

The Early Southern Association 1901 - 1926

Atlanta
Birmingham
Chattanooga
Little Rock
Memphis
Mobile
Nashville
New Orleans

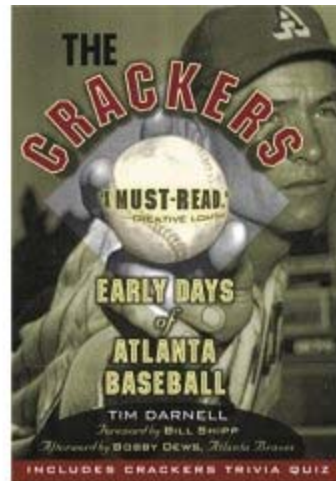


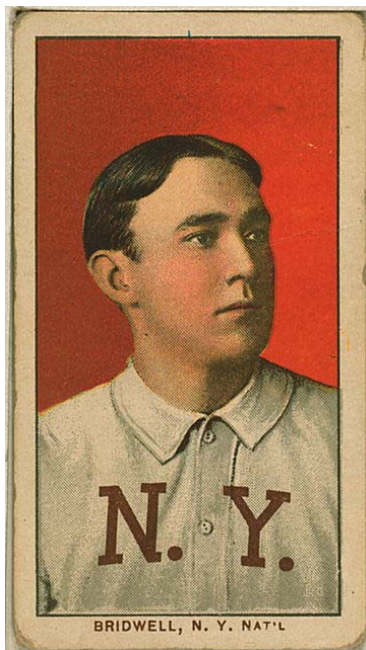
S. Derby Gisclair



Member
Society for American Baseball Research

The *Atlanta Crackers*





Al Bridwell

(1884 – 1969)

Born in Friendship, Ohio, Bridwell served his first stint in the Southern Association with Atlanta in 1903 and was unremarkable. He posted a .196 batting average during 81 games.

Bridwell made his major league debut on April 16, 1905 and played shortstop for five different teams during his eleven seasons in major league baseball (1905 – 1915) and was considered to be one of the best hitting shortstops of the Deadball Era. He ended a streak of 3,246 consecutive at-bats without a home run by hitting his first career homer of George Suggs on April 30, 1913. However, Bridwell will forever be remembered for hitting the single that began the “Merkle’s boner” rally on September 23, 1908.

He returned to the Atlanta Crackers at the age of 32 in 1916, playing twelve games at shortstop, batting a respectable .325 that year. He returned in 1917 at third base (67 games) and second base (20 games) and batted .283 for the season.

Bridwell served two terms as the sheriff of Scioto County, Ohio, before becoming a security guard at a steel factory in Portsmouth, Ohio. He died on January 23, 1969 after being hospitalized for two months.

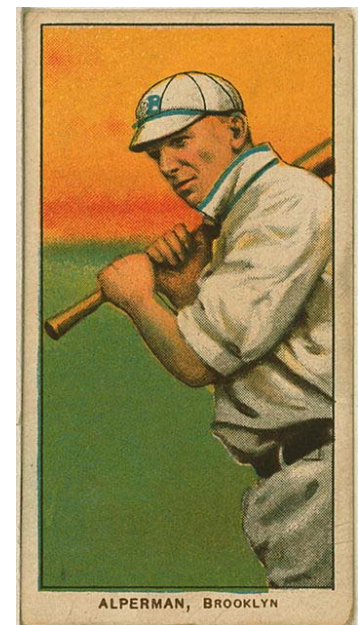
Charles “Whitey” Alperman

(1879 – 1942)

A native of Etna, Pennsylvania, Alperman made his major league debut on April 13, 1906 with the Brooklyn Superbas (Dodgers) and played four seasons in the majors. He was Brooklyn’s starting second baseman in 1906, 1907, and 1909. His best season came in 1907 when he led the league in triples (16). He had a .237 career batting average.

He came to Atlanta in 1912, playing second and third base. He also managed the team for part of the season, replacing Charles Hemphill. Alperman led the team in hits (139) and stolen bases (20). He returned to the Crackers in 1913 to play second base. During two seasons in Atlanta he compiled a .284 batting average.

Alperman was one of the toughest players to keep from reaching base, between his ability to battle pitchers and his knack for getting hit by pitchers. He died on Christmas Day, 1942 at St. Margaret’s Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the age of 63.



The Atlanta Crackers

Wilbur “Lefty” Good (Goode) (1879 – 1963)



A native of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, Good made his major league debut on August 18, 1905 with the New York Highlanders (Yankees) for 5 games as a left-handed pitcher, going 0 – 2 in 19 innings of work.

The diminutive (5'6") Good returned to the majors with the Cleveland Indians for two seasons (1908 – 1909) as an outfielder, but his batting fell off and he was traded to the Philadelphia Athletics who farmed Good out to Baltimore of the Eastern League. He returned to the majors with the Boston Doves (Braves) late in 1910 and remained for most of the 1911, when he was then traded to the Chicago Cubs for the rest of the season.

Good played for the next four seasons (1912 – 1915) with the Cubs. He hit the first pinch hit home run in Cubs' history on June 19, 1913, and on August 18, 1915, he became the only Cub to steal three bases in the same inning snagging second, third, and home in the 6th inning against Brooklyn.

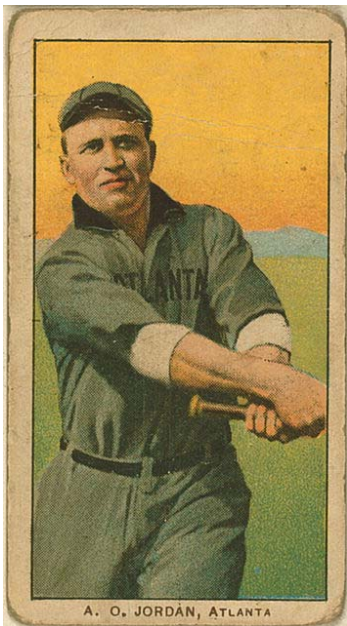
He was acquired by the Philadelphia Phillies for the 1916 season. His final season was in 1918 with the Chicago White Sox. In 11 seasons he posted a .258 batting average.

Good made his debut in the Southern Association with the Atlanta Crackers in 1924 as a 38-year old, playing in 68 games and batting .357 for the 2nd place Crackers.

The 1925 season was Good's finest with Atlanta as he led the Southern Association in at-bats (622), hits (236), and batting average (.379). He returned for the 1926 season, posting a .301 batting average.

Good was named the Crackers' manager in the second half of the 1928 season, but the club finished 66 – 87 (.431) in 7th place. The following season he led his club to a 78 – 75 (.510) record and a 5th place finish. He also played 28 games in the outfield and batted .245 for the season.

He passed away on December 30, 1963 at the age of 78 in Brooksville, Florida.



A.O. "Dutch" Jordan

(1880 – 1972)

This Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania native made his major league debut on April 25, 1903, and had two seasons in the majors with the Brooklyn Superbas (Dodgers) under manager Ned Hanlon. His had a .208 career batting average in the majors.

Jordan came to Atlanta in 1905 as player-manager. He played 124 games at second base and batted .272 while guiding his club to a 3rd place finish behind the New Orleans Pelicans.

He was with the Crackers for another six seasons (1906 – 1911) as the team's starting second baseman. He also served as the manager in 1910 and 1911, winning a combined 129 while losing 147 (.467) and finishing 3rd and 8th respectively.

Jordan played with Chattanooga in 1912 and part of 1913, finishing the 1913 season with the Memphis Chicks. He became the Chief of Police in Brentwood, PA, from 1925 until he retired in 1959.

He died on Christmas Eve, 1972, in Pittsburgh, at the age of 92 after a lengthy illness.

Sid (Syd) Smith

(1883 – 1961)

Born in Smithville, South Carolina, Smith played baseball for the University of South Carolina in 1902 and 1903. Smith broke in with the Atlanta Crackers in 1906, playing four positions – third base (82 games), catcher (38 games), shortstop (8 games), and second base (6 games). His .326 batting average led the Southern Association.

Smith played the next four seasons (1907 – 1910) with the Crackers, mainly as a catcher, but also as an infielder and outfielder. He never regained the hitting success of his rookie year, averaging .261 his last four years in Atlanta.

Smith made his major league debut on April 14, 1908 with the Philadelphia Athletics at the age of 24. He played for five seasons in the majors (1908, 1910 – 1911, 1914 – 1915) with four different teams, compiling a .247 batting average. He returned to Atlanta in 1915 at catcher (20 games) and first base (10 games), batting .252 in a support role.

Smith worked for the South Carolina Employment Security Commission and was quite a versatile athlete, becoming a top golfer, polo player, and coach. He died on June 5, 1961 at the age of 77.



The Atlanta Crackers

Arthur “Bugs” Raymond (1882 – 1912)

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Raymond's nickname has its origins from the term “bug house” or insane asylum, an institution with which Raymond was very familiar.

Raymond made his debut as a pitcher on September 23, 1904 with the Detroit Tigers. He was a spitballer who pitched better when he had a few belts under his belt, a condition which most of his managers encouraged. Only John McGraw of the New York Giants tried to help Raymond. He became the stereotype of the hard-drinking pitcher whose talent was overshadowed by his dependence on alcohol.

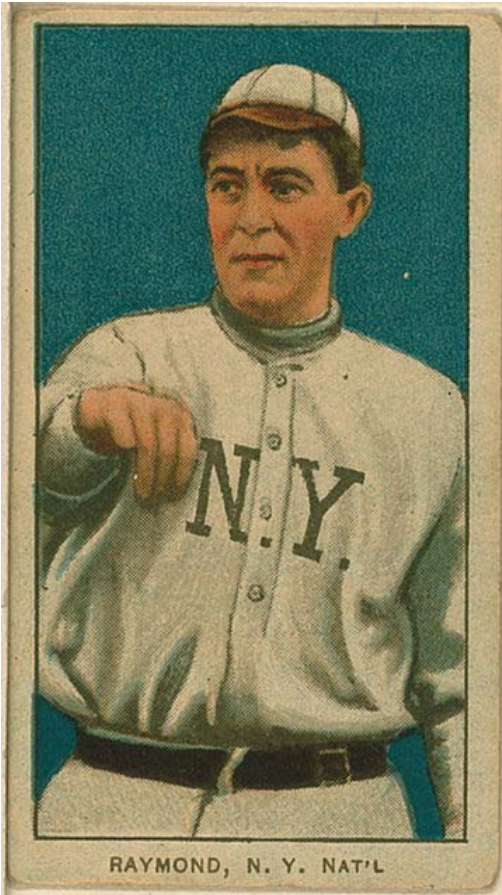
Although he reported late for a July 4, 1905 doubleheader, Raymond threw both games and both were shutouts. Despite his performance, his drinking caused him to be sent down to the Atlanta Crackers in the Southern Association for two seasons (1905 – 1906), where he compiled a record of 10 wins and 6 losses (.625) in 25 appearances. Raymond was suspended in 1906, suspected of throwing a game. He was signed by Savannah in the South Atlantic League and won 18 games for the pennant-winning Indians.

