

The INSIDE GAME



The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

VOL. XIV, No. 3: "LET'S GET THIS LUMPY LICORICE-STAINED BALL ROLLING!"

JUNE 2014

THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN AN INTERVIEW WITH ROB NEYER

by John McMurray

A SABR member since 1984, Rob Neyer has written six books on baseball and was a prominent baseball columnist for ESPN.com for almost 15 years, leaving in early 2011. In 2011, he became National Baseball Editor for SBNation.com, and he is currently working for FoxSports.com as their Senior Baseball Editor. Neyer, who began his career while working with Bill James, has been a prominent advocate of using sabermetrics to evaluate player performance and has written several articles discussing candidates for the Hall of Fame. He offered his perspective to *The Inside Game* on several topics relating to the Deadball Era:

What is your opinion about the practicality of voters continuing to consider Deadball Era players for the Hall of Fame, considering that there is no one living who has seen any of them play?

I don't know that it should matter much if anyone alive has ever seen them. The great majority of people who are alive now didn't see

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SABR 44

As the newsletter was being composed, the list of presentations and the date/time/location of events had not yet been released for SABR 44 in Houston, July 30- August 3, 2014. But if past conventions are any guide, there should be no shortage of matters of interest to Deadball Era Committee members. The annual meeting of our committee will be hosted by chairman John McMurray who will provide an overview of Deadball-related events occurring this past year and inform the membership of future matters of interest. A highlight of the meeting will be formal presentation of the 2014 Ritter Award. This year's winner was *Spitballing: The Baseball Days of Long Bob Ewing* by Mike Lackey. The meeting will be conducted on Friday, August 1, from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM at a to-be-announced location at the Houston convention site.

A convention event of particular interest will be the playing of the simulated game between the all-star teams selected by the 19th Century and Deadball Era committees, conducted under the auspices of the SABR Games and Simulation Research Committee. The game should prove an interesting and entertaining event and all those attending the convention are urged to stop by and catch some of the action.

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BOB WOOD: TWICE A HERO IN 1903

by **Dennis Pajot**

Many baseball players are called heroes when they hit a game winning home run, or pitch marvelously in a big game. But some are real heroes. Bob Wood, Milwaukee Brewer catcher, had a chance to be a real hero twice in about two months in 1903.

On the night of Friday, June 26, several members of the Brewers, in addition to the visiting St. Paul Saints, were in their rooms at the Davidson Hotel, located on North 3rd Street, south of Grand Avenue [now West Wisconsin Avenue], in downtown Milwaukee. A fire started in a tailor shop next door and spread to the hotel. Wood turned in the alarm, and then ran through the hotel arousing the players, many having just enough time to dress and hastily pack some things. Many of the players lost considerable clothing and belongings. Brewer pitcher Elmer Meredith, who was not in the hotel — being home with his sick wife — lost all his clothing and whatever possessions he had in the room.

Pitcher Willie McGill managed to pack all his clothing into a satchel and carried it to the elevator. He returned to his room for some reason and during his absence the satchel was stolen. The fire caused considerable damage to a number of buildings in the downtown area, with losses estimated at about \$200,000 total — \$40,000 of that to the building and contents of the Davidson Hotel.

Brewer owner Charles Havenor was also the owner of the Davidson Hotel. He told *Milwaukee Journal* baseball reporter Brownie: “Good luck never comes to a man without its being doubled with bad. After having won my suit in court [against former co-owner of the Brewers Harry Quin, over ownership of the club], having the best attendance of the week at the baseball game, my hotel burns.” The same newspaper reported Bob Wood lost all his clothes, but managed to



Bob Wood

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The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

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save his pipe: "So matters are not half as bad as they might have been."

On Saturday, August 15, the game between the Brewers and Louisville Colonels was rained out, setting the stage for Bob Wood to put himself in harm's way again. The *Evening Wisconsin* reported the event, reading like a script for an old time Western movie:

Bob Wood, one of the catchers of the Milwaukee American Association baseball team, distinguished himself at noon today and proved that he can catch a runaway team with as much ease and grace as he can take in a ball behind the bat.

A double team, owned by the United States Express Company, attached to one of the company's heaviest wagons, ran away near the Union passenger station [located between 3rd and 4th Street south of Michigan Street] between 12 and 1 o'clock today. The team dashed up Third Street toward Grand Avenue, which was crowded with electric cars, wagons, buggies and automobiles at the time. As the frightened horses madly ran up the street Bob Wood sat in front of the Davidson Hotel. Seeing the serious results probable if the vehicle reached Grand Avenue under such headway, Wood sprang from his seat and reached the middle of the street with two jumps and a half.

He then sprang toward the horses' heads, but missed them, and as the wagon flew by Bob caught the rear end and quickly climbed in. Grabbing up the reins he began to jerk vigorously on them. By the time Grand Avenue was reached he had the team under control, avoiding several threatened collisions by the dexterity of his driving. The runaways were driven back to the Union Station, where they made a second bold break for liberty, within half an hour after the first experience. This time, however, they did not get up much headway and were easily stopped.

The hero of the hour, Catcher Wood, won a great deal of praise from people who witnessed his catch, as all believed that

serious results would follow the runaway if the horses reached the avenue uncontrolled... The runaway injured cabs No. 20 and 76, which were standing in front of the station.

Many stories are written and recalled about drunken ball players and rowdy ball players in the dead-ball era. And there were many. But there were also a number of Bob Wood types, and they deserve to be remembered also.

A frequent newsletter contributor, Dennis Pajot chronicles Deadball Era baseball in his hometown of Milwaukee.

SOURCES

Richard L. Nailen and James S. Haight, *Beertown Blazes, A Century of Milwaukee Fire Fighting* (Milwaukee: Self-published, 1971).

Sporting Life, July 4, 1903.

Milwaukee Journal, June 27, 1903.

Evening Wisconsin, June 27 and August 15, 1903.

Milwaukee Sentinel, June 27, 1903.

NEW DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Inside Game is pleased to welcome the following SABR members who have expressed interest in the Deadball Era to the committee:

Lee Allen
Scott Berkhimer
Ben Jacobson
Chris Joyce
Graig Kreindler
Andrew Padyk
Michael Remillard
John Shultz
Travis Weir
Phil Williams

We look forward to their active participation in committee endeavors. These new committee members, as well as our newsletter contributors, can be contacted via the SABR directory.

ACCURATE RBI RECORDS FOR THE PLAYERS OF THE DEADBALL ERA: PART 2 – THE PLAYERS ON THE 1906 DETROIT TIGERS

by **Herm Krabbenhoft**

In a previous article I presented the results of my research on the runs batted in by the players on the 1919 Boston Red Sox team.¹ I pointed out that the RBI numbers shown in the various baseball encyclopedias for 19 of the 30 Red Sox players are wrong. In this article I provide the results of my research on the runs batted in by the players on the 1906 Detroit Tigers team.²

