

SABR Pictorial History Committee Newsletter

© 1998 Society for American Baseball Research

Number 98:1

January 1998

Tom Shieber, Committee Chair

P.O. Box 203
Mt. Wilson Observatory
Mt. Wilson, CA 91023

Home: 626 584-9811
Work: 626 440-1119
lajoie7@earthlink.net

BASEBALL PICTORIAL RESEARCH ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Quick: Who is Tim Berners-Lee? Don't bother calling up the folks at Cooperstown or *The Sporting News*. And forget about looking up his name in the "Big Mac" or *Total Baseball* . . . you won't find him there. In fact, he has nothing directly to do with baseball at all. But enter "Tim Berners-Lee" into your favorite World Wide Web search engine and his name will return more hits than Hank Aaron, Ty Cobb, and Don Sutton combined. (I never thought I'd ever use those three names together in the same sentence! I promise never to do it again.) But baseball researchers, researchers in general, and, quite frankly, millions and millions of people the world over *should* know who Tim Berners-Lee is. He's the founding father ("developer" as they say in the biz) of the World Wide Web. Indeed, he is the fellow responsible for choosing that very name: "World Wide Web." (Other choices he passed over include: Mine of Information, Information Mine and Information Mesh).

Though the Web has been accessible for less than eight years, it has firmly established itself as a valuable resource for researchers of all kinds. And for the baseball researcher (and, to a lesser extent, the baseball pictorial historian), the story is no different: the Web is a great tool.

Don't be misled, however. By no means has the Web replaced good old-fashioned digging at the library, reviewing of microfilm, and searching through files at your local historical society. That kind of work will remain a necessary part of diligent research for years to come. But, the Web's ability to help the researcher gain a general feel for a topic and point him/her in the right direction is exceptional.

How can the Web help the baseball pictorial researcher? There are a lot of ways. First of all, their a numerous general baseball resources on the Web that will prove useful to the pictorial researcher. Though we look at images, we still need cold hard facts that one generally finds in baseball encyclopedias. The Web offers a number of such sources. The most valuable baseball encyclopedia on the Web is found at the Total Baseball website at:

www.totalbaseball.com

Like the hardcopy tome of the same name, the Total Baseball website is more than just a statistical database. It also contains essays on various aspects of the history of the game, its players, and teams.

Another quite useful online "encyclopedia" is the CNN-SI baseball "Historical Profiles" site. Their data actually comes from Total Baseball, but at times the

continued on page 2

LAST MONTH'S MYSTERY PHOTOS

A few clues came in regarding the mystery photo on page 1 of the August 1997 PHC Newsletter. **John Husman** sent in information on photographer J.G. Reiser. John found Reiser's obituary in the May 8, 1955, issue of the *Toledo Blade*. Among other things, John discovered that Reiser apparently lived next door to his photography studio and that he had been in the business for some forty years. (Copies of the obituary are available by sending a SASE to the committee chair.)

Tom Cline did great work on this same photo by actually tracking down a montage picture of the "Pilots" of Toledo. The image can be found on p. 194 of the 1909 *Reach Guide*, with the caption: "THE 'PILOTS' A POLISH TEAM, Toledo, Ohio." Though the uniform seen in the mystery photo differs from those seen in the montage, the clubs are undoubtedly one and the same. Furthermore, following the caption in the *Reach Guide*, photo credit is given to none other than "J.G. Reiser." Alas, a number of the players in the montage are similar in appearance to the fellow in the mystery photo. Indeed, it is not necessarily the case that the mystery ballplayer is even pictured in the guide photo. But the most likely candidate among the eleven uniformed players pictured in the montage appears to be the individual labeled #7: Moore.

So far, nothing has been sent in to the committee chair regarding any of the other mystery photos.

Baseball Pictorial Research on the WWW *cont. from page 1*

format of the CNN-SI site is easier to use than that at Total Baseball. You can find the CNN-SI site at:

cgi.cnn.com/baseball/mlb/historical_profiles/

What of actual baseball pictures? After all, without pictures, what is there for the baseball pictorial researcher to research? Frankly, the best way to find baseball pictures on the Web is with the aid of a site that I have created called "Early Baseball Pictures on the World Wide Web." This website is a giant compilation of links to pre-1930s baseball images that are available on the Web. I am constantly updating an annotating the massive index which can be found at either of two locations:

home.earthlink.net/~lajoie7/bb_pix.htm

or

www.astro.ucla.edu/~shieber/bb_pix.htm

I chose not to include images from the post 1920s era as it's difficult enough just keeping track of pictures from the earlier days! However, some of the websites I list also have wonderful pictures from the more modern era.

