



Reflecting The Past

The official newsletter of the Pictorial History Committee



Number 2013:3



Nov. 2013

In This Issue

Hey – Isn’t That Merkle Turning Away From Second?	1
100 years later, another boner	
Channeling Okkonen	14
Some research influenced by the old master	
Every Weekday - Something New About Something Old	15
An online daily baseball history column with cool imagery, and no sick days yet taken	
More Benny Bowcock	15
First we can’t find one good quality exemplar, then they fall from the sky	
Committee Business	16
Honoring George Michael, a new committee project proposal, and Image Index updates	

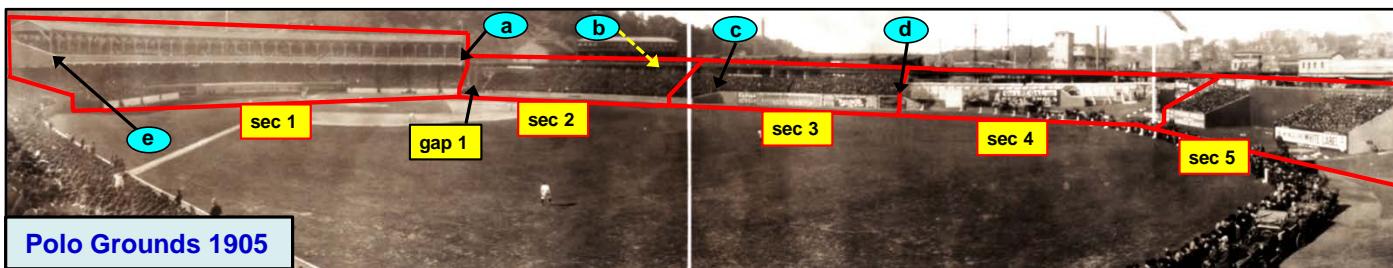
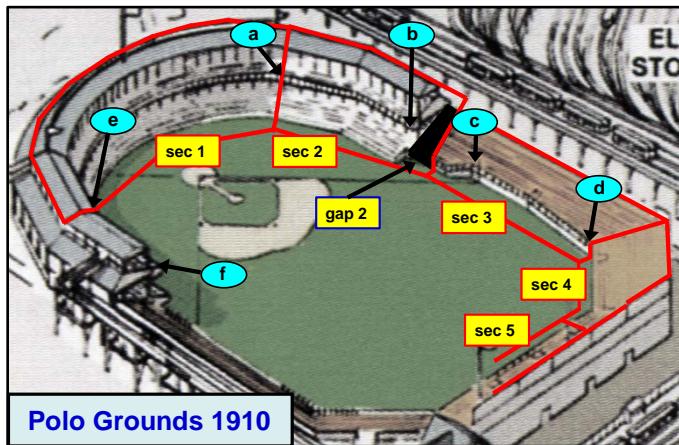
Hey – Isn’t That Merkle Turning Away from Second?

Leading into an article whose conclusions hinge upon the evolution of the Polo Grounds from about 1905-1910, we are going to start with some preliminaries that hopefully will make it easier to follow. We have divided the ballpark into arbitrarily numbered sections that cover specific physical areas. What is contained within some sections will be seen to have changed over time as portions of the park were rebuilt. We will also denote a few important specific location points. These sections and location points will be referred to during the remainder of the article.

To provide a sense of how this will work, we have at the very bottom of the page a 1905 Library of Congress photo of the Polo Grounds. Just above it we have a remarkable Polo Grounds drawing from [Marc Okkonen's Baseball Memories 1900-1909](#). With a bit of modification by us, as will be supported by photos later in the article, it fairly depicts the park in 1910 (though just a few of the proportions aren't perfect). The numbered sections (**sec 1-5**) and denoted location points (a through f) represent the same physical locations in both images.

For example, in 1905, **section 2** contained a gap (**gap 1**) at its left side, likely for a fan entrance and exit. In 1910, this gap is filled with seats and there is another gap (**gap 2**) at the right side of **section 2**. Another big change evident in 1910 is the upper deck of **section 2** that did not exist in 1905. In 1905, **section 4** had no seating. In 1910 it was home to a large block of bleachers. In 1905, **point b** was a point in the air, but by 1910 it marked the extent of the expanded upper deck. These and other changes and their timeline will be established and supported by various photos and newspaper articles. This in turn will be used to debunk two significant (and mutually inconsistent) claims for a particular photo which critically depend on when it was taken.

One more comment. We mostly use high resolution images. Viewing them on printed pages will not reveal all the details discussed. Save a tree – view this on a good monitor. Being able to **zoom in** helps a lot.



One Photo – Two Inconsistent Claims

The wonderful photo below (**photo A**) provides a great early 20th century view of the Polo Grounds as seen from Coogan's Bluff. That should be enough. However, that photo has appeared in a number of articles with claims that it depicts not just one, but two *different* significant games. How can that be, and either way, how can they tell?

Five such articles are listed below. The 2nd and 3rd listed pieces specifically commemorated the 100th anniversary of the **9-23-1908 Merkle Game**, the Cubs at Giants contest in which one of the most controversial incidents of the Deadball Era occurred. We won't recount the well-known story here. It is enough to say that this resulted in said game being declared a tie, necessitating a replay at season's end to decide the pennant. This replay, which drew massive crowds to the ballpark and surrounding areas, is known as the **Merkle Game replay**. It took place on **10-8-1908**. These enumerated recent retrospective articles about Merkle and these two games made use of **photo A**.

- 2007: [thisgreatgame.com, 1908 Merkle Boner](http://www.thisgreatgame.com/1908-baseball-history.html)

Photo caption: Any spot with a view of New York's Polo Grounds is taken up on October 8 for a winner-take-all pennant battle between the Giants and Cubs... (Claimed to be the 10-8-1908 Merkle game *replay*)
<http://www.thisgreatgame.com/1908-baseball-history.html>

- 9-22-2008: [New York Times online, Before Bartman There Was Merkle](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/23/sports/baseball/23merkle.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

Photo caption: Fans crowded Coogan's Bluff...to watch the game between the Giants and...Cubs that would decide the N.L. pennant in 1908 (Claimed to be the 10-8-1908 Merkle game *replay*)
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/23/sports/baseball/23merkle.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

- 9-23-2008: [ESPN online, Sadly, One Play Defined Merkle's Career, Life](http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/news/story?id=3604289)

Photo caption: Fans along Coogan's Bluff watch the Chicago Cubs and New York Giants at the Polo Grounds on Sept. 23, 1908 (Claimed to be the 9-23-1908 Merkle game)
<http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/news/story?id=3604289>

- 9-23-2010: [sbnation.com, 9/23/1908 –Merkle's Boner](http://www.sbnation.com/2010/9/23/1061229/9-23-1908-merkles-boner)

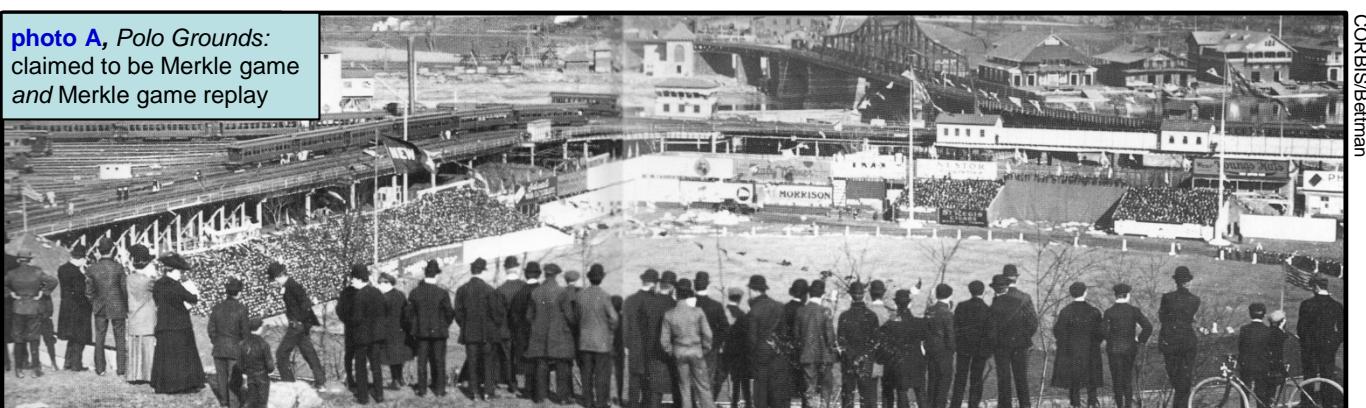
Photo caption: The Fred Merkle game on Sept. 23 (Claimed to be the 9-23-1908 Merkle game)
<http://www.sbnation.com/2010/9/23/1061229/9-23-1908-merkles-boner>

- 1-19-2011: [New York Times online, Polo Grounds and Its Former Tenants Emerge From the Shadows](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/20/sports/20polo.html?_r=0)

Photo caption: The replay at the Polo Grounds of a game between the Giants and...Cubs that ended in a tie because of the most famous blunder in Giants history... (Claimed to be the 10-8-1908 Merkle game *replay*)
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/20/sports/20polo.html?_r=0

The cited source for **photo A** in the first listed article is *The Rucker Archive*. It seems to be closely related to the sources given for **photo A** in the other four listed articles¹. Very oddly, as the above list shows, the image ran on 9-22-2008, and then just one day later on 9-23-2008, respectively, with inconsistent captions. In any case, the justification for either claim is a mystery. We *will* justify our claim that this image depicts neither game and that it is not even a 1908 photo. First we need to examine some Polo Grounds photos in order to make sense of the architectural changes that occurred there in the years leading up to the April, 1911 fire.

