

The INSIDE GAME



The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

VOL. XIII, No. 4: "LET'S GET THIS LUMPY LICORICE-STAINED BALL ROLLING!" NOVEMBER 2013

THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by John McMurray

The ongoing work of the Deadball Era Committee focuses most often on broad areas which are of interest to the membership at large, but there remain many smaller, more specific topics which invite the attention of researchers. Given the intensity of interest in the Deadball Era, it is worthwhile to highlight several of these subject areas which offer some of the greatest potential for examination.

In that spirit, to follow are comments provided to me by several accomplished members of the Deadball Era Committee focusing on where the biggest gaps remain in Deadball Era research. The range of topics offered by these members—which, interestingly, seldom overlap—offers opportunities both for the Committee and for enterprising researchers.

Contributors' remarks are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name. The following comments, which have been edited only for clarity, were individually e-mailed to me for publication in response to my query concerning where individual Deadball Era researchers (or a group of researchers) interested

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A LEAGUE DIVIDED AND ALMOST RUINED BY A BASEBALL

by Dennis Pajot

The minor league American Association leaders met in Chicago in late December 1905 for their annual meeting. The Association had been split on three issues—the sale of the Minneapolis club to Mike Kelley; the election of the Association president, and the matter of which baseball to use for league play. Four clubs—Milwaukee, St. Paul, Louisville, and Kansas City—were on one side, while the owners of the Indianapolis, Columbus, Minneapolis, and Toledo clubs formed the other faction. This four-four split was not as even as it seemed. George Tebeau owned both the Kansas City and Louisville clubs, so there were only three men with four votes on this side. The owners squabbled among themselves and a decision on any issue could not be reached. As a result, it was rumored that the four teams in the Indianapolis faction might bolt from the American Association. Charles Havenor, owner of the Milwaukee club, said that this did not bother his faction, as the AA would find other clubs to replace the seceders in their cities.¹ The ensuing fight over which baseball would be used

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in the American Association is what we will look into in this article.

Since 1903, the American Association had used a baseball manufactured by the Victor Sporting Goods Company of Springfield, Massachusetts. For various reasons, however, use of the Victor ball had met with opposition from all sides. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* gave reasons why the players did not care for the Victor ball: “The pitchers say that it is dead and hurts their arms; the fielders declare that it gets wings and the batters claim that a good, hard rap knocks it out of shape.” Even though the Victor ball was cheap—being furnished to the Association at \$5.00 per dozen, most players wanted it replaced by the Reach baseball (the ball that the AA had used in its initial season of 1902), a position reportedly supported with much effort behind the scenes by American League president Ban Johnson.²

Connie Mack of the Philadelphia Athletics was on hand at the December American Association meeting to represent the Reach baseball firm and declared that club owners Havenor of Milwaukee and George Lennon of St. Paul had promised

him their support. However, baseball politics entered into the picture and these two men suddenly sided with Louisville owner George Tebeau, who reportedly had an interest in the Victor ball. Lennon told the press that he had agreed to vote with Indianapolis owner William Watkins for the adoption of the Reach ball, provided that Watkins would vote for Joseph O’Brien for the American Association presidency. When Watkins declared himself unwilling to support O’Brien, the St. Paul owner decided to cast his vote for the Victor ball. Another report had it that votes were needed to prevent Michael Kelley from purchasing the Minneapolis club, and that Lennon and Havenor switched their votes on the ball issue in return for Tebeau’s two votes on the Kelley matter. Lennon said that he had spoken to Connie Mack about the situation and that Connie did not blame him for switching. However, other sources reported that “Mack’s usually serene disposition was very much ruffled all day over the turn affairs took.”³

William Watkins said that he never “double-crossed” anyone on the O’Brien presidency issue. He claimed that the only pledge he had made

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NEW DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

Lyle Bellamy
Ed Brackett
Craig Brown
Tim Cornett
Chuck Hildebrandt
Jeremy Hodges
Clifton Stagnaro
Michael Yoder

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.

was to vote for the Reach ball and to deliver four votes for it. Watkins severely criticized Tebeau and Havenor, denouncing them as magnates who had never done anything for the American Association unless it furthered their own personal interests. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* summed up the Victor/Reach ball situation this way: "So the Association will worry through another season with an instrument which none of the players wants and to which at least six magnates are opposed. Such is one of the silly effects of the brand of politics now in style in the American Association."⁴

The AA baseball question lay dormant until late February when J. Edward Grillo, owner of the Toledo Mud Hens, reported that Garry Herrmann, chairman of the National Commission, Organized Baseball's three-man governing body, had ruled that the National Agreement required the American Association to toss out the Victor ball and to play with either the Spalding or Reach ball. Charles Havenor reacted by stating that he would fight any Commission attempt to coerce the AA in the ball matter.⁵ Meanwhile, the American Association was in such a disarray that the two rival ownership factions had not even met to set up a schedule for the upcoming season, only a little over a month away. Finally, it was decided that a representative from each faction would sit down and draft a schedule, with league president O'Brien acting as arbiter.⁶

On March 29 the American Association owners met in Chicago. A 154-game schedule was adopted and O'Brien was re-elected as president by a unanimous vote, "the faction opposed to him accepting the situation gracefully." However, the baseball issue was not so easily disposed of. Several votes were taken, each yielding a four-to-four stalemate. After the meeting was adjourned, the pro-Victor members of the board of directors got together privately and instructed O'Brien to award the contract to the Victor

Sporting Goods Company for one year.⁷ When revealed, this decision was not well received by the Reach faction. It was reported "on good authority" that Indianapolis, Columbus, Minneapolis, and Toledo would withdraw from the American Association if there was an attempt to use the Victor ball during the season. Thomas Bryce, owner of the Columbus Senators, said that the four clubs in his faction had found the Victor ball objectionable for the past two years, but had remained quiet about it, so as not to embarrass one of the AA club owners. However, this season



1907 Reach Baseball Guide, page 139

American Association Presidents, 1906

they felt that a different ball was needed to ensure the quality of play on the field demanded by players and patrons of the Association. These four clubs voted solidly for the Reach ball used by the American League, determining that it best satisfied the needs of the American Association.⁸

The other four clubs were just as determined to go with the Victor ball. George Tebeau replied that the AA had a five-year contract with the Victor Company, with two years remaining. He noted that the league's constitution provided that in case of a tie vote, a disputed matter was to be settled by the Association's board of directors. Two of the directors had not voted on the ball issue, and according to the by-laws, a non-vote was to be counted as an affirmative vote. Thus, Tebeau maintained that the board had technically voted unanimously for the Victor ball. That being so, he continued, if the four dissenting clubs withdrew from the AA, they would "be outlaws pure and simple." In response to insinuations about his connection to Victor, Tebeau stated that "They have made the charge that I am for the Victor ball because I am deeply in debt to the Victor people. This is a lie and I deny it here for the first time. I did borrow but I have paid most of it back. I am for the Victor ball because it is a cheaper ball than either of the others and it is better. The truth is that Watkins and Bryce want to run things as they formerly did and they haven't a chance. We have put a stop to their methods. August Herrmann owns the Toledo club and he will make Ed Grillo do the right thing. Watkins is broke and needs a guardian if he intends to get out financially this year. If not he will be a ruined man in base ball."⁹

Tebeau's denial that he was deeply in debt to the Victor people was explored in full in *The Sporting News*. Up to 1905 George Tebeau had had the backing of the two AA clubs which he owned, plus that of Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Toledo. However after the 1904 season, Cincinnati interests took over the Toledo franchise, with former American Association president J. Edward Grillo installed as the Mud Hens president. With Toledo now becoming an anti-Tebeau club, the AA leaders were split into evenly divided factions. According to statements



1906 Reach Baseball Guide, page 192

Joseph O'Brien

attributed to Havenor, the Victor firm had loaned Tebeau the sum of \$5,000 to finance the Louisville club, with the understanding that its ball should be adopted by the AA for another term of years. The clubs in the Tebeau faction thus voted for the Victor ball more to aid their leader in obtaining his financing, than from a preference for the Victor ball over the Reach or the Spalding. The Victor Company's contract for the Association baseball expired with the 1904 season, but Tebeau informed his factional allies that it was not then convenient for him to meet his obligations to the Victor people. This prompted Tebeau to solicit their help in securing

an extension on his note by prolonging the AA ball contract with Victor. Havenor was reported to have demurred at first, but “at the persistent entreaty of his factional and personal friend,” the Milwaukee Brewer owner agreed to vote for the Victor ball contract. Havenor reportedly told Tebeau: “We will carry you for one more year, after that we’ll choose a ball without consideration for your financial obligations.”¹⁰

On April 10 it appeared that a compromise had been reached. Indianapolis, Columbus, Toledo, and Minneapolis would use the Reach ball in their parks during the season, while Milwaukee, St. Paul, Kansas City, and Louisville would use the Victor ball. Watkins in Indianapolis was so confident in this agreement that he placed a large order for Reach balls, and part of the consignment was delivered.¹¹ However, this compromise was soon shot down by American Association president Joseph O’Brien. On April 17, he met with National Commission chairman Garry Herrmann, who urged the league president to allow the four clubs to use the Reach ball on their home grounds. O’Brien then discovered that Havenor of the Milwaukee club had instructed his manager to take the Brewers off the field in Toledo if the Victor ball was not used. The Brewer owner also made public his doubt that the National Commission had any jurisdiction over the ball controversy, believing it to be an internal AA matter. The Havenor view was based on Rule 11, Section 1, of the National Agreement, which read: “Each party to this agreement retains the right to conduct its affairs and govern its players, according to its constitution and by-laws.” Similar orders about using the Victor ball were sent out to the Kansas City, St. Paul, and Louisville teams by their owners. Immediately, the four teams in the pro-Reach ball faction issued statements declaring that they would use the Reach ball.¹²

It now looked like a war in the American Association was brewing. Thomas Bryce said that the Reach ball would be used at Neil Park in Columbus, no matter what. He even said that visiting clubs in other parks might have the right to insist on the use of either the Reach or Spalding ball. Bryce believed that refusing to use

one of these balls was acting contrary to National Association playing rules. Charles Havenor replied that the Victor ball had been adopted by the American Association and that it must be used. The Milwaukee owner boldly declared that if the Watkins faction wanted trouble, they could have it right from the start. And that if it came to closing parks, he was ready to do so. If the AA was to be disrupted, Havenor said that he could stand it.¹³

The day after league president O’Brien met with National Commission chairman Herrmann, O’Brien sent out notice to all clubs that the Victor ball must be used in all American Association games. Herrmann then sent notice to O’Brien, ordering him to permit the use of the Reach ball by the clubs desiring to use it. If the American Association disregarded this directive, it stood the chance of losing recognition by the National Commission and the protection of Organized Baseball. Herrmann followed up with a telegram to all AA club owners, advising that:

The National Commission can no longer recognize O’Brien as the president of the American Association, as he has refused to comply with a request from this body concerning the Victor and Reach ball controversy. We, therefore, advise you that, unless you desire to do so, you are no longer compelled to recognize him or his orders.¹⁴

