

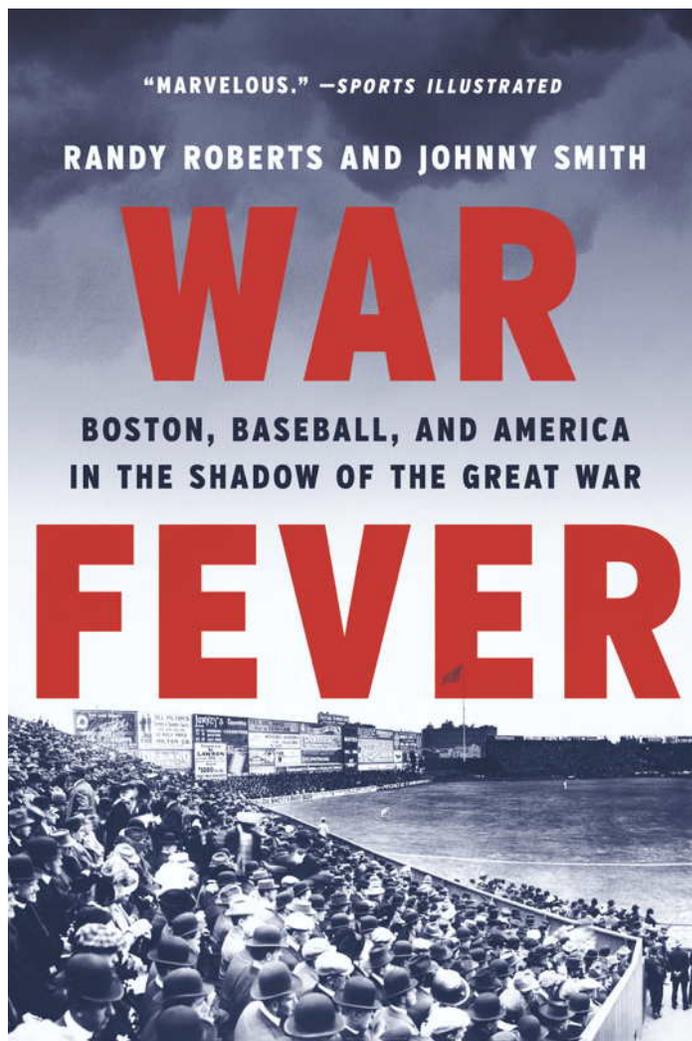
**WAR FEVER WINS**  
**2021 LARRY RITTER AWARD**

by **Doug Skipper**

*War Fever: Boston, Baseball, and America in the Shadow of the Great War*, by Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith (New York: Basic Books, 2020), a timely and provocative study of the transformative impact of World War I on American culture set against a backdrop of history's most lethal pandemic, is the winner of the 2021 Larry Ritter Award.

The award is bestowed annually by the Deadball Era Committee of the Society for American Baseball Research to the author of the best book about baseball between 1901 and 1919 published during the previous calendar year. The winner's work must demonstrate original research or analysis, a fresh perspective, compelling thesis, impressive insight, accuracy, and clear, graceful prose.

Meticulously researched and riveting, *War Fever* tells the tale of three men from the Boston area whose lives are changed forever by the events of 1918; events that reshaped American culture.



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The first main character is Babe Ruth, baseball's best left-handed pitcher, who that summer emerged as baseball's greatest slugger. Despite his German heritage, Ruth was celebrated by the media, as he transcended and revolutionized the game, and ascended to the level of cultural icon. Although Ruth leads the Red Sox to a World Series title in 1918, events set in motion that summer will eventually result in his departure from Boston.

As Ruth ascends, Karl Muck, the German-born conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, fails to comprehend that war-inspired anti-German sentiment demands that he show allegiance to his host country. With ordinary Americans living in fear of U-boats patrolling the waters of the East Coast and German agents living and operating amongst them, support for the war flourishes and distain for anything German grows. Muck, who enjoys social connections to the German diplomatic corps, commits an error of omission when it does not occur to him to open an out-of-town concert with *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Although the song is not yet the national anthem and not usually played at concerts, Muck is accused of refusing to play the anthem and vilified,

sending his life into a downward spiral. He is suspected of spying and interned by government authorities given wide latitude during the war. Though the Bureau of Investigation finds no evidence that Muck is a spy, his life is forever changed.

The life of the third character, Charles Whittlesey, was also everlastingly altered by the events of World War I. A scholarly Harvard law school graduate, he becomes the most unlikely of heroes. Whittlesey joins the US Army as a volunteer, rises to the rank of major, and leads the "Lost Battalion" when that unit, as a result of command failure, is surrounded by a superior German force in the Argonne Forest. Under Whittlesey, who will later receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for his leadership and bravery, the battalion holds out against overwhelming odds. According to press reports, when confronted by a demand to surrender by the German commander, Whittlesey profanely replies, earning the nickname "Go to Hell" Whittlesey. Roberts and Smith debunk that myth, showing that the declaration was a bit of propaganda in a thorough and absorbing portrayal of Whittlesey's tragic life.

"The irony is that one is famous for what he didn't do (Muck), and one for what he didn't say (Whittlesey)," Roberts said with a smile in a joint interview with Smith after they were notified that they had won the Ritter Award. "In the human dimension, if you look at celebrities, we have a celebrity whose life was destroyed by the war (Muck), a celebrity who is put into stratospheric celebrity category (Ruth), and another figure who is made a celebrity during the war, and it destroys him (Whittlesey). I think what we were trying to do is look at the war, and so we wanted a character who fought in the war. We were really interested in popular culture; I would say Babe Ruth was the one character we were going to have in it," Roberts continued. "Then we wanted to show kind of the repressive nature of the war and the Muck story turned out to be a great way of showing that."

The three stories come together to portray an America embroiled in change. "Together, we hoped that people would get a feel for 1918, for the



## The INSIDE GAME

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propaganda, for the sport, for the emergence of Babe Ruth, the impact that it had on baseball, and on the Deadball Era, so together we thought (these stories) may say something,” Smith added. “I think that each of these characters, their lives were fundamentally altered by the war and they became representatives of different aspects of the war. I think that one thing that’s interesting about their lives and how they became symbols for something larger, is the role that media and propaganda played, whether it was media that was participating in propaganda or the government’s wartime censorship.”

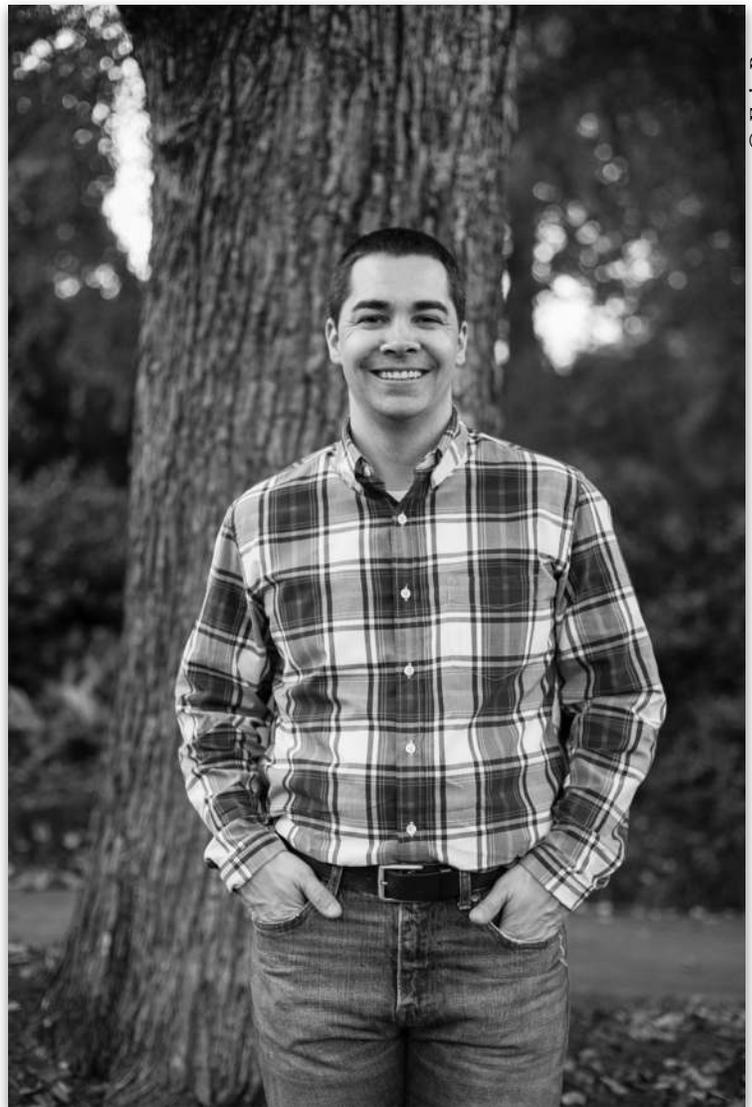
“But each of them served a political purpose in some way. Major league baseball is becoming politicized in ways that it had not been previously

because of the war effort,” Smith continued. “The sport needs an attraction, and this is the point when Ruth became a mythical figure. We often think in our popular culture about the Yankee years that define him, but if you go back and think about the ways that the writers were creating Ruth ‘The Colossus,’ that he was some mythical character out of a comic book, that was a profound moment when the war shaped his life.

“And for Karl Muck, he becomes a villain, really, the face of American fears over German spies” Smith continued, noting that it became important to show allegiance in a public way. “It’s when *The Star-Spangled Banner* gets to be played at baseball stadiums,” Smith said. “It wasn’t consistently played after 1918, but it’s the beginning. It marks



**Randy Roberts**



**Johnny Smith**

© Evie Perez

a turning point, this ritual, how you as a citizen demonstrate in public your patriotism by singing at sporting events, particularly at baseball games. For people to understand, and we've had this debate the last few years, why do we play *The Star-Spangled Banner*? Well, you have to go back to the war and understand the context of the war, and that's why the Muck story was interesting too because there was this rallying cry by these *uber-patriots* that *The Star-Spangled Banner* should be played at every public venue. Muck's reaction, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's reaction, was that it did not belong in an orchestra concert because it was not an artistic song; it had no place in a symphony orchestra. And so this song, whether it was being played at baseball games and military parades, Americans questioned its importance, and your participation in singing or playing that song had political implications.

"On one hand, he was very cozy with the German ambassador (Johann Heinrich) von Bernstorff, who was undoubtedly running spy operations in the United States," Smith said of Muck. "But from what we can tell from the government documents, the investigation into Muck, they never had any evidence that he was actually a spy. But I think this is why the context is so important, because so many Americans believed that any German living in the United States should be treated as a spy, treated as dangerous.

You have a federal investigator who looks into the mirror and says there is no reason to believe that he is working as a spy on behalf of the German government, but in Boston there were Bureau (of Investigation) agents who refused to accept it because they felt there was circumstantial evidence that raised suspicion in their eyes about his behavior, and he made 'anti-American statements.' And so they jumped to the conclusion that between making the anti-American statements and 'refusing to play *The Star-Spangled Banner*,' that this conductor was hostile to 100% Americanism; he was seen as an imminent danger. And given the laws during the war under President Wilson, the United States government had incredible leeway to do whatever they wanted to do with someone just being suspected of being a threat to national security, and so Muck, like a number of

other Germans who had committed no actual crime, was forced to live out the war in an internment camp."

"And then you have Charles Whittlesey, who before the war, no one would have imagined he would become seen as a hero, but because of his leadership and courage that he showed on the battlefield, he's being used by the government to convey a new message about how all the sacrifices were worth it for this promoting of democracy around the world," Smith continued. "So, each of these characters, their lives were shaped not only by Boston, but also by the war itself and we felt like it was an opportunity to look at the war in a different perspective in a way that hadn't been done before. And even though the characters' lives, they don't interact necessarily, we felt it was a kaleidoscopic portrait that we could create for the reader, and that they could get a larger impression of the way the war fundamentally changed the lives of these men and also turned America upside down in many ways."

In addition to the war, the Boston area also endured the Spanish Influenza pandemic in 1918. "You know one thing that's interesting is following the pandemic and the Red Sox," Smith said. "There are three waves to the pandemic in 1918. We see it begin in early 1918 and by the time spring training rolls around and the Red Sox are in Arkansas, that virus is moving with soldiers who are going from the camps to train stations and we know that ball players in Hot Springs have come in contact with these soldiers and a few of these guys got sick. But no one really suspected, at least in the public, that this is going to become a full-blown pandemic. Those ball players, they recovered, and they were just fine. And of course, there is the story that in May, when a more mild form of the flu is spreading, Ruth gets sick and he has a terrible fever, and all the symptoms of the flu, the aches, the chills. He goes to the hospital, the doctor gives him too much silver nitrate solution, and he has a terrible reaction, and the public is worried that Babe Ruth is in a terrible situation. But he recovers."

"Then you fast forward to the third wave of the flu," Smith continued. "This is where I think the

story is maybe most fascinating when we're thinking about the pandemic." Roberts said that "Of course, we know today that the flu that came back from Europe to the United States was a mutant form of the flu that had gone from the United States to Europe. People today recognize the Brazilian variation and the South African variation and the different strains (of Covid-19). In this case, a deadly one (influenza strain) came back."