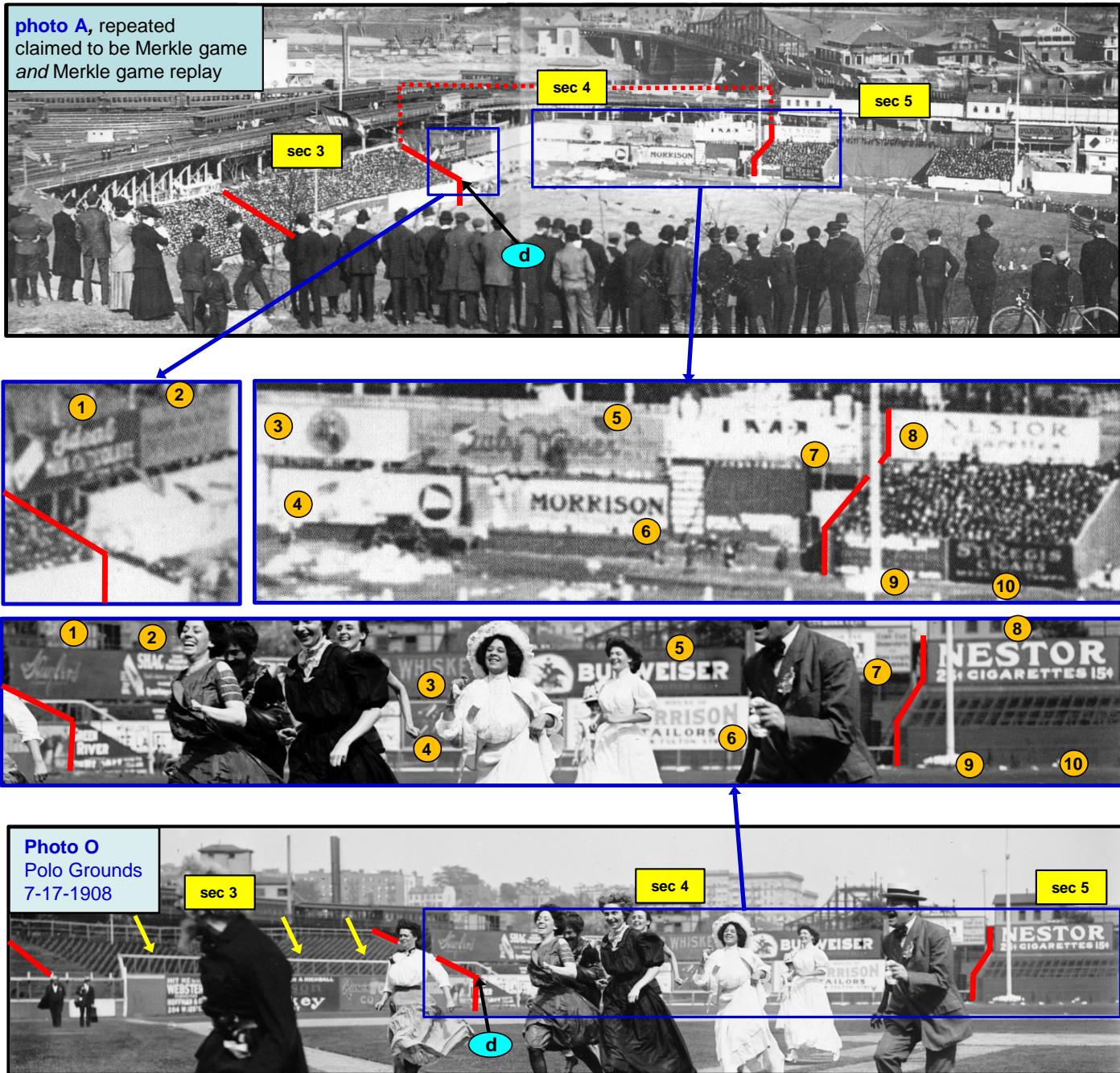
(Our copy of photo A was sourced by CORBIS/Bettman who identify it as game 2 of the 1905 WS. That's also wrong)



(1) That is our impression. If informed otherwise we will print a correction in the next issue.

Billboards in Section 4

We have repeated **photo A** just below. The objective is to compare the billboards therein to those seen in **Photo O**, at the very bottom of the page. **Photo O** depicts a scene from a 7-17-1908 charitable event held at the Polo Grounds for the benefit of the Home For Destitute and Crippled Children. The event featured activities that included well-known actors². We have magnified and numbered some of the billboards (mostly in **section 4**) from both photos, displaying the enlarged portions (outlined in blue) at the center of the page. Each billboard number corresponds to the same respective location in photos **A** and **O**.

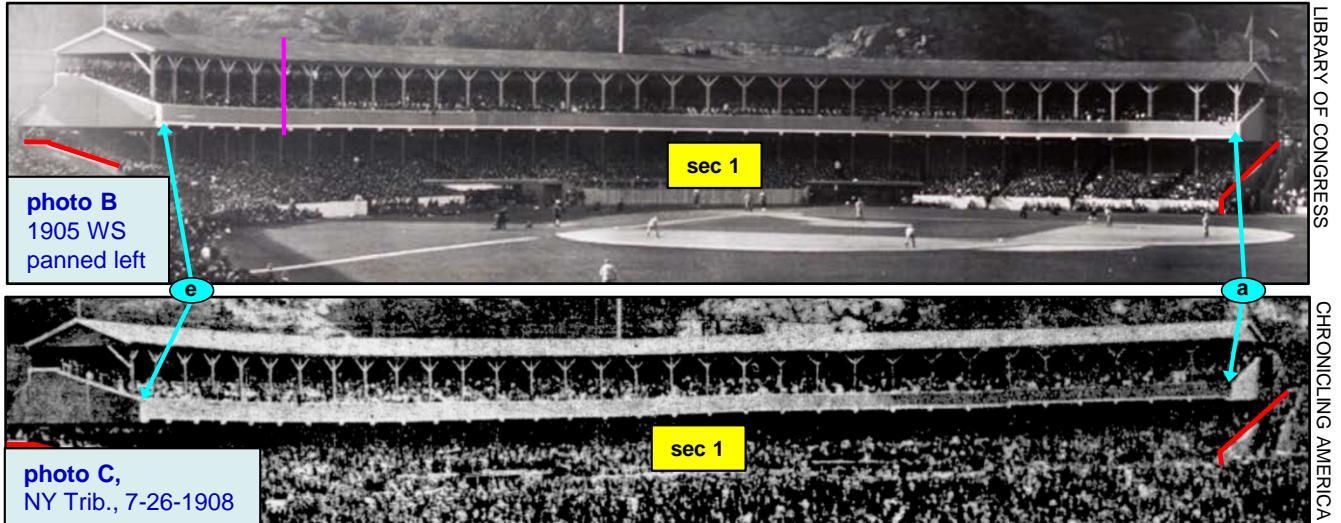


Comparing the like numbered billboards from the two photos, it is clear that none of them match. Experience tells us that, usually, most billboards tend to stay the same through a given season. Additionally, the railing atop the wall in front of **section 3** that is seen in **Photo O** (yellow arrows) is not present in **Photo A**. The difference in the billboards plus the lack of the **section 3** railing in **Photo A** provide a very strong indication that the image does not date to the 1908 season. However, let's defer our conclusion because, as we will show, there is more to the story.

Grandstand

• Full views of section 1, 1905 WS & 7-26-1908

Let's examine the asymmetrical **section 1** grandstand. **Photo B** from the Library of Congress, just below, appeared in the 1906 *Spalding Guide* identified as a 1905 WS image. The left half of the photo is shown here. The left field side grandstand extends somewhat beyond 3rd base to **point a**, while on the right field side it extends farther, past the purple line well beyond 1st base to **point e**. The upper deck façade is plain. In photo **C**, next below, taken about three years later from the 7-26-1908 *New York Tribune*, **section 1** appears unchanged.

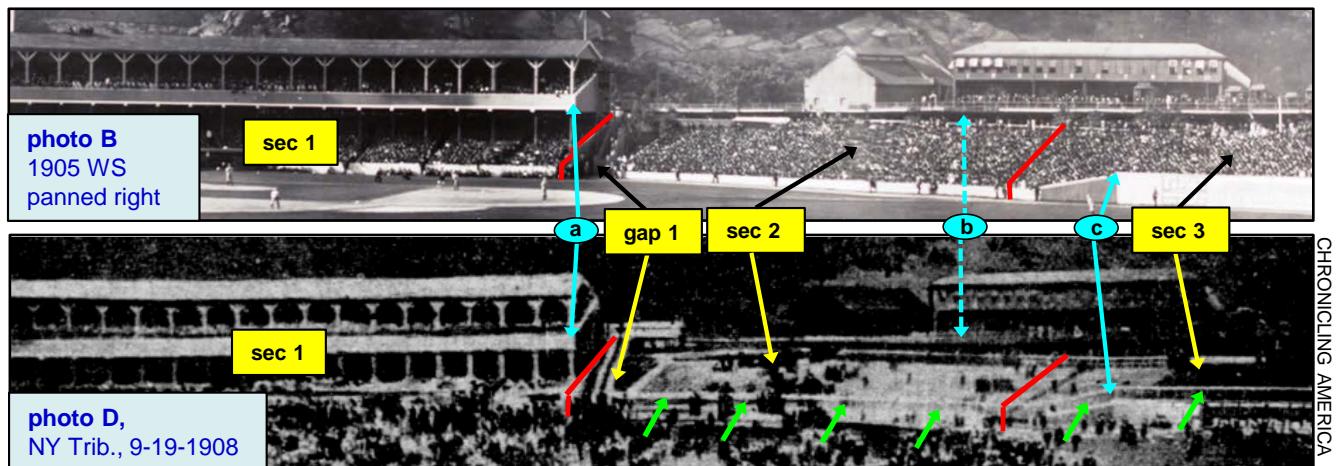


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

CHRONICLING AMERICA

• Views panned right, showing section 2, 1905 WS & 9-19-1908

Just below is **photo B** again, this time panned right to show the uncovered seating down the left field line which includes **section 2**. Below it is **photo D**, an image from the *New York Tribune*, published just four days before the 9-23-1908 Merkle game. It is very similar to **photo B**, but note that a white railing (green arrows) is visible in front of the seats of **section 2** and **section 3**. This railing was not present in 1905 when **photo B** was taken.



CHRONICLING AMERICA

• Upper-deck façade close-ups, 1908

Photo E shows Alan Storke at bat and Roger Bresnahan catching. Based on uniform and sock styles, this was likely taken in 1908. The magnified portion of the upper deck's plain façade shows roof support posts close behind the façade (blue arrows).