The *Milwaukee Sentinel* predicted that Herrmann’s actions would touch off one of the biggest fights in the history of minor leagues baseball. Pointing out that Herrmann was the principal owner of the Toledo club, the *Sentinel* believed that he had overreached his powers. The newspaper observed that there was no provision in the National Agreement that gave chairman Herrmann, or the National Commission, the right to decide the American Association baseball dispute. That was a matter for the American Association alone to settle. The *Sentinel* concluded: “Whether the commission will usurp the right is a matter of conjecture, but at all events the affair will end in a merry war.”¹⁵

On the morning of April 18, J. Edward Grillo of the Toledo club went to the Lucas County (Ohio)

Common Pleas Court, securing an injunction prohibiting umpire Sullivan from putting a Victor ball in play during the upcoming game. Similar court action was filed in Indianapolis, where Hoosiers owner William Watkins alleged that Victor-faction leader George Tebeau had a conflict of interest arising from a contract with the Victor Sporting Goods Company, whereby he was to receive some benefit or profit—as reported above, to be \$5,000—for the adoption of the Victor ball as the official ball for American Association play. This made the use of the Victor ball a violation of Rule 14 of the National Agreement and therefore illegal. Watkins further claimed that the American Association board of directors had refused to adopt the Victor ball at its meeting in Chicago on March 29, but that a clandestine second meeting had been convened later that same day by the Tebeau faction. With Watkins and the Reach ball supporters excluded, the proposal to adopt the Victor ball was put through.¹⁶

When called to account, George Tebeau explained the \$5,000 that he had received from the Victor Company as follows:

When the American Association was formed we had a war on with the Western League and at that time we were hard pressed for financial support. I was urged by Mr. Watkins to take Louisville when no one else would go there. I wanted Kansas City. In order to get along I took half of Kansas City and the Association the other half. However, Mr. [Dale] Gear, who had charge of affairs there, spent \$5000 more in fixing up stands, etc., than we planned. We needed money bad to tide us over and I went to the Reach people to help us out. They declined and then I went to the Victor people, and they made me a loan of \$5000. It saved the Association and in turn I had the Victor ball adopted for five years. Why should we not stand by the Victor people when they saved the Association from going under? That is the only compensation I received from the Victor people—the loan of money. I say we owe them much, and Watkins' faction should stand by them just as much as I do. These are facts, and the fans



1906 Reach Baseball Guide, page 174

Garry Herrmann

can judge for themselves as to who is right in the matter.¹⁷

The *Minneapolis Journal* summed up what most fans thought of the dispute under the headline *A Teapot Tempest*. In the *Journal's* view, "The fans care very little whether the players use Spalding, Reach, Victor, croquet or highball. ... The pennant does not go to the ball, but to the men who handle it best—and knock it furthest. All of the balls mentioned are of standard variety."¹⁸

About noon on Opening Day, Garry Herrmann wired Joseph O'Brien the warning that unless he rescinded his orders to the umpires on using only the Victor ball, the American Association

would be regarded as an outlaw league. With Herrmann's wire, and the Ohio court's temporary restraining order in place, the American Association season started on April 18, using whichever ball the home team wished to put in play. The Reach ball was used in Toledo, Indianapolis, and Columbus. Only Louisville used the Victor ball. Despite the ongoing ball dispute, there were no disruptions of play. As the *Minneapolis Journal* commented: "There were no thunders from Jupiter's throne and no catastrophes following. ... Garry Hermann sung his little song and the frightened three [meaning Tebeau, Lennon, and Havenor] scuttled in out of the dampness."¹⁹ The next day, however, Bill Fox of Minneapolis refused to play at Louisville with the Victor ball. The game was declared forfeit and Fox was fined \$100 by AA president O'Brien.²⁰

Still, the baseball controversy was not settled. On April 26, Charles Havenor wired Herrmann demanding immediate re-consideration of the AA ball case, claiming that Herrmann had no right to pass judgment on a matter in which he was an interested party. Havenor and the other pro-Victor ball owners also claimed that Ban Johnson, another member of the National Commission, had never voted to compel exclusive AA use of the Reach ball. These owners declared they would use the Victor ball, as it had been selected by the American Association board of directors.²¹ In the meantime, C. B. Whitney, representing the Victor Sporting Goods Company, arrived in Milwaukee to confer with Havenor and Tebeau. Whitney said that his firm did not propose to be put out of business by anyone. He claimed that he had been advised by a Supreme Court justice to institute legal action against the National Commission to enjoin it from interfering with the American Association's contract with the Victor Company. Whitney further stated that he was going to New York to start suit against Garry Herrmann and National League president Harry C. Pulliam (the third National Commission member) for stopping Joseph O'Brien from using the Victor ball in certain American Association ballparks.²²



Minneapolis Journal, April 22, 1901

So hard were the feelings running between William Watkins and Charles Havenor that the Indianapolis players stayed at the Republican House rather than their usual accommodation, the Havenor-owned Davidson Hotel, on the Hoosiers trip to Milwaukee in early May.²³ *The Sporting News* put the terrible situation in the American Association on the head of one man:

Provided that published reports are correct, the row in the American Association, which may lead to a lawsuit, had its origin in a private loan made to one of its club members, who, in part payment, pledged the endorsement of his organization for the product of a manufacturer in the games' supplies. It also appears that if this indebtedness had been canceled at maturity, one of the most important leagues in the

National Association might have been without entanglements. Tebeau's attitude and actions are not surprising, but it is almost beyond conception that Havenor and Lennon will tie themselves up with a party who has kept the league in internal strife since it became identified with organized baseball. What have they gained as individuals or as club owners by the connection? Neither has asked for or needed the influence or assistance of the American Association to secure or postpone the payment of loans. Each maintains his baseball and commercial credit with his individual or club resources. As businessmen, they must realize that dissension has been harmful to every club connected with their league. The meager returns that their clubs have received for games at Kansas City for a series of seasons have kept down the profits of every other team. Every handicap that Tebeauism has placed on the American Association would have been removed if Lennon and Havenor, or either of them, had withdrawn from the faction formed by Tebeau for Tebeau and been solely influenced by the merits of a question in casting their votes. Two-team Tebeau could not harm the American Association if he did not have the help of Havenor and Lennon, whom he has used so long that he regards them as assets.²⁴

On May 8, the National Commission met in Cincinnati to consider the AA baseball dispute. President O'Brien and his lawyer, Henry Killilea of Milwaukee, were present, as was a delegate from the Victor Company. From the pro-Reach side were Thomas Bryce and William Watkins. In the bitter feelings that pervaded the meeting, "many hot words were indulged in, and there came near being some hair and whisker pulling." The Victor representative threatened to sue Bryce for "daring to think" that the Reach ball was better than the one his company produced. In the end the three-man commission decided it had jurisdiction over the matter, but "for the good of the game" would not make a decision at this time. Garry Herrmann seemed to soften his stance a little, now saying that he favored a rule in which leagues could use the Reach, Victor, or Spalding ball. He was quoted as saying: "The present rule is manifestly unfair, as there should be perfectly free competition among all manufacturers." For the time being the American Association sides were permitted to use either ball a club wanted to.²⁵

On June 8, the National Commission returned to the "Ball Case." The commission disagreed with the pro-Victor magnates, asserting that it had jurisdiction in any case that violated a specific provision of the National Agreement. To say that the ball controversy was an internal matter was not seen as logical by the commission, giving

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 The American Association,
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 PHILADELPHIA.
 Pacific Coast Branch, Alameda, Cal.
 PHIL. B. BEXEART CO.
 Send For Free Illustrated Catalog.

Sporting Life, July 21, 1906, page 16

The Victor Official League Ball
 Readopted March 29, '06, by
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
 COLUMBUS, MILWAUKEE,
 INDIANAPOLIS, MINNEAPOLIS,
 KANSAS CITY, ST. PAUL,
 LOUISVILLE, TOLEDO.
 (Making the Fourth Consecutive Year.)
 Adopted March 30, '06, For Five Years By
THE WESTERN LEAGUE
 DENVER, OMAHA,
 DES MOINES, PUEBLO,
 LINCOLN, SIOUX CITY.
 It Has Also Been Adopted By Fifteen Other Promi-
 nent Professional Leagues.
VICTOR SPORTING GOODS CO.,
 Springfield, Mass.

Sporting Life, April 4, 1906, page 16

examples of how the putative “internal rule” would not apply in other cases: “One of the rules provides the kind of a bat that shall be used and among other things states that it must be entirely of hard wood. Supposing some of the clubs were using a steel or iron bat, could the Commission under those circumstances refuse a request of any club to use a bat made entirely of hard wood? Certainly not. ... The rules provide how the field shall be laid out, the distance between bases, the pitcher’s box, etc. If certain leagues were violating the rules in any of these respects, requests coming from club members thereof to operate in conformity with what the rules prescribe, could not be refused.”²⁶

In the AA “Ball case” it was pointed out that on March 2, 1904 (and amended on February 14, 1906) the Joint Playing Rules Committee adopted a code of rules, which were published and were thus official for all leagues in Organized Baseball. Regarding baseballs, Rule 14, Section 1 read: “The ball must weigh not less than five nor more than five and one-quarter ounces avoirdupois, and measure not less than nine nor more than nine and one-quarter inches in circumference. The Spalding National League ball or Reach American League ball must be used in all games played under these rules.” Thus a rule was in place mandating that the Spalding or Reach balls were the only ones to be used in Organized Baseball.

The rule notwithstanding, the National Commission exercised discretion in this case, *Sporting Life* calling it “A Remarkable Decision.” Here is what the National Commission determined:

We do not intend to pass on the merits of this rule. If a mistake has been made in adopting only two kinds of balls it should be stricken out. If other manufacturers of baseballs contend that the quality thereof is as good as either of the balls prescribed by the rules, they should apply to the Joint Rules Committee and have them admitted.

From the arguments advanced in this case, it is our judgment that there should be a change in this rule so as to provide for the most open

and active competition in the furnishing of balls, and that every manufacturer who can furnish a ball up to a certain standard required, should be permitted to do so. This change in the rule, in our judgment, should be made at once. If the work of the Joint Rules Committee at this time has no power, then we strongly recommend that the agreement be amended, and the Commission itself given power to modify or change the playing rules.

It was also evident from the evidence submitted in the case, that certain leagues of the National Association were of the opinion that they had authority to use a ball of their choosing, regardless of the provisions of the uniform rules, and in accordance therewith entered into legal contracts for furnishing balls other than those prescribed. In such cases we recommend that there shall be no interference by the Commission until the expiration of such contracts. [Author Note: This would include not only the American Association, but also the Western League, which had adopted the Victor ball at its annual meeting in March.]²⁷

In this particular controversy a dispute exists as to whether or not the American Association has a legal contract for furnishing what is known as the “Victor” ball or not, four clubs contending that they have and four clubs disputing this contention.

This we hold to be an internal affair of the Association and must be adjusted by them, unless the Commission was unanimously requested to adjudicate it for them.