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

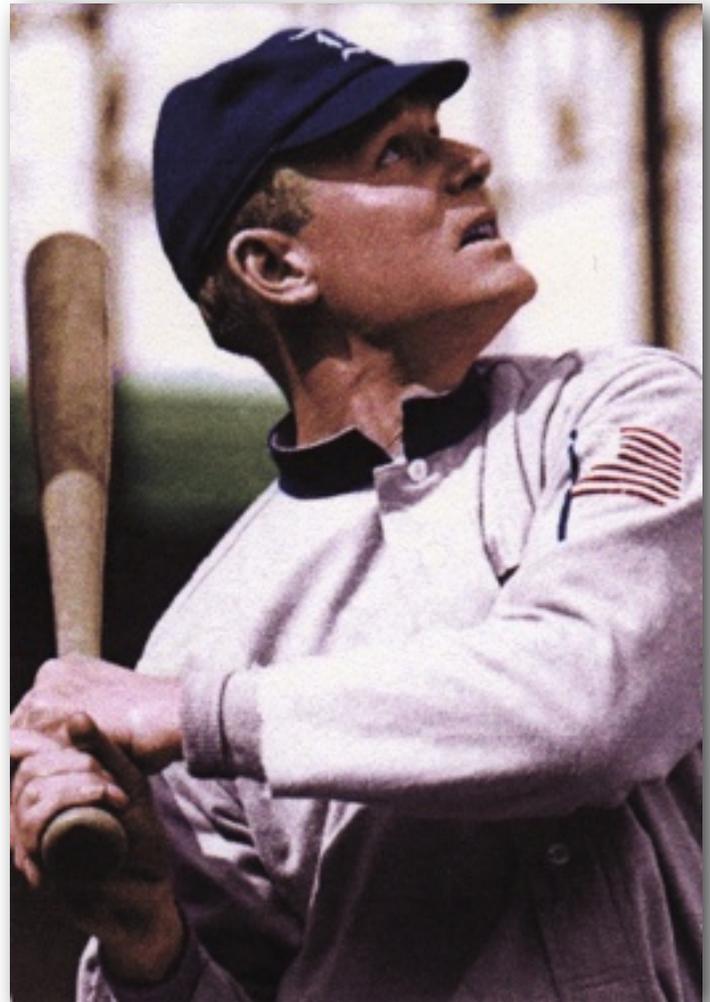
Employing previously-described research procedures, I have ascertained the complete details for each of the 518 runs scored by the 1906 Detroit Tigers. The complete runs-scored documentation is provided in the Appendix of a companion article.³ Therefore, I have simultaneously determined the accurate RBI record for each of the players on the 1906 Detroit team. See Appendix A for the game-by-game RBI record for each Tigers player.

Table 1 presents the RBI numbers for the players on the 1906 Tigers according to two sources:

- (a) The RBIs shown in David Neft's "Big-Mac" (1969 edition), and
- (b) The actual RBIs (i.e., the RBIs based on the research described in this article).

Also shown are the absolute-value differences ($|\Delta|$) between Neft's RBI numbers and the actual RBI numbers.

There are several items relevant to Table 1 that need to be pointed out. First, it is emphasized that Neft's RBI numbers have been adopted by all of the various baseball encyclopedias and websites.^{4,5} Thus, for example, the RBI numbers currently shown on the Baseball-Reference.com website are identical to Neft's RBI numbers – except for two players. Baseball-Reference.com



Sam Crawford

shows both Ed Killian and John Rowan with zero RBIs. Second, as things have transpired, the Day-By-Day (DBD) ledgers generated by Neft for each player from the 1905-1919 seasons are no longer available. So, no data are extant to support Neft's RBI numbers for the 1905-1919 players – including the players on the 1906 Detroit Tigers.⁶

Third, the entries in the "RBIs (Actual)" column for Bill Coughlin and Germany Schaefer are bracketed with asterisks to indicate uncertainty. Thus, in the second game of the Tigers-Senators doubleheader on August 8, 1906, Detroit scored two runs in the ninth inning. From the descriptions given in the pertinent newspaper accounts, it is not possible to ascertain with 100 per cent confidence if (a) Schaefer and Coughlin each batted in one run, or (b) if Coughlin batted in both of the runs. See Appendix B for complete

information. Fourth, examination of Table 1 shows that Neft's RBI numbers and my RBI numbers are different for 15 (or 16) of the 24 players on the 1906 Tigers team. While most of the differences between Neft's RBI numbers and my RBI numbers are small – e.g., only one RBI for eight (or nine) of the 15 (or 16) players – there are substantial differences for three of the players. Thus, Neft and Baseball-Reference.com show Ty Cobb with 34 RBIs, while I have Cobb with 41 RBIs – a difference of seven RBIs. Similarly, my 41 RBIs for Charley O'Leary are seven RBIs more than Neft's and Baseball-Reference's 34 RBIs. At the opposite extreme, Neft and Baseball-Reference have Sam Crawford with 72 RBIs, while I credit Crawford with 66 RBIs – six fewer RBIs.

It is important to point out that none of the RBIs that I credited to Ty Cobb involves a "judgment" – i.e., there are no instances where I credited an RBI to Cobb because of the instruction in the official scoring rules: "With less than two outs, if an error is made on a play on which a runner from third would ordinarily score, credit the batsman with a run batted in." See Appendix A and C for complete details. Also with regard to Cobb's 1906 RBI record, it is important to point out that subsequent to the initial presentation of my findings, I learned that back in 1964 – i.e., five years before the publication of Neft's "Big-Mac" – SABR-founding member Bob McConnell had reached the same conclusion based on his research that I have – that Ty Cobb actually achieved 41 RBIs during the 1906 season. See Appendix D. So, as it turns out, my determination (in 2013) of Ty Cobb's accurate RBI record for 1906 serves as an independent corroboration of McConnell's ground-breaking research carried out nearly 50 years earlier.

Moving on now to Sam Crawford's RBI record for 1906, as shown in his game-by-game RBI record (Appendix A), just as was the case with Cobb, none of the RBIs that I credited to Sam Crawford involves a "judgment." All of the RBIs I credited to Crawford are from safe hits, sacrifice flies, or groundouts; no fielding errors were involved in any of RBIs that I credited to Crawford. See Appendix C for complete details



Germany Schaefer

on all runs scored when a fielding error was committed subsequent to the batter putting the ball in play.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The salient question regarding the RBI numbers presented in Table 1 is: Which RBI numbers are accurate – Neft's or mine? As mentioned above, there are no data currently available to support the accuracy of Neft's RBI numbers – and therefore, Baseball-Reference's RBI numbers.⁶ In contrast, employing multiple independent newspaper accounts I have assembled the complete details of each of the 518 runs scored by Detroit during the 1906 season. This comprehensive supporting documentation is readily available on the SABR.org website. Therefore, I conclude that my RBI numbers for

the players on the 1906 Detroit Tigers are accurate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With sincere thanks I gratefully acknowledge these individuals for their fantastic help in providing me with photocopies/scans of vitally-important newspaper accounts – Ron Antonucci, Steve Boren, Keith Carlson, Mark Moore, Dave Newman, Dave Smith, Gary Stone, and Dixie Tourangeau. I should also like to thank the following people who provided me with other useful information – Cliff Blau, Clem Comly, Ev Cope, Steve Elsberry, Greg Erion, Andy McCue, David Neft, Pete Palmer, Tom Ruane, Stew Thornley, David Vincent, and Jim Wohlenhaus. And, I thank Trent McCotter for providing me with Bob McConnell’s pioneering research results on Ty Cobb’s accurate RBI record for 1906.

The Inside Game is pleased to present this latest installment in Herm Krabbenhoft’s record-altering research on Deadball Era RBIs. The appendices to the instant article can be reviewed on-line at SABR’s Deadball Era

Committee webpage: <http://sabr.org/research/deadball-era-research-committee-newsletters>.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Herm Krabbenhoft, “Accurate RBI Records for the Players of the Deadball Era: Part 1 – The Players on the 1919 Boston Red Sox,” *The Inside Game*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, February 2014.
2. Some of the results given in this article were first presented in a talk given on August 1, 2013 at the SABR Baseball Records Committee meeting during the National Convention of the Society for American Baseball Research in Philadelphia: Herm Krabbenhoft, “Runs Scored ... Missing ... Found ... Phantom.”
3. Herm Krabbenhoft, “Missing ... Found ... Phantom: The Accurate Runs-Scored Records of the 1906 Detroit Tigers,” *The Inside Game*, Vol. XIV, No. 2, April 2014.
4. The various baseball encyclopedias utilizing Neft’s 1891-1919 RBI numbers include: (a) *The Baseball Encyclopedia* (New York: Macmillan, 1969-1996); (b) *Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1974-2007); (c) *Total Baseball* (New York and Kingston, NY: Warner Books, Viking Press, Total Sports Publishing, and Sport Media Publishing, 1989-2004); (d) *The ESPN Encyclopedia of Baseball* (New York: Sterling Press, 2004-2008); and (e) *STATS ML Baseball Handbook* (Northbrook, Illinois: STATS, 1998-2000). It is also pointed out that *The Complete Baseball Record Book* published by *The Sporting News* (2005-2008) also used Neft’s RBI numbers in the League Leaders section.
5. The various baseball websites utilizing Neft’s 1891-1919 RBI numbers include Baseball-Reference.com, Retrosheet.org, and MLB.com.
6. In a telephone conversation with Mr. Neft on June 25, 2013, I asked him about there not being any game-by-game RBI data for the 1905-1919 seasons. Mr. Neft told me that the intention was to donate the original 1905-1919 files to the Hall of Fame, as had been done for the original 1891-1904 files. In the meantime, however, the 1905-1919 files were stored in a warehouse, which had a fire and apparently all of the 1905-1919 files were destroyed. I also asked Mr. Neft if there were any back-up files or printouts for the 1905-1919 files. He said that he was not aware of any. I then asked, “So, does that mean there are no data available to support your RBI numbers for the 1905-1919 seasons – including the 1906 Detroit Tigers?” Mr. Neft answered, “That appears to be so.”

