

# NINETEENTH CENTURY NOTES

SPRING 2018

SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN BASEBALL RESEARCH

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

## Bill Humber Named to Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame by Kevin Glew

**Committee Contacts**  
Chairman— Peter Mancuso  
6970 Ely Road  
New Hope, PA 18938  
peterplus4@earthlink.net

Editor/VC— Bob Bailey  
10223 SW 49th Lane  
Gainesville, FL 32608  
bobbailey@cox.net

Follow the Nineteenth Century Committee on Facebook at @SABR19thCC.

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**A** strong argument could be made that without Bill Humber there would be no Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame.

It's thanks in large part to his tireless and trailblazing research efforts that many of the stories shared in the St. Mary's, Ont.-based shrine have been brought to light. So it's fitting that Humber will now be honoured permanently in the museum.

The Canuck ball hall announced on February 1 that the 68-year-old



Bill Humber

historian will be part of its 2018 induction class, along with former Mon-

trepreneur Expos superstar Pedro Martinez and long-time Toronto Blue Jays outfielder Lloyd Moseby.

The trio will be celebrated in a ceremony on June 16. Humber will become the first historian/academic researcher to be inducted.

"Researching the roots of Canadian baseball, sharing those stories, and celebrating long lost heroes, has been a lifelong passion for me, so to join them in this special place is both an honour and a humbling experience," said Humber.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Chairman's Corner by Peter Mancuso

**The 2018 Fred** is just a couple of weeks ahead and the HOF just confirmed that our hoped for additional space for this year's conference will not be available. What, does look very promising, is that we will have that additional space starting in 2019. **PLEASE NOTE: THE FRED DATES FOR 2019**

**WILL BE APRIL 26 & 27.** This year's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Fred has been sold out since mid January so the need for an expanded capacity seems evident.

**Annual Nineteenth Century Committee's Business Meeting** will be held during SABR 48 in Pittsburgh which is scheduled June 20-24, 2018 at the

Wyndham Grand. Please, visit SABR's website for convention registration and hotel reservation information. This is the last issue of our newsletter before the convention. In the weeks and months ahead I will group email our committee membership details of

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# Bill Humber Named to Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame (cont.)

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Born in Toronto, Ont., in 1949, Humber acquired a love for baseball at a young age.

“I grew up in the sandlot days of baseball when you just went out and you found a place to play and it could even be a concrete parking lot where there were no cars in it,” shared Humber.

As a child, he cheered for the International League’s Toronto Maple Leafs.

“My dad came to Canada after the war. He was in the British army. He’d never seen a baseball game in his life when he got here, but one of the first things he did with my brother and I was take us to a game at the old Maple Leaf Stadium in Toronto,” reflected Humber. “I can remember from my earliest days, when I was seven or eight, going to those games in Toronto and just falling in love with the game and the whole atmosphere when I was walking into the stadium.” Two of his favourite Maple Leafs players were Steve Demeter and Rocky Nelson.

“I always liked to think I was a third baseman,” said Humber. “I don’t think I was a very good third baseman, but that was the position I kind of caught on to and it may have been because Steve Demeter played third base for the Maple Leafs and he was a particular favourite of mine.”

And Humber still has a photo of Nelson on his office wall. A Portsmouth, Ohio native, Nelson captured a Triple Crown for the Maple Leafs in 1958 when he topped the International League with a .326 batting average, 43 home runs and 120 RBI. Nelson



Bill Humber demonstrated  
Cricket Technique at 2011  
Fred

was inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame in 1987, so Humber will soon have a plaque alongside his boyhood hero’s.

Humber’s interest in baseball history also began at a young age. “I can recall handing in an 80-page project on the history of baseball in Grade 3 and I wish I still had it,” said Humber. “It was probably pretty primitive but it would be really fun to look at it today.”

For his post-secondary education, Humber completed an undergraduate degree in Arts & Science at the University of Toronto

and a master’s in Environmental Studies at York University. In the spring of 1973, towards the end of his work on his master’s, he wanted to read a book strictly for pleasure and he chose Roger Kahn’s classic *The Boys of Summer*. He thoroughly enjoyed the book and it sparked a greater interest in baseball history for him.

After graduation, Humber’s first job required him to ride a bus from Bowmanville, Ont., to downtown Toronto in the spring of 1974. During that commute, he would peruse baseball books. One of the books that had the greatest impact on him was Irving A. Leiter’s *Baseball: Diamond in the Rough*.

