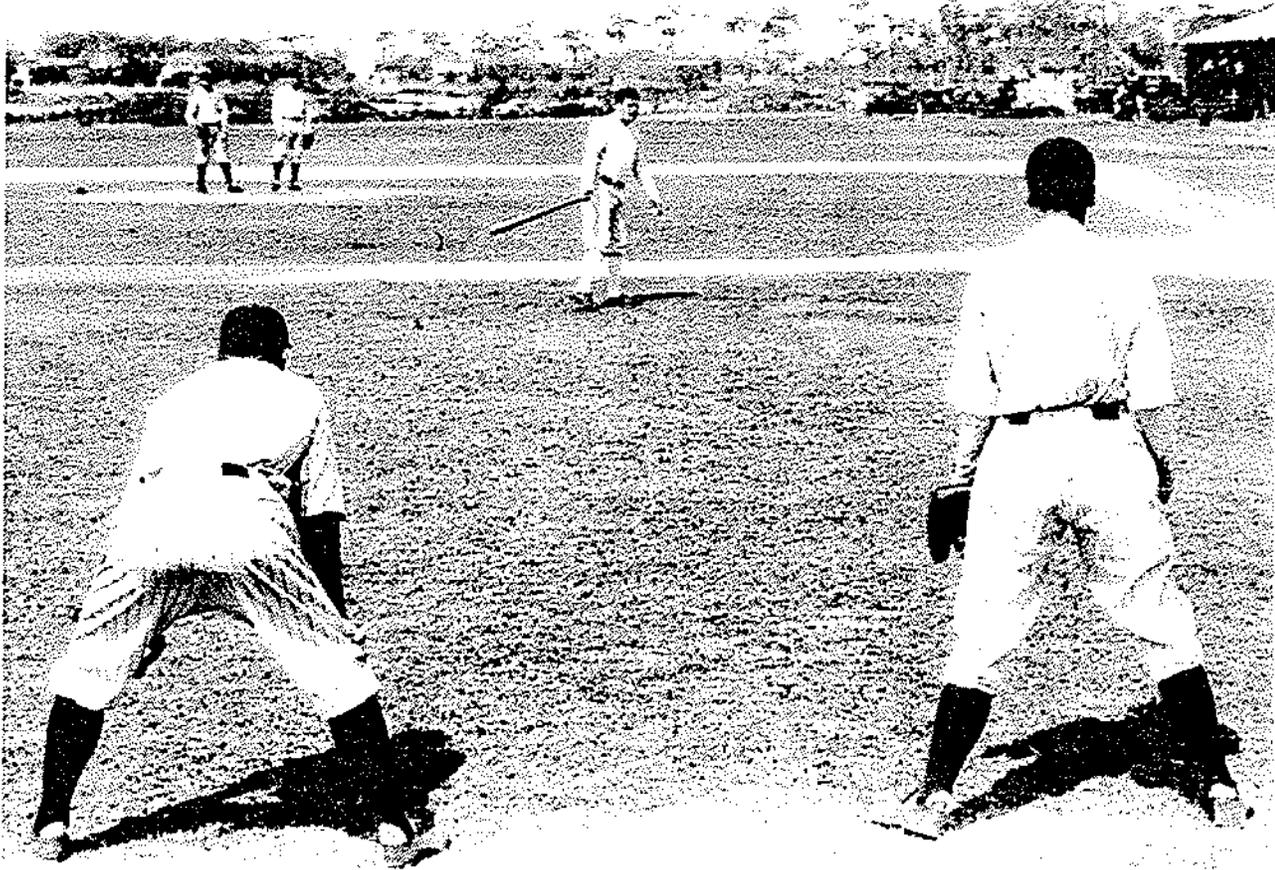


SABR Pictorial History Committee Newsletter

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Babe Ruth plays pepper with a couple of Yankee rookies during Spring Training in St. Petersburg, Florida in this never-before seen 1928 wire service photograph.