Under the circumstances it follows therefore that the only question that we can pass on this at this time is whether certain National Agreement clubs will be permitted to use a ball prescribed by the uniform rules, if they so desire, and our answer to this must be in the affirmative, and the request of the Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Toledo and Columbus clubs will therefore be granted.²⁸

Interestingly, only Harry C. Pulliam and Garry Herrmann signed the decision. Ban Johnson did not.²⁹ American Association President O'Brien said the decision handed down by the National Commission left the matter pretty much where it was before the pronouncement was made. O'Brien said the ball matter would end and both factions could use whatever ball they desired, as long as they used one of the three baseballs prescribed in the rules.³⁰

The "Ball Case" came to an end officially in late December 1906 when Joseph O'Brien was re-elected American Association president for three more years, with a salary raise from \$2,000 to \$3,600. It was decided at a league meeting that O'Brien should advertise for bids for the official AA balls. The Association further instructed its president to contract for the next year's supply, according to his own judgment after the bids were received. In March 1907, the Victor ball was chosen to be the official ball of the American Association, and would be used in all Association games.³¹

**HIT BY FOUL BALL;
IS AWARDED \$3,500**

**KANSAS CITY BLUES LOSE IN SUIT FILED
BY LAWYER FOR DAMAGES**

KANSAS CITY—"If the Kansas City Blues had kept their eyes on the ball with the same accuracy that they contend Edling should have exercised, they would have attained a higher place in the race for the pennant," said the Kansas City court of appeals Monday in an opinion awarding Chas. A. Edling, a lawyer, \$3,500 for being hit on the nose by a foul ball. Edling was watching a game here in 1911 when a foul ball came through the wire fence and broke his nose. The club contended that Edling ought to have seen the ball coming.

The (Dubuque) Telegraph-Herald, June 2, 1914

1. *Milwaukee Journal*, December 29, 1905; *Sporting Life*, January 13, 1906, p. 6.
2. *Sporting Life*, January 13, 1906, p. 6; quote re-published in *The Sporting News*, January 6, 1906, p.1.
3. *Milwaukee Journal*, December 29 and 30, 1905; *Sporting Life*, January 13, 1906, p.6; *The Sporting News*, January 6, 1906, p.1.
4. *Sporting Life*, January 13, 1906, p. 6; quote re-published in *The Sporting News*, January 6, 1906, p. 1.
5. *Minneapolis Journal*, February 28, 1906; *Sporting Life*, March 10, 1906, p. 7.
6. *Sporting Life*, March 17, 1906, p. 10.
7. *Sporting Life*, April 7, 1906, p. 13.
8. *Sporting Life*, April 7, 1906, p. 8, and April 14, 1906, p. 11.
9. Ibid.
10. *The Sporting News*, May 5, 1906, p. 4.
11. *Sporting Life*, April 14, 1906, p. 11.
12. *Minneapolis Journal*, April 17, 1906; *Sporting Life*, April 28, 1906, p. 14, and June 30, 1906, p. 11.
13. *Minneapolis Journal*, April 13 and 17, 1906.
14. *Sporting Life*, April 28, 1906, p. 14.
15. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, April 19, 1906.
16. *Minneapolis Journal*, April 19, 1906; *Sporting Life*, April 28, 1906, p. 28, May 12, 1906, p. 9, and May 19, 1906, p. 9.
17. *Sporting Life*, May 12, 1906, p. 9.
18. *Minneapolis Journal*, April 1, 1906.
19. *Milwaukee Journal*, April 19, 1906; *Minneapolis Journal*, April 22, 1906.
20. *Sporting Life*, May 5, 1906, p. 10.
21. *Minneapolis Journal*, April 26, 1906; *Sporting Life*, May 5, 1906, p. 18.
22. *Sporting Life*, May 5, 1906, p. 18.
23. *Milwaukee Journal*, May 6, 1906.
24. *The Sporting News*, May 5, 1906, p. 4.
25. *Sporting Life*, May 19, 1906, p. 9.
26. *Sporting Life*, June 30, 1906, p. 11.
27. *Sporting Life*, April 14, 1906, p. 14.
28. *Minneapolis Journal*, April 1, 1906; *Sporting Life*, June 30, 1906, p. 11.
29. *Sporting Life*, June 30, 1906, p. 11.
30. *Minneapolis Journal*, June 9, 1906; *Sporting Life*, June 30, 1906, p. 11.
31. *Minneapolis Journal* and *Milwaukee Journal*, December 31, 1906; *Sporting Life*, March 23, 1907, p. 10, and March 30, 1907, p. 18.

**BEFORE HE BECAME
THE OLD SOLDIER:
THE PLAYING CAREER OF
WEST POINT OUTFIELDER
DOUGLAS MACARTHUR**

by **Bill Lamb**

A brilliant, if controversial, military commander, five-star General Douglas MacArthur received many of this nation's highest accolades, including the Congressional Medal of Honor. But among the awards that MacArthur held most dear was a far more modest laurel: the monogram that he won as a member of the 1901 West Point baseball team. For the remainder of his long life, the General would often plan battlefield strategy, entertain visiting dignitaries, or relax at home in attire festooned with his cherished varsity "A."¹

A life of military distinction seemed foreordained for Douglas MacArthur. Born at the Arsenal Barracks in Little Rock, Arkansas on January 26, 1880, he was the youngest of three sons born to then-US Army Captain Arthur MacArthur, Jr., and his formidable wife, the former Mary Pinkney Hardy. Raised in the American West as an Army brat, young Doug took readily to physical activity and quickly developed a love of sports. Not over-endowed with natural athletic ability, MacArthur made optimum use of his keen intellect, physical fitness, and an indomitable determination to succeed, molding himself into a first-class schoolboy athlete. At West Texas Military Academy in San Antonio, he was the star of the tennis team and the quarterback of an undefeated football team in his senior year. He was also a standout baseball player. Although he lacked power at the plate, MacArthur was "a deft bunter, a skilled shortstop," and the team captain/manager.² He was also valedictorian of his class and a leader of the cadet corps at WTMA. Despite these accomplishments and family influence – MacArthur's father was a distinguished career officer who himself had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for battlefield gallantry as a youthful Civil War field

commander³ and would later serve as Governor-General of the Philippines, while his grandfather, Arthur MacArthur, Sr., had been a prominent Washington, DC judge – Douglas did not receive an expected presidential appointment to West Point upon his high school graduation in 1897. Undiscouraged, he committed himself to a course of rigorous study and attained admission by competitive examination a year later.

In the beginning, life at the United States Military Academy was not easy for Cadet Douglas MacArthur. The prominence of his surname attracted the enmity of envious upperclassmen, while the constant attention of MacArthur's overprotective mother only made things worse. With her husband dispatched to the Philippines to put down the insurrection led by Emilio Aguinaldo, Pinky MacArthur took up lodgings in a hotel within sight of her beloved Douglas's billet and was soon a conspicuous presence on the West Point campus. As a result, young MacArthur (as well as fellow plebe Ulysses S. Grant, III) was targeted for particularly savage hazing during his West Point initiation. The experience, however, ultimately turned to MacArthur's advantage, as he gained the esteem of the cadet corps when he respectfully but firmly declined to identify his tormentors during ensuing Congressional hearings into the death of a classmate subjected to similar treatment.⁴ Thereafter, his academic brilliance, leadership abilities, and engaging personality made MacArthur a big man on campus at West Point.

Despite the demands of the classroom and drill field, MacArthur had not lost his desire to engage in athletics. Although football was probably his first love, Doug's spare (5'11" but barely 140 pounds) physique made him unsuited for the brutal flying wedge-style of gridiron play then in vogue at the college level. Instead, he turned to baseball. Although it would always play second fiddle to football, the West Point baseball program had recently received a boost – the attention generated by a challenge from "our friends, the enemy" at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis. Although the Cadets had put a team on the diamond since 1890,⁵ the student-directed operation of yore would have to

be upgraded if the team was to beat the likes of Navy. To that end, the Cadets engaged New York Giants player/manager George Davis to “coach the team in batting” during February and March 1901. Davis’s “work was most successful ... (and) upon his advice, Mr. Charles Irvine was secured to stay with the team for the month preceding the Navy game.”⁶ Coach Irvine was, in fact, Charles Irving Davis, George’s younger brother and himself a standout semi-pro shortstop.⁷ Irvine was impressed by MacArthur and installed him in the West Point outfield, while often batting him second in the lineup. By all accounts, MacArthur remained weak with the bat. Nevertheless, he was often an offensive spark. As described by second baseman/team captain Stephen Abbot, “Dauntless Doug” (as teammates called him) “was a heady player. He was far from brilliant, but somehow he could manage to get on first. He’d outfox the pitchers, draw a base on

balls ... or run out a bunt – and he’d be on first” for the meat of the order to drive in.⁸

The 1901 West Point season got off to an auspicious start, with drubbings of Hamilton College (14-4), Vermont (16-0), Rutgers (10-1), and Riverview Military Academy (8-4), before Lehigh administered a dose of like medicine, routing the Cadets 20-6. A 6-6 tie with NYU on May 15, then set the stage for the all-important clash with Navy. On the of May 17, the Army team, under the supervision of its faculty representative, 1st Lt. Leon B. Kromer, arrived in Baltimore to rest the night before journeying on to Annapolis. At 2:30 pm the following day, the game began with Navy (its record then standing at 4-2) batting first. As he took his defensive post in left field, MacArthur got a good-natured roasting from a grandstand full of Midshipmen, who serenaded him with a ditty that ended: “Are you the Governor General or a hobo? Who is the



The 1901 West Point Baseball Team. Outfielder Douglas MacArthur is seated in the second row, far right. Coach Charles Irvine (Davis) is standing in center, wearing a straw hat.

boss of this show – you or Emilio Aguinaldo?”⁹ With two out in the first, Navy’s James Reed doubled down the left field line, but MacArthur returned the ball safely to the infield and the Cadets emerged unscathed when the frame ended with a groundout. The Cadets also went scoreless in their first at-bat, with MacArthur striking out.

Navy broke the scoring seal with a tally in the third, but the Cadets promptly responded with a three-run outburst, in which MacArthur played a small but crucial role. With two men on and no outs, Dauntless Doug coaxed a walk from Navy pitcher Webb Raudenbush to load the bases. The first Army run scored on a fly to right, with the other base runners also tagging up and advancing a base. They kept running when the throw home sailed over the head of the Navy catcher, allowing the second Army base runner to score, with MacArthur moving to third on the overthrow. A single by Army shortstop John Herr later plated MacArthur, giving the Cadets a 3-to-1 lead which they would never relinquish. MacArthur was ineffectual in his final two plate appearances, striking out in the fifth and popping up a sacrifice bunt try three innings later. Meanwhile, the Cadets tacked on another run, and then withstood a two-run ninth inning Navy rally to post a 4-to-3 victory.¹⁰ For the remainder of his life, the inaugural clash between the two service academies would be remembered fondly by MacArthur. More than sixty years after that historic Army win, he wrote that the game “will always stand out as one of my happiest memories.”¹¹

The Cadets followed up their Navy triumph with a 12-2 pasting of the New York Normal School, but fell to a 7th New York Regiment team 7-2 in their season finale. All in all, the 6-2-1 season was deemed a success, with Lt. Kromer commending “the excellent spirit of the squad and the able coaching of Mr. Davis and Mr. Irvine” in his report to the Officers’ Athletic Association.¹² For the 1901 season as a whole, left fielder MacArthur batted a team-low .266, and his defensive play was apparently shaky.¹³ Still, MacArthur was one of only nine team members awarded a varsity “A” at season’s end.