Raymond began the 1907 season with the Jackson Senators in the Cotton States League. During an exhibition game with the Yankees he struck out Wee Willie Keeler three times. He moved up to the Charleston Sea Gulls in the South Atlantic League, playing 51 games and posting a 35 – 11 record, earning him a trip back to the majors.

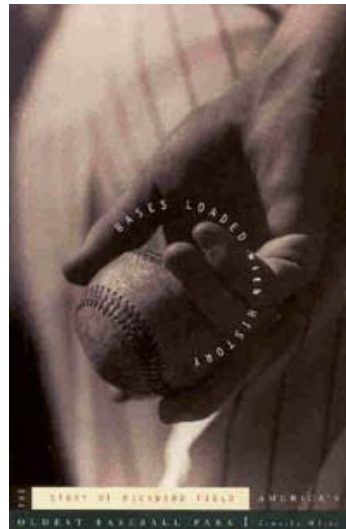
He next appeared with the St. Louis Cardinals and the New York Giants from 1907 through 1911. He led the league in losses (25) and wild pitches (9) in 1908. His major league career stats show a 45 – 47 (.441) mark. And his troubled behavior continued. After walking home the winning run during a game on July 22, 1910, he was suspended for the rest of the season.

Raymond began the 1911 season with his usual promise, but during a June 8th game with the Cardinals was shelled for 8 runs in 6 innings. Giants' manager McGraw accused Raymond of drinking. Leading to his suspension and a \$200 fine.

After baseball Raymond became a pressman. He died from a brain hemorrhage on September 7, 1912 in his room at the Veley Hotel in Chicago two days after being hit in the head during a barroom brawl. He was only 30 years old.



The *Birmingham Barons*



Carlton Molesworth

(1876 – 1961)

This native of Frederick, Maryland, would become synonymous with Birmingham baseball and one of the most successful managers in the history of the Southern Association.



The stocky left-hander (5'6", 200 pounds) began his career on September 14, 1895 as a 19-year old pitcher with the Washington Senators. He was the second-youngest player in the league at the time. He struggled during his four appearances, giving up 33 hits in 16 innings of work, finishing with a 0 – 2 (.000) record and a 14.62 ERA. He would fare better in the minors.

Molesworth broke into the Southern Association with Chattanooga as an outfielder. During the 1901 – 1902 seasons he played in 163 games and batted .320 and .285 respectively. He spent the next three seasons (1903 – 1905) with Montgomery, batting over .300 each year. He led all Southern Association batters in 1905 (.312).

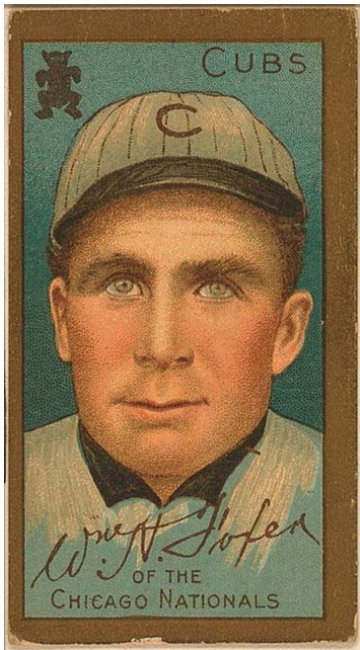
In 1906 Molesworth came to Birmingham and thus began a twenty-two year career with the Barons. In 1907 he led the Southern Association in at-bats (142) and runs (89). In the second half of the 1908 season he got his first crack at being the field manager with the Barons, a position he would hold until 1922.

During his six seasons (1906 – 1911) as a player, Molesworth averaged .279 as a hitter. But it would be as a manager where he would truly earn his place in Southern Association history.

During his tenure as the Barons' manager (1908 – 1922), Molesworth would guide his teams to a 1,098 – 977 (.529) record, capturing Southern Association pennants in 1912 and 1914.

All told, Molesworth spent 53 years in organized baseball as a player, manager, and scout. He was a scout for the Pittsburgh Pirates for 21 years.

After a number of years of declining health, Molesworth passed away at the Glen Merrie Nursing Home in Frederick, Maryland on July 25, 1961 at the age of 85.



William Foxen

(1884 – 1937)

A native of Tenafly, New Jersey, Foxen made his major league debut on May 5, 1908 with the Philadelphia Phillies and pitched for four seasons in the majors with the Philadelphia Phillies (1908 – 1910) and the Chicago Cubs (1910 – 1911). The left-hander was 16 – 20 (.444) in the majors. He was allegedly known for bickering during the games with the umpire and other players.

Foxen played with the Hartford Senators in the Connecticut League (Class D) in 1902, leading the league in strikeouts (180). He returned in 1903 to the New Bedford Whalers in the New England League, and also saw time with Jersey City in the Eastern League. He played briefly with the Portsmouth Truckers in the Class C Virginia League in 1909 – 1910.

Foxen came to the Southern Association in 1911, seeing time with three clubs that first season – Atlanta, Birmingham, and New Orleans. He returned to Birmingham in 1911 and was 19 – 9 (.679) with the Barons. The following season he went 15 – 14 (.517) for Birmingham.

Foxen died on April 17, 1937 in Brooklyn, New York, at the age of 53.

Rafeal “Mike” Almeida

(1887 – 1968)

A native of Havana, Cuba, Almeida was the first Cuban to make it in the majors. He first played with the Class B New Britain Perfectos in the Connecticut League.

Almeida was acquired by the Cincinnati Reds, making his major league debut on July 4, 1911, playing third base and batting .312 during 36 games. But when he failed to report on time for the 1912 season, he was farmed out to the Birmingham Barons.

While a member of the 1912 Barons under Carleton Molesworth, Almeida played third base in 107 games and batted .301, helping Birmingham capture their second Southern Association pennant.

Almeida returned to the Reds for 12 games in 1912. He played for 50 games during the 1913 season. His final game in the majors occurred on July 18, 1913.

Almeida was 80 years old when he died on March 19, 1968 in his native Havana, Cuba.



The Birmingham Barons

Harry “Slim” Sallee

(1885 – 1950)

This native of Higginsport, Ohio was a 6'3", 180 pound left-hander, earning him the moniker of “Slim.”

Sallee played with the Meridian White Ribbons in the Cotton States League in 1905, going 10 – 4 (.714) and leading the league in wins and winning percentage before a yellow fever epidemic that swept the South forced the league to shut down.

Sallee then joined Birmingham in 1905 as a gifted 20-year old junkballer with tremendous control. He made 14 appearances and posted an 8 – 6 (.571) record for the Barons.

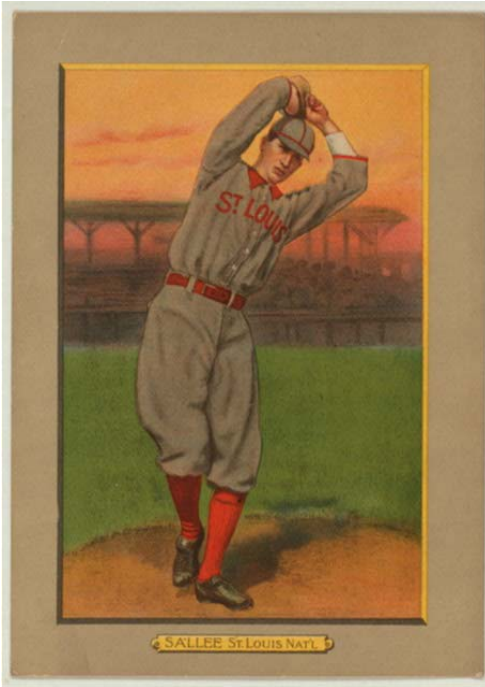
He fared better the following season, going 17 – 12 (.586) during the 1906 campaign. However, Sallee was known to leave the practice field when he became bored, wandering into the nearest bar. His drinking would cause teams to give up on him despite his obvious talent.

He made his major league debut on April 16, 1908 with the St. Louis Cardinals and spent the next fourteen seasons in the majors with St. Louis, the New York Giants, and the Cincinnati Reds. He led the league in saves three times – 1912 (6), 1914 (6), and 1917 (4). Unfortunately Sallee was part of weak St. Louis clubs that finished in the first division once in nine seasons (1914).

Sallee also played in the 1917 and 1919 World Series, going 1 – 3 with a 3.45 ERA. As a member of the 1919 Cincinnati Reds, he participated in the notorious World Series against the Chicago White Sox. He won the October 2nd game and lost the October 8th game in that series.

During fourteen seasons in the majors Sallee was 174 – 143 (.549) with a 2.56 ERA. After his rookie season in 1908, he never had an ERA higher than 2.97.

Sallee operated several businesses in his hometown of Higginsport, Ohio, most of which were lost either during the Depression or when the Ohio River flooded in 1937. He died on March 20, 1950 from a heart attack. He was 65 years old.



Irvin “Kaiser” Wilhelm

(1874 – 1936)

Born in Wooster, Ohio, Wilhelm graduated from Wooster University and broke in with the Canton Club in 1900.



Wilhelm first appeared in the Southern Association in 1901 with the Birmingham Barons and quickly established himself as the club's ace, going 15 – 18 (.454). He returned in 1902, again leading the team with a 14 – 9 (.609) record and taking over the manager's job for the second half of the season.

Wilhelm made his major league debut on April 18, 1903 as a member of the Pittsburgh Pirates as a 29-year old right-hander. He made 12 appearances that season, winning 5 and losing 3 and posting a 3.24 ERA.

The following season he joined the Boston Beaneaters and joined their starting rotation alongside Vic Willis and Togie Pittinger, going 14 – 20 with a 3.69 ERA. 1905 was a dismal season with a 3 – 23 mark.

Wilhelm returned to the Birmingham Barons in 1906 at the age of 32 and continued his winning ways. On July 9, 1906, Wilhelm threw the first perfect game in the history of the Southern Association against Montgomery. He finished the season with a 22 – 13 (.629) record and helped Birmingham capture their first Southern Association pennant.

Wilhelm led the Southern Association in games (48) and wins (23) during 1907, ending the season with a remarkable six shutouts in a row and a league best eleven shutouts for the season. While pitching both ends of a doubleheader was common, Wilhelm completed the feat five times during 1907. His performance earned him a return trip to the majors.

