



SABR Nineteenth Century Committee

Overlooked Legend Award

2016 Preliminary Election Nominees

Biographies compiled by Adam Darowski, Joe Williams, and Bob Gregory.

Charlie Bennett

Born: November 21, 1854, **Died:** February 24, 1927

Years: 1878, 1880–93

Category: Player (Catcher)

Bennett was one of the greatest catchers of the Nineteenth Century, starring for Detroit and Boston of the NL. He was a powerful hitter who often ranked among the leaders in homers and slugging percentage while finishing in the top ten in bases on balls six times. His defense was stellar and he was a leader on the field. He led NL catchers in fielding percentage seven times, putouts three times, and ranked in the top five in games caught ten times. He caught Lee Richmond's perfect game in 1880, the first perfect game in baseball history. He was also an innovator in the use of equipment by popularizing the use of a chest protector and the catcher's mitt. During the offseason in 1894, he had an accident trying to catch a train and lost both of his legs, thus ending his career. He retired with the most games caught in history with 954. In 1896, Detroit's new ball park (Bennett Park) was named after the city's beloved hero. Bennett was an Overlooked Legend finalist for the first time in 2015, finishing seventh.

Tommy Bond

Born: April 2, 1856, **Died:** January 24, 1941

Years: 1874–84

Category: Player (Pitcher)

Bond was the best pitcher of the second half of the 1870s and the last living veteran of the National League's inaugural season. Bond is the only NL pitcher to win 40 games three times. He paced the league in wins, ERA, and innings two times each and is also the all-time leader in strikeouts per walk (5.04). Bond won the first pitching Triple Crown in 1877, winning 40 games with a 2.11 ERA and 170 strikeouts. He led Boston to back-to-back pennants in 1877 and 1878. Bond's effectiveness essentially disappeared when the mound was moved back to 50 feet in 1881. He would win only 13 more games. Bond was the first Major League player born in Ireland. Today, the top pitching honor in the Irish Baseball League is called the Tommy Bond Best Pitcher

Award. He finished his career with 234 wins against 163 losses, a 2.14 ERA, and 972 strikeouts (compared to only 193 walks).

Bob Caruthers

Born: January 5, 1864, **Died:** August 5, 1911

Years: 1884–93

Category: Player (Pitcher/Outfielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/92fe6805>

Caruthers was among the greatest all-around players of his day. He was an outstanding pitcher and a hard-hitting outfielder who had a solid reputation as a defensive player and a base runner. As a member of St. Louis of the American Association, he led the Browns to the pennant in 1885, going 40–13 and leading the league in wins, winning percentage and ERA. The Browns won the pennant again in 1886 with Caruthers going 30–14 with a 2.32 ERA while hitting .334, slugging .527 and leading the league with a .448 OBP. The 1887 season was much of the same with a pennant, a 29–9 record and a league-leading .763 winning percentage, at the same time hitting .357, slugging .547, scoring 102 runs, stealing 49 bases and a .463 OBP. After the season, Caruthers was traded to Brooklyn of the AA where he would play for four seasons, winning 29, 40, 23 and 18 games, respectively, while contributing to pennant winners in 1889 and 1890, Brooklyn's first season in the NL. In 1892, he went back to the Browns, now a NL team, and played primarily in the outfield, having career highs in games, at bats, hits and walks. He finished with a 218–99 record, an ERA of 2.83 and a .391 OBP for his career. Caruthers was an Overlooked Legend finalist from 2010–2015, finishing fourth last year.

Cupid Childs

Born: August 8, 1867, **Died:** November 8, 1912

Years: 1888, 1890–1901

Category: Player (Second Baseman)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/d373e248>

Cupid Childs was a left-handed hitting second baseman with a penchant for getting on base. Childs was originally signed by Harry Wright's Philadelphia Quakers, but was cut after just two games. Later in the year, he joined the minor league Syracuse Stars. It was with Syracuse that he returned to the majors in 1890, as the club joined the American Association. Childs hit .345 that year with a .434 on-base percentage and a league-leading 33 doubles. In 1891, Childs signed with the Baltimore Orioles. His contract was voided (after a court hearing) after the Association withdrew from the National Agreement. He was free to sign with Cleveland and spent eight seasons with the Spiders, hitting .318 with a .434 on-base percentage. Only Billy Hamilton drew more walks over that span than Childs' 758. In 1899, Childs was transferred to the St. Louis Browns. He contracted malaria and never was the same, hitting .253 during his time in St. Louis and two seasons with Chicago. His career totals include a .306 batting average, .416 on-base percentage (sixth among players with 5,000 or more plate appearances at the time of his retirement), 1,721 hits, 991 walks, and 269 stolen bases.