From that day until the end, he would flaunt it proudly, no matter how high or dignified the station that he rose to.¹⁴

The 1902 season was a disappointment for both Douglas MacArthur and the West Point baseball team. Although the surviving evidence is fragmentary, the available box scores suggest that MacArthur saw little game action during the campaign, his spot in the outfield taken by more gifted players. MacArthur did not appear in the Cadets 7-2 defeat of the 7th New York Regiment nine on May 30, or in the 15-4 loss to Yale on June 10, 1902. He did get into the pivotal May 17 game against arch-rival Navy, but only as a late-inning replacement for an injured teammate.¹⁵ Notwithstanding an overall 10-6 log, the Cadets’ 5-to-3 loss to the Midshipmen rendered the 1902 West Point season a failure, as sourly noted in the commentary of the faculty baseball representative (1st Lt. T. A. Roberts) in the Annual Report of the AOAA.¹⁶ In Roberts’s estimation, the “weak point in the cadet team was, as always, the batting.” The team also suffered from coaching that “was not, on the whole, satisfactory,” as Coach Irvine (Davis) “appeared to lose his hold on the men” at mid-season.¹⁷ Roberts’s opinion, however, was evidently not that of the West Point players, who presented Coach Irvine with a meerschaum pipe as a token of their appreciation. Although he was not the team captain, MacArthur, the man closest on the team to Irvine, made the presentation.¹⁸

Although he had another year of athletic eligibility remaining, MacArthur did not go out for the baseball team in 1903. According to biographer William Manchester, MacArthur “gave up baseball in his last year so that he could hit the books harder,”¹⁹ an assertion difficult to reconcile with MacArthur’s service as student manager of the West Point football team that school year. More likely causes of his separation from the diamond include the loss of playing time in 1902, the termination of his friend Charles Irvine (Davis) as Army baseball coach at 1902 season’s end, and, perhaps, wounded pride. In any event, the premature end of his baseball career did little to dim the luster of MacArthur’s

stay at West Point. Valedictorian of his class and first captain of the cadet corps, a brilliant, albeit controversial, military career lay before the erstwhile Cadet outfielder.

Bill Lamb of Meredith, New Hampshire is the editor of The Inside Game.

1. MacArthur "wore long bathrobes of West Point gray with a huge dark blue A embroidered on the left breast" with such regularity that the these "terry towel reminders of athletic glory days" had to be replaced every two years. Perret, Gregory, *Old Soldiers Never Die: The Life of Douglas MacArthur* (Random House: New York, 1996), 39.
2. As per Manchester, William, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1964* (McGraw-Hill: New York, 1978), 45.
3. Arthur MacArthur, Jr., and Douglas MacArthur remain the only father-and-son to receive the Medal of Honor.
4. Internal proceedings conducted by the War Department led to the dismissal of five West Point upperclassmen and the curtailment of overly physical hazing rituals.
5. In 1868, a group of summer cruising Midshipmen had apparently engaged a Cadet nine in an informal baseball game. See Crane, John and James F. Kieley, *West Point* (McGraw-Hill: New York, 1947), 153. But West Point baseball records commence in 1890, when the self-coached Cadets posted a 2-0-1 log against local competition.
6. *Report of the Army Officers' Athletic Association for the Year 1901*, 22.
7. According to his son, Lt. Col. Charles I. Davis, Jr., USAF, retired, Charles Davis adopted the coaching pseudonym *Irvine* so as not to be seen as trading upon the renown of his brother George. Letter of Cohoes, New York town historian Walter Lipka to the writer, December 11, 2000.
8. Hunt, Frazier, *The Untold Story of Douglas MacArthur* (Devin-Adair: New York, 1954), 30.
9. As recalled by MacArthur in *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 26.
10. For a fuller account of the game, complete with box score, see Huber, Mike and Jack Picciuto, "The First Army-Navy Baseball Game," *Base Ball, A Journal of the Early Game*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 2007, 96-102.
11. MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 27.
12. *1901 AOAA Annual Report*, 24.
13. The .571 fielding percentage assigned MacArthur by the 1901 Annual Report is unrealistically abysmal and presumed by the writer to be an uncaught typographical error. Still, team captain Abbot described MacArthur's defensive play in the outfield as "barely adequate." Hunt, 30. Forty years after-the-fact, however, Coach Charles Davis (Irvine) gave a different assessment, informing an inquiring reporter that "General MacArthur never made a single error in two years as an outfielder under Davis's tutelage," as per an unidentified circa 1944 newspaper article provided to Cohoes town historian Lipka by Charles I. Davis, Jr.
14. From World War I battlefield trenches to the tent where the Inchon Landing was planned in 1950, MacArthur frequently presented himself to subordinates in sweaters or bath robes adorned with his varsity "A." Later in retirement at the Waldorf Towers in New York, MacArthur often greeted visitors in similar attire.
15. See the Army-Navy box score in the *Washington Post*, May 18, 1902.
16. *1902 AOAA Report*, 33.
17. *Ibid.*
18. As recalled by Charles (Irvine) Davis in the unidentified circa 1944 newspaper article noted above.
19. Manchester, 54.



Youngstown Vindicator, June 9, 1913

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CHICK STAHL: RAINBOW IN THE DARK

by **Dennis Auger**

The March 1907 suicide of popular Boston player-manager Chick Stahl is a matter shrouded in misunderstanding. More than 50 years after the fact, author Al Stump asserted that Stahl's death was prompted by the blackmail threats of a designing woman supposedly carrying Stahl's unborn child. Since then, baseball historians have uncritically accepted the Stump claim. This essay presents an alternative theory, and one, unlike Stump's, supported by evidence in the historical record. Chick Stahl's suicide was the end product of longstanding, chronic depression, a thesis that I first offered in *Mysteries from Baseball's Past* (McFarland, 2010). The text below provides additional support for that contention and can be viewed as a supplement to my previous commentary in *Mysteries*.

Charles Stahl was born on January 10, 1873 in Avilla, Indiana, but Fort Wayne was considered his hometown. His parents were devout Roman Catholics of German heritage. Chick became a member of the Boston Beaneaters in 1897. How does one assess his major league career (1897-1906)? A perspective can be gained by comparing him to Thurman Munson (1969-1979). Significant parallels exist in terms of length of career, offensive statistics, and defensive abilities. These two Midwesterners were not the greatest ballplayers of their respective eras but they were certainly in the top echelon. Lastly, their untimely deaths cut their careers short and probably prevented them from accumulating the numbers required to be enshrined in the Hall of Fame.

In 1901, Chick jumped to the American League. The Boston Americans franchise was a successful one, winning the World Series in 1903 and repeating as league champions in 1904. The team's fortunes then took a precipitous fall. The 1906 club was ravaged by poor play and dissension, highlighted when player-manager Jimmy Collins went AWOL. Stahl took over the

managerial reigns but the team finished with 105 losses.

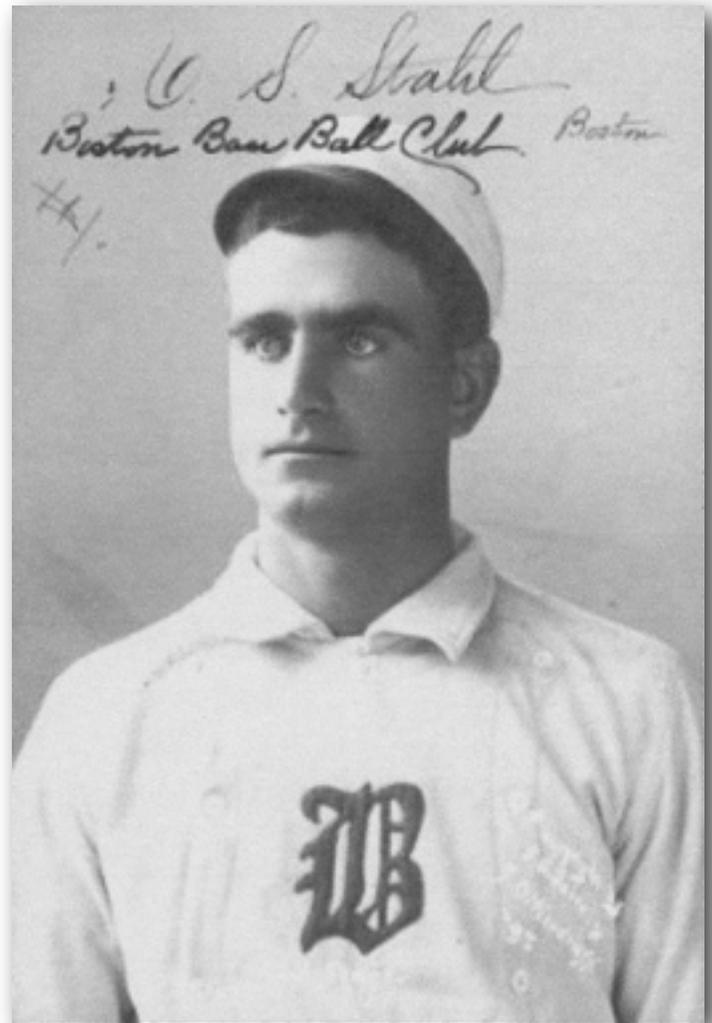
Two significant events occurred in Stahl's life in November 1906. Stahl was a practicing Catholic and he met Julia Harmon at a church function. They were married at St. Francis De Sales Church in Roxbury, Massachusetts. Following the honeymoon, the thirty-three old "benedict" agreed to be Boston's player-manager. Little Rock, Arkansas was the site of spring training in 1907. As the team moved north, Stahl abruptly resigned as manager on March 25 in Louisville. The Americans arrived at West Baden Springs, Indiana two days later and the Hoosier native agreed to continue as interim manager until a replacement was selected. That evening he wired a telegram to Julia which read, "Cheer up little girl and be happy. I am alright now and able to play the game of my life." His activities the next day, March 28, began innocently enough — he had breakfast and checked the playing field conditions. Returning to his suite, Stahl drank four ounces of carbolic acid and suffered an excruciating death. His last words were, "Boys, I couldn't help it, it drove me to it." Because the death was ruled a suicide, a Catholic funeral service was prohibited. Fraternal societies performed the funeral rites which were attended by several thousand mourners.

At this point, I digress for a paragraph, but there is a *raison d'être*. As a member of Notre Dame's "subway alumni," I truly appreciated the football team's renaissance in 2012. An essential component of the season was how linebacker and team captain Manti Te'o dealt with personal tragedy. Then the tragedy saga was exposed as untrue. In the aftermath, Todd Burlage in *Blue & Gold Illustrated* took himself and media outlets to task for erroneous journalism and "factual failure." He pointed out that the reported facts, many of them conflicting, could have been checked but were not, and concluded that the Te'o portrayal was "based on a faulty herd mentality that if it's in print or on the Internet, it's gotta be true." Enthralled by this emotionally powerful story, I, too, failed as a Te'o fact-checker and did not think of questioning the original story's veracity. It is a journalistic trap

one can easily fall into. Why interject this anecdote here? In my opinion, the published word about Stahl's suicide suffers the same problems as the Te'o debacle. To rectify this, providing historical accuracy regarding the Stahl demise must be the paramount objective.