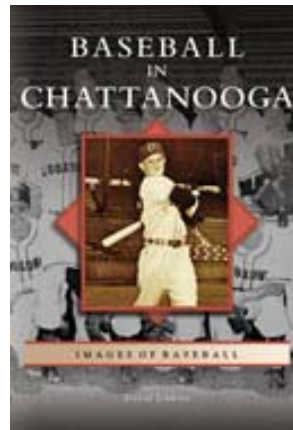
With the Brooklyn Suberbas (Dodgers) in 1908, Wilhelm led the club in wins (16), losses (22) and ERA (1.87). He returned for the 1909 and 1910 seasons, but in 1910 he suffered a severe attack of typhoid which kept him off the mound for the better part of the season. He rehabbed with the Canton Deubers in the Ohio-Pennsylvania League, going 23 – 7 (.767) and leading the league in wins, winning percentage and strikeouts (284).

Wilhelm would try three more times to mount a comeback in the majors – in 1914 anhd 1915 with the Baltimore Terrapins in the Federal League, and in 1921 as the oldest player in the league at the age of 47 with the Philadelphia Phillies.

He passed away at the age of 62 in Rochester, New York, on May 22, 1936.

The Birmingham Barons

The Chattanooga Lookouts



Harry “The Giant Killer” Coveleski

(1886 – 1950)

Born in Shamokin, Pennsylvania, Coveleski played for nine years in the majors (1907 – 1918). In-between, he played in the Southern Association. Called up by the Philadelphia Phillies late in September of 1908, Coveleski beat the New York Giants three times in five days, eliminating the Giants from the National League pennant race. He earned a \$50 bonus and his nickname. The Giants retaliated the following season, learning that Coveleski carried a slab of bologna in his back pocket which he nibbled on during games. Their taunts during the game unnerved him so much that other teams soon took up the practice and by the end of the 1909 season Coveleski was back in the minors.

He played with the Philadelphia Phillies from 1907 – 1909, going 11 – 11 in three seasons. In 1910 he was with the Cincinnati Reds for seven games at the end of the season.

Coveleski came to Birmingham just about at the mid-point in 1910 and the right-hander made thirty-three appearances, posting a 21 – 10 (.677) record, leading the Barons in wins that season. He was acquired by the Chattanooga Lookouts where he played for three seasons (1911 – 1913). His inaugural season was dismal, going 12 – 23 (.343) and leading the Southern Association in losses. However, by 1913 he was back to his old form, going 28 – 9 (.757) leading the Southern Association in wins (28) and innings pitched (314).

His 1913 season in Chattanooga earned him a call-up to the Detroit Tigers where he spent the next five seasons (1914 – 1918). During that time he was 69 – 43 (.617). The 1915 season, however, was a bit rocky, as Coveleski led the league in hits allowed (271), hit batsmen (20), and games (50) on his way to a 22 – 13 season.

Coveleski returned to the Southern Association in 1919 at the age of 33 with the Little Rock Travelers where he went 1 – 1 (.500).

His brother Stan was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1969. In all, there were four Coveleski brothers who played professional baseball.

After retiring from baseball, Coveleski returned to his hometown of Luke Fidler, Pennsylvania, and became a slate picker and later a miner. He died at State Hospital in Shamokin, Pennsylvania on August 4, 1950, after a series of strokes.





Bob Higgins

(1886 – 1941)

A native of Fayetteville, Tennessee, Higgins enjoyed two stints in the majors, beginning with the Cleveland Indians on September 13, 1909. He came to Chattanooga in 1910, playing catcher (36 games) and outfield (20 games) and batting .264 for the season. He returned for the 1911 season as the starting catcher for the Lookouts, also filling in at third base (10 games).

Higgins was called up to Brooklyn at the end of the 1911 season and returned to the Dodgers for the 1912 campaign. However, his .143 batting average was disappointing.

Higgins caught on with the New Orleans Pelicans (1914 – 1917) as their starting catcher. He returned to the Chattanooga Lookouts for 1918 and part of the 1919 season before being acquired by the Atlanta Crackers. He closed out his time in the Southern Association with Atlanta in 1920, playing in only 15 games. Higgins played, managed, and umpired in the Southern Association for many years. He holds career records for a catcher for putouts (3,411), assists (1,005) and total chances (4,416).

After baseball, Higgins settled in Chattanooga and became a cotton buyer. Higgins died at his home in Chattanooga of undetermined causes on May 25, 1941, at the age of 54.

Fred Payne

(1880 – 1954)

A native of Camden, New York, Payne began his major league career on April 21, 1906 with the Detroit Tigers. He is believed to be the only batter to pinch hit for Ty Cobb, in 1906, after Cobb had struck out four times in a row. Payne was with the Tigers for three seasons (1906 – 1908). He played in the 1907 World Series.

He then played three seasons (1909 – 1911) with the Chicago White Sox. During 1909 he made only 2 errors in 150 chances and in 1910 he ranked 3rd among all catchers. In a total of six seasons in the majors, Payne had a career .215 batting average in the major leagues.

Payne was a member of the 1916 Chattanooga Lookouts as a reserve catcher and only played in two games that year.

Payne was a construction inspector for 27 years in Detroit, Michigan. He died on January 15, 1954, in Camden, New York, at the home of his niece at the age of 73.





Sammy “The Dixie Thrush” Strang

(1876 – 1932)

Born Samuel Strang Nicklin in Chattanooga, Strang was the son of Southern Association President J.B. Nicklin. Strang made his major league debut at the age of 19 with the Louisville Colonels on July 10, 1896, playing 14 games at shortstop. He was the youngest player in the majors that season. He returned to the majors with the Chicago Orphans (NL) in 1900 where he saw action in 27 games as an infielder.

Strang was the New York Giants’ main utility player in 1905, leading the league in pinch hits (8). In fact, legend has it that it was Strang’s ability to “come through in a pinch” that gave the term to the game. Unfortunately, he was unable to produce in his only appearance in the 1905 World Series. During ten seasons in the majors, Strang posted a .269 batting average, leading the league in on-base percentage (.423) in 1906.

Strang became the owner-manager of the Chattanooga Lookouts in 1919 at the age of 43. As the club’s manager from 1919 through 1925, he compiled a record of 363 – 537 (.403) and never finished better than 6th place.

Strang died at the age of 55 on March 13, 1932 at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga from a ruptured gastric ulcer.

J.F. Kiernan (Kieran)

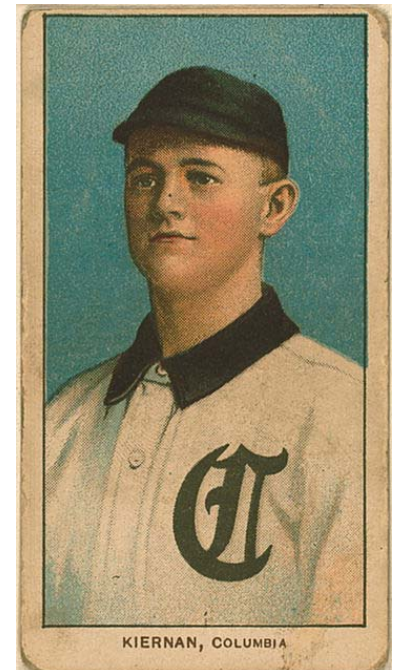
(1892 – 1981)

Born in Knightsbridge, New York, Kiernan played eleven games at second base for the 1902 Chattanooga Lookouts, batting a paltry .152 for the year.

Kiernan served in the U.S. Army in France during World War I. He became a sportswriter for the New York Times, moving to the Herald Tribune in 1922. He later returned to the Times to write the paper’s first bylined sports column. In 1943 he went to the New York Sun.

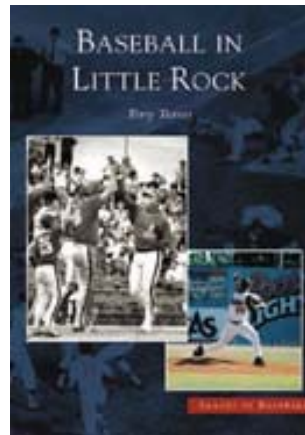
He was presented with the J.G. Taylor Spink Award from the Baseball National Hall of Fame in 1973 in recognition of his contributions to the game as a writer.

Kiernan died of a heart attack at the age of 89 in Rockport, Massachusetts on December 10, 1981.



The Chattanooga Lookouts

The *Little Rock Travelers*



J.J. “Nig” Clarke

(1882 – 1949)

A native of Amherstburg, Ontario in Canada, Clarke once hit 8 home runs in a single game on June 15, 1902 while playing for the pennant winning Corsicana Oil Citys of the Texas League.

Clarke appeared with the Little Rock Travelers for only 4 games in 1902, but returned the following season to play 41 games, batting .253 in 1903.

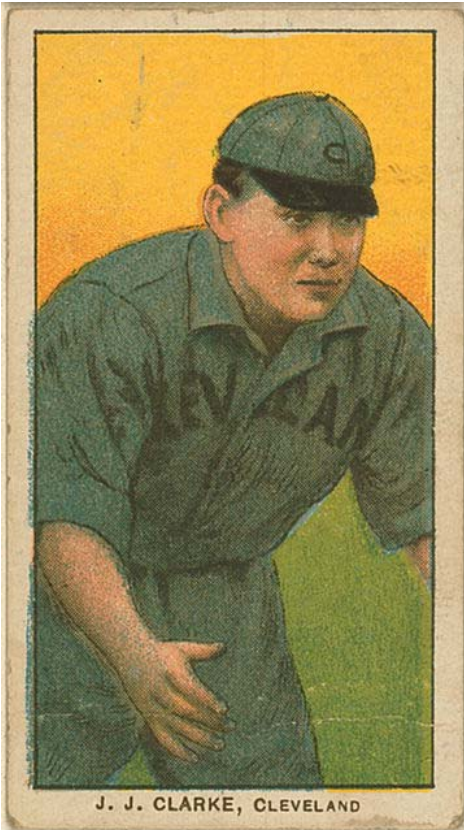
Clarke was acquired by Abner Powell for his 1904 Atlanta Crackers where he became their starting catcher, playing in 133 games and batting .263 for the season.

He made his major league debut on April 26, 1905 with the Cleveland Indians for a scant five games before he was acquired by the Detroit Tigers on August 1st. Ten days later the Indians bought him back, and Clarke remained with the Indians through the 1910 season. He was the Indians' backstop when Addie Joss pitched his perfect game on October 2, 1908 against the Chicago White Sox.

Plagued by a chronic sore arm, Clarke was involved in one of the most unusual plays in baseball history. Detroit's Germany Schaeffer stole second base with a runner on third, but Clarke made no throw. On the next pitch, Schaeffer then bolted back to first base trying to draw a throw from Clarke. On the very next pitch Schaeffer once again took off toward second base, this time drawing a throw from Clarke which allowed the runner to score from third base.