Jim Creighton

Born: April 15, 1841, **Died:** October 18, 1862

Years: 1857–62

Category: Executive/Pioneer

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/2d2e5d16>

Creighton was baseball's first superstar and possibly its first professional. His life came to a tragic end just six months after his twenty-first birthday, making the young ballplayer a baseball legend and fueling the lore that makes baseball our national pastime. He was a tremendous hitter but made his mark on baseball history by revolutionizing the pitcher position with his swift and accurate pitching that didn't allow batters to get a solid hit on the ball. Prior to Creighton, the focus for pitchers was to toss the ball to the batter so they could put the ball in play. In 1860, he joined the Excelsior Club of Brooklyn and became the game's most dominant pitcher while teaming with catcher Joe Leggett to form the best battery in the nation. On November 8, 1860, Creighton pitched the first recorded shutout against the St. George Cricket Club, 25–0. Creighton was an Overlooked Legend finalist from 2012–2015, finishing third last year.

Lave Cross

Born: May 12, 1866, **Died:** September 6, 1927

Years: 1887–1907

Category: Player (Third Base/Catcher)

Lave Cross was a third baseman (and a catcher in his early days) who played 14 of his 21 Major League seasons in the city of Philadelphia. He split his Philadelphia tenure across four leagues—six seasons in the National League, five in the American League, two in the American Association, and one season in the Players League. A solid hitter and an excellent defender, Cross enjoyed his best offensive season in 1894, hitting .387 for the Phillies with a .424 on-base percentage, 132 RBI, 128 runs scored, 210 hits, and only seven strikeouts. Cross finished his long career with 2,651 hits (5th all-time upon his retirement) and 1,378 runs batted in (also fifth). He was also third all-time in games played. He retired with more games, total chances, putouts, and assists than any third baseman up to that point. He even had the best fielding percentage at the position.

Bud Fowler

Born: March 16, 1858, **Died:** February 26, 1913

Years: 1878–1909

Category: Executive/Pioneer

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/200e2bbd>

Fowler, who grew up in Cooperstown, was a pioneering African-American baseball player and promoter. He was primarily known for his play as a catcher, pitcher and second baseman. He traveled the country for 30 years, playing at all levels of baseball except in the majors—not because he wasn't talented enough but simply because of the color of his skin. He was the first African-American in Organized Baseball when he played with the Lynn Live Oaks in the International Association in 1878. Fowler faced racism from fans, team administrators and teammates, thus making each stop usually

a brief one despite often being the best player on the team. As early as 1883, he tried to form a “colored league” and in 1887 formed the first successful African-American barnstorming team, the New York Gorhams. In 1894, he would be the driving force behind the establishment of the famed Page Fence Giants.

Jack Glasscock

Born: July 22, 1857, **Died:** February 24, 1947

Years: 1879–95

Category: Player (Shortstop)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/0bcddad0>

Considered by many historians as the greatest defensive shortstop of the Nineteenth Century, Glasscock played the majority of his career without a glove. He led the league in fielding percentage and assists six times, double plays four times, putouts two times and had the most range of any shortstop of his era. He retired as the career leader for shortstops in games, assists, double plays, putouts, total chances and fielding percentage. At the bat, he got better with age. A career .290 hitter, he led the NL in hits in 1889 and 1890, winning the 1890 batting title with a .336 average after finishing second the previous year with a .352 average. He finished his career with 1,164 runs, 2,041 hits and more than 827 RBI. Striking out around just 200 times in his career, Glasscock was also one of the toughest hitters to strikeout, leading the league three times in at bats per strikeout. The “King of Shortstops” played for nine teams in seventeen years. Glasscock was an Overlooked Legend finalist from 2009–2015, finishing second (behind winner Tony Mullane) last year.