“It’s not a great book and it had lots of mistakes in it, and a lot of the mistakes had to do with the date and the full report of the Beachville game, but it was the first time that I had seen an account of the game in Beachville in 1838,” recalled Humber.

This inspired him to research the origins of baseball in Canada – something that virtually no one else was doing at the time. Armed with his passion for his baseball history, he became one of the first Canadians to join the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) in 1978 and the following year, he founded a course called “Baseball Spring Training for Fans” at Seneca College which continues to this day. He has taught the course since its inception.

“The idea [for the course] was pretty simple. The players get to go to Florida – or today Arizona as well – to get ready for the season

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# Bill Humber Named to Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame (cont.)

and I thought well, what do the poor fans get to do? They have to sit around until April rolls around for the start of the season. So 40 years ago, I just had an idea that why don't we just do a course, a class (non-credit) just for fun in a college classroom?" recalled Humber.

The course was a tremendous success and it led to Humber having his first article about baseball published in *The Globe and Mail* in 1979 after Neil Campbell, one of the paper's writers, attended a class in which Humber spoke about the London Tecumsehs who captured an International Association championship in 1877.

Humber was also instrumental in the formation of the Toronto Hanlan's Point chapter of SABR and he played a central role in the organization of Toronto's first SABR Convention in 1981, which represented the first time the conference was held outside of the U.S.

Largely due to the success of that convention, Humber became the first – and still only – Canadian to have been appointed to the SABR board of directors. He served on the board in 1982 and 1983.

In 1983, Humber authored, *Cheering for the Home Team*, the first extensive book on Canadian baseball history. It was published by The Boston Mills Press, a small firm that specialized in railway books, and only 4,000 copies (2,000 hardcopies and 2,000 soft covers) were produced. Both versions sold out.

"The great regret is that they didn't essentially flood the country with the book because nobody had

ever done a book on baseball in Canada before," said Humber. "So it was a bit of a lost opportunity. I mean, I don't regret it, but it could've been more."

Over the years, Humber has penned several other groundbreaking Canadian baseball books, including *Let's Play Ball: Inside the Perfect Game* (1989), *The Baseball Book and Trophy* (1993), *Diamonds of the North: A Concise History of Baseball in Canada* (1995) and *All I Thought About was Baseball (with John St. James)* (1996).



The Bowmanville, Ont., resident has also done countless presentations about Canadian baseball history across North America and he never misses an opportunity to wave the flag when he's in the company of his American colleagues. He has served as a strong voice for Canadian baseball history on SABR's 19th Century Research Committee and was a keynote speaker at the Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19th Century Baseball Conference in 2016.

It would be difficult to summarize all of Humber's groundbreaking research. The depth of his work on the roots of baseball in Canada is unparalleled and he has

introduced fans and fellow historians to fascinating Canadian baseball pioneers like William Shuttleworth and Robert Addy. He's particularly proud of the research he did on the first international baseball game that took place in August 1860 between a team from Hamilton, Ont., and Buffalo, N.Y. He was able to establish that that contest took place in Clifton, which is now known as Niagara Falls, Ont.

Fortunately for Canadians, Humber's love of baseball has never waned. For more than four decades, the veteran Seneca College professor has conducted unprecedented research on Canadian baseball history and is now widely recognized as Canada's premier baseball historian.

For his contributions, Humber, who's the director of Eco Initiatives at Seneca College, was named an honorary Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame inductee in 2004 and is a recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, which is awarded to Canadians who have made outstanding and exemplary contributions to their communities or to Canada as a whole. He continues to be a regular contributor on baseball matters to radio and TV shows throughout Canada and the U.S.

"I like to think I've helped popularize the study of baseball and helped people look back on the history of the game in Canada," said Humber.

There's no question that he has, and his permanent plaque at the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame will ensure that he's acknowledged as an important part of that history.

## Chairman's Corner (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

the day and time of our meeting and the meeting's full agenda.

**Overlooked 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Legends Project's Annual Election** will commence around mid-May. **Adam Darowski** and his committee ran a very successful Primary Election back in late January-early February to narrow down a field of twenty-five candidates to ten finalists for the mid-May election to determine the 2018 Overlooked Legend, who will be announced at our annual business meeting during SABR 48. Watch for emails from both our committee and SABR announcing the names of the ten finalists along with their expanded bios as the mid-May elections approach. Also be sure to follow the instructions, including the election deadline when it comes

time to cast your ballot.

