

The INSIDE GAME

The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee



VOL. XV, NO. 5: "LET'S GET THIS LUMPY LICORICE-STAINED BALL ROLLING!" NOVEMBER 2015

THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by John McMurray

Writing in January 1915, Ernest J. Lanigan suggested that if Gavy Cravath were only to play more regularly, the slugging Philadelphia Phillies outfielder might be able to challenge Buck Freeman's longstanding record for home runs in a single season (25), set in 1899. Lanigan's prediction was based on one other factor, namely "if the schedule maker would allow the Quakers to play all their championship games at the Broad and Huntingdon street (*sic*) grounds."

That Cravath's home run totals were a product of playing at the Baker Bowl, where the short leftfield fence was especially friendly to right-handed power hitters like Cravath, is well known. Of the 119 home runs that Cravath hit during his 11 major league seasons, 92 were hit at the Baker Bowl. In no season did Cravath hit more than five home runs away from his home park, and no player in history hit a greater percentage of his career home runs in his home stadium than did the stocky Cravath.

Clifford Carlton Cravath (whose own spelling of his nickname was "Gavy") is occasionally mentioned as a glaring omission from the Hall of

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ACCURATE RBI RECORDS FOR PLAYERS OF THE DEADBALL ERA: PART 6 — THE PLAYERS ON THE 1917 TIGERS AND WHITE SOX

by Herm Krabbenhoft

In previous articles in the title series I have demonstrated that league leaders in runs batted in actually achieved different RBI numbers from those reported in the various most-recently-published hard-copy baseball encyclopedias (e.g., *The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia*, *The Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball, Total Baseball*, and *The Baseball Encyclopedia*).¹⁻⁴ Likewise for the RBI numbers given on various baseball websites (e.g., MLB.com, Retrosheet.org, and Baseball-Reference.com). Thus, for the 1919 American League RBI crown, Babe Ruth actually had 113 (not 114) RBIs.⁵ And, for the 1918 AL RBI throne, Bobby Veach actually amassed 84 (not 78) ribbies.⁶ Also, for the 1917 National League campaign, Heinie Zimmerman actually topped the circuit with 100 (not 102) runs batted in.⁷ Moreover, for the 1912 National League runs batted in race, Heinie Zimmerman — not Honus

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Wagner — was the true champion with 105 (not 99) RBIs.⁸ It is further emphasized that, following the vetting of the evidence I assembled in support of my conclusions, Pete Palmer incorporated the appropriate corrections and changes for the RBI numbers in his database of baseball statistics — and the corrected RBI numbers are now presented for the 1919 and 1918 AL and 1912 NL RBI kings on the Baseball-Reference.com and Retrosheet.org websites.⁹

The present article deals with the 1917 American League RBI championship. According to the research conducted by Ernie Lanigan during the 1917 season, the top four players in runs batted in were Bobby Veach (115 RBIs), Ty Cobb (108), Happy Felsch (100) and Harry Heilmann (84).^{10,11} However, according to the research effort directed by David S. Neft in the mid-1960s, the RBI numbers for each of these players are different from those claimed by Lanigan — Veach (103 RBIs), Cobb (102), Felsch (102), and Heilmann (86).¹² It is important to point out that Palmer utilized Neft's RBI numbers (rather

than Lanigan's RBI numbers) when Palmer put together his database of baseball statistics.^{13,14} Thus, Neft's "Big-Mac" RBI numbers for the 1917 season are those currently shown in the most-recent hard-copy baseball encyclopedias and provided on the various baseball websites on the Internet.¹⁻⁴

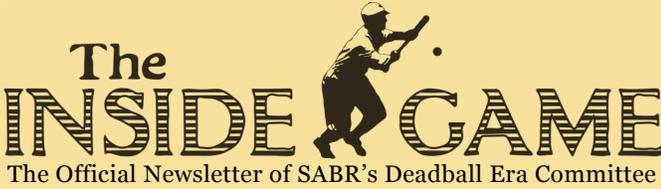
So, the focus of my research described in this report seeks to answer these two questions:

- (1) Who was the true leader in most RBIs in the American League for the 1917 season?
- (2) How many RBIs did the RBI champion actually achieve?

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The same procedure employed for my previous RBI research efforts was utilized in the present study. Thus, I endeavored to obtain the complete details for each of the 639 runs scored by the 1917 Detroit Tigers and the 655 runs tallied by the 1917 Chicago White Sox. Complete details means that I sought to determine the following three items for each run: (1) the identity of the player who scored the run; (2) the run-scoring event — e.g., a two-RBI single, a one-RBI grounder (batter safe on a fielding error), a zero-RBI grounder (batter safe on a fielding error), a one-RBI bases-loaded walk, a zero-RBI balk, and so forth; (3) the identity of the player who completed his plate appearance during the run-scoring event — i.e., the player who could be credited with batting in the run.

To obtain the complete details for each run I relied on the descriptions provided in the game accounts presented in numerous independent newspapers. For the Tigers games I utilized the *Detroit Free Press, Journal, News, and Times*. For the White Sox games I used the *Chicago Tribune, Daily News, Examiner, and Herald*. I also checked multiple newspapers published in the cities of the opposing teams — the *Boston Globe, Herald, and Post*; the *Cleveland Plain Dealer and Press*; the *New York Times, Evening Telegram, Herald, Sun, and Tribune*; the *Philadelphia Inquirer, North American, Press, Public Ledger, and Record*, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Post-Dispatch, Republic, and Star-*



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In order to properly assign credit to a player for batting in a run, I adhered strictly to the appropriate official scoring rules. Because runs batted in were not officially recorded until 1920, there were no official scoring rules for RBIs in 1917. Therefore, utilizing the 1920 official scoring rules to assign credit for RBIs in 1917 seems like the logical approach. However, the official scoring rules for RBIs in 1920 (indeed, through 1930) provide no guidance whatsoever for properly assigning credit for RBIs in prior seasons — the entirety of the 1920 rules reads:

“The summary shall contain: The number of runs batted in by each batsman.” [Rule 86, Section B]

Therefore, to assign credit for RBIs in the 1917 season, I utilized the 1931 official scoring rules — which do provide appropriate instruction:

“Runs Batted In are runs scored on safe hits (including home runs), sacrifice hits, outfield put-outs, infield put-outs, and when the run is forced over by reason of the batsman becoming a base runner. 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.” [Rule 70, Section 13]

The 1931 rule is essentially the same rule that is in effect today. The only significant difference is the provision introduced in 1939 which does not credit a batter with an RBI when the runner scores when the batter hits into a force groundout double play.

RESULTS

Tables 1 and 2 present the RBI numbers for each of the players on the 1917 Detroit Tigers and Chicago White Sox, respectively, according to my research. Also shown for comparison are the RBI numbers according to Neft. The Appendices A-1 and B-1 (available on the SABR.org website) provide the complete details for the runs scored by the 1917 Tigers and White Sox, respectively, on a game-by-game basis, according to my



Bobby Veach

research. It is pointed out that I provided the documentation in support of the RBI numbers I obtained to Retrosheet’s Tom Ruane and Dave Smith for their review. Upon consideration of the all the evidence acquired, complete agreement on the RBI numbers was achieved and the RBI numbers were incorporated on the Retrosheet.org website.¹⁵

DISCUSSION

Probably the most-striking aspect of Tables 1 and 2 is that several players do not have a single specific RBI number — i.e., the “RBIs (Krabbenhof)” column shows some players with a range of RBIs. For example, in Table 1, George Burns is shown with “42-43” RBIs. Similarly, in Table 2, Eddie Cicotte is shown with “9-10” RBIs. That ranges of RBIs are shown for some of the

players (five on the Tigers and nine on the White Sox) means that my research efforts were not able to obtain complete details for some of the runs scored in some of the games played by Detroit (five games) and by Chicago (three games). The runs-scored and runs-batted-in information I assembled for each of those games is presented in Appendix A-2 (Tigers) and Appendix B-2 (White Sox). Tables 3 and 4 provide summaries of the “either-or” issues for assigning RBI credit for the runs for which the descriptions in the various newspaper accounts did not supply adequate details.

The newspaper account descriptions given for the three eighth-inning runs scored by the Tigers in the first game of the July 17 double header (Table 3) illustrate the “either-or” uncertainties:

DETROIT FREE PRESS — “The top of the Detroit batting order came up in the eighth and five hits in succession, one of them a double by Cobb, brought in three more runs before anybody was out. The next three men were soft.”

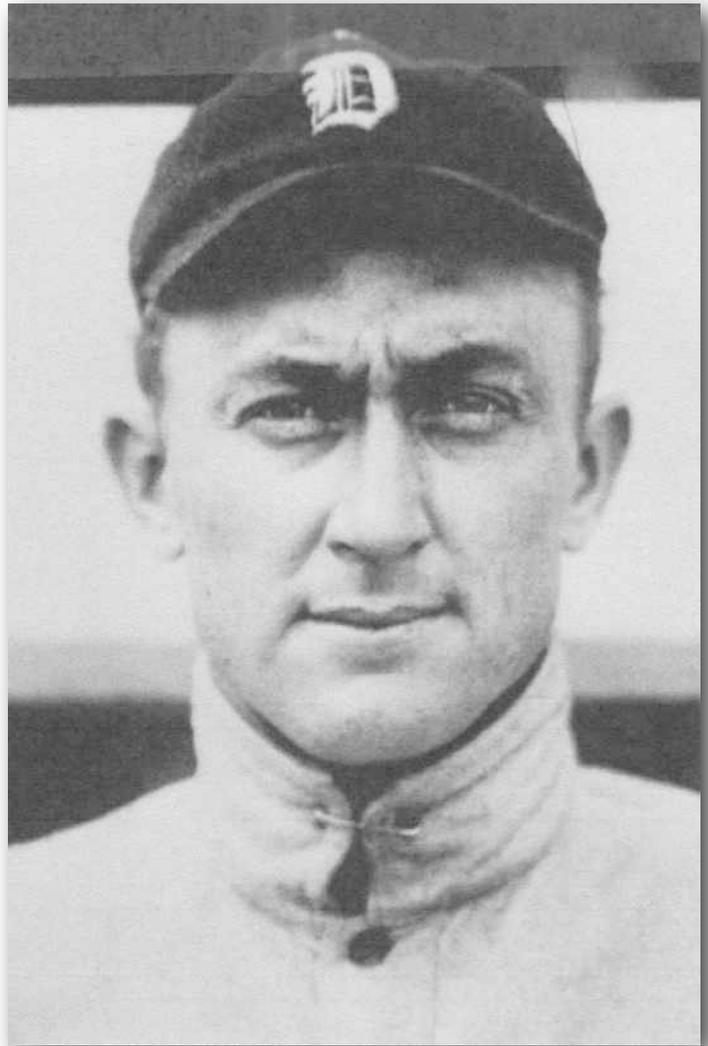
DETROIT JOURNAL — “... and in the eighth five hits in a row netted three runs.”

DETROIT NEWS — Nothing at all.

DETROIT TIMES — “Bush, Vitt, Cobb, Veach, and Heilmann all hit safely in succession in the eighth, three runs scoring. Cobb’s blow was the only extra-baser of this lot, and it was a funny one. He was ducking a bad pitch and the ball hit his bat and popped over third for a two-base hit.”

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER — “The top of the Detroit batting order came up in the eighth and five hits in succession, one of them a double by Cobb, brought in three more runs before anybody was out. The next three men were soft.”

PHILADELPHIA NORTH AMERICAN — “Starting with the head of their batting order in the eighth, five Tigers got hits to the outfield and Bush and Vitt and Cobb tallied.”



Ty Cobb

PHILADELPHIA PRESS — “In the eighth three men went over on singles by Bush and Vitt, Cobb’s double, and Veach’s single.”

PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEDGER — Nothing at all.

PHILADELPHIA RECORD — “The first five Tigers up in the eighth hit safely. Bush, Vitt, and Cobb scored the final [three] runs.”

From these descriptions all one knows for certain is (a) that each of the first five Tigers batters in the eighth inning (Bush, Vitt, Cobb, Veach, and Heilmann) hit safely (with Cobb’s double being the only extra base hit) and (b) that the first three players (Bush, Vitt, and Cobb) scored the three runs and (c) that each of the next three batters (Harper, Young, and Stanage) were retired (i.e., “were soft”). And, it is noted that the

description given in the *Philadelphia Record* account states that the three runs were scored on (the first) four hits, suggesting that Heilmann's hit (which was not mentioned) was not involved in the scoring.

What is, therefore, not known for certain is: "Who batted in whom?" Let's go through the various (not far-fetched) possibilities that accommodate the available information.

- * Bush singled.
- * Vitt singled, advancing Bush to second OR third.
- * Cobb doubled,
 - (a) scoring Bush and advancing Vitt to third OR
 - (b) scoring both Bush and Vitt.
- * Veach singled,
 - (a) advancing Cobb to third (if third was unoccupied) OR
 - (b) scoring Vitt (if he was on third) and advancing Cobb to third OR
 - (c) scoring Vitt and Cobb (if Vitt was on third) OR
 - (d) scoring Cobb (if Vitt had already scored on Cobb's double).
- * Heilmann singled,
 - (a) advancing Veach to second or third OR
 - (b) scoring Cobb (if he was on third) and advancing Veach to second or third.
- * Harper was retired (i.e., "was soft").
- * Young was retired (i.e., "was soft").
- * Stange was retired (i.e., "was soft") to end the inning.