Why did Stahl commit suicide? The prevalent view is that it was the result of being blackmailed. Several prominent authors have advocated or given credence to this theory, and it has become accepted as fact in much of the national pastime's literature. What follows is a chronological presentation of the blackmail story by date of publication. Al Stump was the first writer to promulgate the theory, originally in the May 1959 issue of *True Magazine*. He repeated it later that year in the September issue of *Baseball Digest* in an article captioned "Baseball's Biggest Headache: Dames." According to Stump, when Stahl was at West Baden, "he had a visitor from his past. She was a doxie he'd known casually and inconclusively in Chicago months earlier. Now claiming pregnancy, she demanded money and marriage — or disclosure and scandal. Stahl's pleas couldn't quiet her." So he committed suicide. In 1971, Harold Seymour wrote that "there is reason to believe that a woman who asserted she was his pregnant wife hounded Chick Stahl into ... committing suicide." David Quentin Voigt (1983) later reported that "baseball Sadies sometimes blackmailed those who enjoyed their favors." Stahl was "distraught over fear of exposure" and killed himself.

The next contributor was Glenn Stout who discussed the suicide in an article entitled "The Manager's End Game" (1986 and 1991). Stout stated that "Chick Stahl was driven to his death by the specter of scandal initiated by a women (*sic*) who was not Mrs. Stahl. She was a 'baseball Sadie' (i.e., a groupie). ...While the Americans played in Chicago late in the 1906 season Stahl ... had a brief affair with an anonymous woman who is said to have made a habit of sharing her bed with ballplayers ... She first contacted Stahl during the Americans' stay in Little Rock in early March. Her demands were simple: either he would agree to marry her or she would tell the world about the expected child." Stout cited



Chick Stahl

Frederick O'Connell, a baseball correspondent in 1907, to support the blackmail story. O'Connell had written that "a great trouble was generally admitted" and "many knew the cause" of the [Stahl] suicide." Stout also stated that "the basic ingredients of the story are generally accepted. Two of baseball's most noted historians, Harold Seymour and David Voigt, refer to the sad tale in their multi-volume histories." In addition, Floyd Conner (2000), Bill James (2001), Derek Gentile (2003), and John Snyder (2006) all reiterated the same story. Peter Golenbock (2005) quoted Stout as follows: "Seymour and Al Stump wrote a story that he killed himself because of a baseball Annie. Supposedly, he had had a relationship with a woman in Chicago the previous year. What happened is that she got pregnant ... she started to blackmail him." So he killed himself.

What is the purpose of such an extensive listing here? It is to demonstrate the popularity of the blackmail story and to show that it has become ensconced in baseball annals. The other reason is based in scholastic discourse. According to Thomas Aquinas, it is imperative to present an opposing argument clearly and fairly because only in this way can one judge the argument's merits. As I see no value in misrepresenting the writings of others, I have taken much effort to cite the above authors accurately. Their words will now be examined.

As previously noted, Stump is the original proponent of the blackmail theory, unveiling it 52 years after the event. His *Baseball Digest* article contained over eighty paragraphs, but devoted less than an entire one to the alleged incident. Stump related the story without providing any documentation or sources. Where did he derive his information about the woman? That she was a doxie? That she lived in Chicago? That she was pregnant? That Stahl knew her casually? That the ballplayer pleaded with her because she threatened blackmail? Stump never identified how, where, and when he obtained such specific information to back up his allegations. In short, he failed to abide by the basic principles of historical research.

Seymour's "there is reason to believe" certainly does not meet the criteria of proof, either. Researcher Chris Christensen states that the noted historian's papers at Cornell University "revealed no trace of information concerning Chick Stahl." As for Voigt's documentation, he simply refers to Stump's article. Concerning Stout's version, it is fair for a reader to ask: From whence do the details come? An expression such as "a great trouble" is open to a plethora of interpretations. Lastly, invoking the undocumented writings of Stump, Seymour, and Voigt and employing the word "supposedly" does not prove the theory in question.

So why has the blackmail story become embedded in baseball's history? It is because many well respected historians have reported it as fact, the absence of supporting evidence notwithstanding. A well-founded journalistic

standard is that two independent sources are required to verify an investigative story prior to publication. The Apostle Paul, well versed in Jewish and Roman law, wrote that "a judicial fact shall be established only on the testimony of two or three witnesses." Is it not right to ask who are the witnesses or sources behind the blackmail story that make it factual, i.e., an actual occurrence? In conclusion, as stated in my *Mysteries* article, "the blackmail proponents fail to provide documentation and identifiable sources confirming the veracity of the theory in question. They have never been able to specify a named or unnamed source" that proves or corroborates even one detail of the alleged blackmail incident. The blackmail allegation resembles a house of cards that collapses under analytical scrutiny.

Based upon my research of the Stahl suicide, I have come to the conclusion that Al Stump is responsible for the blackmail story. He is the source upon whom all the others rely, and the author most often referred to in terms of confirming what happened. The post-Stump writers do not identify any sources substantiating their viewpoint, other than Stump. So who was Al Stump? I refer readers to William Cobb's award winning article "The Georgia Peach: Stumped by the Storyteller" in the 2010 issue of *The National Pastime*. Cobb concluded that Stump "is a proven liar, proven forger, likely thief and certainly a provocateur who created, fabricated and sensationalized stories of the *True Magazine* ilk." Well researched evidence is provided by Cobb for these statements. As William Cobb's purpose was to debunk some of Stump's allegations about Ty Cobb, he did not address Stump's assertions about the Stahl's suicide. But given the exposure of Stump's fabrications about Ty Cobb, one cannot avoid this question: how credible is the Stump blackmail story? Do historians want to rely on an author who offers no documentation and has questionable reliability?

Speaking personally, I was once an adherent of the blackmail story. But the documentation issue, combined with a one-page article written by SABR member Dick Thompson in 1999,

changed my mind. Thompson discovered an extensive article on the Stahl suicide which had appeared in the March 30, 1907 edition of the *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*. The article headline and sub-headlines read as follows: "Meditated Self-Slaying, Chick Stahl Had Often Talked About Suicide; Base Ball Player Had Entertained Dangerous Ideas About Self-Destruction." Stahl had longstanding roots in Fort Wayne and the newspaper account reported that his closest friends were not shocked by his demise. The *Journal-Gazette* reporter interviewed a city official who had been friends with Stahl since boyhood. The official related that "Chick talked about killing himself several times when he was discouraged about his affairs." On one occasion, the official heard Stahl say to the barber shaving him, "If you would just push that blade in and cut my head about half off, so I would never feel it, I'd be rid of my troubles." According to this lifelong friend, that incident occurred five years previous, "but more than once before that time and more than once afterwards he [Stahl] was heard to say things that indicated a suicidal tendency." Such suicidal ideation was present throughout adulthood. When he was playing amateur ball (approximate age: 17), Chick "had periods of mental depression and when the future looked dark he used to talk about taking his own life. Sometimes the slightest disappointment would sink him into almost a stupor of depression, and on these occasions his teammates and manager used to fear that he had designs on his own life."

The *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette* account adds other dimensions to this beloved player's personality profile. Stahl was struggling emotionally with the fact that his best years as a player were behind him and he feared "the down grade" to the minors. Also, "the realization by himself that he could not manage a team preyed on his mind ... He had a horror of having to appear before an audience in the role of one who outlived his usefulness." Even though Stahl often seemed jovial, "there was ever in his ready laughter a sort of half-repressed melancholy ... there could be seen something in his demeanor that told that his jollity was forced." Besides the

Journal-Gazette account, *Sporting Life* reported that Washington players had observed this same Stahl melancholy in 1906, and this was prior to the alleged September liaison in Chicago. Based on the above symptoms and history, Stahl would clearly be diagnosed with clinical depression.

Attention also needs to be paid to Chick's religious faith. He was a devout Catholic, a fact attested to by various sources, including Frederick O'Connell who on March 31, 1907 wrote: "Stahl never forgot his religious duties during the baseball season. Only a week ago last Sunday, Stahl did his Easter duty in Little Rock. He never missed mass if it was possible for him to attend." In Stahl's day, fulfilling the Easter obligation was a bedrock tenet of Catholicism, on par with keeping the Ten Commandments.

My commentary now enters the theological realm. What if the illicit sexual liaisons are someday proven? Will that negate the view that depression was the cause of the Stahl suicide? My answer is No. In analyzing the question, I would like to incorporate what it was it like to be a practicing Catholic during the two centuries prior to the Second Vatican Council of 1962-1965. One defining trait of Catholic morality was that it was permeated by Jansenism which was an ultra-rigid spirituality, especially ingrained in those of Irish, French, and German heritage. Special vigilance had to be taken concerning sexual sins. For example, taking pleasure in a sexual thought was a mortal sin that would result in eternal damnation if not confessed and repented. To explore this, an appeal will be made to an unorthodox and lapsed Catholic theologian — George Carlin! In his routine "I Used to be Irish Catholic/The Confessional," the comedian highlights how easy it is to commit a mortal sin by giving two examples. First, it all comes down to intention, "so if your intention is to go to 42nd Street and commit a mortal sin, save your carfare, you already did it!" Thereafter, Carlin focuses on sexual morality. Concerning foreplay (edited), "it was a sin to want to feel up Ellen, a sin to plan it, a sin to think of a place, a sin to take her to the place, a sin to try to, and a sin to do it. Six sins in one feel!" If you are over age 60 and raised

Catholic, you might be able to resonate with this. Despite being humorous, Carlin offers a valuable insight into the mores of a past era. The avoidance of committing a mortal sin was no easy task for any person, but for a man like Stahl suffering from depression, the burden would be even greater. It cannot be known if Chick was encumbered by the weight of Jansenistic morality. However, if he was and if the allegations about promiscuity are true, the guilt that he suffered would be one more contributing factor contributing to his self-destruction.

There is another area to reflect upon when examining Stahl's faith and Catholic teaching. The Church imposed a strict moral code, and not only in sexual matters. It also emphasized that God's mercy was infinite. That being so, what was the unforgiveable sin? It was suicide, viewed as the irrevocable rejection of God, the source of all life and the dispenser of forgiveness to all who seek it. The Church condemnation of suicide would have been well understood by a practicing Catholic like Chick Stahl. Thus, only something as debilitating as severe mental depression was likely capable of reducing Stahl to the state where he would commit Catholicism's unpardonable sin and thereby place his immortal soul in peril.

Based on superficial portrayals, Stahl can be seen as a narcissistic womanizer. But what kind of character did he really possess? Chick was frugal and a wise investor in real estate. He was generous to his family, purchasing a home for his mother and helping a brother start a business. As a ballplayer, he refrained from "rowdiness." On one occasion, he and teammate Ted "Parson" Lewis escorted an umpire off the field when the crowd threatened harm. At a time when racism was prevalent, Stahl appeared in a photo with young black children in Deep South Macon, Georgia. Chick's concern for others was exemplified when he discussed his managerial stress, "Releasing players grated on my nerves ... it made me sick at heart." His teammates clarify the profile. Cy Young reflected that "players may come and go, but there are few Chick Stahls." Lou Criger gave this testimonial: "He was the squarest man I ever knew. He had only one fault

— he was too generous. He was often bunkoed because he believed in the goodness of all mankind." At the Stahl funeral, Congressman James Robinson offered the eulogy and said that "our brother loved his fellow-men and believed that the pinnacle of ambition was reached when he did his duty to all. ... He squared his conduct to the Golden Rule."