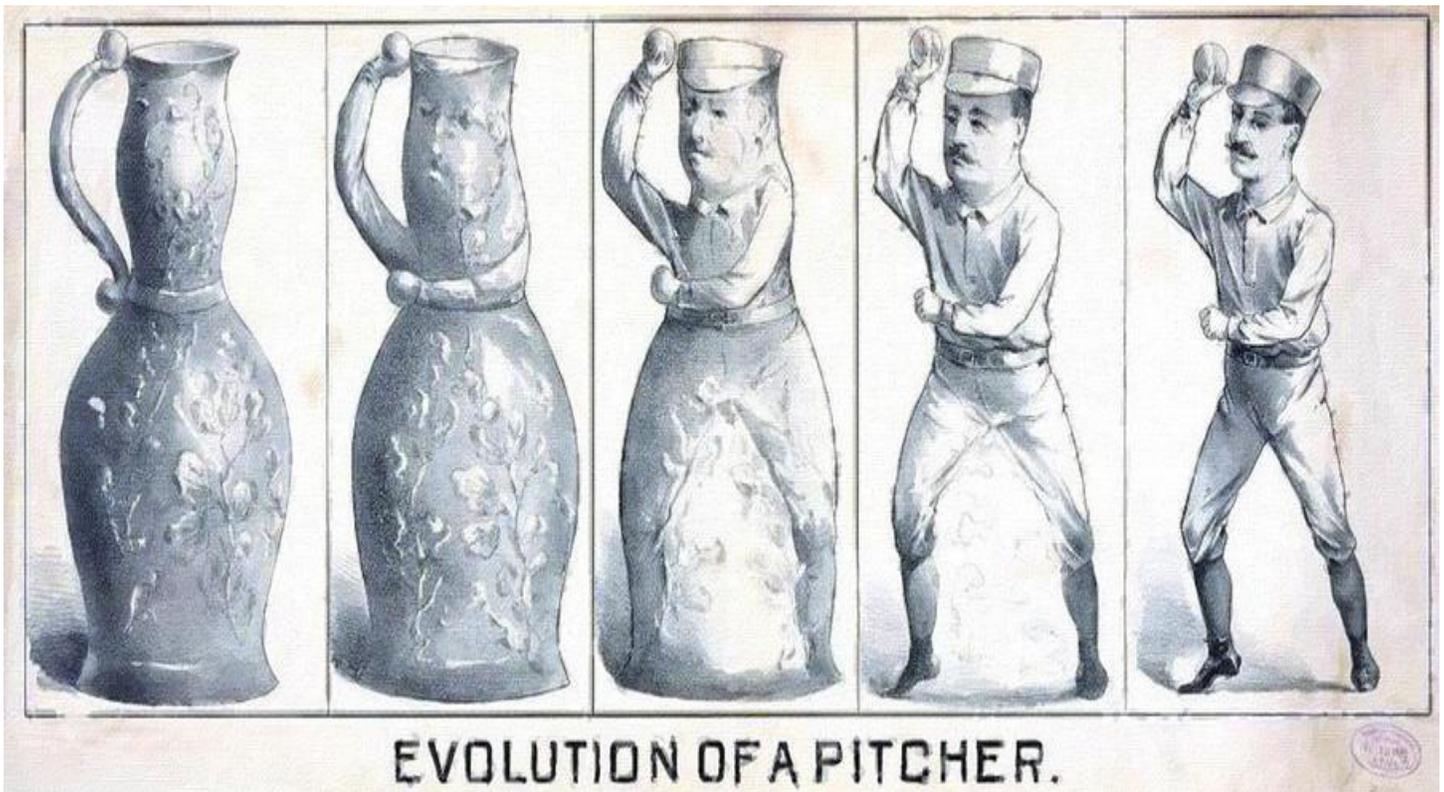
**Greater Cleveland 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Symposium**, the third in our series of region-specific, bi-annual symposiums, is scheduled for November 10, 2018. Please, see the Preview Announcement contained in this issue of *Nineteenth Century Notes* to give you an idea of what to expect at this fall's symposium interdisciplinary symposium.

**The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Grave Marker Project Committee** under the leadership of **Ralph Carhart** is moving forward toward the dedication of its fourth grave marker, that of **Robert "Parisian Bob" Caruthers**. A SABR 19<sup>th</sup> Century Overlooked Legend, (2017) Caruthers died in 1911 in Illinois. Watch for email announcements from both our committee and

SABR about the grave marker dedication details.

