

NINETEENTH CENTURY NOTES

SPRING 2024

SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH

Nineteenth Century Notes is a publication of the Nineteenth Century Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research

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Managerial Thrill Ride at the Coney Island of the West

by Bob Tiemann

For the St. Louis Browns, the 1895 season had been very disappointing, both on the field and at the box office. Owner Chris Von der Ahe looked to increase his revenues by adding other attractions to his big ballpark on Natural Bridge Ave, Sportsman's Park.

The day the '95 season ended, Chris started horseracing at the park. Over the winter he announced that the club would add a Shoot the Chutes water slide that sent boats splashing onto

a small lake beyond the right field fence. There would also be electric lighting for the horse track to allow for night racing on days of baseball games. The other National League owners were appalled at having open betting at one of their sites. And baseball purists derisively dubbed Von der Ahe's ballpark as "The Coney Island of the West."

To manage his baseball team, Von der Ahe hired a Philadelphia sports editor, Harry Diddlebock, who had experience as a minor league president. Diddlebock

was friendly with the St. Louis owner, having entertained him at his home and shared an excursion to Atlantic City. Harry managed the team's spring training in Texas and through the first three weeks of the regular season.

At 3 a.m. on the morning of May 8, 1896, a St. Louis policeman found him bloody and semi-conscious by the side of the street near his home in north St. Louis. He had won money at the evening horse races at Sportsman's Park that

(Continued on page 2)

Co-Chairs' Corner

by Peter Mancuso

The 2024 Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19th Century Baseball Conference is scheduled for this April 19 & 20 in its usual venue, the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY. Attendee registration has been strong so you may find that registration has been closed when you attempt to reg-

ister, which can only be done on-line through the SABR website. For additional information about this year's or future "Fred" conferences, please, email Peter Mancuso at email address:

peterplus4@earthlink.net

**SABR and Nineteenth
Century Committee**

Member Larry McCray passed away in late December, 2023. Larry was the founding Chair of SABR's **Origins Committee** and the force behind the **Protopall Project**. He was a recipient of both SABR's **Bob Davids and Chadwick Awards**. Along with his

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Managerial Thrill Ride (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

night and had gone to celebrate at a tavern. On his way home, he claimed he had been set upon by a



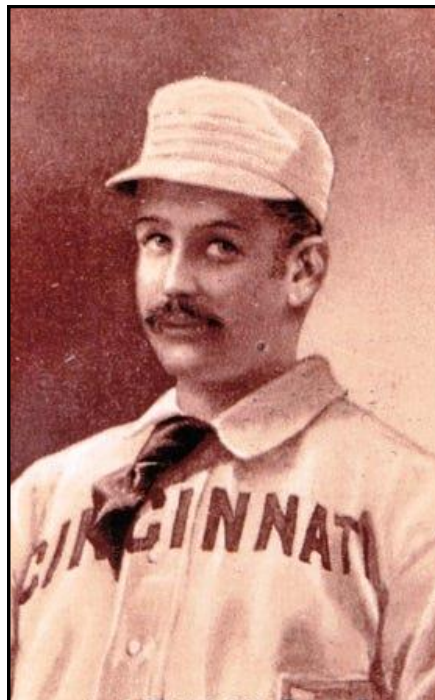
Harry Diddlebock

group of ruffians who used “brass knucks,” leaving his face so disfigured that “it is hardly recognizable.” He told a newspaperman that the assailants were “a certain group of ‘knockers’ who infest Sportsman’s Park and who, he says, have taken a dislike to him.” (Rep 5/09) None of the newspaper reports mentioned robbery.

When Diddlebock failed to appear at that morning’s practice, owner Chris Von der Ahe summarily suspended the manager. At that point the Browns had a won-lost record of 7-10 and were in 10th place in the 12-team National League. When some of the club directors questioned the owner’s

harsh decision, a board meeting was called for May 10, at which Von der Ahe produced a report by a private detective he had hired to investigate his manager’s actions on the night of the May 7. The detective said that Diddlebock and some friends went to several bars and were quite intoxicated. He also asserted that Harry sat down on a stool at a trolley stop and “while in his stuporous condition” he fell off the stool and injured his face. “A manager who carouses sets a poor example to his player,” one director said. With the owner determined to get rid of him, Harry lost his job. (PD 5/11)

Meanwhile, back at the ballpark chaos reigned. In Diddle-



Arlie Latham

bock’s absence, Von der Ahe had appointed 36-year-old team captain Arlie Latham as manager. A

hero of the old American Association Browns from 1882 thru 1889, Latham was now near the end of the line as a player, playing just 8 NL games in 1896 with 7 base hits and 10 errors made. But he was still as loud as ever on the sidelines and player bench. Many of the other Browns had come to distrust him as a stool pigeon feeding the owner’s penchant for fines and public chastisements. One unnamed player went so far as to say, “If Latham is appointed permanent manager I will jump the team and



Chris Von der Ahe

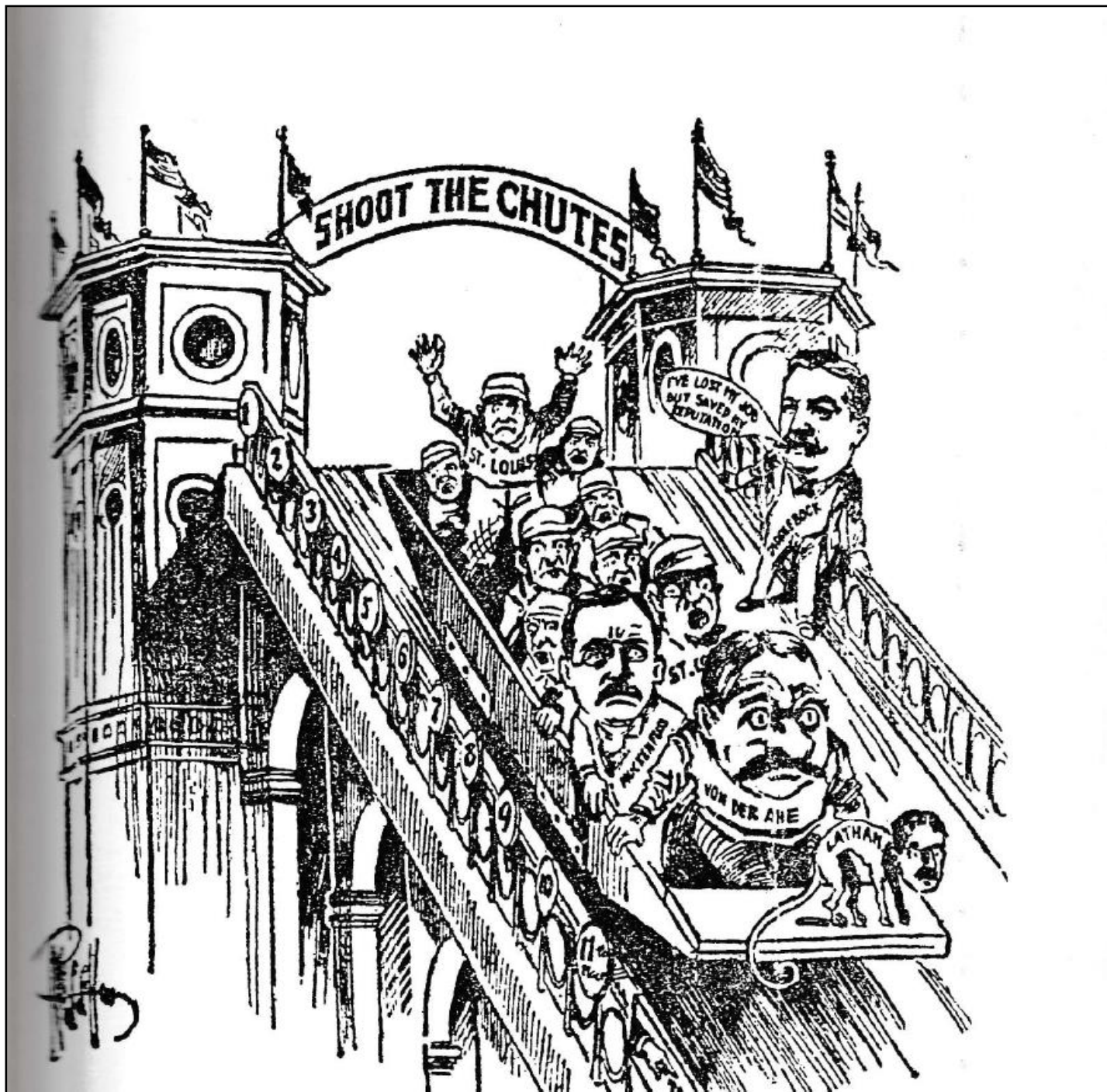
go home.” (Rep 5/09)

Manager Latham was fired after three losses (and no wins) punctuated by some embarrassing base-running mishaps caused by poor coaching. On May 11 Von der Ahe named himself manager with short-stop Monte Cross as captain. President Von der Ahe was on the bench that afternoon, “field glasses and all.” (PD 5/12)

Chris had more than baseball strategy to deal with. Neither his race track nor the Shoot the Chutes generated the hoped-for revenues, and

(Continued on page 4)

Managerial Thrill Ride (cont.)