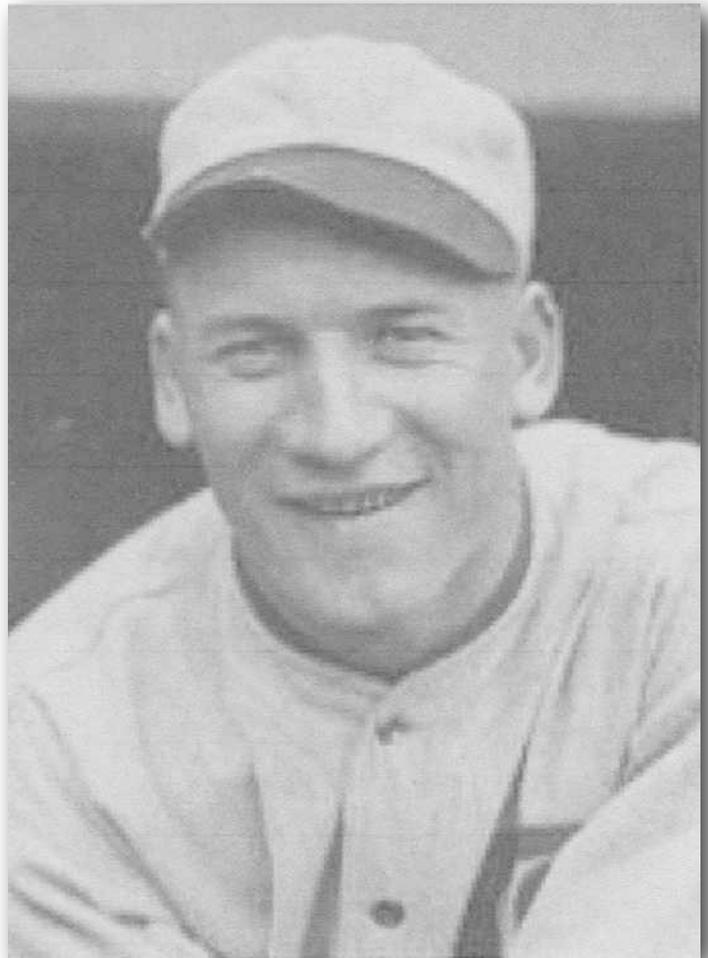
So, for the eighth-inning, the runs batted in numbers are:

Cobb — one (Bush) OR two (Bush and Vitt).

Veach — zero OR one (Vitt) OR two (Vitt and Cobb) OR one (Cobb).

Heilmann — zero OR one (Cobb).

It is important to emphasize that the maximum number of RBIs for the eighth inning is three. Thus, if Cobb had two RBIs (Bush and Vitt), then either Veach or Heilmann had one RBI (Cobb). Similarly, if Cobb had one RBI (Bush), then



Happy Felsch

Veach either had one RBI (Vitt) [and Heilmann had one RBI (Cobb)] or two RBIs (Vitt and Cobb) [and Heilmann had zero RBIs]. Those are the only possible RBI distributions that fit the descriptions given in the various newspaper accounts for the three eighth-inning runs.

And, for the entire game, the runs batted in numbers are:

Cobb — two OR three (including Deacon Jones in the third inning).

Veach — three OR four OR five (including Vitt and Cobb in the third inning and Cobb in the seventh inning).

Bush — one (Stange in the fourth inning).

Stange — one (Heilmann in the seventh inning).

Heilmann — zero OR one.

Because Neft shows single specific full-season RBI numbers for every player on the 1917 Detroit

Tigers (indeed, for every player from every season), Neft (and his team of researchers) must have come up with single specific RBI numbers for Cobb, Veach, and Heilmann in the second game of the July 17 twin bill. Unfortunately, Neft's single specific RBI numbers are not known for any games from the 1905 through 1919 seasons. That's because Neft's game-by-game batting records — including RBIs — for each player from the 1905-1919 period are no longer available.¹⁶

Since I checked the daily newspapers published in Detroit (where the game was played) and Philadelphia (the home city of the team that opposed the Tigers) and was not able to come up with single specific RBI numbers, it seems that Neft and his research team made single specific choices for the RBIs for the eighth-inning runs scored by Bush, Vitt, and Cobb. (It's also possible that Neft's research team found a detailed description of the eighth-inning runs in a newspaper account that I did not check. While possible, that's not likely in my opinion.)

Moving on now to the two key questions that drove my research effort, it is seen that, according to my findings, Veach was the RBI champion for the American League in 1917 — with 110 or 111 or 112 or 113 or 114 runs batted in. Cobb was first runner-up with 106 or 107 or 108 RBIs. And Felsch earned the bronze medal with either 99 or 100 ribbies. It is emphasized that Veach's fewest-possible RBIs total (110) is greater than Cobb's most-possible RBIs total (108) and that Cobb's fewest-possible RBIs total (106) is greater than Felsch's most-possible RBIs total (100). Thus, the irrefutable rank-order is Veach-Cobb-Felsch.

So, I have satisfactorily answered the first question — Veach was “the true leader in most RBIs in the American League in 1917.” But, my answer to the second question — 110 to 114 RBIs — is disappointing, although accurate based on all of the available evidence.

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, in addition to Veach, Cobb, and Felsch, there are eleven other players for whom there is not a single specific RBI number according to the documentation I

collected during my research efforts. On the Tigers, besides Veach and Cobb, are George Burns (42 or 43 RBIs), Harry Heilmann (85-88), and Ossie Vitt (45-47). On the White Sox, besides Felsch, are Eddie Cicotte (9 or 10 RBIs), Eddie Collins (66-68), Joe Jackson (82-84), Ted Jourdan (2 or 3), Nemo Leibold (28-30), Swede Risberg (43 or 44), Ray Schalk (50 or 51), and Buck Weaver (32 or 33).

It is important to stress that the accuracy of my RBI numbers is fully supported by multiple independent newspaper accounts. Furthermore, the supporting evidence that I assembled was independently reviewed by Retrosheet's Tom Ruane and Dave Smith. Significantly, 100% agreement between my conclusions and their conclusions was achieved. Consequently, my game-by-game RBI numbers (as presented in Appendices A-1 and B-1) have been incorporated in the Retrosheet box score file (and derived player daily files) — EXCEPT for the games with “Either-Or” RBIs, the RBI cells in those games appropriately being left blank in the box score file (and the derived player daily files).

Another important item for discussion is the magnitude of the difference of my RBI number with Neft's RBI number for each player. Inspection of Table 1 reveals that our RBI numbers are exactly the same for 16 of the 28 Tigers players (although it is noted that eight of

NEW DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

Alan J. Adams
Thomas Auchter
Richard Bak
Matt Madej
Owen Edward Randell
Wayne Voltz

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.

these sixteen players had zero RBIs and that four of those eight players had ten or fewer at bats). For ten of the Tigers players my RBI numbers and Neft's RBI numbers are unmistakably different. The differences range from minus-1 RBI to plus-7 RBIs (if Veach had 110 RBIs) or plus-11 RBIs (if Veach had 114 RBIs). That leaves two players — Heilmann and Vitt — whose ranges of RBIs include Neft's RBI numbers. Focusing on the regular field-position players (i.e., the ten players with the most at bats), it is seen that for five of these players [Cobb (588 at bats), Bush (581), Veach (571), Young (503), and Burns (407)] my RBI numbers are different from Neft's RBI numbers. For three of the ten regular field-position players [Oscar Stanage (297 at bats), Tubby Spencer (192), and George Harper (117 at bats)] my RBI numbers and Neft's RBI numbers are exactly the same. So, it can be advanced that Neft's RBI numbers are wrong for at least half of the ten regular field-position players and correct for thirty percent; the accuracy of Neft's RBI numbers for the other two regular field-position players (Heilmann and Vitt) is unknown because the RBI ranges from my research for these players include Neft's RBI numbers.

Applying the same analytical treatment for the players on the 1917 White Sox (Table 2) reveals that Neft's RBI numbers and my RBI numbers are identical for 10 of the 26 players and unmistakably different for 11 of the 26 players. The differences range from minus-3 RBIs (if Felsch had 99 RBIs) to plus-7 RBIs (if Joe Jackson had 82 RBIs) or plus-9 RBIs (if Jackson had 84 RBIs). There are five players — Eddie Collins, Ted Jourdan, Nemo Leibold, Ray Schalk, and Buck Weaver — whose ranges of RBIs include Neft's RBI numbers. Focusing on the ten regular field-position players for the 1917 White Sox, it is seen that for five of these players [Felsch (575 at bats), Gandil (553), Risberg (474), Shano Collins (257), and McMullin (194)] my RBI numbers are different from Neft's RBI numbers. Thus, Neft's RBI numbers are wrong for at least fifty percent of the ten regular field-position players. For the other five players, the accuracy of Neft's RBI numbers is unknown

because the RBI ranges from my research for these players include Neft's RBI numbers.

It may also be pointed out that the RBI numbers claimed by Lanigan for Veach (115), Cobb (108), Felsch (100), and Heilmann (84) are closer to my RBI numbers for Veach (110-114), Cobb (106-108), Felsch (99-100), and Heilmann (85-88) than are the RBI numbers claimed by Neft for Veach (103), Cobb (102), Felsch (102), and Heilmann (86).

Perhaps the most interesting item that emerges from the results of this research effort is how the RBI numbers for those players that do not have single specific RBI numbers according to my research — particularly Bobby Veach, the American League RBI champion — will be dealt with. As noted above, Pete Palmer incorporated Neft's RBI numbers for all players from the 1917 season (indeed from the 1891-1919 seasons) into his database of baseball statistics. Thus, Palmer's database of baseball statistics — which is utilized by Baseball-Reference.com and Retrosheet.org (for its player-profile pages) — presently has Veach as the AL RBI leader with 103 runs batted in. However, my research ascertained that Veach actually had at least 110 RBIs and at most 114 RBIs.

It seems reasonable to assume that (most) baseball fans want accurate RBI numbers — i.e., single specific full-season RBI number for each player. But, what if a single specific RBI number

SANTA ANA—Walter Johnson, Orange county's great pitcher, will be given an ovation when he makes his appearance on the local diamond next Sunday, which will be known as "Johnson Day."

The Salt Lakes will be the visiting team, and a hard struggle is anticipated, as the railroaders are near the winning peg in the percentage column.

Sunday's event is expected to be a big one for Orange county, as every important baseball fan of the county has received a special invitation to be present.

Los Angeles Herald, December 24, 1909

cannot be ascertained for a particular player? How is that situation going to be handled? Clearly, for the 1917 American League season, Bobby Veach batted in the most runs. And, the “103 RBIs” number currently shown on Baseball-Reference.com is incorrect. According to the player daily file for Veach on Retrosheet.org, Veach had 103 RBIs in 151 of the 154 games in which he played; for the other three games (July 1, second game; July 17, first game; and July 21, second game) in which he played the RBI cell is blank. According to Table 3, Veach had either 0 OR 1 RBI in the second game on July 1, 3 OR 4 OR 5 RBIs in the first game on July 17, and 4 OR 5 RBIs in the second game on July 21. Therefore, incorporating the minimum numbers of RBIs for these three games ($0 + 3 + 4 = 7$) into the Retrosheet blanks would give Veach a total of 110 RBIs for the season. Alternatively, incorporating the maximum numbers of RBIs for these three games ($1 + 5 + 5 = 11$) into the Retrosheet blanks would give Veach a total of 114 RBIs for the season. What is the RBI number that will ultimately be shown for Veach on the Baseball-Reference.com, Retrosheet.org, on other websites, and possibly in future reference apps? Likewise for the other players for whom single specific RBI numbers have not (yet) been ascertained.

To address this situation, I provided the penultimate draft of this article (including the Appendix) to Palmer and Gary Gillette for their review.¹⁷ After evaluating all of the information and considering the different alternatives, they have decided to use the minimum full-season RBI numbers in Palmer’s database of baseball statistics. Their rationale is that, based on the best currently-available evidence, the player certainly had at least the minimum number or runs batted in. The minimum number of RBIs is not an approximation or a guess of the actual number of RBIs achieved by the player.¹⁸ Gillette indicated that the corrections/changes of the relevant RBI numbers for the players on the 1917 Detroit Tigers and Chicago White Sox would be effected in Palmer’s database sometime after the completion of the 2015 season.¹⁹ Gillette also added the following comment: “As I wrote in the

introduction to Pete’s and my ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia, ‘History is process, not perfection.’ The painstaking research conducted by Herm and others continues the long process of making the records of Major League Baseball’s first half-century more accurate, more complete, and more interesting.”²⁰

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Bobby Veach was the true leader in most RBIs in the American League for the 1917 season; he achieved 110 or 111 or 112 or 113 or 114 runs batted in. Ty Cobb was first runner-up for the 1917 AL RBI crown; he batted in 106 or 107 or 108 runs. Happy Felsch earned the bronze medal for most RBIs with 99 or 100 ribbies. Harry Heilmann ended up fourth in the RBI race with 85 or 86 or 87 or 88.²¹

Finally, as mentioned in previous installments in this series of articles, the original driver for me to carry out this RBI research effort is to ascertain which players assembled the longest Consecutive Games RUN Batted In (CGRUNBI) streaks during the Deadball Era. For the 1917 Detroit Tigers and White Sox teams, the players with the longest CGRUNBI streaks were Heilmann with a five-gamer and Jackson with a seven-gamer, respectively.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With grateful appreciation I thank the following people for their superb help in providing me with scans or photocopies of the game accounts in the various newspapers to which they had access: Cliff Blau, Steve Boren, Keith Carlson, Greg Hilton, Dave Newman, Gary Stone, and Dixie Tourangeau. I also thank Gary Gillette, Pete Palmer, Tom Ruane, and Dave Smith for reviewing the runs-scored and runs-batted-in evidence I assembled.