While a number of websites deserve special mention for their large collection of diverse and high quality baseball pictures (see table below), the best I have seen is found at the Library of Congress website. The Photographs, Prints & Drawings section of the American Memory Collection website contains well over a hundred top-notch baseball photos and can be found at the following address:

lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/phcoll.new.html

In particular, the Library of Congress' collection of panoramic images of teams and ballparks is superb. The team photos show players lined up in a row and are often fully identified. The ballpark pictures provide valuable information as to what various ballparks looked like at different times in history. At right is one of these panoramic images, taken from a box seat in the upper level of the Polo Grounds on October 13, 1910. (The image at the Library of Congress website is of much higher quality than that of this reproduction.)

Here is a partial list of other sites which contain quality baseball images that may prove useful for your baseball pictorial research:

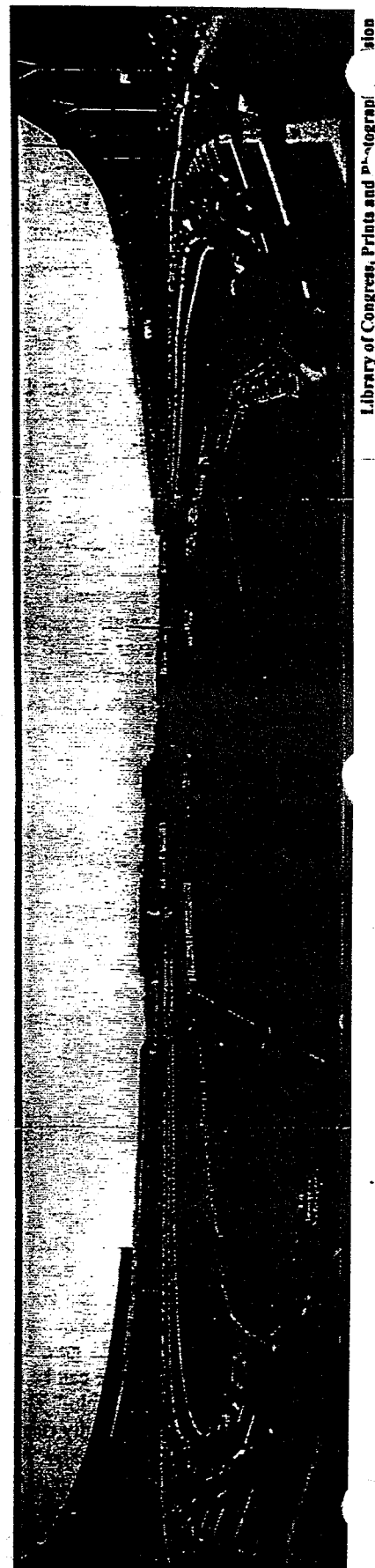
- Prairie Gold—Sports Heroes of Saskatchewan
strobe.lights.com/sports/
- The National Baseball Hall of Fame—History of the World Series
www.baseballhalloffame.org/exhibits/series/wsmenu.html
- Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh—Bridging the Urban Landscape
www.cipgh.org/exhibit/
- Major League Baseball@Bat—Japanese American Baseball
www.majorleaguebaseball.com/library/nisei.sml
- British Columbia Archives—Visual Records
www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/visual/visual.htm
- The Sporting News Archives—The Conlon Collection
www.sportingnews.com/archives/conlon/index.html

There are a lot of great pictures and resources out there. Happy surfin'!

— **Tom Shieber**

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

A special thank you is in order for the generous donations made to the Pictorial History Committee by SABR members **Howard Singer** and **Lile Anderson**.