"On the eve of the World Series between the Red Sox and Cubs in Boston there were sailors getting sick at Commonwealth Pier," Smith said. "But if you read the papers, if you listen to the political leaders, they said that the disease was essentially quarantined to the pier. But that was a lie. The virus will spread from the pier to the civilian population. You have all of these events taking place in early September where people were getting together, a draft registration, liberty bond parades, and three World Series games at Fenway Park with thousands of people. And although we can't document with great certainty that the games at Fenway Park spread the virus, we can very likely assume that the games there that brought people together, which included military personnel who were being honored, helped spread the virus in the city of Boston. It raises all sorts of questions about how the decisions being made by Massachusetts health officials, the mayor's office, and others. They didn't warn the public to stay away from World Series games in 1918. That was not part of the discussion."

An earlier work by Skip Desjardin, *September 1918: War, Plague, and the World Series* (Regnery History) which won the 2019 Larry Ritter Award, came to the same conclusions about how local health officials mishandled the Spanish Flu pandemic in the Boston area. Though both books are based on Boston area characters during 1918 with the war and the pandemic raging, the two books are complimentary and rarely repetitive. Smith said he and Roberts became aware of the Desjardin book after they were well along with their work. "You can have books seemingly looking at the same period, the same city, the same sport but approach it from a different way," Smith said. "That's part of what's fascinating about what historians do. We look at documents differently,

look at sources differently, make different decisions about how to interpret those materials. It's an interesting conversation."

Both books explore the end of Ruth's tenure in Boston. Ruth battled manager Ed Barrow, who wanted his best pitcher to pitch, for more chances to bat, and his relationship with Red Sox owner Harry Frazee soured as Ruth sought a bigger paycheck for his services. But the impact of both the war and the pandemic on both theater and ballpark box offices had made life difficult for Frazee, who borrowed money from New York Yankees owner Jacob Ruppert who also owned a major brewery in New York.

"The one question that today's environment raises for me is the story is usually that Frazee had some plays that failed, that he had some problems," Roberts said. "One of the things I'm not sure that anyone has taken into account is the impact of the pandemic. Yeah, there was social distancing back then, there were masks, places were closed down. How much impact did the pandemic have on his theaters? He was in the business of packing as many people into his theaters as possible and I've never seen any reference to that impact. People want to write it off that they were bad plays. Were they bad plays, or were the theaters shut down for a while in New York?"

"By 1919, Frazee certainly suffered because his theaters were not as lucrative as he would have liked," Smith said. "Of course, you compound that with the baseball attendance being slashed. The entertainment world, it struggled during the war. So, he's making financial calculations about an asset. He sees Ruth as an asset. So I guess the short answer is that yes, Frazee had to make a financial decision as much as the tensions that existed between him and Ruth and their personalities, he had to make a financial decision, and he thought it was the right one, and if you look at the other side of that decision, for Jacob Ruppert, he's looking ahead to Prohibition, he's looking ahead making an economic and a political calculation, he's going to have a hard time selling his beer, so he needs the Yankees to be a financially lucrative business and he believes that given Ruth's performance at the Polo Grounds, that he can be a

star in New York, that he can be a gate attraction, so for him, the gamble to acquire Ruth was worth it.”

Roberts and Smith said they were both honored to receive the award named for Ritter, the author of *The Glory of the Their Times*. In the 1960s, Ritter interviewed a number of Deadball Era players about their experiences and memories, and the resulting book is one of the best about baseball.

“You know to me, it’s Ritter himself, the quality of his work, that you know the awe that he inspired. Those interviews are just spectacular interviews. That that was one of the first books that I read as a scholar, and this is a long time ago. I thought “This is a good book. This is a really, really good book,”” Roberts said. “I admire the carefulness of SABR, and we hope that the people who read our book will look at our footnotes, maybe not studying, but see that we’re trying to be faithful to the past.”

“When you write these books, you don’t set out to win an award or to get recognition,” Smith reflected. “You hope, I think, to have a conversation with an audience of readers, and I think that SABR of all places, recognizes our contribution, and that is what makes it really meaningful. The members of SABR are our ideal readers, the people who would really appreciate that one of the things that Randy and I were trying to do was to challenge people’s assumptions about Ruth and to get them to think differently about his meaning in the war. And so I think to receive this recognition from SABR, from people who really know baseball history, that’s what I think really gives the award some meaning, because these are people that we respect as authors, because they read critically baseball history and American history. I think that’s part of what makes it special.

Roberts is the 150th anniversary distinguished professor of history at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana. He has authored and co-authored dozens of books “at the intersection of popular and political history.” Smith, a former student of Roberts at Purdue, is the J.C. “Bud” Shaw Professor of Sports History and an associate professor of history at Georgia Tech in Atlanta.

*War Fever* is Roberts and Smith’s third collaboration. They teamed up previously on *A Season in the Sun: The Rise of Mickey Mantle*, and *Blood Brothers: The Fatal Friendship Between Muhammad Ali and Malcom X*.

#### RITTER AWARD NOTES

Joe Niese’s *Zack Wheat: The Life of the Brooklyn Dodgers Hall of Famer* (McFarland) and Mark Peavy’s *A History of Baseball in the Deadball Era: Volume One, 1901 to 1905* (independently published by Deadball Books) also earned consideration as a finalists. A total of 16 books were nominated for consideration.

Conferred annually since 2002, the award is usually presented at the DEC meeting at SABR’s annual convention each summer. However, for the second straight year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the convention has been postponed and the presentation will be virtual. The winner of the award is selected by the Larry Ritter Book Award Committee chaired by Doug Skipper, with members Mark Dugo, Ben Klein, Craig Lammers, Mark Pattison, Andrew Milner, Don Jensen, and DEC Chairman John McMurray.

#### TY COBB SOME THROWER

I was amused at Glen Echo last night to see Ty Cobb give a real demonstration of his ability to throw straight balls.

Accompanied by a couple of members of the Detroit club, Cobb arrived at the amusement resort and the first thing he did was to look up the African Dodger booth. No one there seemed to recognize the great ball player, and he took three balls. These went true to the mark, and he repeated seven times in succession before every one became nervous and inquired who the man was. When it was discovered that it was the one and only Cobb quite a crowd gathered. Cobb was offered ten cigars, which he did not smoke, but moved away and soon returned to the city.

Bob Thayer’s Sporting Gossip

*Washington Times, June 2, 1911*

# DAWSON CITY BASEBALL “THE GREATEST BALL TOWN IN THE WORLD FOR ITS SIZE”

by **Phil Williams**

On August 16, 1896, prospectors discovered gold in northwest Canada’s remote Klondike region. The scope of the strike became widely apparent in July 1897, when steamships carrying \$1.5 million of gold arrived in San Francisco and Seattle. (The equivalent of \$128 million per gold’s market price in 2020.)<sup>1</sup> Over the next year, 100,000 “stampedeers” set out for Dawson, previously a mere hamlet northwest of the gold finds.<sup>2</sup>

Canadian authorities required each stamper to bring a ton of goods, lest starvation ensue. The most immediate and affordable route began by landing at the Alaskan port of Skagway. Then, to reach the Yukon River and find (or build) a barge to Dawson, a stamper could either repeatedly ascend the snowy Chilkoot Pass or trudge through the muddy White Pass. Only 30,000 adventurers completed the journey. An unfortunate few perished along the way. The rest found the obstacles too intimidating.

The arrivals, mostly male, mostly American, brought baseball with them.<sup>3</sup> On the Fourth of July 1898, the Sour Dough Stiffs (those who had survived a Yukon winter were called sourdoughs) played the Cheechakos (the label for those who had yet to). Reflecting a stamper’s packing priorities, “The bats were hewed from discarded boat masts and the balls were of all kinds from the ball of twine to the rounded block of wood.” Reflecting available space, they played “on the sandbar in front of town.”<sup>4</sup>

With most of the promising areas already claimed, perhaps only a hundred stampedeers found substantial gold wealth. Fewer still resisted the temptations of Dawson’s nightlife and brought their riches back home. The settlement’s population plummeted, with a gold strike in Nome, Alaska, proving particularly enticing. By the summer of 1899, only 10,000 remained in Dawson. A year

later, a census reported 5,404, with 62% being American and 32% British/Canadian.<sup>5</sup>

Dawson began to transition into a mercantile hub and an administrative center.<sup>6</sup> In 1901, Canadian authorities shut down its gambling houses and its brothels were forced across the Klondike River to Klondike City. In 1902, Dawson was incorporated as a city and the Dawson-Whitehorse road was completed (two years earlier, the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad connected Skagway to Whitehorse).

Little else about baseball appeared in Dawson’s newspapers until 1901. That July, the local Gandolfos – along with many townspeople – journeyed down the Yukon River via steamboat to Eagle, Alaska. There a team from Fort Egbert, a recently-created U.S. Army headquarters, awaited them. The Dawson team, named after merchant Joseph Gandolfo, romped. A week later, on Friday, August 2, the Gandolfos hosted a re-match. The crowd of 1,000 favored the American soldiers. When their pitcher, “Spider” Long cleared the bases in the eighth with a triple, “an enthusiastic fellow countryman drew the long-legged sergeant to one side, pulled out a wad of bills half as thick as his thigh and skimming off a ‘twenty’ pushed it into the pitcher’s hand. ‘It was worth every d—n cent of it,’ he exclaimed, enthusiastically, when ‘Spider’ mildly protested.” Although the northern skies still held a couple hours of sunlight, the game was called as a 12-12 draw at 9



*Yukon Sun, July 22, 1903*

p.m. so the crowd could be seated when curtains rose at the city's theaters a half-hour later.<sup>7</sup>

Three weeks later, Dawson's doctors and lawyers squared off. A local paper reported that, "Many on either side had never indulged in America's national game and the ludicrous situations and amusing plays were abundant in the extreme." An example: "Judge Dugas came up again with a look of determination in his eye. Barrett in the box saw it and with fear and trembling let drive a corkscrew drop. It dropped and caught the batter in the shin bone and the judge not knowing the meaning of the umpire's cry of dead ball was at a loss whether to throw the bat at the pitcher or not. Walsh came to the rescue and with great dignity escorted his lordship to first."<sup>8</sup>

"The baseball fever has caught on in town," a reporter observed in July 1902, "and no evening in the last two weeks has been without a baseball game."<sup>9</sup> In May 1903 residents formed the Dawson Baseball League for the coming season. The circuit consisted of four teams: the Civil Service (Canadian government officials), Gandolfos (again backed by Joseph Gandolfo), Amaranths (a social club), and Ye Idyle Hours (another social club, mostly American).<sup>10</sup> New grounds were laid out at the police parade grounds. Admission to the grandstand was 25 cents to cover costs.<sup>11</sup> The "strictly amateur" league would play 22 games and bring "a little wholesome entertainment" to Dawson during its short summer.<sup>12</sup>

The Civil Service and Idyle Hours (or Idlers, as Dawsonites called them) emerged as the strongest squads. They first met on June 2, with the Idlers winning, 8-7.<sup>13</sup> "All night after the Civil Service's defeat, the streets of Dawson were crowded with excited throngs, while from the saloons came the noise of angry argument."<sup>14</sup> Such passions soon merged with political unrest. A drought was impairing the sluicing necessary to mining operations while, in Ottawa, a governmental commission was reviewing future hydraulic concessions for the Klondike. "The opposition party seized the occasion for a demonstration against the party in power, and when morning came the Klondike was divided into warring factions."<sup>15</sup> Such divisions complicated club allegiances. Canadians backing



*Dawson Nugget, August 3, 1901*

the opposition party often cheered for the Idlers while Americans supporting Dawson's government officials sometimes rooted for the Civil Service team.<sup>16</sup>

Civil Service promptly reorganized with a full slate of 18 officials, including a finance committee, plucked from Dawson's leading citizens.<sup>17</sup> Teams recruited players from other Yukon and Alaskan towns. Or beyond. Future Highlander Bill Hogg, then pitching in the Pacific National League, was unsuccessfully recruited with an offer of \$1,000 plus expenses.<sup>18</sup> "Rumors of wholesale corruption in the leading teams flew around the streets, and players were accused of selling out."<sup>19</sup>

The two teams met a second time on June 23. A thousand miners from nearby settlements made their way to the city for the occasion. The Idlers cruised to a 9-3 victory, and took over first place. The team's backers won some \$27,000 in wagers.<sup>20</sup> Faro and poker remained popular in elusive back rooms.<sup>21</sup> Baseball provided a more open outlet for gambling.