**"Baseball's 19<sup>th</sup> Century 'Winter' Meetings" Book Project** continues to move toward publication (hoping for later this year) with editorial leadership of Part II graciously taken on by SABR's own **Bill Nowlin**. Part I was completed last year under the editorship of **Jeremy Hodges**. Several members who worked on one or both parts have made substantial finds that have in turn led them to further research, adding to our understanding of baseball's evolution.

**The Baseball Season** is upon us, enjoy! Best Regards, Peter Mancuso, "...because baseball history is, not only baseball history."



## Tom Shieber Receives Chadwick Award



**T**om Shieber, Senior Curator at the Baseball Hall of Fame and member of the Nineteenth Century Committee was named a recipient of the 2018 Henry Chadwick Award.

The Henry Chadwick Award was established in November 2009 to honor baseball's great researchers—historians, statisticians, annalists, and archivists—for their invaluable contributions to making baseball the game that links America's present with its past.

SABR's announcement noted that Tom has been one of baseball

research's leading lights for more than two decades. The founder of SABR's [Pictorial History Committee](#) in 1994, he served as its chairman and newsletter editor for its first several years, and remains one of its top researchers.

An expert in 19th-century baseball, among many other areas, he is responsible for locating and correctly identifying the oldest team photograph: that of the New York Gotham club of 1855.

His Baseball Researchers Blog (<http://baseballresearcher.blogspot.com/>) in its tenth year, is a delight for anyone interested in the microscopic details of baseball, especially as depicted in photography, imagery, or film. A native of Missouri and a one-time solar physicist at Mt. Wilson, California, since 1998 Tom has been a curator (now senior curator) at the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Over his years of researching he has uncovered a photo of the Gothams which he has dated to 1856, written about the baseball connection with the holiday movie *The Christmas Story*, and noted the unlikelihood that the classic

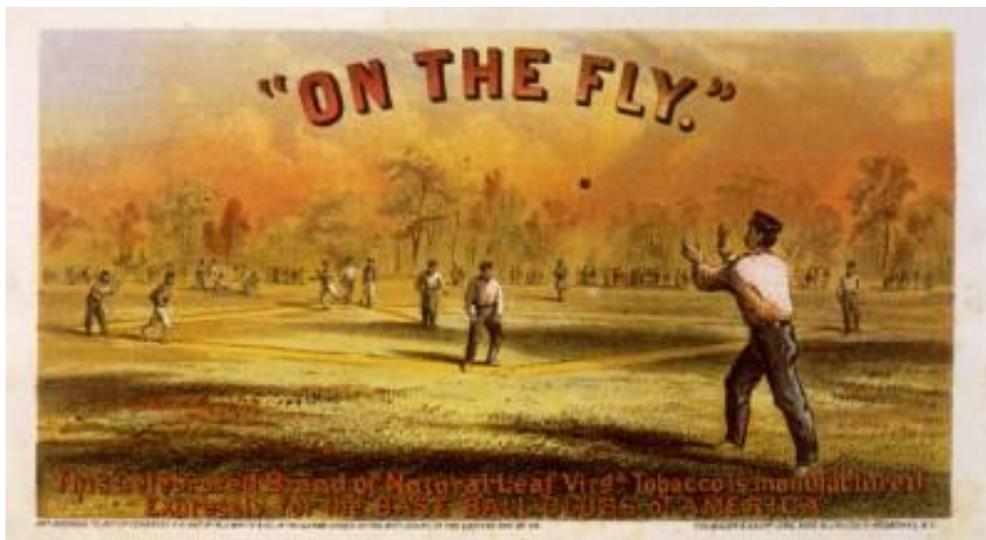


Tom Shieber delivers the Keynote Address at the 2013 Fred.

film *Pride of the Yankees* had its film flipped to accommodate right-handed Gary Cooper's portrayal of left-handed Lou Gehrig.

If none of these tickle you fancy download a copy of his co-authored paper Solar Rotation Measurements at Mount Wilson (1988). Or see his page at IMDB (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1770281/>)

Tom has been active with the committee's annual conference, The Fred, held in Cooperstown each year, delivering the Keynote Address in 2013.



# Excerpt from Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball

## by Rob Bauer

Editor's Note: The following excerpt comes from chapter one of the new book *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball: Alcohol, Fitness, and Cheating in 1880s Baseball*, by Rob Bauer. The chapter is on the drinking habits of 1880s players and this excerpt describes one of the teams most notorious for its bad behavior, the Philadelphia Athletics, along with how alcohol abuse unfortunately ruined the careers and lives of certain ballplayers. The first chapter is the longest of the book because drinking was such a major problem in baseball that it required significant space to explain all the ways it affected the game. This is the first of a series of four books on Gilded Age Baseball. See News & Notes for more on the series.