Editor Note: The Part 6 article caption notwithstanding, this is the seventh installment of the Herm Krabbenhoft series on revision of Deadball Era RBI stats. The piece in the June newsletter was inadvertently captioned Part 7. We apologize for the mis-sequencing. Herm’s next article (1916 Detroit Tigers Runs Scored) will appear in the February 2016 newsletter.

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7. Herm Krabbenhoft, "Accurate RBI Records for Players of the Deadball Era: Part 7 — The Players on the 1917 New York Giants," *The Inside Game*, Volume XV, Number 3 (June 2015), 22.
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9. Herm Krabbenhoft, "Seeking Resolution of the Discrepancy for the 1912 NL Triple Crown," *The Baseball Research Journal*, Volume 44, Issue 1 (Spring 2015), 54.
10. "Ernest Lanigan of the New York Sunday World presents some interesting statistics on the subject of batting in runs," *Baseball Magazine*, Volume 20, Issue 2 (1918), 445.
11. J.G. Taylor Spink, *Daguerreotypes of Great Stars of Baseball* (St. Louis: The Sporting News, 1951). See also each of the subsequent editions published through the final edition (1990).
12. David S. Neft (Director of Research, Information Concepts Incorporated), Lee Allen (Historian, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum), and Robert Markel (Executive Editor, Macmillan Company), *The Baseball Encyclopedia* (New York: Macmillan, 1969). See also each of the subsequent editions published through the final edition (1996).
13. Herm Krabbenhoft, "RBI records 1891-1919," email to Pete Palmer (March 18, 2014 at 1:48 pm) in which I wrote, "Subsequent to Big-Mac, you used Neft's RBI numbers — exclusively (i.e., none of Lanigan's RBI numbers) — in your baseball statistics data base. Subsequently, your baseball statistics data base has been used in your BB Encyclopedias (*Total Baseball* with John Thorn and *The ESPN BB Encyclopedia* with Gary Gillette) as well as some/all Internet sites presenting RBI stats — e.g., Baseball-Reference. So, all of the 1891-1919 RBI numbers out there now are from your baseball statistics database and ultimately from Neft's RBI numbers in the first Big-Mac." On March 18, 2014 at 5:42 pm, Palmer replied to me via email, "I have no argument with anything you said." In a subsequent email to me (January 9, 2015) Palmer wrote that MLB.com obtained his data base of baseball statistics "probably in 2001 or so" and that "MLB has not done much with the data besides adding in current years." Along that line, in an email (July 16, 2012) to me from John Thorn (the Official Historian of Major League Baseball) about Hank Greenberg's 1935 RBI stats, John wrote: "Herm I have no sway with the mlb.com data. It is Pete Palmer's old *Total Baseball* data base, with some tinkering by unknown hands."
14. Herm Krabbenhoft, "RBIs before 1920," retrolist@yahoo.com, post submitted March 29, 2014 at 12:57 pm, with courtesy copies to John Thorn and David S. Neft. Here is one of the key items I expressed: "David S. Neft was the third person to compile RBI stats for the seasons before 1920. According to the presentation given in *The Numbers Game* by Alan Schwarz, Neft recruited people (many of them being college students) to go through game accounts in microfilmed newspapers and generate DBD RBI numbers for those players who played from 1891 through 1919. The result of Neft's research project was the first edition of Big-Mac — which utilized Tattersall's RBI numbers for the 1876-1890 seasons, Neft's RBI numbers for the 1891-1919 seasons, and the official DBD RBI numbers for the 1920-1968 seasons. Neft's RBI numbers for the 1891-1919 seasons — as well as Tattersall's RBI numbers for the 1876-1890 seasons — were subsequently incorporated by Pete Palmer into his data base of baseball statistics. Palmer's data base of baseball statistics — including Neft's RBI numbers for the 1891-1919 seasons and Tattersall's RBI numbers for the 1876-1890 seasons — has been utilized extensively in both printed encyclopedias (e.g., *Total Baseball* and *The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia*) and on Internet websites (e.g., Baseball-Reference.com and MLB.com). It is

important to point out that Neft's RBI numbers for the players from the 1891-1904 seasons are supported by DBD records ('ICI sheets') which are available on microfilm at the Baseball Hall of Fame Library. Regrettably, Neft's DBD RBI records for the players from the 1905-1919 seasons are no longer available." On March 29, 2014 at 1:09 pm, Thorn responded via an email to me, "Fine summation, Herm. I have no quibbles with any of it." On March 29, 2014 at 4:37 pm, Neft replied via an email to me, "Thanks for sending this to me. As far as I know this is an accurate statement of the history of this research."

15. Tom Ruane, emails to Herm Krabbenhoft, March 2, 2015 and March 04, 2015. The annual summer update of the Retrosheet website (released on June 24, 2015) includes the game-by-game RBI numbers from my research for the players on the 1917 Tigers and White Sox.
16. Telephone conversation with David S. Neft on June 25, 2013. The only existing records of Neft's game-by-game RBI data for the the 1905-1919 seasons were destroyed in a warehouse fire.
17. Email from Herm Krabbenhoft to Pete Palmer and Gary Gillette, July 5, 2015.

18. Gary Gillette, meeting with Herm Krabbenhoft, July 28, 2015, Detroit, Michigan.
19. Pete Palmer, email to Herm Krabbenhoft and Gary Gillette (with a courtesy copy to David S. Neft), July 21, 2015: "I would say the same thing as I have said on all your research. It is very good, accurate, better than the original ICI research or the Lanigan research. I see no reason not to use your stuff, since it is more accurate. We are not changing any official stats, just getting a better source for unofficial stats."
20. Gary Gillette, email to Herm Krabbenhoft, July 29, 2015.
21. Some of the results reported in this article were presented at the Society for American Baseball Research Convention (SABR-45) in Chicago on June 26, 2015: Herm Krabbenhoft, "Happiness is Leading the Majors in RBIs: Who Was Happiest in 1917 – Zimmerman, Veach, Cobb, or Felsch?"



TABLE 1. RUNS-BATTED-IN NUMBERS FOR PLAYERS ON THE 1917 DETROIT TIGERS

Player	RBIs (Krabbenhoft)	RBIs (Neft)	\Delta [§]	Player	RBIs (Krabbenhoft)	RBIs (Neft)	\Delta
Bernie Boland	3	2	1	George Harper	12	12	—
George Burns	42-43	40	?	Harry Heilmann	85-88	86	?
Donie Bush	23	24	(1)	Bill James	1	2	(1)
Ty Cobb	106-108	102	?	Bob Jones	2	2	—
(Johnny Couch)	0	0	—	Deacon Jones	0	0	—
Stan Coveleski	0	0	—	Willie Mitchell	4	4	—
Sam Crawford	11	12	(1)	Fred Nicholson	2	1	1
George Cunningham	3	3	—	Tubby Spencer	22	22	—
Hooks Dauss	0	2	(2)	Oscar Stanage	30	30	—
(Tony DeFate)	0	0	—	Bobby Veach	110-114	103	?
Ben Dyer	0	0	—	Ossie Vitt	45-47	47	?
Howard Ehmke	2	2	—	(Frank Walker)	0	0	—
Babe Ellison	4	4	—	Archie Yelle	0	0	—
(Ira Flagstead)	0	0	—	Ralph Young	38	35	3

NOTE: A player whose name is enclosed in parentheses indicates that the player had zero RBIs and ten or fewer at bats.

§ The |\Delta| column gives the absolute-value difference between my RBI number and Neft's RBI number; an entry enclosed in parentheses indicates that my RBI number is less than Neft's RBI number; a question mark (?) indicates that there is not a definitive absolute-value difference between my RBI number and Neft's RBI number.

**TABLE 2. RUNS-BATTED-IN NUMBERS
FOR PLAYERS ON THE 1917 CHICAGO WHITE SOX**

Player	RBI (Krabbenhof)	RBI (Neft)	\Delta [§]	Player	RBI (Krabbenhof)	RBI (Neft)	\Delta
Joe Benz	0	0	—	Ted Jourdan	2-3	2	?
(Bobby Byrne)	0	0	—	Nemo Leibold	28-30	29	?
Eddie Cicotte	9-10	8	?	Byrd Lynn	7	5	2
Eddie Collins	66-68	67	?	Fred McMullin	14	12	2
Shano Collins	13	14	(1)	Eddie Murphy	16	16	—
Dave Danforth	5	5	—	Swede Risberg	43-44	45	?
Red Faber	3	2	1	Reb Russell	9	9	—
Happy Felsch	99-100	102	?	Ray Schalk	50-51	51	?
(Jack Fournier)	0	0	—	Jim Scott	1	0	1
Chick Gandil	56	57	(1)	(Zeb Terry)	0	0	—
(Ziggy Hasbrook)	0	0	—	Buck Weaver	32-33	32	?
Joe Jackson	82-84	75	?	Lefty Williams	2	2	—
Joe Jenkins	3	2	1	(Mellie Wolfgang)	0	0	—

NOTE: A player whose name is enclosed in parentheses indicates that the player had zero RBIs and ten or fewer at bats.

§ The |\Delta| column gives the absolute-value difference between my RBI number and Neft's RBI number; an entry enclosed in parentheses indicates that my RBI number is less than Neft's RBI number; a question mark (?) indicates that there is not a definitive absolute-value difference between my RBI number and Neft's RBI number.

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The Pittsburgh Press, July 2, 1905

**TABLE 3. "EITHER-OR" RBI GAMES
FOR THE 1917 DETROIT TIGERS PLAYERS**

Game	Opp	R	R#	Inn	R-Scorer	R-Event	R-Batter		
6-29	STL*	19			Young (2nd)	BS + E-1 + E-3	(Cobb)		
					OR	OR	OR		
			17	9	Young (3rd)	1-RBI SF	Heilmann		
					OR	OR	OR		
					Young (3rd)	1-RBI SF	Burns		
7-01 (2)	STL*	9							
			8	9	Bush	1-RBI SOFC	Vitt		
						OR	OR		
					1-RBI SOFC	Veach			
7-17 (1)	PHI	9							
			7	8	Bush	1-RBI Double			
						OR	Cobb		
								2-RBI Double	
			8	8	Vitt	2-RBI Double	Cobb		
						OR	OR		
					1-RBI Single	Veach			
					OR	Or			
					2-RBI Single	Veach			
			9	8	Cobb	1-RBI Single	Veach		
						OR	OR		
						2-RBI Single	Veach		
						OR	OR		
						1-RBI Single	Heilmann		
7-21 (2)	NY	11							
			8	8	Vitt	1-RBI Double			
						OR	Veach		
						2-RBI Double			
			9	8	Cobb	2-RBI Double	Veach		
			OR	OR					
					1-RBI Double	Heilmann			
			10	8	Veach	1-RBI Double			
						OR	Heilmann		
						2-RBI Double			
			11	8	Heilmann	1-RBI Out	Young		
7-30	WAS*	16							
			10	7	Stanage	1-RBI Single	Vitt		
						OR	OR		
						2-RBI Double	Cobb		
			11	7	Bush	1-RBI Double			
						OR	Cobb		
						2-RBI Double			

NOTES: For the 6-29 game: (a) the base from which Young scored is indicated in parentheses in the R-Scorer column; (b) for the R-Event column, "BS + E-1 + E-3" indicates "Bunt Single + Error by the pitcher + Error by the first baseman"; and (c) for the R-Batter column, enclosing Cobb in parentheses, i.e., (Cobb), indicates that Cobb would not get credit for an RBI.

**TABLE 4. "EITHER-OR" RBI GAMES
FOR THE PLAYERS ON THE 1917 WHITE SOX**

Game	Opp	R	R#	Inn	R-Scorer	R-Event	R-Batter			
6-08	WAS*	11	8	8	Risberg	1-RBI Single OR	Leibold OR			
						1-RBI Single OR	Weaver OR			
						2-RBI Single	Weaver			
			9	8	Lynn	1-RBI Single OR	Weaver OR			
						2-RBI Double OR	E. Collins OR			
						3-RBI Double	E. Collins			
			10	8	Leibold	2-RBI Double OR	E. Collins OR			
						3-RBI Double	E. Collins			
			11	8	Weaver	3-RBI Double OR	E. Collins OR			
						1-RBI Out	Jackson			
			8-29 (2)	STL	11	8	8	Danforth	1-RBI Single OR	E. Collins OR
									1-RBI SOFC	Jackson
9	8	Leibold				1-RBI SOFC OR	Jackson OR			
						1-RBI SOFC	Felsch			
10	8	E. Collins (2nd)				SOFC + E-4	(Felsch)			
						1-RBI SOFC OR	Felsch OR			
10	8	E. Collins (3rd)				1-RBI Out OR	Jourdan OR			
						1-RBI Single OR	Risberg OR			
						2-RBI Single	Risberg			
11	8	Jackson (3rd)				1-RBI Out OR	Jourdan OR			
						1-RBI Single	Risberg			
11	8	Jackson (2nd)				2-RBI Single	Risberg			
9-03 (2)	DET	14	11	6	Gandil	1-RBI Single OR	Schalk OR			
						1-RBI GO	Cicotte			
			12	6	Risberg	1-RBI GO OR	Cicotte OR			
						1-RBI Single OR	Leibold OR			
			13	6	Schalk	2-RBI Single	Leibold			
						1-RBI Single OR	Leibold OR			
2-RBI Single	Leibold									

NOTES: For the 8-29 (2) game: (a) the base from which E. Collins scored is indicated in parentheses in the R-Scorer column; (b) for the possibility that E. Collins scored from second base, the "SOFC + E-4" entry in the R-Event column indicates "safe on fielder's choice + error by the second baseman; and (c) for the R-Batter column, enclosing Felsch in parentheses, i.e., (Felsch), indicates that Felsch would not get credit for an RBI.