It is with dissatisfaction that I begin this second newsletter. I meant to get this done months ago. But work has been crushing lately, and I could not devote proper time to SABR's Pictorial History Committee. All the fronts of communication compete for time and demand attention, from phone calls to emails to newsgathering, and it takes more months than expected to get to the news organized and printed. If any committee members would like to become the news source for the Pictorial Historians, and put together the newsletter on a more regular and frequent basis, we all would like you to step forward. My picture business is requiring more rather than less work lately, and that is not likely to change. So, I am seriously seeking help, if you have the time and the discipline. Meanwhile, even though you were getting nothing in the mail, work did go on. Thanks to some dedicated members we have a successful project - the Player Image Index, which is growing rapidly. It will now be easy for any committee member to make entries into our database. When we supply you with the software, we hope to see everyone adding players, local or obscure, ancient or brief. This is the main focus of the committee and what we will discuss at length now.

-----Mark Rucker

BILL HICKMAN OUR HERO!

Thanks mainly to member Bill Hickman the Player Image Index is alive and growing. Together with Cary Smith, Bill has taken on the work of the project like a man possessed. He has worked hard especially on the "Missing Player File," which is our cup-of-coffee list for players spending very little time in the Major Leagues. The number of Missing Players when Bill began was about 3000 total. Bill reports that he has completed over 1600 entries, so he is already half finished. He has systematically located obscure Major Leaguers by going through Total Baseball page by page, looking for position players who have at least a first initial to go with their last name, and have played in the range of 20 games in the bigs. Bill reports that approximately 50% of the Missing Players appeared in more than 20 games, and half in fewer than 20 games.

Our eventual goal is to have a pictorial entry for every ML. player - but we are beginning with the most difficult first. Bill has this to say about the Missing Players he has been pursuing: "Based on the first 800 players I've catalogued for the Missing Images list. I've found the following:

- 14% played in 101 or more major league games.
- 23% played in 51 or more major league games.
- 39% played in 21 or more major league games.
- 45% played in 16 or more major league games.
- 52% played in 11 or more major league games.
- 48% played in 10 or fewer major league games.

Some played in hundreds of games and one, Tommy "Buttermilk" Dowd, played in well over a thousand games. We ought to be able to find something on him. 53.5% spent some time in the majors during the 1800's. 46.5% spent all their time in the majors during the 1900's.

The 800 player sample should be random, unless spelling of the players' last names means something in terms of sample bias. I don't think so. I'd guess that the 800 player sample constitutes more than 25% of this particular universe of missing players, so it is a sizable sample.

It will be difficult to find images for a many of these players, but I thought it might help to have some kind of breakdown regarding the cadre of players we're still chasing." All told, using baseball cards, illustrated books, and George Brace's photo inventory, cataloged over 12,000 major leaguers, many of them heretofore unseen.

As a result of Bill's dedication he has been named Editor of the Player Image Index. Bill will be the "point man" responsible for supervising submissions, filling in missing data, and making reported corrections. Cary Smith, who has been our data man up to now, has transferred all his information to Bill's office for loading using our revised, and hopefully, permanent system. To promote the gathering, recording, and dissemination of the data gathered, we have worked out a format in the Excel program, which we can all easily use and share. We will provide any and all members with copies of the Excel database, so that we all can be adding names on a regular basis. We will try to place the Index on the SABR Website, to see who we have, and who we need. The informational columns in the Excel database will look like the chart on the following page:

CHARLES "CHINO" SMITH

Pictures turn up all the time, and often from surprising sources. Cuba has become a gold mine for Negro league images in recent years. It's not that this is a new development, since Cubans have had a strong historical interest for centuries. It is just that we are now realizing what photographs and graphics have been produced on the baseball-crazed island for the past 100 years, and little by little we are getting to see them. It is exciting when we discover the image of an obscure player in the Majors from long ago, but even more exciting is getting a picture of an Important player, whose career was brief, or who was seldom photographed. Such a discovery came as two previously undiscovered photos of Charles "Chino" Smith, a Negro Leaguer, who died young after a remarkable career from 1924-1931. He played for the Philadelphia Giants, the Brooklyn Royal Giants, and the Lincoln Giants in the States, and for the Habana team in the Cuban winter leagues for a few seasons. Satchel Paige described him as one of the two toughest hitters he ever faced. He is shown here in photos from a Cuban magazine's files from the 1920s.