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

NEW MEMBERS AND MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

The SABR Pictorial History Committee welcomes the following new members:

Bill Anderson	6348 W. Cambridge Drive Ludington, MI 49431	Martin Hoerchner	3 Sheridan Crescent Chislehurst, Kent BR75RZ ENGLAND
Al Dieckmann	1762 Rockville Dr. Baldwin, NY 11510	Jerry Vickery	413 Southgate Drive Belleville, IL 62223

Please note the following address changes:

Jeff Samoray	3813 Devon Rd. Apt. 4 Royal Oaks, MI 48073-1951	Ron Kaplan	23 Dodd Street Montclair, NJ 07042
--------------	--	------------	---------------------------------------

EMAIL ADDRESSES

Below is a list of email addresses of PHC members. Please send corrections and additions to the PHC Chair:

Geoff Belinfante	geoffbell@aol.com	Neal McCabe	NealMcCabe@aol.com
Dick Beverage	rbeverage@aol.com	John McMurray	mcmurrayj@aol.com
Dick Clark	tstearnes@aol.com	Dave McNeal	DAVEM@lmhs.noacsc.ohio.gov
Dick Derby	yannigan@aol.com	Jeff Obermeyer	JObermeyer@msn.com
Joe Dittmar	Dittmar5@aol.com	Richard Puff	rpuff@ccgateway.amc.edu
Larry Gerlach	Larry.Gerlach@m.cc.utah.edu	Mark Rucker	trnsgrph@ix.netcom.com
Steve Gietschier	sgietsch@sportingnews.com	Tom Shieber	lajoie7@earthlink.net
Martin Hoerchner	Martin@mhoerch.demon.co.uk	Lyle Spatz	lmspatz@PRODIGY.NET
David Icenogle	DI49@aol.com	Max Weder	ettinger@portal.ca
Ron Kaplan	RonK23@aol.com		

RESEARCH NEEDS

• **Tom O'Connell** is writing an instructional book on hitting. He is trying to find film of Joe DiMaggio batting in order to examine Joltin' Joe's technique. Send correspondence to Tom at:

Tom O'Connell
3135 S. Vermont Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53207
email: oconnetj@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us

• **Marty Olinick** is looking for a picture of Moe Berg in a Brooklyn Dodger uniform. Berg played with the Dodgers in his first year in the majors: 1923. Send correspondence to Marty at:

email: Marty_Olinick@bmge.com

• From the SABR listserver on October 13th, 1997, **Reed Browning** wrote:

The Sporting News, January 1904, reports that Larry Lajoie and Harry Bay "have been immortalized by the moving picture man. During the post-season series between Cleveland and Cincinnati last fall Larry was 'shot' by the vitascope as he was at bat in one of the games played in Cincinnati. Bay was on

third at the time and the picture also catches him as he slides home on Larry's hit to short."

The picture was being shown somewhere in Cleveland in January 1904, and the article reports that "it is an excellent picture, the figures being true to life."

Does film exist of Keeler, Lajoie, Waddell, or Young in action? If so, can it be viewed? If not, what's the earliest action film available?

You can contact Reed at:

Reed Browning
Box 382
Gambier, OH 43022-0382
email: browninr@kenyon.edu

• From the SABR listserver on October 23rd, 1997, **Claudia Goodridge** wrote in asking for photos of Roberto Clemente. She is looking for both action and close-up shots. Claudia asks that if you have or know the location of such photos, please contact **Howie Greenspan** at:

Howie Greenspan
47 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06857
email: hgreenspan@mbi-inc.com

THE KID AND THE BABE

A few months ago I was contacted by **Bob O'Neill**, vice president of sales and marketing at a collectibles business called *Baseball Americana*. Bob was looking for information about a photo that *Baseball Americana* had purchased from Specs Toporcer back in the 1980s. Toporcer, a utility infielder for the 1920s Cardinals, is perhaps best known as the first non-pitching major leaguer to wear glasses. After leaving big league ball in the 1920s, Specs bounced around the minors for well over a decade. By the mid-1940s he was a scout with the Red Sox, later jumping up to the position of Director of Minor League Operations.

The color photo that *Baseball Americana* had purchased (reproduced on p. 5 of this newsletter) shows **Ted Williams** posed with Babe Ruth, the two baseball greats smiling and shaking hands. Written on the front of the photo is the following:

To Specs Toporcer
great man in baseball
my friend always
Ted Williams

Bob was curious as to when and where the photo was taken and hoped that I might be able help him out. Bob had already done a great deal of legwork, but so far he had come up empty. He informed me that the image (sans inscription) had been reproduced in the November 25, 1996, issue of *Sports Illustrated*, with the following caption:

THE KID AND THE BABE

In a photo he now signs for collectors . . .
Ted Williams greets the retired Babe Ruth
before a charity game at Fenway Park in 1942.

Bob had called *SI*, but they could not shed further light on the image. The source information for the photo as published in *SI* stated "George Toporcer/Ted Williams Family Enterprises." George Toporcer and "Specs" Toporcer were, of course, one and the same. Unfortunately, Specs passed away in 1989, so we can't query him regarding the history of the photo.