THE INSIDE GAME: THE YEAR 2015 IN REVIEW

As last year, we conclude the 2015 run of *The Inside Game* with a brief look back at what has been delivered over the past 12 months. In five issues covering approximately 145 pages, the newsletter has attempted to keep DEC members apprised of news and matters of general interest related to the game as played from 1901 to 1919; published a dozen original Deadball-related research and biographical articles; and reviewed an array of recent books devoted to the game and those who played it during the first two decades of the last century.

Much of what the newsletter conveyed about Deadball-related events and/or the affairs of our committee appeared in "The Chairman's Column," a regular feature penned by DEC chairman John McMurray. In addition to exploring such topics as the importance of the stolen base to Deadball Era play and the 1915 season of Phillies slugger Gavvy Cravath, the column afforded space with commentary for republication of the address by distinguished baseball historian Dorothy Seymour Mills at the annual Fred Ivor-Campbell/19th Century Committee conference in Cooperstown; the remarks on the Deadball Era made by the noted baseball author and scholar Charles Alexander during the DEC meeting conducted at SABR 45 in Houston; and a lively, informative interview of Major League Baseball Official Historian John Thorn by former newsletter editor Mark Ruckhaus. Elsewhere, we also published the remarks of 2015 Ritter Award co-winners Nathaniel Grow (*Baseball on Trial: The Origins of Baseball's Antitrust Exemption* – Univ. of Illinois Press) and Chuck Kimberly (*Wee Willie, Old Cy, and Baseball War: Scenes from the Dawn of the Deadball Era, 1900-1903* -- McFarland), and the results of the newsletter survey to which 100 DEC members responded. As promised last February, we have taken the comments of our survey respondents to heart in the formulation and presentation of ensuing newsletters. As for the current issue, news features include coverage of the dedication of a

monument to Pittsburgh star Ginger Beaumont, the latest memorial tribute to Wisconsin baseball greats erected by DEC member Dave Stalker, and the restoration of Cleveland's League Park. And no issue of *The Inside Game* would be complete without the collection of delightfully odd news items and historic Deadball cartoons that layout editor Bob Harris unearths and integrates into the text.

The newsletter takes pride in the original Deadball research and biographical articles that we published this year. As in the past, readers were entertained and enlightened by the record-revising statistical inquiries of Herm Krabbenhoft and by tales about turn-of-the-century ball in and around Milwaukee by Dennis Pajot. The newsletter also presented interesting and informative Deadball articles by new voices like Joe Wancho and Phil Williams (from whom we hope to receive more in future). Meanwhile, the book review section, first under the direction of Gail Rowe and thereafter Dan Levitt, continued to keep newsletter readers abreast of the latest in Deadball literature. Fourteen new books were reviewed, one of which prompted a spirited but respectful difference of opinion between two frequent newsletter contributors. We hope that other readers will be favor us with their thoughts about newsletter content, which we will be pleased to publish whenever correspondents permit.

Finally, a reminder. *The Inside Game* does not write itself. It relies upon contributions submitted by DEC members. For the past two years, we have been fortunate to exceed our four newsletters per year goal, publishing six issues in 2014 and five this year. In 2016, we aim to present our first issue in February, and will put out as many issues thereafter as we receive material for. We invite members, both regular contributors and first-timers alike, to submit their writings to us whenever they would like to see their Deadball-related news or research appear in print. In the meantime, best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving to all, and hope to see you again early next year.

Bill Lamb, Editor

GINGER BEAUMONT HONORED IN DAVID STALKER'S BASEBALL MEMORIAL SERIES

by **David Stalker**

On July 19, 2015, a two-sided monument was unveiled honoring Deadball standout Ginger Beaumont. The event took place on a sunny afternoon at beautiful Beaumont Field in Burlington, Wisconsin. The monument dedication was followed by induction ceremonies for Burlington's Baseball Hall of Fame, which Beaumont has been a member of since 2012. Bill Milatz, chairman of Burlington's Baseball Hall of Fame committee, was master of ceremonies. He thanked the many from Burlington and the surrounding area that made the Beaumont monument possible. Ginger's granddaughter Jean Cognato was introduced along with her daughter Julie Roden, both of whom traveled from out of state to attend.

Jean gave thanks and shared stories and warm memories of her grandfather throughout the afternoon. One thing she mentioned was that "Grandpa Beau" taught her how to throw a baseball hard, not like a girl. He also once embroidered a tablecloth during several games, to help steady the nerves. That tablecloth may now be viewed at the Heritage Museum in Racine, Wisconsin, courtesy of Jean.

Dennis Degenhardt gave thanks to SABR members who contributed to the memorial. He said that most of that support came from Pittsburgh's Forbes Field Chapter. They take much pride in their former player. The speedy Beaumont played baseball in Rochester and the surrounding area, but it was in Waupun, Wisconsin where he became known through out the state and captured the attention of Connie Mack.

On Tuesday, July 28, 1896, just days after Beaumont's 20th birthday, the *Waupun Times* announced four new team members for the 1896 season. Beaumont of Rochester and Adkins of East Troy were among them. Ginger Beaumont and Merle "Doc" Adkins lived about ten miles

from each other. They attended and played baseball together at Beloit College, and from 1896 to 1898 Adkins pitched and Beaumont caught for the Prison City team in Waupun.

An 1897 newspaper box score once showed visiting Fond du Lac with a 12 to 5 lead in the seventh inning. Beaumont hit a three-run homer to highlight a six-run inning and bring the team within one run. Then in the last half of the ninth inning, with the score tied, and two outs, Beaumont stepped up to the plate. The crowd began shouting for another home run. He connected and the ball sailed away. As Ginger crossed the plate with his second home run in the game, his teammates rushed out to greet him, picked him up, and carried him around the diamond. He became a fan favorite right from the start.

Finishing the season, Waupun traveled to Beaver Dam, playing at the fair grounds. Pink Hawley, the Beaver Dam native who had just returned home after winning 22 games for the Pittsburgh Pirates, took the mound for Beaver Dam. Ginger showed he could pitch as well, striking out eight, and narrowly losing the game to the big leaguer, 5-4.

On July 28 and July 29, 1897, the Page Fence Giants, a traveling all-Black team, played in Waupun. Giants pitcher George Wilson struck out 15 batters, but Beaumont did well against him in both games, getting a hit and scoring two runs in the first game, and collecting two hits in the second. The Giants won both games, 7-4 and 10-1. After the games, Giants player Wood joined the Prison City team, pitching and playing second base.

By 1898, Waupun was one of the top teams in Wisconsin. With future major league catcher John Kleinow joining the team, Beaumont split his time between catching and playing second base. In one account, the *Waupun Times* referred to Beaumont as "Butch." On August 23, the newspaper stated that Beaumont had played his last game with Waupun and would finish out the season wearing a Milwaukee Brewers uniform, playing in the Western League under

Connie Mack. In his 24 games with Milwaukee, he batted .354 and played in the outfield.

Ginger made his major league debut on April 21, 1899 with the National League Pittsburgh Pirates and finished that season with a .352 batting average. In 1903, Beaumont made history by being the first batter of the modern World Series. Boston's Cy Young was on the mound with Lou Criger catching. Both Beaumont and Criger have now been honored in this Baseball Memorial Series: Beaumont in Burlington, and Criger in his hometown of Elkhart, Indiana. Their 1903 World Series play is noted on their memorials; both include mention of their mutual friend Cy Young, and both had their granddaughters who think the world of their grandfathers attend their dedications.

In 1907, Beaumont joined the Boston Doves. He batted .322 and led the league in hits for his fourth time, with 187. It was his last season batting over .300. Ginger remained with Boston through 1909. With Chicago only about an 80-mile drive from Burlington, it was somewhat of a homecoming when he joined the Chicago Cubs in 1910. He became a member of a team that would eventually have four members in the National Baseball Hall of Fame: Mordecai Brown, Joe Tinker, Johnny Evers, and Frank Chance. The team played in its fourth World Series in a five-year span that season. As the Cubs dynasty ended, so did Beaumont's major league career, as he made his final at-bat in the World Series.

Beaumont batted over .300 in seven of his 12 major league seasons, finishing his career with a .311 lifetime average, a significant accomplishment in an era when pitching dominated the game. Later in his life, Ginger stated that his eight years with the Pirates were his favorite.

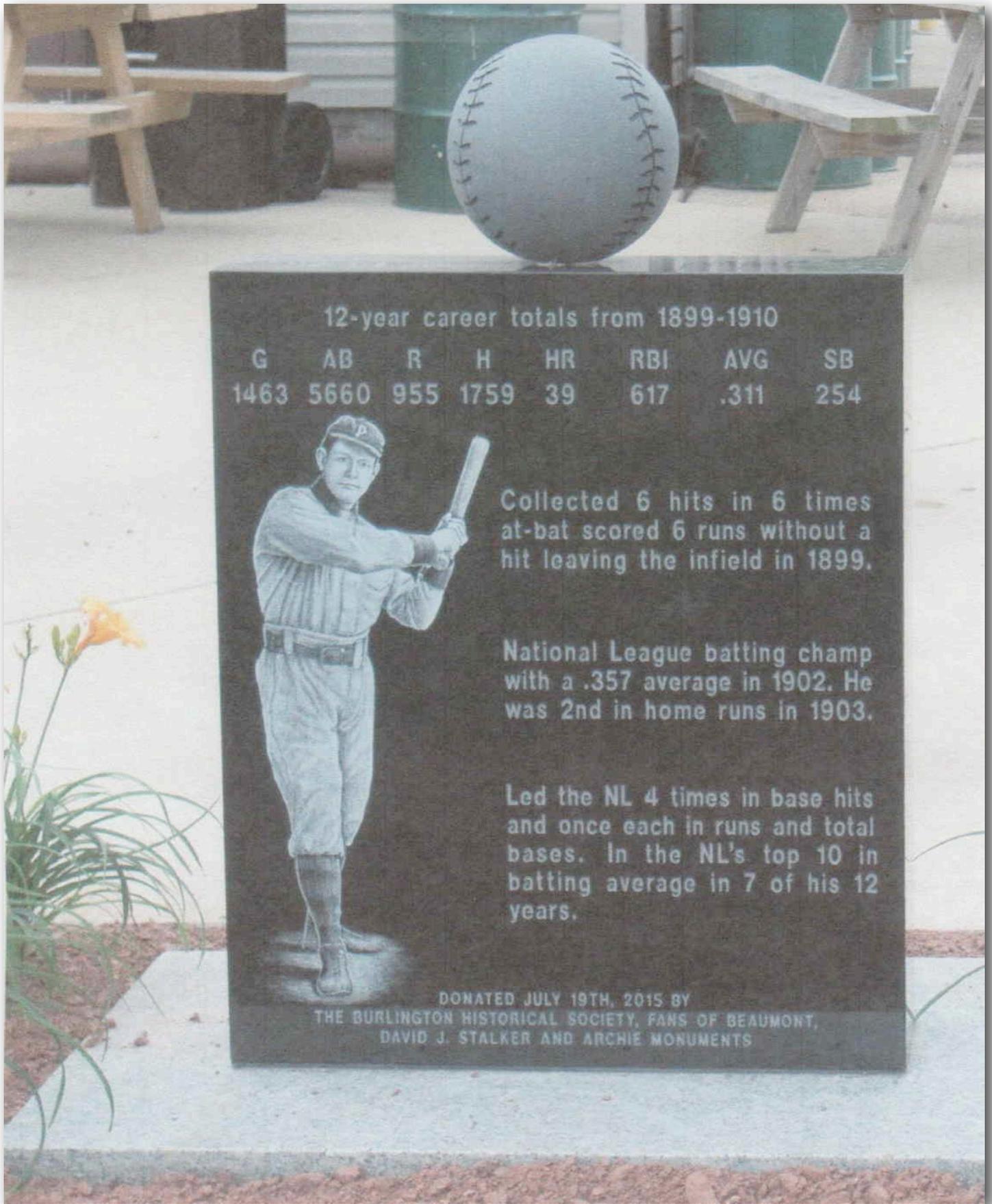
After baseball he purchased a 180-acre farm in Honey Creek, Wisconsin, just miles down the road from Rochester. He named his place the Center Field Farm. Ginger was a choir director at a Honey Creek Baptist Church, and did some auctioneering. He was a kind man who was known to happily help anyone, and was as good off the field, as he was on.



Great-granddaughter Julie Rodon, granddaughter Jean Cognato, and David Stalker standing behind Ginger Beaumont monument

Beaumont was inducted into the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame in 1951. Connie Mack and pitchers Cy Young and Deacon Phillippe from the 1903 World Series all traveled to Milwaukee to join in the festivities honoring Beaumont. In 2011, Ginger became a member of the Racine County Sports Hall of Fame. The following year, he was inducted into Burlington's Baseball Hall of Fame, as well.

