498 8457)  
 Ron Henry ([auricle99@aol.com](mailto:auricle99@aol.com)), 3031 Ewing Ave S #142, Minneapolis MN 55416-4227 (612-925-9114)  
 Bill Hickman ([bdhickmn@aol.com](mailto:bdhickmn@aol.com); no 'a'), 7 Columbia Ct, Rockville MD 20850 (301-424-6314)  
 Eric Miklich ([ddejm@msn.com](mailto:ddejm@msn.com)), 8 Linda Ln, Babylon NY 11703-1010 (631-243-1668)  
 Michael Olenick ([michael.olenick@tesco.net](mailto:michael.olenick@tesco.net)), 354 14th St #2, Brooklyn NY 11215-7347 (718-832-9447)  
 Lyle Spatz ([spatzl@bellsouth.net](mailto:spatzl@bellsouth.net)), 8413 Grand Messina Cir, Boynton Beach FL 33437 (561-740-4710)  
 Dean Thilgen ([vbbdeano@myinfmail.com](mailto:vbbdeano@myinfmail.com)), 1687 Century Cir #215, Saint Paul MN 55125-2186 (651-702-9677)  
 John Thorn ([jthorn@newworldsports.org](mailto:jthorn@newworldsports.org)), 45 Birch St #5-H, Kingston NY 12401 (845-331-1782)  
 David Vincent ([grandslams@aol.com](mailto:grandslams@aol.com)), 14744 Winterfield Ct, Centreville VA 20120 (703-266-3020)

## Help Offered

Please send Help Offered items, interpreting "Help" broadly. Do you have any special services, data or materials that you would like to offer to other members? –Ed.

## Contacts

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 Paul Wendt, Chair ([pgw@theworld.com](mailto:pgw@theworld.com)), 64 Riverside St #3, Watertown MA 02472-2652 (617-926-8253)

Frederick Ivor-Campbell, Vice Chair ([fredivorc@hotmail.com](mailto:fredivorc@hotmail.com)), 405 Metacom Ave, Bristol RI 02809-5113 (401-254-2347)

Chip Atkison, Director, Early Rules and Practices ([sabrchip@aol.com](mailto:sabrchip@aol.com)), 2867 S Wolff St, Denver CO 80236-2010 (303-975-1063)

Jeff Sackmann, Director, Early Baseball Music ([jeff\\_sackmann@hotmail.com](mailto:jeff_sackmann@hotmail.com); one '\_'), 3526 28th St #3, Astoria NY 11106 (646-241-8622)

**INTERNET RESOURCES** are listed in the index of SABR research committees (<http://sabr.org>; "Research"; column heading "WebSites & Other Internet Resources"). That route should remain viable as addresses change. Presently,

Website "19th Century Resources"  
<http://world.std.com/~pgw/19c>

Egroup or email list '19cBB'  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/19cBB>. Join this mutual distribution email list by sending any email message to [19cBB-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:19cBB-subscribe@yahogroups.com). There are Daily Digest and No Email (web only) options.