George Gore

Born: May 3, 1854, **Died:** September 16, 1933

Years: 1879–92

Category: Player (Outfielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/6e664ded>

Gore was a speedy center fielder who had a knack for getting on base and scoring runs. In 1,310 games, he scored 1,327 runs, including seven seasons of 100 or more

(and two other seasons where he scored fewer than 100 runs but still led the league). He was a hard hitter who also took a walk, leading the league in bases on balls three times and finishing in the top seven in on-base percentage ten times. Gore retired a .301 career hitter with a .386 on-base percentage. He was the table setter for many championship teams. He played on NL championship teams in 1880, 1881, 1882, 1885, and 1886 with Chicago, and world championship teams with the New York Giants in 1888 and 1889, beating the AA pennant winners in the “World Series” while batting .455 and .333, respectively. On June 25, 1881, Gore stole seven bases in a single game, a record he shares with Billy Hamilton. Gore was an Overlooked Legend finalist in 2009 and 2011.

Mike Griffin

Born: March 20, 1865, **Died:** April 10, 1908

Years: 1887–98

Category: Player (Outfielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/45f87fcd>

Griffin, the first player in Major League history to hit a home run in his first plate appearance, was an outstanding all-around center fielder with Baltimore of the AA, Brooklyn of the NL, and Philadelphia of the Players League. In his 12 seasons, the leadoff hitter stole 473 bases and scored 1,406 runs in just 1,513 games while hitting .296 with a .388 OBP. Ten times he scored 100 or more runs in a season, including a career-high 152 in 1889. On the field, he was among the elite defensive players, leading outfielders in fielding percentage five times with two second place finishes. With outstanding range, he led outfielders in putouts two times (and was the runner-up three times). Unfortunately, Griffin’s career was cut short due to a contract dispute with Brooklyn.

Paul Hines

Born: March 1, 1855, **Died:** July 10, 1935

Years: 1872–91

Category: Player (Outfielder)

Hines, an outstanding defensive center fielder, was among the best all-around players in the game for 20 seasons. He started his career with Washington of the NA before becoming a member of the Chicago White Stockings in 1874 and playing for the first NL champion in 1876. In 1878, he joined Providence and became baseball's first Triple Crown winner when he led the league with 4 homers, 50 RBI and a .358 batting average. He followed his historic season with another batting title in 1879, while also leading the league in games, hits and total bases as the Grays won their first NL championship. In 1884, along with Old Hoss Radbourn, Hines led the Grays to the NL pennant before defeating the AA's New York club to win the first "World Series." Hines ended his career with 1,217 runs (sixth all-time), 2,133 hits (third), 549 extra-base hits (fifth), 855 RBI (seventh) and a .302 batting average. Hines was an Overlooked Legend finalist in 2009 and 2011–2015, finishing tenth last year.

Dummy Hoy

Born: May 23, 1862, **Died:** December 15, 1961

Years: 1889–99, 1901–02

Category: Player (Outfielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/763405ef>

Hoy played 14 seasons in four major leagues, spending the most time in Cincinnati and Washington of the NL. Hoy was deaf and had difficulty speaking. Despite his challenges, he was among the best center-fielders and leadoff hitters in the game. He accumulated 2,048 hits, 1,429 runs, 121 triples, 596 stolen bases and 1,006 walks while hitting .288 with a .386 OBP. In 1901, at the age of 39, he played for the American League champion White Stockings, leading the league in walks and hit by pitches. When he retired, he ranked ninth in games played, second in bases on balls, fourth in stolen bases and sixth in hit by pitches. He was the career leader in games played in centerfield (1,727) until 1920. Hoy has been credited with the use of hand signals in the game but that is open for debate. Still, the deaf boy from Ohio became one of the best players of his era. Hoy was an Overlooked Legend finalist from 2013–2015, finishing fifth last year.

Bobby Mathews

Born: November 21, 1851, **Died:** April 17, 1898

Years: 1869–77, 1879, 1881–87

Category: Player (Pitcher)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/e7ad641f>

Mathews, winner of 297 games (first all-time when he retired), was a pioneer pitcher in the development of both the spitball and the curveball. He was the winning pitcher in the NA's first game in 1871. In 1872, he joined Baltimore as their ace, winning 25 games and leading the league in strikeouts. Mathews joined the New York Mutuals in 1873, becoming their workhorse while leading the league in strikeouts in both 1873 and 1874. Despite the Mutuals being a subpar offensive team, Mathews managed to become the third winningest pitcher in the NA's existence. From 1877 to 1882, Mathews bounced around from team to team, which ultimately cost him the three "major-league" wins he needed for 300. He won just 39 games in those six seasons, although he was a key contributor as the change pitcher for the champion Providence Grays in 1879. His career was rejuvenated in 1883 when he joined the AA's Athletics and led them to the championship. It was the first of three consecutive seasons of 30 wins for the hurler. Mathews finished his career with a record 4,956 innings pitched and a 2.86 ERA. Mathews was an Overlooked Legend finalist in 2009, 2010, and from 2012–2015, finishing ninth last year.