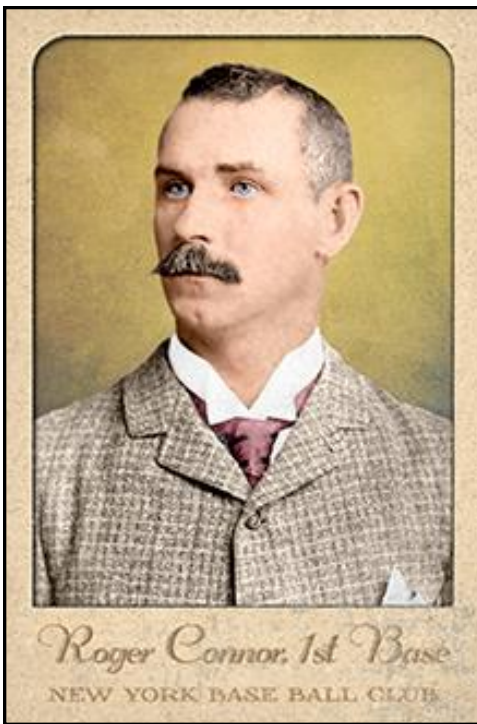


Cartoon from *The Sporting News*, satirizing St. Louis owner Chris Von der Ahe by comparing his chute-the-chute sideshow ride with the Browns' slide in the standings. (*The Sporting News*)

Managerial Thrill Ride (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

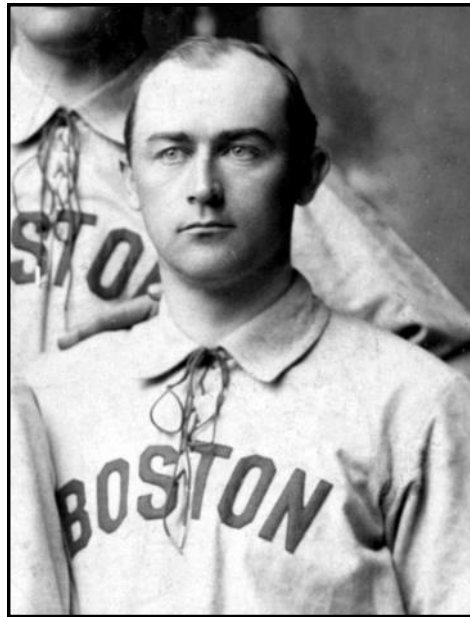
the Browns poor play attracted only meager crowds. Bankruptcy was looming over \$44,000 owed to a bank, due on August 15. Chris withheld visitors' shares (50%) of the weekend gate receipts from Baltimore and Washington, claiming it was still owed to him from the American Association's 1891 Cincinnati venture. Outraged Baltimore owner Harry Von der Horst cabled Von der Ahe, "If you intend to keep up this nonsense our club will not again appear in your city." (SpLf 5/16) Chris also missed two player paydays in June. The team was on the road on both the 15th and 30th of the month, so at



Roger Connor

least the players did not have to pay for food most of the month. The players were squared salary-wise (less the inevitable petty fines) July 1st. Many waterslide and race track employees and contractors remained unpaid, and one Shoot the Chutes "sailor" was actually killed

in a boat accident at the park dur-



Tommy Dowd

ing the ballgame on July 28th. Von der Ahe was involved in at least eight lawsuits in 1896 (Hetrick, 312-313), one for failing to pay for the materials used to build the Shoot the Cutes. Recently divorced, Chris was also juggling two mistresses, both of whom expected to marry him.

With Cross as captain and Von der Ahe as manager, the Browns lost the next two games. Cross then left the team upon hearing that his father had died in Philadelphia. The team was 7-15 and had slipped to 11th place. Von der Ahe was not going to try and run the team on the field, so he convened a meeting of the players on May 13 and had them elect a new captain. The unanimous choice was veteran first baseman Roger Connor. Chris then appointed Connor to be manager as well, and Roger reluctantly accepted. He was the Browns fourth manager in a season barely four weeks old! No wonder *The*

Sporting News speculated that, although Connor had the respect of the players, "He will be the victim of the knockers at Sportsman's Park and it is doubtful if he will retain the management of the team for a week." (TSN 5-16) Nearing his 38th birthday and described as "elephantine," Connor was the all-time leader in career home runs and triples, although those statistics were unknown at the time

At least Connor's tenure lasted longer than a week. Playing with "dash and vim" (GD 5/15), the Browns won 4 of their next 8. The quiet-spoken Connor even "developed into quite a kicker." (SpLf 6/13) When the team left on a month-long road trip, the player-manager promised that the Browns would return "in a higher position than they occupy at present" (i.e., 11th place). (GD 5/24) Von der Ahe did not accompany the team east, going to a resort in West Baden, Indiana, to recuperate. Connor's promised improvement did not happen. The Browns lost the first 10 games of the trip, 17 of 21 in all. During an 0-7 homestand Von der Ahe continued to fine players for poor performance, including \$25 each for four men in one day alone, June 28th. The team was badly demoralized, and the *Globe-Democrat* complained, "The Browns played ... as if there was no head to the team...Not once during the entire game was Manager Connor heard to coach his players." (GD 7/08)

When the losing streak reached 14 games on July 8, Von der Ahe finally fired Con-

(Continued on page 5)

Managerial Thrill Ride (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

nor. The immediate cause was the unexplained absence of one of his players, which Connor had tried to keep secret from Von der Ahe.

The owner said, "He has made the same mistake of previous managers, that is, he has been too lenient with the men." (Rep 7/9) Another newspaper summed things up as follows, "Roger says he was tired of the 'hull shooting match.' Chris says he was tired of Roger." (PD 7/09). The Hall of Fame player had a managerial record of 8-37 and never managed in the majors again. Connor remained on the team until injured in the last week of the season, and he was the Browns leader in home runs, RBIs and total bases.

Leadoff man Tommy Dowd, who had been with the team since 1893, was the next manager named. The losing streak was snapped and the Browns won 13 of their next 20. When the team went on the road, Von der Ahe again went to West Baden, easing the stress on the players. The

Browns meanwhile reverted to form with a 9-29 road trip. The owner was able to refinance his bank note in August and in September he ran off to Erie, Pa., to wed one of his girlfriends. So the last months of the season were relatively crisis free. Under captain-manager Dowd, the Browns won 25 and lost 38, finishing in 11th place out of 12 with a 40-90 record. Dowd would eventually be rehired for 1897.