**T**he experience of the Metropolitans stands in stark contrast to that of the Philadelphia Athletics of the American Association. Of all the teams in 1880s baseball, the Athletics probably lushed the hardest and most consistently and often did so in plain view of the public. Nearly every year in the second half of the decade, they were someone's popular pick to dethrone the St. Louis Browns as the Association's premier team, yet the Athletics never got closer to first place than ten games back when they finished third in 1888. This caused various writers covering the team to analyze the team's player transactions based on how each move might improve the

team's overall sobriety level. For instance, in 1885, *The Sporting Life's* Philadelphia correspondent discussed the impact of potential personnel moves as follows: "It may be that Louisville's brilliant young short stop, McLaughlin, may be released to the Athletics. This fine player would amply replace Houck, as he is a good short stop with none of Houck's bad habits." Similarly, "It is quite likely that a deal will be made with Providence for Farrell, the crack second base-



Charlie Bastian in the middle of the picture

man, who would strengthen the club in a place where it has always been weak. This engagement would provide against the contingency of Bastian's retirement." Charlie Bastian was considering retirement because "the

latter has gone into the liquor business down town with his brother-in-law and is doing such good business that he is reported as saying that he will not play ball next season. He doesn't care much about playing second base anyhow, and feels disgruntled over a couple of fines which were imposed upon him last season and were deducted from his pay." This problem stalked the Athletics constantly. By 1888, their management had assembled a good team with many quality players, especially at bat. Between Henry Larkin at first base, Lou Bierbauer at second, Denny Lyons at third, and outfielders Harry Stovey and Curt Welch, the Athletics managed to lead the American Association in OPS, finishing ten points better than Association champion St. Louis and at least twenty-six points better than any other club. Stovey was one of baseball's greatest players. Contemporaries lauded his hitting, baserunning, defense, and gentlemanly deportment. Yet, despite high expectations, the team finished in third place in 1888. Granted, the Browns put up an excellent record, but that was little consolation to the Athletics' faithful. This finish was even more disappointing when news leaked out of the lushing tendencies of five Athletic players.

# Excerpt from *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball* (cont.)

*(Continued from page 6)*

When the club visited Cincinnati that year, these five men, already with questionable reputations in Philadelphia itself, lost no time in showing the denizens of Cincinnati their true colors. Cincinnati management grimaced, too, when one of their own men, catcher Kid Baldwin, joined the Athletics in their patronage of local saloons. As one Cincinnati newspaper reported,

“No man can drink whiskey and play base ball and make a success of both. . . . There is one team in the American Association that but for the bibulous inclination of its members would stand an elegant opportunity of winning the championship. This team is now well up in the race, but would be higher did the members not worship at the shrine of Bacchus. It is a grand aggregation of boozers, and, during their last visit to this city the members had on large-sized packages of Over-the-Rhine product most of the time. Several times one or two of the players came on the field ‘feeling rather happy.’ A player must be rather far gone when he can’t wait until after the game to get a drink. This was the case with two of the members of the team in question. While a game was in progress these players marched boldly up to a bar in their uniforms and tossed off two and three bowls of the amber.”

The team’s manager in 1888, Billy Sharsig, apparently was aware of the problem, but for whatever reason, he was loath to discipline his men. While the problems continued when the Athletics reached Louisville, an event in St. Louis was probably the low point of the season, in terms of sobriety: “Not satisfied with going around ‘lushing’ at night time, President Von der Ahe charges them with bringing a keg of beer to the grounds on July 4.” Chris Von der Ahe, owner of the St. Louis Browns, claimed, “I went up to where the Athletics were and saw that they had a keg of beer there. Seeing that none of my men were around I came back and told Sharsig of what I saw. Sharsig wanted me to have the keg removed. I told him it was none of my business what his players did and if he wanted the keg emptied he should empty it himself.” It is a testament to the talent level of the Athletics that even though several Athletics got started a little early in celebrating the nation’s independence, Von der Ahe finished his story by remarking, “Well, my players saw what was going on and they were happy, as they thought they were going to have an easy thing of it that afternoon. I was never so mad in my life as I was after that game. To think that we were beaten by a lot of drunken ball

players riled me and I felt like selling out and quitting the business.”

