

# NINETEENTH CENTURY NOTES

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SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH

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## LEDELL (NOT CANNONBALL) TITCOMB: TRACING THE ORIGINS OF A DUBIOUS NICKNAME by Bill Lamb

**B**aseball-Reference, Retrosheet, and other current reference works list 19<sup>th</sup> century pitcher Ledell Titcomb by means of a moniker that did not appear in newsprint during his playing days: *Cannonball*. Rather, the first discovered instance of Titcomb being called “Cannonball” comes in a fanciful late-1948 news article published when Titcomb was 82 years old. But when he died two years later, the Associated Press identified him as “Ledell



Ledell N. Titcomb

(Cannon Ball) Titcomb.” So did his obituary in *The Sporting News*. In 1951,

the initial edition of *The Official Encyclopedia of Baseball* by Turkin & Thompson followed suit, listing our subject as “Ledell (Cannon Ball) Titcomb.” By 1979, the listing had morphed into “Cannonball Titcomb” in Macmillan. And “Cannonball Titcomb” is how he is listed in B-R, Retrosheet, et al., today. In the writer’s view, use of the *Cannonball* nickname cannot withstand historical scrutiny. At most, the handle is highly

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## CHAIRMAN’S CORNER by Peter Mancuso

**T**he Philadelphia 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Inter-disciplinary Symposium is just about six weeks away and if you hope to attend but have not already signed up to be part of it, please, be sure to do so very soon. Full details on the all-day, Saturday, **November 12<sup>th</sup>** event are contained on four pages within

this newsletter and I invite anyone with any questions regarding the symposium to contact me directly by email or telephone.

**The 2017 Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19<sup>th</sup> Century Base Ball Conference** will be held on Friday and Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. We have worked

hard to construct what we hope will be another interesting and enjoyable core program and this is a reminder that the **final deadline** to submit a 200-400 word abstract for a 20-25 minute **Research Presentation proposal** on any topic of 19<sup>th</sup> Century baseball is just a few weeks away, **October 31<sup>st</sup>**. Abstracts should be

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## Not the Cannonball (cont.)

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suspect, based on a likely apocryphal yarn about Titcomb in his youth. For the reasons recited below, it appears much more likely that the *Cannonball* nickname is spurious, and that its employment in modern reference works should therefore be discontinued. But first, some background.

Ledell Titcomb was born on August 21, 1866 in West Baldwin, Maine. By the time he was a teenager, the Titcomb family had relocated to Wakefield, Massachusetts where young Ledell began playing ball. A smallish (5'6"/157 lb.) lefty batter and thrower, Titcomb was a charter member of an amateur club formed in nearby Haverhill in 1884. *Boston Herald*, April 24, 1884. Originally a first baseman but near-helpless with the bat, Titcomb was converted into a pitcher later that season. When the Haverhill club entered the professional Eastern New England League in 1885, Titcomb pitched "quite effectively against all the clubs" of that circuit until suspended indefinitely following an indifferent performance against Lawrence in early August. *Boston Journal*, August 7, 1885, and *Sporting Life*, November 18, 1885. A month later, the club acceded to Titcomb's demand for his release. Previously in June, Titcomb had impressed manager Harry Wright of the National League Philadelphia Quakers by hurling Haverhill to a 2-1 exhibition game victory over Wright's charges. Once Titcomb became available, Wright promptly signed him for the 1886 season. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, November 14, 1885, *Sporting Life*, November 18, 1885, and *Wheeling* (West Virginia) *Reg-*

*ister*, November 22, 1885. Pertinent for present purposes, newspaper coverage of these events identified our subject as "pitcher Titcomb" or simply "Titcomb," a common practice of the era. No mention of his first name or a nickname, even in the hometown *Haverhill Evening Bulletin*, was



Ledell Titcomb in action

discovered.

What follows below is analysis of some 600-700 newspaper articles mentioning Titcomb:

1. Professional Playing Career (1885-1891): For the most part, Titcomb was identified by last name only during his pro career. On at least 17 occasions, however, *Ledell Titcomb* appeared in newsprint. At no time whatsoever during his professional playing career did the putative nickname *Cannon Ball/Cannonball* appear in the newspapers that covered Titcomb.

2. Post-Playing Career (1891-1947): Following his arm injury-induced early retirement from the

game, Titcomb spent the remainder of his long life working in the shoe manufacturing trade and living in New England, first in Haverhill, thereafter in Kingston, New Hampshire. During this period, sparse newspaper attention was accorded Titcomb. But on the odd occasion when his name did appear in print, it was always given as *Ledell Titcomb*, never as *Cannon Ball/Cannonball Titcomb*. See e.g., *New York Times*, May 9, 1915: NY Giants manager Jim Mutrie had difficulties developing "a southpaw pitcher named Ledell Titcomb," the *Portsmouth* [New Hampshire] *Herald*, May 3, 1935 article captioned: "Kingston Man Was With Giants: Ledell Titcomb Pitched When Wilbert Robinson Was Catcher," and the *Haverhill* [Massachusetts] *Gazette*, July 11, 1940 article captioned: "Del Titcomb, Vet Of Major And Minor Leagues." Conspicuous by its absence, particularly in the substantial profiles published in the *Portsmouth* and *Haverhill* newspapers, was any trace of the nickname *Cannonball*.