Bob tried the folks at the Ted Williams Museum but they could provide no help. *The Sporting News*, the National Baseball Library, the Babe Ruth Museum . . . no one could track down the location and date of the picture. And so now Bob asked for help from me and I set to work.

First of all, I looked at the players' uniforms. (How many times have I praised **Marc Okkonen's** wonderful source: *Baseball Uniforms of the 20th Century*?) The familiar "NY" insignia on Babe Ruth's uniform is one of the oldest major league logos still in use. (Detroit's Old English "D" was first introduced in 1904 and St. Louis' intertwined "STL" was used as early as 1900, perhaps 1899). The Highlanders uniform of 1905 featured a slightly

different "NY" logo on the left breast of their jersey (see inset at right), while the more familiar version was introduced four years later on the club's left shirtsleeve and cap front.



In 1912, the logo returned to the front of the jersey and remained there until 1917. While the "NY" insignia remained on the Yankee cap, it was not until 1936 that it returned to the front of the club's home jersey. It has remained there ever since.

Ted Williams is wearing a Red Sox road uniform, a style that was first introduced in 1938. A major clue on Ted's uniform is not easily seen in the reproduction on p. 5. On his left sleeve is a patch that was worn by all sixteen major league clubs during the war years: 1942-45. The patch was a traditional U.S. shield with white stars on a blue field at the top, and a series of vertical red stripes at the bottom. According to Marc Okkonen, the red stripes were used during 1943-45, while a red "HEALTH" was used in place of the stripes during 1942. Close examination of the photo reveals that Williams is wearing a patch of the "HEALTH" variety. (An exceptional copy of the Williams/Ruth photo, clear enough to discern the first few letters of "HEALTH," can be found on the World Wide Web at the Official Ted Williams Website:

www.hitter.com/album/album3b.html

Given the presence of the word "HEALTH," it would seem likely that the photo was taken some time during 1942. (Certainly it wasn't taken any earlier than that season.) Perhaps this is how *Sports Illustrated* came to the conclusion that the photo dated from 1942.

But there is another clue: behind Williams one can see rectangular openings beyond the stands. This clue clearly identifies the ballpark. Comparison with other photos shows that these rectangular openings are characteristic of Fenway Park. (See Donald Honig's *The Boston Red Sox: An Illustrated History*, pp. 140, 151, 158, 177, and 224.)

I began searching for games in which Ruth and Williams might have met during the 1942 season, but the search came up empty. Indeed, the only time I could find Ruth in uniform during 1942 was when he faced Walter Johnson in a staged duel between games of a Yankees-Senators Sunday doubleheader, August 23rd. But that event took place at Yankee Stadium, not Fenway Park, and on that day Ted Williams and the Bosox were in Philadelphia playing the Athletics.

Just a few days after I had first been contacted by Bob O'Neill, I received a letter from SABR member

Ed Brown. By coincidence, Ed wrote to ask me about a photo of Williams and Ruth found on p. 232 of Ed Linn's *The Great Rivalry*. This picture was almost identical to that which Bob O'Neill had sent along, though Bob's version was taken from a slight angle, while Ed's shows Williams and Ruth looking square into the camera. Not only were these two photos taken on the same date and at the same location, but it is obvious they were taken at essentially the very same moment.

According to Ed, the same photo that is found in *The Great Rivalry* can also be seen hanging in sports bars and restaurants all over the greater Boston area, each with the caption:

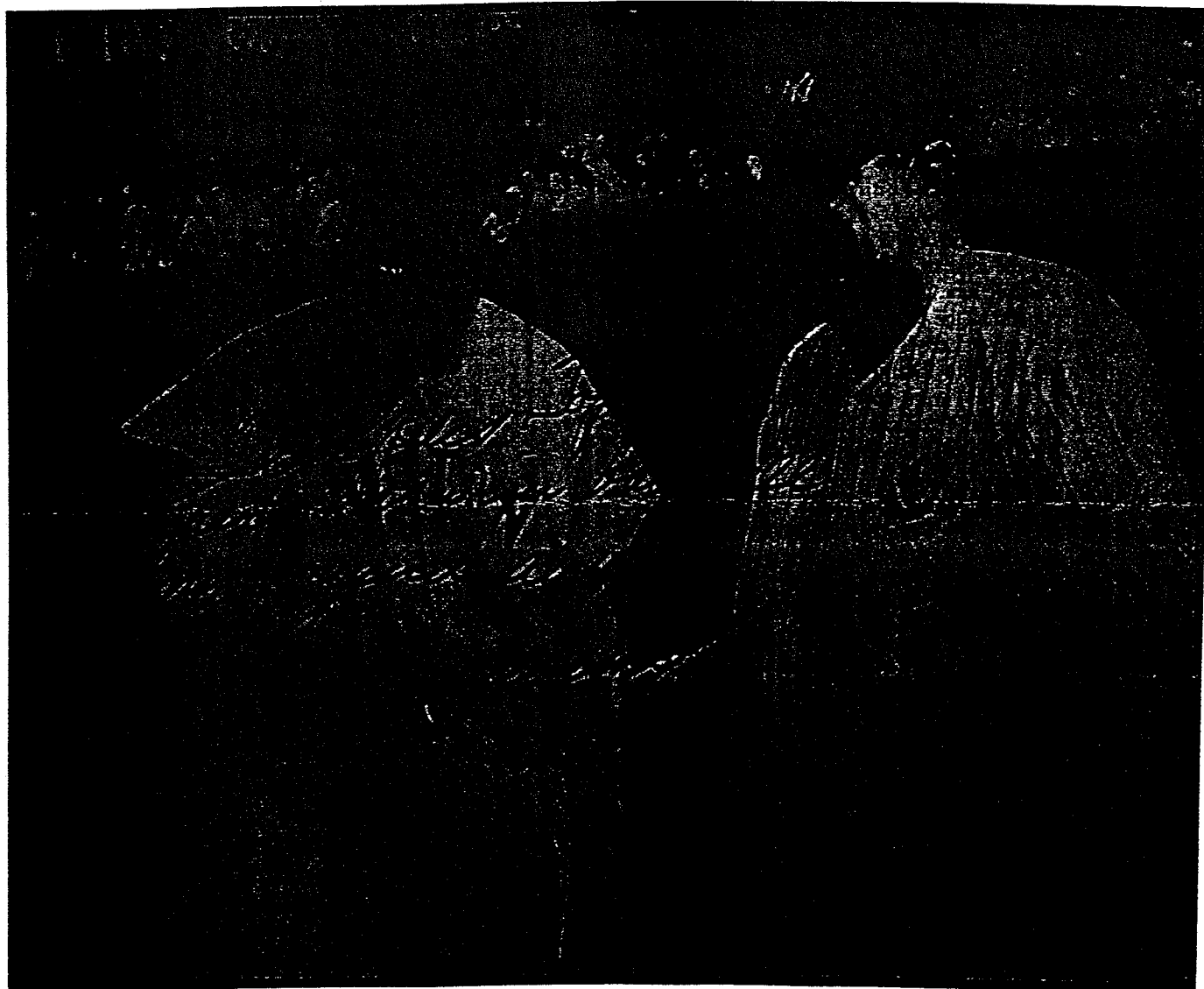
The only picture ever taken in uniform
First meeting of two champions
July 13, 1943 Boston, Mass. Fenway Park

I noted two items from this caption. First, this certainly isn't the *only* picture ever taken of Williams and Ruth together in uniform. Indeed, I can think of three, and there very well may be others:

- 1) the photo from the Baseball Americana collection;
- 2) the photo found in *The Great Rivalry* and in various locations throughout Boston;
- 3) a photo found on p. 271 of Geoffrey Ward and Ken Burns' *Baseball*.

This last photo (credited to *The Sporting News*) was probably taken on the same date and at the same location as the other two, but was shot in the clubhouse, not on the ballfield.

The second point I noted from the caption was that the date of July 13, 1943, seemed improbable, as that was the date of the All-Star game at Shibe Park (the first "Midsummer Classic" to be played under the lights). But the photos certainly don't show Shibe Park (indeed the caption corroborates the Fenway location), and, besides, Williams was in the service in '43. Nevertheless, I decided to look at the *New York Times*: Was there, perhaps, a separate ballgame that took place on July 13, 1943—a game at which both Ruth and Williams were in attendance? The answer was no.



While looking through the *NY Times*, I also decided to check out a different date I thought promising: July 28, 1943. According to Marshall Smelser in *The Life That Ruth Built*, it was on that day that Ruth played in his last baseball game. The Babe managed a team dubbed the Yanklands while the opposition University of North Carolina Pre-Flight Cloudbusters were managed by none other than the Splendid Splinter. I found that game in the paper, but it took place at Yankee Stadium, not Fenway, and an accompanying picture of Williams at bat revealed that on that day he was wearing a U.S. Navy baseball uniform.