Sources:

(GD) – *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*

(Rep) – *St. Louis Republic*

(PD) – *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

(TSN) – *The Sporting News*

(SpLf) – *Sporting Life*

(Hetrick) – J. Thomas Hetrick, *Chris Von der Ahe and the St. Louis Browns*, Pocol Press,

Managers, Record, Term, Place:

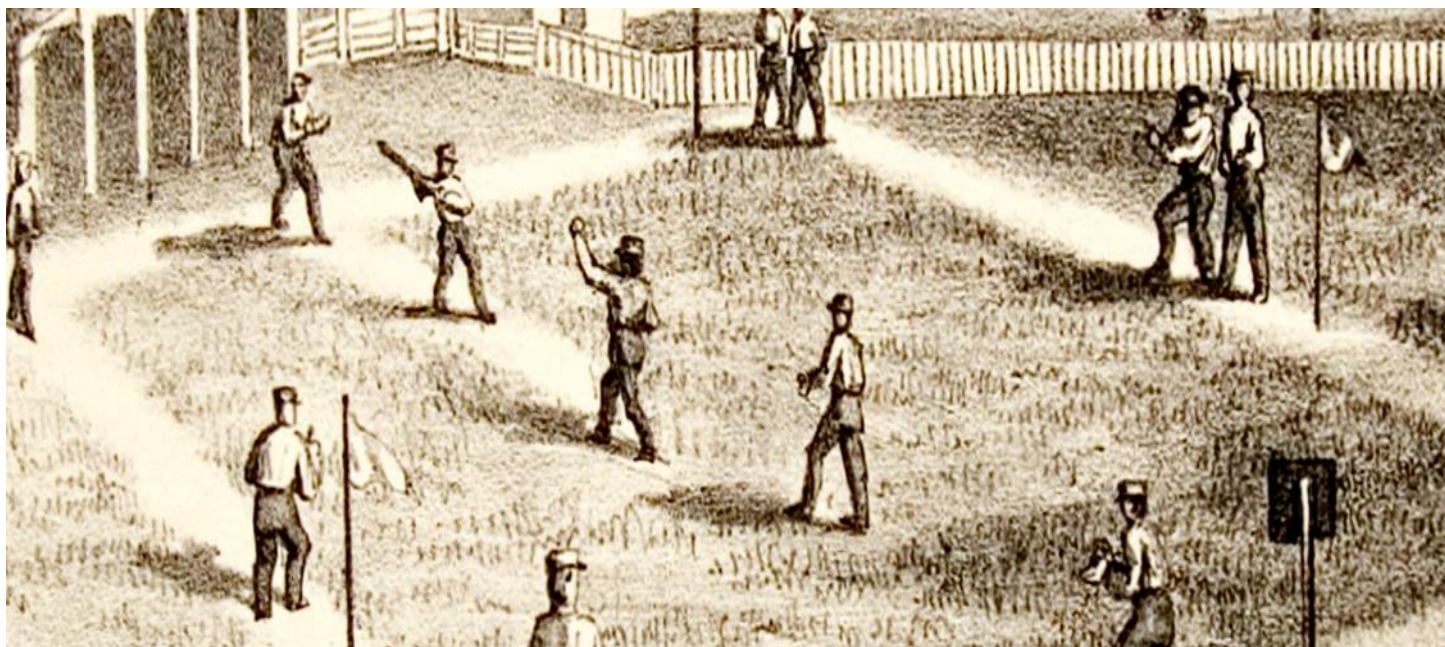
Harry Diddlebock 7-10, .412, April 16 – May 7, (10th place).

Arlie Latham 0-3, .000, May 8 – May 10, (10th place)

Chris Von der Ahe 0-2, .000, May 11 – May 12, (11th place).

Roger Connor 8-37-1, .178, May 13 – July 8, (11th place).

Tommy Dowd 25-38, .397, July 9 – September 26, (11th place).



Outfielder Records in 1887

by Brian Marshall

The 1887 season is probably most remembered as the season that bases on balls were counted as hits but it also represents the first season that an outfielder registered 300, or more, putouts, among other feats, in a single season. According to the

game on five separate occasions, see Table 2. The seven POs, as the point of demarcation, isn't arbitrarily selected, it stems from an article in *The Washington Post* [2] stating that seven POs was an "unusually large number for a single game". It can be observed

in Table 1 that Johnston made eight, or more, POs in four of the five games which, based on the comment in *The Washington Post*, would be even more unusual. The demarcation point of seven was further applied to chances in the outfield when a *Chicago*

Table 1: Outfielders With 300, or More, Putouts, During the 1887 Season; Ranked by PO					
Player	Team	League	PO	A	TCA
Dick Johnston	Boston Beaneaters	NL	339	34	373
Curt Welch	St Louis Browns	AA	336*	29	365
Pop Corkhill	Cincinnati Red Stockings	AA	310	29	339

Legend: PO = Putouts, A = Assists, TCA = Total Chances Accepted

*The 336 PO listed for Curt Welch represents only the PO he registered as an outfielder. Welch also played at second and first base during the 1887 season.

baseball-reference.com [1] web site there were three outfielders, in two different leagues, with 300, or more, putouts, during the 1887 season, see Table 1. Dick Johnston of the Boston Beaneaters in the National League (NL) led the major leagues in PO (Putouts) by an outfielder with 339. Curt Welch of the St Louis Browns in the American Association (AA) was close behind with 336. The fact that Johnston and Welch were one and two shouldn't be surprising because they were considered the two best outfielders in baseball at the time.

The importance of the 1887 season, from an outfielder perspective, is further enhanced by Dick Johnston's single game performances. Johnston managed to achieve, what was apparently, for the time, the truly amazing feat of making seven, or more, POs in a single



Tribune article stated "Brodie had a busy day in center. Seven chances in the field are above the ordinary." [3].

From a physical perspective, Johnston wasn't a big man, he stood a mere 5 foot, 8 inches in height and weighed in at 155 pounds but he was a extremely large man in the outfield during the 1887 season where he played at the centerfield position. Dick Johnston set, and/or, equaled the following NL records during the 1887 season;

a) most putouts in a single game by a centerfielder; 9 on May 24, 1887 vs Indianapolis Hoosiers; the game was ten innings

b) most total chances accepted (TCA) in a single game by a centerfielder; 10 on May 24, 1887 vs

(Continued on page 7)

Outfielder Records in 1887 (cont.)

(Continued from page 6)

Indianapolis Hoosiers; the game was ten innings

c) equaled the nine inning record for most TCA in a single game by a centerfielder; 9 on June 22, 1887 vs Indianapolis Hoosiers

d) most putouts in a single season by an outfielder; 339

e) most putouts in a single season by a centerfielder; 339

f) most games with ≥ 8 putouts by an outfielder during a single season; 4

g) most games with ≥ 8 putouts by a centerfielder during a single season; 4

h) most games with ≥ 7 putouts by an outfielder during a single season; 5

i) most games with ≥ 7 putouts by a centerfielder during a single season; 5

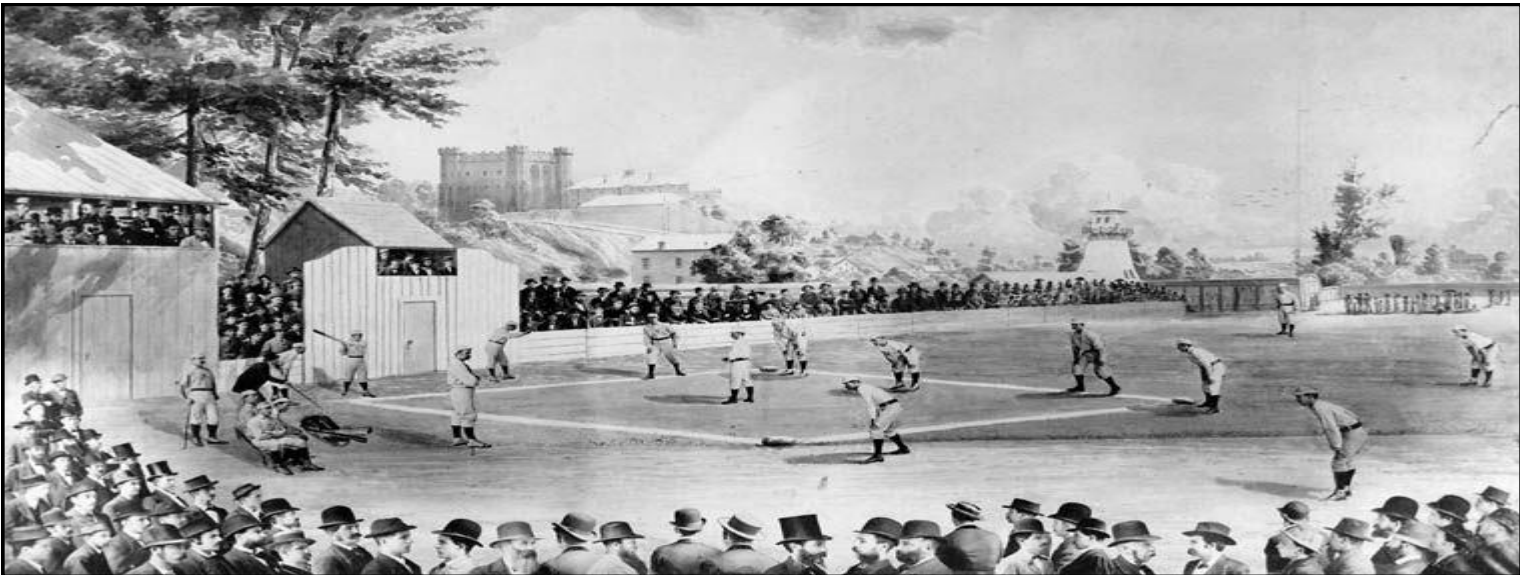
The reason that some of John-

ston's records say "by an outfielder" and some say "by a centerfielder" is because the records can be interpreted two ways; a) those that apply to all outfielders and b) those that apply specifically to centerfielders. Readers can make their own choice regarding the "outfielder" and "centerfielder" differentiation.