On July 19, 2015 Ginger Beaumont became a member of David Stalker's Baseball Memorial Series. After the ceremony, Jean Cognato kissed her hand and then set it on the granite baseball that sets on top of the memorial. Her smile was as bright as her Grandpa Beau's red hair. Later she said that she has never been prouder.



12-year career totals from 1899-1910

G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	AVG	SB
1463	5660	955	1759	39	617	.311	254



Collected 6 hits in 6 times at-bat scored 6 runs without a hit leaving the infield in 1899.

National League batting champ with a .357 average in 1902. He was 2nd in home runs in 1903.

Led the NL 4 times in base hits and once each in runs and total bases. In the NL's top 10 in batting average in 7 of his 12 years.

DONATED JULY 19TH, 2015 BY
THE BURLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FANS OF BEAUMONT,
DAVID J. STALKER AND ARCHIE MONUMENTS

Beaumont monument, reverse side

The monument is adorned with a portrait by Linda Boettcher and reads:

This memorial is dedicated to the life of Clarence H. Beaumont [with “Ginger” inscribed under the portrait]. Born in Rochester, WI, July 23, 1876 to Thomas and Mary Beaumont. He made his major league debut Apr. 21, 1899 and his big league career lasted from 1899 to 1910. Beaumont married Norma (Vaughan) Beaumont in Nov. 1901. They raised two daughters, Marion and Janet, and one son, Charles. Ginger played 8 seasons with the Pittsburgh Pirates, three with the Boston Nationals and one season with the Chicago Cubs. The owner of the Pirates nicknamed him “Ginger” due to his red hair. In 1903 Beaumont became the first batter in the World Series flying out to centerfield off Cy Young. He would retire after 12 seasons and return to Honey Creek where he lived on his farm called “Center Field Farm.” In 1951 Beaumont was inducted into the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame. Beaumont died at 79 on Apr. 10, 1956. His obituary in *The Sporting News* called him, “One of the game’s all-time great outfielders.”

The backside of the monument features a full body etching by Boettcher, and memorializes Ginger’s 12-year career totals from 1899-1910. Note is also made that Ginger once collected six hits in six times at-bat and scored six runs without a hit leaving the infield in 1899; that he was National League batting champ with a .357 average in 1902, and second in home runs in 1903; that he led the NL in base hits four times, and once each in runs and total bases, and that he placed in the NL’s top 10 in batting average in seven times of his 12 seasons. At the memorial’s base, an inscription states “Donated July 19, 2015 by: The Burlington Historical Society, Fans of Beaumont, David J. Stalker and Archie Monuments.”

The Ginger Beaumont monument is the most recent memorial to Badger State baseball greats erected through the efforts of David J. Stalker of Watertown, Wisconsin.

Ginger Beaumont is one of the fastest men in the country going down to first. A stop watch was held on him the other day, and it took him just three seconds to cover the thirty yards. It took Heine Peitz five.

The (Washington, D.C.) Evening Times, August 23, 1901

Ginger Beaumont wants to leave Mt. Clemens, Mich., where he has been treating rheumatism in his leg, and help the Pirates in their fall games. He has been ordered to stay at the resort, though, as Wallace is doing well in center and Clymer is ready to jump in at any time.

(Washington, D.C.) Evening Star, September 2, 1905

GIANT RECRUIT DIES IN CAMP

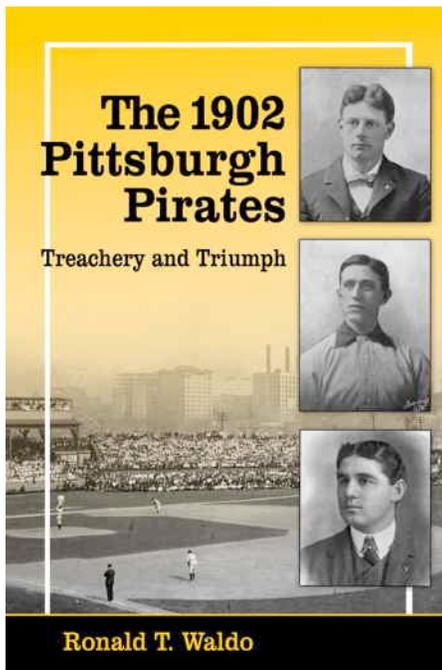
PITCHER HANLEY OF MARIETTA SUCCUMBS TO ACUTE APPENDICITIS

RUSHED TO HOSPITAL AND OPERATED UPON BUT GANGRENE HAD SET IN— A FAVORITE

MARLIN, TEX.—Thomas Hanley, one of the most promising recruit pitchers of the Giant squad, died here yesterday morning of appendicitis. For a week Hanley had been suffering with pains in his stomach and when operated upon yesterday it was found he had appendicitis of long standing and gangrene had set in. Hanley was 24, and lived in Marietta, O. He came to the Giants from the Newark (O.) club. Hanley’s father, who is wealthy, was notified of his son’s illness and later of his death. The body was shipped to Marietta.

Hanley was popular with the other players, and his sudden death has cast a gloom over the training camp. Coach Robinson was with Hanley, the other players being in Dallas. McGraw ordered that no expense be spared in caring for the body and shipping it home.

Youngstown Vindicator, March 10, 1913



**THE 1902 PITTSBURGH
PIRATES: TREACHERY
AND TRIUMPH**

BY RONALD T. WALDO

2015. Jefferson, NC:
McFarland & Company
[ISBN: 978-0-7864-7832-3;
ebook: 978-1-4766-1506-6;
300 pp. \$29.95 USD. Softcover
(6" X 9")]

Reviewed by

Robert Peyton Wiggins
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In his most recent book, *The 1902 Pittsburgh Pirates*, Ronald T. Waldo provides a piece of baseball history that has received little attention. In doing so, he gives Pirates' owner Barney Dreyfuss the credit he deserves as an important baseball mogul in the early years of the 20th century.

One cannot separate the 1902 season from the war between

the two major leagues, and Waldo is thorough in documenting that conflict. The early part of the book is devoted to Dreyfuss' ascension to the presidency and majority owner of the Pirates, the war with the one-year old American League, and synopses of the Pirates 1900 and 1901 seasons. There was a tale that the newly-formed American League chose not to sign Pittsburgh players in order to produce a lopsided National League pennant race that led to a decline in interest and attendance. In July 1901, the Pirates forward-thinking owner Barney Dreyfuss signed "all" of his players to contracts that ran through the 1902 baseball season. While Pittsburgh's players were unavailable until the conclusion of their contracts, the other National League clubs stuck to the tradition of signing players in the off-season and paid for it when their rosters were decimated by American League raiders.

The most interesting section of the book is the clandestine attempt by American League President Ban Johnson to secure commitments from Pittsburgh players to join his league for 1903. Pirates' catcher Jack O'Connor organized secret meetings between his teammates and American League executives, only to be foiled by Dreyfuss. Ultimately, the Pirates would lose some players, including the team's most important pitcher, Jack Chesbro, but

most remained faithful to the Pittsburgh club. That activity by the Americans may have sidetracked the "World Series" a year before the inaugural post-season championship. During the summer of 1902 Dreyfuss proposed a series with the American League champion and received a positive reception from the Philadelphia Athletics' Connie Mack. After Ban Johnson's attempts to woo Pirate players to his league, the idea was dropped.

A problem the author faced was the foregone conclusion the Pirates would easily win the National League championship. Waldo's coverage of ball games day after day becomes redundant, although he does employ anecdotal accounts as a respite. In the age of "rowdiness," there were plenty of fisticuffs to highlight, but humorous tidbits as well. During the course of one game, Honus Wagner attempted to eject a yellow dog that appeared on the field. The Pirates star player was led on a chase that left him gasping for breath when the dog exited from whence he came. Waldo does not reveal much about the game of baseball as it was played just after the turn of the century. He does point out that the Pirates' strategy was "when in doubt, bunt." Waldo did not explore the poor condition of that era's playing fields or the difference between then and the lively ball period of two decades later. Nor are there descriptions of crucial

equipment such as balls and gloves that were markedly different than just a few years later.

The author refers to the 1902 Pirates as “one of the greatest teams in baseball history,” (p. 2) but it is difficult to evaluate that Pittsburgh club among the game’s elite teams because of the precipitous decline in talent by the rest of the National League. The season ended on a distasteful note with the defections of Pirate players to the other league and a disappointing post-season exhibition series against a team of American League All-Stars. Although the 1903 version of the Pirates repeated as National League champions, the loss of the World Series that year took some of the luster off the legacy of the 1902 Pittsburgh Club.

Waldo’s sources are meticulously documented, as demonstrated in 1,118 endnotes for twelve chapters. However, the Pirates game

commentaries were mostly gleaned from one newspaper, the *Pittsburg Press*. It is curious that Waldo utilized only one Pittsburgh newspaper when several other papers represented the city at the time. Some readers may find that the numerous block quotations, some quite long, detract from the flow of the narrative. Baseball is a visual game and many of the seventeen portraits the author acquired from the National Baseball of Fame would have more impact if not squeezed down to a width of three inches or less.

This book may a bit rigorous for the casual reader, but it is a fit for fans of the Deadball Era and Pirates history buffs.

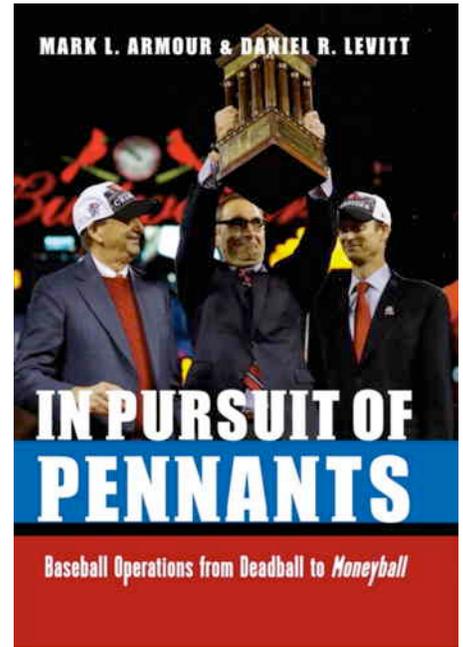
Robert Peyton Wiggins is the author of several books including The Federal League of Baseball Clubs, winner of the 2010 Larry Ritter Award. He also has written several articles for the SABR Baseball Biography Project.

CHANCE MAY LOSE MITCHELL

**FATHER SAYS BASEBALL HAS
NO ELEMENT OF SPORT IN IT AND
FORBIDS SON TO JOIN CUBS**

SARDIS, MISS.—The Rev. Dr. Mitchell, Methodist minister and father of Robert Mitchell, the state university pitcher who has agreed to a trial offered by the Chicago Cubs, says baseball is a “cold blooded money making business and that no element of sport lies in the game of today.” For that reason he will forbid his son to enter the professional field. “Bob” is touring the varsity squad and it is not known whether he will abide by his father’s decision. He is over 21 years.

Chicago Tribune, April 29, 1910



**IN PURSUIT OF
PENNANTS: BASEBALL
OPERATIONS FROM
DEADBALL TO
MONEYBALL**

**BY MARK L. ARMOUR
AND DANIEL R. LEVITT**

2015. Lincoln, NE: University
of Nebraska Press.

[ISBN-978-0-8032-3497-0.
458 pages. \$34.95. Hard
cover]

Reviewed by
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Everyone who enjoyed *Paths to Glory: How Great Baseball Teams Got That Way* will be happy to hear that Mark L. Armour and Daniel R. Levitt have collaborated again after a decade or so of flying solo on first-rate projects. With *In Pursuit of Pennants* they have produced another big winner, a companion piece and a logical outgrowth of *Paths to Glory*.

Knowledge of *Paths to Glory*, while a bonus to the reader approaching *In Pursuit of Pennants*, is not imperative.

In effect, we have two books here, a history and an encyclopedia. Viewing the work as history, a reader may proceed continuously from beginning to end. Conversely, one may read in the book, picking and choosing whatever looks interesting at the time. Either approach will yield dividends.

The authors have set themselves a daunting task, to describe baseball operations (“machinations” might be a better word) over roughly 115 years. Presenting their material in chronological order (with some necessary overlap), they divide the book into four parts. Part 1, “Professional Management,” begins with Barney Dreyfuss working alone as an owner-operator and building a powerful Pittsburgh Pirates team in the first decade of the 20th century, followed by field manager John McGraw doing much the same thing to turn the New York Giants from also-rans into perennial contenders and frequent champions. Colonel Jacob Ruppert hired Ed Barrow, beginning the transformation of the New York Yankees into baseball’s most powerful organization. The St. Louis Cardinals’ Branch Rickey began to formalize the relationship between the major and minor leagues by developing the farm system; not coincidentally, the

Cardinals rose to the top of the National League. Working to stay ahead, Ruppert in 1932 hired George Weiss to take over the Yankees’ emerging farm system.