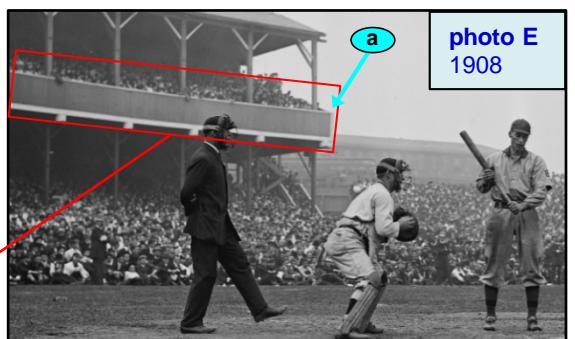


photo E
1908

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Photo F, a well-known pre-game photo from the Merkle game replay, shows the same plain style upper-deck façade with roof supports close to it.

• Late 1908 Rebuild

While this would not likely happen now, back then a significant ballpark expansion could be hastily executed during the season. From the 9-22-1908 *N.Y. Evening World*, "Jim Foster, the expert stand builder...has contracted to extend the [left field] grandstand at the Polo Grounds as far as the left field foul line, which, when finished, will correspond with the extension recently made to the right field end of the stand. It will be a double decker, and when finished, will accommodate at least two thousand more people. The will begin work immediately after the Cubs series [ending 9-24], and promises to have the job done in 18 days."

That seems like a tall order, especially with the Reds coming into town for a series starting on 9-25. **Photo D**, from the 9-19-1908 *N.Y. Tribune*, is repeated here for easy reference, just below. **Photo G**, just below **photo D**, an image of the aftermath of the Merkle game replay appearing in the 10-9-1908 *N.Y. Tribune*, is significantly different than **photo D**, taken only nineteen days earlier. Mr. Foster was not yet finished, but he had made progress.

In **photo G** we can see the timbers that would later support the extended upper-deck (details in magnification at bottom of page). This was probably not just a covering over the existing stands of **section 2**, as newspaper accounts seem to indicate that the lower deck seating was also newly built. **Gap 1** and the staircase within it seen in **photo D** is filled with seats in **photo G**. Also, the ground level wall in front of that seating appears much higher than before.

Though the game had ended, note the large number of fans still precariously perched on top of the grandstand roof in **Photo G** (green arrows). The newspapers made much of this (10-9-1908 *N.Y. Tribune*, p. 2), and such a large crowd on the grandstand roof may have been unique to this game³.

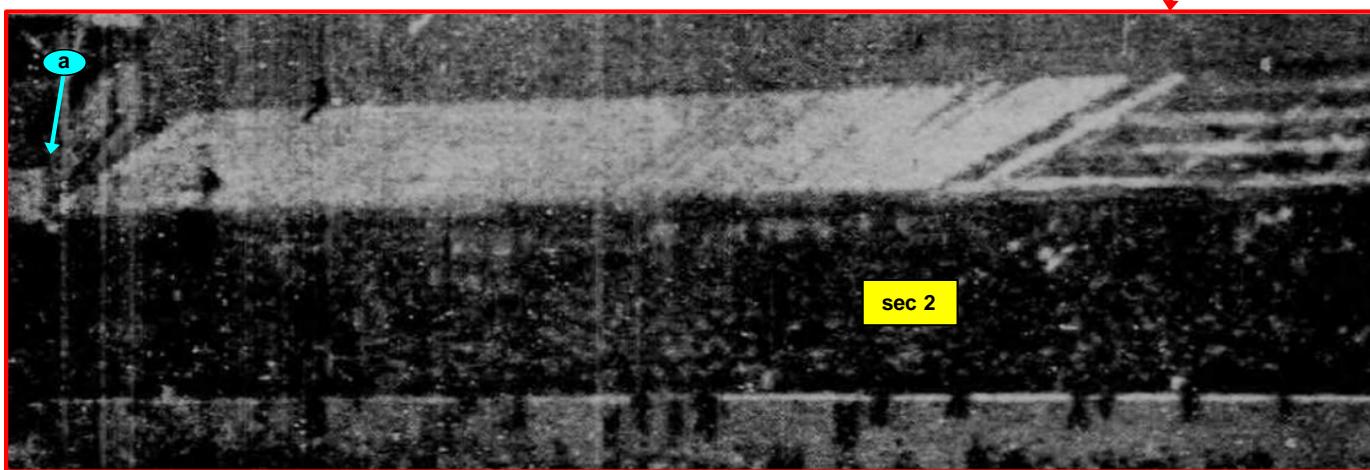
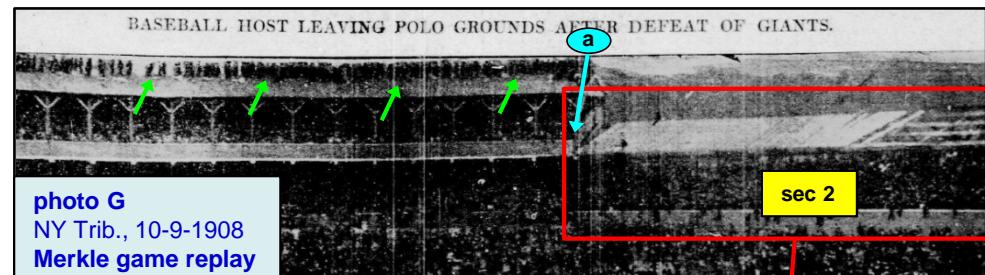
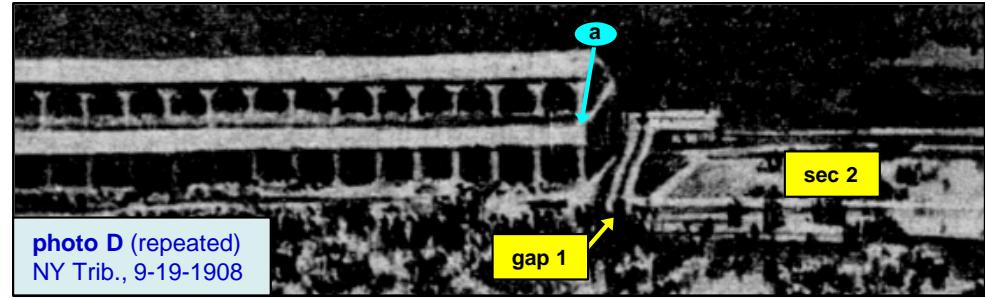
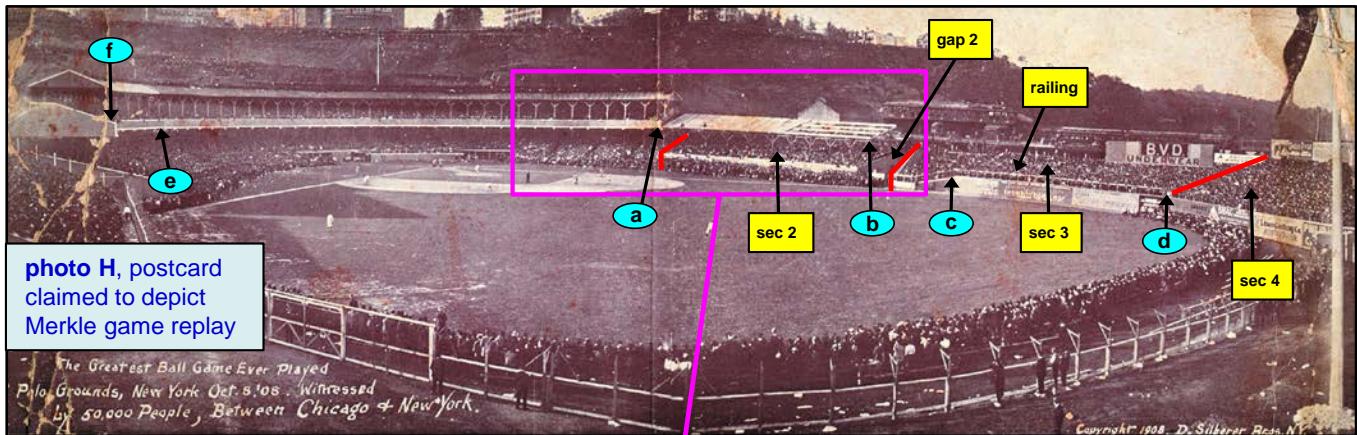
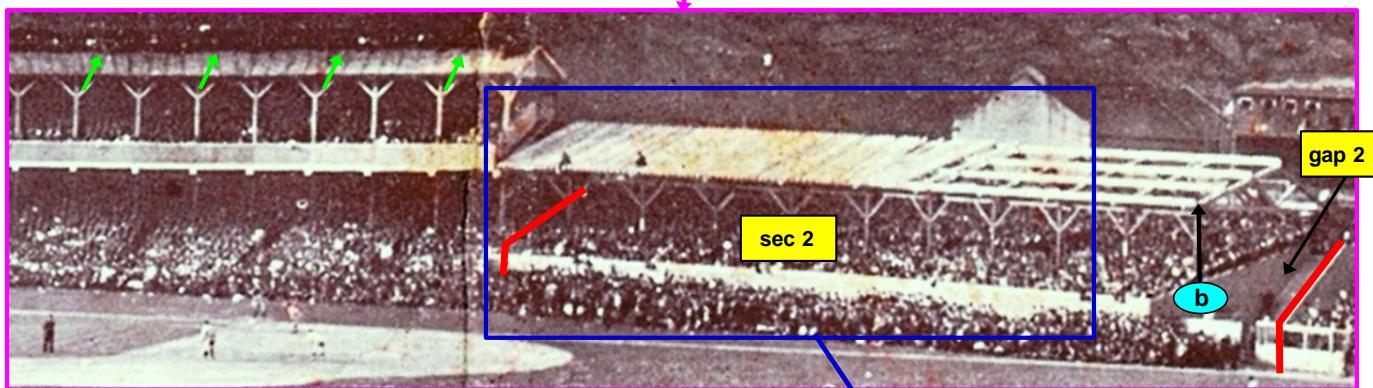


Photo H, just below, is from a postcard claimed to depict the Merkle game replay. The magnified portion just below it shows work in progress similar to that seen in **photo G**. We can see how far down the line the new construction extended (**point b**). As in **photo G**, there is a fairly dense crowd atop the grandstand roof (green arrows).