It appeared as if I was at a dead-end when I received a phone call from PHC member *Lefty Blasco*. As luck would have it, Lefty had a picture of Williams and Ruth on a souvenir pin, also with a caption stating that their get-together occurred on July 13, 1943. It was apparently the same picture as that found in *The Great Rivalry*. I decided to take a second look at the *NY Times*—perhaps I had missed something the first time around. Indeed I had.

As I advanced the microfilm toward July 13th, I perused the sports sections for the days preceding the All-Star game. In the July 13th issue, I found it. On the day *before* the All-Star game, a charity game between Babe Ruth's All-Stars and the Boston Braves took place at Fenway. It was July 12, not July 13. The *NY Times* column is reproduced at right.

A call to the good folks at the Los Angeles Amateur Athletic Foundation Library clinched it. I asked librarian Michael Salmon to take a look through *The Sporting News* and see if he could find note of the charity game. Not only did *The Sporting News* of July 22, 1943, mention the game, but it also published the same picture as seen in *The Great Rivalry* and on Lefty's pin!

Though the photo location (Fenway Park) and date (July 12, 1943) were now established, a few questions remained. Why was Williams wearing a road uniform? At first I thought I had this solved when I saw that Ted played for the "visiting" Ruth's All-Stars. But Babe was wearing a *home* uniform and was on the same team. I suppose the answer to this uniform discrepancy is that since neither Williams nor Ruth were actually playing in the majors at the time, they were supplied with whatever uniform happened to be around. Home, road, who cares? It's a charity game.

What of the word "HEALTH" on Williams' uniform? Wasn't that worn in 1942 only? Yes and no. The previous major league uniform that Williams had worn was from 1942, so it seems likely he was simply wearing a 1942 uniform for this game. But while researching the picture, I found a photo in the *NY Times* of Bobby Doerr, hero of the 1943 All-Star game. The picture was taken the day of the All-Star game, but his uniform clearly showed the special

patch with the words "HEALTH" on the shield. It appears that in 1943 *as well as* 1942, some players still wore the patch with the word "HEALTH" at the bottom, rather than just red stripes.

Thanks goes to the following people for their generous help: Lefty Blasco, Ed Brown, **Bob Hoie**, Bob O'Neill, and Michael Salmon.

— *Tom Shieber*

RUTH'S ALL-STARS DOWN BRAVES, 9-8

Williams and Dom DiMaggio Connect for Long Drives in Service Team Victory

BOSTON, July 12 (AP)—The fat and forty-eightish but still fabulous Babe Ruth, aided by such recent American League heroes as Ted Williams, batting champion, and Dom DiMaggio, today masterminded a service all-star team to a 9-8 victory over the Braves at Fenway Park.

During the late stages of the game, which served as the piece de resistance of Mayor Maurice J. Tobin's annual charity field day program, Ruth heeded the pleas of the 12,000 spectators and, wearing his famous No. 3 Yankee uniform, obliged as a pinch hitter. He took lusty swings at Dave Odom's offerings and managed to fly out to right field on his third try.

Before the game Ruth, who had not handled a bat since last summer, attempted to pit on a long-range batting duel with Williams, who wore his recently discarded Red Sox spangles. With Red Barrett, the Braves' bullpen pitcher, throwing, Williams managed to belt three balls into the right-field stands. Ruth, hampered by his old knee injury, was unable to drive off the playing field.

In the seventh inning Williams belted a homer against Odom with two runners aboard and DiMaggio contributed a third-inning triple with a pair of all-stars on base. Chuck Workman put the Braves into a 5-5 tie in the fifth by hitting a homer with one on base.

Other members of the Ruth forces included Ensign Babe Young of the Coast Guard, formerly of the Giants; Al Roberge, former Braves infielder, now stationed at Fort Devens, and Coast Guardsman Jimmy Hegan, recent Cleveland catcher.

The score by innings:

Ruth's All-Stars 0 8 4 1 0 0 4 0 0 2 12 1
Boston (N.)....1 2 0 0 2 0 3 0 0 3 18 0
Batteries—Kwasniewski, Hanson, Murphy
and Hagan, Yankowski; Martin, Odum and
Moss.