Part 2, “General Manager Ascendant,” opens with Buzzy Bavasi’s development of the Dodger Way, a system-wide structure of scouting, instruction, and development. George Weiss took over as Yankee GM in 1947 and took the team to even greater heights. However, the most significant event of 1947 was integration, brought about by Branch Rickey, the Dodgers, and Jackie Robinson. How teams responded to this morally fraught situation largely determined their fate over the next few decades. Those that availed themselves (for whatever reason) of an enormous pool of talent did well: the Dodgers, Giants, and Indians in the 1950s, the Dodgers and Cardinals in the 1960s. The Yankees took their sweet time and did all right until the mid-1960s because they were brimming with talent in their farm system, but their American League counterparts floundered badly. Only when the Orioles (1966, 1969-1971), Red Sox (1967), and Tigers (1968) wised up did they come out of the wilderness. Meanwhile, 1965 saw the institution of the amateur draft, which quickly became and remains the best means of acquiring talent. In Cincinnati Bob Howsam put together the

last great team of pre-free-agency era.

Part 3, “New Order,” guides us through the collapse of the Yankees during the dreary years with CBS and their reemergence under the tumultuous reign of George Steinbrenner, who was sage enough to hire Gabe Paul. It was a period of expansion, and in 1968 Kansas City and Seattle received franchises. We see why the Royals made the playoffs in a few years and the Seattle Pilots became the Milwaukee Brewers in one. In late December 1975, arbitrator Peter Seitz provided a new interpretation of the reserve clause and granted free agency to pitchers Andy Messersmith and Dave McNally, changing the whole complexion of the game with owners and players becoming richer than anyone could have imagined. Toronto got a franchise in 1976, hired Pat Gillick as GM, and became a contender in less than a decade. Seattle got another franchise and struggled until Gillick became GM in 2000.

Part 4, “Businessmen,” brings us to the present, beginning with Pat Gillick’s years in Baltimore and Philadelphia, where he continued to work miracles. The publication in 2003 of Michael Lewis’s seminal *Moneyball* brought new analytical ideas to building teams. Nearly everybody bought into *Moneyball*, especially Billy Beane in Oakland, with Gillick being the exception, preferring to go with a player’s character and overall

makeup. Our journey culminates in the 2013 World Series between the Red Sox and the Cardinals and a look into the 2014 season. The book ends with an appendix listing the honors – Executive of the Year awards, election to the Hall of Fame, and so on – that executives have received.

Throughout *In Pursuit of Pennants* Armour and Levitt use Wins Above Replacement (WAR), a metric that works well for readers who are not mathematically inclined, to evaluate the moves an executive makes. Bob Howsam and Pat Gillick receive particularly favorable treatment. Gillick was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2011, and Armour and Levitt (though not saying so in so many words) make a case supporting Howsam's election that works even with those who do not support honoring executives in Cooperstown.¹

Several factors converge to make *In Pursuit of Pennants* a superb book. First is its extraordinary research, which is evident from the copious notes for each chapter. Moreover, the authors' arguments and conclusions are logical and cogently presented. Armour and Levitt are first-rate writers and storytellers. Aware that they are telling stories, they provide brief profiles of the executives whose careers they are portraying, delineating characters as it were. Accordingly, the reader understands not only *what* an

executive did and *how* he did it but also *why* he did it. As occurs in a good story, novel, or play, the reader often experiences a sense of inevitability about a trade, draft, strategy, or event. What had to happen, happened. Finally, as a touchstone of all good writing, the book has an aural quality. That is, the reader doesn't read so much as listen in his or her mind's ear. To read *In Pursuit of Pennants* is to engage in a conversation over beers and burgers with a couple of friends. Making this conversation so effective is that Armour and Levitt work their magic seamlessly. It is very difficult to tell who wrote what section or chapter, although a reader who knows both writers' past work can make some educated.

Several conclusions arise from a reading of *In Pursuit of Pennants*. First, the task of putting together a winning team has evolved from the one-man approaches of Barney Dreyfuss and John McGraw into a complex, multi-level corporate entity divided equally into business and baseball operations each comprised of huge staffs. Second, every general manager has to make use of all of the tools that have emerged in the

last century: scouting, instruction, development, integration (Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, and so on), free agency, the amateur draft, analytics, trades – everything. Finally, *In Pursuit of Pennants* is by far the best treatment of the building of baseball teams. It belongs in easy reach on every baseball researcher's desk or bookshelf, and it's going to be there for a very long time.

A retired English professor, Jan Finkel served for many years as chief editor of SABR's BioProject.

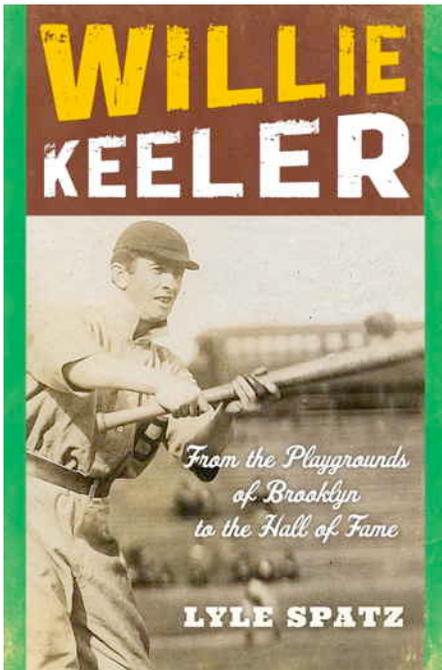
NOTE

1. Armour and Levitt have a useful and attractive website (pursuitofpennants.com) devoted to their book. On the site is their blog (pursuitofpennants.wordpress.com), which has their list of the 25 greatest general managers with links to their articles on the GMs containing material that doesn't appear in the book. They rank Branch Rickey first for obvious reasons, but there are surprises. Pat Gillick and Bob Howsam rank second and fourth, respectively, while Larry MacPhail and Gabe Paul merit only honorable mention. Coming in at twenty-fourth is John Quinn, who is barely mentioned in the book. This list would be a welcome addition to *In Pursuit of Pennants*.

The late Henry Chadwick was scarcely entitled to the title of the father of baseball. He was present at the birth and baptism of the game and he assisted in bringing it up, but he was not responsible for its birth. He rather deserved the title of the games's godfather.

[attributed to the *Boston Herald*]

(Trenton) Daily True American, May 6, 1908



**WILLIE KEELER: FROM
THE PLAYGROUNDS OF
BROOKLYN TO THE
HALL OF FAME**

BY LYLE SPATZ

2015. Lanham, MD: Rowman
& Littlefield.

[ISBN: 978-1-4422-4653-9;
ebook 978-1-4422-4654-6. 374
pp. \$40.00 USD, Paperback]

Reviewed by

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The most revealing chapter of Lyle Spatz's new biography of Willie Keeler occurs near the end. It contains contemporary views of Keeler compared to Ty Cobb, with many observers judging Keeler to be Cobb's superior in "scientific" place hitting, base running, and defense. Indeed, Keeler perfected the hands-apart grip that allowed him to steer the ball where the fielders weren't, a style followed by Cobb.

Compensating for his 5'4½", 140-pound stature, Keeler deployed an array of bunts, bloop, and bleeders that consistently frustrated fielders. He batted over .370 in each of his first six full seasons and amassed over 200 hits in his first eight seasons. That latter record lasted more than a century, finally broken by Ichiro Suzuki, Keeler's 21st-century counterpart. Yet Keeler is virtually unknown to today's casual fan and is fully appreciated only by the kind of dedicated fan who has access to this review.

As expected in a Lyle Spatz book, this Keeler biography contains a wealth of illuminating details. Keeler's career (1892-1909) spanned a particularly volatile period, and Spatz provides many perspectives on how rule changes and league alliances affected Keeler's fortunes. He reached the majors just in time to be aided by the lengthening of the pitching distance, with 1894 his first full season. Nearly a decade later, however, the new foul-strike rule hurt

him; he had been a major practitioner of fouling off pitch after pitch with impunity before picking out the offering he wanted.

The business practices of the major leagues greatly affected his career. After a successful run with the vaunted Baltimore Orioles of the 1890s, he was transferred to his hometown Brooklyn Superbas in 1899 thanks to syndicate ball. After helping them win two straight pennants, he was courted by the upstart American League. Though he loved playing in Brooklyn (a bachelor, he lived with his father until the latter's death in 1912), he was finally persuaded to venture as far as Upper Manhattan in 1903, becoming the first star of the newborn New York Highlanders. Team success eluded him in his seven seasons there before he finished up with a brief stint on the Giants, reunited with Orioles cohort John McGraw.

Spatz weaves his tale deftly. His prose is effortless and direct, with little excess. Every sentence tells you something

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The book review section relies upon book copies generously donated to us by their publishers. *In Pursuit of Pennants* and *The Colonel and Hug* were published by the University of Nebraska Press and can be ordered by telephone (402-472-3851) or email (pressmail@unl.edu). *Willie Keeler* comes from Rowman & Littlefield and can be obtained via telephone at 800-462-6420 or by emailing customercare@nbnbook.com. *The 1902 Pittsburgh Pirates* was published by McFarland and can be ordered by calling 800-253-2187 or emailing info@mcfarlandpub.com. We respectfully urge your patronage.

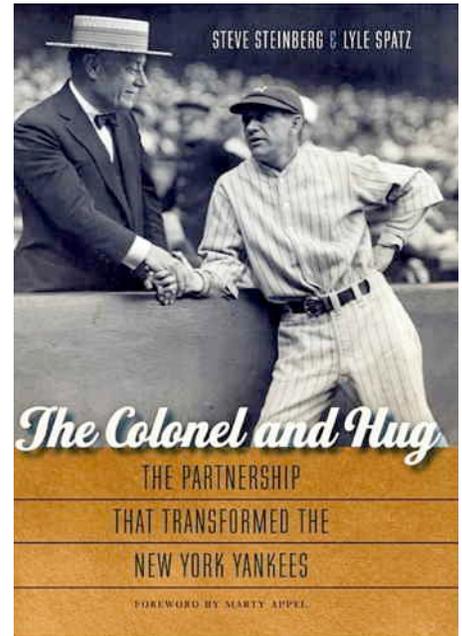
that puts events in context. The chapters are short, and the reading is always smooth. The history is impeccable. The few times I double-checked something, I only wondered why I had doubted him. The meticulous chronicling is both the strength and the drawback of this book. Every roster move includes the credentials of the newcomer and the fate of the departed player. Much attention is paid to schedules, game results, and standings. This is common in biographies, and Spatz's summaries are more engaging than most, but Keeler himself sometimes gets lost in the flurry of historical details. In his account of the 1900 season, for instance, Spatz notes Keeler's uncharacteristic slow start and his sub-.200 batting average in early May. There follows a four-page, blow-by-blow description of Brooklyn's stirring march to its second straight pennant, with nary a mention of Keeler. In the final paragraph of the chapter, we're given his stats, but considering that he led the team in batting average, hits, and runs scored, it would have been more

helpful to have specific evidence of his contribution to his team's victories.

I also wish the author hadn't aggravated one of my pet peeves about baseball biographies: using first and last names interchangeably. Spatz is entitled to call his subject whatever he wants, but his habit of referring to "Keeler" and "Willie" in the same sentence and going back and forth within a paragraph is disconcerting to me.

There's a lot to like about this biography. The quotes by and about Keeler are telling, the photos and notes are first-rate, and the portrait of Keeler as a gentleman amidst ruffians is vivid. I was left wanting to know more about Keeler's life off the field, and more about his precise role in the offensive innovations of the Orioles, but what's there is much more than a half-full glass and pleasing to the taste.

Gabriel Schechter is a freelance editor and researcher whose writings can be found at charlesapril.com and thenationalpastimemuseum.com.



THE COLONEL AND HUG: THE PARTNERSHIP THAT TRANSFORMED THE NEW YORK YANKEES

BY STEVE STEINBERG AND LYLE SPATZ

2015. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

[ISBN: 978-0-8032-4865-6.

576 pp. \$34.95USD, Hardcover]

Reviewed by

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During the early years of the last century, the achievements of the New York American League baseball club were less than impressive. Brought into the league to lend it Big Apple credibility, the team won no pennants while losing more games than it won during the deadball era. The team's original owners were corrupt; their managers and players,

WALLACE REJOINS BROWNS

ST. LOUIS—R. J. (Bobby) Wallace, former American League umpire, has signed to play the remainder of this season with the St. Louis Americans. For several years Wallace was star shortstop for the Browns, but two years ago joined the American League staff of umpires. It is thought that Wallace will play third.

The Pittsburg Press, August 1, 1916

with few exceptions, were mediocre.

The Yankees' fortunes began to improve with the 1915 sale of the club to Jacob Ruppert and "Til" Huston, aka "The Two Colonels," and with Ruppert's subsequent appointment of Miller Huggins as manager in late 1917. Those events were followed by the acquisition of Babe Ruth, the hiring of a business manager (effectively general manager) in Ed Barrow, the signing of Lou Gehrig, and a number of trades and other moves that led directly to the Yankees' ascendance to the baseball summit. Steve Steinberg and Lyle Spatz set out to recreate the story of that ascendance. The result of their labors, like the Ruppert-Huggins Yankees of the 1920s, is an unqualified success.