Dick McBride

Born: June 14, 1847, **Died:** January 20, 1916

Years: 1861–76

Category: Player (Pitcher)

McBride was the star pitcher of the Philadelphia-based Athletics and baseball's first 300 game winner, winning 149 games in the NA and more than that during the "Amateur Era". The cricket standout and Civil War veteran first made his mark with the team as a shortstop, earning a spot on a Philadelphia all-star team in 1862. When not pitching, McBride was on the base paths scoring lots of runs, leading the National Association of Base Ball Players clubs in runs scored in 1866 with a 160 and finishing second the following year with 265. In the NA and NL, he scored 208 runs and drove in

177 runners in 240 games. McBride's pitching was the catalyst to the Athletics becoming among the best clubs of the late 1860s. As captain of the Athletics, the team won the 1871 NA championship with him going 18–5 and a league-leading .783 winning percentage. Over the next four seasons, he won 30, 24, 33 and 44 games. Only Al Spalding won more games in the NA than McBride.

Cal McVey

Born: August 30, 1849, **Died:** August 20, 1926

Years: 1866–79

Category: Player (First Baseman/Catcher/Outfielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/2d659416>

McVey was a premier batsmen and versatile ballplayer during his playing days. He gained prominence as a member of the legendary Cincinnati Red Stockings in 1869 and 1870. He joined Boston in the NA for the next two seasons as catcher, helping the team win the NA championship in 1872. He played and managed Baltimore in 1873 but returned to Boston for two more seasons and two more NA championships. When the NA was no more, McVey was the league's third leading career hitter with a .362 average while being third in hits (476), tied for fifth in homers (8), and first in RBI (277). In 1876, he joined the NL's White Stocking as their first baseman and change pitcher as the team won the pennant. After a stint with Cincinnati, McVey gave up the majors and headed westward at the age of 29. When he left, he was the career leader in hits (869) and RBI (449), third in runs (555), and fourth in games played (530) and batting average (.346).

Dave Orr

Born: September 29, 1859, **Died:** June 2, 1915

Years: 1883–90

Category: Player (First Baseman)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/28f70a6f>

Orr (a 5'11", 250 pound giant) was one of the most powerful hitters of the nineteenth century before being taken away from the game after only eight seasons due to a

stroke suffered shortly after he turned 31. In 1884 (Orr's first full season with the New York Metropolitans), he fell two home runs short of the Triple Crown. He led the league in batting average, hits, runs batted in, and total bases. The Mets won the American Association pennant but ran into Old Hoss Radbourn and the juggernaut Providence Grays in the "World Series". Orr followed up that performance by leading the league in slugging percentage and triples in 1885. He led in both categories in 1886 while also pacing the circuit in hits and total bases (he was the first player to hit 30 triples or amass 300 total bases). In 1887, he hit well but battled injuries and the Mets folded after the season. He played for Brooklyn (in 1888) and Columbus (1889) before joining the Player's League for one more big season (.371 average with 124 RBI). Shortly after the season, he suffered a stroke during an exhibition game and never played again.

Dickey Pearce

Born: February 29, 1836, **Died:** September 18, 1908

Years: 1856–77

Category: Player (Shortstop)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/db8ea477>

Pearce was the first great shortstop in baseball history. He revolutionized the game both on the field and at the plate. Prior to Pearce, shortstops were rovers that primarily backed up throws and handled relays from the outfield. Pearce positioned himself on the field according to the hitter at the plate. He would play in against weak hitters and back against stronger batsmen. At the plate, he was a "scientific" hitter who was primarily a leadoff hitter. He has been credited with inventing the bunt, the fair-foul hit and possibly the sacrifice bunt and the squeeze play as well. Pearce's greatest seasons were with the legendary Atlantics of Brooklyn teams that dominated the late 1850s and 1860s. Pearce was an Overlooked Legend finalist in 2011.