Table 2: Dick Johnston's Five Games With 7, or More, Putouts, During the 1887 Season					
Date	Opponent	League	PO	A	TCA
May 3	Philadelphia Quakers	NL	7	0	7
May 9	Philadelphia Quakers	NL	8	0	8
May 24*	Indianapolis Hoosiers	NL	9	1	10
June 22	Indianapolis Hoosiers	NL	8	1	9
Sept. 20	Indianapolis Hoosiers	NL	8	0	8

References/Notes

- [1] Fielding Leaders Table for Putouts as OF, as listed on *baseball-reference.com* for the 1887 season.
- [2] "FOR THE BASEBALL FANS," *The Washington Post*, Saturday, September 5, 1896, page 8.
- [3] "HUTCHISON WINS HIS GAME: The Bostons Unable to Hit Him and Chicago Takes the Lead Again: Notes of the Game," *The Chicago Tribune*, Friday, May 15, 1891, page 7.



Co-Chair's Corner (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

wife, Alexa, the couple frequently attended the “Fred” Conference and, although Larry remained very modest (he turned down being a Keynote Speaker, Special Presenter and Spotlight Interviewee) I did manage to get him to be “Fred” Panelist on at least one occasion. He did, however, contribute something most lasting to the annual Frederick Ivor-Campbell Conference by suggesting a year or two after naming the Conference in memory of Frederick Ivor-Campbell, the conference’s nickname, “**The Fred.**” Today, it is known to thousands of SABR members and others as “**The Fred**” **thanks to Larry.** To learn more about Larry McCray and his extraordinary accomplishments; in and out of SABR, see the “**News and Notes**” section **in this issue for the link to**

Larry McCray’s obituary in the Origins Committee Newsletter.

Our 19cBB Speakers Series, Season IV, will be wrapping up this May and we recently sent out our **Call for Abstracts for Season V** (Sept ’24 – May ’25). **Bob Bailey’s** idea (“what we should do during the pandemic...”) has long outlived the pandemic, thankfully. There are nine, 45-50 minute presentations with A/V each academic calendar year, given virtually via Zoom Meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Abstracts (200-400 words on any topic of 19cBB, with title and contact information) may be emailed to Bob, Jon and Peter by this May 15th.

Our 19cBB Book Club inaugural season is launching its’ fourth quarter - spring: April-June. At this quarters conclusion we will have had discussions of thirteen

books (starting last July) dealing with 19th century baseball (including two novels). See, within this issue, the details for this spring’s 19cBB Book Club quarter and our call for future book discussion moderators.

The NEW Nineteenth Century Committee’s Facebook Page was launched in late 2023. It is for the exclusive use of Nineteenth Century Committee Members (You) and it is off to a highly interactive, flying start. See Co-Chair, **Jon Popovich’s** piece in this newsletter (see page 9) which describes the site and how to join in.

The 2024 MLB season is underway, may your favorite team not disappoint you. Best regards, Bob, Jon and Peter, “...because, baseball history is not only baseball history.”

2024 Overlooked Legends Finalists

The 19th Century Overlooked Legend for 2024 is getting ready to enter the final voting phase. The process begins with the 19th Century Committee Members selecting the finalists from a master list of candidates. The process then continues with the twelve finalists put before the membership of SABR for this year’s selection. The selection for 2024 will be announced at the 19th Century Committee’s Annual Meeting at the SABR Conven-

tion in Minneapolis this August. By category, the finalists are:

PLAYERS:

TOMMY BOND
PAUL HINES
GEORGE VAN HALTREN

PIONEER/CONTRIBUTOR:

DICKEY PEARCE
LIP PIKE
AL REACH

BLACK BASEBALL:

GRANT HOME RUN JOHNSON
OCTAVIUS CATTO
GEORGE STOVEY

MANAGER/EXECUTIVE/ UMPIRE:

CHRIS VON Der AHE
BEN SHIBE
JIM MUTRIE

Facebook Re-Launch

by Jonathan Popovich

Our newly re-conceived, SABR Nineteenth Century Committee Facebook page went live on November 1, 2023, and it is with great pleasure that we provide you this recap of the initiative, as well as an update on its visitation and utilization over the past four months.

With so many social media platforms being leveraged in so many ways, Committee Chairman and Site Moderators collaborated on a plan to expand upon our own pre-existing Facebook presence which, while serving its purpose, was little more than a message board. The intention was to create an interactive space...a space where surveys, research ideas, and resources could be shared; a space where one could go to seek direction and encouragement on a book project, or how to publish; a site to post and discuss a newly found artifact, and a space to act as the single repository for all the media now being generated by the Committee such as the Speakers Series videos and Book Review

presentations.

We are so very satisfied to report that the Facebook page has met and exceeded all of our initial hopes for it. The page has indeed transitioned from a public message board into the dynamic, private group forum we knew it would. In mining the site for productivity data, it's become apparent to us that what's been achieved is that enjoyable, interesting, educational, and irresistible space we needed to share information and promote growth in 19th C. baseball research.

In the short time the page has been operational, we have accepted over 90 members to our community. *It is you* who have initiated over 200 postings that have resulted in over 400 comments and nearly 1000 member reactions. All manner of 19th century baseball research has been posted and re-posted here...from period imagery and maps of ball grounds, to news clippings and copies of historical documents,

it's all here for you to use, share, and enjoy.

For those of you not yet participating in our Facebook Group, we invite you to join up by requesting membership that one of our three moderators will process and/or assist you with. Below is a direct link to the page...

[SABR Nineteenth Century Committee Members Facebook Page](#)

Should you have any questions about the Facebook Group, eligibility, requesting membership, etc., etc., please email SABR Nineteenth Century Committee Members Facebook Moderators: Matt Albertson (mdalbert86@gmail.com), Jonathan Popovich (Co-Chair, Nineteenth Century Committee) (jayz43_1b@gmail.com), or Andy Terri-
rick(andyt4579@hotmail.com)



Ticket issued in 1895 by the London Base-Ball Association, London, England (B-97.46 National Baseball Hall of Fame Library)

Nineteenth Century Book Club

The 19th Century Book Club is entering the final quarter of its first season. We close the year with three Moderators who have solid experience preparing for these sessions and three books that look at various aspects of 19th Century baseball.

Each session of the Book Club start at 8:00 P.M. Eastern Time. All session are held via Zoom and all 19th Century Committee members will receive a Zoom link from the SABR office on the morning of the event.

Book for discussion, April 25, 2024, 8:00 P.M., ET, via Zoom Meeting, ed. Bill Felber; *Inventing Baseball: The 100 Greatest Games of the 19th Century*; Society for American Baseball Research, 2013; 308 pages.

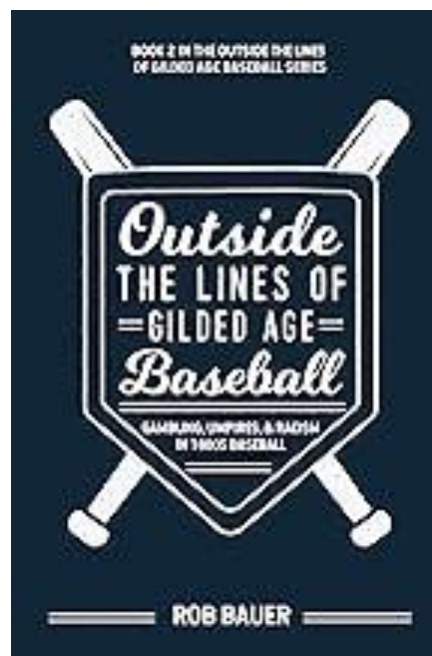


This book was a project of the 19th Century Committee of SABR in 2013. It contains 100 essays on greatest and most historically important games of baseball's early period. Over 40 committee members contributed essays on specific games. The discussion will be led

by Committee Co-Chair Peter Mancuso who was a contributor to the essays and worked in an editorial role.