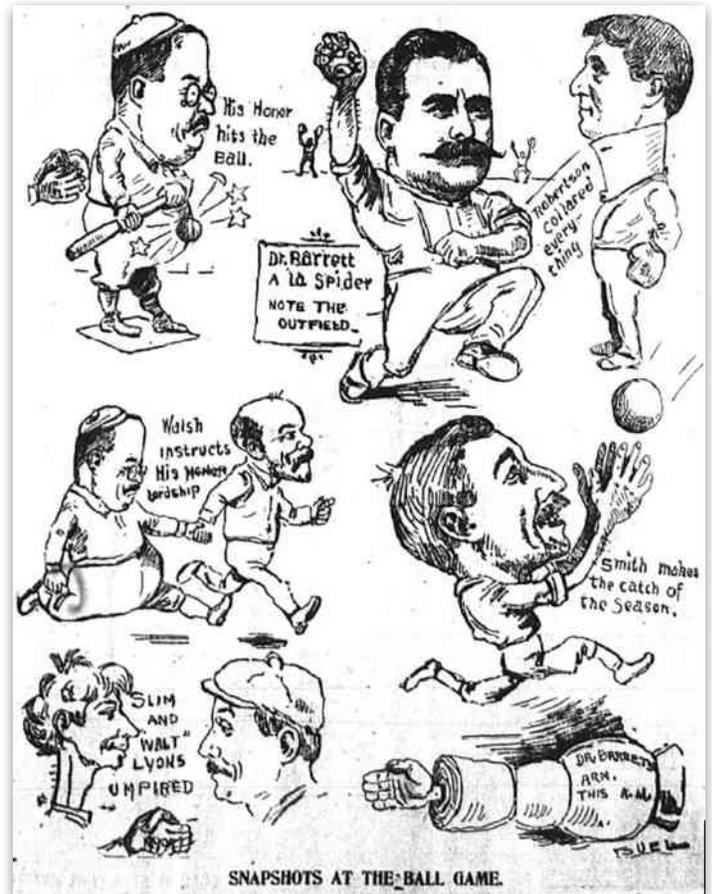
As the third showdown between the Civil Service and the Idlers approached on July 14, "betting

was so heavy that the clubs became uneasy and warned their partisans against risking too much.”<sup>22</sup> In front of 4,100 fans, including some from distant outposts who walked days to reach Dawson, the Idlers romped, 24-4. “If the league players were not such honest boys,” a local reporter sneered the next day, “there would certainly be dark whisperings of ‘fixing,’ ‘jobbing’ and the like.”<sup>23</sup>

A respite from league action came in late July when the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad team arrived via steamer for a “baseball carnival.”<sup>24</sup> The Whitehorse club would play each of the four clubs, then conclude with a game against a picked Dawson nine. The host teams slipped star players to each other. When the railroaders objected, Dawsonites pointed at the half-dozen Skagway recruits beefing up Whitehorse’s roster.

Civil Service held off WP&YR’s efforts, 7-6, in the July 21 opener. The next evening the Amaranths triumphed, 3-2, in front of 4,000 fans. Then the Gandolfos entertained 3,500 by besting the visitors, 5-3. The Idylers handed the Whitehorse team its fourth defeat in four nights, 10-9.<sup>25</sup> The finale came on Saturday, July 25, in front of another rambunctious crowd of 4,000. Dawson’s picked team rallied in the ninth to cut Whitehorse’s lead to 3-2. But a deep drive to left field was snared, and the visitors took a single victory home. “Dawson,” exclaimed a local paper the next morning, “is the greatest ball town in the world for its size.”<sup>26</sup>

Forfeits and alleged throwdowns followed when league play resumed. The Civil Service remained in the hunt, in part due to their lending of players to the Amaranths and Gandolfos when they took on the Idlers. On August 11, the two front-runners met for the fourth and final time. The Idlers took a 3-0 lead into the sixth, but the Civil Service scored four runs in the bottom of the frame. Two Idler runs in the seventh and a single tally by the Civil Service in the eighth followed. With the game tied, 6-6, Jimmy Barrager came to the plate with a man on first in the bottom of the ninth. Barrager, a speedy second baseman from Oregon who captained the WP&YR team that had visited Dawson



SNAPSHOTS AT THE BALL GAME.

*Dawson Nugget, August 28, 1901*

weeks earlier, socked a walk-off blow “in the direction of the Indian River mining district.”<sup>27</sup>

For weeks a gaudy 20-foot-long Spalding & Brothers pennant, reading “Champions of Yukon Territory, 1903,” had lined a local merchant’s wall.<sup>28</sup> Now it belonged to the Civil Service. Dawson’s four league teams, it was estimated, had spent \$25,000 for players and other expenses while over \$220,000 was bet on their games.<sup>29</sup>

Seemingly, only one major leaguer was directly associated with Dawson baseball: Jesse Stovall, otherwise known as George’s older brother.<sup>30</sup> It is unclear, however, when he played there. Klondike Douglass, a utility player with St. Louis, earned his nickname during the height of the gold rush by wondering out loud whether he might join his uncle and brother in stampeding. Upon being dealt to Philadelphia after the 1897 season, and not finding their contract offer to his liking, he wondered out loud again. London-born Klondike Smith, an outfielder with the 1912 Highlanders,

was only a boy during the gold rush. Oscar Harstad's and Smoky Joe Wood's fathers sought fortune in the Klondike, perhaps Smith's did as well.

Dawson emerged from a baseball hangover to embrace reform as the 1904 season dawned. Contracts bound players to their teams. An arbitration committee settled disputes. Players received whatever came from the gate, after game expenses, usually \$3 to \$5 per man. Most importantly, betting on baseball was no longer brazen or corrupting. How Dawson achieved this is uncertain. Greater enforcement or expansion of territorial gambling laws and/or local civic and governmental efforts likely played a considerable role.<sup>31</sup>

Ball grounds were relocated to the city's new Minto Park mid-season. Decades later a correspondent called it "a beautiful park of blue-grass turf, surrounded by large spruce and birch trees, native flowers and plants. ... The diamond is in good condition and equals many fields I have seen in the states."<sup>32</sup> In a revamped three-team league, the N.C.'s took the 1904 pennant. Game accounts

from the season suggest an average of 1,000. Healthy, but not at 1903's feverish pace.

In 1906 the Guggenheim family bought up mines, creating the Yukon Gold Company. By 1907 enormous floating dredges were in operation. As mining became less labor-intensive, and its output fell, Dawson's population continued to decline, reaching approximately 3,000 in 1910. By 1920 it reached 1,000, just a few hundred less than its present population.

Series with other Yukon and Alaskan cities still sparked Dawson's all-out efforts. "Start immediately with the best you've got, and bring plenty money," wired Fairbanks in advance of an August 1908 showdown. Dawson loaded up with several Skagway players and took the five-game series.<sup>33</sup>

When Dawson invited their team for a series in 1914 it revived, for a Whitehorse correspondent, "pleasant recollections of days when Dawson was the most enthusiastic baseball town of its size on the continent of North America." Yet, as this claim faded, baseball remained vital to Dawson's sporting life, with adult and youth leagues forming



**Civil Service Team, Champions of All Alaska and the Yukon**

*St. Louis Republic, May 8, 1904*

summer after summer.<sup>34</sup> This heritage comes down to the present day. For several decades contemporary Dawsonites have hosted a Labour Day Slo-Pitch Classic Tournament, with teams from the Yukon, Alaska, and the Northwest Territories competing on Minto Park's diamonds. "Baseball is life," observed tournament organizer Dawn Kisoun in 2016. "The rest is details."<sup>35</sup>

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author is grateful to the University of Washington Libraries for assistance in accessing their collection of Dawson's *Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget*.

#### NOTES

1. For more insights into measuring worth, see Samuel H. Williamson & Louis P. Cain, "Measures of Worth," *MeasuringWorth*, 2021, [www.measuringworth.com/defining\\_measures\\_of\\_worth.php](http://www.measuringworth.com/defining_measures_of_worth.php).
2. For background on the Gold Rush and Dawson City's history, see Bill Morrison's acclaimed 2016 documentary film, *Dawson City: Frozen Time*.
3. Note baseball may have been new to Dawson City, but the sport was not new to the Yukon. Whalers had formed leagues on Herschel Island several years before. See Matt Rothenberg, "Putting the Game on Ice," National Baseball Hall of Fame, [baseballhall.org/discover-more/stories/short-stops/putting-the-game-on-ice](http://baseballhall.org/discover-more/stories/short-stops/putting-the-game-on-ice).
4. "Americans Celebrate," (Dawson) *Klondike Nugget*, July 5, 1898: 1.
5. "The Yukon Census," (Dawson) *Yukon Sun*, May 8, 1900: 4.
6. For more on this evolution, see Margaret Archibald, "Grubstake to Grocery Store: Supplying the Klondike, 1897-1907," *Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History*, No. 26, [parkscanadahistory.com/series/chs/26/chs26-1a.htm](http://parkscanadahistory.com/series/chs/26/chs26-1a.htm).
7. The game was covered in considerable detail by correspondent George Nox McCain, then working for the *Philadelphia Press*, in a story filed months later. See "Baseball Game in the Klondike," *Philadelphia Press*, October 13, 1901: 9. Also see, especially for an amusing cartoon of game highlights, "The Game Was Hot," (Dawson) *Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget*, August 3, 1901: 3.
8. "Medicos Were Easy," *Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget*, August 28, 1901: 6.
9. "More Baseball for this Evening," (Dawson) *Morning Sun*, July 31, 1902: 4.

10. "Fine Games Are Assured," *Yukon Sun*, May 3, 1903: 5.
11. "Cannot Charge for Admission," *Yukon Sun*, May 19, 1903: 4.
12. Jackson B. Corbet Jr., "Klondike Baseball," *St. Louis Republic*, May 8, 1904: 17. Corbet previously had worked at the *Dawson Daily News*.
13. "Idylers Victors in Great Game," *Yukon Sun*, June 3, 1903: 4.
14. Corbet Jr., "Klondike Baseball," 17.
15. Same as above.
16. Same as above.
17. "Civil Service is Reorganized," *Yukon Sun*, June 6, 1903: 4.
18. "Want to Play Here," *Dawson News*, April 20, 1904: 4.
19. Corbet Jr., "Klondike Baseball," 17.
20. Corbet Jr., "Klondike Baseball," 17; "Idylers Now Head List," *Yukon Sun*, June 24, 1903: 1.
21. For examples of authorities finding such iniquity see "Dismissal of the Cases," *Yukon Sun*, May 11, 1902: 5; "Cases Enlarged Until Sunday," *Yukon Sun*, September 1, 1903: 4.
22. Corbet Jr., "Klondike Baseball," 18.
23. "Idlers Win by Enormous Score," *Yukon Sun*, July 15, 1903: 2.
24. "Baseball Carnival," *Yukon Sun*, July 21, 1903: 4.
25. "Baseball the Thing," *Yukon Sun*, July 22, 1903: 4; "Amaranths Win Game," *Yukon Sun*, July 23, 1903: 4; "Whitehorse the Loser," *Yukon Sun*, July 24, 1903: 4; "Once More is Beaten," *Yukon Sun*, July 25, 1903: 4.
26. "Was Played for Keeps," *Yukon Sun*, July 26, 1903: 4.
27. "Idylers in the Soup," *Yukon Sun*, August 12, 1903: 4; "Old Multnomah Star Plays Ball in Alaska," (Juneau) *Alaska Dispatch*, November 1, 1913: 4.
28. "Is the Emblem of Championship," *Yukon Sun*, July 18, 1903: 2.
29. Corbet Jr., "Klondike Baseball," 18.
30. "Dawson Still a Mecca for Sports," (Dawson) *Yukon World*, March 5, 1905: 3.
31. On 1904 changes, see "Fans Active at Dawson," *Alaska Dispatch*, March 24, 1904: 1; "New Rules Are Made," *Dawson News*, June 17, 1904: 4; "Are Close Together," *Dawson News*, June 17, 1904: 3. Note also that as Dawson's population diminished, apparently its daily newspapers did too.
32. C. Elton Troth, "Teams in Farthest North League Travel Rugged Alaska by Plane," *The Sporting News*, October 22, 1936: 8.

33. *Alaska Dispatch*, August 5, 1908: 4; *Alaska Dispatch*, August 25, 1908: 3.
34. The Dawson City Museum has a fine photographic archive of the community's sporting heritage at [dawsonmuseum.ca/collections/sports](http://dawsonmuseum.ca/collections/sports).

35. Gabriela Sgaga, "Can We Beat Alaska This Year?" *WhatsUpYukon*, August 30, 2016, [whatsupyukon.com/yukon/communities/can-we-beat-alaska-this-year](http://whatsupyukon.com/yukon/communities/can-we-beat-alaska-this-year).

## DEADBALL STARS AND THEIR NAMESAKES: A BASEBALL CARD GALLERY

compiled by **Tom Simon** and **Bill Lamb**

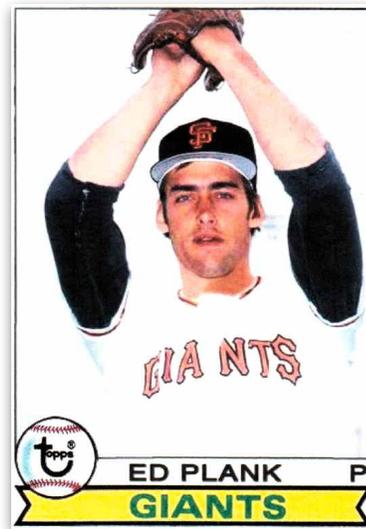
Recently, Tom Simon came across an on-line baseball card image of nine-game San Francisco Giants pitcher Ed Plank, a non-relative of Hall of Famer Eddie Plank, that got us wondering: How many other Deadball Era stars have a major league namesake? A less-than-exhaustive look into the question uncovered, with some elasticity regarding first names, seven sets of namesake twins and a trio of triplets. A few of our couplets are father-son combos. The remainder are unrelated. Following the Ed Plank-Eddie Plank template, set forth below are — with the exception of certain of our more obscure gallery members — vintage or replica baseball cards for these Deadball Era stars and their namesakes. Readers are invited to let us know whom we missed so we can run an update in the September newsletter, if needed.