BRICK OWENS FIRED FOR BREAKING RULE

Because he was found guilty of patronizing a gambling house, which is in violation of the rules of deportment, Brick Owens, one of the most popular umpires in the National league and a former A.A. official, was Tuesday dismissed. President Lynch followed his dismissal of Owens by issuing a statement in the nature of a warning to all who hold this position.

Owens left Chicago for St. Louis Wednesday and will go from there to his home in Kansas City. “Lynch’s action was a great surprise to me,” said Owens. “A foul tip struck me in the foot last week and I intended to stay in Chicago a few days to allow my foot to get better.”

The Toledo News-Bee, May 7, 1913

TABLE 1: RUNS-BATTED-IN BY THE INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS ON THE 1906 DETROIT TIGERS.

Player	RBI (Neft)	RBI (Actual)	Δ
Ty Cobb	34	41	7
Bill Coughlin	60	*60 or 61*	0 or 1
Sam Crawford	72	66	6
Red Donahue	1	2	1
Bill Donovan	0	2	2
John Eubank	1	1	---
Gus Hetling	0	0	---
Davy Jones	24	23	1
Ed Killian	4	5	1
Chris Lindsay	33	36	3
Bobby Lowe	12	13	1
Matty McIntyre	39	39	---
George Mullin	6	8	2
Charley O'Leary	34	41	7
Fred Payne	20	22	2
Jack Rowan	1	0	1
Germany Schaefer	42	*43 or 44*	1 or 2
Frank Scheibeck	0	0	---
Boss Schmidt	10	10	---
Ed Siever	3	2	1
Sam Thompson	3	4	1
Jack Warner	10	9	1
Jimmy Wiggs	0	0	---
Ed Willett	0	0	---



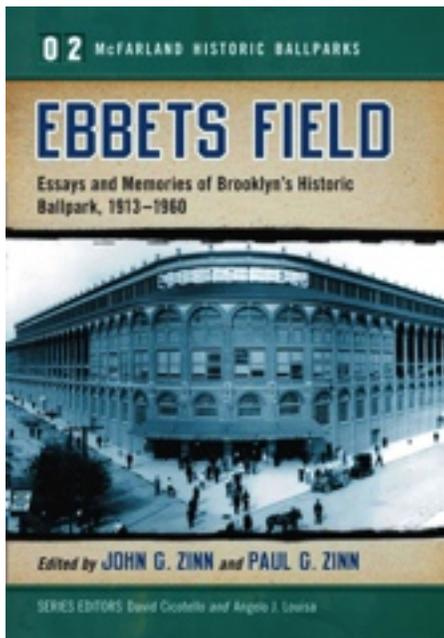
DEADBALL BIOS

Since the last issue of *The Inside Game* was circulated, the BioProject has published profiles of Deadball Era figures Joe Bean, King Lear, Candy LaChance, Jack McFetridge, Howard Lehr, Jimmy Viox, Brownie Burke, Elmer Smith, Jimmy Lavender, Fred Beebe, and Jack Harper. If you have not already done so, we suggest that you check out these new bios online.

**BILL BURNS BIFFED
UMPIRE ON THE NOSE**

In the game between the Hoosiers and Colonels on Friday at Indianapolis, Umpire Johnstone got a fine roughing from Louisville players in an argument over a decision. After Pitcher Bill Burns had been fined \$50 by the arbitrator, he threw a handful of dirt into Johnstone's face and punched him on the nose. Burns was later arrested.

The Toledo News-Bee, September 12, 1914



**EBBETS FIELD:
ESSAYS AND
MEMORIES OF
BROOKLYN'S
HISTORIC BALLPARK,
1913-1960**

**EDITED BY
JOHN G. ZINN AND
PAUL G. ZINN**

2013. Jefferson, NC:
McFarland & Company
[ISBN: 978-0-7864-4827-2;
ebook: 978-1-4766-0064-2.
240 pp. \$39.95 USD, Softcover
(7" X 10")]

Reviewed by
Bob McGee
robertmcgee@optonline.net

Revisiting Ebbets Field for a fan of the game, especially for any fan from New York, where baseball's hegemony as the national pastime unquestionably remains sacrosanct, is similar to the prelate revisiting scripture. Even though the same stories are ritualistically

told and re-told, the urge to read or recite the same tale yet another time remains preferable to other worthy pursuits, even if you know how the story comes out. John and Paul Zinn have produced the second in McFarland's series on historic ballparks. Some 141 pages span seven essays on the history of Ebbets Field. The book also contains 81 pages of personal ballpark reminiscences by visiting and home players and fans.

The Zinns made themselves regulars at the Brooklyn Historical Society and took on the task of painstakingly recounting or adding to the historical record of Ebbets Field. They are careful historians, not cavalier do-it-for-the-money book producers. Their efforts, and those of their collaborators Ellen Snyder-Grenier, James Overmyer, and Ronald Selter, are meticulously footnoted, with topic variations that almost make the book referential, leading to snippets of chapter reading, rather than manifesting as an end-to-end yarn. If each author produces some repetitive references, the informative pieces are often accompanied by box scores and photographs, including some charming illustrations and Ace Parker-era Ebbets Field football photos not seen before in the literature.

Occasional lapses occur in some of the verbatim recollections. Chuck Diering, who played with four teams over ten years, remembered the right field line as being

"240 or 250 feet," probably confusing it with the 257-foot right field marker in the Polo Grounds. Diering shortened the left field line, too. If you are running a string of recollections and someone errs in their reminiscence, is it better to let their memory stand as they recall it, as long as the manuscript has the correct statistic or fact elsewhere, or is it better to edit the interview and omit the incorrect item? In Diering's recollection, it was the second sentence of a page-plus reminiscence. It may have been better, under those circumstances, to just eliminate it. Sullivan Place, which was labeled Sullivan Street on Clarence Van Buskirk's original blueprints (the real Sullivan Street is in Red Hook) is mischaracterized once, as was the one-block long Cedar Place, at one juncture referred to as Cedar Avenue.

The most enjoyable part of the book is the thoughts of people as they remember Ebbets Field, whether it's Dave Anderson, who grew up on Senator Street, or Lee Lowenfish who has given us wonderful books like his biography of Branch Rickey (2007), or Andy Mele, who played on the Parade Grounds and wrote *The Boys of Brooklyn* (2008), or Robert Caro, biographer of LBJ, who remembers Ebbets Field as a magical place. Caro recounts, as echoed by so many who grew up in that time, that he never felt the same way about

baseball after Walter O'Malley announced he was moving the team in October, 1957.

If you can stand it, there's even a Brooklyn Historical oral history interview with Peter O'Malley, devoid though of any reference to his father's dastardly deed, leaving one to ask if anyone happened to see the elephant sitting in the living room. Doris Kearns Goodwin is in here, too, remembering her first game in 1949 if you happened to miss her full-length elegy to sense of place in her *Wait Till Next Year: A Memoir* (1997). Just as important, so are the memories of Bill Bess, Jack Barthel, Sam Bernstein, Bud Livingston, Jim Gardner, and other fans who loved Ebbets Field, which in turn left its indelible mark on them. Ebbets Field, after all, was a place that made being a part of Brooklyn something greater, larger, and more prideful than being from any other place. For defining a place and its people as the people, in turn, defined it,

Ebbets Field, Brooklyn, N.Y. was incomparable.

