



Biographical Research Committee Monthly Report
February 1992

Several Major Finds Uncovered

I would have thought that February being a short month, that it would be fairly slow as far as our report is concerned. Maybe it was the extra day but this was one of the best months we ever had. It was tough to choose the *Find of the Month* but I decided to give it to myself (about time) for tracking down Robert Lee Hart.

Robert Lee Hart

I am writing a biography of Jake Beckley for More 19th Century Stars and I sent away for his obituary from the Hannibal newspaper. I was amazed when I saw a couple of our missing players mentioned in the article. It mentioned Frank Hafner whom I had already found a few months ago and listed his address. It mentioned Charlie Hoover who is still missing but did not list his address. And it mentioned Bob Hart, a former Hannibal player who was pitching for Leavenworth in 1886 and invited Beckley to join the team.

In looking at my missing player list, I wondered if this might be Joseph L. Hart, who pitched for St. Louis in 1890. I first called Riverside Cemetery in Hannibal to see if Hart might be buried there. He was, and the curator gave me his date of burial. I then sent away for a copy of the obituary.

While waiting to receive the obit, I asked Joe Simenic to check the 1890 *Sporting Life* to see if there was any clue to the St. Louis pitcher's identity. Joe was able to find that Hart had come to the Browns from Grand Rapids. Meanwhile, I received his obituary, which stated that he was once a well-known baseball pitcher who had at

one time played for Grand Rapids. I found a letter I received about 10 years ago from former biographical committee member Richard Malatzky stating that the Browns pitcher was named Robert L. Hart and that he played for Milwaukee in 1887.

Knowing that Harold Dellinger had done research on the 1886 Leavenworth club, I asked him to check on Hart and he had a note that Hart had signed with Milwaukee for 1887.

Finally, I found a book in the library on the history of Hannibal. I was amazed to find an article on Hart referring to him as a former St. Louis Brown. Everything fit together but it certainly helps to get lucky.

Guy McFadden

This one was easy once we had the right clue. Tom Shrimplin, one of our newer members, lives in Valley Falls, Kansas, so I sent him McFadden, who was born in Topeka. Tom found an article on McFadden's father and his father's Civil War career. So I wrote the National Archives for Samuel McFadden's pension record.

Samuel worked for the pension office so he was very meticulous about filling out the forms. On one of the forms he filled out in 1915, he gave his son Guy's complete birth and death information. A piece of cake.

William Kemmer

This guy has been a thorn in our side for years. We knew that in 1930 he was an usher at Griffith Stadium. I had tried to locate something on him in Washington several years ago but came up empty. Dick Thompson sent away for a death certificate search and, lo and behold, it comes back with the name Kemmerer but listed his occupation as former baseball player. Amazingly, I ran into the same thing with Phil Ketter a few months ago. Ketter's name was really Ketterer. Maybe I should check for Charlie Hooverer.

—1884 Kiley, John Frederick	Height: <u>5-07</u> Weight: <u>147</u>	(R1)
—1907 Maddox, Nicholas N	B: <u>Govans, Maryland</u>	(S1)
✓1913 McAllester, William Lusk N	B: <u>Dec 29 1888</u>	(S7)
✓1942 McElyea, Frank	B: <u>Hawthorne Township, Illinois</u>	(H1)
	D: <u>Apr 19 1887</u>	
	<u>Evansville, Indiana</u>	
✓1895 McFadden, Guy G.	B: <u>Sep 3 1872</u>	(C1)
	<u>Topeka, Kansas</u>	
	D: <u>Mar 10 1911</u>	
	<u>Topeka, Kansas</u>	
✓1938 Meyer, George Francis	D: <u>Jan 3 1992</u>	(H1)
	<u>Hoffman Estates, Illinois</u>	
✓1945 Modak, Michael Joseph Aloysius N	Name: <u>Michael Modak</u>	(H1)
—1902 Murphy, John Patrick N2	Height: <u>5-07.5</u> Weight: <u>160</u>	(R1)
✓1949 Rapp, Earl Wellington N	D: <u>Feb 13 1992</u>	(W1)
	<u>Swedesboro, New Jersey</u>	
✓1959 Shannon, Walter Charles N	B: <u>Jan 23 1933</u>	(H5)
	D: <u>Feb 8 1992</u>	
	<u>Creve Coeur, Missouri</u>	
—1902 Smoot, Homer Vernon	B: <u>Mar 23 1878</u>	(D1)
—1909 Speer, George Nathan N	Height: <u>5-09</u> Weight: <u>152</u>	(S1)
✓1944 Suarez, Luis Abelardo N	D: <u>Jun 5 1991</u>	(J1)
	<u>Havana, Cuba</u>	
✓1926 Taylor, Edward James N	D: <u>Jan 30 1992</u>	(W2)
	<u>Chula Vista, California</u>	
—1890 Vickery, Thomas Gill	TR	(S1)
✓1902 Williams, David Owen	B: <u>Feb 7 1881</u>	(R1)
	Height: <u>5-11.5</u> Weight: <u>167</u>	