### EDDIE PLANK AND ED PLANK

The staff ace of Connie Mack's juggernaut Philadelphia A's, Eddie Plank won more games (326) than any other left-hander pitching in the Deadball Era. Right-handed reliever Ed Plank did not record a decision in his nine appearances for the 1978-1979 San Francisco Giants.



*Eddie Plank*



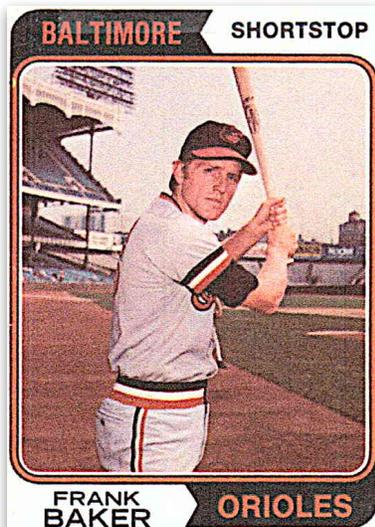
*Ed Plank*

## FRANK (HOME RUN) BAKER, INFIELDER FRANK BAKER, AND OUTFIELDER FRANK BAKER

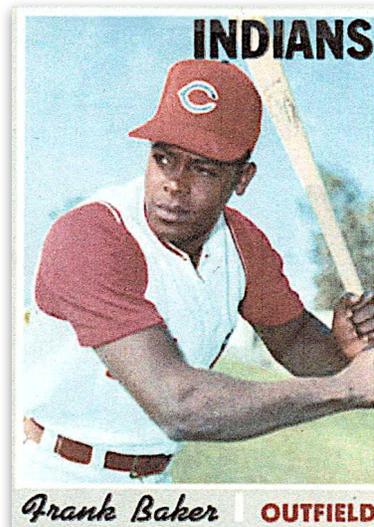
If we have the latitude to call John Franklin (Home Run) Baker by the name that he was known to contemporaries, three Frank Bakers have played major league ball. A teammate of Eddie Plank, the original Frank Baker was a member of the Philadelphia Athletics vaunted \$100,000 infield. Like his namesake, our second Frank Baker was an infielder, seeing time with the New York Yankees and Baltimore Orioles in the early 1970s, while the other Frank Baker played some outfield for the Cleveland Indians during the 1969 and 1971 seasons.



*Frank (Home Run) Baker*



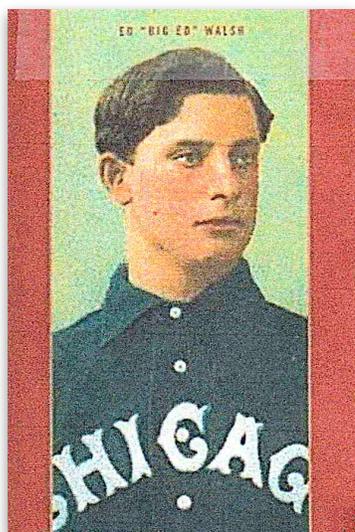
*Infielder Frank Baker*



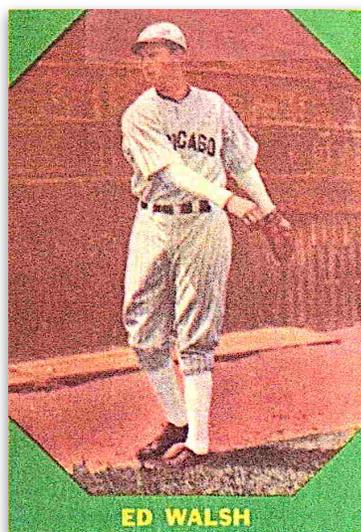
*Outfielder Frank Baker*

## BIG ED WALSH AND SON ED WALSH

On the way to a berth in Cooperstown, spitballer Big Ed Walsh won 40 games for the Chicago White Sox in 1908. Twenty years later, his son Ed Walsh began a four-season stint with the White Sox that saw him post 11 major league wins for a career.



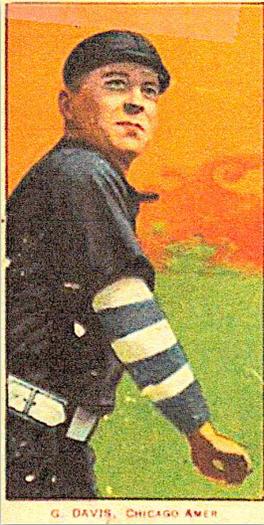
*Big Ed Walsh*



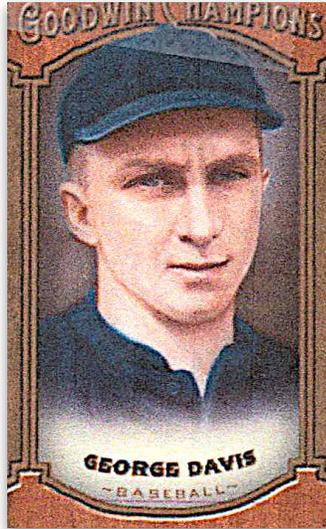
*Son Ed Walsh*

## GEORGE DAVIS, GEORGE (IRON) DAVIS, AND GEORGE (KIDDO) DAVIS

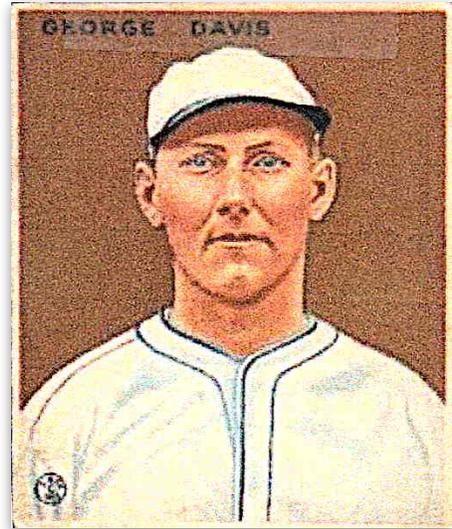
More a 19<sup>th</sup> century star, Hall of Fame shortstop George Davis was the leading batsman for the 1906 World Series champion Chicago White Sox Hitless Wonders. Right-hander George (Iron) Davis threw a no-hitter for the Boston Braves in September 1914, while George (Kiddo) Davis was a journeyman outfielder for various National League clubs in the 1930s.



**George Davis**



**George (Iron) Davis**



**George (Kiddo) Davis**

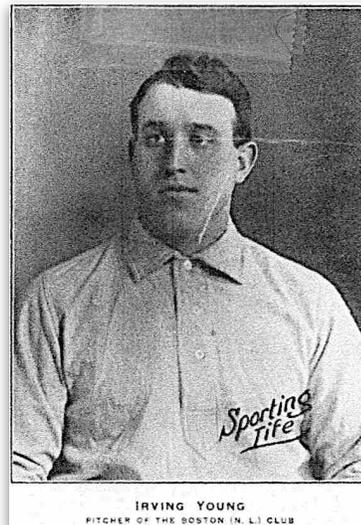
## CY YOUNG AND YOUNG CY YOUNG

Cy Young, major league baseball's all-time winningest pitcher, had his best seasons statistically for the Deadball Era Boston Americans. Meanwhile across town, Irv (sometimes called *Young Cy* or *Cy the Second*) Young was suffering through three-consecutive 20-loss seasons for the hapless 1905-1907 Boston Beaneaters/Doves.



Cy Young, p. Boston Am.

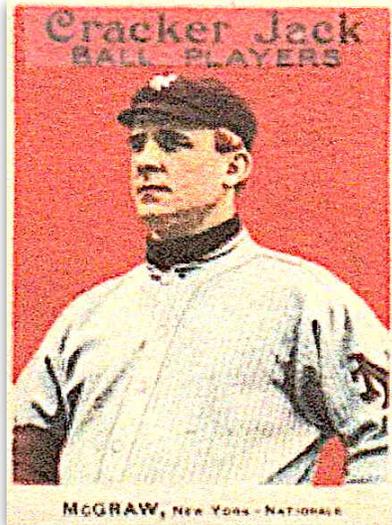
**Cy Young**



**Young Cy Young**

## MANAGER JOHN MCGRAW AND PITCHER JOHN MCGRAW

The most famous and the most obscure members of our gallery share the name John McGraw. Taking over the helm of the New York Giants midway through the 1902 season, Little Napoleon directed his teams to five Deadball Era National League pennants and a 1905 World Series triumph. A righthanded pitcher, the other John McGraw's major league career consisted of two scoreless innings of Federal League relief thrown for the 1914 Brooklyn Tip-Tops.



*Manager John McGraw*



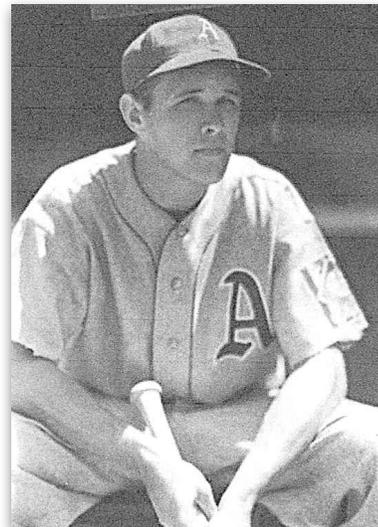
*Pitcher John McGraw*

## EDDIE COLLINS AND EDDIE COLLINS, JR.

Figuring in any conversation about baseball's greatest second baseman, Hall of Famer Eddie Collins enjoyed World Series triumphs as a member of both the Philadelphia A's (1910, 1911, and 1913) and Chicago White Sox (1917). Son Eddie, Jr., a light-hitting outfielder, had no such luck, spending parts of three seasons playing for the tail-end Athletics of 1939-1942.



*Eddie Collins*



*Eddie Collins, Jr.*

## HANDSOME DANNY MURPHY, OF DANNY MURPHY, AND OF/P DANNY MURPHY

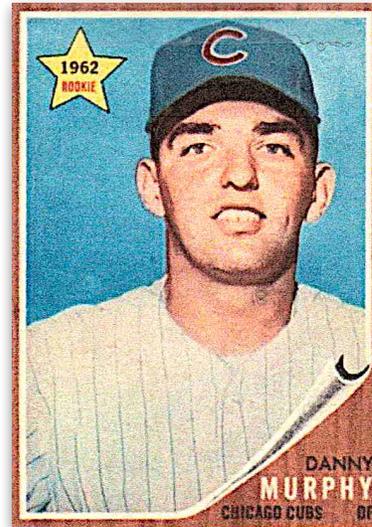
Another of our obscure gallery members, Handsome Danny Murphy was an eight-game catcher for the 1891 New York Giants. The best known of the Danny Murphys (center, below) was a stalwart outfielder and reliable batsman for the Deadball Era champion Philadelphia A's, while the most recent one first came to the majors as an outfielder for the Chicago Cubs in the early 1960s, and returned some years later as a relief pitcher for the White Sox, without achieving great success (.177 BA/4-4) in either endeavor.



*Handsome Danny Murphy*



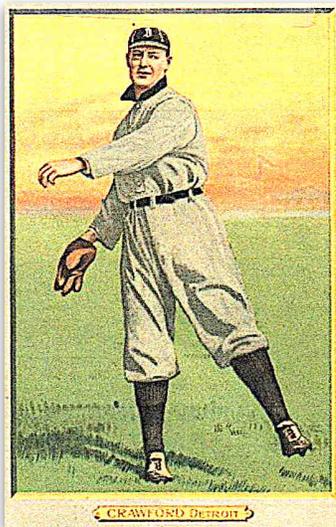
*OF Danny Murphy*



*OF/P Danny Murphy*

## OUTFIELDER SAM CRAWFORD AND PITCHER SAM CRAWFORD

Playing alongside Ty Cobb and Bobby Veach, Detroit Tigers outfielder Sam Crawford was a member of arguably the Deadball Era's best-hitting outfield. His little-known namesake was a mediocre pitcher for pre-Negro League and Negro League clubs from 1914 to 1931.



*Outfielder Sam Crawford*



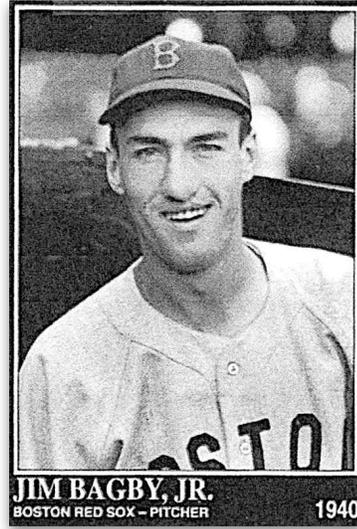
*Pitcher Sam Crawford*

## JIM BAGBY AND JIM BAGBY, JR.

En route to a solid nine-season major league career, late-Deadball Era right-hander Jim Bagby posted 31 wins for the 1920 world champion Cleveland Indians. Son Jim, Jr., also a righty hurler, followed in his father's footsteps, with two 17-win seasons highlighting a big leagues career than ran from 1938 to 1947.