Clarke's major league career was briefly interrupted by military service with the Marines during World War One. He returned to the show in 1919 with the Philadelphia Phillies at the age of 36, playing catcher and batting .242 in 62 games. He was picked up on waivers by the Pittsburgh Pirates, but only saw action in 3 games during the 1920 season. Over nine seasons in the majors, Clarke compiled a .254 batting average.

After baseball Clarke worked at the Whitehead and Kales plant in River Rouge, Michigan. He died on June 15, 1949, at his home in River Rouge, Michigan, at the age of 66.



Norman “Kid” Elberfeld

(1875 - 1944)

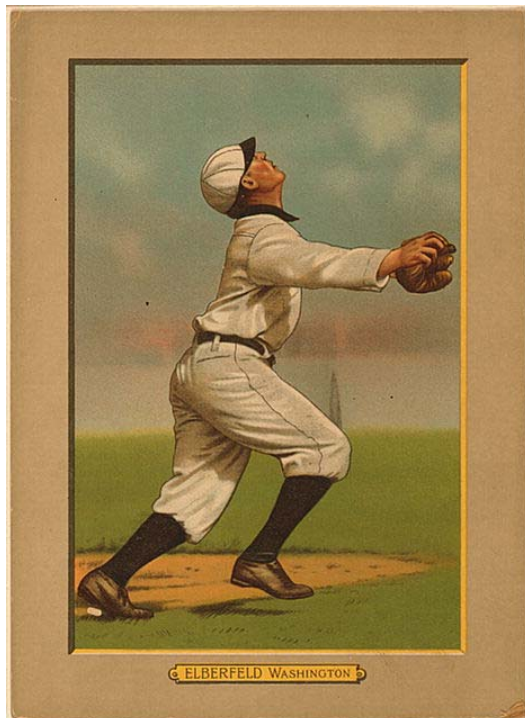
Born in Pomeroy, Ohio, Elberfeld played semi-professional baseball as a teenager. He made his major league debut on May 30, 1898 with the Philadelphia Phillies. He so impressed the scouts that he was chosen over Honus Wagner to be the Phillies' new shortstop. Elberfeld hit .310 as Detroit's shortstop in his first full season. From mid-1903 through 1907 he was the New York Highlanders' (Yankees) starting shortstop.

He enjoyed a fourteen year career (1898 – 1914) in the majors, compiling a .271 batting average. He twice led the league in being hit by pitches – 1903 (15) and 1911 (25). The diminutive Elberfeld (5'5”) was known for daring base runners to slash him out of their way, which they often did. In the clubhouse he cauterized his spike wounds by pouring straight whiskey over them, resulting in badly scarred legs. But the feisty infielder would make his reputation in the Southern Association as a player and a manager.

Elberfeld's debut in the Southern Association came in 1912 with Montgomery, playing 78 games at shortstop. He then spent four seasons (1913, 1915 – 1918) with Chattanooga, where he got his first chance as field manager. While playing infield for the Lookouts, Elberfeld also guided his club to a 284 – 292 (.493) record during those four campaigns. Elberfeld played sparingly in Little Rock in 1918, but was able to lead the Travelers to a 41 – 28 (.594) season and a 2nd place finish in a war-shortened season. He retired from playing after the 1918 season. The *Tabasco Kid* earned his nickname because of his fiery nature. He was given to baiting umpires and was thrown out of many games because of his insults and verbal harangues. Elberfeld was once ejected by legendary Harry “Steamboat” Johnson before a game with Little Rock even began.

During the next six seasons in Little Rock (1919 – 1924) Elberfeld led the Travelers to a 426 – 452 (.485) record, capturing the Southern Association pennant in 1920. Back to back last place showings in 1923 and 1924 led to his dismissal from Little Rock. Elberfeld managed Mobile in 1925 (73 – 78) and Chattanooga in 1926 (55 – 94) before finally retiring from baseball at the age of 51. He often boasted that he had earned enough money playing baseball to put five daughters and a son through college.

After battling a severe cold for a week, Elberfeld died from bronchopneumonia at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga on January 13, 1944 at the age of 68.



The Little Rock Travelers



Bill Hart

(1865 – 1936)

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, just after the Civil War, Hart made his major league debut as a 20-year old left-handed pitcher for the Philadelphia Athletics on July 26, 1886. He led the league in losses (29) and earned runs allowed (191) in his rookie year. In eight seasons (1886 – 1901) Hart compiled a 66 – 120 (.355) record with a 4.65 ERA.

Hart first appeared in the Southern Association with Little Rock in 1907, going 13 – 10 (.565) in 25 appearances. He returned in 1908 (13 – 16) and 1909 (15 – 11). His 15 wins in 1909 led the Travelers' staff.

Hart was 44 years old when he was acquired by the Chattanooga Lookouts for the 1910 campaign, playing in 12 games and posting a 5 – 4 (.556) record. All told, Hart won over 250 games in his minor league career.

Hart played and umpired in baseball for 32 years, four of which were spent in the National League as an umpire and one as an American League umpire.

After baseball he was an electrotyper. He died in Cincinnati, Ohio on September 19, 1936 from a heart attack at the age of 71.

Lena Blackburne

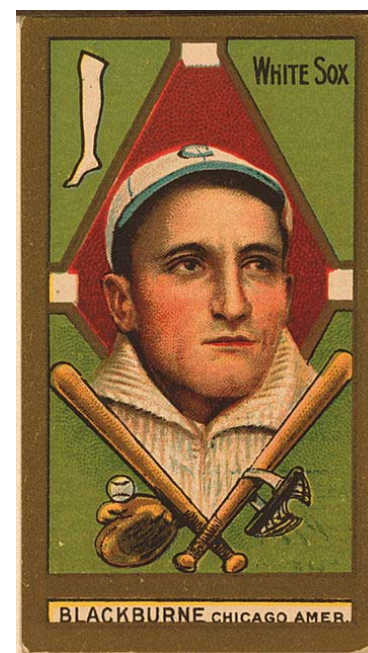
(1886 – 1968)

Born Russell Aubrey Blackburne in Clifton Heights, Pennsylvania, he acquired his unique nickname while in the minors from a fan who thought Blackburne had a "leaner" physique than other players. Blackburne made his major league debut as a shortstop with the Chicago White Sox on April 14, 1910. In eight seasons – 1910, 1912, 1914- 1915, 1918 – 1919, 1927 – Blackburne compiled a .214 batting average with the White Sox, the Cincinnati Reds, the Boston Braves and the Philadelphia Phillies. His two years (1928 – 1929) at the helm of the Chicago White Sox was marred by a savage fistfight with Art Shires, one of his players.

On June 13, 1921, umpires in both leagues began the practice of rubbing Delaware River mud on new baseballs before each game to reduce the shine. The mud was supplied by Blackburne from his New Jersey farm and the practice still takes places today.

Blackburne came to Little Rock in 1925 as their player-manager. He played 145 games at second base and shortstop while batting .298 for the Travelers. He guided the club to a 67 – 86 (.438) last-place finish. He returned to play 86 games at second and third base in 1926, batting .278 for the season.

He died on February 29, 1968 at Zurbrugg Memorial Hospital in Riverside, New Jersey, at the age of 81.



The Little Rock Travelers

Tris Speaker

(1888 – 1958)

Born in Hubbard, Texas, joined Houston in the Texas League straight out of Texas Wesleyan University, and won the Texas League batting crown in 1907 in his rookie year. He was purchased by the Boston Red Sox and made his major league debut on September 14, 1907 as a 19-year old. He played 19 games as an end of the season call-up with Boston. However, he didn't make much of an impression as a hitter on Boston's manager, Deacon McGuire, getting three hits in 19 at-bats (.158). As a result Speaker was left behind in Little Rock at the conclusion of spring training in 1908 as payment for Boston's use of the Travelers' field. He tore up the Southern Association in 1908, leading the league in runs (81), hits (165), and batting (.350). This performance earned him a return to the Boston Red Sox, who repurchased his contract for \$500. Speaker would spend nine seasons with Boston (1907 – 1915). Although he was the best hitter on the Red Sox roster from 1910 through 1915, Speaker was traded to the Cleveland Indians on April 12, 1916 for two players and \$55,000 and would spend eleven seasons with the Indians (1916 – 1926), and one season apiece with the Washington Senators and the Philadelphia Athletics at the end of his career.



Speaker was a member of three winning World Series clubs – in 1912 and 1915 with the Red Sox against the New York Giants and the Philadelphia Phillies respectively, and in 1920 with the Cleveland Indians against the Brooklyn Dodgers. He won the 1912 American League Most Valuable Player award, setting league marks for on-base percentage (.464), hits (193), home runs (10), and doubles (53). Speaker led the league in doubles seven times between 1912 and 1923 on his way to establishing the major league career record of 792 two-baggers. In 22 seasons in the majors, Speaker compiled a .345 batting average and hit 117 home runs during the Deadball Era. He retired from playing at the age of 40. He still holds the major league record for double plays by an outfielder (139) which may never be broken.

He was the 7th player elected to the Hall of Fame in 1937 and has been called the greatest centerfielder of his day.

Speaker died from a heart attack after a fishing trip at his lodge on Lake Whitney, Texas, on December 8, 1958 at the age of 70.

The
Memphis Chicks

Glenn” Sandy” Liebhardt

(1883 – 1956)

Born in Milton, Indiana, Liebhardt moved to Arizona in 1903 with the idea of becoming a cowboy, but was convinced by a friend to try out for the minor league club in Los Angeles. It was there that he learned the art of throwing the spitball from its originator, Elmer Stricklett.

The right-handed pitcher made his debut in the Southern Association with the Memphis Chicks in 1906. The 23-year phenom led the league in wins (35) and games (47). Not only would this establish a Southern Association season record that would never be equaled, but the details of Liebhardt’s season itself are quite remarkable.

Liebhardt had no room for error as 10 of his 35 wins were by a one-run margin. His starts went into extra innings 5 times and Liebhardt threw two 11-inning complete games and two 12-inning complete games. He also completed all but one of the 46 games he started, having been ejected for protesting too strenuously. In 16 of his 46 games he allowed his opponents only one run and a total of 89 runs in all, less than two runs per game average. The rubber-armed Lienhardt also threw five double headers, winning 9 of the 10 games.