3. Contained in the Titcomb file at the Hall of Fame Library is the apparent font of the *Cannonball* nickname: an unidentified newspaper article almost surely published by the *Haverhill Gazette*. Same was filed from "Kingston, N.H." and captioned: "Baseball Recommended As Career By Kingston Oldster." The article is undated but the text describes "Ledell Titcomb" as "an 82 year old Kingston resident," while other content suggests that the article was written in late 1948. Toward the end of the piece appeared the following: "Those who remember Titcomb will re-

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## Not the Cannonball (cont.)

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call that his pitches were so fast that the only fellow who could catch them was Bill (*sic*) Robinson, who later became manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. His mates at Haverhill nicknamed him ‘Cannonball’ after he split a plank with a pitched ball.”

4. Titcomb died of heart failure in an Exeter, New Hampshire hospital on June 8, 1950. He was 83. The Ledell Titcomb obituaries published in the local NH press were unremarkable, making no mention of the deceased, “a former major league baseball player,” being called *Cannonball*. See e.g., the *Kingston News*, June 15, 1950. But the *Haverhill Gazette* reprised the plank-breaking/Cannonball anecdote in its Titcomb obituary. The real name-changer, however, was a brief, error-filled Associated Press obituary – it got the date of death wrong; described the slightly-built Titcomb as a “rugged 200-pounder” (the weight of NY Giants pitching teammate Cannonball Ed Crane), and accepted the Wilbert Robinson story (when contemporary news articles always identified Pat Murphy as the catcher with whom Titcomb had his modest professional success). Drawing upon the 1948 *Haverhill Gazette* piece, the AP identified the deceased as “Ledell (Cannon Ball) Titcomb,” and expanded the underlying tale to: “Old-timers said he demonstrated his plank-splitting fast ball any number of times.” See e.g., the [Little Rock] *Arkansas Gazette*, June 9, 1950, and *Lexington [Kentucky] Herald*, June 10, 1950.

5. *The Sporting News*, which presumably should have been more discerning, uncritically accepted the AP obituary, republishing its date of death, weight, etc., errors, in its

memoriam of “Ledell (Cannon Ball) Titcomb,” July 7, 1950. Among other things, *TSN* printed the following: “A southpaw, weighing 200 pounds, Titcomb had a fast ball that was said to split



Ledell Titcomb at the bat

planks, resulting in his nickname of Cannon Ball.”

6. Once *The Sporting News* placed its imprimatur upon the *Cannon Ball* nickname, it became set in baseball stone. But how/why the listing for our subject evolved from “Ledell (Cannon Ball) Titcomb” into “Cannonball Titcomb” in post-Turkin & Thompson reference works listings is unknown.

Follow-up Inquiry:

7. What is curious about modern acceptance of the plank-splitting fastball/Cannonball story is that, while he had speed, Titcomb was actually a “puzzler” who used

mostly breaking stuff against major league batters. A typical contemporary assessment of Titcomb’s pitching proclivities was provided in *Sporting Life*, June 6, 1888: “Ledell Titcomb is left-handed, with wide and varied curves, inclined to be wild, and with no head at all.” Years later, an unbylined New York sports-writer observed: “A southpaw pitcher named Ledell Titcomb ... was too much of a comedian to take baseball seriously, but the fellow had rare skill and was a puzzler to all big league batsmen when he felt inclined to do his best.” *New York Times*, May 9, 1915.

8. In a handwritten letter to NL President Ford Frick dated August 9, 1937, Titcomb outlined his professional playing days in seeking a free MLB ballpark pass. He signed the letter, “Respt. yours, Ledell Titcomb.” Nowhere in his career resume did Titcomb mention being called “Cannonball.”

9. Around 1970, a posthumous Ledell Titcomb player questionnaire completed by his niece Virginia Bergeron for the Hall of Fame library stated that Titcomb’s nickname was “Dell,” not “Cannonball.”

10. A search for the surname Titcomb in newspapers published from the start of Titcomb’s playing days in 1884 until the day before his death in June 1950 via GenealogyBank yielded 10,458 page hits. Linkage of the word “Cannonball” with “Titcomb” promptly reduced that number to zero. No surprise here, as apart from the late-1948 *Haverhill Gazette* article noted above, Titcomb appears never to have been called

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## Not the Cannonball (cont.)