Since a great deal of our time in the Pictorial History Committee is spent studying photos, an article on the development of baseball photography now and then seems like a good idea. In the spirit of information sharing, the following is the complete article on taking action photos from Camera magazine, December, 1912.

BASEBALL AND THE POCKET TELEPHOTO CAMERA: BY T. W. KILMER

We are all at times dreamers, and it is to the realization of a dream that I ask your attention. For upward of twenty-five years I have wished, yea, and wished harder than I have wished for anything in my life, to attend baseball games, sporting events and horse races at county fairs and be enabled to sit in my seat in the grandstand, take from my pocket a small, unostentatious camera and "get" anything I wished. The horses neck and neck at the finish, the lithe, well-muscled fox-hunter just clearing the bars, or the baseball player sliding for the home-plate.

The difficulties were many, and, after thinking that I had the solution of the problem at my fingers' ends, it would suddenly fade away and I would find myself just where I started. During the past year I have, however, procured a combination photographic which answers all my questions, and in which my fondest hopes have been realized. It delivers the good, not only to my own satisfaction, but also to the satisfaction of many others.



FIG. 4. "PITCHER WARMING UP."
T. W. KILMER, NEW YORK, N. Y.



FIG. 3. "THIRD BASE,
BUNNER GOING
HOME." "BOTH
FEET OFF THE
GROUND."
T. W. KILMER,
NEW YORK, N. Y.



FIG. 2. "SAFE AT
PLATE." "SAFE AT
FIRST." (A RE-
MARKABLE PHOTO-
GRAPH, TAKEN
FROM THE GRAND
STAND, SHOWING
TWO PLAYS AT
ONCE.)

Take Fig. 1, for instance. This photograph was made at about 4:30 P.M. in august, while rain threatened. You can see that there are practically no shadows. This is a 5x7 glossy enlargement direct from the small negative; the ball can be plainly seen a few inches from the catcher's mitt, where it arrived just too late to get the runner at the plate. This picture was taken from the grandstand in 1/250 of a second. Sharpness, definition, depth of field - yes, they are all there.



FIG. 1. "BEATING THE BALL HOME."
(TAKEN FROM GRAND STAND.)
T. W. KILMER.
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Fig. 2 is rather remarkable, in that it is the first photograph which I have seen of a ball game wherein two plays are shown plain and sharp on the same plate; even the right-fielder is in focus, as well as the catcher in the foreground. In Fig. 3 we have a runner at right angles to the lens; he has both feet off the ground, and is a good subject for testing any photographic outfit.