The book is available as an e-book or a hardcopy volume from the SABR website or from Amazon.

Book for Discussion, June 6, 2024, 8:00 P.M., ET, via Zoom Meeting; Rob Bauer; *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball: Gambling, Umpires, & Racism in 1880s Baseball*; Self-Published, 2018; 187 pages.



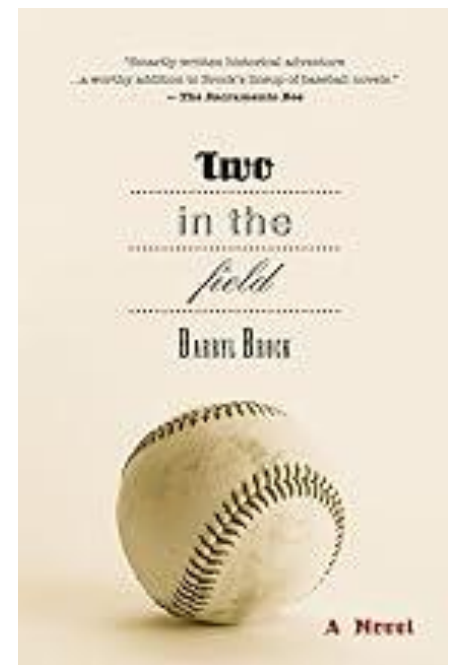
This the second volume of Bauer's examination of baseball in the 1880s. The first volume dealt with Alcohol, Fitness and Cheating during the decade. It was discussed in March, 2024. This volume deals with gambling, umpires and racism.

Bauer has been an active 19th Century Committee member having presented at the Fred and the 19th Century Speakers Series.

The Moderator for the session will be Matt Albertson, who also moderated the discussion of Bauer's first volume in the series.

The book is available from Amazon or from the author at: robbauerbooks@gmail.com.

Book for Discussion, June 27, 2024, 8:00 P.M., ET, via Zoom Meeting; Darryl Brock; *Two in the Field*; North Atlantic Books, 2007, 408 pages.



lantic Books, 2007, 408 pages.

This is the sequel to Brock's novel *If I Never Get Back* which was discussed in February. The novel continues the story of narrator Sam Fowler as he seeks Caitlyn and continues to fall in with ball players and ball teams.

The earlier discussion on Brock's work sought to examine how some relationships ended and this session will continue the discussion.

The Moderator will be Paul Langendorfer who also moderated the earlier Brock novel.

News & Notes

-SABR's Origins Committee issued a new Newsletter in February. Go to the SABR web site and locate the Origins Committee in the Research Committee section. This newsletter has a tribute to Larry McCray (as mentioned earlier in the Co-Chair's Corner) a long-time member and friend of the Nineteenth Century Committee. Here is the link to the Origins most recent newsletter.

file:

<https://sabr.org/research/origins-research-committee-newsletters/>

The Nineteenth Century Committee -is bookended by both the Origins Committee and the Deadball Committee. So in addition to keeping up with the doings on Origins keeping up with the younger players of the deadball era here is a link to their most recent newsletter.

file:

<https://sabr.org/research/deadball-era-research-committee-newsletters/>

-The Nineteenth Century Speakers Series is working on the event's fifth season which will run from



September 2024 to May 2025. A Call for Presentation Abstracts has been issued. Abstracts should be 200-40 words and should acknowledge that the presentation will include a visual component. Each session is held via Zoom and is held on the second Tuesday of the month.

-SABR's 52nd Annual Convention is scheduled for August 7-11 in downtown Minneapolis. Registration is open on the SABR website. During the Convention the Nineteenth Century Committee will hold its Annual Business Meeting. We will send out a notice for the day and time in the next Newsletter. The Newsletter will also carry an Agenda for the Meeting. The 2024 19th Century

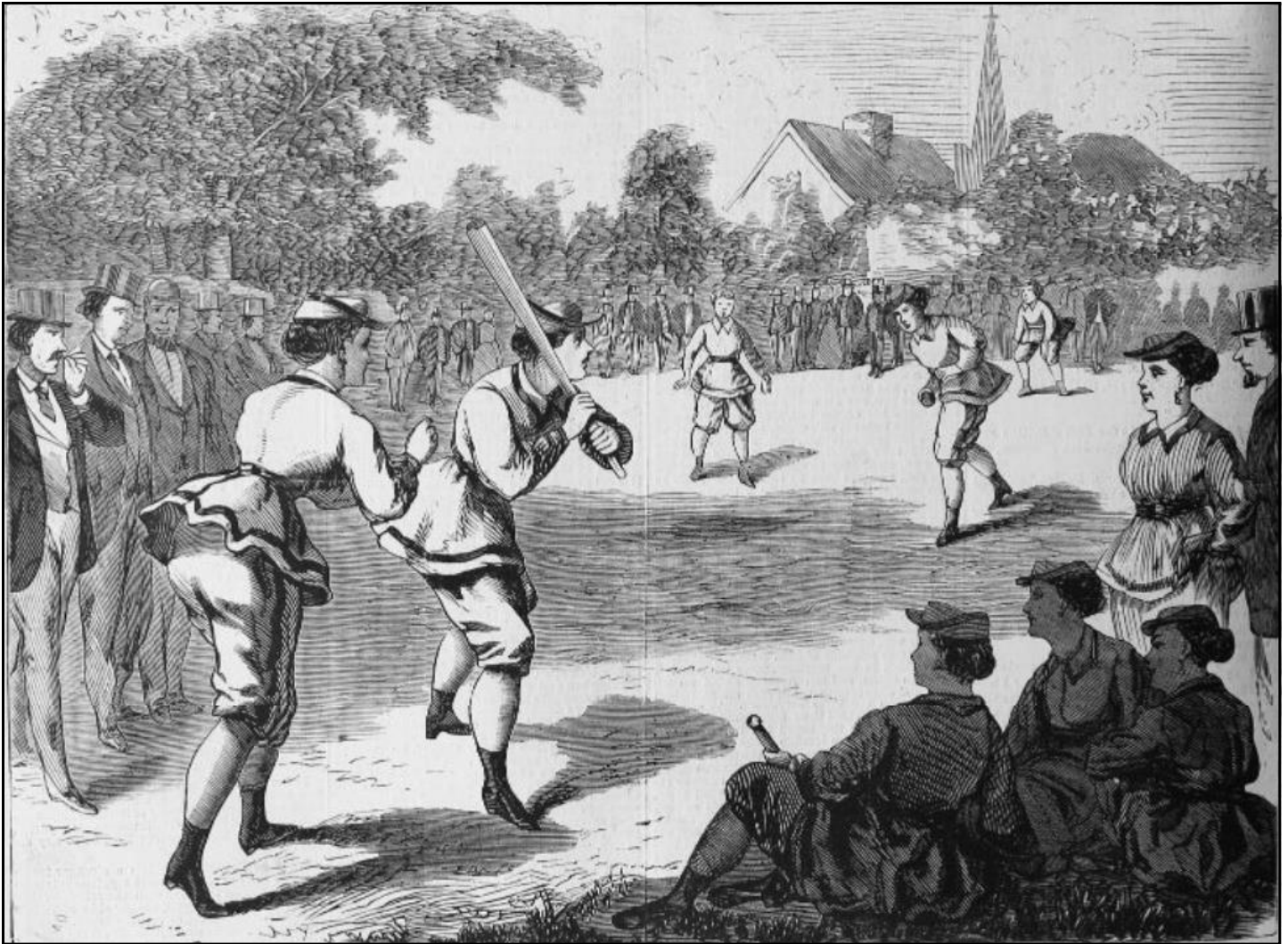
Overlook Legend will be announced at the meeting.

-In the past several Newsletters we have started to run some longer-form articles. There is no word limitation on these submission and we will run all endnotes and acknowledgments associated with the article. This Newsletter issue has an article submitted by Paul Proia on the death of former major leaguer Mox McQuerry while serving as a police officer in Covington, KY. Right now we do not have any submissions for the Summer or later editions of the Newsletter. If you have an article of an article idea that you think might go over 3,000 words, send an email to the Newsletter editor at bobailey@cox.net. Shorter articles are also welcomed.