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Cannonball (or Cannon Ball) in newsprint during his lifetime. That phenomenon dates only from widespread circulation the maladroit AP obituary.

Conclusion:

The “Cannonball” nickname rests on the slimmest of historical reeds. As far as has been discovered, the nickname (and the alternative “Cannon Ball”) was never used during Titcomb’s playing career – not even once – and first reached newsprint some 57 years after

Titcomb had thrown his last pitch. When published in 1948, moreover, the source of the original “Cannon Ball” reference was the cryptic “those who remember,” later “old-timers,” precious few of whom were likely around to supply such a purported remembrance firsthand. Indeed, the entire “Cannon Ball/Cannonball” tale smells of news writer invention.

What the putative nickname has going for it is inertia. More than 65 years have passed since *The Sporting News* conferred its blessing on Ledell “Cannon Ball” Titcomb, and

“Cannonball Titcomb” is now firmly ensconced in present baseball reference works. But it should not be, as the nickname lacks historical pedigree. Extirpating long accepted “truths” is never easy, but if SABR is to remain faithful to its mission of preserving the history of the game accurately, the effort should be made. To that end, “Cannon Ball/Cannonball” should no longer be considered an accepted moniker for Ledell Titcomb.

## A Remembrance of Bob Gregory

February 16, 1956– September 13, 2016 by Joe Williams

Longtime SABR member Robert E. “Bob” Gregory, 60, passed away on September 13 after an inspirational battle with cancer. Bob first joined SABR in 1984. He was the founder of the Kekionga Chapter of Fort Wayne and an active member the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Committee. He received the Nineteenth Century Committee’s Chairman’s Award in 2016.

He was an original member of the Overlooked 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Legends Project with Charles Faber and Joe Williams that was founded in 2008. The trio created the process to elect a 19<sup>th</sup> century baseball great who has yet to be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

The 2010 Overlooked Legend winner, James “Deacon” White, was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2013. Bob and Joe attended the ceremony and Bob represented SABR on September 29, 2013 in

Aurora, Illinois for James “Deacon” White Day. As part of the celebration, the 200 block of South Calumet Avenue received the honorary designation of “James “Deacon” White Way” with a street sign unveiling at the corner of Marseillaise and Calumet Avenues.

Bob was passionate about honoring greats of the early game which led him to becoming the original chairman of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Grave Marker Project. Bob had to step down when he became too ill to continue as chairman, turning the project over to current chairman Ralph Carhart. The project unveiled its first grave marker on May 14 in Brooklyn’s historic Green-Wood Cemetery for New York Knickerbocker pioneer James Whyte Davis.

Bob was a fan of the Kekiongas of Fort Wayne and their star pitcher Bobby Mathews. His love of Fort Wayne led to a contribution to *Base Ball Pioneers, 1850-1870* on the Summit City Base Ball Club of Fort Wayne. He also championed elec-

tion to the Hall of Fame for individuals from baseball’s pioneer era and was a contributor to the Doc Adams for the Hall of Fame campaign.

Despite his health issues, Bob was a youthful looking man with an upbeat personality. His sense of humor and positive outlook on life during his courageous battle to survive was truly inspirational to all that knew him. He brought his good spirits to Cooperstown each April to attend the Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19<sup>th</sup> Century Base Ball Conference (“The Fred”) where he would gain pleasure speaking with many of his colleagues.

Bob is survived by his wife Mindy and his daughter Caitlin. In lieu of flowers, Bob wanted people to donate to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Grave Marker Project (<http://sabr.org/latest/help-support-sabrs-19th-century-baseball-grave-marker-project>).

## Chairman's Corner (cont.)

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emailed to me at [petrplus4@earthlink.net](mailto:petrplus4@earthlink.net). Registration for the Fred will begin approximately January 1<sup>st</sup> with the publication of our Winter issue of this newsletter.

**Our Annual Committee Business Meeting** was held for one hour on Thursday, July 28<sup>th</sup> during SABR 46 in Miami, approximately 40 SABR members were in attendance. The following items from the agenda were presented, announced or discussed:

**2016 Annual Chairman's Award** was presented to **Bob Gregory** of Indiana for his devotion in helping to establish two Nineteenth Century Committee project committees, the Overlooked 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Legends Committee and for which he remained a central contributor for eight years and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Grave Marker Committee for which he served as its first Chairperson. Bob also an associate

editor to the "Baseball's 19<sup>th</sup> Century Winter Meetings book project.

**Overlooked 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Legends Committee** announced the **Jack Glasscock** was selected as the 2016 Overlooked Legend (a 19<sup>th</sup> century player deemed worthy for consideration for induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame but not yet elected for the honor. Glasscock, the eighth annual selectee joins previous selections: Pete Browning, Deacon White, Harry Stovey, Bill Dahlen, Ross Barnes, Doc Adams and Tony Mullane. Visit the SABR website to view the complete press release.