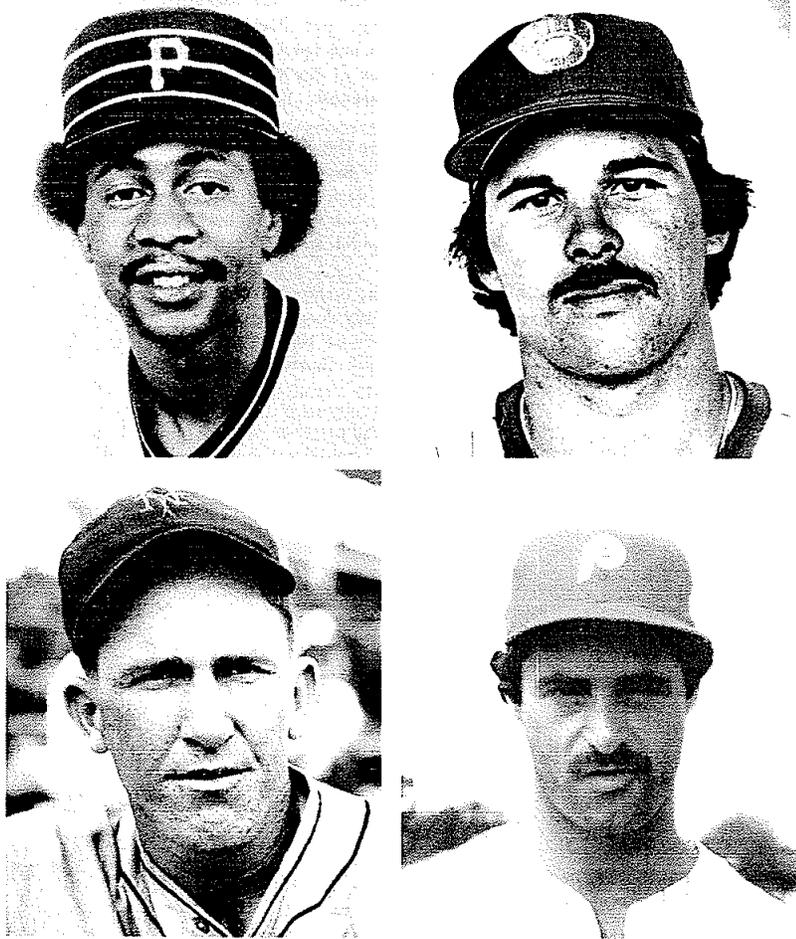
These few baseball pictures, will, I think, demonstrate the fact that, although the heavy equipment, large and heavy lenses of long focus and twelve loaded 5x7 holders, are quite a necessity at times and give the best results in many instances, yet the little pocket instrument, fitted with a telephoto lens, is truly capable of turning out stuff that not only gladdens the heart of many an editor, but also is a great satisfaction to the fellow who just takes pictures for the love of the thing.



FIG. 5. "LEFT FIELDER NEGOTIATING A HIGH ONE." T. W. KILMER, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Our members successfully identified all four guys from last month. Do you have any photos you want identified? Send in a good clear copy, and we'll run the picture in a future newsletter. The answers from last month, (along with the first to submit an id.) were: upper left: Art Decatur (Tom Cline), upper right: Scott Thompson (Lefty Blasco), lower left: Hank Lieber (Bill Anderson), lower right: Ken Clay (Tom Cline). Thanks to all.

WHO ARE THESE GUYS?



WE NEED A VOLUNTEER.

We are continually falling behind on the Player Image Index, because each spring brings in a new group of players for which we have no pictures. Would a Committee member be willing to hunt down and record pictures of rookies each season, and enter the info in the database for us? Baseball cards or Registers could be used - any source with a photo for reference. It won't be that much work, but the assistance will be tremendous.

We want to welcome the following new members to the Committee.