*Jim Bagby*



*Jim Bagby, Jr.*



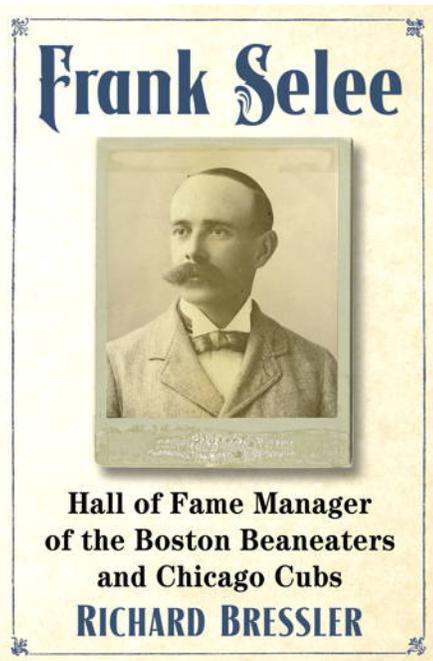
# Budweiser

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**BECK & CO. BREWERS, ST. LOUIS, MO.**

*(New York) Sun, March 18, 1910*



**FRANK SELEE:  
HALL OF FAME  
MANAGER OF THE  
BOSTON BEANEATERS  
AND CHICAGO CUBS**

**By Richard Bressler**

2020, McFarland  
[ISBN: 9781476682044. 197  
pp. \$35 USD. Softcover]

Reviewed by  
**David Shiner**  
cunegonde@prodigy.net

Deadball era enthusiasts are well acquainted with the name of Frank Selee. Fans of late nineteenth century baseball know even more about him. Selee was the most successful manager of the 1890s; his Boston Beaneaters won more games than Ned Hanlon's better-known Baltimore Orioles and far more than any other team in that decade.

Selee's managerial successes continued in Chicago in the

early part of the last century, although illness prevented him from reaping the fruits of his labors when the Cubs became a dynasty. He was unable to continue as Cubs' skipper after midseason 1905, succumbing to consumption – or, as we call it today, tuberculosis – four years later. He didn't live to see his 50th birthday, but his achievements spoke for themselves.

Or at least they should have. In the underappreciated *Bill James Guide to Baseball Managers* James stated that, despite Selee's clear managerial superiority to Hanlon over the course of their respective careers, "Hanlon was recently elected to the Hall of Fame. Selee hasn't been, and won't be." Fortunately, James's prognosis turned out to be incorrect: Selee was enshrined in the Hall just a few years later.

Although Selee was one of the few skippers of his era with essentially no professional playing experience, he would become the most successful. From the beginning, his impressive managerial feats came about largely because of his excellent eye for diamond talent, a particularly valuable skill at a time when each manager generally acted as his own GM. His first foray out of his native Massachusetts came when he was hired to manage Oshkosh in the Northwest League. He persuaded the team's owners to sign future Hall of Famer Tommy McCarthy and pitcher Tom Lovett, who would become a 30-game winner in the

major. Two years later, as manager of the Omaha club in the Western Association, he signed Kid Nichols, another future Hall of Famer. Nichols went 39-8, and Omaha romped to the Western Association pennant. That was enough to convince the Boston management to persuade the 30-year-old Selee to return home to manage the Beaneaters.

Richard Bressler's book rightly places most of its emphasis on Selee's remarkable successes as a major league manager, primarily in Boston but also in Chicago. His most conspicuous traits as a manager were signing the most talented players he could persuade his bosses to shell out for, and letting them play without undue managerial interference. He brought McCarthy and Nichols with him to Boston and later signed a raft of future Hall of Famers, including Hugh Duffy, Jimmy Collins, and Billy Hamilton. When he arrived in Chicago he sorted out a haphazard lot of players, quickly turning a failing franchise into a successful one and paving the way for the club's signal successes under his successor, Frank Chance, in the 1906-1910 period.

Chronicling the thoughts and actions of a man who died more than a century ago is challenging under the best of circumstances. Authoring a full biography about him is even more difficult. Contemporary accounts alone don't lend themselves to anything like a complete picture, so other sources must be used. In Se-

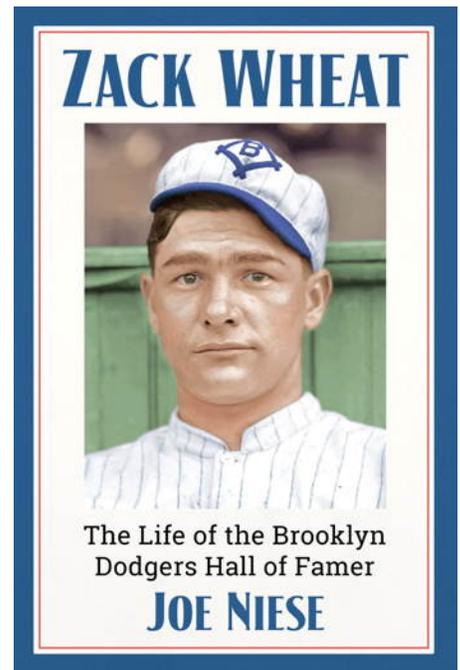
lee's case, the pickings are slim. He wasn't a colorful character or a self-promoter. He had no children, so there are no descendants who can be approached for memorabilia or family stories. He had, as James notes, no major heirs among later managers, unlike contemporaries such as Hanlon, Connie Mack, and John McGraw.

So what's left? Mostly accounts of ballgames, in which the manager rarely plays a visible role, at least in newspaper reports. Signings, trades, releases. By themselves, these don't add up to a book that is likely to keep readers turning its pages. And since Selee wasn't known for deft turns of phrase, quotations from his meagre writings don't do much to enliven the narrative. There are some engaging stories in the book, such as those told by Davy Jones to Lawrence Ritter for *The Glory of their Times* and reprinted here, but they have little to do

with Selee other than the fact that they took place on teams he managed.

Frank Selee's managerial career is worthy of the Hall of Fame, and also of book-length biographical treatment. By all accounts, he was a good man and a model citizen. His low-key style and gentlemanly deportment were praiseworthy, a point which author Bressler notes clearly and without overstatement. It would be nice to know more about him. Given the aforementioned difficulties, though, it seems unlikely that we ever will.

*David Shiner has written numerous articles, interviews, book reviews, and stories about baseball for various sports magazines, research journals, and literary publications. He is also the author of Baseball's Greatest Players: The Saga Continues (Superior Books, 2001), a sequel to Tom Meany's classic Baseball's Greatest Players.*



**ZACK WHEAT:  
THE LIFE OF THE  
BROOKLYN DODGERS  
HALL OF FAMER**

**By Joe Niese**

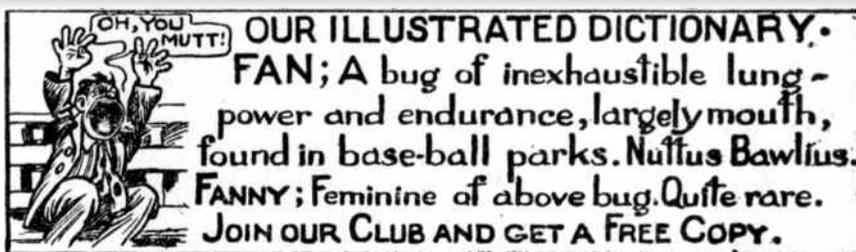
2020, McFarland  
[ISBN: 978-1476680149. 196  
pp. \$29.95 USD. Softcover]

Reviewed by  
**Andrew Milner**  
ajmilner@comcast.net

The Brooklyn Dodgers occupy an enormous space in the minds of most baseball fans, but it is primarily the Jackie Robinson/Pee Wee Reese-era Dodgers who garner that attention. Neither Peter Golenbock's excellent *Bums* nor the equally great books by the late Roger Kahn discuss the 1916-20 Dodgers in any great detail. The period surrounding World War I was the only extended moment where Brooklyn was

**PUBLISHERS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

As per usual, the books reviewed in this issue were generously supplied to us by their publishers. The biographies of Frank Selee and Zach Wheat were published by McFarland and can be ordered via email (info@mcfarlandpub.com) or telephone (1-800-253-2187). *Joe Harris, The Moon* was self-published by author Joyce A. Miller and can be obtained from Amazon and other retail outlets. We urge your patronage.



Walt McDougall

Bridgeton (New Jersey) Pioneer, July 20, 1911

unquestionably the best of New York City's three major league teams, winning two pennants while the Giants won only one and the pre-Ruth Yankees none at all. And left fielder Zack Wheat, who retired with a .317 batting average and 2,884 hits, was considered the best Dodger of that generation -- as late as the 1950s, sportswriters and teammates were still referring to him as the greatest Dodger ever.

Wheat, in other words, has long deserved a full-length biography. Joe Niese has admirably filled that need with a solidly-written, well-researched book. *Zack Wheat: The Life of the Brooklyn Dodgers Hall of Famer* concisely chronicles Wheat's development from cocky Missouri youth -- signed by Brooklyn, the 21-year-old Wheat walks into the Dodgers' offices and tells the club owner, "Say, Mr. Ebbets, I came here to get in your outfield and I want a chance to land there" -- to a mature 19-year big league veteran.

Niese provides a solid sense of what it was like to be on the Dodgers when Ebbets Field was brand new and the team was simply regarded as a good ballclub, before Brooklyn ballplayers were immortalized as The Boys of Summer, the Daffiness Boys, or as caricatures drawn by Willard Mullin. He notes that Wheat stayed in the lineup during the 1916 pennant race even after severely injuring his hip following a slide: "Wheat's fortitude

was recognized by both fans -- who tried to put together a petition to purchase him an automobile in early fall -- and, surprisingly, Brooklyn sportswriters, who, according to Wheat, protected him from possible pariah status." Niese, in addition, details how Wheat handled playing most of his career under manager Wilbert Robinson, a veteran of the 1890s Orioles and frenemy of John McGraw. When Wheat unofficially replaced Robinson as Brooklyn manager in 1925, he began by leading the club to an 11-5 homestand. Wheat's success, according to Niese, "likely pushed Robinson's abrupt return to the bench in late July," Wheat willingly acquiesced: "Confrontation was just not something that Wheat was comfortable with."

The biography illustrates that Wheat continued to put up good numbers while he aged, as his thirties coincided with the lively-ball era; at ages 35 and 36 he batted .375 in both the 1923 and 1924 seasons. Wheat finished third in the 1924 National League MVP voting as the Dodgers nearly prevented the Giants from winning a fourth-straight pennant. After a subpar 1926 season Wheat was unceremoniously released -- "It kind of soured me a little on baseball," he would later tell a reporter -- and he closed his major league career with the 1927 Philadelphia A's as one of six future Hall of Famers on the roster. Niese also details Wheat's longtime friendship with

teammate Casey Stengel, who called Wheat "one of the greatest hitters I ever saw in my lifetime," and his affiliation with top sportswriters like Frank Graham and Fred Lieb, though it was the Veterans Committee that belatedly elected Wheat to the Hall of Fame in 1959.

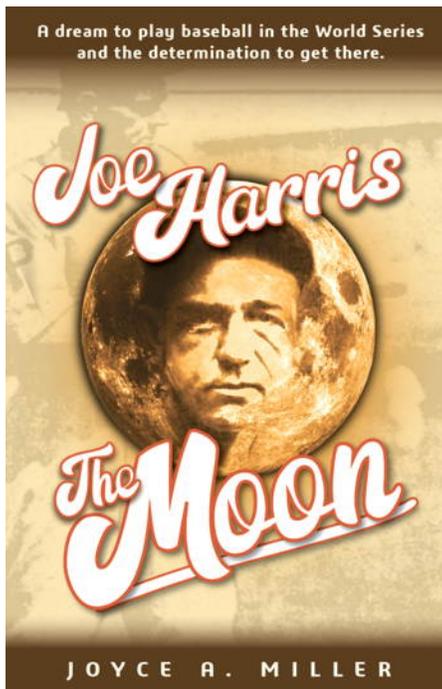
The book's primary flaw? Once Wheat hangs up his spikes the narrative quickly wraps up as Niese devotes only 13 pages to Wheat's post-baseball career, which spanned 45 years until his death in 1972. Wheat's career as a Kansas City police officer is mostly glossed over, apart from a near-fatal car accident in 1936. While almost nobody living saw Wheat play ball, tracking down one of his neighbors or family members to interview or locating Wheat's letters might have offered a wider sense of Wheat as a person. The book also has several typos (Niese credits Wheat with 333 outfield assists, not putouts, in 1916).

These drawbacks aside, Niese has done an exemplary job restoring the memory of an unjustly forgotten great, and *Zack Wheat* is one of the top Dead-ball reads of the past year.

*Andrew Milner joined SABR in 1984 and contributed to Baseball's Biggest Blowout Games and SABR's forthcoming book on Shibe Park. He lives in suburban Philadelphia.*



*Gene Ahern,  
Milwaukee Journal,  
November 25, 1918*



## JOE HARRIS, THE MOON

By Joyce A. Miller

2020, Joyce A. Miller  
[ISBN 978-1-5381-7354963-0-  
6.198 PP. \$15.00 USD, Soft-  
cover]

Reviewed by  
**T.S. Flynn**  
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*Joe Harris, The Moon* is a novelized biography of the author's great uncle, the eponymous ballplayer from southwest Pennsylvania coal country whose playing career spanned 20 seasons, including 10 in the major leagues. Told chronologically, the novel is organized into short chapters titled by year and covering events from 1903 through 1932. The final chapter, "1959," serves as an epilogue.