**19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Grave Marker Project** accepted our larger Committee's thanks and appreciation for their outstanding efforts and results in placing a beautiful marker on the grave of early baseball pioneer, James Whyte Davis, an early NY Knick-

erbocker buried in Brooklyn's Greenwood Cemetery. Also discussed were plans underway to mark the grave of 19<sup>th</sup> century Baseball Hall of Famer Pud Galvin.

**Baseball's 19<sup>th</sup> Century Winter Meetings Book Project** reports progress toward completion of each of its two volumes. Vol. 1 (1858-1875) has all season's chapters assigned, many written and some currently being edited and fact checked. Vol. 2 (1876-1900) is seeking authors for approximately five chapters, a small have been written and are beginning the editorial process.

I want to take this opportunity to wish all of you an exciting post season whether your team makes it there or not.

Peter Mancuso...because baseball history is not only baseball history.

## When First Place Played Second Place

In the 1890s the Temple Cup Series matched the top two teams in the NL in an ersatz World Series. The Series was played 1894-1897 and was revived in 1900 with the top two NL squads playing for the Chronical-Telegraph Cup.

The major league Temple Cup history is fairly well-documented, but several minor leagues adopted the idea and had their own first v. second post-season series. The 1893 Pennsylvania State League produced an in-house post-season series. The Eastern League had the Steinert Cup Series in 1895-1897 and the Atlantic League ran a ver-

sion in 1896 for the Soby Cup. In 1896 the Virginia State League vied for the Nowlan Cup. There are some notes that the Interstate League and the Texas-Southern League held similar series before 1900.

Awarding Cups was a popular pastime in the late 1800s. In addition to these trophies there was the Hall Cup (awarded in 1888 to the Giants for defeating the Browns in the World Series,) the Dauvray Cup, awarded from 1887-1893 to the World Series winner or NL Pennant winner, and probably others.

We know very little about these 19<sup>th</sup> century minor league trophies. So the questions before the house are: Were there other trophies? Do any survive today? Were they one-shot deals or were they awarded multiple times? Who played in the series? (We know Honus Wagner participated in the 1896 Soby Cup Series.)

If you have any material on these questions or other series send the editor a note ([bobbailey@cox.net](mailto:bobbailey@cox.net)) and we will publish comments in a future newsletter.

# The Longest Consecutive-Games-Run-Batted-In Streaks by the Players on the 1887 Detroit Wolverines

by Herm Krabbenhoft

In a previous report I described my research to ascertain the longest Consecutive-Games-RUN-Scored (CGRUNS) streaks by the players on the 1887 Detroit Wolverines (*Nineteenth Century Notes*, Winter-2014). In the present report I provide the results of my research to find out who compiled longest Consecutive-Games-RUN-Batted-In (CGRUNBI) streak on the 1887 Detroit Wolverines. It may be pointed out that the Elias Sport Bureau — the official statistician of Major League Baseball — does not recognize any runs-batted-in statistics accomplished before 1920. Thus, in *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*, the section on RBIs is prefaced with the statement, “Since 1920 — Prior seasons not compiled on official score[sheet]s.” Thus, according to Elias, the *official* major league record for “Most Games, Consecutive, Runs Batted In” is 17 by Ray Grimes of the 1922 Chicago Cubs. Since Sam Thompson accumulated the most RBIs in a single season during the 19th century — 166 RBIs for the 1887 Wolverines according to the various baseball encyclopedias — it was of particular interest to find out his longest *unofficial* CGRUNBI streak and where it ranks compared to Grimes’ *official* 17-CGRUNBI streak.

## RESEARCH PROCEDURE

In order to accurately ascertain the longest CGRUNBI streaks, it is absolutely essential to have accurate RBI numbers — on a Game-By-Game (GBG) basis — for each player. As provided in my report on

the “Accurate Runs Scored — 1887 Detroit Wolverines” (*Nineteenth Century Notes*, Spring-2016), I ascertained the complete details for each of the 970 runs scored by the 1887 Wolverines, i.e., (a) the identity of the player who scored the run; (b) the run-scoring event; and (c) the identity of the player who batted in the run.

## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Table 1 (page 7) presents pertinent runs-batted-in results, according to my research, for each of the 20 players who participated in at least one game for the 1887 Detroit Wolverines. Also shown, for comparison, are the full-season RBI numbers according to the research of John Tattersall (which were first reported in the first edition (1969) of *The Baseball Encyclopedia* and subsequently presented in other baseball encyclopedias — e.g., *STATS All-Time Major League Handbook* (2000), *Total Baseball* (2004), and *The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia* (2008) — as well as currently being given on the Internet — e.g., MLB.com (the official website for Major League Baseball) and Baseball-Reference.com. Examination of Table 1 reveals that for only seven players is there agreement between my runs-batted-in numbers and Tattersall’s runs-batted-in numbers. Sam Thompson is among the 13 players for whom my RBI numbers and Tattersall’s RBI numbers do not agree — 167 versus 166, respectively.