COURTESY REA AUCTIONS



If we look a bit closer at the construction timbers in **photo H**, there are a few timbers that are somewhat askew (black arrows) and another timber that is separated from the rest (red arrow). When comparing this to the magnified portion of **photo G**, repeated at the bottom of page, there clearly is a match.

We can add that there appears to be a brave (or foolish) soul seated in the same spot on the timbers in both photos (brown arrow). It could be the same guy, though we'll never know. In any case there is more than enough to support the claim that **postcard photo H is in fact a view of the Merkle game replay**. That gives us an additional reference to be used later. The location of **point b**

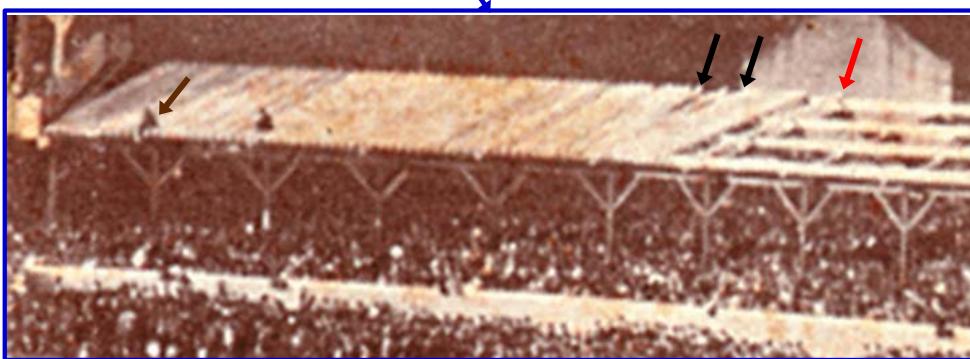


photo G, (repeated)
NY Trib., 10-9-1908
Merkle game replay

Grandstand – Summary of significant findings (red numbers used for reference later)

1905

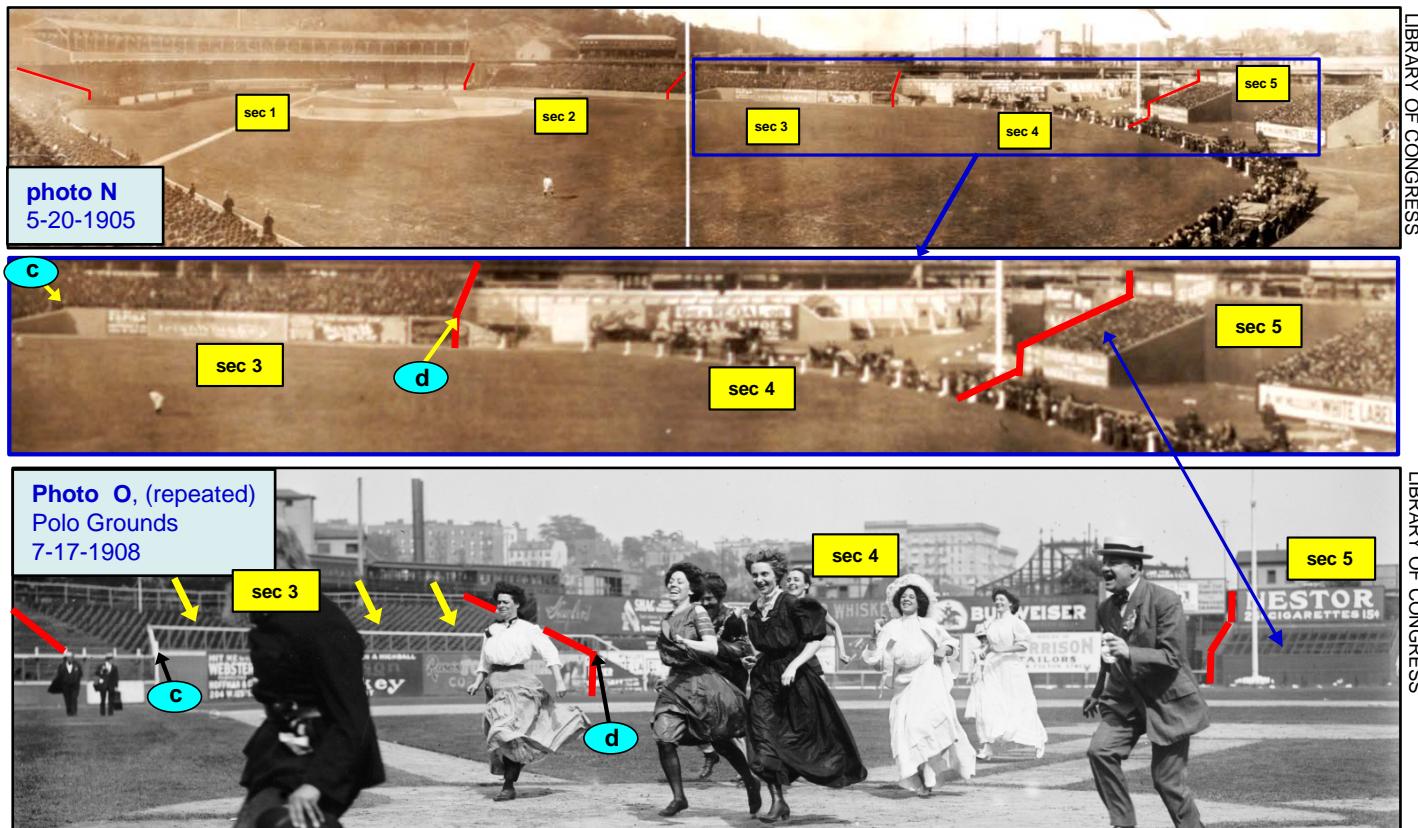
- **section 1:** left field side grandstand upper-deck extends to just somewhat beyond 3rd base (to **point a**) (1)
grandstand upper-deck has a plain façade (2)
grandstand upper-deck seats extend forward to just beyond roof supports (3)
- **gap 1:** gap in seating at left side of **section 2** (4)
- **sections 2 and section 3:** no railing atop wall in front of seats (5)

1908

- 9-19-1908 newspaper photo shows -
- section 1:** matches 1905 (6)
- section 2:** railing has been added atop wall in front of seating (7)
- 10-8-1908 newspaper photo and postcard **photo H** show
- section 2:** new lower deck seating, and framing to support new upper-deck extending to **point b** (8)
- gap 2:** gap in seating at right side of **section 2** (9)
- section 3:** railing atop wall in front of seating (10)

Bleachers

Just below we have Library of Congress **photo N** dated 5-20-1905 (note that the billboards match those in the full uncropped 1905 WS **photo B** – see appendix 1). Just below it, the part encompassing **sections 3, 4** and part of **section 5** is magnified. The bleacher seating appears sparse. All we can see are two small blocks of bleachers within **section 5**. Within **section 4** there are billboards, but no seating.



Now we return to **Photo O**, just above, taken on 7-17-1908 and previously discussed on page 3. We again see that in 1908 there is a railing (yellow arrows) in front of the seating of **section 3** that was not present in the 1905. As for **section 4**, on close examination (looking between the people) it appears to be similar to **Photo N** – there are (different) billboards but still no seating in **section 4**. However, the previously described September/October grandstand expansion was not the only seating addition made during the 1908 season. Some weeks before that, big changes had already occurred at the Polo Grounds.

Plans were made during the 1908 season to also substantially enlarge the outfield bleacher seating. From the 8-23-1908 *N. Y. Tribune*, "The bleachers at the Polo Grounds are to be enlarged by adding an annex platform 170 feet long and 64 feet deep." The 9-2-1908 *N. Y. Evening World* stated, "...This stand... will be ready by the time the Giants return next Tuesday [9-8-1908]." Other newspaper articles confirm that the new bleachers were likely complete well before the 9-23-1908 Merkle game. From the 9-9-1908 N. Y. Sun, "...the spectators had taken in the enlarged stands, which include...an extended bleacher which towers up like a football stand..."

The new bleachers in **section 4** can be partially seen in **Photo H**, below, which we have determined to depict the 10-8-1908 Merkle game replay. In contrast to the July 17 scene in **photo O**, as of Oct. 8, **section 4** is filled with seats. Note also that some billboards have been added behind **section 3**, though a close look indicates that the BVD billboard is not real. It was added by the photographer, likely in exchange for a fee (or some briefs) from BVD⁴.