A researcher, including myself, must be willing to incorporate new discoveries and insights into any analysis. This can result in modifying or even changing one's conclusion. Based on the evidence, sources, and documentation available, my present view is that the primary and underlying reason for Stahl's suicide was his lifelong battle with depression. Managerial stress, fear of declining athletic ability, the alleged sexual liaison, and the perfectionism arising from his religious belief and accompanying guilt would all be contributing factors exacerbating his depression resulting in his act of desperation. In conclusion, the lyrics of heavy metal vocalist Ronnie Dio seem apt:

Do your demons ever let you go,
do they hide deep inside

No sign of the morning coming,
no sign of the day

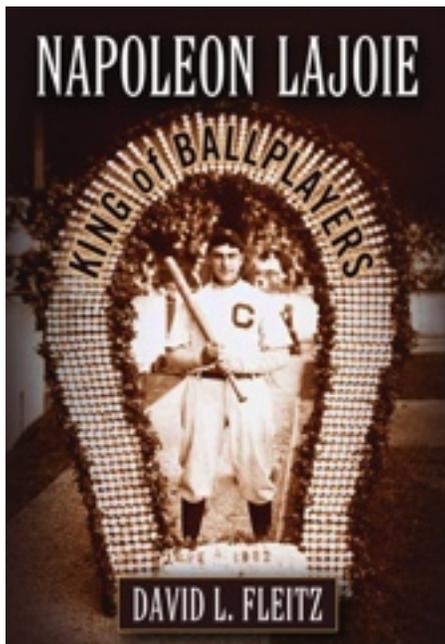
You have been left on your own
like a rainbow in the dark

You are a rainbow in the dark.

Charles Stahl's goodness, virtues, faith, and talents are symbolized by the rainbow while the darkness represents his depression and internal turmoil. On March 28, 1907, the beauty of the rainbow was eclipsed by the darkness.

Deadball Era Committee member Dennis Auger of Uxbridge, Massachusetts is also the author of the BioProject profile of Chick Stahl.





**NAPOLEON LAJOIE:
KING OF
BALLPLAYERS
BY DAVID L. FLEITZ**

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McFarland & Company
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Softcover]

Reviewed by
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Although baseball historians have ranked Napoleon Lajoie as one of the best baseball players of all time, no full-length biography has been written about him until now. David Fleitz, the author of eight well-received books on baseball, summarizes the greatness of Lajoie as follows: “[N]o one can deny that Lajoie, who played major league baseball from 1896 to 1916, was one of the greatest stars in the history of the game.

Newspapers of the era referred to him as the ‘King of Ballplayers,’ and it is not an exaggeration to say that his arrival in Cleveland in 1902 saved American League baseball in the city. He was so popular in Cleveland that in 1903, when a local newspaper held a contest to find a new nickname for the club, the fans voted to call the team the Napoleons, quickly shortened to Naps,” (p. 1).

Fleitz carefully relates the events that caused Lajoie to leave the Philadelphia Phillies in 1901 and jump to the new American League. Lajoie argued with the ownership of the Philadelphia club over his salary, insisting that there was a verbal understanding that he would be paid the same as Ed Delahanty. Shortly after signing his contract, Lajoie discovered that Delahanty was paid more, and he lost trust in the Phillies ownership. After the season, Lajoie was easily persuaded to join the Philadelphia Athletics, creating legal disputes that lasted for two years. The Phillies contested his leaving and a year later, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court declared his contract with the Athletics invalid. Lajoie chose to disobey the decision of the court, becoming a free agent at the height of his career. In 1902, he signed with Cleveland and played there through 1914, serving as player-manager from 1905 through 1909.

The book is replete with accounts of Lajoie’s offensive

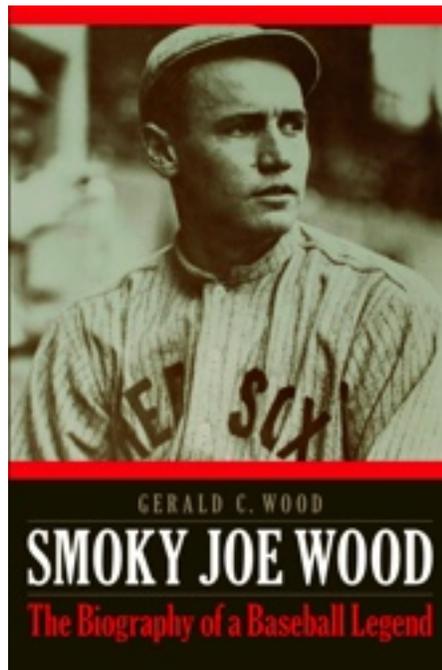
and defensive greatness. He became a superstar, winning batting titles in 1901, 1903, and 1904. He would have won the batting title in 1905, but due to an injury he did not qualify, having too few at bats. In 1906, he finished in second place by three points. He won the batting title again in 1910, although Ty Cobb was erroneously awarded that honor. That batting crown decision remains controversial to this day.

Napoleon Lajoie: King of Ballplayers is a study of leadership, including that of the Phillies owner, Colonel John Rogers. Rogers replaced Manager Bill Nash with George Stallings, supposedly “an intense, demanding disciplinarian,” (p. 24). “[Stallings’] expletive-laden tirades became the stuff of legend,” p 25. His approach did not work as a managerial style; it alienated his team. Stallings never had to deal with a Delahanty or a Lajoie. Delahanty was a “hard-drinking carouser who often found trouble away from the ballpark,” (p. 19). The great Delahanty was a bad influence on the rookie Lajoie. Rogers replaced Stallings with the easy-going and likeable Bill Shettsline who had outstanding communication and human relations skills. The team played well for him. Fleitz details Lajoie’s relations with other managers, good and bad and, finally, Lajoie’s own management style and results.

Today's management would do well requiring players to learn from Delahanty and Lajoie. Delahanty had difficulty dealing with success, money and fame, and died tragically. On the other hand, Lajoie, who as a rookie was a gullible follower of the carousing veterans, turned his life around. A major turning point in Lajoie's life was the day he showed up to a game drunk. The manager played him anyway. Lajoie embarrassed himself in front of his fans by his poor performance and errors and was suspended for four days. He adapted a wiser, moderate lifestyle and disciplined himself in all aspects of life to become the best player that he could. He did, however, more than occasionally lose his temper with umpires.

In this otherwise excellent, well-documented biography, we learn little about Lajoie's personal life or marriage except that he was married to the same woman (Myrtle Ivy Smith, nee Wallace) from 1906 until her death in 1954. The book also provides interesting photos of some of Lajoie's Hall of Fame teammates, managers, and a few well-known competitors.

Charles Chubb has been a baseball fan for his entire life. He has coached high school baseball, and umpired. He is a grandson of Elmer Flick, a Hall of Famer and teammate of Napoleon Lajoie.



**SMOKY JOE WOOD:
THE BIOGRAPHY OF A
BASEBALL LEGEND
BY GERALD C. WOOD**

*2013. Lincoln, Nebraska:
University of Nebraska Press.
[ISBN: 978-0-8032-4499-3.
440 pages. \$34.95 USD,
Hardback]*

Reviewed by
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It is difficult to imagine anyone writing a more thorough biography of Smoky Joe Wood than what Gerald C. Wood (a possible, though extremely distant relation) has produced. Despite its many good points, this book is also flawed. The first 25 pages of the book detail the life of Smoky Joe's father, John F. Wood, a fascinating character in his own right. John F. – both stubborn and eccentric – was a "lawyer and

two-time newspaper editor, as well as a politician, gold rusher, chicken farmer, wood- and metal-worker." John F. also worked as a schoolteacher (his wife was a former student) and as a land speculator. Joe always expressed pride in his father, but Gerald Wood concludes that, "Joe's defensiveness toward John masked the hurt of a boy orphaned twice by his father's lust for gold," (p. 10).

Howard Ellsworth Wood was born in October 1889, the second of three children, in Kansas City, Missouri. Wood explains how Howard Ellsworth became "Joe." While living in Chicago, the Wood family attended the World's Fair in 1893. The antics of two performing clowns (billed as "Joey and Petey") reminded Joe's parents of their two boys and they began calling them Joe and Pete.

One of this book's strengths is its attention to detail, but the author often goes overboard, swamping the reader with unnecessary facts. The Woods descended from pioneers in Orange County, New York, so Wood offers a lengthy history of the area. He also includes quite a bit on John F.'s travels near the turn of the century to the state of Washington, Alaska, and British Columbia, searching for gold. (Author Wood makes liberal use of letters John F. wrote home, part of the Wood Family Archives to which he had access.)

The book's most serious problem is Wood's insistence on mentioning every game Joe pitched and giving his pitching line and (sometimes) a little play-by-play. This excessive detail bogs down what should be a lively narrative. I found myself skimming these sections – one minor league season runs seven dense pages – or simply skipping ahead to where the story picked up again. Also, Wood offers few looks beyond Joe's performances. The reader often has no idea who else on the Red Sox is doing well (or poorly), where the team is in the standings, or what else is going on in the American and National Leagues. Also, Wood puts undue importance on Joe's win-loss record as a measure of his success, and when ERA is mentioned, it is usually only at season's end.

Joe's beginnings in professional baseball are expertly recounted. If Joe felt abandoned by his father, he found a surrogate family on the diamond. Wood writes that Joe "filled the void [left by his father] with baseball. Joe's success on the town team offered acceptance and prestige while his father roamed the Southwest, trying to get rich quick." Baseball was always a refuge for Joe. "I don't know of anything that I'd rather have done," he told one interviewer, "Baseball is all I ever wanted," (p. 310).

In 1912, the Red Sox moved from the Huntington Avenue Grounds to brand-new Fenway

Park – and Joe had the finest season of his career. He led the major leagues with 34 wins and had a 1.91 ERA (2nd best in the AL). Joe also led the league with 10 shutouts, including a 1-0 victory over Walter Johnson in a much-hyped duel in Boston on September 6. In late August, Boston Post writer Paul Shannon first used the "Smoky" nickname that would stay with Joe for the rest of his life. After Joe bested Johnson, other papers picked up the nickname.

Although supremely talented, Joe was often injured. In 1913, he sustained a sprained ankle in spring training and a fractured thumb during the season. Joe pitched with excruciating pain in 1915, likely from a torn rotator cuff. He sat out the 1916 season after being disgusted by a one-third cut in pay and the trading of his friend Tris Speaker to Cleveland. Unable to pitch and desperate to remain in the game he loved, Joe transitioned into an outfielder after the Red Sox traded him to the Indians. He finished 10th in batting average in 1918 and was among the league leaders in doubles, RBIs, and slugging percentage. In addition to playing both left and right fields, he also played 19 games at second base. Over the next two seasons, Joe platooned in the Cleveland outfield with Elmer Smith, with Joe playing against left-handers. In 1920, Cleveland overcame the shock of Ray Chapman's mid-August death to win the pennant and

defeat the Brooklyn Dodgers in the World Series. Wood retired from baseball after the 1922 season to spend time with his wife and four children, and also for the security of regular, long-term employment. He accepted a coaching job at Yale University, a position he would hold until 1942.

The book offers details of the gambling and game-fixing scandal that enveloped Joe in 1926. In the spring of that year, Dutch Leonard told AL president Ban Johnson that Joe had conspired with Speaker and Ty Cobb to bet on and fix a Tigers-Indians game late in the 1919 season. Joe admitted placing a bet and collecting his winnings. Although Commissioner Landis declared the accused not guilty of fixing a game, he was completely silent on the betting issue.