It is important to emphasize that I have assembled rock-solid evi-

dence — on a GBG basis — in support of the full season runs-batted-in numbers I ascertained for each player. The Appendix (available on SABR.org) provides, on a GBG basis, the complete details for each player’s runs-scored and runs-batted-in numbers. For example, Table 2 presents, according to my research, the details for the runs batted in by Pretzels Getzein.

Inspection of Table 2 (page 8) clearly reveals that Getzein actually had 16 RBIs (not 14 RBIs as determined by Tattersall and shown in the various baseball encyclopedias and websites). It is emphasized that there is no information extant which gives Tattersall’s RBI numbers on a GBG basis. Moreover, there is no information which states the criteria that Tattersall utilized to credit or to not credit a player with a run batted in. For example, did Tattersall credit the batter with an RBI for a runner who scored on a bases-loaded walk? ... or for a runner who scored on a groundout double play? ... or for a runner who scored on a play on which the batter was safe on a fielding error?

For crediting RBIs in my research endeavor I adhered strictly to the 1931 official scoring rules: *Runs Batted In are runs scored on safe hits (including home runs), sacrifice hits, out-field put-outs, infield putouts, and when a run is forced over by reason of the batsman becoming a base-runner. With less than two outs, if an er-*

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**TABLE I - Runs-Batted-In Numbers and CGRUNBI Streaks for the Players on the 1887 Detroit Wolverines**

Player	RBI (Tattersall)	RBI (Krabbenhoft)	Games Played	Games with an RBI	RBI per Game	Longest CGRUNBI Streak
Lady Baldwin	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	24	6	0.250	2
Ed Beatin	0	0	2	0	0.000	0
Charlie Bennett	20	20	46	16	0.435	4
Fatty Briody	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	33	15	0.818	2
Dan Brouthers	<b>101</b>	<b>97</b>	123	52	0.789	4
William Burke	1	1	2	1	0.500	1
Pete Conway	7	7	24	6	0.292	1
Fred Dunlap	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	65	28	0.662	6
Charlie Ganzel	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	57	14	0.404	4
Pretzels Getzein	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	43	10	0.372	2
Henry Gruber	0	0	7	0	0.000	0
Ned Hanlon	<b>69</b>	<b>68</b>	118	43	0.576	6
Jim Manning	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	13	2	0.154	1
Hardy Richardson	<b>94</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>121</b>	46	0.686	5
Jack Rowe	<b>96</b>	<b>93</b>	124	55	0.750	4
Billy Shindle	12	12	22	9	0.545	3
Sam Thompson	<b>166</b>	<b>167</b>	127	80	1.315	8
Larry Twitchell	<b>51</b>	<b>45-46</b>	65	32	0.692-0.708	6
Stump Weidman	11	11	21	8	0.524	2
Deacon White	<b>75</b>	<b>72-73</b>	111	47-48	0.649-0.658	6

NOTE: Players for whom Krabbenhoft's RBI numbers and Tattersall's RBI numbers do not agree are shown in boldface. For Richardson's games played, Krabbenhoft's boldface entry (121) indicates that it is different from the value (131) shown in the various encyclopedias.

## Table 2- Getzein's Runs-Batted-In Record for the 1887 Detroit Wolverines

DATE	G #	OPP	POS	RBI #	INN	R-Scoring Event	R-Scorer
5-09	03	PIT	P	01-02	5-5	2-RBI Single	White, Hanlon
5-19	06	PHI*	P	03-04-05	2-5-5	1-RBI Homer, 2-RBI Double	Getzen, Hanlon, Ganzel
5-23	07	WAS*	P	06	7	1-RBI Groundout	Hanlon
7-05	13	BOS	P	07-08-09	2-2-4	2-RBI Double, 1-RBI Single	Dunlap, Twitchell (2)
8-16	27	CHI*	P	10	4	1-RBI Single	White
8-22	29	WAS*	P	11	4	1-RBI Triple	Hanlon
8-29	32	BOS*	P	12	5	1-RBI Single	Hanlon
9-03	34	NY*	P	13-14	5-5	2-RBI Single	Twitchell, Bennett
8-08	36	PIT	P	15	5	1-RBI Double	Hanlon
9-15	38	WAS	P	16	7	1-RBI Single	Hanlon

NOTE: An asterisk in the "OPP" column indicates that the game was played at the opponent's field.