-The following authors will be selling and signing their books at this year's Fred: David Block, *Pastime Lost*, \$20; Paul DeFonzo, *Big League Baseball- A History- Volume 1: 1871-1893*, \$30; Marty Payne, *Baseball on Maryland's Eastern Shore, 1866-1950*, \$35. Cash sales, exact change appreciated.



1882 Vogel Brothers Clothier Trade Card.



Nineteenth Century Women's Base Ball Game Illustration (Source Unknown)

The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop

by Paul Proia



The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

Editors Note: This is our third long-form article published in the newsletter. The Article was submitted by Paul Proia who operates the mightycaseybaseball.com website.

According to Wallace Bishop, it was self-defense. He and his friend, William Lyons, were approached by another tramp who complained about one thing or another. At some point, Bishop offered to buy the man a keg of beer they could share while they camped at Ludlow Lagoon.

Ludlow Lagoon was a newly created amusement park of sorts. A trolley line looked for a way to drum up business so it invested in a project that dammed a river, creating an island dotted lake that would serve as a getaway for Cincinnati area residents. However, it also served as an outpost for the hobos, tramps, drifters, and criminals who were escaping from something, the law or even life, and did so by riding the trains that now connected the continental United States. Located on the edge of Covington, Kentucky, Ludlow Lagoon was close enough that someone could easily sneak onto a train at one or more of the nearby train stations, but far enough outside of town that lawmen wouldn't necessarily mess with them.

After Bishop made his offer to buy him beer, the tramp had bickered enough. Bishop claimed that the tramp pulled out two revolvers and fired – one bullet grazing Bishop's leg. Acting quickly, Bishop and Lyons were able to corral the tramp and Bishop wrested away one of the revolvers.

Bishop's shot was direct and true; the tramp fell to the ground and died immediately. Now, Bishop and Lyons would have to hit the road again – rather, hit the rails again. Already fugitives from the law, being connected to a shooting would land them in

were out of time – a police officer was now boarding the trolley from the Kentucky side.

Patrolman William Thomas McQuery, a tall and sturdy man loaded with bravery, patience, and temperament to deal with all kinds of pressure, boarded the



Postcard of Ludlow Lagoon

prison if caught. They hopped on a green line trolley and headed for Cincinnati.

The sound of gunshots coming from Ludlow Lagoon alerted the local Covington police officers. They caught and surrounded the trolley, placing officers on both sides of the Roebling suspension bridge that crossed the Ohio River and connected Covington with Cincinnati. The trolley came to a stop in the middle of the bridge – and seeing as the bridge was now blocked on both ends, Bishop and Lyons looked for alternate escape routes. They

trolley and, without noting the reason he was talking to the two men, asked Bishop and Lyons to quietly follow him off the train. Bishop and Lyons, after acknowledging the request and claiming to be unarmed, got up from their seats and followed McQuery to the rear of the train. As they reached the end of the car, Bishop reached for his revolver.

Someone on the train screamed, "Look out!" McQuery turned to his left as Bishop fired. The bullet went through McQuery's left arm into his side where it tore through intestines

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The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

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and finally left his right side. It didn't knock over the officer known as "Big Mox," though. The officer grabbed his own revolver and turned to return fire. However, Lyons grabbed McQuery around both arms before he could raise one to aim at Bishop. McQuery squeezed off two shots – one of them grazing Bishop on the leg.

Most of the other passengers stampeded off the other side of the trolley.

Despite the bleeding, Bishop was uninjured; he hopped off the trolley and looked for a way to escape. Seeing no other reasonable option, the best choice for him was to swim for his freedom. He emptied his pockets and, keeping only a wallet and his revolver, hurried over the guardrail and jumped into the Ohio River – some 92 feet below.

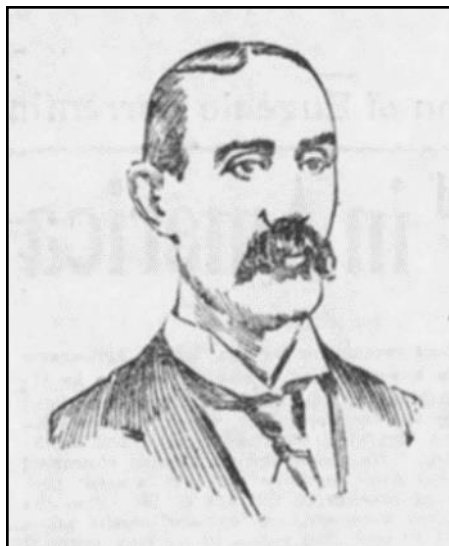
That plan didn't work either – as Bishop reached the Kentucky shore, he was captured by other Covington officers. He didn't go easily, mind you. It was a desperate struggle between freedom and the law – won by the law. Bishop was arrested and placed in the local jail.

As for McQuery, he was soon attended by the commissioner of the Covington Fire Department, who happened to be on the trolley when shots rang out. Mox was quickly taken to a hospital in Cincinnati where doctors did what they could to stop the bleeding and arrest whatever infections would come from the gunshot.

At the Covington jail, Bishop told his captors that his name was

William Burns – a name that matched the initials tattooed on his forearm. Lyons, who was captured on the bridge, was also in jail. And, like Bishop's attempted use of the name Burns, Lyons wasn't the second man's name. Police would later learn his real name was Thomas Mulligan.

Another thing police would learn was that Bishop had not fired upon another drifter at Ludlow Lagoon in self-defense. Five



Mox McQuery

other drifters at Ludlow Lagoon were arrested and confirmed that the shooting victim was laying on the ground, likely sleeping, when fired upon. Officers surmised Bishop must have known the other man, travelled in similar circles, and they had a falling out that Bishop chose to resolve with violence. Newspapers wrote articles suggesting that Bishop and Mulligan were, in fact, yeg-

men." These were the modern version of the bank robbers of the previous generation – fearless and more prone to senseless violence, especially when it came to using heavy explosives to blow up safes.

Regardless of the circumstances of Bishop's and Mulligan's backgrounds or criminal history, they were charged with the murder of a fellow drifter and the attempted murder of a policeman.

What police would never learn was the identity of the killed drifter. At first people suspected he was named McVey, but other McVey family members said the victim was not someone they knew. Officers found a coat belonging to the victim containing various union mining or railway cards that suggested his name might have been W. J. Clark or David C. Collins. However, they proved to be fake identities. After a significant amount of effort, the victim was never identified nor claimed. Eventually he was buried in a potter's field at the county burial ground, near Independence, Kentucky.

As for McQuery, the initial thought was that McQuery would pass – but the constitution of this strong officer would not go without a fight. Shot the evening of June 8, 1900, Big Mox showed signs of improvement. On the morning of June 12th, when McQuery's wife was given an update, the signs were very positive. However, a few hours later, the infections in his intestines began doing deadly damage to McQuery's system. Blood poison-

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The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

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ing and peritonitis set in and by the afternoon Isabel McQuery watched her husband take his last breath.

By nightfall, the charges against Bishop and Mulligan were amended to include the murder of a policeman. In days, the newspapers would follow the story of McQuery's death and Bishop's trials – telling people about Bishop's assumed past as a newspaper employee in St. Louis and McQuery's known past as a major league first baseman.

William Thomas McQuery was born [June 28, 1861](#) in Garrard County, Kentucky to Alexander S. McQuery and Margaret Jane Naylor. William, named for both his paternal and maternal grandfathers, was the last of three children following two sisters born two and three years before him. At the time, Alex worked his father's farm in rural Garrard but soon after he would move toward Covington, a town across the Ohio River from Cincinnati. He'd take on jobs as a plasterer and later as an employee for a safe factory while his wife took on raising three children. The Cincinnati baseball teams of William McQuery's youth were great – including the first professional team that went undefeated in 1869, and a large number of amateur teams that eventually spilled over the river into the Covington area. The first time you see McQuery's name in a box score is with the Kentons – a Covington based baseball team. McQuery was a first baseman of some skill – a large target to throw at (he is listed as 6'1" in your baseball en-

cyclopedia but other articles suggested he was as tall as 6' 4"), and a capable enough hitter to bat in the middle of the lineup. This was 1883; in 1884, he joined his first professional team in Terre Haute, Indiana. He chose Terre Haute over a similar offer from Evansville when he heard rumors that Evansville had financial issues. When not playing ball, William took up some of the jobs his father once had – as a plasterer or lather.