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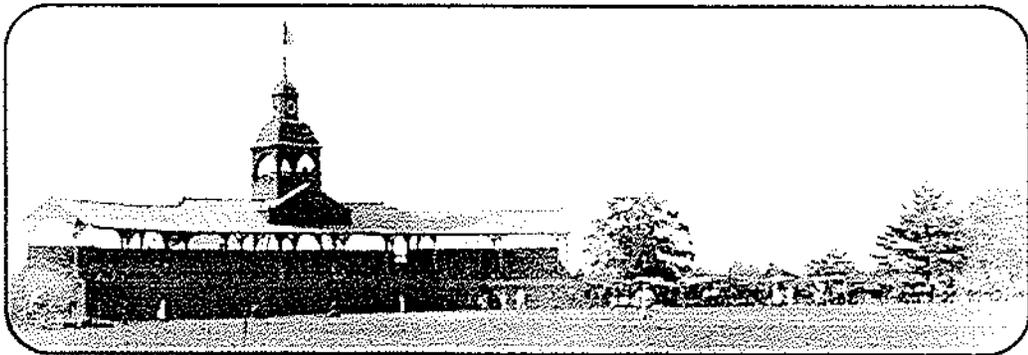
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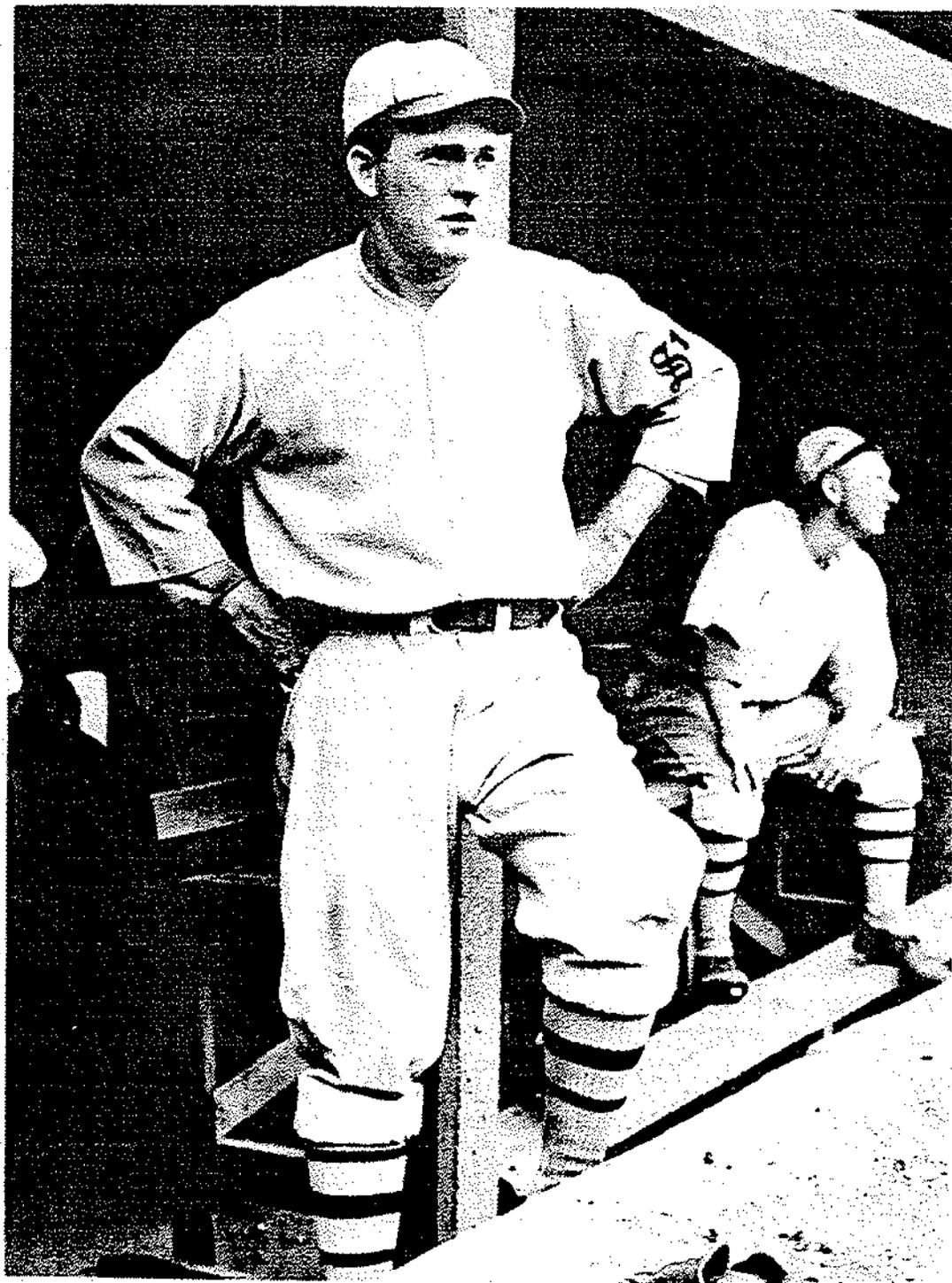
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Game in progress at Yale University Field during the 1888 season. Photo by Pach Brothers of New York for the 1888 Yale class album.





ROGERS HORNSBY
St. Louis National League

1928 The Sporting News premium of Rogers Hornsby with St. Louis. That could be one of our cup-of-coffee players behind him!