The reader is introduced to Harris on the day he began his working life at age 12, tending

to one of several mules that pulled carts in and out of a coal mine. The hardscrabble experience and the short evenings between the boy's shifts are conveyed with a breezy, easy-to-read tone that tends toward romanticization. The language and style are appropriate for readers of any age.

Harris's life story is quite interesting. After toiling in the mine for nine years and playing amateur ball on the side, Joe's big break came at age 21 when a St. Louis Browns scout helped him land a contract with the Class D Bay City club of the Southern Michigan League for the 1913 season. A two-game tryout with the New York Yankees interrupted his 1914 season with Bay City. He failed to impress manager Frank Chance and returned to Michigan to finish the season.

Following two subsequent seasons with the Chattanooga Lookouts, Harris earned a second shot at the big time with Cleveland in 1917. This time, he proved to be a capable major leaguer, but when the season ended Harris enlisted in the Army and soon found himself in the trenches of France fighting in the Great War. This is the most compelling section of the book. A bona fide combat hero, Sergeant Harris led his unit in battle and even saved a wounded soldier named Johnny Miljus who was shot in the shoulder and fell in no-man's land. Harris and Miljus would reunite in 1927, when both suited up for the Pittsburgh Pirates. Harris survived the hor-

ror of combat only to be badly injured when he caught a ride in an overcrowded ambulance that lost control and crashed into a ditch. Harris suffered a skull fracture and several broken ribs, delaying his return to the States by a month.

Harris rejoined the Indians in 1919 and played surprisingly well considering the extent of his injuries. Insulted by a \$5,000 offer for the 1920 season and, according to the novel, disappointed with teammates who agreed to throw the inconsequential final game of the season, he looked elsewhere for employment. An independent club in Franklin, Pennsylvania, half of a two-team industrial league, matched Cleveland's \$5,000 offer and sweetened the deal with an apartment and an ownership stake in a pool hall. The arrangement provided security until the team folded just two years later. Harris then became the first player reinstated to Organized Baseball by Commissioner Kenesaw Landis, and was acquired by the Boston Red Sox.

The novel's accounts of Harris's major league seasons are brief, highlighting his exploits in a game or two per season, as he drifts from Boston to stints with Washington, Pittsburgh, and, finally, Brooklyn. There is no mention of his 1929 season with the Pacific Coast League's Sacramento Senators or his brief stint with the 1931 Buffalo Bisons of the International League. Instead, his tenure with the 1930-31 Toronto

Maple Leafs, also an IL club, is presented as his swan song. It's a comfortable choice for closing the story of his baseball career, as Harris was reunited with his former Cleveland teammate, Toronto manager Steve O'Neil.

Unfortunately, several factual errors afflict *Joe Harris, the Moon*. For example, descriptions of the 1914 New York Yankees uniforms in the novel match those worn by the 1914 New York Giants, and Harris's two-game Yankees tryout — which took place in Chicago

and St. Louis — happens in New York in the novel. The most glaring error in the book is the description of Walter Johnson's 1925 World Series Game Three shutout as a no-hitter. The tone, language, and lack of accurate detail make *Joe Harris, the Moon* a light and somewhat entertaining introduction to an overlooked personality in baseball history.

*T.S. Flynn is a White Sox fan living in Twins territory. He is an educator and a member of the Halsey Hall SABR Chapter.*

#### INVENTS BASEBALL MACHINE

#### UMPIRE MAY REVOLUTIONIZE INDOOR AMUSEMENTS WITH GAME

SHEFFIELD, PA.—W.B. Berry, a semi-professional umpire, has invented a baseball machine which may revolutionize indoor amusements.

His machine, which is now being patented, is a box-shaped affair 20 inches square, containing a device similar to clock works, on which rests a dial having more than 200 holes. Each hole has a baseball play or card over it. To start the game two persons pick out the teams they want to play and the players are written in regular order, being just the same as baseball, and miniature men are used on top of the game, playing around a marked-out diamond.

When a man is at bat, the "at bat" key is pressed, a small trap door opens and a card shows what the play is, a strike out, a base on balls, a hit, stolen base, or a run. Two regulation score cards are used and the machine records 1,604 different plays. No manipulator of the machine has so far been able to figure out a way to outguess it.

(Pittsburgh) Gazette Times, October 6, 1913

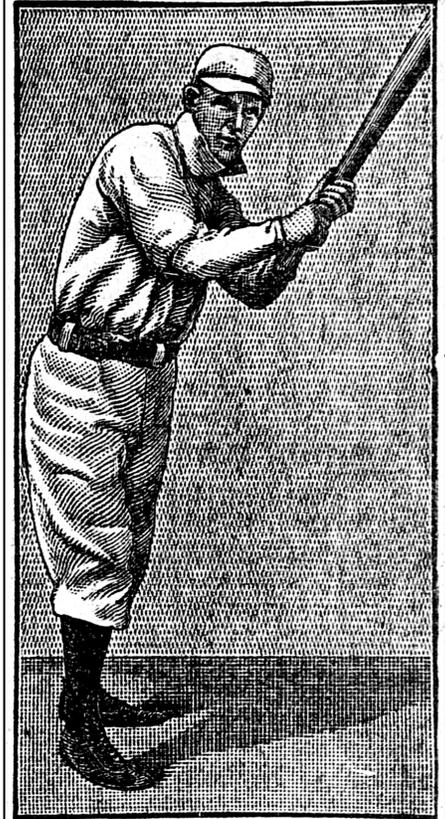
George Brown, the Celebrated Base Ball Player of the National League, Writes What He Thinks of Swamp-Root.

HOTEL EMPIRE,  
New York City, Oct. 19, 1903.

Dr. Kilmer & Co.,

Binghamton, N. Y.

Gentlemen: — After finishing the coaching of the Columbia Col-



lege Base Ball Team last spring, I was not in good condition for the opening of the National League. I started using Swamp-Root, and it put me in fine condition very quick. I am satisfied Swamp-Root is a wonderful remedy, and does everything that you claim for it.

Yours truly,

*George Brown*

New York National League Club.

Minneapolis Journal, February 5, 1904

## OSCAR HORSTMANN: LATE-DEADBALL ERA DISAPPOINTMENT

by **Bill Lamb**

At the close of his maiden season in 1917, right-hander Oscar Horstmann loomed large in the plans of the St. Louis Cardinals. Effective as both a starter and in relief, the young hurler had displayed an excellent fastball, an outstanding overhand curve, and exemplary work habits for the long-downtrodden Cards, finally making some progress in National League standings. If Horstmann could only overcome the control lapses that sometimes plagued him, a bright major league future awaited.

Sadly, it was not to be. The following season, the Horstmann career was derailed by arm miseries, chronic wildness, military service, and the onset of self-doubt. By early-June 1919, he was back in the minors and headed for a premature exit from the game. The effect that this reversal of fortune had on Horstmann, a taciturn man not given to public utterance, can only be speculated upon. But a clue toward his feelings may reside in the player questionnaire that he completed some four decades after his career was over. Horstmann was that relatively rare responder to aver that, had he his life to live over again, he would NOT have played professional baseball.<sup>1</sup> A look back at his tale of late-Deadball Era disappointment follows.

Oscar Theodore Horstmann was born on June 2, 1891 in Alma, Missouri, a rural flyspeck located about 55 miles east of Kansas City. He was the sixth of seven children<sup>2</sup> born to German immigrant Herman Henry Horstmann (1848-1928), a grain elevator operator, and his Missouri-born wife Katharina (nee Pelster, 1852-1939), herself of German descent. Oscar was educated in local public and Lutheran parochial schools through high school graduation.<sup>3</sup> He then matriculated to St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas, a two-year school operated by the Lutheran Church intended to prepare students for entrance into the seminary. And it was there that Bosco Horstmann, as he was known then, first attracted attention pitching for

the St. John's Saints. The career-long misspelling of our subject's surname as *Horstman* also traces to his college playing days.<sup>4</sup>

In 1914, Horstmann forsook the ministry to assay making his living as a baseball player, signing with the Winfield Reds of the unrecognized Oklahoma-Kansas League. He proved an immediate success, going a reported 22-7<sup>5</sup> and attracting interest from various clubs in Organized Baseball, ranging from teams in the elite Class AA Pacific Coast League to the Hutchinson Packers of the lowly Class D Kansas State League.<sup>6</sup> For the time being, however, Horstmann declined to sign with anyone. Instead, he accepted a one-game, non-contract engagement with the last-place Wichita (Kansas) Wolves of the Class A Western League.

On September 18, 1914, Oscar Horstmann entered the professional ranks in grand style, throwing a complete-game three-hitter at the league-leading Sioux City (Iowa) Indians. But shoddy Wichita fielding and his own wildness (eight walks) placed Horstmann on the short end of the score until a three-run, ninth-inning Wolves rally made the newcomer the winning pitcher in his pro debut.<sup>7</sup> Convinced by the outing that he could make the grade professionally and guided by Winfield Reds manager-mentor Mel Backus, Horstmann thereupon accepted a \$150/month contract offer from the Los Angeles Angels of the PCL.<sup>8</sup>

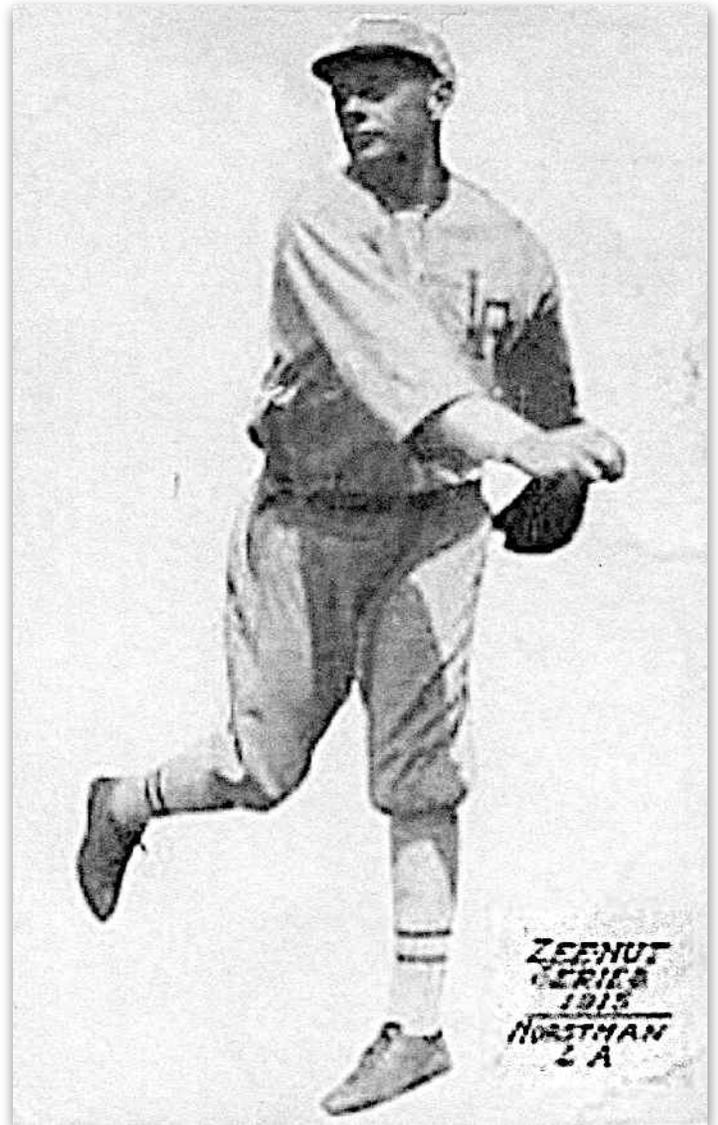
Now 23, Horstmann had matured into a well-conditioned 5'10½"/165 pounder, and fully looked the part of a major league pitcher.<sup>9</sup> Shortly after his arrival in spring camp, Los Angeles manager Frank (Pop) Dillon decided to test the prospect's mettle, thrice sending him out to face the Chicago White Sox, just returned from a globe-circling post-season exhibition game tour. Horstmann was beaten each time, but pitched respectably. Still, manager Dillon concluded that the youngster needed additional seasoning and with the Angels needing to cut their roster down to the 18-player limit before May 1, Horstmann was optioned to the Tucson (Arizona) Pueblos of the Class D Rio Grande Association.<sup>10</sup>

The Tucson club that Horstman was assigned to was the dregs of the four-club Association,<sup>11</sup> a loser of better than two of every three games played. Except when Horstmann, who won seven of his final

nine Tucson starts, pitched. With the league teetering on the verge of collapse, “Oscar Horstman risked his game leg and a possibly brilliant future with the Los Angeles club by pitching good ball” in a 13-5 victory over league-leading Phoenix on July 5.<sup>12</sup> Two days later, the Rio Grande Association disbanded.

To make roster space available for Horstmann, the Angels promptly released ex-major league left-hander Sleepy Bill Burns.<sup>13</sup> Back under the tutelage of veteran Angels manger Dillon, Horstmann “changed his delivery to an over-hand style” with good effect.<sup>14</sup> He was also lauded as “the kind of twirler that thrives on hard work and gets better with each performance” in a mid-season wire service dispatch published in the hinterlands.<sup>15</sup> In 11 mostly-relief outings, Horstmann went 2-3, with a respectable 3.38 ERA in 48 innings pitched, and was retained by the Angels for the following season.