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ror is made on a play on which a runner from third would ordinarily score, credit the batsman with a Run Batted In. [Rule 70. Section 13, Runs Batted In]

I decided to adhere to the 1931 rules (a) because there were no official scoring rules for RBIs in 1887 (or for any year prior to 1920) and (b) because the 1920-1930 official scoring rules for RBIs provided no guidance whatsoever for crediting or not crediting a player with an RBI: *The Summary shall contain: The number of runs batted in by each bats-*

man. [Rule 86, Section 8]

Probably the most striking aspects of Table 1 are the RBI numbers shown for Twitchell and White — "45-46" RBIs for Twitchell and "72-73" RBIs for White. The reason for the "either-or" RBI numbers for these two players is that text descriptions given in the various newspaper accounts did not provide sufficiently detailed information to allow one to ascertain specific RBI numbers for the two runs Detroit scored in the sixth inning of the game on June 27, 1887, against the New York club. Here are the pertinent descriptions provided in the

accounts given in the *DetroitFree Press (DFP)*, *News (DN)*, and *Tribune (DTRB)*:

*DFP* — "Two more [runs] came over in the sixth on Dunlap's single, White's two-baser, and Twitchell's single."

*DN* — Nothing at all.

*DTRB* — "Two runs were netted in the sixth by Dunlap's single, White's double, and Twitchell's single."

It is also pointed out that the

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## The Longest Consecutive-Games-Run-Batted-In Streaks by the Players on the 1887 Detroit Wolverines (cont.)

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accounts given in several New York newspapers (e.g., *Harold, Sun, Times*, and *Tribune*) had no detailed information at all for Detroit's two sixth-inning runs. Thus, there is uncertainty about who batted in whom — did White's double bat in Dunlap and Twitchell's single bat in White OR did White's double put Dunlap on third and Twitchell's single bat in both Dunlap and White? So, did White have zero RBIs or one RBI? And, did Twitchell have one RBI or two RBIs?

With regard to the longest GRUNBI streaks for each Wolverines player, Sam Thompson put together the longest CGRUNBI streak — an eight-gamer, which is nine games fewer than Grimes' 17-gamer. Next in line behind Thomp-

son with six-game CGRUNBI streaks were Deacon White, Ned Hanlon, Larry Twitchell, and Fred Dunlap.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this report, accurate runs batted in records for the players on the 1887 Detroit Wolverines are presented. Significantly, Sam Thompson amassed 167 RBIs — not 166 RBIs as shown in the various baseball encyclopedias. Thus, 167 is the correct number for the record for the most runs batted in by an individual player during the nineteenth century. Surprisingly, even with his phenomenal 1887 RBI performance, the longest CGRUNBI streak that Big Sam achieved was only an 8-gamer. In a future report I'll describe the re-

sults of my research on Thompson's 1895 season, in which he collected a league-leading total of 165 RBIs (according to the various baseball encyclopedias).

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with tremendous gratitude that I thank Dixie Tourangeau, Dave Newman, and Mark Pankin for their outstanding help in providing me with photocopies and scans of several game accounts from newspapers to which they have access. Having those game accounts was vital in allowing me to assemble the accurate Game-By-Game runs-batted-In log required for the results presented in this article. I should also like to thank Tom Ruane and Pete Palmer for valuable input.

## News & Notes

-Committee member Tom Shieber has been awarded the George Michael SABR Pictorial History Award for 2016. SABR's Pictorial History Committee Chairman Mark Fimoff noted that "In bestowing the 2016 George Michael SABR Pictorial History Committee Award upon Tom, we thank him for his contributions to the scholarly interpretation of historical baseball imagery and look forward to his continuing insight."

-Committee member Debra Shattuck has published her book, "Bloomer Girls: Women Baseball Pioneers" through the University of Illinois Press. This is the link to Amazon is:

<https://www.amazon.com/Bloomer-Girls-Baseball-Pioneers-Society/>

dp/0252081862/ref=sr\_1\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1471641475&sr=8-1&keywords=Bloomer+Girls.

-Committee member Joe Williams was looking for a primary source for Deacon White's statement that "I don't want a man to sell my carcass unless I get half." Brock Helander found this in the *Cleveland Leader* on June 29, 1889 datelined Pittsburg: "President James L. White of the Buffalo club arrived in town today to confer with the Pittsburg management regarding his release and that of Jack Rowe. White said today: 'I am over forty years old, and have been laid off more than once in the past two years. Rowe doesn't want to come here. If Detroit gives us half of the purchase money we

will both come. I don't want a man to sell my carcass til I get half.' "

-We are saddened to report the passing of Committee Member, Charles Faber, professor and author who contributed much to the establishment and early development of our Overlooked 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Legends project. See the SABR website for a complete obituary.

-SABR's Collegiate Baseball Committee Chair, Karl Green is seeking Nineteenth Century Committee members who may want to devote research time to 19<sup>th</sup> century intercollegiate baseball in the South.