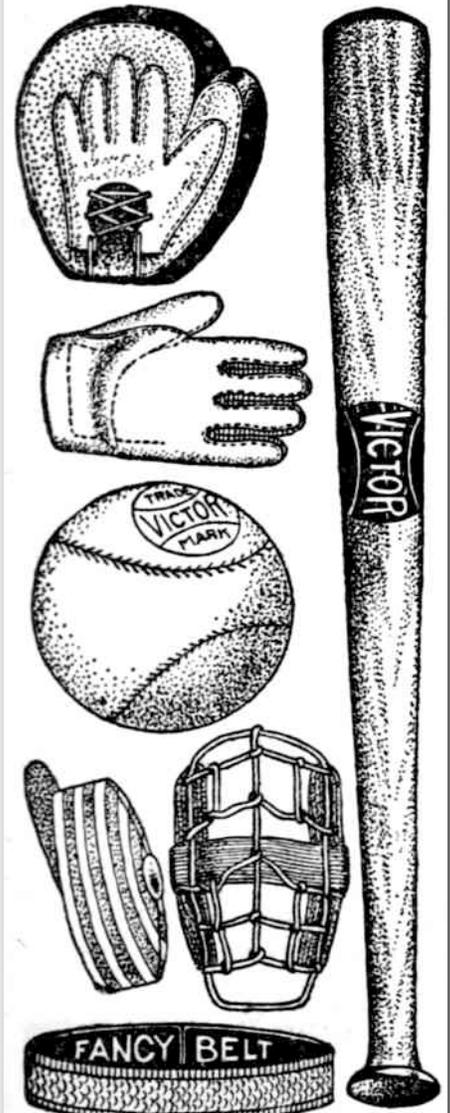
The Ruppert-Huggins partnership was almost ideal. Steinberg and Spatz presage the reasons for that in the Prologue, noting that the first serious meeting between the two men left Huggins "struck favorably by Ruppert's commitment to building a winner, his having the financial resources to do so, and his willingness to let his manager run the club without interference" (p. 3). "Hug" turned out to be correct on all counts, and the Yankees were the beneficiary.

Although their personalities were poles apart, Ruppert and Huggins had several striking similarities. Both men were

noticeably aloof; perhaps as a consequence, neither ever married. More to the point, both had an unwavering commitment to success, and they parlayed that commitment into helping create the juggernaut that their Yankees became. Still, the success of the Ruppert-Huggins partnership was inevitable only in retrospect. As Spatz and Steinberg tell us, Huston never approved of Ruppert's hiring of Huggins and regularly called for the diminutive manager's ouster. The effects of Huston's antipathy were aggravated by the presence on the Yankee roster of a sizeable number of players with mammoth egos, most notably one George Herman Ruth. Those obstacles, coupled with the relatively low regard in which the Yankee skippers' managerial skills were held by much of the New York press corps and fan base, weighed on Huggins, a reserved man without much in the way of social graces. "He never seemed to enjoy success," sportswriter Westbrook Pegler remarked after Huggins' death at the tail-end of the 1929 season. "Even when he was on top of the world in his business he wore a pained, unhappy expression" (p. 290). Bob Connery, a scout who worked with Huggins in New York as well as in his previous managerial stint in St. Louis, told sports scribe Fred Lieb that the skipper's "five years with the Cardinals were

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 **Ball Score**
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Any Bell Telephone
and the latest score will be given.

The Topeka State Journal, July 1, 1909

happier than any five years in New York, even when Huggins was winning pennants” (p. 44).

For Ruppert, the glory days of the Yankees were considerably happier. They also lasted longer: he survived his manager by almost a decade, well into the early years of the DiMaggio era. Ruppert helped bring about the Yankees’ early successes by offering his manager unqualified support. He refused to accept a letter of resignation from Huggins on at least one occasion while backing him unwaveringly against all detractors, including his business partner. It’s worth noting that the Yankees won their first World Series within a few months after Huston sold his share of the team to Ruppert.

The authors’ recounting of the Ruppert-Huggins story is the product of a challenging and

impressive research project. As far as is known, neither man left any memoirs, diaries, or collections of letters. Steinberg and Spatz nevertheless do them justice by intelligently weaving the statements of on-the-scene observers into an exceedingly well-written narrative. Their research can only be described as exhaustive; if there’s been another baseball book with more than 100 pages of endnotes, I haven’t yet seen it.

Baseball aficionados who detest the Bronx Bombers should not use their repugnance toward the team as an excuse to steer clear of *The Colonel and Hug*. I’m as virulent a Yankee-hater as there is, but the authors’ narrative is so compelling that I found my disdain for the team simply melt away in the course of my reading

(temporarily, of course). Although the book contains very little game action, I found it to be an absolute page-turner and an important contribution to the baseball literature of the period. As with a number of recent tomes on other principals in the Yankees’ early success, such as Dan Levitt’s fine biography of Ed Barrow, this book provides a valuable service in helping its readers better understand the genesis of the greatest dynasty in American sports history.

David Shiner has written a large number of articles, interviews, book reviews, and stories about baseball for various sports magazines, research journals, and literary publications. He is the author of Baseball’s Greatest Players: The Saga Continues (Superior Books, 2001), a sequel to Tom Meany’s classic Baseball’s Greatest Players.

SUMMER BASE BALL QUESTION AT YALE.

—By Leo.



(Washington, D.C.) Evening Star, October 22, 1915

THE MILWAUKEE WHATS? THE 1919 NICKNAME

by Dennis Pajot

On page 8 of the September 2015 edition of *The Inside Game* is a reproduction of a short news item from the *Toledo News-Bee* of January 28, 1919, telling readers that the Milwaukee club of the American Association had conducted a successful campaign to rename the Brewers. The team was now to be called the Panthers. Well, this is true, but not entirely. Here is the story behind the story.

The name *Brewers* was first used in the newspapers in connection with a professional baseball team in Milwaukee in 1888. By 1889 it was commonly being used in the press to designate the city's Western Association team. Only twice was there any attempt to change the nickname. In 1894 the press attempted to apply "Blue Ribbons" to the team, but it never stuck. In 1899 then manager Connie Mack, observing many of his players were rather tall, wanted his team called the Giants. The press used this nickname for a bit, but quickly went back to Brewers.¹ The Milwaukee club in the American Association had been known as the Brewers from its inception in 1902. But with Prohibition only a few votes away from becoming the law of the nation, the *Milwaukee Journal* thought it best to change the team's nickname. It ran this article on January 7, 1919:

Will the name Brewers appropriately fit the Milwaukee baseball club hereafter? Back in the old days when the brewing industry brought a certain measure of fame to the city, some imaginative scribe tacked the moniker of Brewers onto our team, and it has stuck ever since. But conditions now have changed. The knell for beer has sounded. Prohibition is going to bat, for some spell at least. Consequently the name of Brewers no longer is a proper designation for our ball club.



The *Journal* wants to know what the fans think about changing the name of the team. Perhaps you, while reading this can think of some appropriate label for the club. The *Journal* would like to hear from you regarding this. Send in your suggestions for a name and we will start a voting contest to determine which is the best. Then the wishes of the fans will be put up to the owners of the club and perhaps they will agree to make the change. Mail your suggestion today or drop in and see the sporting editor and tell him.²

The next day Milwaukee Baseball Club president A.F. Timme announced that he would present a season ticket to the fan who suggested the best name for the team. Timme liked the *Journal's* idea of a new name. "My wish is that the name Brewers for the Milwaukee club be discarded for all time. I know that if *The Journal* sponsored such a move in Milwaukee the name eventually decided upon will be the unanimous choice all over the American Association with all baseball writers."³ A committee to go through these entries and select a new name was formed. It

consisted of Senator Roy Wilcox, lawyer Henry Killilea, ex-American Association president Joseph D. O'Brien, plus, of course, newspapermen Thomas S. Andrews, J.A. Branstinger, Manning Vaughan, Art Schinner, and Sam Levy.⁴ Within days tons of suggestions flowed into the *Journal* offices. The suggestions ranged from the obvious to the ridiculous, the mundane to the spectacular. About any nickname one could think of — and some one would think no-one could — were sent in.⁵

On January 19 the *Journal* announced the winning selection. After carefully going through the “hundreds and hundreds” of names sent in, the committee selected the name “Panthers.” The winning *Panthers* entry was submitted by two contestants: W.L. Davidson and Ellery Thatcher. Both of their cards were received by the *Journal* on the first day of the contest, and it therefore was decided to give each a season ticket to Athletic Park, the home of the Panthers. Davidson was an executive of the Milwaukee Boy Scouts, who was said to be an ardent baseball fan and a shortstop/third baseman while at Lowell (Michigan) High School and Michigan State College. He also acted as a baseball instructor to the boy scouts during their summer outing at a reservation two miles south of Oconomowoc. Ellery Thatcher was only 14 years old, and resided with his parents on West Walnut Street. This last season he had played first base for the Burghardts, a local amateur team.⁶

The *Journal* said there were other people who suggested Panthers, but that Davidson and Thatcher had been the first. The newspaper admitted at least 50 percent of the contestants suggested the name Badgers, and the committee undoubtedly would have selected this name had it not decided the name would conflict with that of the University of Wisconsin teams.⁷ Milwaukee club owner Timme said that he was more than satisfied with the name Panthers, saying “I only hope the team will be all the name implies.” The *Journal* began referring to the ball club as the Panthers immediately.⁸ No doubt for obvious reasons, the rival *Milwaukee Sentinel*



never referred to the Milwaukee team as the Panthers, sticking with Brewers.

Shortly after the sale of the Milwaukee club to Clarence Rowland and Hugh Brennan in February 1919, the latter was reported in the *Sentinel* as saying: “Panthers does not signify anything. There are three clubs in organized baseball already known as the Panthers. Now when you say Brewers, you immediately think of Milwaukee. This city is the only one that ever had a club with that nickname, and it certainly is a popular one.” The *Sentinel* commented that as Brennan was in the advertising business, he knew the value of a catchy name.⁹ The *Journal* was quick to respond:

With all due respect to Hugh Brennan we must take issue with his argument that

the name Brewers should be retained by the team. Brennan has not sensed the local situation as yet and he has not had the opportunity to gauge the sentiment of Milwaukee fans who voted by the thousands in favor of a new moniker for the club. Out of the countless letters received by the *Journal* only one vote was cast for the retention of the name Brewers. This would seem to forcefully indicate that local patrons favored the change.

Milwaukee has never been particularly proud of the fame that has come to it through the brewing industry. It was never the leading industry here, though it was the best advertised. Prohibition has now wiped it out, therefore, this seems

like an opportune time in which to dissociate the city from the questionable fame that has attached to it for years.

The selection of the name Panthers was made after careful consideration by a committee of veteran baseball men and local sporting writers. The new moniker carries with it the suggestion of a spirit of aggressiveness and fight and it seems a particularly appropriate one for a ball club. Much more so than the placid one of Brewers.

Universal use of the name Panthers will in a short time supplant the memory of the Brewers. The advertising value of the new moniker will quickly equal that of the old label, and it will be much more pleasing to



Milwaukee patrons of the national pastime.¹⁰

The day after this response the *Journal* published a short statement that Brennan had decided to accept the name Panthers, apparently feeling pressure from the public.¹¹

The *Wisconsin News* also disdained the Panthers nickname. A *News* reporter wrote, “When you speak of Brewers even in these dry days to come your mind’s eye will immediately turn to Milwaukee, the home of the old amber brew. If for nothing else but memories sake the name should be retained and so we can only say:

They may call ‘em the Panthers, we hope they be fast.

Or Cooties or Sea Gulls or Flea.

And yet, when I think of the days of the past,

They’ll always be Brewers to me.”¹²

During the 1919 season the *Journal* always referred to the team as the Panthers; the *Sentinel*, as well as the *Evening Sentinel* and *Wisconsin News*, always used the nickname Brewers. Even the *Toledo News-Bee* referred to

It is really startling what inroads gambling has made in the royal American game of baseball. That, coupled with fanatic fanism, is bound to ruin the game sooner or later, if it isn’t stopped right quick. A very conservative opinion comes from a very conservative authority, no less than Hugh S. Fullerton. “Chewie,” who is a newspaper and magazine authority on the national game, has this hot line of talk on the subject:

“Baseball, as a great national sport, is in greater peril today than ever before. Not until the present week did I realize this fact. The gamblers, bookmakers and handbook men, who ruined horse racing and drove it out of existence as a sport, and who made fighting a noisome scandal, have attached themselves to baseball this year as never before.”

El Paso Herald, May 22, 1912

the team as the Brewers.¹³ Of course, within a short period of time the Panthers name was forgotten even by the *Journal* — which referred to the team as the Eganites or Egans for the next few years, the Milwaukee manager being Jack Egan.¹⁴ The *Journal* went back to the team name Brewers for the 1922 season.¹⁵ The Brewers remained the Brewers until the Braves arrived in 1953. And then in 1970, the Seattle Pilots moved to Milwaukee and became...well, we all know it was not the Panthers.

NOTES

1. Pajot, Dennis, *The Rise of Milwaukee Baseball: The Cream City from Midwestern Outpost to Major League City, 1859-1901* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2009), 148, 156, 200, 210, 270.
2. *Milwaukee Journal*, January 7, 1919.
3. *Milwaukee Journal*, January 8, 1919.
4. *Milwaukee Journal*, January 18, 1919.
5. *Milwaukee Journal*, January 13, 14, 16, and 17, 1919.
6. *Milwaukee Journal*, January 19, 1919.
7. *Milwaukee Journal*, January 21, 1919.
8. *ibid.*
9. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, February 13, 1919.
10. *ibid.*
11. *Milwaukee Journal*, February 14, 1919.
12. *Wisconsin News*, February 14, 1919.
13. *Toledo News-Bee*, May 6, 7, and 8, 1919.
14. *Milwaukee Journal*, May 2, 1920 and May 1, 1921.
15. *Milwaukee Journal*, May 1, 1922.

