



**Biographical Research Committee Monthly Report**  
January/February 1999

## Finding a Sixpack

It's been a busy month for Richard Malatzky. He's made a few trips to the New Jersey Archives as well as doing a little research in Philadelphia and found 6 of our missing players. Richard found George Ewell, John Cuff, William Hoover, John Kelty, John Riddle, and Charles Reipschlager. I can't ever remember a month where someone tracked down 6 guys. No question that this earns Richard the *Find of the Month* award.

### Frank Griffith

Frank Griffith pitched for Chicago in 1892 and Cleveland in 1894. We knew he died in 1908 but we didn't know where or when. Bill Simpson located his death date and place in the General Register of the Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity as Griffith was a member of that fraternity at Northwestern. In fact, he graduated in 1895 after his major league career was ended.

### New Member

Please welcome Scott Horstmeier to the committee. Scott's address is 108 Rosetta Court, Cincinnati, Ohio 45246 and his code number will be H9.

### Earl Johnson

Jamie Selko sends along this story of Earl Johnson's WWII experience. There was an incident in which the Waffen SS killed 100 American soldiers during the Battle of the Bulge. They were machine-gunned to death with their hands tied behind their backs. Earl Johnson was the leader of the patrol that found the bodies in

the snow.

Enlisting as a private, he ended up a first lieutenant. He won two bronze stars with V (valor) device and the Silver Star. He landed in Normandy on D-Day and fought from the hedgerows of Normandy through the bulge to the Elbe, where his unit sat and waited for the Russians.

### Big Families

Last month I mentioned Elmo Plaskett being one of 16 children. We have found a couple of players who came from larger families. George Harper was one of 20 and Willie Horton was one of 21. Among current players, Bill Swift is one of 15. Thanks to Scott Flatow, Pete Cava, and Bill Weiss for providing this information.

### Birthday List

The following nonagenarians are celebrating birthdays in March and April. Make sure you send a card.

March 12	Robert Barr	91
March 13	Harry Kimberlin	90
March 22	Edward Cole	90
March 29	William Strickland	91
April 9	Howard Groskloss	93
	Claude Passeur	90
April 17	Robert Stevens	92

### Elmer Knetzer

Here is an interesting *Mystery of the Month* from Dick Thompson. Dick just finished working up the 1909 New England League pitching stats. Elmer Knetzer had a won lost record of 9-20 and despite that was bought by the Brooklyn Dodgers at the end of the season. This was Knetzer's first year in pro ball after playing as a semi-pro in the Pittsburgh area from 1905-08. He then went on to a 68-69 record in the majors. In addition to

what you see in the encyclopedias, he was 8-12 for Pittsburgh in the Federal League in 1913 and 6-6 for Columbus in the AA. At that point he was listed on the Columbus ineligible list.

Current accepted birth date is 7/22/1885 in Carrick, Pa. So he turned 24 his first pro year and turned 32 his last year in 1917. Seems to fit. Now the odd part.

In 1927, after a nine year unexplained absence, when Ray Nemec thinks he was pitching semi-pro ball in Pennsylvania, Knetzer made a comeback in pro ball and won 17 games in the Mid-Atlantic League. If we believe his listed age, he would have turned 42 during the season. Now, old Elmer continued to pitch in the New York-Penn and Mid-Atlantic Leagues through 1933. His win totals from 1927-1933 were 17, 17, 17, 15, 16, 12, and 7. He was released by Springfield on April 15, 1934. He would have won his last game at age 48.

Now this is not unheard of. Jack Quinn, George Burnett, Hoyt Wilhelm, etc., etc. But it does seem odd. Dick found two TSN articles that confirms this is all the same guy. Ray Nemec confirms it also. Now Ray says, and he did not tell Dick his source, that Knetzer listed his birth year as 1888 when he made his 1927 comeback. Course he could have shaved a few years off.

### **The Scoreboard**

	IN	OUT	PCT
Total Complete Names	15041	67	99.557
Total Complete Births	14368	740	95.102
Total Complete Deaths	7494	448	49.610
Total Assumed Alive	7166		47.432
Total Bats	13754	1248	91.681
Total Throws	14011	991	93.394
Total Heights	14008	994	93.374
Total Weights	13946	1056	92.961
Total Debut Dates	15108	0	100.000
Total Questionnaires	9982	5126	66.071
Total Completion			92.1282

## Charlie Dexter

By Pete Cava

Charles Dana Dexter

B: June 15, 1876, Evansville, Indiana

D: June 9, 1934, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Debut: April 17, 1896 BRTR 5-07 190

Louisville (NL) 1896-1899

Chicago (NL) 1900-1902

Boston (NL) 1902-1903

Charlie Dexter played all over the field as a professional athlete. His personal life was equally erratic. Dexter played for semi-professional teams in Evansville before attending Sewanee (Tenn.) University in 1894. In 1895, he returned to Evansville, this time as a member of the city's Southern League team. The following year he joined Louisville of the National League.

Dexter spent three more seasons with Louisville. The Chicago Cubs purchased his contract in January 1900 after the NL expelled the Louisville franchise. In July 1902 the Cubs traded him to Boston. Dexter's 1903 campaign with the Beaneaters was his last in the majors. That December, he was in a Chicago theater when a fire broke out. Dexter and another ballplayer, Frank Houseman, were credited with saving hundreds of lives when they burst open a locked exit door.