Lipman Pike

Born: May 25, 1845, **Died:** October 10, 1893

Years: 1865–78, 1881, 1887

Category: Player (Outfielder/Infielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/7a6a0655>

Pike has been referred to as the first great Jewish baseball player and one of the first known paid players. Pike bounced around from team-to-team during his entire career despite being one of the game's most powerful hitters. In 1866, he slugged six homers in one game while a member of the Athletics of Philadelphia. In 1871, he joined Troy of the NA and led the new league in homers with four. He played the next two seasons with Baltimore, again leading the league in homers both seasons. He would lead the NL in homers in 1877 as well. His 16 homers in the NA are ranked first in the league's five-year existence and his 244 RBI rank third. Other than a brief appearance for New York of the AA in 1887, Pike's major league career ended in 1881, leaving with the second highest career slugging percentage (.469), third most homers (21), and seventh highest batting average (.323).

Al Reach

Born: May 25, 1840, **Died:** January 14, 1928

Years: 1858–1903

Category: Executive/Pioneer

Reach spent over 40 years in baseball. He was one of the best players of his era and one of the first to be paid. He played for the Eckford Club of Brooklyn from 1861–1864, participating on championship teams in 1862 and 1863. In 1865, he joined the Athletics and became their regular second baseman through the team's 1871 season when they won the NA championship. In 1874, he opened a sporting goods store which led to him forming the A.J. Reach Company. His company would go on to merge with Albert Spalding's sporting goods empire in 1892 but both companies retained their own identities. Reach balls, which was the official baseball of the AA from 1883–1891, became the official baseball of the American League and Reach's Official Base Ball Guide was published from 1883 to 1939. Reach became a founder and owner of the NL's Philadelphia franchise, now the Phillies, in 1883 until he sold his interest in the team in 1903. During his tenure, he built two ballparks, the first one burning down and replaced with what would be called the Baker Bowl, the first modern ballpark made from brick and steel. Reach was an Overlooked Legend finalist from 2013–2015, finishing sixth last year. He was also a finalist on the Hall of Fame's Pre-Integration ballot in 2013.

Jimmy Ryan

Born: February 11, 1863, **Died:** October 29, 1923

Years: 1885–1900, 1902–03

Category: Player (Outfielder)

Ryan was an outstanding outfielder and leadoff man who spent almost his entire career in Chicago. He joined the White Stockings in 1885, playing for a team that won back-to-back NL pennants. The rest of his career he mostly played on mediocre to poor teams. Ryan was a leading power hitter in his day, leading the NL in 1888 with 16 homers while finishing in the top ten seven times. He hit 22 lead-off homers in his career, a record until Eddie Yost passed him in 1959. He twice hit for the cycle (1888 and 1891) and once scored six runs in a game (1894). Ryan had one of the great arms in history and still ranks third all-time in outfield assists behind only Tris Speaker and Ty Cobb with 375. Ryan retired with 2,014 games (third all-time), 1,643 runs (fifth), 2,513 hits (sixth), 451 doubles (fifth), 118 homers (fourth), 1,093 RBI (twelfth), 805 walks (twelfth), 726 extra-base hits (fifth) and 3,632 total bases (fourth) while batting .308 with a .375 OBP. Ryan was an Overlooked Legend finalist for the first time in 2015, finishing eleventh.

Joe Start

Born: October 14, 1842, **Died:** March 27, 1927

Years: 1859–86

Category: Player (First Baseman)

Start had one of the longest playing careers in baseball history. His size and athletic ability made him one of the most powerful hitters of the 1860s as he ranked among the leaders in hits, runs scored and total bases while being the game's finest defensive first baseman. "Old Reliable" has often been credited as being the first to play first base off the bag. He played on several championship teams, including the 1864–1866 and 1869 Atlantics of Brooklyn teams, the NL-pennant winning Providence Grays in 1879, and in 1884, as the team's captain, the Gray's won the first "World Series". He hit .300 in

eleven NL seasons and led his league in fielding percentage at first base five times between 1871 and 1884. He retired ranked sixth in games (1,070), runs (852), hits (1,417) and total bases (1,744) while ranking seventh in RBI (544). Start was an Overlooked Legend finalist in 2012.

Jack Stivetts

Born: March 31, 1868, **Died:** April 18, 1930

Years: 1889–1899

Category: Player (Pitcher/Outfielder)

“Happy Jack” Stivetts was a workhorse pitcher in the 1890s who was also an above-average hitter. As a 21-year old rookie with the St. Louis Browns, he led the American Association in ERA (2.25) as the team’s third starter. The next season, Browns co-aces Silver King and Ice Box Chamberlain departed for greener pastures, opening up the ace role for Stivetts. He responded with 60 victories and over 850 innings in the next two seasons. He also hit seven home runs in each of those seasons, establishing a single-season record for pitchers that lasted until 1931. In 1892, Stivetts signed with Boston and won 131 games with them (his 4.12 ERA was better than the league average of 4.29). He also batted .305 with 21 homers as a member of the Beaneaters. In 1898, he was traded back to the St. Louis Browns, but refused to report. The Browns were then sold and Stivetts found himself a member of the 1899 Cleveland Spiders, widely recognized as the worst team in history. Stivetts was released after four starts and retired from baseball with a 203–132 record (.606 winning percentage) and a 3.74 ERA to go along with his .298 batting average and 35 home runs.