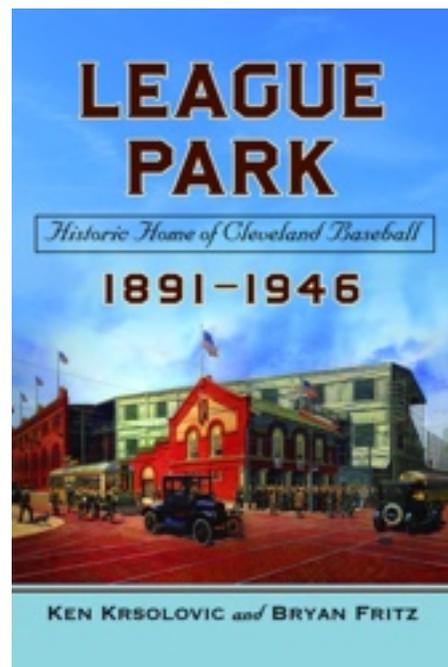
Is there work yet to be done on the old ballyard? Somewhere out there, there is a photograph of the first, original Abe Stark sign ("Hit Sign, Win Suit") on the outfield wall. As Murray Rubin, whose father Hyman worked as a tailor for Stark almost as far back as World War I remembered it, the sign went from the bottom of the wall to the top, before the new scoreboard was put up in 1931. Overton Tremper, Brooklyn outfielder in 1927 and 1928, remembered it too. Some days, Rubin once recalled, his father would alter more suits for players than paying customers. The gospel is always the same, but the sermons often differ.

Bob McGee is the author of The Greatest Ballpark Ever: Ebbets Field and the Story of the Brooklyn Dodgers (Rutgers University Press, 2003), winner of the 2005 Dave Moore Award.

PRES. TENER STOPS PRACTICE OF EXTRA BALL IN INFIELD

PHILADELPHIA—President Tener of the National League today issued an order that infielders must discontinue using an extra ball for warming up purposes between innings. D. Leroy Reeves, secretary to Gov. Tener, in notifying the Philadelphia and St. Louis clubs here today, said the order was issued to help shorten the games. Pitchers are still permitted to warm up while waiting for batters to reach the plate.

The (Pittsburg) Gazette Times, June 16, 1914



LEAGUE PARK: HISTORIC HOME OF CLEVELAND BASEBALL, 1891-1946

BY KEN KRSOLOVIC
AND BRYAN FRITZ

2013. Jefferson, NC:
McFarland & Company
[ISBN: 978-0-7864-6826-3;
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222 pp. \$39.95 USD,
Paperback (6" X 9")]

Reviewed by
Peggy Beck

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In *League Park: Historic Home of Cleveland Baseball*, Ken Krsolovic and Bryan Fritz provide a history of an early Cleveland ballpark. Given the fits and starts of baseball in its early years of professionalization, the authors have created a well-documented and carefully-constructed history of a

ballpark, a fan base, and a community. This book clearly is not just an academic exercise, but a loving search to explain why the ballpark deserves a worthy place in history. The authors are residents of northeast Ohio and candidly acknowledge the frustration at years of failed attempts to restore the grounds of old League Park.

The book offers a year-by-year description of the major events, notable moments, and business losses and gains of the resident teams and ownership groups. These descriptions provide a look at baseball's early development and show the attempts to organize and profit from a young sport. The years covered (1891 through 1946) were witness to important developments on all levels — and in every aspect — of baseball. The internal organization of the chapters is based upon the architecture of the building at the time and the uses of the building after the architectural process ended: “the Wooden Era,” “Concrete and Steel,” “Surviving the Stadium,” “Negro League Park,” “Beyond Baseball,” and “Decline and Rebirth.” Of particular interest are the appendices that include a list of teams by year and box scores from memorable games.

Most of the volume's notes, especially in the early chapters, are based upon newspaper accounts of games and upon team, administrative, and political issues. Primary sources from the period covered in the book are extremely hard to find, but the authors do an admirable job of presenting as much of a complete story as possible with existing records. The acknowledgements include an impressive list of local contributors, demonstrating that interest in this old ballpark has existed for quite a long time. Game chronicles for the early years are provided in highlight form, relying on newspaper accounts to detail occurrences at the ballpark. In the first chapter, the authors include a map that details the locations of several other ballparks in addition to League Park, most considered to be predecessors of League Park.

The mix of histories — cultural history, business history, political history, and franchise histories — during the ballpark's era creates a bit of unevenness. Readers will struggle to get comfortable with descriptions of political and economic issues that flow into discussions of ownership histories that, in turn, flow into game results, individual player

contributions, and other baseball-related materials. Although the strict chronological structure of the volume leads to unevenness, nothing could be improved by the authors who seek to tell the story in an order that follows historic precedent. Visuals related to the park, its structure, and its look, are sprinkled throughout the volume, but are limited by photographic technology of the period and availability. Descriptions in the narrative are strong, but would be helped by diagrams when possible. Diagrams would not have to be archival material, but would be helpful for readers trying to visualize the structure.

Despite the focus on the structure and happenings at the ballpark, player histories are also included, especially for notable players like Addie Joss and Shoeless Joe Jackson. It must be noted here that the authors do not shirk uncomfortable issues, including the rampant financial instability of early baseball, years of low attendance, and many of the headaches related to running a baseball club. Also, one of the most tragic events to happen in Cleveland baseball history — the death of Ray Chapman from a pitch to the head in

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1920 — is covered in greater detail than in most other texts.

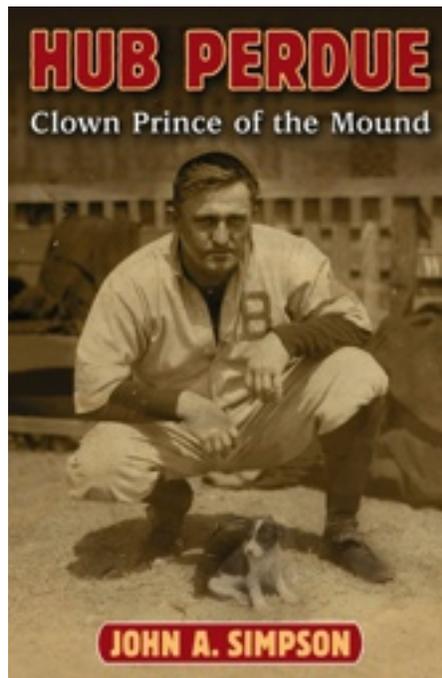
Those with an interest in League Park and early baseball in Cleveland would be well-served by reading this book and keeping it as a reference for future research. Krsolovic and Fritz do excellent detective work, exploiting primary sources and a mix of histories, to present a chronological understanding of the importance of early ballparks to any geographic area, and to those who reside there. Their love and passion for their subject are palpable, an important measure of devotion to the task of authorship.

Peggy Beck is an adjunct instructor of Communication, Journalism, and English at Kent State University at Stark and other universities in the Canton, OH area. She belongs to SABR and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). She credits her dad for her interest in and love for baseball.

POSTPONE LEAGUE GAME IN FAVOR OF COLLEGES

NEW YORK—The Giants and the Cincinnati Reds will bow themselves down and out before college athletes and their followers here next Tuesday, postponing their game to allow Princeton and Yale to play their deciding game at the Polo Grounds.

The Pittsburgh Press, June 17, 1914



HUB PERDUE: CLOWN PRINCE OF THE MOUND

BY JOHN A. SIMPSON

2014. Jefferson, N.C.:
McFarland & Company
[ISBN: 978-0-7864-7225-3;
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Paperback (6" X 9")]

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After nearly a 20-year career in professional baseball most players can say that they gave one hundred percent effort to get the most from their abilities and took their careers seriously. Hub Perdue, though, at least according to his teammates and other observers, chose to be clownishly irreverent toward the sport most people

considered as more than just a game.

Born Herbert Rodney Perdue in 1882, he quickly acquired the nickname Hub from family and neighbors, and grew to manhood in Sumner County near the county seat town of Gallatin in Tennessee. He earned a reputation as an outstanding pitcher for amateur teams and fulfilled many predictions when he signed a professional contract with Paducah, Kentucky of the Class D Kentucky-Illinois-Tennessee (Kitty) League in May 1905. Although he was released before Opening Day, he hooked on with Hopkinsville, Kentucky, also in the Kitty League. He finished his first professional season with a 19-9 record, having played for Hopkinsville until the club folded in July, and then completing the year with Vincennes, Indiana in the same league.