McQuery's play at Terre Haute was given fair praise for his work at first base and his power potential – he had 18 extra base hits in his first summer professional season. When the Union Association Cincinnati Reds needed a first baseman, they asked about McQuery, who likely was more than happy to play baseball closer to home (at least for home games).

Joining the team in August, he played 25 games to a .280 batting average, though with less power than he had shown in the minors.

The Union Association disbanded after the 1884 season, but McQuery's career was just starting. He first signed with Indianapolis, a very good minor league team looking to join the majors. In 32 games for Indianapolis he upped his batting average to .292 and once again was courted by a major league team. This time it was the National League's Detroit Wolverines who picked up McQuery. McQuery was a good addition – a good batting average, doubles power, and he drove in 30 runs in 70 games.

On September 28, 1885,

McQuery's fourth hit, a long homer to left-center, allowed him to finish the cycle in a one-sided win over Providence.

However, his time in Detroit would be short. When Buffalo folded, the Wolverines picked up four players who would turn Detroit into a National League champion in 1886. McQuery instead was released and signed with the Kansas City Cowboys. As with the previous seasons, McQuery was good but not great – and Kansas City was not long for the National League. He returned to the minors.

Thankfully, McQuery landed with a city and team that suited him: the Syracuse Stars. The Stars were close to a major league quality organization in the International League and McQuery played well there from 1887 to 1890. In 1888 and 1889, he batted .309 and .299 with a little power and fielded first base dependably if not gracefully. When Syracuse graduated from the International League to the American Association in 1890, McQuery was named captain of the major league Syracuse franchise. There, he didn't disappoint – batting .308, hitting some doubles, and fielding his position like the intelligent veteran he was.

McQuery is seen on the following page in this team photo of the 1889 Syracuse Stars. You can probably figure out which guy in the top row was nicknamed "Big Mox." (Tall and centered...)

However, Syracuse wasn't long for the major leagues. Released at the end of the 1890 season, he found a role with Wash-

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The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)



1889 Syracuse Stars.

Mox McQuery is third from left in back row. At the end of the back row is Fleet Walker. The manager at center is Jack Chapman former major league manager.

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ington of the American Association, but his batting average slipped to the .240s. After a year in the minors in 1892, he hung up his glove and returned home to Covington.

Those who knew McQuery knew that he was a good person –

even in temperament and fair in judgment. The police chief, Joe Pugh, encouraged McQuery to join the police force and in 1896 he was given his badge. Mox's life was his work and his wife. He previously married the former Isabel Schoyers in 1886 near her family home in Versailles, Indiana. A census record

suggested Isabel had given birth to a child, but there were no children living with him in the 1900 US Census, nor any listed in obituaries or articles of McQuery at the time of his death on [June 12, 1900](#).

The police and fire departments

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The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

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provided pall bearers and accompanied McQuery on his final journey from his home to the funeral at the First Baptist Church where the Reverend C. J. Jones performed a ceremony, to Linden Grove Cemetery where his remains now rest.

As for Wallace Bishop and Thomas Mulligan, their lives would be spent in jails and pris-

horse drawn carriages to haul the prisoners out of Covington to a jail in Louisville. People ran after the carriages yelling, "Hang 'em!" as they chased the exiting criminals.

With only minutes to spare, Bishop and Mulligan were hustled out of town, racing around the downtown area of Milldale where a train station sat on the

officers and their carriages. Police held off the mob until they could load the accused onto the train, then headed off to Louisville.

Justice was apparently too swift in coming. A grand jury was seated, two coroners (one in Covington for the dead drifter and one in Cincinnati for the dead officer) held inquiries, and within days, Judge James P. Tarvin held a trial for the accused. Bishop had been indicted on two counts of murder; Mulligan on one count of murder and one count as an accessory to murder. The jury found them guilty; Tarvin immediately sentenced Bishop to be hanged.

Attorneys representing Bishop filed an appeal, saying the death of McQuery should have been treated as manslaughter rather than murder, given it was the result of an escape and not necessarily planned. The argument for murder was based on Bishop's claim that he didn't have a weapon, but then chose to use it as soon as McQuery's back was turned to him. Since manslaughter was not an option given to the grand jury, however, the appeal was granted. In March, 1901, there was a second trial for Wallace Bishop and Thomas Mulligan.

Now, Bishop's attorneys argued that it would be unlikely that he could receive a fair trial in a county where he had already been arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death – not to mention a near riot at the jail, followed by a harrowing escape to avoid being killed by local residents angered

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Monument at Covington Central Police Headquarters memorializing officers who died in the line of duty. Mox McQuery is the second name on the list.

ons. As word of McQuery's death spread through Covington, Joe Pugh was notified by his officers that people in the city were coming to the city jail to kill Bishop and Mulligan for having done the same to McQuery. Quickly, Pugh organized a group of officers and three

edge of town. They happened upon a picnic – and word spread quickly that Bishop and Mulligan were there. Mobs had been following them and people from nearby railroad yards joined in the chase. Eventually scores of angry people surrounded the of-

The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

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by the death of a popular police officer.

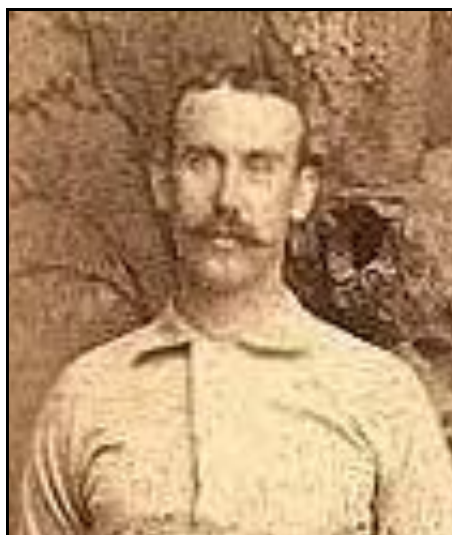
Judge Tarvin had a reputation for hasty and self-serving decisions. In fact, shortly after being elected to his position, he declared that his courthouse needed an overhaul. When the county commission argued with him over some technical point, he had members of that commission jailed for contempt. Now, he had quickly determined Bishop deserved to be hanged for murder without giving a grand jury other valid options. Naturally, he disagreed with the request for a change of venue.

Two days later, after going through scores of potential jurors, they still had just four of the twelve seats filled. Exasperated, Tarvin suggested moving the case – but now the attorneys chose to make Tarvin sit there and watch other batches of jurors get disqualified until a jury was seated. Finally, a new jury found Bishop guilty of murder – but instead of a hanging, Bishop received a life sentence at the state penitentiary in Frankfort, KY.

Bishop's life in prison would be short. On August 20, 1902, three men hatched a plan to escape from the prison. At 6 a.m., with prisoners moving from the dining hall to their job areas following breakfast, the three overpowered guard A. H. Hill, taking his revolver. F. F. Hurst came over to assist Hill, but he was easily corralled by the prisoners as well. The three prisoners thought that by taking a guard during the morning prisoner

transfer they might start a stampede that would help them escape. Instead, only one other prisoner joined in the fray. Albert Ransom, who was carrying his own concealed knife, became the fourth member of the escape effort.

While guards quickly hustled the rest of the prison population back to their cells, Wallace Bishop, Thomas Mulligan, Lafayette



William Thomas "Mox"
McQuery

Brooks, and Ransom moved their two hostages toward the shoe factory. Along the way, they picked up a third hostage who happened to be in a locker room. When the acting deputy warden, Mat Madigan, rushed the four men with his own team of six guards, the four moved onto a second floor workroom that overlooked the prison area.

Ransom was holding a door, but his shoulder was visible through a window. Guard Eph Lillard, Jr. fired his rifle, hitting

Ransom in that shoulder, knocking him over and removing whatever thoughts of escape ran through his head. He quickly left the other three prisoners and surrendered. The other three called out to the guards that if anyone tried to enter the room, they would shoot their hostages. Four hours passed during this standoff without any other shooting, at which point guards used convict Frank Brooks as a messenger to communicate between the prison warden and Bishop. Finally, the three convicts agreed to meet with Warden Eph Lillard, Sr. at the base of the stairs to discuss ending the standoff. As agreed to, Bishop, Mulligan, and Brooks left the room with their hands up. Halfway down the stairs Bishop lowered his arms – possibly to reach for his revolver. Guard George Fry's bullet – one of a few bullets fired – hit Bishop square in the chest. Another shot hit Mulligan, who crawled toward the warden begging for his life. Brooks surrendered. Bishop, instead, cursed the guards who shot him when he was taken back into custody.