George Van Haltren

Born: March 30, 1866, **Died:** September 29, 1945

Years: 1887–1903

Category: Player (Outfielder)

SABR Bio: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/15954c4c>

A pitcher in his early years with a 40–31 record, Van Haltren became a premier centerfielder and leadoff hitter with the New York Giants after earlier productive stops

in Chicago (NL), Baltimore (AA and NL), Brooklyn (PL) and Pittsburgh (NL). When his major league career was over, he had accumulated 2,544 hits (fifth all-time), 1,642 runs (sixth), 161 triples (tenth), 1,015 RBI (seventeenth) and 583 stolen bases (fifth) with a .316 batting average and a .386 on-base percentage. He scored over 100 runs eleven times and batted .300 twelve times. The mustached Van Haltren, an outstanding defensive stalwart with a tremendous throwing arm (three times led the NL in assists from the outfield), finished in the top ten in hits, triples, runs, batting average, stolen bases, total bases and on-base percentage a grand total of 42 times. Van Haltren was an Overlooked Legend finalist in 2010 and from 2014–2015, finishing eighth last year.

Chris Von der Ahe

Born: October 7, 1851, **Died:** June 5, 1913

Years: 1881–99

Category: Executive/Pioneer

Von der Ahe was the owner and the “Boss President” of the St. Louis Browns from 1881 to 1899. A German immigrant, Von der Ahe started out in the grocery and saloon business before becoming a baseball entrepreneur. As early as 1875, he was involved in the organization of a local and competitive amateur St. Louis team, the Grand Avenues. By 1881, he bought controlling interest in the Sportsman’s Park and Club Association that refurbished the baseball grounds a few blocks from his Golden Lion Saloon, an early sports bar, where the Browns would play and dominate the AA. Von der Ahe was a powerful force in the AA and has been credited with bringing baseball back to St. Louis after the Brown Stockings dropped out of the NL in 1877. He fully supported the AA’s three main differences from the NL, a cheaper admission fee that was affordable for the “common man” (25 cents), games played on Sunday, and the sale of alcohol at the ballpark. The Browns were an instance financial success and Chris put much of the profits back into the team, securing top talent and investing in many innovations that were a century before their time. During his tenure, he introduced a beer garden, a stadium club, a water ride and a race track among his many gimmicks to attract people to the park. Eventually, many of these ideas failed and contributed to his financial downfall but he planted the seed for future innovators like Bill Veeck. Before the AA merged with the NL in 1891, the Browns would win four straight pennants (1885–1888) and the “World Series” in 1885 and 1886. He also

helped keep the AA afloat financially during their battles with the Player's League and the NL in 1890 and 1891. Von der Ahe was a finalist on the Hall of Fame's Pre-Integration ballot in 2016.

Ned Williamson

Born: October 24, 1857, **Died:** March 3, 1894

Years: 1878–90

Category: Player (Third Baseman/Shortstop)

Williamson is best known today for holding the single-season home run record for 35 years before Babe Ruth took the crown, but his defense is where he provided the most value on the diamond. Williamson began his career with the Indianapolis Blues of the National League in 1878 before joining Chicago (where he was a key part of five pennant winners in a seven year stretch) in 1879. In 1883, he set a Major League record (that would be broken four years later) with 49 doubles. His total was aided by the short dimensions of Chicago's Lakeshore Park (where a ball over the fence was considered a double). In 1884, a change to the ground rules awarded a home run for balls hit into the stands. Williamson responded by shattering the home run record with 27 (previously 14). Chicago left Lakeshore Park after the season and Williamson would never hit more than nine home runs again. After the 1888 season, he injured his knee while on Albert Spalding's World Tour and was never the same. He was finished after the 1890 season and died from dropsy at age 36. In addition to the home run record, he led third basemen in assists six times, fielding percentage and double plays five times each, range factor per game four times, and putouts once. He also led shortstops in double plays and assists once each.