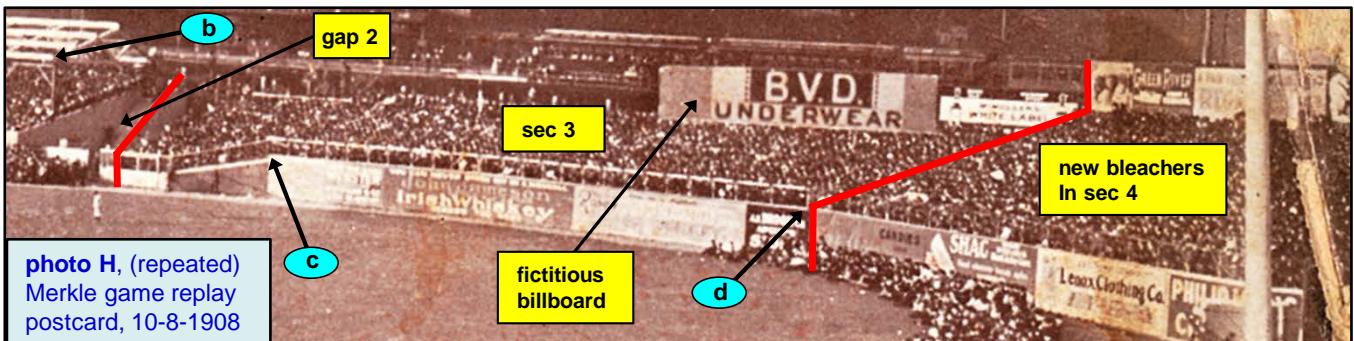
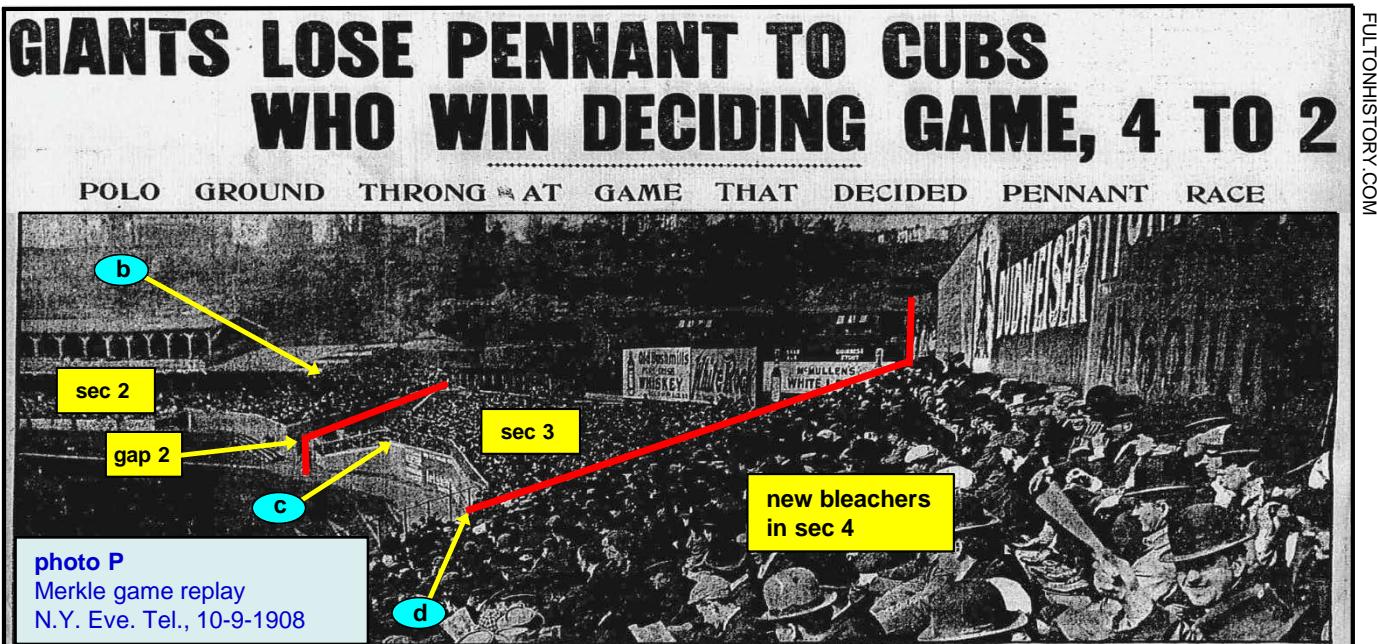


Photo P, below, from the 10-9-1908 *N. Y. Evening Telegram*, depicts the crowd at the Merkle game replay. The photo clearly shows the new **section 4** bleachers discussed above (note that the photo was published in the newspaper mirror-imaged – we have corrected that).



Bleachers – Summary of significant findings (red numbers used for reference later)

Prior to 7-17-1908

- No seats, only billboards in **section 4**, and the billboards are different than those of **photo A (11)**

Prior to the 9-23-1908 Merkle game

- New bleachers extremely likely in place in **section 4** (implied by newspaper articles) **(12)**

Prior to the 10-8-1908 Merkle game replay

- New bleachers certainly in place in **section 4** (photo evidence) **(13)**

Conclusion for Photo A

From here on it's smooth sailing. **Photo A** is repeated below. Referencing the lists of grandstand and bleacher findings we can say that:

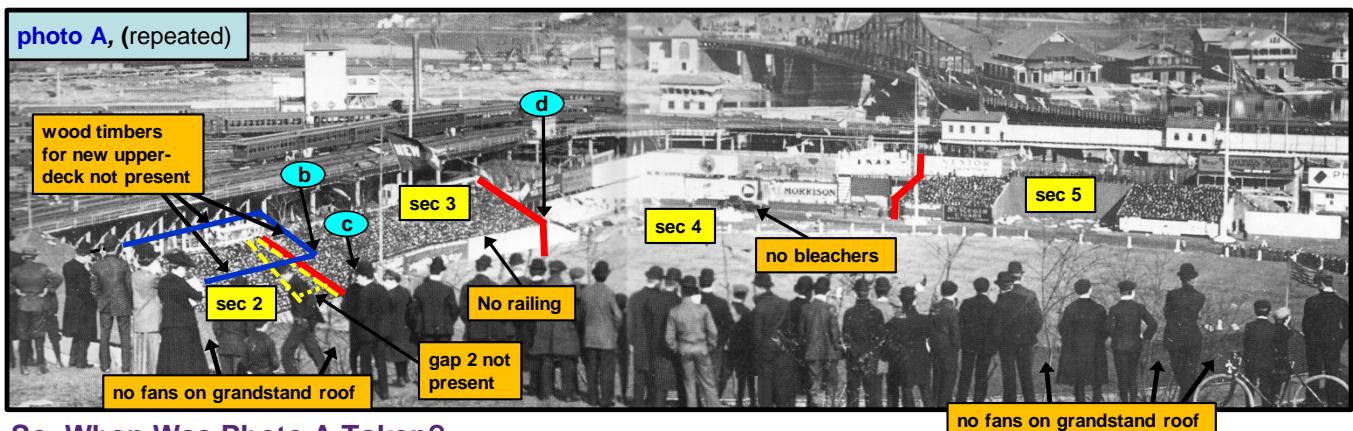
Photo A cannot depict the 10-8-1908 Merkle game replay due to any one of the following:

- (1) No bleachers (only billboards) in **section 4** (13)
- (2) No railing atop the wall in front of **section 3** (5)(10)
- (3) No **gap 2** at the right of **section 2** (9)
- (4) Timbers to support **section 2** upper-deck not present (would be visible within area shown by blue lines) (8)

Also, we know from **photo H** that at some point during that day, there were fans on the grandstand roof and there was a thick crowd of fans on the outfield grass from **point d** running to the right around the outfield. In **photo A**, neither is present.

Photo A cannot depict the 9-23-1908 Merkle game due to any one of the following:

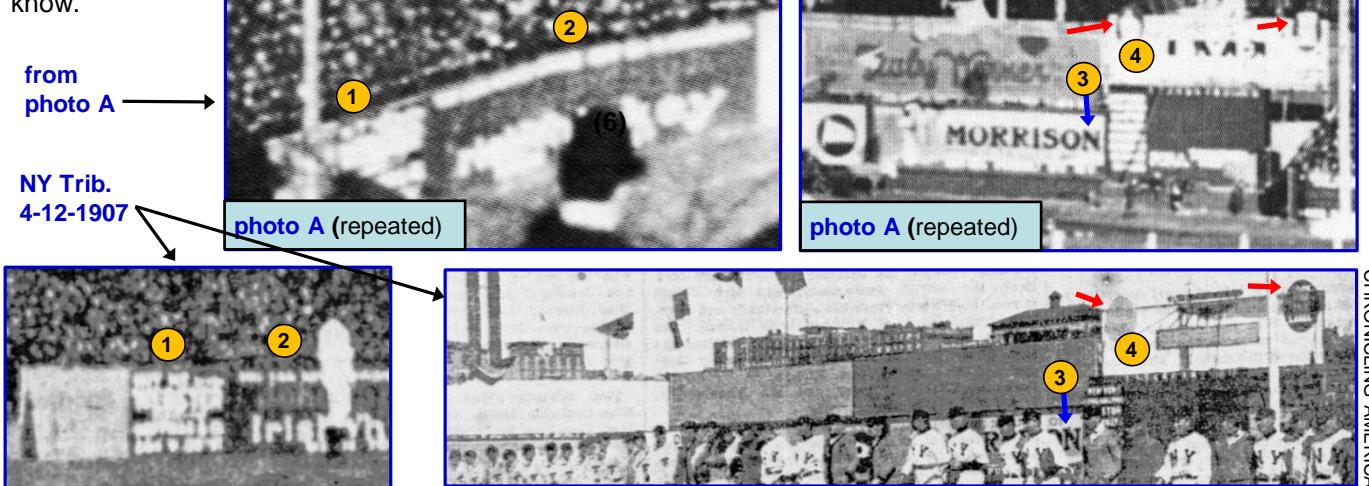
- (1) No railing atop the wall in front of **section 3** (7)
- (2) No seats (only billboards) in **section 4** (12), or alternatively (in the unlikely event the seats weren't built as of 9-23), the **section 4** billboards in **photo A** do not match the **section 4** billboards in 7-17-1908 **photo O** (11)



So, When Was Photo A Taken?

Some of the billboards from **sections 3** and **4** in **photo A** are magnified just below. Except for billboard (2), the Irish Whiskey sign which persisted from 1905 onward, the billboards do not match those of the 1905 **photo N** on page 7 (see **appendix 1**), nor those seen in a 6-18-1906 *N. Y. Tribune* photo we found.

The images at the very bottom of the page appeared in the 4-12-1907 *N. Y. Tribune*. Unfortunately the Tribune chose to deliberately obscure most of the advertising, but we can see some of it. While we can't read all the words, it's fair to say that billboards (1) and (2) match the respective signs in **photo A**. The Morrison signs, (3), also seem to match. Two key features of billboards (4), red arrows, also appear to be the same. Given that, it seems very likely that **photo A** was taken in 1907. If any readers find a better 1907 newspaper photo of the signs, please let us know.