The drinking escapades of major league players cost teams games on the field, no doubt. The careers of men like Tom Ramsey and Pete Browning also illustrate that because there are never enough talented players to go around, even men with a weakness for drink might receive plentiful second chances. Sometimes teams saw no choice but to swallow hard, take the plunge, and hope things turned out for the best. Louisville did every year, and other clubs sometimes did the same, especially when they were as poor as the 1886 Kansas City Cowboys and had little to lose. Wallowing with a record of 19 up and 52 down, on August 11, the Cowboys brought Frank Ringo on board to catch: “It is to be hoped that he will brace up and play good ball, inasmuch as this is his home; however, Mr. McKim informs me that they will stand no lushing whatever, and upon his first disregard of this strict rule he will be heavily fined.” As it turned out, Ringo was not the answer that the Cowboys hoped for. Though he posted tolerable batting stats in limited action, and observers labeled him “a very active player, and the best throw-

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# Excerpt from Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball (cont.)

(Continued from page 7)

ing catcher we have,” the team lost nine straight after his signing and won just eleven more games the rest of the season.

We should not forget, however, that sometimes players who could not control their drinking ruined their lives as well as their careers, and the coda to Ringo’s time in Kansas City demonstrates



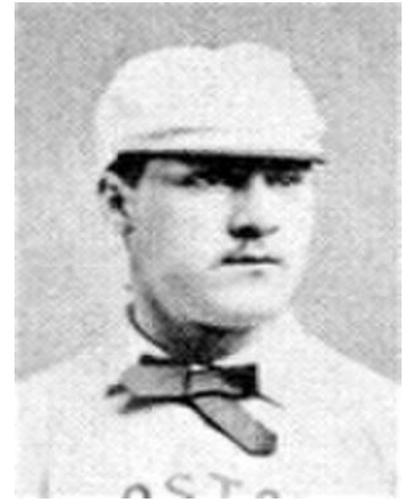
Frank Ringo

one such story. The team let him go at the end of the 1886 campaign, “his greatest enemy being the sole reason. Frank had done excellently until he struck St. Louis, where he forgot his former resolutions, and began getting drunk which caused Manager Rowe’s prompt action.” Like so many other men prone to strong drink, he spent the winter of 1886-1887 looking for a new club while claiming sobriety. It did not work, and he made no

further appearances in major league baseball. These circumstances forced him to spend the winter as a traveling cigar salesperson for West & Co., operating out of Kansas City. He seems to have had reasonable success in this line of work, but apparently, it was not satisfactory to him. In April of 1889, “after eight months of total abstinence he began drinking about two weeks ago and has continued it ever since.” He even married as he tried to keep his life in order, but tragically, on April 12, 1889, Ringo killed himself. The next day, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported, “Frank M. Ringo, the well-known ball-player, who took forty grains of morphine yesterday morning with suicidal intent, died at 9 o’clock this morning.”

Alcoholism also contributed to the death of Lew Brown, a promising catcher who, sadly, could not shake his need for intoxicating liquors. In 1886, Brown found his name on baseball’s blacklist because he signed to play with a minor league team in New York, and the team advanced him some money, but Brown never showed up to join the team. Perhaps it was fate catching up to him, or just the alcohol, but by 1889 Brown was dead. He broke his kneecap in a wrestling match and died from complications from the injury after a doctor amputated his leg and pneumonia set in. One source re-

ported he broke his kneecap not from wrestling itself but when the owner of the drinking establishment he worked for struck him with a gas pipe for a refusal to stop wrestling. Whatever the truth, Brown’s problems, like those of so many Gilded Age ballplayers, stemmed from his long and intimate association with liquor. Several writers re-



Lew Brown

marked on his abilities and friendly disposition when in proper form and free of demon rum, and most appeared saddened at his death: “If Brownie had let booze alone no catcher would have compared with him. His backstopping was marvelous. All deliveries were the same to him. He handled them all with equal ease. A more good hearted, white souled fellow never lived. Peace unto his ashes.”