Dexter purchased his own release from Boston before the 1904 season and returned to Louisville (American Association) as the Colonel's third baseman and team captain. In 1905 he moved from Louisville to Des Moines (Western) in mid-season. In early October Dexter was out carousing when he got into an argument with Harry Bateman, an old friend who played for Milwaukee (American Association.) Dexter, who was known for his hot temper, stabbed Bateman in the chest and seriously wounded him. Dexter was arrested, but Bateman refused to press charges.

During his eight-year big league tenure, Dexter caught, played all four infield positions and the outfield. His best year was 1898, when he batted .314 and stole 44 bases. Dexter's baseball career ended after the 1909 season. He worked in the restaurant business and later in sales. In June 1934 Dexter traveled from his home in Des Moines to visit relatives in St. Louis. On the return trip he stopped in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Using a false name, Dexter checked into a hotel room where he shot and killed himself.

## New Monthly Data

### Questionnaires Received:

None

### New Information Received:

1942 Adkins, John Dewey	D: <u>Dec 26 1998</u>	(S3)
	<u>Santa Monica, California</u>	
1884 Baldwin, Charles Busted	B: <u>Oramel, New York</u>	(P4)
1942 Calvert, Paul Leo Emile	D: <u>Feb 1 1999</u>	(C1)
	<u>Sherbrooke, Quebec</u>	
1884 Cuff, John J.	Name: <u>John Patrick Cuff</u>	(M3)
	B: <u>Union City, New Jersey</u>	
	D: <u>Dec 5 1916</u>	
	<u>Hoboken, New Jersey</u>	
1912 Cutshaw, George William	B: <u>Jul 29 1886</u>	(M1)
1952 Dunn, James William	D: <u>Jan 6 1999</u>	(PP)
	<u>Gadsden, Alabama</u>	
1884 Dunn, Stephen B.	BL	(M3)
1951 Dyck, James Robert	D: <u>Jan 11 1999</u>	(CL)
	<u>Cheney, Washington</u>	
1938 Errickson, Richard Merriwell	B: <u>Mar 5 1912</u>	(P1)
1871 Ewell, George	Name: <u>George W. Ewell</u>	(M3)
	B: <u>Feb 1851</u>	
	<u>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</u>	
	D: <u>Oct 20 1910</u>	
	<u>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</u>	
1941 Fischer, Reuben Walter	D: <u>Jul 16 1997</u>	(N4)
	<u>Green Bay, Wisconsin</u>	
1938 Georgy, Oscar John	D: <u>Jan 15 1999</u>	(S6)
	<u>New Orleans, Louisiana</u>	
1937 Gill, George Lloyd	D: <u>Feb 21 1999</u>	(C1)
	<u>Jackson, Mississippi</u>	
1940 Gorsica, John Joseph Perry	D: <u>Dec 16 1998</u>	(H4)
	<u>Charlottesville, North Carolina</u>	
1946 Graham, John Bernard	D: <u>Dec 30 1998</u>	(W1)
	<u>Los Alamitos, California</u>	
1892 Griffith, Frank Wesley	D: <u>Dec 8 1908</u>	(S7)
	<u>Waterman, Illinois</u>	
1884 Hoover, William J.	Name: <u>William James Hoover</u>	(M3)
	B: <u>Apr 12 1863</u>	
	D: <u>Apr 16 1924</u>	
	<u>Jersey City, New Jersey</u>	
1911 Keliher, Maurice Michael	Debut: <u>Sep 10 1911</u>	(V1)
1890 Kelty, John James	B: <u>Mar 10 1871</u>	(M3)
	D: <u>Apr 13 1929</u>	
	<u>Jersey City, New Jersey</u>	
1944 King, Clyde Edward	B: <u>May 23 1924</u>	(T1)
1902 Lamer, Pierre	Name: <u>Pierre Lamers</u>	(B1)

1874 Miller, Thomas P.	B: <u>1850</u>	(M3)
1952 Mizell, Wilmer David	D: <u>Feb 21 1999</u>	(D6)
	<u>Kerrville, Texas</u>	
1973 Parker, David Gene	B: <u>Grenada, Mississippi</u>	(L5)
1995 Perez, Eduardo	Name: Eduardo <u>Rafael</u> Perez	(C1)
1922 Reichle, Richard Wendell	D: <u>Richmond Heights, Missouri</u>	(SE)
1883 Reipschlager, Charles W.	B: <u>Feb 1854</u>	(M3)
	D: <u>Mar 16 1910</u>	
	<u>Atlantic City, New Jersey</u>	
1889 Riddle, John H.	D: <u>May 5 1931</u>	(M3)
	<u>Camden, New Jersey</u>	
1934 Sington, Frederic William	D: <u>Aug 20 1998</u>	(C1)
	<u>Birmingham, Alabama</u>	
1884 Smith, Ed	New player with Baltimore (UA) in 1884	(S1)
	Debut: <u>Apr 18 1884</u>	
1884 Smith, John Francis	Debut: <u>Aug 14 1884</u>	(S1)
1875 Trenwith, George	B: <u>1851</u>	(M3)
	<u>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</u>	
1935 Vance, Joseph Albert	D: <u>San Antonio, Texas</u>	(SE)
1951 Zauchin, Norbert Henry	D: <u>Jan 31 1999</u>	(C1)
	<u>Birmingham, Alabama</u>	