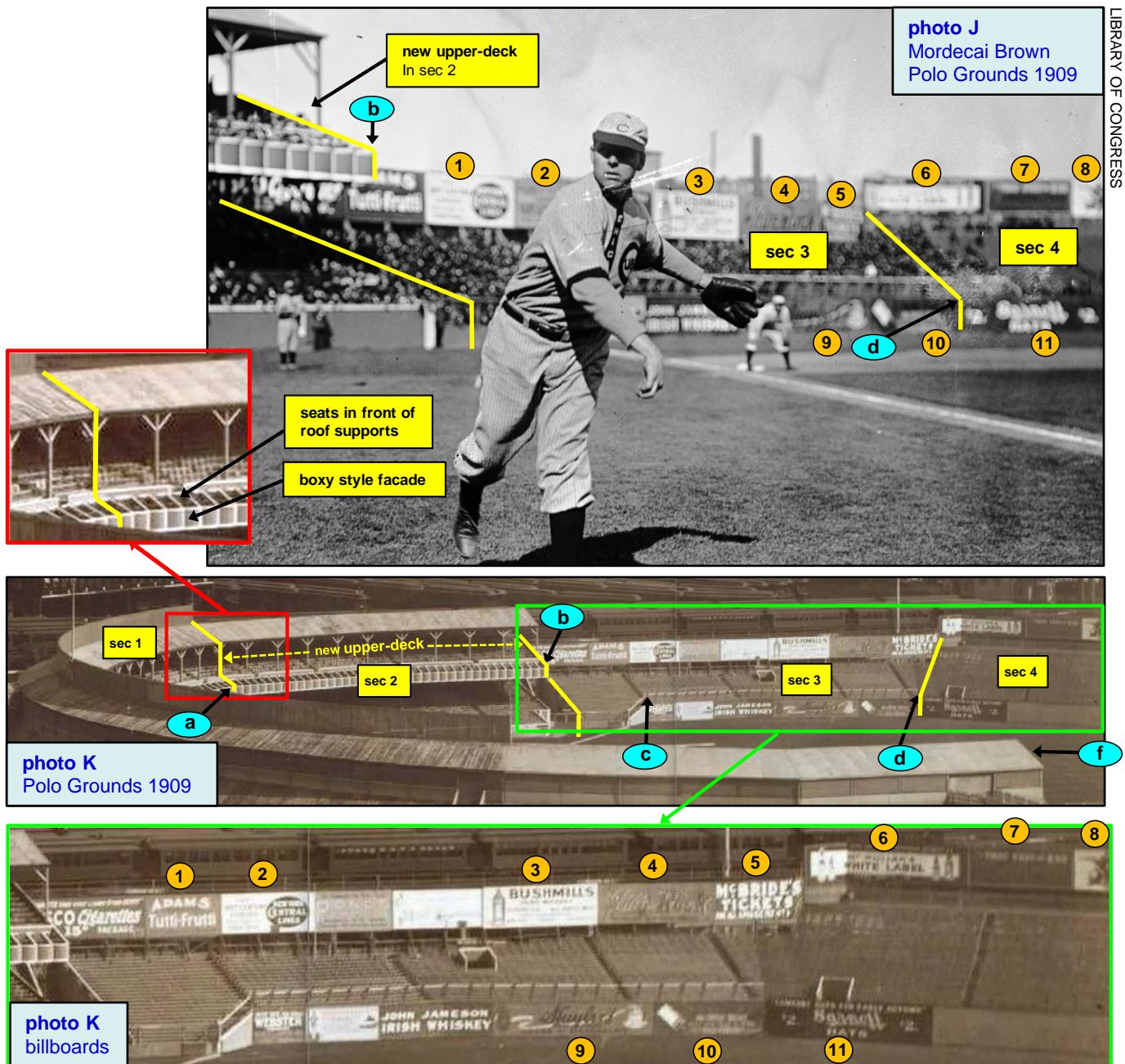
The Reason for the Misidentification Is?...

Well, we have no idea. Any response received from the source of **photo A** will be considered on the record, and it will appear in print.

Grandstand Upper-Deck completion - 1909

Though we are done debunking the Merkle game connection for **photo A**, there is value in continuing the description of the Polo Grounds expansion over the next two years. It may help readers who want to date other photos. **Photo J** depicts Mordecai Brown warming up at the Polo Grounds while wearing a unique to 1909 Cubs road uniform. We can now see what the new **section 2** grandstand upper deck looked like after it was completed.

Just below **photo J** is **photo K**, also taken in 1909. We know the year from careful comparison of the numbered billboards in this image (magnified bottom of page) with those seen in **Photo J**. The entire new upper-deck extension can be seen in **section 2**. It extends from **point a** up to **point b**. Unlike the 1908 version of the upper-deck, the new structure now includes a few rows of seats well in front of the roof supports. Other photos show that these new rows of seats with a new boxy style façade also extended across the old upper-deck of **section 1**.



Grandstand - 1910

Photo L, just right, depicts Jimmy Archer in a unique to 1910 Cubs road uniform. A boxy style façade is now also apparent in front of the *lower* deck grandstand seats (compare to 1909 **photo J**). In **photo M** below we see a large portion of the left side of the Polo Grounds. The billboards match those visible in **photo L**, hence it was also taken in 1910. We can see in the magnified portion of **photo P** that the lower deck boxy façade sits in front of several rows of newly added seating that begin somewhat beyond the 3rd base side dugout. This was completed early during the 1910 season.



photo L
Jimmy Archer
Polo Grounds 1910

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



photo M
Polo Grounds 1910

One photo we have found, attributable to 1911 just before the April fire, shows that the visible portion grandstand matches what we have shown for the 1910 season⁵. We haven't found an image that shows the pre-fire 1911 billboards as yet.



1909/1910 – Summary of useful findings

1909

- **section 2:** new grandstand with upper-deck has been completed extending to **point b (14)**
- **sections 1 and 2:** upper-deck has new boxy style façade and more rows of seats in front of roof supports **(15)**

1910

- **section 2:** a few more rows of seats with a new boxy style façade added to grandstand lower deck **(16)**

Give a Man A Fish...

There is a terrific 2005 book by **Frank Deford** entitled *The Old Ball Game – How John McGraw, Christy Mathewson, and the New York Giants Created Modern Baseball*. On page 140 it includes a photo of the Polo Grounds taken from Coogan's Bluff. It apparently comes from the same source as did **photo A**, but it clearly is a different photo. The caption in the book reads, "Polo Grounds, 1908 playoff with the Cubs." A familiar refrain indeed. Could it be right this time?

We hope that our newsletter has some didactic value, so for this one the exercise is left to the reader. The book is readily available on Amazon.com very inexpensively in paperback or Kindle format. The quality of the image in our paperback copy is not very good, but it's good enough. All the information needed to date this photo is given in this article. Let us know what you think and why, and we will print some of your comments in the next issue.

Discussion of some peripheral issues and a list of relevant newspaper quotes appear in the appendices that follow. 

(2) The event is described in the 7-18-1908 *N.Y. Tribune*

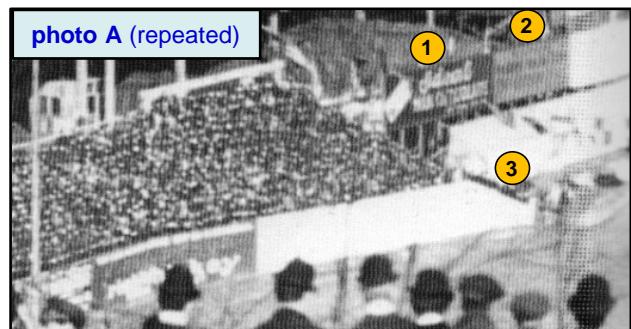
(3) For an earlier game, the 9-19-1908 *N.Y. Sun* made note of just a few fans on the roof, "There were a half dozen bold spirits on the roof."

(4) Another version of this postcard also includes several other fake signs, including a ground level faux Hunyadi Water sign in **section 3**

(5) *Mystery Photo Supplement*, March 2012, p. 12-13, <https://sabr.box.com/shared/static/106f79f134092a683653.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Photo A Does Not Depict the 1905 WS

The Corbis claim that **photo A** depicts game 2 from the 1905 WS is now addressed in detail. Some of the billboards in **section 4** in that photo are magnified and numbered, just right. Looking at those same respective locations in the 1905 WS **photo B**, below, we see that there are no billboards present. Hence there is nothing to support the claim that **photo A** depicts a 1905 WS game.



Appendix 2 – Relevant Quotes From 1908 Newspapers on the Polo Grounds Expansion

New York Tribune 8-12-1908: Plans have been filed...for enlarging the big grandstand...at the Polo Grounds...with a balcony above the ground floor.

New York Tribune 8-23-1908: More Seats for Polo Grounds Fans: The bleachers at the Polo Grounds are to be enlarged by adding an annex platform 170 feet long and 64 feet deep. [The article references an earlier filing of a plan to expand the grandstands].

New York Evening World 9-2-1908: In the mean time great rafters and columns of timbers have begun to mark the lines of the greatest grandstand [*no doubt they mean bleachers*] in the country, which is being especially built to accommodate the crowds at the Polo Grounds during the final fight.....This stand will increase the seating capacity at the Polo Grounds to at least 25,000...It will be ready by the time the Giants return next Tuesday [9-8-1908]

New York Sun 9-9-1908: [return from road trip]: After the spectators had taken in the enlarged stands, which include an addition to the stand deluxe and an extended bleacher which towers up like a football stand...

New York Tribune 9-9-1908: The additions to the stands since that have been erected since the Polo Grounds were last open helped furnish seats for all.

New York Sun 9-15 1908: The enlarged stands at the Polo Grounds form the most sweeping amphitheater to be found anywhere.

New York Evening World 9-19-1908: There were more than 30,000 in the grounds. Heretofore it was out of the question to handle that many people in any major league ballpark, but the addition of the new stands at the Polo Grounds made it possible.

New York Sun 9-19-1908: It was the first real test of whether the crowd would be big enough to fill the enlarged stands....The stands themselves provided a sweep of seating room which formed a huge horseshoe around the field, leaving only breaks between the ends of the stands and the quarter roost...Inside those in the grandstand who couldn't find seats or standing room clambered up on the rafters. There were a half dozen bold spirits on the roof.

New York Evening World 9-22-1908: Jim Foster, the expert stand builder of Philadelphia, has contracted to extend the [*left field*] grandstand at the Polo Grounds as far as the left field foul line, which, when finished, will correspond with the extension recently made to the right field end of the stand. It will be a double decker, and when finished,

will accommodate at least two thousand more people. He will begin work immediately after the Cubs series [last game 9-24], and promises to have the job done in eighteen days.

New York Evening World 9-30-1908: With the extension of the grandstand and the bleachers at the Polo Grounds, the park becomes pretty near an ideal spot for big football games....

New York Tribune 10-9-1908 p.2: A few venturesome souls made their way to the top of the grandstand....They got a rope and a ladder, and five hundred men and boys paid \$1 apiece to be hauled up to a precarious seat on the ridge [grandstand roof]....the police relaxed their attention for a moment, and the respite was long enough to enable a hundred or more men to crawl under the new grandstand back of third base.