Spring 1916 began with rumor that newly-installed Los Angeles manager Frank Chance intended to unload Horstmann. First, it was reported that he was to be optioned to the Tacoma (Washington) Tigers of the Class B Northwestern League.<sup>16</sup> Thereafter, a trade that would send Horstmann and others to the Toronto Maple Leafs of the Class AA International League was proposed by fell through.<sup>17</sup> Evidently, erratic control was the deficiency that landed the young hurler in his manger’s doghouse, a shortcoming that Chance attributed to the Horstmann disinclination to pitch batting practice or otherwise throw on the sidelines.<sup>18</sup> But in mid-June, a one-hit shutout of the San Francisco Seals redeemed him with the club leader, and soon Chance was touting Oscar and Angels batterymate Johnny Bassler as “destined for the big show.”<sup>19</sup> Chance also took credit for the pitcher’s improved control, a product of positive suggestion that had been implanted in the pitcher’s brain. “You are what you think you are,” Chance counseled him. All Horstmann had to do was repeat to himself the mantra “I ain’t wild. I got perfect control” prior to windup and his pitches would go precisely where intended.<sup>20</sup> He also purportedly added a new pitch to his repertoire – the “dust ball,” an offering delivered with a handful of dirt that obscured the ball’s



*Los Angeles Angels, 1915*

trajectory until it “finally emerges from the cloud of dust as it nears the plate.”<sup>21</sup>

In almost no time, Horstmann was deemed “the most promising pitching prospect in the [PCL], possessing great speed, a fine curve ball, and, above all things, courage in the pinches,” according to a nationally-syndicated article.<sup>22</sup> “He has all the appearance of a great young pitcher who is rising to the top fast.” Such testimonials were somewhat belied by Horstmann’s numbers. Used as both a starter and reliever, he posted an underwhelming 11-14 (.440) record for a 119-79 (.601) league champion Los Angeles club. But a 2.56 ERA and only 189 base hits allowed in 232 innings pitched attested to the quality of Horstmann’s stuff. The 104 walks issued, however, remained worrisome.

In mid-August, the Chance “big show” prophecy was borne out by Horstmann's acquisition by the St. Louis Cardinals.<sup>23</sup> Under the terms of the transfer, he was to finish the extended PCL season with Los Angeles and report to Cardinals camp the following spring.

Horstmann's arrival in the major leagues in April 1917 coincided with American entry into the Great War. To show patriotic fervor while awaiting the call to duty of their charges, St. Louis club brass had the Cardinal players doing rifle-bearing close order drill on the ball field during the preseason. When polled, all the players expressed their willingness to join the fight – with one exception: Oscar Horstmann. The new Cardinals pitcher “wants to dress wounds and not make them, and he will join the hospital corps if called upon.”<sup>24</sup>

With anti-German sentiment surging among the populace, Horstmann, the son of a German immigrant and bearer of an unmistakably Teutonic surname, was an inviting target for fan vitriol. Yet no evidence whatever survives to indicate that he was ever harassed at the ballpark because of his ethnicity. This may well have been a result of a well-publicized change in Horstmann's attitude. In early May, he expressed the intention of applying for officer candidate training with a reserve Army infantry unit. Oscar explained his new-found stance thusly: “I believe we should go into war right, now that we have entered it, and I do not believe that half-measures should be adopted. It is the solemn duty of every American to help his country force the war to a speedy conclusion and have it over with rather than let it drag on.”<sup>25</sup>

As it turned out, the war effort placed few demands on baseball during the 1917 season. A week into the campaign, Oscar made his major league debut, coming on in relief of starter Bob Steele in a 9-2 loss to the Chicago Cubs. He fared poorly, giving up two hits and two walks in two-thirds innings pitched, but Cardinal errors made both the runs that he surrendered unearned. Given a start against Brooklyn a month later, Horstmann pitched well but dropped a 3-1 decision to the Robins. In late June, he broke into the win column with a five-hit, complete-game victory over the Cubs, 6-3. Used judiciously thereafter by manager Miller Huggins,

Horstmann reeled off five consecutive victories in the ensuing month, including a doubleheader-worth of relief wins against the Philadelphia Phillies on July 21. He began the season's final month with a five-hit, 1-0 gem against Pittsburgh, his only shutout as a big leaguer. Horstmann closed the campaign with another impressive effort, a three-hit, 7-2 triumph over the Phillies that temporarily deprived the redoubtable Grover Alexander of his thirtieth victory.

At season end, Horstmann's final numbers were promising. In 35 appearances (11 starts), he went 9-4 (.692) for a third-place (82-70, .539) St. Louis outfit that improved a whopping 22 games over the previous season's record. A 3.44 ERA and only 111 base hits allowed in 138 2/3 innings pitched were also more-than-respectable. The only seeming concern was Horstmann's control, as reflected in his substandard 50-strikeouts-to-54-walks ratio. Still, St. Louis was high on the young pitcher, club president Branch Rickey observing that Horstmann's work had been “of such a nature to lead to the prediction that he would have a great year next season.”<sup>26</sup> Unbeknownst to all concerned, Oscar Horstmann's career was, in fact, irrevocably headed in the opposite direction. Indeed, he would never win another major league game.

That, of course, was unforeseeable at the time. Front office confidence in Horstmann was so high that his new contract with the club was a two-season pact.<sup>27</sup> But the increasing personnel demands of World War I made his immediate future uncertain. Young, unmarried, and without dependents at home, Oscar was a prime candidate for the military draft. And he publicly resolved not to seek an exemption or otherwise try to avoid service if called.<sup>28</sup> For the time being, however, Horstmann was free to report to the Cardinals spring camp – where he promptly developed a tender arm.

The Cardinals nursed Horstmann through spring training, but without much improvement in the condition of his arm. Used sparingly in the early regular season, he did not register a decision until May 17 when, wild and ineffective, he did not make it out of the second inning in an 8-1 loss to Boston. Two weeks later, a disastrous relief outing (four walks and a base hit in one-third inning pitched)

ended Horstmann's season. Shortly thereafter, the long-expected call to military service arrived, with the pitcher directed to report on June 20.<sup>29</sup>

Upon induction, the college-educated conscript was sent to officer candidate school and thereafter commissioned as a second lieutenant assigned to an infantry unit. Lt. Horstmann spent the war stateside, the November 11 Armistice being declared before he could be deployed overseas. Honorably discharged in December, Oscar returned home to Alma where he continued to live with his parents and awaited the start of 1919 Cardinals spring training.<sup>30</sup>

The layoff appeared to have done him good, with his early workouts pleasing club boss Rickey. "Horstman looks better than he has in two years," Rickey told the hometown press in mid-March.<sup>31</sup> But Horstmann's progress was sidetracked when he and four other Cardinal pitchers were injured in a mid-April automobile accident. With staff ace Lee Meadows behind the wheel, their vehicle skidded on slippery pavement and collided with a St. Louis trolley car.<sup>32</sup> "Entirely disregarding the fact that he was bleeding from several cuts and that one eye was completely closed, Oscar Horstman, calmly smoking a cigar, took the time to tell [bystanders] just how the other men were hurt [and] passed over his own hurts as superficial." Although he was back on the mound within two weeks of the crash, Horstmann was ineffective, and suspicion would long linger that the pitching progress that he had demonstrated in spring training had been derailed by the accident.<sup>34</sup>

Struggling with his control and hit regularly (14 base hits and 12 walks in 15 innings pitched), the major league career of Oscar Horstmann came to a close with a scoreless two-inning relief stint against the Cincinnati Reds on June 1, 1919. For the next four weeks, he sat idle on the Cardinals bench until optioned to the Columbus (Ohio) Senators of the International League in late June.<sup>35</sup> Although it was hoped that the still only-28-year-old hurler would regain form and pitch his way back to St. Louis, it was not to be. His major league career was over. In 50 appearances spread over three seasons, Horstmann posted a 9-7 (.563) record, with a 3.67 ERA in 176 2/3 innings pitched. He held opposition



*St. Louis Cardinals*

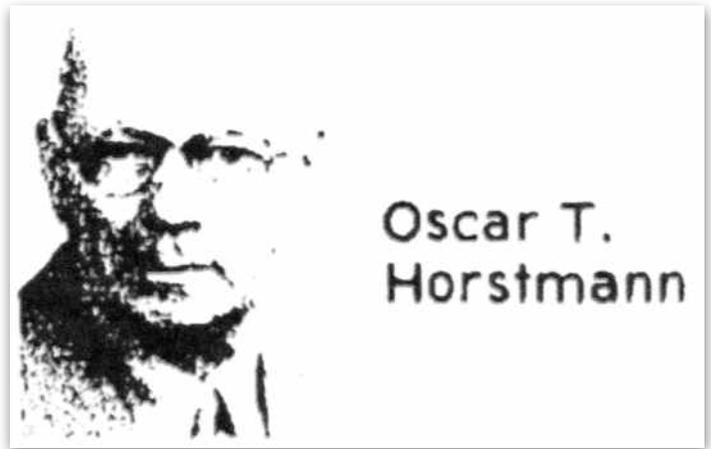
batsmen to a respectable .245 OBA<sup>36</sup> but poor control (80 walks versus only 61 strikeouts) had often gotten him into trouble.

Horstmann found little redemption in Columbus, going 2-5 (albeit with a decent 3.25 ERA) in 18 outings for the Senators before being "found wanting" and returned to St. Louis shortly before the IL season ended.<sup>37</sup> Over the winter, the Cardinals dealt Horstmann to the Kansas City Blues of the Class AA American Association in exchange for shortstop prospect Jim McAuley.<sup>38</sup> Toiling for the last-place (60-106, .361) Blues, Horstmann's 1902 record (9-16, .360) mirror-imaged that of his ball club. His 240 innings pitched indicated that arm miseries might be behind him, but his overgenerous 274 base hits and 90 walks allowed over that span precluded his re-elevation to the majors.

Oscar returned to Kansas City for the 1921 campaign, and during the early going he still flashed talent. But his lack of success perplexed local observers who chalked it up to self-doubt. "Horstman's case is difficult to fathom. He seems unable to win," the *Kansas City Star* remarked. "He has the best curve ball in the league and a good fast one, but he seems to lack confidence in himself and lays them in too fat for opposing hitters."<sup>39</sup> Veteran circuit umpire Jim Murray subscribed to the same view. "Like a lot of others, [Murray] can't understand why Horstman isn't a winning pitcher. ... He has everything that goes to make a winning hurler and why he does not get by is a mystery."<sup>40</sup> By late July, Blues manager Otto Knabe had pretty much given up on Horstmann, using him only sparingly. Oscar lasted out the season in Kansas City, but his final numbers – 4-6 in 33 games, with a 5.69 ERA in only 106 innings pitched – indicated that the end of the professional trail was drawing near.

In January 1922, Kansas City released Horstmann who was then claimed on waivers by an American Association rival, the Louisville Colonels.<sup>41</sup> By-now familiar questions about the pitcher's psyche accompanied his relocation. According to one Louisville sportswriter, "the case of Oscar Horstman ... contains as many intricacies as the theory of relativity, one that would take the mind of Einstein to resolve. ... Horstman has as much stuff as anyone in the league. Just why he can't strike a winning stride has never been practically explained."<sup>42</sup> A tendency to lay in fat pitches "too often when in trouble" suggested that Horstmann "lacked guts. ... [Yet] despite his many faults, Horstman is a hard worker and never was known to shirk a duty. He was always ready to work when called upon and gave his best, however poor that might have been."<sup>43</sup>

Horstmann's supposed psychological problems appeared a moot point when the hurler informed Louisville of his intention to leave Organized Baseball, declaring that "he can get more money out of independent baseball than he can playing with an Association club."<sup>44</sup> Two months later, Horstmann changed his mind, signing a Louisville contract and belatedly reporting to the club's spring camp in



**May 1977 Obituary Photo**

Pensacola, Florida.<sup>45</sup> But shortly after his arrival he was shelled by Brooklyn in an exhibition game outing, and thereafter complained of shoulder soreness.<sup>46</sup> Eventually, it all ended badly with Horstmann suspended by the club for failure to get into pitching shape and on his way home to Alma in mid-May, having never thrown a regular season pitch for the Colonels.<sup>47</sup>

Following his experience in Louisville, Oscar Horstmann abandoned the game, retreating into an anonymity so complete that his name went unmentioned in discoverable baseball newsprint until his obituary was published in *The Sporting News* some 55 years later.<sup>48</sup> By means of census and other governmental records now viewable on-line, it can be determined that Oscar spent his first post-baseball decade living at the family residence in Alma and working in sales.<sup>49</sup> In December 1933, the 42-year-old bachelor married Annabelle Smith, an insurance company secretary eleven years his junior. Their union would endure the next 44 years but yielded no offspring. By 1940, the couple had relocated to Kansas City where Oscar found employment as a grain inspector. Upon retirement in 1967, he and his wife moved to Salina, Kansas.<sup>50</sup> Ten years later, he suffered a heart attack while at home and died in a nearby hospital. Oscar Theodore Horstmann was 85. Following funeral services, his remains were cremated and subsequently inurned in a mausoleum at Mount Moriah Cemetery, Kansas City.<sup>51</sup> Immediate survivors were limited to widow Annabelle and younger sister Edna Horstmann Breitag.