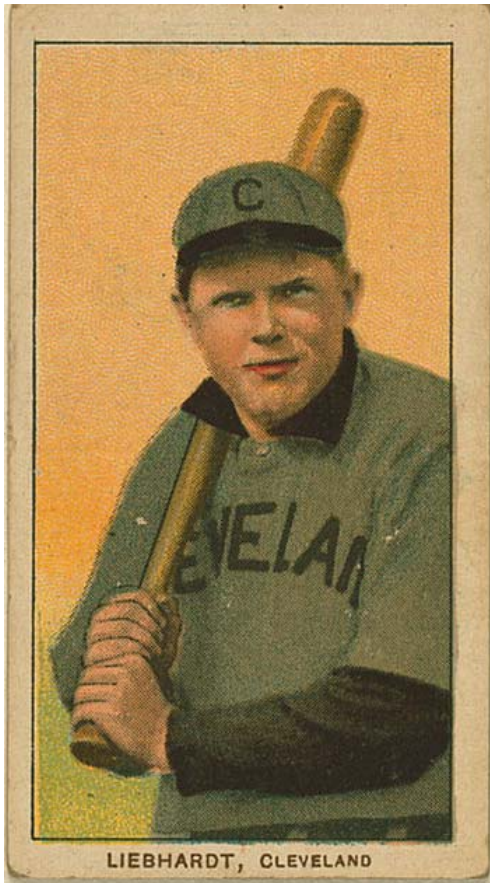
Liebhardt’s performance led to his being called up at the end of the 1906 season to the Cleveland Indians. He made his first start on October 2, 1906, pitching a three hitter against the powerful Detroit Tigers. He was 2 – 0 with a 1.50 ERA during the abbreviated season with the Indians.

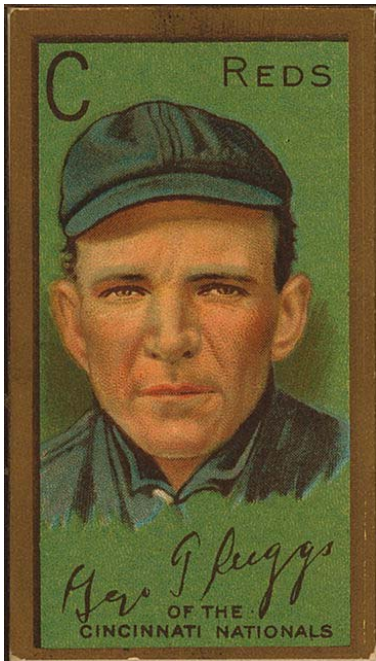
Liebhardt remained with the Indians from 1906 through 1909, compiling a 36 – 35 (.507) record with a 2.17 ERA. His best season was 1907 when he was 18 – 14.

He returned to the Chicks in 1913 and pitched .500 ball, going 9 – 9 for the season. He made 33 appearances in 1914, but was only able to go 15 – 14 (.517) that year.

His son, also named Glenn, pitched briefly for the Philadelphia A’s and the St. Louis Browns in the 1930’s.

After baseball, Liebhardt managed a store for the Wagerman Paint Company. He passed away on July 15, 1956 at the Huron Road Hospital in Cleveland after a brief illness. He was 73 years old.





George Suggs

(1883 – 1949)

A native of Kinston, North Carolina, Suggs is first seen with Jacksonville in 1904, after which he broke into the Southern Association in 1905 with the Memphis Chicks. Suggs was a right-handed pitcher who in 29 appearances compiled a 13 – 13 (.500) record in the 1905 season. He returned to Memphis for the 1906 season, going 18 – 16 (.529) in 39 appearances, also playing 6 games in the outfield. 1907 would be Suggs' best, leading the team in wins with 17 against 14 losses (.547). That earned him a trip to the majors.

Suggs made his major league debut on April 21, 1908 with the Detroit Tigers. He spent two seasons in Detroit before being acquired by Cincinnati for the next four seasons (1910 – 1913). Like so many other players, he jumped to the Federal League for the promise of higher pay. He spent 1914 and 1915 with the Baltimore Terrapins. During eight years in the majors Suggs was 99 – 91 (.521) with a 3.11 ERA. He once picked off seven runners in a single game.

Suggs operated a sporting goods store in his hometown of Kinston before spending 20 years as a storage house manager and factory foreman for E.V. Webb Tobacco Company. He died on April 4, 1949, in Kinston after a four month illness. He was 60.

Philip “Red” Ehret

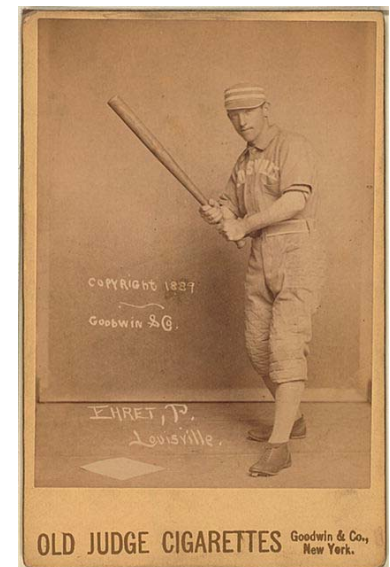
(1868 – 1940)

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Ehret made his major league debut as a 19-year old right-handed pitcher for the Kansas City Cowboys in the American Association on July 7, 1888. He spent three seasons (1889 – 1891) with his hometown Louisville Colonels, posting a 48 – 56 (.462) record. He moved on to the Pittsburgh Pirates for three seasons (1892 – 1894), going 53 – 59 (.473). He spent the remainder of his career with the St. Louis Browns, the Cincinnati Reds, and back with the Colonels. In eleven seasons, Ehret compiled a 139 – 167 (.454) record with a 4.02 ERA.

Ehret came to the Memphis Frankfurters (in honor of owner-manager Charles Frank) in 1902, winning 7 games while losing 4 (.636). The following season he made 15 appearances and was 10 – 4 (.714) for the renamed Memphis Egyptians. The 1904 season saw Ehret go 10 – 11 (.476).

He became a minor league umpire for many seasons and eventually spent four seasons as a National League umpire.

Ehret was 71 years old when he died of rectal cancer at General Hospital on July 28, 1940 in Cincinnati, Ohio.



The Memphis Chicks



George "Scoops" Carey

(1870 – 1916)

A native of East Liverpool, Ohio, graduated from West Virginia University and made his major league debut on April 28, 1895 with the Baltimore Orioles of the American Association. Carey played for four seasons in the majors – Baltimore (AA) for 1906 – 1907, the Louisville Colonels (NL) in 1898, and the Washington Senators (AL) in 1902 and 1903. He has a .271 career batting average in the majors.

Carey was 32 years old when he first appeared in the Southern Association with Nashville in 1903, appearing in only 14 games at first base. He returned in 1906 with Memphis and played through the 1908 season with the Chicks. He was traded in mid-1909 to Little Rock. In his five seasons in the Southern Association, Carey appeared in 530 games as a first baseman and posted a .244 batting average.

After retiring from baseball, Carey became a painter. He died from heart disease at the age of 46 on December 17, 1916 at City Hospital in East Liverpool, Kentucky.

Bill "Big Bill" Chappelle

(1884 – 1944)

Hailing from Waterloo, New York, the 6'2" Chappelle debuted in the Southern Association with Memphis in 1908, appearing in 24 games as a right handed pitcher and going 13 – 9 (.591). He was a late season callup to the Boston Doves (NL, making his major league debut on August 20, 1908. He posted a 2 – 4 (.333) record with a 1.79 ERA in his short stay.

Chappelle returned to Boston in 1909 and was 1 – 1 when he was traded to the Cincinnati Reds for Chick Autry in May. He only made one appearance for the Reds and posted no record.

He returned to Memphis in 1910 and led the pitching staff in wins with 19 in 41 appearances. He began 1911 with Mobile, but was traded to Chattanooga during the season. Chappelle finished the 1911 season with the Lookouts and returned for the 1912 and 1913 seasons as well.

He was a veteran of the Spanish-American War (1898) as a 14-year old. Chappelle died on New Years' Eve, 1944 in Mineola, New York, at the age of 60.



The Memphis Chicks

Clyde “Deerfoot” Milan

(1887 – 1953)

Jesse Clyde Milan was born in Linden, Tennessee, and was signed while playing with Wichita on the same 1906 scouting trip as Walter Johnson. The two eventually became roommates for 15 seasons while with the Senators.

Milan made his major league debut on August 19, 1907 with the Washington and in sixteen seasons (1907 – 1922) compiled a .285 batting average. He earned his nickname for his fleetness on the base paths. In 1912 he broke Ty Cobb's American League single season record for stolen bases with 88. He had 495 steals in his major league career. On June 14, 1912, Milan stole five bases, including home, in three innings against the Cleveland Indians. He led the league in stolen bases in back-to-back seasons – 1912 (88) and 1913 (75).

Senators' owner Clark Griffith called Milan the greatest centerfielder the Senators ever had. Playing in shallow center, a common practice during the Deadball Era, Milan would use his speed to run down deep fly balls.

He was 38 years old when he made his first appearance in the Southern Association as the player-manager for the Memphis Chicks. Nonetheless, Milan batted .324 during 84 games while leading his team to a 4th place finish with an 80 – 73 (.523) record. The following season was his last as a player, playing only 15 games in the outfield. Milan would guide the Chicks for three seasons, finishing 4th in 1925, in 2nd place in 1926, and in 3rd place in 1927. His career record at Memphis was 264 – 194 (.576).

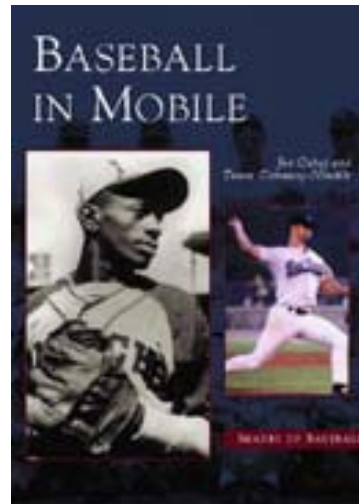
He was named the manager of the Birmingham Barons in 1930, succeeding the legendary Johnny Dobbs, and that season his club finished in 3rd place with a 85 – 68 (.556) record. The 1931 season proved to be Milan's best as a manager, guiding the Barons to a 97 – 55 (.638) record to capture the Barons' sixth Southern Association pennant. They would go on to win the Dixie Series over Dizzy Dean and the Houston Buffalos, coming back from a 3 games to 1 deficit to take the series 4 games to 3. In his five seasons (1930 – 1934) with Birmingham, Milan compiled a record of 390 – 371 (.512).

Milan would manage parts of three seasons from 1935 through 1937 with Chattanooga. As a manager in the Southern Association, Milan achieved a career record of 793 – 729 (.521).

Milan spent his entire life in baseball as a player, manager, scout, and coach. He was associated with the Senators from 1907 until his death in 1953. Milan suffered a heart attack while hitting fungos at spring training in Orlando, Florida, on March 3, 1953 and died at Orange Memorial Hospital at the age of 65.



The *Mobile Bears*



Duffy Lewis

(1888 – 1979)

Born George Edward Lewis in San Francisco, California, Lewis was another in a long line of graduates of St. Mary's University of California to play professional baseball.