When it became obvious what fate awaited him, Bishop called for the Reverend T. S. Major and expressed a desire to join the Catholic Church. Major quickly baptized Bishop, then Bishop asked for Mat Madigan and asked for his pardon and forgiveness. Early that evening, Wallace Bishop left this earth.

Notice was sent to a possible family member in Hammond, Indiana. Bishop had been communicating by letter with an S.E (or C. E) Bishop there, recently writing about the hellish conditions in the

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The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

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prison. Having no response, nor any interest from nearby medical schools, Bishop's body was buried in the prison graveyard.

Mulligan tried to escape a second time in 1906, crawling under the floor of that same shoe shop, then under the old wooden stockade which stood outside the walls of the prison. Free, he took to running toward Bloomington, a village ten miles from Frankfort. He was captured, and while Officer T. E. Dailey was returning Mulligan back to the prison, Mulligan got away a second time – making it five miles in handcuffs before being captured again. With 15 miles of running under his belt that day, Mulligan was exhausted and put up no fight the second time he was returned to his prison cell.

At this point, Mulligan's health was failing – he lost his sight and suffered from dementia. At the end of 1906, reports in papers foretold Mulligan's impending death, though he survived to at least late August 1907. His actual death was not reported in Kentucky papers. He outlived his judge; James Tarvin died August 20, 1907, following an asthma attack. As for Lafayette Brooks, he would also die in prison. Brooks, who had murdered the son of a judge in

1896, jumped out of a third story window of the same prison shoe factory. The 40-foot jump was reported as a suicide attempt, with injuries that would eventually kill him. Reports of the death of Ransom, who murdered a man in Louisville, could not be located.

Notes:

1850, 1860, 1870, 1880. 1900 US Censuses

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"Notes," Louisville Courier-Journal, March 16: 1890: 9.

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"Leaped For Liberty," Public Ledger (Maysville, KY), June 9, 1900: 3.

"Claims," Cincinnati Enquirer, June 10, 1900: 12.

"Burns Becomes Bishop," Cincinnati Enquirer, June 10, 1900: 12.

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"Hurried," Cincinnati Enquirer, June 13, 1900: 12.

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"Officer McQuery Dead," Kentucky Advocate, June 13, 1900: 1.

"Funeral," Cincinnati Enquirer, June 14, 1900: 12.

"Indicted," Cincinnati Enquirer, June 15, 1900: 3.

"The Extreme Penalty," Hamilton County Ledger, July 27, 1900: 5.

"Bishop Given Death Sentence," Lexington Herald, July 28, 1900: 5.

"A New Trial," Lexington Daily Leader, January 9, 1901: 1.

A Historical Note on Judge Tarvin. Tarvin's brother was A.H. Tarvin. A.H. Tarvin was the baseball writer for the Louisville Courier-Journal in the 1930s and 1940s. A.H. Tarvin is the author of *75 Years on Louisville Diamonds*, published in 1940.

(Continued on page 21)

The Day Mox McQuery Met Wallace Bishop (cont.)

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"Judge Tarvin's Difficulties," Louisville Courier-Journal, March 16, 1901: 2.

"For Life," Cincinnati Post, March 18, 1901: 3.

"Convict Mutiny in Frankfort Prison," Owensboro Messenger, August 22, 1902: 3.

"At Bay," Louisville Courier-

Journal, August 21, 1902: 1, 3.
(Images taken were on page 3.)

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Findagrave- Wallace Bishop

"Wallace Bishop," Lexington Daily Leader, August 24, 1902: 8.

"The Latest," Louisville Courier-Journal, July 11, 1903: 1.

"In the Jury's Hands," Louisville

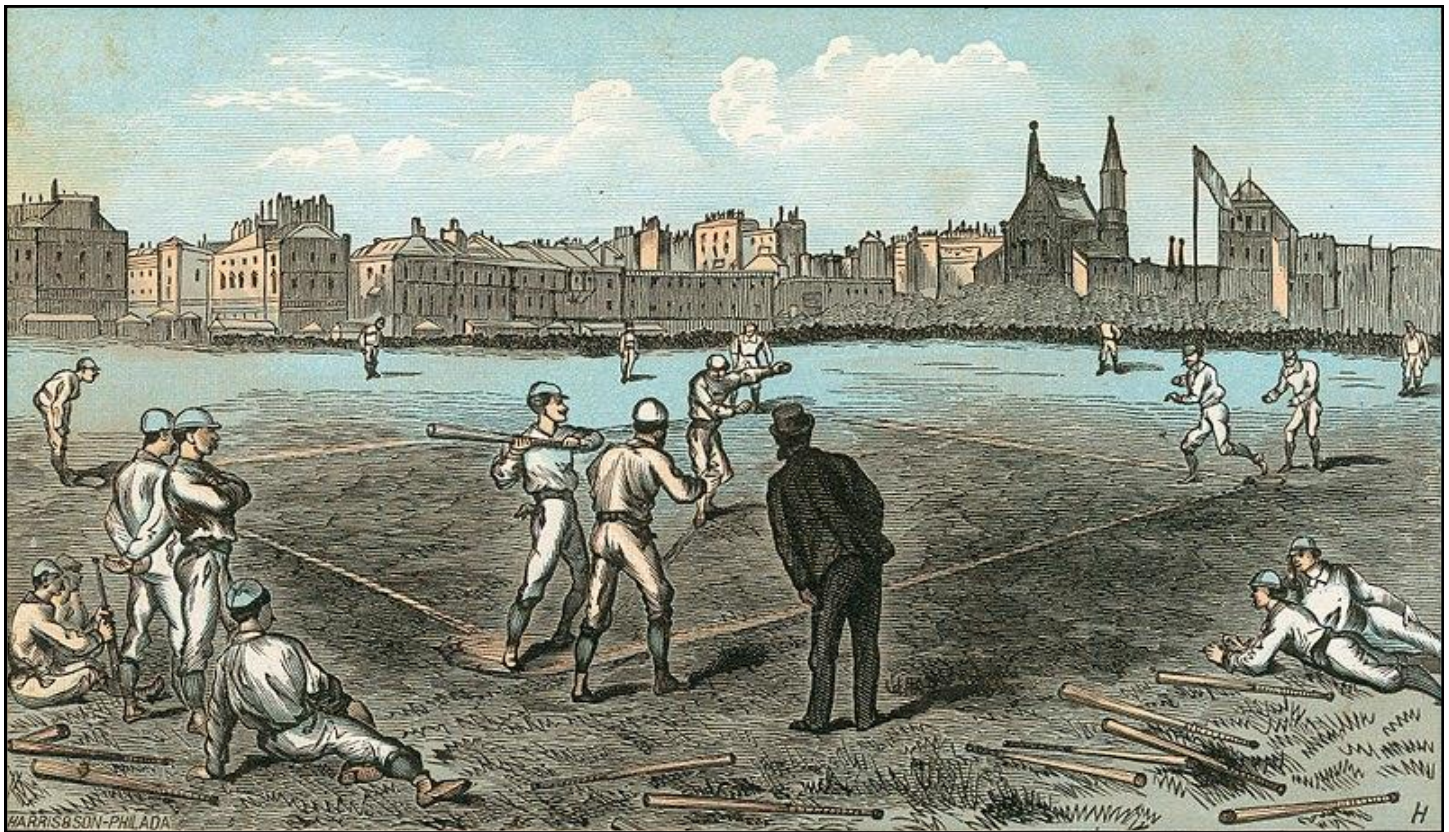
Courier-Journal, July 4, 1896: 3.

"Desperate Prisoner Made His Escape," Owensboro Messenger, April 15, 1906: 1.

"Mulligan is Dying," Kentucky Post, November 10, 1906: 3.

"Mulligan Insane at Penitentiary," Kentucky Post, August 26, 1907: 2.

"Judge Tarvin Dies Suddenly," Louisville Courier-Journal, August 21, 1907: 1.



Scene of a late nineteenth century urban professional baseball game. Created by Harris & Son, Philadelphia.

Original held at Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, MO