Hub was back at Vincennes for the 1906 season and again was effective, finishing with 25 wins and 8 losses. The next year he was with his hometown Nashville club in the Southern Association, the highest minor league classification at the time. The year 1907 was not good for the pitcher becoming known as the Gallatin Squash, owing to his propensity to add pounds. His record dropped to 11-15, partly due to the Vols being a last place club and partly because Hub suffered a mid-season case of mumps.

Hub spent four years at Nashville pitching effectively while building a reputation for showboating and clowning that delayed his ascent to the major leagues. He also developed an arm injury that affected his pitching for the rest of his career, and continued his "pork chop fever" (being overweight). His break came when he opened the 1912 season with the National League Boston Braves. He got off to a hot start, going 4-0, but cooled off, losing seven of nine games. His arm trouble continued, necessitating surgery. The next year things were brighter for the Gallatin Squash. He posted a 16-13 record and tied among Braves pitchers for the most wins, but Manager George Stalling was unhappy with him, owing mostly to Hub's approach to the sport. Perhaps the breaking point came at Pittsburgh when Perdue struck out batting right-handed. The next at bat he struck out left-handed. The third time up he took two strikes from the right side, then took a third strike batting left-handed. Stallings did not think it was funny; he traded Perdue to the St. Louis Cardinals.

Perdue finished 1914 and played the 1915 season with the Cardinals, although he was inconsistent and used sparingly, completing his last major league season with a 6-12 record and a release. In the days of small salaries major leaguers usually worked their way down the minor league ladder as their skills waned.

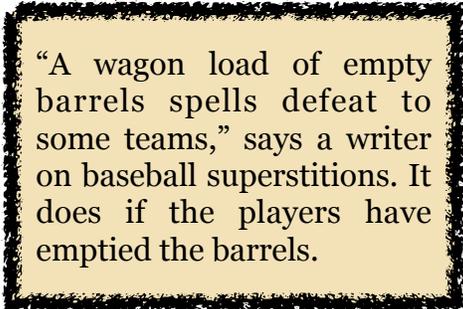
Hub signed with the Louisville Colonels of the American Association for 1916. Louisville won the pennant that year, although Hub had only a so-so season. But, as in other cities, he was a crowd favorite. He was given his release in May but quickly signed with Chattanooga. Although it was another step down, he was home. He still had a washed-up arm but he threw the veteran's arsenal of junk pitches described as "cunning and guile and a lot of chicanery" that was particularly effective against minor league batters.

Following a stint with Chattanooga, Hub moved to New Orleans, another Southern Association team, and finally, in 1920, back to Sulphur Dell. This last move was mostly a kind gesture by the Nashville ownership to keep him as an active player. After a few seasons as player-manager in lower classification leagues the inevitable end came at the Class B Sally (South Atlantic) League on his 41st birthday. Out of a baseball uniform for good after 19 years as a professional ballplayer, Hub remained a hometown hero, and was elected county clerk where he served 12 years before his retirement.

John A. Simpson's carefully-researched and well-written book examines a player forgotten today even by most serious baseball fans. It is hard to find fault with the work although the book incorrectly states that the Kitty League played almost exclusively

scheduled double-headers during Hub's years in the loop. Most weekday dates were single games. Also, Hopkinsville is mistakenly placed as a "bluegrass community" when it is in the Pennyroyal (Pennyrile) section of the state, more than 100 miles from the Bluegrass. Nitpicking aside, the book captures the spirit of baseball in the early years of the twentieth century. In addition, the author brings life to this short biography, allowing readers to experience the pitcher's promise and disappointments. His description of Hub's sadness upon being voted out of office in 1946 at the age of 64 is particularly poignant. This book is a worthy addition to the literature, especially for those with a love affair with the storied Southern Association, or someone just flirting with it.

Randy Morgan is a member of SABR and the St. Louis Brown's Historical Society. He currently is writing a book about the history of professional baseball in Paducah, Kentucky and the leagues in which the city held franchises.



"A wagon load of empty barrels spells defeat to some teams," says a writer on baseball superstitions. It does if the players have emptied the barrels.

The Pittsburgh Press, March 8, 1905

**ANDREW FREEDMAN:
A DIFFERENT TAKE ON
TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY
BASEBALL'S
MOST HATED TEAM OWNER**

by **Bill Lamb**

Baseball chroniclers have rarely been kind to Andrew Freedman, principal owner of the New York Giants from January 1895 to September 1902. Among other things, Freedman has been described as *arrogant, abrasive, bad-tempered, vindictive*, and *the most hated team owner in baseball*. All of which is pretty much accurate. The purpose of this essay is not to rehabilitate Freedman in the eyes of those interested in turn-of-the-century baseball, for it would be near impossible to argue that Freedman was good for the game. Rather, the text below will attempt to place his failings as a club magnate into broader context – integrating Freedman’s stewardship of the Giants into a larger life, that of a Tammany Hall insider, a high-end Gotham real estate operative, a municipal finance innovator, a New York City subway visionary, a patron of the arts, and a benefactor of various charities. In short, I hope to present Freedman as most New Yorkers outside the baseball world saw him: a multifaceted and accomplished man, albeit sometimes a shady one, consumed by commerce and NYC politics, who happened to own a major league baseball team for a time. But first, a thumbnail biography.

Andrew Freedman was born in mid-town Manhattan on September 1, 1860. He was the second of four children born to Joseph Freedman and his wife, the former Elizabeth Davies. The Freedmans were German-Jewish immigrants, but hardly impoverished inhabitants of the Lower Eastside. To the contrary, the family was affluent. Joseph Freedman was a prosperous businessman, variously described in census reports as a silk importer, dry goods merchant, and realtor. By the time that Andrew was born, there were already servants in the Freedman home and he would be raised in comfort.

Andrew (he hated *Andy* which everyone called him, but not to his face) attended the local public elementary school through 8th grade, and then enrolled in pre-admission classes at the College of the City of New York (CCNY). Freedman was intelligent, but disinterested in school. He dropped out of CCNY in spring 1876 after his freshman year (ranked 166 out of 200) and began his working life at age 16 as a clerk in a wholesale dry goods house. Like many things written by baseball authors about Freedman, the frequent assertion that he was a lawyer is erroneous. Freedman was not a lawyer, never studied law, and took no law-related course work at CCNY. His only connection to the law was that, as an adult, Freedman often needed a lawyer.