Lewis made his major league debut on April 16, 1910 with the Boston Red Sox as a member of the outfield that included Tris Speaker and Harry Hooper. In 1914 he became the first player to pinch hit for rookie pitcher Babe Ruth.

A reliable line-drive hitter and an adept fielder, Lewis played for eleven seasons with the Boston Red Sox (1910 – 1917), the New York Yankees (1919 – 1920) and the Washington Senators (1921). He owned left field during his years with the Red Sox when there was a steep incline in front of the fence in Fenway Park's left field wall which became known as *Duffy's Cliff*. He led the American League in sacrifice hits in 1912 with 31 and in games played in 1919 with 141.

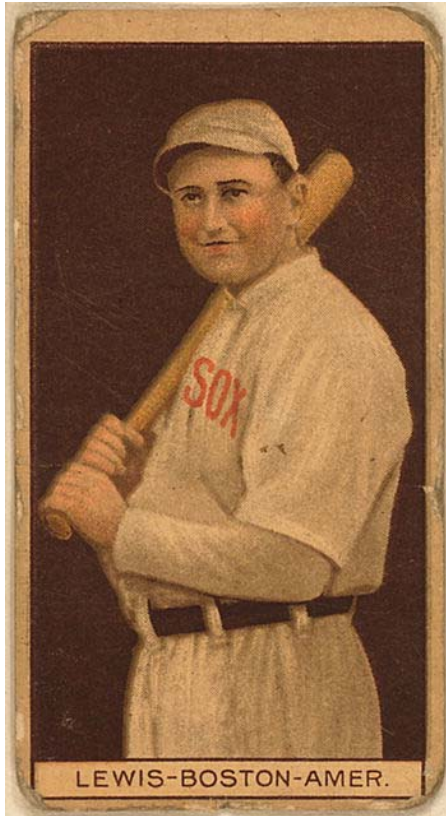
Lewis was a member of three winning World Series squads with Boston – 1912, 1915, and 1916. The Red Sox beat the New York Giants, the Philadelphia Phillies and the Brooklyn Superbas (Dodgers) respectively. Lewis had a .299 batting average for the three World Series, his best being the 1915 series when he posted a .444 average.

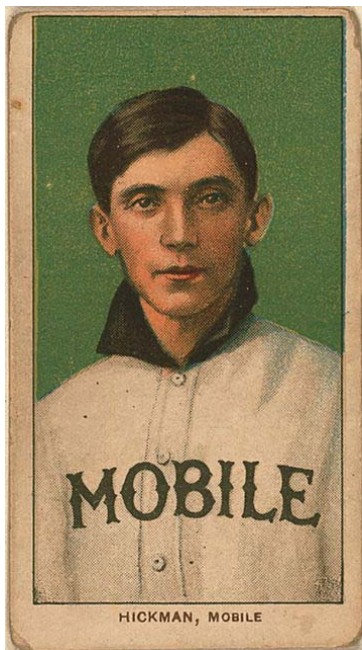
He was a veteran of World War One, and upon his return from the war was traded to the New York Yankees on December 18, 1918.

Lewis was 38 years old when he made his Southern Association debut with the 1926 Mobile Bears as their player-manager. He played in 40 games in the outfield and batted .335, but was replaced as manager in mid-season by third baseman Milt Stock. The Bears finished in 7th place with a 56 – 96 (.368) record.

Lewis claimed to be the only man to have been present when Babe Ruth hit both his first and his last home runs, other than Ruth himself. He saw the first as a player with the Red Sox and the last when he was the traveling secretary for the Boston Braves, a position he held for many years.

He died at his home in Salem, New Hampshire, on June 17, 1979, at the age of 91.





Gordon Hickman

Hickman was a journeyman pitcher who played for five teams in the Southern Association between 1906 and 1910 – Birmingham, Shreveport, Mobile, New Orleans, and Montgomery. He compiled a 61 – 67 (.476) record during that time.

His best years were those he spent with Mobile, leading the team in wins in 1908 (18) and winning percentage (.563) in thirty-five appearances. Hickman returned to Mobile in 1909, going 12 – 15 (.444) for the 5th place Sea Gulls.

Hickman began the 1910 season with Mobile, but then traveled through New Orleans and finished the season with Montgomery. All told he made thirty-one appearances and posted an 11 – 14 (.440) mark for the season.

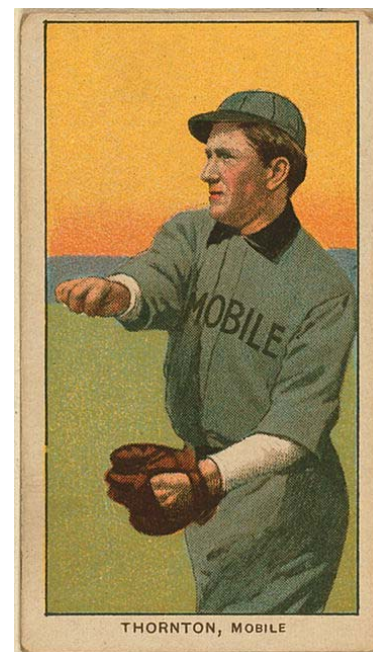
Woodie Thornton

Thornton made his Southern Association with the Montgomery Senators in 1905, playing alongside Carlton Molesworth in the outfield and posting a .225 batting average. He returned for the 1906 season, but injuries limited his time to 8 games.

He played with Mobile Sea Gulls in the Cotton States League in 1907, leading the league in hits (150) and runs (76). He remained with the team when they joined the Southern Association for the 1908 campaign, leading manager Thomas Fisher's club in at-bats (542), runs (53), hits (144), and stolen bases (20) while posting a .266 batting average.

Thornton was joined in the Mobile outfield by future Hall of Famer Zack Wheat for the 1909 season, but the Sea Gulls finished in 5th place. Thornton batted .241 for the season.

He played with the Sacramento Sacts in the Pacific Coast League in 1911.



The Mobile Bears

Charles “Boss” Schmidt

(1880 – 1952)

Born in Coal Hill, Arkansas, Schmidt was a pugnacious character who left the coal mines near his hometown and became the leader of three pennant winning Detroit Tiger teams (1907 – 1909) by beating the stuffing out of Ty Cobb on several occasions.



Schmidt made his major league debut at the age of 25 with the Detroit Tigers on April 30, 1906 and became their starting catcher for the next six seasons (1906 – 1911). He had a .243 career batting average. Throughout his career, he never wore shin guards.

He retired after the 1911 season and returned to the coal mines of Arkansas, but thought better of it and decided to continue his baseball career in the minors.

Schmidt came to the Mobile Sea Gulls for the 1913 season as their starting catcher, playing 128 games and working with Mobile pitchers Tiller Cavet (23 – 12) and Carter Hogg (18 – 10). He returned for the 1914 season, playing 145 games and posting a .287 batting average.

Schmidt took over as player-manager for the 1915 campaign after the club had finished in 2nd place in 1913 and 1914. He continued as the club's starting catcher, but despite the offense of Southern Association batting champ Elmer Miller and another 20-win season from Carter Hogg, Schmidt's Sea Gulls finished 68 – 86 (.442), 23 games behind the New Orleans Pelicans.

Hopes were once again high for the 1916 season, but the Sea Gulls were lodged in last place when Schmidt was replaced by Matty McIntyre. He remained behind the plate, batting .312 for the season.

The 37-year old Schmidt was acquired by the Memphis Chicks for the 1917 season where he played in 54 games as a backup catcher for manager Cy Barger. He had a .238 batting average for the season.

A natural-born boxer, Schmidt once fought an exhibition match against heavyweight champion Jack Johnson. He was also known for having wrestled a live bear at a local carnival – he pinned the bear!

Schmidt died on November 14, 1952, at his doctor's home in Altus, Arkansas, from an intestinal disorder. He was 72 years old.

Zack “Buck” Wheat

(1888 – 1972)

Born Zachary Davis Wheat in Hamilton, Missouri, a town 60 miles northeast of Kansas City, still on the frontier – only six years earlier Jesse James was killed in nearby St. Joseph. Wheat began playing second base with the semi-pro Union Club and in 1906 was earning \$60 per month playing for a team in Enterprise, Kansas. He would make minor league stops in Ft. Worth and Shreveport in 1908 and 1909 respectively, batting .260 in 1908 and .246 in 1909. Wheat attributed his weak bat to bouts with malaria.

The plucky outfielder made his Southern Association debut with the Mobile Sea Gulls in 1908 under manager Thomas Fisher. He played in 24 games as a reserve outfielder and batted .226 for the season. He returned to the Sea Gulls in 1909, playing left field in 129 games and leading the team in runs (58). He posted a .245 batting average and was sold to Brooklyn for \$1,200 at the end of the Southern Association season.

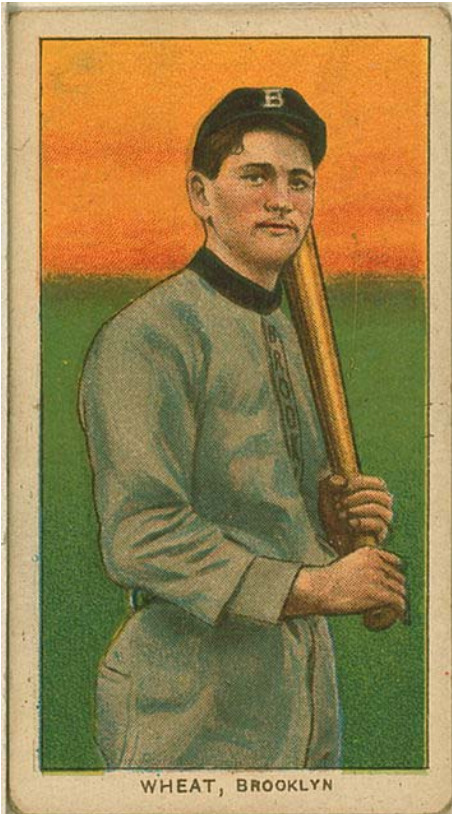
Wheat made his major league debut on September 11, 1909, and remained in left field for the Dodgers until 1926. In nineteen seasons he batted over .300 thirteen times. In 1912, Wheat recommended that Brooklyn sign his old friend from Kansas City, and thus Casey Stengel came to the Dodgers. In 1917, *Baseball Magazine* wrote that “Wheat is the easiest, most graceful of outfielders with no close rivals.”

Wheat's final home run for Brooklyn came during the 1926 season as a pinch hitter. As he rounded first base, his injured legs cramped up on him and he fell as he approached second base. After a short pause, he rose and continued to hobble towards third base in obvious pain. In the end it took Wheat over five minutes to round the bases.

He was released by the Dodgers on New Years' Day, 1927, but caught on with Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics for the 1927 season. He played infrequently along with Ty Cobb and Al Simmons in the Athletics outfield. He batted .324 for the season, mostly as a pinch hitter, but the 39-year old veteran was worn down after nineteen seasons.