The "Legend and Legacy" chapter offers an excellent overview of Joe's career, along with his thoughts on all aspects of the game and its history. This is the type of entertaining recap that was sorely needed in other sections of the book. Author Gerald Wood also includes a bit of trivia: Joe and Babe Ruth are the only players to have 300 innings pitched one year and 500 at-bats in another. They are also the only two players to start a World Series game as both a pitcher and an outfielder.

Allan Wood is the author of Babe Ruth and the 1918 Red Sox (2001).



**THE CRACKER JACK
COLLECTION:
BASEBALL'S PRIZED
PLAYERS**

**BY TOM ZAPPALA &
ELLEN ZAPPALA, WITH
JOHN MOLORI & JIM
DAVIS**

*2013. Portsmouth, NH:
Peter E. Randall*

*[ISBN: 978-1-931807-24-1.
177 pages. \$30.00 USD,
Hardcover (10" X 12")]*

Reviewed by

Mark S. Sternman
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Baseball cards can unite baseball fanatics and novices alike. As a child, I devoured *The Great American Baseball Card Flipping, Trading and Bubble Gum Book*. *The Cracker Jack Collection*, a beautiful-looking volume, charmed my step-daughter with its colorful reproductions. Outside of rendering the occasionally appropriate cutting judgment of scoundrels

like Hal Chase and Chick Gandil, the *Cracker Jack Collection* does not realize the potential of its pretty portraiture. It is undone by egregious errors (like a reference to “Alex [sic] Pujols”), cringe-worthy phrases, lazy writing, and failures both to comment on the fronts of the cards and show any images at all of their reverse sides.

The Introduction calls those who played in the days just before World War I “the founding fathers of our National Pastime.” Our Nineteenth Century Committee friends would doubtless dispute that claim, reflected similarly on the page featuring Eddie Collins, the first AL player to steal 80 bases in a season, but hardly the first Major League players to do so as the authors assert.

The section on Collins serves as a microcosm of the book. Besides overlooking the first quarter-century of the National League, the authors credit Collins with playing on the Philadelphia A’s 1929 and 1930 championship squads, thereby overlooking the fact that he merely pinch-hit a dozen times over those two seasons. They also write that he was “one of the original 13 players to be elected to the Hall of Fame in 1939,” when only ten were inducted that year, the Hall’s fourth rather than first class. The text on Collins comments on neither why he glowers in his picture nor why he wears Philadelphia garb, but

identifies him as playing for Chicago. Joe Orlando, in his otherwise informative but brief concluding chapter comparing the 1914 and 1915 sets, writes about the two 1914 Rollie Zeider cards, but neglects to note that Zeider wears a Federal League uniform in one and an American League top in the other.

A number of the player poses demand speculation, but get none. Nap Rucker bows with his arms at his knees, leading one to wonder whether he began his wind-up that peculiarly. The Jeff Tesreau card shows him holding a bat; the text rightly focuses on his more prominent pitching career but, as with Rucker, leaves the oddity of the image unmentioned.

Egregious errors include characterizing Ty Cobb as “[p]robably the most gifted athlete of the early twentieth century,” overlooking Jim Thorpe, and claiming on page 28 that Babe Ruth rather than Stuffie McInnis unseated Dick Hoblitzell at first base for the 1918 Red Sox. That might seem like a misdemeanor -- if page 24 had not featured a graphic treatment of McInnis. The authors also write that a solid but hardly standout player like Ed Konetchy “dominated in the majors,” thereby grossly exaggerating his accomplishments. In addition, they include Butch Schmidt with Johnny Evers and Rabbit Maranville as “part of the best middle infield in baseball,”

thus revealing terminological ignorance.

The errors sting, but the phrases scar, especially those ending the player profiles. It is almost as if someone urged the authors to unload their lamest puns here. A quartet of the worst examples follow, evenly split between the two leagues: (1) "This Rabbit [Maranville] surely enjoyed a 24-'carrot' gold career"; (2) "Three days before the World Series in 1949 Wildfire Schulte's flame went out permanently"; (3) "[Wally] Schang proudly wore that number eight, which in no coincidence, rhymes with great," and (4) "I guess you could say that this was one [Bob] Groom who was also a bridesmaid."

For such creative word-players, the authors strangely and proximately use the same banal phrases. Readers learn that Gavvy Cravath was "an excellent outfielder," (p. 74), the identical phrase used to describe Sam Crawford on page 75. Catcher "Bert Whaling's defensive numbers are pretty good," (p. 110). Two sentences later, we read, "As catchers go, "Art 'Dutch' Wilson was pretty good." Wilson played with hurler Al

Demaree and must have had something in common heretofore lost to history since "[a]s pitchers go, Al Demaree was pretty good," (p. 126). As writing goes, these meaningless descriptions are, alas, typical of the text and worse than pretty bad.

The Deadball Era research interests of Mark S. Sternman include Johnny Evers, Fred Tenney, and the 1914 Boston Braves.



THE BASEBALL INDEX

The Baseball Index is an invaluable tool for baseball researchers. In essence, *TBI* is a free catalog of baseball literature, encompassing books, magazine articles, pamphlets, films, recordings, advertisements, and just about anything else published about the game, from the familiar to the obscure. At present, more than 243,000 baseball-related items have been cataloged. Bear in mind, however, that *TBI*, as an index to baseball literature, serves only as a guide to what has been published. It does not provide the actual text to what is sourced in the catalog. It simply tells you where matters of interest can be located. *TBI* is easy to search. Just go to *The Baseball Index* tab on the SABR website and then type in the person or topic that you are interested in. *TBI* will then provide all the book, magazine article, etc., citations for that person/topic that it has cataloged.

The Baseball Index is an ongoing project of the Bibliography Committee. Those wishing to contribute to the project or otherwise interested in learning more about *TBI* are invited to contact committee chairman Andy McCue via agmccue44@earthlink.net.

A personal postscript. Although a SABR member for more than 20 years, I was long unaware of *TBI*'s existence. But for the past three years or so, I have routinely consulted *TBI* whenever starting a new research project and have found it to be a great help. If you have not used *TBI*, I urge you to give it a try.

Bill Lamb, Editor

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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

continued from page 1

in pursuing original research should devote their attention:

Rick Huhn, author of *Eddie Collins: A Baseball Biography*:

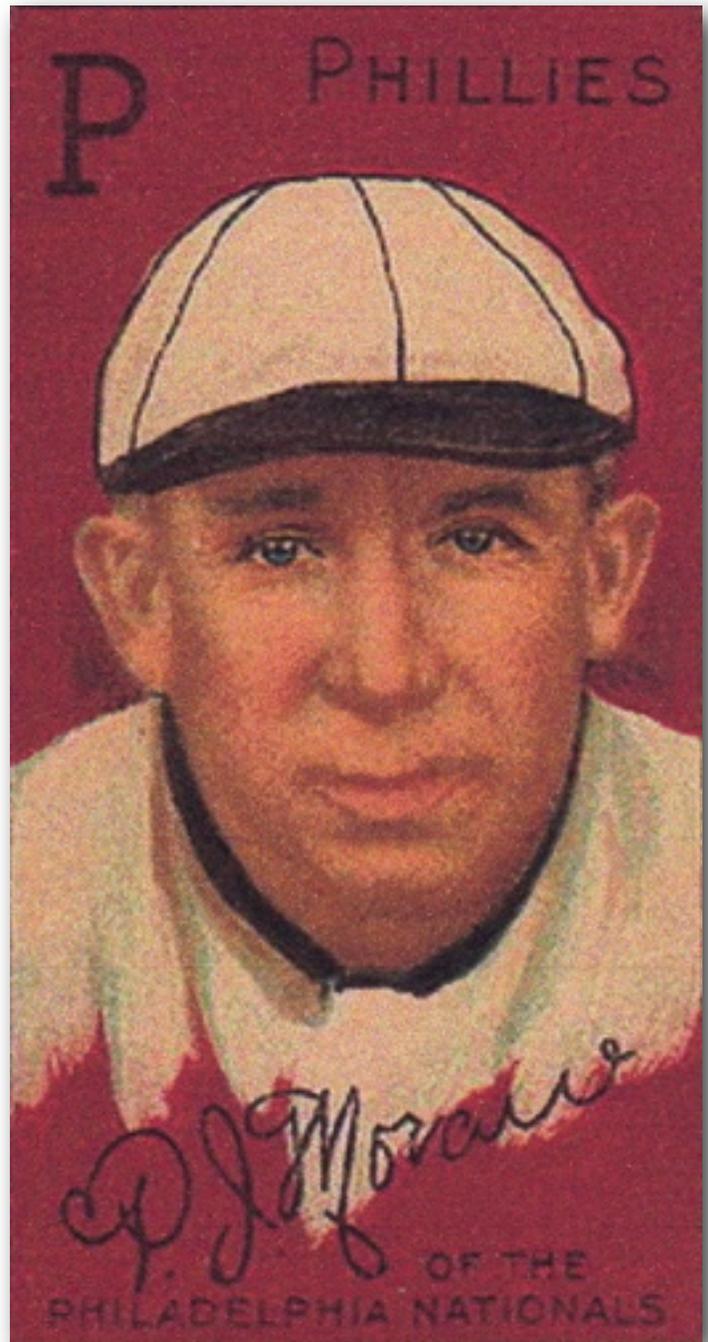
“To the casual observer, the history of the Deadball Era might seem to be a field well plowed. This is certainly not the case. There is still much to be discovered, analyzed and, in some cases, reanalyzed.

“One subject that begs additional attention is the Deadball Era manager. While the background and managerial careers of the two giants of the Era, John McGraw and Connie Mack, have been well covered, that is not the case with countless others. A few that come immediately to mind are Lee Fohl, Pants Rowland and Pat Moran. What made these men managerial material? Why did they succeed or fail? An offshoot is the employment of the player/manager. An in-depth study would provide the opportunity to take a closer look at the likes of Fielder Jones, Red Doin, Jimmy McAleer and more. How, for example, was each player/manager's on field and off field performance affected by his dual role?

“A totally different topic involves the compilation and study of the various poems about the game—often in the form of a limerick—which appeared so frequently on the sports pages of newspapers nationwide during the Era. They afford an amusing or at times sarcastic take on the baseball played during the Era, as well as an opportunity to identify and study the terrific writers who covered the sport. This topic might also be of interest to both the Baseball and the Arts and Baseball and the Media research committees of SABR.”

R.J. Lesch, longtime member of the Deadball Era Committee, who is working to finish a book on the 1911-13 New York Giants:

“The two most important contributions possible for Deadball Era research would be to complete the Retrosheet play-by-play accounts for the era



Pat Moran

and to fill the gaps on minor-league rosters and statistics. Right now, it is still a challenge to piece together a player's career based on existing online records. It is also still challenging to compare Deadball Era players to those of other eras. The gaps are closing rapidly, though. The records will never be perfect and complete, but they'll improve to the point where we can answer questions we can't answer today.