## Keynote Speakers for Philadelphia Conference Named

**D**aniel R. Biddle and Murray Dubin, Co-authors of *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America*, will be the Keynote speakers at the 2016 19th Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Conference to be held in Philadelphia on November 12, 2016. Registration information for the Conference can be found on pages 10-11. The speakers bring a wide-range of journalistic experience to their research and their book “Tasting Freedom.”

### Daniel R. Biddle, Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Investigative Reporting

Daniel Biddle was among a trio of reporters who won a Pulitzer Prize for a series titled "Disorder in the Court" that documented conflict of



Daniel Biddle

interest, incompetence and politicking in the Philadelphia courts. The series led to a series of investigations and reforms. Mr. Biddle graduated from the University of Michi-

gan and worked for The Cleveland Plain Dealer from 1976 until 1979, when he joined The Inquirer as a City Hall reporter.

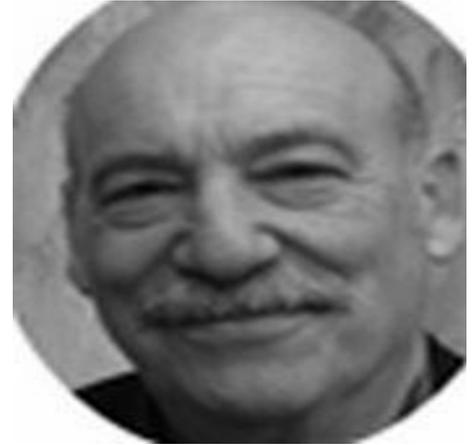
Daniel R. Biddle, was The Inquirer's Pennsylvania State editor, he has worked in nearly every phase of newspaper reporting and editing, and is now the Inquirer's political editor and will be directing that paper's coverage of the Democratic National Convention this summer in Philadelphia. He has been a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University and has taught at the University of Pennsylvania.

### Veteran Philadelphia Inquirer newsmen Murray Dubin,

After graduating from Temple University with a degree in journalism in 1969, Murray Dubin worked briefly at the Arlington Heights Herald in suburban Chicago. From there, he went to Newcastle, Wyoming where he worked as a cowboy on a cattle ranch before starting his career at Philadelphia Inquirer in 1971,

During his extended stay at the Inquirer, this veteran reporter also served as its Los Angeles Bureau chief, briefly on its editorial board; and as an editor he managed: family, fashion, real estate, design, society, and gossip news.

After 34 years at the Philadelphia Inquirer, which included stints covering, City Hall, housing, family and children, radical groups, neighborhoods, ethnicity and race Dubin left the paper in 2005 to devote his energy full-time to writing. He is also the author of *South Philadelphia Mummies, Memories and the Melrose Dinner*.



Murray Dubin

### “Tasting Freedom: ...” A Limited Number of Signed Copies Available for Purchase

Dan Biddle and Murray Dubin have arranged with their publisher to have a limited number of hard-back copies of their book, *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America* that they will sign and make available at our symposium for \$25 each, a great value.

Here are just a few snippets of the praise given *Tasting Freedom*:

“Biddle and Dubin’s book is for all of us who love a story about baseball and war, about race and the making of America” – Larry Tye, author of *Satchel: The Life and Times of an American Legend*;

“The Story is both riveting and elucidative” – Juan Williams, author of *Eyes on the Prize* and *Thurgood Marshall*;

“The research is first-rate and the breadth of coverage is impressive” – Julie Winch, University of Massachusetts, Boston.

**Society for American Baseball Research (SABR)**  
**Nineteenth Century Committee & Connie Mack Chapter**  
**Philadelphia 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Symposium**  
**Saturday, November 12, 2016, 9:AM – 5:PM**  
**Maggiano's Restaurant, 1201 Filbert St., Philadelphia, PA**

**Program & Schedule:**

**9:00 -10:AM - Check-in and Continental Breakfast**

**10:00 - 10:15 - Introduction and Greetings**

**10:15 - 10:45 – Welcoming Address, : John Thorn, Official Historian of Major League Baseball**

**10:45 – 11:00 – Mid-morning Refreshment**

**11:00 – 11:30 – Research Presentation: Ralph Carhart, “The Pre- 1871 Spread of ‘Base Ball’ in the Greater Philadelphia Area”**

**11:30 – 12:00 – Research Presentation: Jerrold Casway, “Cricket’s Foundation for Philadelphia Baseball”**

**12:00 - 2:00 – Luncheon and Keynote Speakers: Daniel R. Biddle and Murray Dubin, Co-authors, “Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America”, the Pythians beyond the diamond. Book Signings begin**

**2:00 - 3:00 - Panel Discussion: “Philadelphia’s 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Movers & Shakers”, Moderator, Dick Rosen; Panelists: Jerrold Casway, John Shiffert , and Richard Hershberger.**