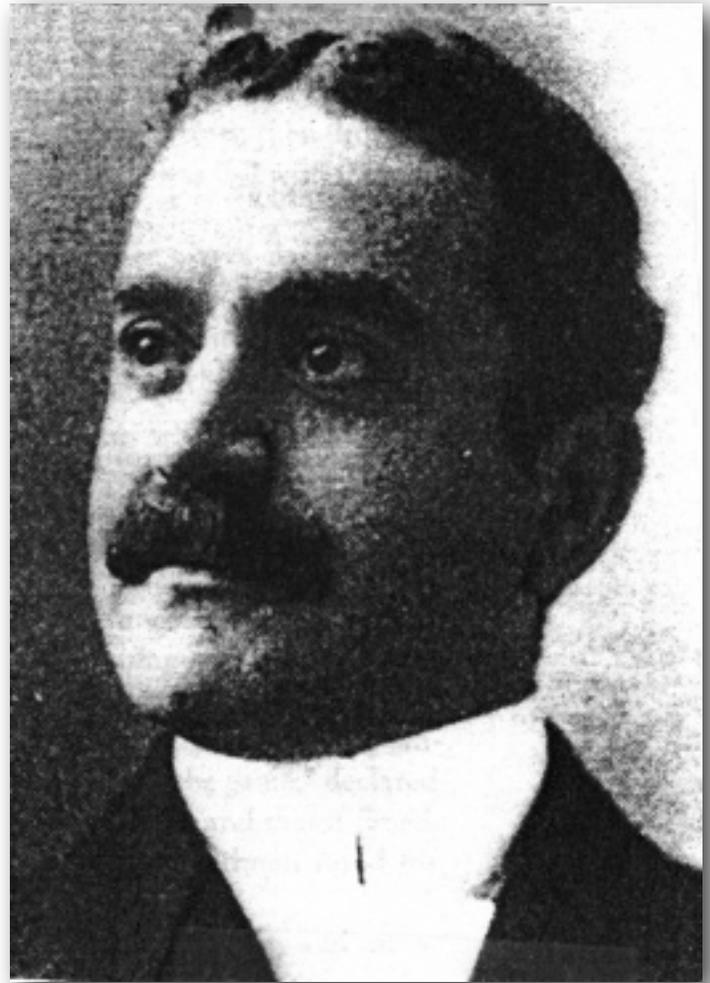
In 1881, 21-year-old Andrew Freedman made the move that would dictate the course of his adult life: He joined Tammany Hall, the corrupt political organization that controlled the Democratic Party in New York City (then only Manhattan and parts of the Bronx). At the time that Freedman joined it, Tammany Hall was not a monolith; it was riven by the factions that had emerged following the fall of Boss Tweed a decade earlier. Freedman attached himself to those backing Richard Croker, not yet Tammany boss but then a rising star in the Wigwam. Croker is a fascinating, if repellent, figure. Anglo-Irish by birth and brought to New York as a child, he grew into a very tough guy – a gang leader in his younger days with an acquittal on murder charges on his resume. Every bit as avaricious as Boss Tweed, but without Tweed’s roguish charm and bonhomie, Croker was cold, taciturn, shrewd, ruthless, and unapologetically corrupt. In late 1885, Croker assumed control of Tammany, and led it to unparalleled heights, at least as money-making enterprise. Croker, if he did not invent it, perfected “honest graft,” the protection money collected by a Tammany-controlled NYPD from every saloon, whorehouse, betting parlor, dance hall, drug den, and other outpost of the New York demimonde. During his reign, Tammany coffers filled to overflowing, with Croker and those close to him becoming very wealthy in the process. That

included Andrew Freedman. What first drew the two men together – besides usefulness to one another – is uncertain, but Freedman quickly became a Croker protégé, his agent on the all-powerful Tammany Finance Committee. In time, Croker and Freedman became more than just political allies. They became business associates and close, lifelong friends. For years, Freedman served as a sort of personal aide or secretary to Croker and was deeply devoted to him.

Frank Graham, Noel Hynd, and other New York Giants historians have perpetuated the one-dimensional portrait of Andrew Freedman as a brutish lout or a buffoon. I do not dispute that Andrew Freedman was a man of major failings – at least when it came to being a baseball team owner. But Freedman was also a man of formidable abilities. He was smart, possessed of fierce energy, and had extraordinary business acumen. Indeed, Freedman had an absolute genius for making money. During his lifetime, he would amass fortunes in three separate fields: (1) real estate, (2) municipal bonding, insurance, and finance, and (3) subway construction. In addition, Freedman was an astute investor in the corporate endeavors of other entrepreneurs.

The first of these fortunes was made in real estate. Space limitations do not permit exposition of the big money deals that Freedman was involved in. Suffice it to say that property owners, construction firms, city contractors, and others requiring the favor of Boss Croker were well-advised to retain the high-priced services of Andrew Freedman for their realty transactions. The Freedman real estate business flourished and by the early 1890s, he had become very wealthy. But Freedman's revenue sources were not confined to real estate. Tammany-friendly judges regularly appointed him to lucrative fiduciary positions as a business conservator, a bankruptcy trustee, or an estate guardian. And in early 1893, Freedman's appointment as trustee of the financially ailing Manhattan Athletic Club (MAC) led to his introduction to major league baseball.

Freedman was not an athlete himself and never played any sports, as far as is known. But his



Andrew Freedman, c. 1895

stewardship of the MAC included oversight of operations at Manhattan Field (nee New Polo Grounds), the one-time home of the New York Giants before the club moved next-door to Polo Grounds III (originally Brotherhood Park). With the premises no longer needed by the Giants, the lease to the Manhattan Field had been acquired by the MAC for use by its baseball, football, and track teams, and for rental for other activities. The lease was a prime asset of the MAC, and the operation of Manhattan Field therefore required the attention of MAC trustee Freedman, who frequently visited the stadium to ensure proper administration of the revenue-generating events (harness racing, track meets, college football) conducted there. Freedman always maintained that his interest in baseball stemmed from dropping in on Giants games played at Polo Grounds III while on his rounds at Manhattan Field.

Freedman took a quick liking to the game and quietly began acquiring stock in the Giants during 1894, often using proxies like circus impresario James A. Bailey to disguise the transactions. Freedman accelerated his stock purchases after Tammany lost the NYC municipal elections of November 1894 and Boss Croker temporarily retired to his estates in the British Isles. In January 1895, Freedman gained majority control of the NY Giants franchise by acquiring the shares of de facto club boss Edward B. Talcott and his allies. Initially, the Freedman acquisition of the club was well-received. Even future Freedman adversaries like A G Spalding and John Montgomery Ward voiced their approval. To club ownership, Freedman brought an array of seeming positives. He was an able man with great energy. Unlike John T. Brush of Indianapolis, Arthur Soden of Boston, and other distant stakeholders in the Giants franchise, Freedman was the native-born New Yorker that Giants fans and the NYC press had been clamoring for. Last but not most important, he brought deep pockets to a financially distressed franchise. Indeed, it has been said that Freedman's personal fortune exceeded that of the other NL magnates, combined. Overlooked in the initial surge of good feelings were some disquieting facts. Freedman was very young, only 34 when he acquired the club. Despite his business acumen, Freedman had no experience whatever in the management of a professional sports team. But perhaps most critically, there was the Freedman persona: an often-prickly disposition, aggravated by his having grown up in well-to-do circumstances, and by the confinement of his adult associations to business and social elites. Freedman lacked the common touch, had no understanding of baseball's unique culture, and often treated his managers, players, the baseball press, and even fellow team owners with condescension.

When Freedman took control of the franchise, the NY Giants were the defending Temple Cup champions from whom great things were expected. But the club got off poorly in 1895. Freedman was stunned when the press criticized