He was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1957 by the Veterans Committee, but wasn't actually eligible for election until 1959.

After baseball, Wheat tried his hand at farming full-time, but he lost his 160-acre farm during the Depression. He then operated a bowling alley for a short period before becoming a patrolman with the Kansas City Police Department. It was during a high speed chase with a fugitive in 1936 that he was nearly killed in an automobile accident and spent five months in the hospital recovering. Wheat died on March 11, 1972 at Bothwell Hospital in Sedalia, Missouri, at the age of 83 following a heart attack he suffered at his home.

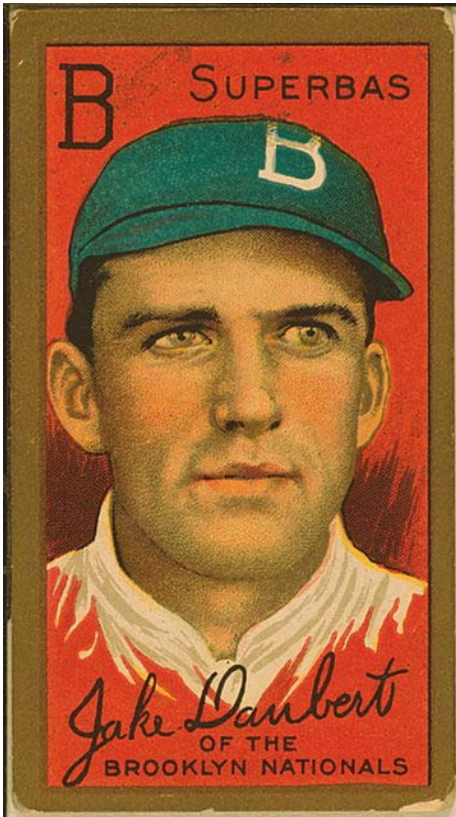


The
Nashville Vols

Jake Daubert

(1884 – 1924)

Born Jacob Ellsworth Daubert in Shamokin, Pennsylvania, he has been called the greatest all-around first baseman of the Deadball Era. He broke in with a semi-pro team from Lykens, Pennsylvania to escape a life in the mines. He moved up to Class D with Kane (OH) Mountaineers in the Interstate League in 1906.



In 1908 Daubert played 138 games at first base for manager Bill Bernhardt's pennant-winning Vols. He batted .262 for the season and led the league in home runs (6). Daubert started with the Toledo Mud Hens in the American Association before he was acquired by Memphis for the 1909 season. He played 81 games at first base for the Chicks, batting .314 for the season. During two seasons in the Southern Association, Daubert made only 23 errors in 2,235 chances – a .990 fielding average.

Daubert would make his major league debut on April 14, 1910 with the Brooklyn Superbras with whom he would spend nine seasons (1910 – 1918). He was the National League MVP in 1913 and led the league in batting in 1913 (.350) and 1914 (.329).

During a doubleheader on August 15, 1914, Daubert was hampered by an injured ankle, but remained in the lineup. He successfully laid down six sacrifice bunts between the two games to tie a major league record.

Often considered a modest, polite and affable fellow, Daubert was also considered a beast when it came to money matters. When the 1918 season was suspended early due to the World War One, Daubert sued Brooklyn owner Charles Ebbets for the balance of his salary. He got \$2,150 in a settlement, but Ebbets was so upset that he traded Daubert to the Cincinnati Reds. He helped the Cincinnati Reds capture the National League pennant, followed by a questionable victory in the 1919 World Series over the Chicago White Sox. Daubert was one of the many players who benefited from the change to the "lively" ball in 1920. In 1922, Daubert had 205 hits and batted .336 at the age of 38. He remained with Cincinnati through the 1924 season. He had a .303 career batting average.

Daubert was the captain of the Reds and still in his prime when he suffered an attack of acute appendicitis while in Cincinnati. He was operated on by the team physician, Dr. Harry Hines on October 2nd, but did not respond well to the surgery. He lingered for several days and eventually died at Good Samaritan Hospital on October 9, 1924, at the age of 40.

Ed “Batty” Abbaticchio

(1877 – 1957)

A native of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, Abbaticchio was one of the first Italian-Americans to reach major league prominence.

Abbaticchio made his major league debut on September 4, 1897 with the Philadelphia Phillies, but only made three appearances in the infield. He returned for the 1898 season, playing in twenty-five games and hitting for a .228 mark.

He made his debut in the Southern Association with Nashville in 1901, playing 108 games at second base for Newt Fisher's pennant winning Vols. Abbaticchio led the Southern Association in runs (127) and led all Nashville batters with a .360 average.

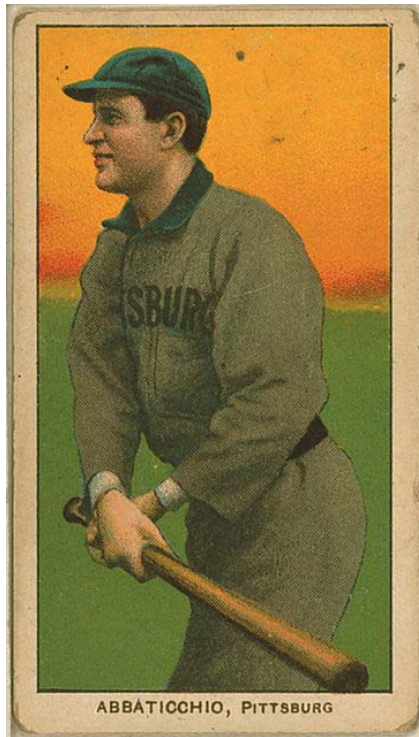
Batty returned to Nashville for the 1902 season, leading the league in triples (18) and stolen bases (61) while posting a team best .353 batting average.

He returned to the majors with the Boston Braves (1903 – 1905, 1910) and the Pittsburgh Pirates (1907 – 1910). He led the league in at-bats (610) in 1905.

In a season-ending playoff in 1908 between the Cubs and Abbaticchio's Pirates, which they thought they had won on Abbaticchio's grand slam home run – a blast that would later be called foul. A woman who had been struck by the ball later sued for damages and it was determined that she had been sitting in fair territory.

In nine seasons, Abbaticchio recorded a .254 career batting average. He appeared in the 1909 World Series with Pittsburgh against the Detroit Tigers.

He owned and operated the Abbaticchio Hotel in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, before retiring to Florida. He died in Fort Lauderdale on August 16, 1957, from cancer at the age of 79.





Hub “The Gallatin Squash” Perdue

(1882 – 1968)

Born in Bethpage, Tennessee, Purdue first caught the eye of the baseball community as a member of the Vincennes Alices in the Kitty League where he led the league in wins (25), winning percentage (.758), and strikeouts (260). Perdue debuted in the Southern Association with the Nashville Vols in 1907 under manager Johnny Dobbs. He was 11 – 15 (.423) for the season.

Perdue returned in 1908 and posted a 16 – 12 (.571), helping the Vols to capture their third Southern Association pennant. He led the league in 1909 with 23 victories in 37 appearances. During the 1910 season, Perdue compiled a 12 – 17 (.414) record for the 5th place Vols. He made his major league debut on April 19, 1910 with the Boston Braves. He was traded to the St. Louis Cardinals in 1914, missing out on being part of the 1914 “miracle Braves.”

Perdue returned to Nashville in 1917, going 15 – 10 (.600) with a 1.95 ERA. He was acquired by New Orleans and spent the next three seasons (1918 – 1920) with the Pelicans. He was 12 – 2 (.857) during the 1918 season, followed by a 17 – 12 season in 1919 during which he led the league with a 1.56 ERA. Perdue played the 1920 season with New Orleans and Nashville, but posted a weak 5 – 13 (.278) record.

Perdue died at the Shady Grove Nursing Home in Gallatin, Tennessee on October 31, 1968, at the age of 86.

Bill “Strawberry Bill” Bernhard

(1871 – 1949)

Originally from Clarence, New York, Bernhardt was a right-handed pitcher who led the National League in wild pitches in 1900 (11) and in winning percentage in 1902 (.788). He was the first Cleveland pitcher to lead the league in winning percentage. Bernhardt made his major league debut on April 24, 1899 with the Philadelphia Phillies. He spent nine seasons (1899 – 1907) with Philadelphia and the Cleveland Indians. His career stats show a 116 – 82 (.586) record with a 3.04 ERA.

He became the player-manager of the Nashville Vols in 1908 and led the club to its third Southern Association pennant with a 75 – 56 (.573) record. He also made 14 appearances on the mound, going 7 – 6 (.538). Bernhardt led his 1909 Nashville Vols to a 2nd place berth with an 85 – 55 (.594) record. In 1910 his club finished in 5th place with a disappointing 64 – 76 (.457) mark which led to his being replaced as manager. He was the manager of the Memphis Chicks from 1911 through 1913, finishing 6th, 4th and 7th respectively. Bernhardt was 194 – 216 (.473) at the helm of the Chicks.

Bernhard succumbed to leukemia on March 30, 1949 at Balboa Hospital in San Diego, California, at the age of 78.



The Nashville Vols

Roy “Whitey” Ellam

(1886 – 1948)

Born in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, Ellam made his Southern Association debut as a shortstop for Carleton Molesworth’s Birmingham Barons in 1909. He played in 141 games and posted an anemic .195 batting average for the season. He was called up to the Cincinnati Red at the end of the season, making his major league debut on September 18, 1909 at the age of 23. He played in 10 games for the Reds, but his bat was still weak (.190) and Ellam returned to Birmingham for the following season. He was a solid infielder but worked on improving his batting, going .202 in 1910 and .219 in 1911. He was a member of the 1912 and 1914 Southern Association championship teams and spent a total of seven seasons with the Barons.

Ellam was named the player-manager of the Nashville Vols in 1916 and guided his club to an 84 – 54 (.609) record and its fourth Southern Association crown. He also batted .278 with his new team. He returned the following season, but the Vols were 77 – 73 (.513) and finished in 5th place. Ellam also played the full season at shortstop and batted .294.

The 1918 season was shortened due to World War One and Ellam’s club was caught in 7th place with a 30 – 40 (.429) record when play was suspended. He made another stab at the majors, catching on with the Pittsburgh Pirates. He played in 26 games at shortstop, but once again his weak bat (.130) caused the Pirates to release him in late August.