New York Tribune 10-9-1908 p.4: Pushed off the top of the new north stand at the Polo Grounds yesterday afternoon, Edward Wheeler.....fell twenty feet and broke his right leg.

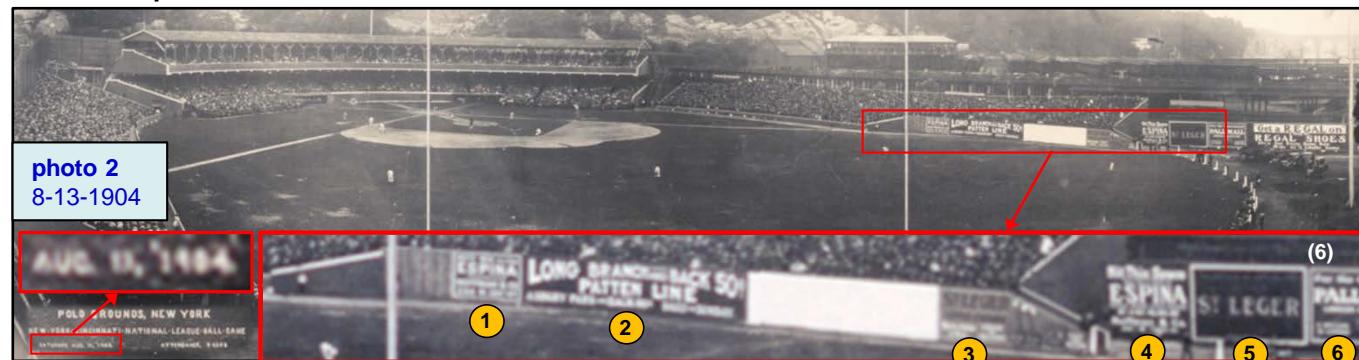
Appendix 3 – Another Polo Grounds Postcard

Here is another Polo Grounds postcard (**photo 1**) that we can correctly date. According to the inscription it depicts a very well-attended Cubs-Giants game. The copyright date is 1908, and in fact it has been claimed that this photo was taken in 1908. We have magnified some of the left field signage, outlined in red.



Here above we see (1) Espina, (2) Long Branch/Patten Line, (3) St Leger, (4) Espina, (5) St Leger, and (6) part of a Pall Mall sign.

The Library of Congress photo below (**photo 2**) bears a George Lawrence studio mark and the vintage inscription dates it to the Giants-Reds game of August 13, 1904. A section of the left field billboards has again been magnified. It can be seen that they are an exact match to the signs in the above scene. We can then be fairly certain that **photo 1** was also taken in 1904, not 1908.



Appendix 4 – Polo Grounds Wikipedia Page

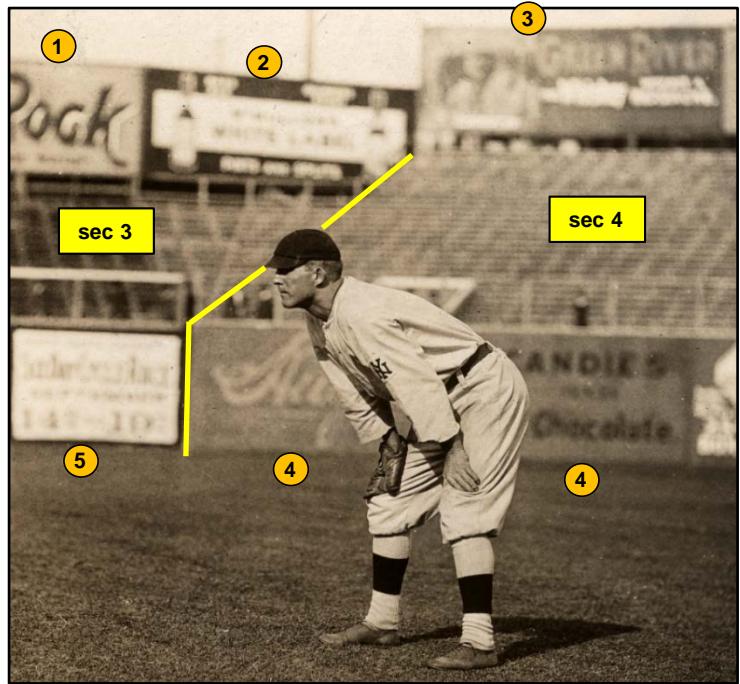
Not surprisingly, on the Polo Grounds Wikipedia page, if you scroll down a bit, on the right you'll see **photo A** with the caption, "Fans observe a game at the Polo Grounds from Coogan's Bluff, 1908." If you then double-click on the photo, you get an enlarged version with the photo's file name, "[Merkles_Boner_game_Polo_Grounds_Sept23_1908.jpg](#)." Ugh! We have left it as is for now, but we will soon submit the correct year for that photo and a reference to this article.

Appendix 5 – Cy Seymour at the Polo Grounds, Dated 9-29-1908 (5 days after the Merkle Game)

This George Bain shot of Cy Seymour comes courtesy of **Dennis Goldstein**. The photo bears a date stamp of 9-29-1908. Note the presence of the new **section 4** bleachers. The stamp is of a style common to Bain photos. Let's compare the billboards to those seen in our Merkle game replay images.

Sign (1) (the "Rock" portion of the White Rock billboard) and sign (2) are clearly visible in **section 3** of the Merkle game replay newspaper image, **photo P**, on page 8. Signs (3) and (4), with sign (4) spanning both sides of Seymour, are clearly visible in the Merkle game replay postcard **photo H**, also on page 8.

It's interesting to note that sign (5) differs from the billboard in that location in **photo H**. However, given the other matches, and also given the logo font style on Seymour's left arm which may be unique to 1908, this is certainly a late 1908 photo taken after the bleacher expansion. There is no reason we can see to doubt the date stamp. 



DENNIS GOLDSTEIN COLLECTION

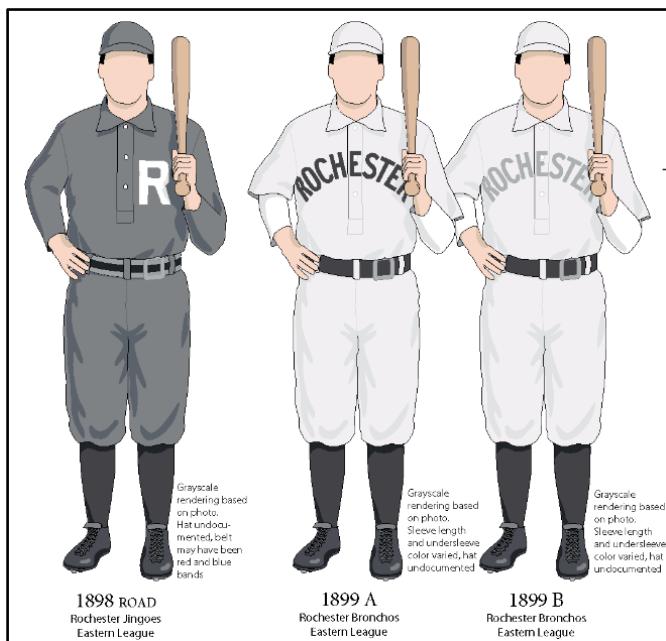
Channeling Okkonen

The *Rochester Baseball Historical Society* has a website well worth visiting. It is maintained by **Joe Territo** and **Paul Bielewicz**. Go to: <http://rochesterbaseballhistory.org/>, and click on **REASEARCH PROJECTS**. There is an impressive list of contributions, including quite a few from the prominent 19thC researcher **Priscilla Astifan**.

Of particular interest to our committee is the work found down towards the bottom of the page under the heading **Uniforms**. There are three entries which feature the work of **Craig Brown**, assisted by Paul Bielewicz. The fastest way to be amazed and visually impressed is to download the third entry, *Rochester Uniform Database - A Study of Rochester Baseball Uniforms from 1887 – present*¹. The excerpted depictions, just right, show renderings of the Eastern League Rochester club attire in 1898 and 1899, along with an honest description of what is known and what is not yet known, with comments such as "hat undocumented," and "belt may have been red and blue." This provides a good indication of where more research is needed.

Craig's first two entries are entitled *Before They Wore Wings, part 1*², and *part 2*³. These feature a meticulously crafted photo history of Rochester players in uniform from the 1880's to 1927. This also includes artist renderings.

Craig has future plans for some very interesting research. We will keep you up to date. 



(1) http://rochesterbaseballhistory.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/rochesterbaseballuniformdatabase_1apr13.pdf

(2) http://rochesterbaseballhistory.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/beforetheyworewings_partone_1apr13.pdf

(3) http://rochesterbaseballhistory.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/beforetheyworewings_parttwo_1apr13.pdf

Every Weekday - Something New About Something Old

We were fortunate enough to accidentally come upon a site called *Baseball History Daily - Heroes, Villains, Oddities and Minutiae-The Forgotten History of the National Pastime*. It is the creation of **Thom Karmik** and can be found at:

<http://baseballhistorydaily.com/>

The site was born on July 2012, and since then it has lived up to its name – there has been a new column every weekday. The nicely crafted articles include very well-chosen imagery.

The columns for August 5 and 6, 2013, tell the story of Phillies pitcher George Chalmers and feature photos from his scrapbook (supplied by Chalmers's niece, **Karen Weiss**). Our favorite is the image, right, taken during the Phillies trip to Cuba in November, 1911.