Tammany Boss Richard Croker

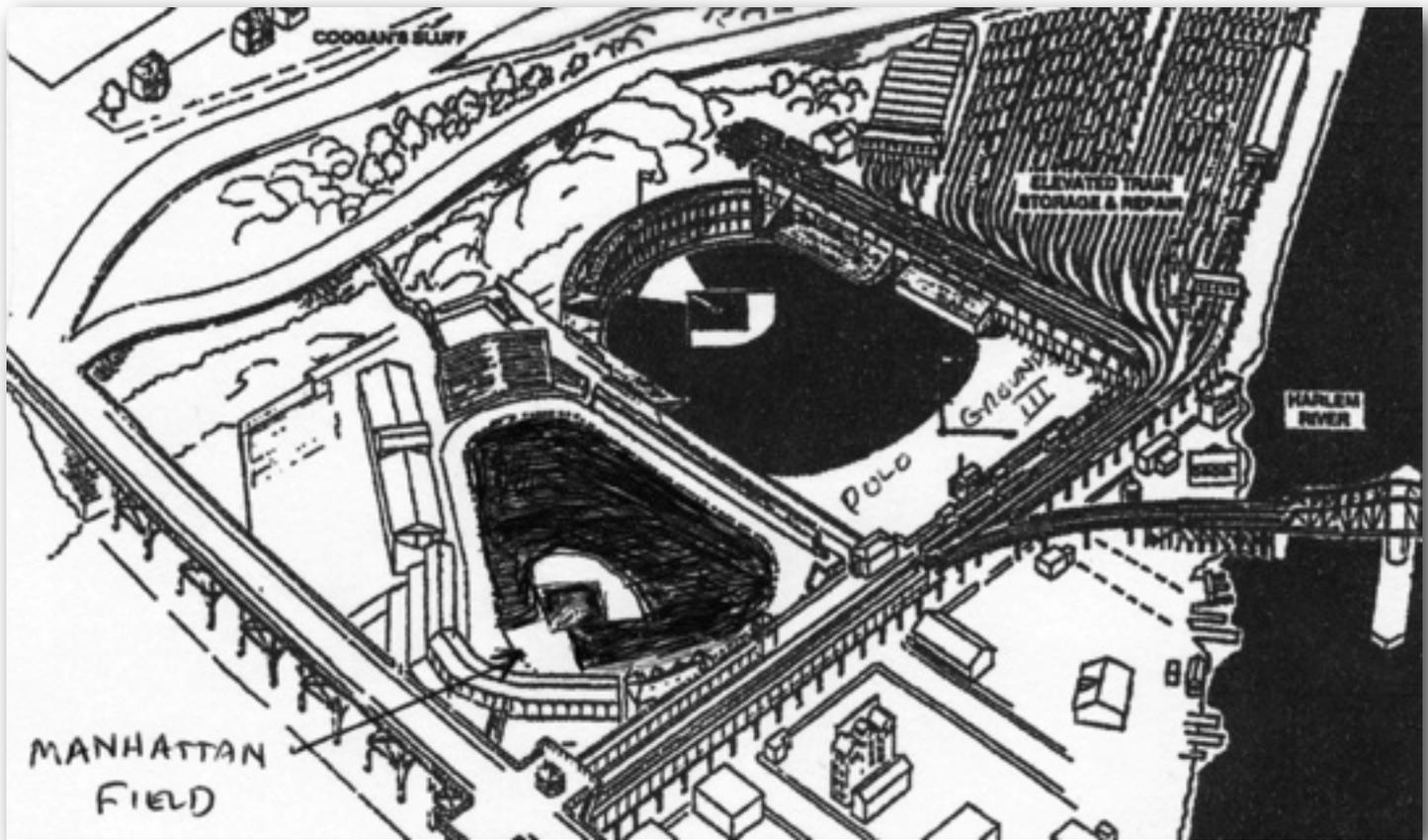
the Giants, and even more stunned when he himself was criticized. Freedman's life had not conditioned him to public criticism. He was also very thin-skinned and almost reflexively combative. Freedman fought – at times, literally, as he was quick to use his fists – with everyone. He quarreled with fellow team owners; alienated his players, particularly the strong-willed Amos Rusie; hired and fired a succession of managers, and most improvidently, antagonized the baseball press, often with petty gestures like banning offending sportswriters from admission to the ballpark. Sportswriters retaliated by upping the criticism of Freedman and his club. When an indignant Freedman then refused to talk to some of them, the sportswriter fraternity, particularly Charles Dryden of the *New York Journal*, began publishing imaginary interviews of Freedman, all designed to make him appear a complete ignoramus. The most famous of these involves the tale in which Freedman is reputed to have warned Dryden that “He was on the brink of an abscess, and likely to be pushed in.”

Although the passage of time shrouds the matter, it is my view that the quote is almost certainly a fabrication. Freedman, for all his faults, was an articulate, cosmopolitan man who did not speak in malapropisms. Yet to this day, no profile of Andrew Freedman is complete unless it includes this alleged example of Freedman's boorishness.

That said, there was no shortage of genuine examples of egregious Freedman behavior for the press to exploit. My two personal favorites are among the more obscure of the Freedman transgressions. In early 1896, Freedman, who also owned a minor league team in the Atlantic League, had Wilmington Peaches captain Bob Berryhill excluded from a game at the Polo Grounds. Freedman's NYPD bodyguards manned the gates to make sure that Berryhill did not get inside. The day before, Berryhill had had the effrontery to suggest – loudly – that Freedman get into uniform if he wanted to come onto the field to dispute the umpire's calls. When apprised of Berryhill's exclusion, the Atlantic League forfeited the game to Wilmington. By

early July, that incident and other Freedman's antics led to the expulsion of his New York Mets franchise from the league. Later that same year, Freedman struck again, ordering the suspension of a little-used Giants pitcher named Carney Flynn. Flynn's offense: he had missed a Giants game to attend his mother's funeral.

In the eight seasons that Freedman owned the club, the Giants were a pennant contender only once: in 1897. Not entirely coincidentally, Freedman paid no attention whatsoever to the club that season, his time consumed by personal, business, and political affairs. In fact, with his club in the thick of the pennant race that August, Freedman did what many wealthy New Yorkers did to escape the summer heat. He sailed for Europe, perfectly indifferent to the outcome of the pennant race. But while Freedman may have been a dilettante when it came to owning a baseball team, his interest in matters of commerce and politics was relentless. In the same year that he was ignoring a pennant-contending ballclub, Freedman founded the



Manhattan Field (lower) and Polo Grounds III

Maryland Casualty Company, a trailblazer – for both good and ill – in the field of municipal insurance, bonding, and finance, and, in time, the source of another Freedman fortune. Freedman also devoted himself to a Tammany comeback in the NYC elections of 1897. He was an important backroom actor in the electoral landslide that brought the Van Wyck administration, among the most corrupt in NYC history, into power. Freedman declined appointment to office, preferring as always to wield political influence out of public view. At Boss Croker's insistence, however, Freedman did accept the position of treasurer of the national Democratic Party.

The remainder of Freedman's tenure as Giants owner was mostly an unhappy one. Space does not permit discussion of such misadventures as the Ducky Holmes affair, the Baseball Trust scheme, or his collaboration with John T. Brush in the attempt to gut the Baltimore franchise of the new American League. But I will offer one comment on the Baseball Trust controversy. In his 1911 memoir, A G Spalding portrayed himself as the instrument of Freedman's departure from baseball, Freedman's sale of the Giants being Spalding's price for relinquishing his claim to the NL presidency. This claim has been presented as fact in many subsequent baseball histories. No evidence is ever presented in support of the Spalding assertion – because there is none. Indeed, the claim is improbable, if not preposterous, in my opinion. Spalding had personalized the NL presidency dispute, denouncing Freedman publicly and in newsprint, a clever public relations gambit, as Freedman was a made-to-order villain. But Spalding was out of his depth when it came to a courtroom battle with Andrew Freedman. Freedman was a fearless and veteran litigant, and armed with a battalion of Manhattan's finest trial lawyers. Freedman also held the winning hand on the merits of the lawsuit, as Spalding's claim to the NL presidency was a hopeless loser from a purely legal perspective. The notion that Freedman left baseball at the bidding of A G Spalding rings false because: (1) Andrew Freedman held Spalding in disdain; (2) Spalding had virtually no

prospect of winning his suit to retain the NL presidency (particularly with Judge Charles Truax, a longtime Tammany friend of Freedman's presiding over the case); and (3) it misunderstands the Freedman psyche. He was an exceptionally proud man who never gave in. Compromise and settlement were alien to the Freedman character, particularly when it involved those, like Spalding, who had personalized their differences with him. Freedman never shied from combat with his adversaries, and would rather taking a beating (physically or financially) than cry Uncle. **Andrew Freedman left baseball in September 1902 because he chose to.** Giants' club ownership had been a continuous disappointment to him, and Freedman no longer had time for the team, his attention now focused on the project that would become his legacy: the New York City subway system.

In November 1901, a scandal-weakened Tammany Hall suffered a crushing defeat at the polls. Soon thereafter, Boss Croker departed for his estates overseas, far beyond the subpoena power of the incoming reform administration. The fall of Croker diminished the status of Croker loyalists, and Andrew Freedman spent his remaining years as a Wigwam backbencher. But Freedman remained a force in city affairs, as he had powerful friends elsewhere on the Manhattan landscape, the most important of whom was the banker August Belmont, Jr. A city-wide subway had been planned for years, but nothing ever happened – until Freedman swung into action. He possessed all the attributes needed to get the project off the drawing board: expertise in NYC real estate and property condemnation practices; a thorough understanding of underwriting bonds and insurance; political savvy; personal acquaintance with likely project contractors, and access to Belmont and the other bankers who would finance the staggering \$35 million subway price tag. The privately-owned Interborough Rapid Transit system was up and running within four years, bringing far-flung city precincts together while making millions for subway investors, including Freedman. Upon his death a decade

later, a glowing *New York Times* obituary extolled Freedman's business, civic, and charitable endeavors, and described him as the person "who did more than perhaps any other man to make possible the subway system in this city." Freedman's ownership of the Giants was mentioned in passing

Although scorned in the sporting press, Freedman was held in high esteem by the business and civic elites of his day. Freedman's circle of friends included Belmont, fellow yachtsman Cornelius Vanderbilt, III, 1904 Democratic Presidential candidate Alton Parker, theater magnate Lee Shubert, Tammany powerhouse Big Tim Sullivan and other New York political heavyweights, financier Jacob Schiff, retailing giant Nathan Strauss, and distinguished lawyers De Lancey Nicoll and Samuel Untermyer. These names mean little today. But 100 years ago, they represented the cream of New York City's financial, legal, and political establishments.