NEW FROM THE GAMES AND BIOPROJECT

Since our last newsletter went to press, the Games Project has published accounts of the four games of the 1914 Boston Braves-Philadelphia Athletics World Series by DEC member Mark Sternman. Meanwhile, bios of Charlie Ferguson, Archie Stewart, Al Bridwell, Wib Smith, and sportswriter Billy Weart have appeared on the BioProject site. As always, we urge readers to check out these interesting Deadball-related pieces.

CLEVELAND'S LEAGUE PARK REBORN

For 55 years, including the entire Deadball Era, Cleveland Spiders/Naps/Indians baseball was played at League Park, the cozy brick and steel stadium located on the city's east side. The Indians abandoned use of the ballpark after the 1946 season, and most of the structure was razed five years later. Only remnants survived as Cleveland endured the Hough riots of the late 1960s and the urban decay of the decades that followed.

Although long gone, League Park did not escape the notice of this newsletter. The 1901-1909 iteration of the ballpark was the subject of a comprehensive Ron Selter article published in April 2012, while the Ken Krsolvic-Bryan Fritz history of League Park was favorably reviewed in our June 2014 issue. Having touched upon the ballpark's past, we are now pleased to inform readers – via local reportage and photos supplied by DEC member Bob Emling – that League Park has a future, as well.

Following a \$6.3 million restoration, League Park reopened its gates on August 23, 2014. The more than 2,000 Opening Day attendees included a handful who remembered League Park games played 60 to 70 years earlier, while reportage in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and the *Elyria (Ohio) Chronicle* recalled landmark events: Cy Young throwing the ballpark's first pitch in 1891; the Indians' World Series triumph of 1920; Babe Ruth's 500th homer in 1929; and the Cleveland Buckeyes victory in the 1945 Negro Leagues World Series. Although newly installed bleachers were intended to accommodate only a fraction of the 20,000 fans who crowded League Park for big games in its heyday and artificial turf replaced the grass playing surface, the circa 1908 ballpark dimensions were retained: 356 feet in left field, 450 in dead center, and a short-porch 290 guarded by a 48-foot high fence in right. Incorporated into the new stadium were two surviving features of the old League Park. The three-story building that once housed the ticket office will become the new home of Cleveland Baseball Heritage Museum, while the



Historical marker, erected 1979



Right field fence, with old ticket office in background



Ticket office/Cleveland Baseball Heritage Museum building

now-bowed brick wall that separated the grounds from 66th Street was buttressed for stability and adorned with images of Major and Negro Leagues greats like Young, Ruth, Tris Speaker, Elmer Smith, Satchel Paige, and Quincy Troupe. Although no professional baseball games loom on the schedule, the new League Park is expected to be in constant use, with high school and recreation league baseball/softball games regularly on the docket.

This article was crafted from the reportage of the Cleveland Plain Dealer and Elyria (Ohio) Chronicle, August 24, 2014. The photographs were taken by DEC member Bob Emling.



Interior ballpark wall with Elmer Smith and Tris Speaker plaques



Ticket office and interior ballpark wall



Exterior ballpark wall on 66th Street

NEW RULE NOT LIKED

A majority of ball players do not favor the new rule passed by the National League which compels visiting teams to use the dressing rooms at the ball parks.

The players say that by dressing at the hotels they have more time to map out the plan of action to be used on the field than otherwise.

Many managers also oppose the scheme, for the reason that they prefer to start for the grounds with all their men in hand.

The American League has discussed the rule but will not adopt it.

The Toledo News-Bee, December 22, 1906

BASEBALL PLAYER DYING

ABERDEEN, WASH.—Otto Moore, second baseman on the Montesano team of the Washington State League, struck by a pitched ball in the Aberdeen-Montesano game at Montesano Sunday, is not expected to live through the day. He has been unconscious for 36 hours. Moore was at the bat and attempted to dodge a curved ball. He misjudged it, and stepped directly in its path instead. Moore's home is in Portland.

Editor's note: Moore survived and played for Portland's Northwestern League teams in 1911 and 1912.

The Tacoma Times, July 12, 1910

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

continued from page 1

Fame on the basis of his six National League home run titles (including one tie) achieved over seven seasons from 1913 through 1919. Yet he is remembered just as much for being, as Bill Swank called him in *Deadball Stars of the National League*, "an anomaly in the Deadball Era" as the first consistent power hitter in a period when teams focused on stealing bases. Swank quoted Cravath as saying: "Some players steal bases with hook slides and speed. I steal them with my bat."

Even if Cravath's single-season home run mark has been dwarfed in the years since, it is worth remembering the extraordinary season he enjoyed one-hundred years ago. In 1915, Cravath dominated the National League to a degree that few players have, leading the league in runs, home runs, RBIs, walks, on-base percentage, and slugging percentage. Cravath's 24 home runs nearly doubled the total of Cy Williams, the N.L.'s second-place finisher that season. Cravath also had 28 more RBIs than anyone else in the league. That the Phillies were able to reach the 1915 World Series with Cravath as the team's only real offensive threat (other than perhaps Fred Luderus, who hit primarily for average) speaks to Cravath's historically-significant performance.

Cravath's name is so closely associated with prodigious home run totals that it is often forgotten that he had one of the best throwing arms for an outfielder of his time. In fact, Cravath led National League outfielders in one other important category in 1915: assists, with 28. Although known by his teammates as a practical joker, Cravath's on-field toughness and Western roots ostensibly earned him the nickname of "Cactus." Writing in 1941, Stan Baumgartner, a teammate of Cravath on the 1915 Phillies, provided this description of the 5'10", 185 lb. outfielder: "a swashbuckling, tobacco-chewin', high cussin', bull-necked, blacksmith-armed wielder of the wagon tongue."

Cravath, of course, fell one home run shy of Freeman's home run mark in 1915, but Cravath's



Gavy Cravath

total set a 20th Century National League home run record, as well as a modern standard that stood until Babe Ruth surpassed it in 1919. In contrast, the Boston Braves, Boston Red Sox, Brooklyn Dodgers, Philadelphia Athletics, St. Louis Browns, and Washington Senators each hit fewer than 20 home runs as a team in 1915. In comparison, Braggo Roth led the American League with seven homers that year, and other than the 21 home runs that Frank Schulte hit in 1921, no Deadball Era player hit more than 20 home runs in a season until Ruth did so in 1919.

Where Cravath fell short was in his performance in the 1915 World Series, where he hit only .125 (2-for-16) without a home run in the five-game loss to Boston. But, other than Luderus and Dave Bancroft, no one in the Philadelphia lineup had a productive World Series offensively. Cravath's groundout against Ernie Shore in Game 1 did drive in the tying run in the only game that the Phillies would win in that Series. When the Phillies went on to lose four straight Series games, each by a single run, as Cravath

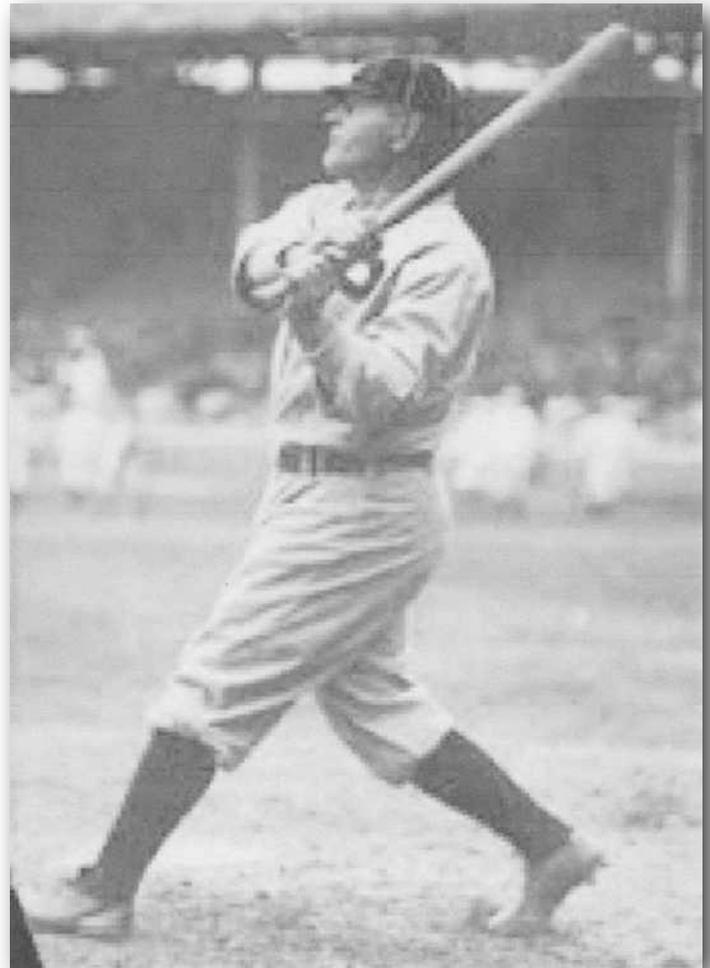
struggled, it was to be expected that the blame would fall on Philadelphia's most prolific offensive performer. One article published shortly after the 1915 World Series remarked that "Cravath looked more like an amateur than any other member of the Phillies."

Still, the respect that Cravath commanded in 1915 is evident in this note included by Robert Creamer in his biography of Babe Ruth, *Babe: The Legend Comes to Life*. Boston manager Bill Carrigan, Creamer says, was so intent on neutralizing Cravath's power in the 1915 World Series that he insisted on starting right-handed pitchers as often as he could. In keeping with that approach, Carrigan did not start Ruth, then a pitching prodigy. That Carrigan was apparently concerned more with stopping Cravath than he was with countering 31-game winner Grover Cleveland Alexander neatly sums up Cravath's dominance in 1915.

Perhaps Cravath's 1913 season, when he set career highs for hits, RBI, and slugging percentage, was his best statistically. Even so, Cravath will be always be remembered first for breaking new ground as a home run hitter in 1915 with his then-astounding 24 home runs. In Cravath's 1963 obituary, Fred Lieb noted that "[t]wo dozen Cravath home runs in 1915 were almost as magic a figure as 61 for Roger Maris of the Yankees in 1961." Whereas Ty Cobb was the dominant player in the American League in 1915, there is little doubt that Gavy Cravath, as Cobb's stylistic opposite, had the greatest impact of any player during that season.



Walt Hoban 1914



Gavy Cravath

REBEL OAKES IS A MILLIONAIRE

SHREVEPORT, LA.—"Rebel" Oakes, former St. Louis Cardinal and Brooklyn baseball player, is a millionaire. The Standard Oil Company's second test well came in a 7000-barrel gusher on Oakes' land in Claiborne Parish, La.

The Toledo News-Bee, Aug 14, 1919

FLU TAKES A PLAYER

Jake Felz, left fielder of the Jersey City ball team, died Monday in that city from an attack of influenza. Felz was 23 years old and gave promise of becoming a great player.

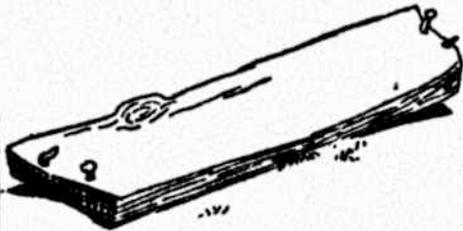
The Toledo News-Bee - January 28, 1919

Jack Powell, the New York American twirler, has developed a new way of starting his delivery with the right hand and then pitching the ball with his left. The balk rule, strictly enforced, will put a crimp in this little trick.

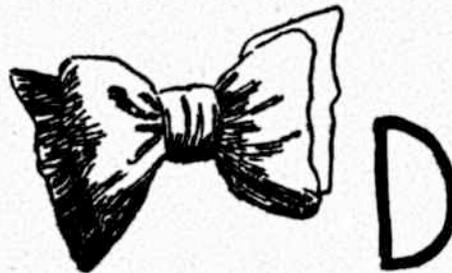
The Washington (D.C.) Times, April 13, 1905

WHAT BALLPLAYERS ARE THESE?

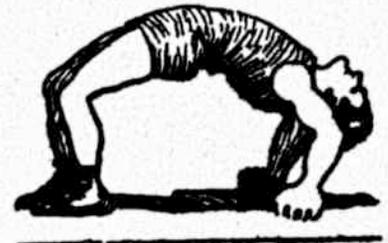
Eddie



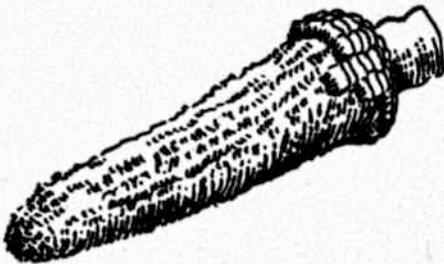
Ping



Charles Albert



Ty



John Franklin



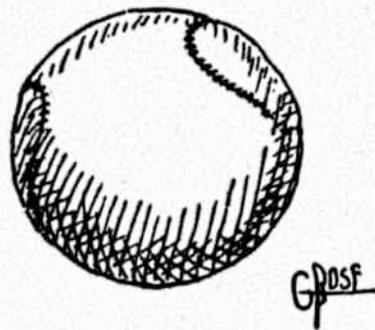
Charles



Joe



Neal



Tris



The Tacoma Times, November 17, 1913

Editor's note: The correct puzzle answers (we hope) are: Eddie Plank, Ping Bodie, Charles Albert (Chief) Bender, Ty Cobb, John Franklin (Home Run) Baker, Charles (Gabby) Street, Joe Tinker, Neal Ball, and Tris Speaker.