The story of Charlie

(Continued on page 9)

# Excerpt from Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball (cont.)

Sweeney provides one final example of how drink could sabotage not only the career of a highly promising player, but his entire life as well. In 1883, the California team employing him expelled him from their club for “dishonorable conduct” in a May 13 game and called for Sweeney’s blacklisting. However, his next team, Providence of the National League, claimed Sweeney’s dismissal from the California club was a frame job, so it could avoid potential criticism and secure Sweeney’s considerable talents. It did not take long for them to tire of Sweeney’s antics, however. By mid-1884, despite an impeccable pitching effort (an ERA+ of 183 for Providence) he was with St. Louis of the Union Association. When that team moved to the National League in 1885, Sweeney disgraced himself by sucker punching teammate Emmett Seery in the team’s clubhouse. This caused the *St. Louis Critic* to state, “It is very doubtful if Sweeney will ever play ball in St. Louis again. . . . Seery is a little gentleman, while Sweeney is a whiskey-guzzling, cowardly nincompoop. His cowardly treachery . . . brands Sweeney as a cur, and we sincerely trust that Mr. Lucas will give him his release.” Seery, in marked contrast to his assailant, burnished his standing as a gentleman by gaining a repu-

tation as one of baseball’s premier chess players. Rather than release such a talented player, however, Lucas gave the pitcher one more chance in 1886, after Sweeney pledged to mend his ways: “Charley Sweeney is said to have reformed. He has not yet joined the Salvation Army, but is said to leave liquor severely alone, and is trying hard to get into good playing shape. If he



Charlie Sweeney

succeeds he will again try his hand in St. Louis.” Things did not work out, however, and Sweeney only pitched in eleven games in the Mound City.

Sweeney pitched just one more, highly ineffective, season in the majors. He threw his last pitch in major league baseball at age twenty-four. Released by the minor league Syracuse Stars late in 1886, Sweeney’s career botched out so quickly that *The Sporting Life* lamented his fall from glory: “Alas, what a drop

for a pitcher who in ’84 was considered the finest of them all. On Tuesday last he pitched for the Constableville Club against the Lowvilles.” *The Sporting News*, describing Sweeney’s Syracuse performance, concurred: “Charley Sweeney . . . was no stronger here and has been given his release. He pitched a slow, straight ball which the opposing clubs had no difficulty in hitting.” He finished the season with the Sacramento Altas in his native California.

Although his time as a quality major league pitcher was over after 1886, Sweeney was talented enough that the Cleveland Blues gave him a shot as a utility player for 1887, mainly manning first base and the outfield, but Sweeney never could shake his taste for liquor. Even his 1887 marriage to a Sacramento woman could not get him to settle down. When a touring team of major league players visited California in December of 1887, he brandished a Colt revolver at New York Giant first baseman Roger Connor “with true Western enthusiasm, and though prevented from increasing the Coroner’s troubles kept up the feud and expressed a wild desire for blood.” At age thirty-two, Sweeney killed a man in a saloon, resulting in incarceration. He died shortly after his release, in California, at the age of thirty-eight.

# Save the Date: Cleveland 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baseball Interdisciplinary Symposium, November 10, 2018

**When:** The Cleveland 19cBB Interdisciplinary Symposium will take place on, **Saturday, November 10, 2018** from 10:AM-5:PM with check-in and coffee service from 9 to 10:am. There will also be an **optional** nearby activity the following day, Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup> from mid-morning to early afternoon.

**Where:** The Cleveland symposium will be held at the majestic Main Branch of the **Cleveland Public Library** (CPL) in the heart of downtown Cleveland. The optional Sunday event will be a guided visit to the **Baseball Heritage Museum** located only 15 minutes from downtown on the grounds of historic **League Park** (1891-1946).

**What:** The day-long Saturday sym-

posium will be devoted to 19<sup>th</sup> century baseball as it was played and evolved in Cleveland and its greater region of northeastern Ohio. A keynote luncheon address (interdisciplinary history) will provide a look at late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Cleveland with a particular understanding of one of that city's most important and powerful forces, its transportation system. In addition to the on-site luncheon there will be both an early morning and mid-afternoon coffee and refreshments service.

**Who:** To date (late March) we have assembled a partial list of program participants, including: **John Thorn**, MLB's Official Historian; **John Skrtic**, Director of Public Services, CPL; **Jeremy Feador**, Cleveland Indians, Historian & Curator; **David**

**Goldberg**, Professor of History, Cleveland State University of Ohio; and three SABR researchers and authors with specific focus on elements of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Cleveland area baseball: **David Fleitz**, **John McMurray**, and **Joseph Wanko**, and others to be announced.

**How:** Watch for the publication of the complete **Program & Schedule** and **Registration Information** which will be published in **early July** in the Summer, 2018 issue of this newsletter and on the SABR website. All of this at a very reasonable cost. **We hope to see you there.**

## Also at the Cleveland Public Library

**T**he Cleveland Public Library houses the Sports Research Center on the 5th Floor of the Main Library.

The Collection includes Oral Histories conducted by Eugene Murdock when he prepared his books of interviews with former ballplayers.