“Other intriguing areas of study:

- Relationships between clubs and leagues. Branch Rickey did not invent the modern farm system; major and minor leagues and clubs had many informal relationships, which evolved into the formal structures we have today. I think we can learn a good deal about the development of the game during the Deadball Era and afterward by understanding these relationships better.
- Economic impacts. In any period, events in the outside world impinge upon baseball, but with the exceptions of major wars, we usually don't pay much attention. For the Deadball Era, the Panic of 1907 and the 1913 recession undoubtedly had a profound impact on the economics of baseball, but few historians have said much about it.

What about the growth of workers' salaries and the increase in leisure time during the Progressive Era due to labor movements and modern industrial practices—is there a link between those processes and the growth of baseball? If so, were some regions of the U.S. and Canada affected more than others? How?

- Leagues and clubs outside of Organized Baseball. In addition to African-American ballclubs during the period (about which we still have more to learn), what about other leagues? What about the City Leagues in Chicago or St. Louis? What about the various industrial leagues in various cities? Almost every city had ballgames between the city fire departments and police departments; sometimes these sold more tickets than major-league games in the same cities. Are there stories here? What does this say about the popularity of the game at the time?”

Dan Levitt, author of *The Battle That Forged Modern Baseball: The Federal League Challenge and Its Legacy*, winner of the 2013 Ritter Award:

“The Deadball Committee and its members have produced a tremendous amount of top notch research in the last decade or so, adding significantly to our understanding of the people and the era. But the period is so rich in history that there is still plenty to explore. One area that I believe remains available for future research is Dave Fultz and his Base Ball Players Fraternity, the last players union of any significance and clout before Marvin Miller came along in the 1960s. It even received grudging recognition from the owners for a short period of time and called for a strike by the players.

“I also think research on the way players were scouted could offer interesting and useful information. There are many anecdotes of how various players were found, either as amateurs or in the minor leagues, but no systematic study that I know of on how each team found its



Dave Fultz

players—some were obviously better at this than others.

“In addition, there is room for further research on the game on the field. For example, is there pitch count information to be uncovered; how often did teams put on defensive shifts; how often did teams have fans standing along the outfield fence; what was the average time of a game; and so on.”

Norman Macht, author of *Connie Mack and the Early Years of Baseball* (winner of the 2008 Ritter Award); *Connie Mack: The Turbulent and Triumphant Years, 1915-1931*; and *Connie Mack: The Final Years* (to be published in February 2015):

“I would like to see a comprehensive study of changes in the rules—and proposals that didn't pass—complete with the discussions surrounding them, who were for and who against, and the reasons they passed or failed, including the banning of the spitter that ended the era. For example, how many people know that the foul strike rule, where foul balls were called strikes with less than two strikes on the batter, was introduced during the Deadball Era, was widely criticized, and was used in only one league for two years? The Cincinnati Base Hit came and went. The DH and interleague play were also hotly discussed and rejected.

“Other topics of interest: umpires, their personalities and techniques when two men worked the game; trends in the length of games, if any, and the reasons; the evolution of equipment and uniforms.”

Dennis Pajot, author of *Baseball's Heartland War, 1902-1903: The Western League and American Association Vie for Turf, Players, and Profit*:

“As the Deadball Era was so volatile in terms of minor league clubs and leagues shifting and folding, I would love to see articles on the reasons for these shifts and failures. I would also like to read more about the impact of the Great War—including the years leading up to it and immediately following—on all of organized

baseball in America. Of course, some of the above is discussed in books, but to be honest many of us do not have the time, access to, or money to purchase all the books on baseball out there. An individual article would help those interested in these topics, and hopefully put someone on the road to further research.

“I have always thought there is no such thing as ‘a definitive study’ on anything. *The Inside Game*—and/or Deadball Era web site or e-list—should be an ideal place to add to (or correct) previous research. Where else could someone just add a paragraph to her/his own research or add a tidbit to someone else's? There are always hidden treasures. Sometimes there is not a whole lot to the find, but that does not mean it should remain hidden. We should encourage researchers to add their finds, no matter how small, for all of our enjoyment and knowledge.

“One other feature I would like to see is in regard to books and journal articles. I would like to see a regular feature in *The Inside Game* (or a new web site) featuring books and journal articles published in the past year (to take an arbitrary time) on Deadball Era baseball topics. These would not be reviews, just a one or two sentence description. The name of the book or article, author, publisher, and a one sentence description (no more, no less—to be fair to all) would be sufficient.”

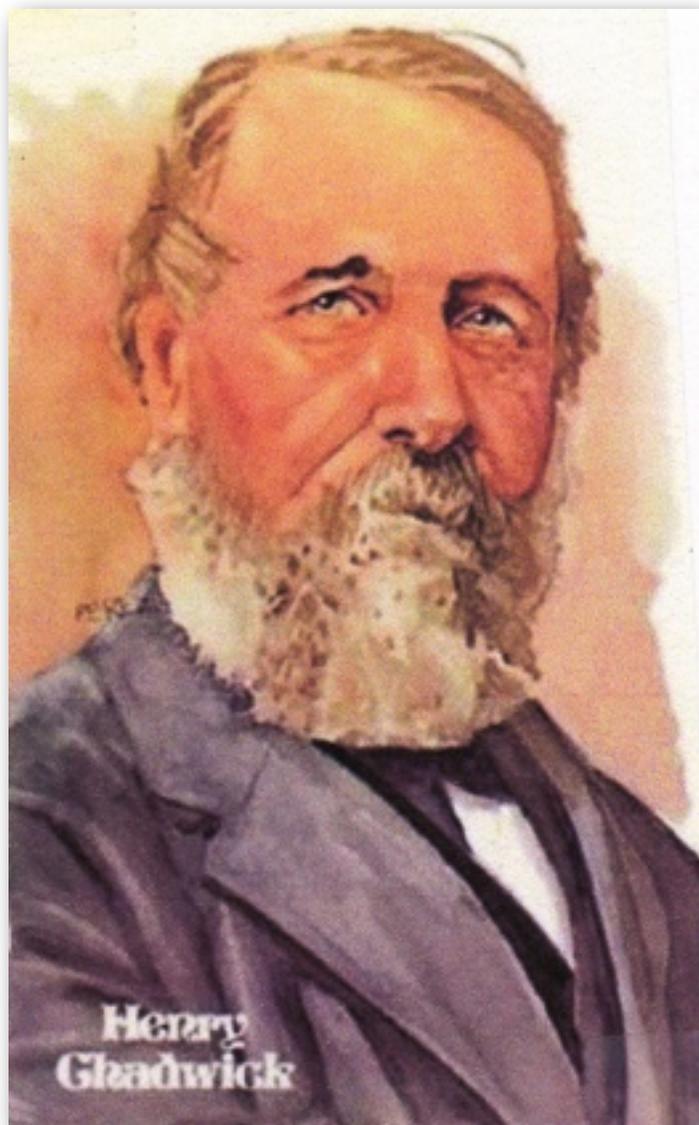
Tom Ruane, winner of the 2009 Bob Davids Award (SABR's highest honor):

“When it comes to Deadball Era research, my focus has been exclusively on determining what actually happened in each game. So I've been working (with a lot of help from the usual crowd of Retrosheet volunteers) to generate accurate box scores for this period. Assuming I am able to get the 1914 Federal League wrapped in time for the November release, we will be roughly a third of the way through, having preliminary box scores for all the games played from 1914 to 1919.

“I say ‘preliminary’ because even with our released box scores, there is still much to be done. Some of the missing data is rather arcane (sacrifice hits allowed by pitchers is missing for

many games) and some is of more general interest (RBI data is missing for many games and could be incorrect for others). So this is very much a work in progress at the moment.

“In addition to providing a lot of previously unavailable data (daily batting and pitching logs, home/road, monthly, ball park splits, and so on), this effort is also producing thousands of likely errors in the official record of this period. Most of these are hardly earth-shaking (Tris Speaker, for example, probably had one more game, at-bat and sacrifice in 1915 than he is officially credited with), but these still should be investigated and resolved.”



Henry Chadwick

Gabriel Schechter, former chair of the Ritter Award subcommittee and author of several books, including *Victory Faust: The Rube Who Saved McGraw's Giants*:

“My priority would be research into old newspapers on microfilm. With more microfilm available than ever, it is possible to make both popular and obscure newspapers available. The more eyes we can get looking at old newspapers, the better. The more trained eyes, savvy through experience, who look through this material, the better the chance that something cool or important won't slip through our fingers. Has anyone ever read every word of the run of *Sporting Life*? I doubt it. But a group of people could work out a systematic way of covering every word, one year at a time. Over time, it would accumulate into something significant. The raw material of century-old history gets further away from us every day, but the newspapers are a stable resource.”

Tom Simon, Chair Emeritus of the Deadball Era Committee and editor of *Deadball Stars of the National League*:

"My wants are simple: Caught Stealing data for the years other than 1912 and 1914-16 in the A.L. and 1913 and 1915 in the N.L.; and more books in the style of G. H. Fleming showcasing the spectacular writing of Deadball Era scribes."

John Thorn, Official Historian of Major League Baseball and co-editor of *Total Baseball*:

“It seems to me that on-field stuff has been pretty well covered, from biographies to team histories to old-newspaper trawling for tidbits. If there were world enough and time, here is what I'd like to work on or read:

1. A book about the baseball art of the period—from the futurist/cubist baseball work of James Daugherty to the oil paintings by Kernan and Beneker that graced the covers of *Baseball Magazine*, Penfield and Leyendecker for *Collier's*, Rockwell for *The Saturday Evening Post*, et al.

2. A complete volume of Henry Chadwick's ephemeral pieces, from the Clipper days of the

1860s to the Brooklyn Eagle of his last years. This would include magazine and sporting weekly pieces—and not only baseball. His scrapbooks in the New York Public Library might be a good place to start.

3. A state-by-state history of baseball 1900-20—not just MLB or even Organized Baseball.

4. A history of the farm system before Branch Rickey, going back to John T. Brush and beyond.”

Some potential projects, like the compilation of more complete play-by-play accounts, could be taken on by individual members in large or small amounts. Others, such as providing a comprehensive account of changes in the rules,

would require more group coordination but would provide an invaluable addition to the historical record. If you have an interest in pursuing any of these topics—or others from the period—please contact me or invite Committee input via our Yahoo group discussion list. Many new avenues remain for the Committee to pursue, and I look forward to us doing so in the year ahead.



SPITBALLING: THE BASEBALL DAYS OF LONG BOB EWING

In *Spitballing*, longtime Lima, Ohio sportswriter/editor and DEC member Mike Lackey brings neglected Deadball stalwart Bob Ewing back to life. Reportedly the first National Leaguer to employ the wet delivery, Ewing had the unenviable task of hurling for the lackluster Cincinnati Reds but did so with aplomb, winning 20 games in 1905. In addition to deep research into contemporary newspaper reportage, biographer Lackey was given access to Ewing family papers and photos, all of which help Lackey place Bob Ewing in the context of his times and help the reader better appreciate the pitcher. In remarks accompanying the book's recent release, Mike said that "Long Bob was a somewhat reticent character and at first I had trouble getting a handle on his personality. But he lived a fascinating life and I came to think of him as a congenial guide not just to the deadball era, but to life in America in his time." Edited by DEC founder Tom Simon and over 360 pages in length, this comprehensive look at spitballing Bob Ewing can be obtained via the publisher at www.orange-frazier.com or through www.amazon.com.

Bill Lamb, Editor