**3:00 - 3:15 - Break and Book Signings Continue**

**3:15 - 3:45 - Research Presentation: Richard Hershberger, “The Olympic Ball Club: Sport as a Social Endeavor”**

**3:45 - 4:00 - Afternoon Break Snacks and Book Signings Conclude**

**4:00 - 4:30 - Research Presentation: John Schiffert, “The 1871 Athletics: Baseball’s First Professional League Champions”**

**4:30 - 5:00 - Research Presentation: Matt Albertson, “The Quaker Brotherhood: Philadelphia’s Player’s League Season of 1890”**

## Philadelphia 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Symposium - Further Information

### Symposium Venue:

The Philadelphia 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Symposium will be held in our own private banquet/meeting room at **Maggiano's Little Italy** restaurant located at **12<sup>th</sup> & Filbert Streets** in Center City Philadelphia. The address is 1201 Filbert St., Philadelphia, PA 19107. Corner of Filbert & 12<sup>th</sup> Streets is three blocks east of Broad St and one block north of Market.

**Parking:** All day, 12 hour parking with a special \$10.00 flat rate is available at the "Standard" Parking Garage at the Hilton Garden Inn located on 11<sup>th</sup> St. between Filbert & Arch after redeeming special voucher from our event host at Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant.

**Local & Regional Public Transportation: SEPTA: Jefferson Station** Market St. between 10th & 12th Sts This station is served the following Regional Rail Lines: Airport, Warminster, Wilmington/Newark, West Trenton, Media/Elwyn, Lansdale/Doylestown, Paoli/Thorndale, Manayunk/Norristown, Chestnut Hill East, Trenton, Fox Chase and Chestnut Hill. This is an accessible station. Check SEPTA website for Schedule for Arrival and Departures on Saturday.

**Amtrac:** Arrive Phila's 30<sup>th</sup> St. Station and take any regional SEPTA line to Jefferson Station.

**Phila. Intl. Airport:** Use Airport Regional Rail Line to Jefferson Station.

### All-Day Meeting Food Package:

**Continental Breakfast, 9:am-10:am** (during Symposium Check-in) includes: Assortment of Muffins, Croissants, Assorted Jams and Butter, Cinnamon Streusel Coffee Cake, Sliced Seasonal Fresh Fruit, Fresh Baked Zucchini Bread, Assorted Fruit Juices, Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee and Assorted Hot Teas.

**Mid-Morning Refreshment, 10:45-11:am** includes: Assorted Sodas, Coffee & Tea Station.

**Family Style Lunch, 12noon-2:pm** Served with freshly baked Ciabatta Rolls, brewed regular and decaffeinated Coffee, Hot Tea, Iced Tea and Sodas. **First Course, Salads:** Caesar and/or Maggiano's House Salad.

**Second Course, Pastas:** Rigatoni "D", Chicken, Mushroom, Marsala and/or Baked Rigatoni & Meatballs with Smoked Italian Cheese. **Third Course, Desserts:** Apple Crostada and/or New York Style Cheesecake.

**Afternoon Break Snacks, 3:45-4:pm** includes: Double Choc. Brownies, Choc. Chunk Cookies, White Choc. Macadamia Nut Cookies, Triple Choc. Cookies, Vera's Lemon Cookies, Sugar Cookies, Assorted Chips, Season Whole Fruit. Served with freshly brewed regular and decaf Coffee, Hot Tea, Iced Tea and Sodas.

**Hotels:** Due to a large convention in town during our date it is impossible with a group our size to secure even a small block of rooms at a competitive rate. However, there are individual rooms available at reasonable rates at various size properties in Center City Philadelphia within a fifteen minute walk our venue. Visit your favorite online booking site to make your individual booking.

**SABR, Nineteenth Century Committee & Connie Mack Chapter  
Philadelphia 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Symposium  
Saturday, November 12, 2016, 9:AM – 5:PM  
Registration Form**

**To register, prepare and mail this form with payment (see below)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name for Name Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_, St or Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

The Symposium includes an All-Day Meeting Food Package, See Further Information page.

**Registration Fee:** \$95.00 per person, include up to 3 guests: \$95 X \_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

Guest/s Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State or Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Name for Name Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State or Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Name for Name Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State or Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Name for Name Badge \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment and Mailing:**

**Payment:** Please, make check or MO, (US dollars) payable to: “SABR”

**Important:** On memo line of check, please, print: “Phila. 19cBB Symposium”

**Mail** check and completed Registration Form (photocopies OK) before November 1, 2016 to:

**Peter Mancuso, 6970 Ely Rd., New Hope, PA 18938, Questions:** [peterplus4@earthlink.net](mailto:peterplus4@earthlink.net) or call: 215-862-2887