The Library boasts the best of Cleveland sports history all housed in the Main Public Library Building



The best of Cleveland sports history all in one convenient location.

This includes more than 25,000 books, magazines and primary research materials, including archival photos, scrap-

books, autographs, clippings, oral history recordings, correspondence and more

The Sports Research Center is free and open to the public year-round. Information about the Center can be found at <https://cpl.org/thelibrary/sports-research-center/>.

Managers of the Center will be at the Symposium or you can call John Skrtic at the Library, (216) 623-2800.

## News & Notes

-Rob Bauer's book *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball: Alcohol, Fitness, and Cheating in 1880s Baseball* is available from Amazon for \$8.99

([https://www.amazon.com/Outside-the-Lines-of-Gilded-Age-Baseball-ebook/dp/B0791FNPF9/ref=pd\\_sim\\_351\\_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=BJ6ASGFG3N9AGY7QF9CA](https://www.amazon.com/Outside-the-Lines-of-Gilded-Age-Baseball-ebook/dp/B0791FNPF9/ref=pd_sim_351_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=BJ6ASGFG3N9AGY7QF9CA)).

Other books planned in the series include: *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball: Gambling, Umpires, and Racism in 1880s Baseball*; *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball: The Origins of the 1890 Players League*; and *Outside the Lines of Gilded Age Baseball: The Finances of 1880s Baseball*.

-Notes from Larry McCray on the Protoball website:

Protoball.org has begun to receive suggestions about ways to make its site more useful to origins researchers. The site has not been actively or thoughtfully managed (by me) in recent years, and your suggestions are most welcome. The rehab oversight group includes Bruce Allardice, Ralph Carhart, Jan Finkel, Bob Tholkes, and me.

Bruce Allardice has discovered a source suggesting that the Hungarian baserunning game of *longa meta* may date back to Roman times. The catch is that the source is written in Croatian. *Gentle Plea*: if you know Croatian, or know someone who reads it, give us a hand evaluating this possibility.

Bill Johnson, formerly chair of the SABR Origins Committee, has just agreed to help expand Protoball's coverage of ballplaying by minorities, in cooperation with the

SABR Negro Leagues Committee. He also hopes to help revivify Protoball's data on early ballplaying in specific localities. If you would like to know more about these initiatives, let us know.

Protoball's collection of accounts of ballplaying by Civil War troops now numbers 182 citations. It is at [http://protoball.org/Chronology:Civil\\_War](http://protoball.org/Chronology:Civil_War). *Gentle Plea*: If you know of other finds, let us know.

Also Larry notes that following have been added to the Protoball.org website over the past year.

-*Bruce Allardice* continues to put up Ruthian numbers for new Protoball finds. This year he surpassed 4500 PBall entries, including finds that are the first known modern games and clubs for many of the 50 states, and for dozens of foreign countries. For a fuller overview of his contributions, and his empirical writings on the spread of base ball, see [http://protoball.org/Bruce Allardice](http://protoball.org/Bruce_Allardice).

-One of 19CBB's best features is the series of new finds lofted by *Richard Hersherberger*. Nearly 100 of these have now been reflected in Protoball's Chronology at

<http://protoball.org/Chronologies>. These contributions come on top of Richard's manicured compilation of hundreds of early ball clubs, which he has made available to PBall's *PrePro Data Base*. Plus: for a listing of Richard's original essays on for varied Origins Era subtopics (e.g. Sliding, Base Stealing, and Called Pitches), see

[http://protoball.org/Richard\\_Hersherberger](http://protoball.org/Richard_Hersherberger).

-*Bob Tholkes* is assembling a Registry of Interclub Matches, many of them played after the years covered in Craig Waff's original Games Tabulation on Protoball. These matches, numbering about 5100 (two-thirds of them new to Protoball), will be added to the site's PrePro Data Base in 2018; Protoball now includes data for about 3200 early games and about 6000 early clubs.

-The site's rudimentary *Glossary of Games* now lists the names and descriptions of more than 250 baseball-like games.

-The site was cited by SABR at this year's annual awards bash as the "vast and critically important Protoball Project, which helps researchers locate and refine data (on early ballplaying)"

If you have anything that fits within the activities of Protoball contact Larry at [:lmccray@mit.edu](mailto:lmccray@mit.edu).