Andrew Freedman never married, a brief 1905 engagement to Elsie Rothschild lasted only a few weeks. For the remainder of his life, he concentrated on the insurance and underwriting business; invested in other companies, including the ventures of Orville and Wilbur Wright; and amused himself with pastimes like patronage of the opera, collecting French landscape paintings, breeding Holstein cattle, yacht racing, and golf. He was also a generous benefactor of various charities, most notably the ASPCA. Upon his death, the bulk of his fortune went to the maintenance of a peculiar charity of his own devising: a non-sectarian residential home for gentrified folk fallen on hard times. First opened in 1924, the Andrew Freedman Home, a magnificent four-story limestone palazzo sited on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, remained in operation as a charity until the late-1960s. Today, it is a NYC landmark used for various community purposes.

In November 1914, Freedman served as a best man (one of three, actually) when Richard Croker married his second wife. Soon thereafter, Freedman's tautly-wound constitution began to

unravel. He took ill, ignored his doctors' advice to reduce his frenetic pace, and suffered a nervous breakdown in November 1915. Confined to his Manhattan apartment suite and attended by 24-hour nursing care, Andrew Freedman suffered a stroke and died on December 4, 1915. He was only 55-years-old. Sadly for Freedman, the many accomplishments of his life have been forgotten over time. Today, all that remains of his memory is the one-note portrayal of baseball authors: Andrew Freedman, the most hated team owner of turn-of-the-century baseball.

Bill Lamb is the editor of The Inside Game. This essay is adapted from a presentation made to the Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19th Century Committee conference in Cooperstown in April 2014.



**PROPOSED DEADBALL ERA
COMMITTEE TRIP TO FACTORYVILLE,
PA FOR CHRISTY MATHEWSON
DAYS, AUGUST 8-9**

The 19th annual celebration of Christy Mathewson Days will take place in the immortal's hometown of Factoryville, Pennsylvania on August 8-9, 2014. Scheduled events include an exhibition of Christy Mathewson artifacts and the sale of tickets to the nearby Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Railroaders v. Columbus Clippers game on Friday (August 8), and a parade followed by celebration at Christy Mathewson Park on Saturday (August 9). Factoryville is located in northeast Pennsylvania, about 15 miles north of Scranton. Further information about the festivities can be obtained from event organizers via <http://christymathewson.com/cmcare.html>. If you would like to join other Deadball Era Committee members there, please contact Mark Dugo at claydad96@aol.com.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

continued from page 1

Ron Santo play, yet it made sense to a lot of people to put him in the Hall of Fame. It made sense to me. I don't believe in a statute of limitations.

Now, you could argue, and probably people have, that if someone gets chance after chance after chance via whatever avenue and isn't elected, it becomes sort of self-defeating in a way, or perhaps pointless to keep trying. But I think if I were running the Hall of Fame, I would try to figure out a process — I haven't even begun to think what that would look like — but I would have some sort of process that would allow for consideration of any outstanding candidate, regardless of when he played.

What about candidates like Deacon White or Hank O'Day, who were elected in 2013? The 16-member Pre-Integration Era Committee obviously decided that each was worthy of the Hall of Fame, but others could counter by arguing that the Hall of Fame could still tell the story of baseball without them being included.

You could make that argument, and I think it's a valid point. To me, it gets back to the question of why the Hall of Fame exists. Does it exist to tell a story? Does it exist to highlight the best players of the era? One thing the Hall of Fame has never really done — at least not to my satisfaction — is to explain what its role is. We know the role of the museum is to educate the public and to preserve the history. I'm pretty clear about that. I don't know that they've ever been particularly clear about the role of the Hall of Fame itself and what the plaques signify. Maybe the Hall of Fame likes it that way. That sorts of leads us (i.e, each of us, individually) to decide what it should be. I think it should be for the best players, and there are a lot of players in there who shouldn't be. And there are a few who *aren't* in there, whom I think should be.

Considering the growth of advanced metrics to assess player performance, are there some potential Hall of Fame candidates from the



Rob Neyer

Deadball Era whom you now view differently because you saw new statistical measures which you hadn't seen before?

Off the top of my head, I think that Sherry Magee is the one player whom I had no idea until recently of just how good he was. I think we really have given short-shrift to some outstanding hitters from that era. If they didn't all hit .360 or something, like Cobb, we just sort of ignore them. Magee didn't have a particularly long career, but very few players in those days had long careers. I would love to see some data on this, but it seems to me like the injury risk was just so high in those days that, aside from Cobb, Lajoie, Wagner, and maybe Eddie Collins — the ones who basically had all the big seasons — there really wasn't much room for anyone else. And part of the reason was because a lot of players just couldn't stay healthy.

So it was a different time. With Jimmy Sheckard, Magee, and Bill Dahlen, I think those players really haven't really gotten their due over the years. Now, there aren't many I would put in that category. In other words, there really aren't that many guys who are missing in the Hall of Fame from the Deadball Era. But I do think those few players who did put up big numbers for at least

six or eight or ten years, we should talk about them more.

The best Deadball Era players who are not in the Hall of Fame may have been good players — like Magee and Sheppard — but they were not key cogs on championship teams. Is it reasonable to infer that the voters may already have already elected all of the worthy candidates from the Deadball Era?

Maybe the voters have. It seems to me that the math would suggest that there probably is a player or two from that era who deserves to be elected because it just seems unlikely that we would have gotten all of them. And it is also tough to look at managers from those days to know who was really doing the managing, the general managing, and all that.

How would you weigh the merits of potential Deadball Era Hall of Fame candidates versus candidates from the 19th century?

I'm generally ignorant of the 19th century and the early Deadball Era, and, if I am, I suspect that the vast majority of people who do what I do are also ignorant, and that hasn't helped. To a large degree, our memories sort of begin with the players who are in *The Glory of Their Times* because they were the oldest who were interviewed and who we were able to memorialize. Of course, we know that Marquard wouldn't be in the Hall of Fame without that book.

What appeal do the players of the Deadball Era hold for you, as a columnist who most often writes about contemporary players?

It has always been difficult for me to relate to the Deadball Era for all of the obvious reasons. We don't have the film or the color photography and very few interviews, at least ones that have been published.

At the same time, I love reading about that era. For me, like a lot of people — and I'm not proud of this at all — baseball basically starts for me with the American League joining the National League. That's when it really becomes real to me.

Maybe it's just because there's a "19" in front of the year instead of an "18." I don't know what it is. The 19th century has never really captured my interest. I don't really know why, it just hasn't. You know, the Deadball Era begins with 1901 and 1902, then the World Series starts, you have Ty Cobb, et cetera, et cetera. As a result, my baseball knowledge begins around then, and I've obviously read more about the Deadball Era than I have about the 19th century.

To what extent does the ability to recognize the game during the Deadball Era and to compare it easily to today's game play a role in the period's appeal for you?

I think that's it. It has often been said that one of the attractions of baseball is that we could go back to the game in 1912 or 1935 or whatever, and it would basically be the game we know and understand. And the further you go back, especially into the 19th century and as the pitching distance becomes different, the less it becomes the game that we know. Yes, we would recognize baseball in 1882 as being baseball, but I think it would be harder to relate to than it would be even 20 years later. Basically, the further back you go, the messier it gets. And, I think, messy is hard. You know, John Thorn embraces it, but many of us, including me, have a tough time with it. We stick with what we understand and what is accessible.

I think it comes back to the fact that it is a recognizable game during the Deadball Era. And we do have recognizable figures: we have Ty Cobb, whom everybody knows. We also have Honus Wagner and Walter Johnson, which lends credence to the idea that the Deadball Era is as far back as we can go with clarity. And we want to go back because an appealing thing about baseball is the nostalgia and the history. We want to go back, but we don't want to go back too far. In that sense, to me the Deadball Era is an excellent starting point.