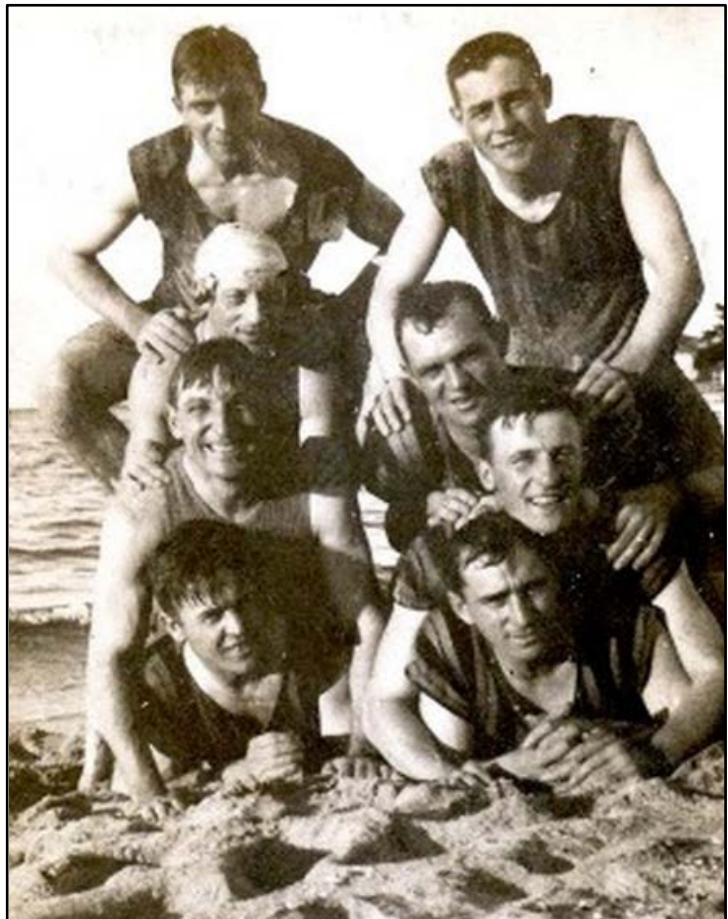
No IDs were given, but aided by the published roster for the trip, we have, left to right, top to bottom:

Bill Killefer -- ?

Mike Mitchell -- Toots Shultz

Hans Lobert -- George Chalmers

Otto Knabe -- Sherry Magee 



COURTESY OF KAREN WEISS

Phillies stacked up on the beach in Cuba, 1911

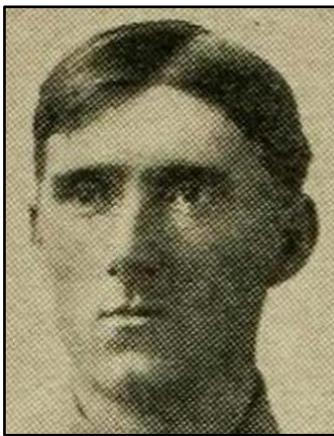
A Little More From Benny Bowcock

The relatively unknown but often seen Mr. Bowcock gets some additional face time in this issue. When we left off in the last issue, we were convinced that the image, near right, depicted Bowcock based upon some strong evidence combined with a couple of "not so great" exemplars.

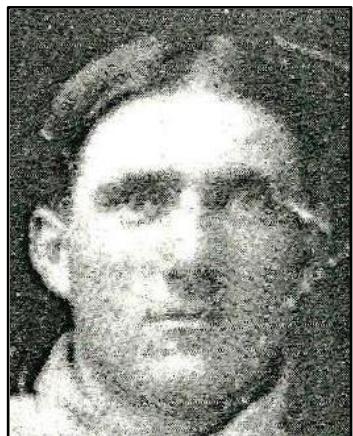
Bob Richardson came through for us with no less than three confirmed headshots of Benny, all of which were better than what we had. We have reproduced the best one, far right, which depicts the short-time major leaguer with Fall River in 1905. If there was any doubt, there should be none now.

Also, we received a comment from **Leon Lucky** of *Brockleman and Lucky Auctions*. Leon is also the owner of the [net54](#) baseball-card/memorabilia online discussion forum¹. When describing the E101-4 Morgan/Bowcock card, we incorrectly stated that it was issued by *Nadja Caramels*. Leon pointed out that *Nadja Caramels* was not itself an entity, but was merely a brand of the *Blanke Wenneker Company* who issued the card. 

(1) <http://www.net54baseball.com/>



We claimed this is Bowcock



Bowcock, Fall River 1905

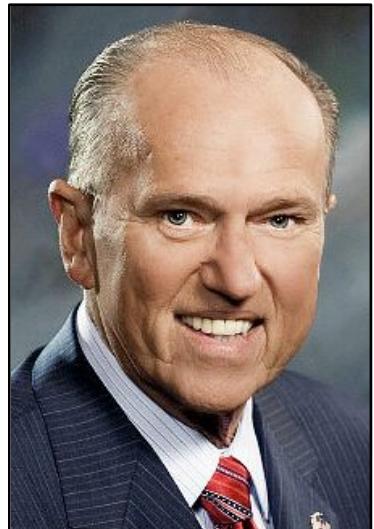
Committee Business

★ New Committee Award ★

At the convention **Leslie Heaphy** encouraged the chairs of the various research committees to issue awards. The Negro Leagues Committee does just that, and their awards do attract a fair amount of attention. Upon his return from the convention **Bill Hickman** suggested that we come up with something. We now have a proposal that will be outlined here.

The award will be known as the **George Michael SABR Pictorial History Committee Award**, and it will be granted for significant contribution to the knowledge and understanding of historical baseball imagery. George was a nationally known sportscaster as well as a long time SABR member and baseball photo collector. He specialized in the analyses of early to mid 20th century game action scenes (particularly ones that included players sliding), showing remarkable skill in determining the date of the game and even the particular play within the game, along with the identification of the players and umpires present. He combined all that with an excellent presentation style, as can be seen in:

- *Identifying Mystery Photos, Baseball Research Journal #33, 2004*
- *Nine Mystery Photos, Baseball Research Journal #34, 2005*
- *Mystery Photos, Baseball Research Journal #35, 2007*



George Michael

His influence can be seen in photo analysis articles that have subsequently appeared in PHC's own *Mystery Photo Supplement* and *Reflecting the Past* (including the lead article in this issue), as well as pieces in *BRJ* and *TNP*. An excellent tribute to George can be found here:

<http://keitholbermann.mlblogs.com/2009/12/24/george-michael-baseball-historian-rip/>

The award will be bestowed when merited and thus not necessarily given every year. Recipients will be selected by consensus of the PHC chairpersons. There will be a link on the SABR PHC web page connected to a list of recipients that will include text describing the reasons each person received the award. We plan to announce the first winner of the award in the next newsletter.

>New Committee Project Proposal

The committee currently has a *Spalding Guide - Reach Guide* index in the form of an Excel spreadsheet which lists the minor league team photos and corresponding page numbers in the Guides. During our PHC meeting at the recent convention, **Tom Shieber** made a project proposal that would take this a significant step further. Tom suggested that we form a team of PHC volunteers to go through the Guides and list every player in each minor league team photo. This would greatly facilitate the finding of images of career minor leaguers.

This project has become much more feasible with the online availability of so many (though not all) Reach and Spalding Guides on *Internet Archive*, many more than have been available from the Library of Congress site.

We would need a team of volunteers to go through Guides (either online or from personal collections) and enter the names and page numbers, in some specified format, for the players depicted. In almost all cases, only last names are given, and we really do need the first names. Each last name would have to be checked against the roster for that team, on say, baseball-reference.com, in order to obtain the corresponding

first name. This is no small undertaking as a fair amount of work would be needed for each Guide.

Of course there will be complications. Two players with the same last name on a team may cause confusion in matching first names from the roster. However, that should not deter us from moving forward.

Minor league images first appeared in the 1895 Spalding Guide, and the 1902 Reach Guide. We would start with the earliest guides and move forward in time. The earlier Guides had relatively few photos. The number had expanded greatly by the mid-1900's.

The project would likely proceed in phases, with the first phase ignoring the possible misidentifications in the Guides, and a later effort designed to deal with those bad IDs.

Most importantly, let us know if you would like to volunteer for this effort, and if so, how many years you are willing to cover. In order for the project to proceed, we have to have enough volunteers.

We are open to suggestions related to this project. Please let us know what you think.

Image Index Updates



By T. Scott Brandon

Last, but definitely not least, as this is our core function. We have the following changes to report.

Formerly Missing Players Found Since the July Newsletter

John Hiland – by Mark Fimoff in an 1888 New Jersey Skeeters team photo. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/kybnfn7>

Malcom MacDonald – by Rich Bowering in the 08-Apr-1905 Philadelphia Inquirer. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/lhdtx5f>

Players Reinserted in the Missing List Since the July Newsletter

Fred Johnston – player image index photo actually pictures 1924 Robins teammate Jimmy Johnston.

The missing player list can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pl-list>

Formerly Missing Umpires Found Since the July Newsletter

William Betts – by T. Scott Brandon in the 19-Jan-1913 Washington Times. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/mmaet4v>

Harry Colgan – by T. Scott Brandon in the 26-Aug-1902 Butte Inter Mountain. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/ky42qsj>

Pete Harrison – by T. Scott Brandon in the 09-Jun-1916 Tacoma Times. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/l9o7hy1>

James Haynie – by Mark Fimoff in an article about the first National Association game. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/kf7k4yy>

Charles McCafferty – by T. Scott Brandon, pictured as a member of the 1909 Lincoln Railsplitters in the 1910 Reach Guide. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/kwthhyg>

Arthur Queisser – by T. Scott Brandon, pictured as a member of the 1913 Springfield (IL) Watchmakers in the 1914 Spalding Guide. The image can be seen on the OOTP website here: <http://tinyurl.com/lpmhr6e>

The missing umpire list can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/um-list>

Yet Another Notable Website

A great site that has been around a long time is [Baseball Fever](#), whose proprietor is **Bill Burgess**. There is probably no other privately run site that matches this one in terms of image quantity and quality. It includes a veritable mother lode of historical baseball photos, with some SABR members participating in the posting and identification of images. Start here:

<http://www.baseball-fever.com/forumdisplay.php?80-Baseball-Photography>

Contacting the Pictorial History Committee Chair

If you want to contact us for any reason related to PHC business, we are (in alphabetical order):

T. Scott Brandon, t_scott Brandon@msn.com

Mark Fimoff, bmarlowe@comcast.net

Cary Smith, zinnbeck@aol.com

Thanks to Priscilla Astifan, Paul, Bielewics, Craig Brown, Bill Burgess, David DYTE, Dennis Goldstein, Eric Gouldsberry, Leslie Heaphy, Bill Hickman, Thom Karmik, Rob Lifson, Leon Lucky, Marc Okkonen, Bob Richardson, Tom Shieber, and Karen Weiss for their assistance with and/or contributions to this issue. If you have a comment on this issue, or a photo or a relevant article that you would like to submit for a future issue of **RTP**, please send it to **Mark Fimoff**, bmarlowe@comcast.net.