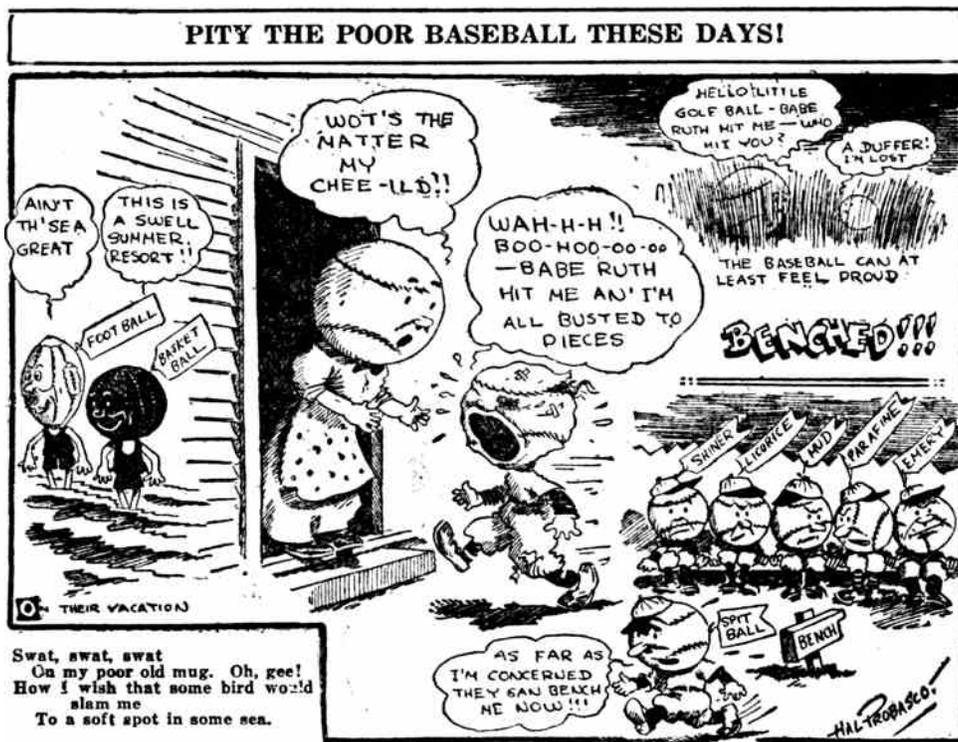
## NOTES

1. Per the player questionnaire completed by Horstmann in 1960 and now contained in his file at the Giamatti Research Center in Cooperstown.
2. The other Horstmann children were John Frederick (born 1872), Henry (1875), Herman (1877), Otto (1882), Clara (1888), and Edna (1894).
3. Per to the Horstmann player questionnaire.
4. See e.g., “Twirled Great Ball and Lost,” *Winfield (Kansas) Courier*, May 18, 1911: 1, extolling the 16-strikeout performance of Oscar Horstman against Southwestern College.
5. According to the *Winfield (Kansas) Free Press*, March 4, 1915: 3.
6. As reported in the *Winfield Courier*, *Arkansas City (Kansas) Traveler*, and elsewhere in September 1914.
7. See “Sioux Couldn’t Hit Horstman,” *Wichita (Kansas) Beacon*, September 19, 1914: 7.
8. Per “Bosco Signs,” *Winfield Courier*, September 26, 1914: 6. See also, “Los Angeles Offers Horstman \$1200 Contract,” *Winfield Courier*, September 17, 1914, and “Horstman in Los Angeles,” *Wichita (Kansas) Eagle*, March 2, 1915: 7. The Horstmann contract covered the extended eight-month PCL playing schedule.
9. The height/weight provided by Horstmann himself in his Hall of Fame player questionnaire.
10. As reported in “Bosco’ Was Farmed,” *Blackwell (Oklahoma) News*, May 6, 1915: 2. See also, *Salt Lake (Utah) Telegram*, April 16, 1915: 16, and *El Paso (Texas) Herald*, May 7, 1915: 10.
11. The Rio Grande Association began the 1915 season as a six-club circuit but teams in Las Cruces (New Mexico) and Douglas (Arizona) abandoned play in late May.
12. Lyle Abbott, “Being the Funeral Oration of a Luckless League,” (Phoenix) *Arizona Republican*, July 6, 1915: 2.
13. Per “Angels Release Burns; Take on Horstman,” *San Diego Evening Tribune*, July 8, 1915: 8. See also, “Horstman Joins Angels,” (Portland) *Oregon Journal*, July 15, 1915: 12. Some years later, the released Burns would descend into baseball infamy for his role as go-between for players and gamblers in the Black Sox scandal.
14. Per the *Winfield Courier*, October 28, 1915: 4.
15. See e.g., “Baseball Stories,” (Hurley, Wisconsin) *Iron County News*, July 29, 1915: 7, and (White River, South Dakota) *Mellette County Pioneer*, August 4, 1915: 4.
16. See e.g., “Baseball Notes,” (Portland) *Oregon Journal*, April 4, 1916: 13.
17. Per “Baseball Brevities,” *Oregon Journal*, April 29, 1916: 8, and “Diamond Dust,” *Salt Lake Telegram*, May 1, 1916: 10.
18. See “Baseball Notes,” *Oregon Journal*, June 22, 1916: 13.
19. As reported in “All Have Forgotten,” (Portland) *Oregonian*, June 28, 1916: 15.
20. See “Mental Suggestion Great Help to Young Coast Pitcher,” *Bridgeport (Connecticut) Evening Farmer*, August 5, 1916: 11; William Peel, “Other Sporting Gossip,” *Washington (DC) Herald*, August 11, 1916: 9.
21. According to “Sportographs,” *Riverside (California) Enterprise*, August 16, 1916: 10.
22. See e.g., (Fairbanks) *Alaska Citizen*, September 11, 1916: 4.
23. As reported in “Bosco’ Horstman Joins St. Louis,” *Winfield Courier*, August 22, 1916: 6; “9 Sold to Majors,” *Oregonian*, August 29, 1916: 13; and elsewhere. In return for Horstmann, the Angels received pitcher Charley Hall, a player to be named later (eventually infielder Art Butler), and an unspecified amount of cash.
24. Per “Ball Players Will Serve If Needed,” (Boise, Idaho) *Evening Capital News*, April 5, 1917: 13.
25. “Cardinal Pitcher Preparing to Join Officers’ Reserve,” *St. Louis Star*, May 3, 1917: 13.
26. Per “Rickey to Barter for Talent When Magnates Gather,” *St. Louis Star*, October 30, 1917: 13.
27. As revealed in “Paulette Accepts and Signs for Next Season,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 11, 1918: 20.
28. Per the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 12, 1918: 12. See also, “Oscar Horstman and Long Ready to Do Their Bit,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 14, 1918: 14, and Clarence F. Lloyd, “Jack Hendricks Will Be Lucky If Outfield Isn’t Lost in Draft,” *St. Louis Star*, January 25, 1918: 13. When he registered for the draft the previous May, Horstmann had sought an exemption from service due to “swelling veins.”
29. See “Oscar Horstman Called into Service June 20,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 12, 1918: 19; “Jack Smith Departs While Horstman Is Notified That He Is Wanted,” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, June 13, 1918: 7.
30. Per “Lieut. Horstman Gets Discharged from Army,” *St. Louis Star*, December 21, 1918: 9.
31. See “Rickey Looks Them Over,” *St. Louis Star*, March 19, 1919: 22.
32. Per “Five Cardinal Pitchers Hurt in Automobile Smash,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 16, 1919: 30. Besides Horstmann and Meadows, the vehicle was occupied by fellow St. Louis hurlers Bill

Doak, Red Ames, and Bill Sherdel, all of whom suffered injury.

33. "Among the Debris," *St. Louis Star*, April 17, 1919: 17.
34. See e.g., "Some Real Hard Luck," *St. Louis Star*, December 3, 1919: 11; "Oscar Horstman, a really fine pitching prospect, was utterly ruined by the accident." See also, "Short of Hurling Talent," *Kansas City Star*, March 25, 1920: 12; "There is nothing sure that [Horstmann] will not be troubled from the injuries he received in the motor vehicle accident in St. Louis."
35. As reported in "Horstman to Columbus," (Little Rock) *Arkansas Gazette*, June 26, 1919: 12; "Horstman Slipping," *Chattanooga (Tennessee) News*, June 26, 1919: 19; "Horstman Joins Columbus Squad," *Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch*, June 28, 1919: 13.
36. Per *Total Baseball* (Kingston, New York: Total Sports Publishing, 7th ed., 2001), 1530.
37. See "Two Pitchers Go," *Columbus Dispatch*, September 10, 1919: 30.
38. As reported in "Name Successor to Ganzel," *Columbus Dispatch*, February 1, 1920: 27; "St. Louis Nationals Building Up for Year," *Duluth (Minnesota) News-Tribune*, February 1, 1920: 3.
39. "Horstman Lacks 'Something,'" *Kansas City Star*, April 26, 1921: 11.
40. Per "Lack Only the Pitchers," *Kansas City Star*, July 29, 1921: 14.

41. As reported in "Horstman Released," *Duluth News-Tribune*, January 4, 1922: 9, and *Grand Forks (North Dakota) Herald*, January 4, 1922: 7. See also, "Louisville Gets Pitcher," *Washington (DC) Evening Star*, January 8, 1922: 32.
42. Jack Hellman, "New Hurler Has Ability," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, January 5, 1922: 6.
43. Hellman, above.
44. Per "Horstman to Quit Game, He Declares," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, January 6, 1922: 8.
45. As related in "Former Blue Faces About," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, March 11, 1922: 8.
46. As reported by Charles A. Reinhardt, "Twirlers Put Through Strenuous Practice; Francis Gains Favor," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, April 1, 1922: 10. Reportedly, the overhand-throwing Horstmann was unable to raise his arm above his shoulder.
47. See "Oscar Horstman Is Suspended," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, May 21, 1922: 54.
48. See "Obituaries: Oscar Horstmann," *The Sporting News*, May 22, 1977: 53.
49. Per the 1930 US Census.
50. Per the Horstmann obituary published in the *Salina (Kansas) Journal*, May 11, 1977: 10.
51. Per the Find-A-Grave website which provides a photo of the mausoleum plaque for Oscar and Anna Horstmann (who died in 1999 at age 97).



Hal Probasco

Richmond (Indiana) Palladium and Sun-Telegram, June 22, 1920

## GAMES/BIOPROJECT

SABR members cooped up by the pandemic continue to produce an impressive array of essays for the Games Project and BioProject. Regarding the former, upwards of 25 new game accounts involving Deadball Era contests have been published since our last newsletter was released. Meanwhile, new profiles of Deadballers Sam Lanford, George Zackert, Tom Long, John T. Powers, Ed Willett, Ward Miller, Al Wickland, Ed Lennox, Doc Watson, Roland Howell, Doc Shanley, Dick "Cannonball" Redding, Bobby Messenger, Phil Cooney, J. Edward Krause, Joe Gieber, Roy Radebaugh, Fred Curtis, Paul Sentell, Merito Acosta, Dale Gear, Howard Camp, Louis Santop, and Ziggy Hasbrook are available. As always, we urge you to check these out if you have not already done so.

## ZACH WHEAT BIOGRAPHER WINS RON GABRIEL AWARD

The Ron Gabriel Award is presented annually to the author of the best research on the Brooklyn Dodgers completed during the preceding calendar year. This year's Gabriel Award went to Joe Niese, a library director from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, for his book *Zach Wheat: The Life and Times of the Brooklyn Dodgers Hall of Famer*, published by McFarland (and reviewed on page 19, herein). In addition to his winning bio of the Deadball Era star, Niese is a biographer of Burleigh Grimes and Andy Pafko, as well as the author of other books and articles on sports. The newsletter extends its congratulations to Joe.

## NEW DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

<b>Jean Bergesen</b>	<b>Kent Krause</b>
<b>Ralph De Filippo</b>	<b>Mike Mandelkorn</b>
<b>Edward P. Gardner</b>	<b>Derrick Mauldin</b>
<b>Dan Holmes</b>	<b>David Raith</b>
<b>Ken Kirk</b>	<b>Frank Tursi</b>

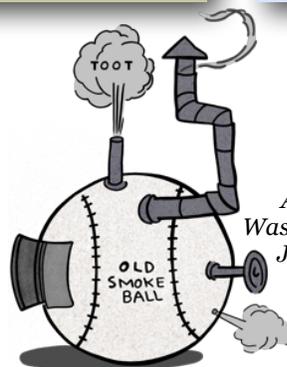
We look forward to their active participation in committee endeavors. These new committee members, as well as our newsletter contributors, can be contacted via the SABR directory.

## DEC MEMBER INTEREST ADDENDUM

**David Nemec**, contact: [philtomney@yahoo.com](mailto:philtomney@yahoo.com). Interests — Cleveland AL and AA clubs; Jack Graney; Guy Morton; Federal League umpires; Luther Bonin; Bill Joyce.

## CY YOUNG QUIZ CORRECTION

The answer to the final question on the Cy Young quiz presented in the February newsletter stands corrected. Including a 1992 biography written for young readers by distinguished DEC member Norman Macht, there have been five (not four) Cy Young bios published to date. With this correction, the newsletter editor's now-three-for-thirteen quiz score has zoomed over the Mendoza line.



Arthur Baer  
*Washington Times,*  
July 25, 1912

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