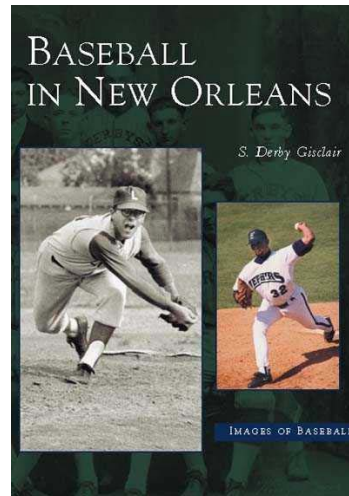
Ellam returned to Nashville for the 1919 season which proved to be even more disappointing as the previous year as the Vols fell into last place at 55 – 83 (.399) and the following season wasn’t much better, with a 7th place, 65 – 89 (.422) finish. It was his last at the helm of the Nashville club.

Ellam returned to the Southern Association in 1922 as the manager of the Atlanta Crackers, but was replaced early in the season by Bill Rariden. The 36-year old caught on as a reserve shortstop on Bert Niehoff’s Mobile team. He played in 62 games for the pennant winning Bears. Ironically the Crackers finished in last place that season. Ellam holds career records for a shortstop for putouts (3,709) and assists (5,143). He also played in 1,378 games during his Southern Association career.

Ellam returned to Conshohocken where he entered the plumbing and heating business. He was killed on October 28, 1948 while on a jobsite when a counterbalance weight fell on him as he lowered a fire escape ladder. He was 62 years old.



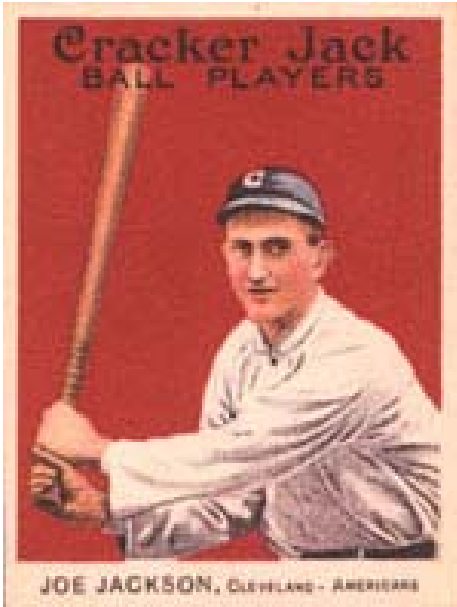
The *New Orleans Pelicans*



Joe Jackson

(1888 – 1951)

Born in Brandon Mills, South Carolina, Jackson grew up playing baseball in the textile leagues in and around Pickens County in South Carolina. Jackson was a prodigious hitter who captured batting titles in the Carolina League in 1908 (.346) and the SALLY League in 1909 (.358). He made his major league debut on August 25, 1908 at the age of 18 with the Philadelphia Athletics. But he was unaccustomed to life in a major city.



He was in his third year of professional baseball in 1910 when Connie Mack sent him to New Orleans for more seasoning, reasoning that the skittish Jackson might feel more at home in a southern city. He settled down under the guidance of Pelicans' manager Charles Frank and became the cornerstone of the outfield that included Hank Butcher and Jake Weimer. The Pelicans took over 1st place in mid-June and sprinted to their second Southern Association pennant 8 games ahead of Birmingham behind the bat of Shoeless Joe. He would lead the league in batting (.354), hits (165), and runs (82) while leading the team in stolen bases (40).

On July 25, 1910, Jackson was traded to the Cleveland Naps (Indians) in an even-trade for Bris Lord. Jackson played a mere 20 games for the Tribe that year.

1911 was the year that Jackson came into his own – playing full time in the Cleveland outfield alongside Joe Birmingham and Jack Graney and leading the team with a .408 batting average. In all Jackson would play with the Naps for over five seasons. He was traded to the Chicago White Sox late in the 1915 season for three players and \$31,500 in cash. He would play another five seasons (1915 – 1920) with the White Sox.

Jackson had an incredible throwing arm and once threw a baseball 396 feet during a contest against Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb. During a thirteen year career in major league baseball, Jackson struck out 158 times in 4,981 at-bats. He also has the 3rd highest career batting average (.356) in major league history. But unfortunately he will always be associated with the 1919 White Sox scandal. Although he hit .375, threw out six base runners, and had thirteen hits – including the only home run of the series – Jackson was vilified in the press of the day for “tanking the series.”

Jackson played and managed semi-pro baseball throughout the South, mostly in his native South Carolina. He also owned and operated a liquor store in Greenville. He suffered a heart attack at his home in Greenville on December 5, 1951 and died almost immediately. Jackson was 63 years old.



Bristol R. Lord

(1883 – 1964)

A native of Upland, Pennsylvania, Lord was plucked off the sandlots of Philadelphia in 1905 by Connie Mack when the Athletics' regular center fielder was injured. He made his major league debut on April 21, 1905. He spent three seasons (1905 – 1907) with the Athletics before Connie Mack sent him to New Orleans to regain his swing.

Lord made his Southern Association debut in 1908 as a member of the New Orleans Pelicans. He played 119 games in the outfield, batting .314 while collecting 145 hits and 27 stolen bases. His 6 home runs led the league.

He returned to the majors with the Cleveland Naps in 1909 and was part of one of the most lop-sided trades in baseball history. On July 25, 1910 Lord was traded back to the Philadelphia Athletics even-up for Shoeless Joe Jackson. Lord remained in Philadelphia through 1912 and spent his final season with the Boston Braves in 1913.

He tried his hand at managing in the minors and eventually became a college coach. After baseball he became a probate officer in his hometown of Upland. He died in Annapolis, Maryland on November 13, 1964 at the age of 81.

Jake “Tornado Jake” Weimer

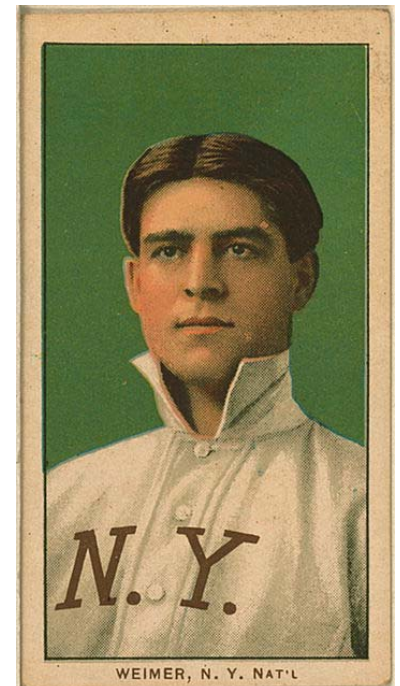
(1873 – 1928)

A native of Ottumwa, Iowa, Weimer made his major league debut on April 17, 1903 with the Chicago as a left-handed pitcher. In three seasons with the Cubs (1903 – 1905), Weimer posted a 58 – 34 (.630) record. He was traded to the Cincinnati Reds for third baseman Harry Steinfeldt in 1906.

Weimer spent three seasons (1906 – 1908) with the Reds and a final season in 1909 with the New York Giants. Over seven seasons he compiled a 97 – 69 (.584) record with a 2.23 ERA.

Weimer had switched to the outfield when he joined the New Orleans Pelicans for the 1909 season and led the team in at-bats (534) and hits (151) while compiling a .288 batting average for the season. He returned to New Orleans for the 1910 campaign and was part of the outfield that featured Joe Jackson and Hank Butcher. As a group they accounted for nearly 40% of the team's hits that season. Weimer shared the Southern Association home run crown with teammate Hank Butcher, each having four dingers to their credit. He finished the 1910 season with a .252 batting average.

Weimer was only 54 years old when he died at South Shore Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, on June 19, 1928.



The New Orleans Pelicans

Ted Breitenstein

(1869 – 1935)

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Breitenstein debuted on April 28, 1891 with his hometown St. Louis Browns, throwing a no-hitter in his first start for manager Charles Comiskey. When the Browns moved from the American Association into the National League in 1892, Breitenstein moved with them.

Breitenstein pitched for six seasons (1891 – 1896) with the Browns, compiling a 94 – 122 (.435) record. He twice led the league in complete games (46 in each season) and in games started (50 in each season), but also was a 20-game loser in five consecutive seasons (1892 – 1896).

He was acquired by the Cincinnati Reds in 1897 and spent four seasons (1897 – 1900), going 66 – 45 (.596). He returned to his hometown with the St. Louis Cardinals for the 1901 season. Over eleven seasons (1891 – 1901), Breitenstein compiled an 160 – 170 (.485) record with a 4.04 ERA.

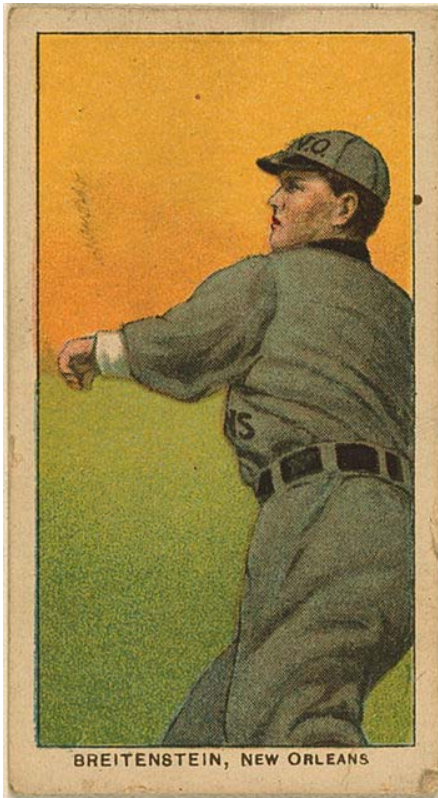
Breitenstein debuted in the Southern Association with Memphis, spending two seasons (1902 – 1903) under manager Charles Frank. When Frank was named the manager of the New Orleans Pelicans in 1904, he acquired Breitenstein for the Pelicans.

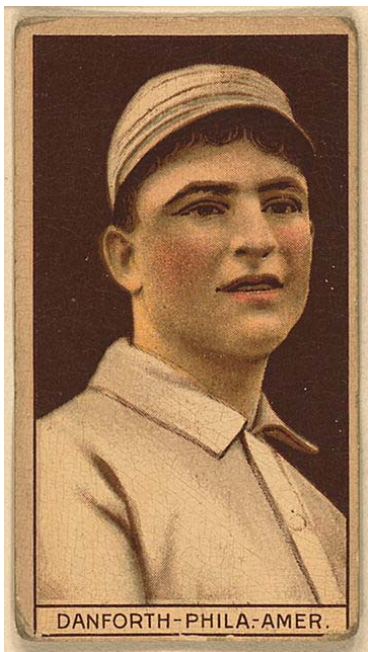
For the next eight seasons, *The Grand Old Man* compiled a 122 – 64 (.656) record in New Orleans. He led the team in wins in 1904 – 1906 and in 1908. He might have done so in 1907 had he not been kicked by a horse he was shoeing before the season started.

On August 15, 1909, Breitenstein threw the first no-hitter in Pelicans history against Montgomery.

After his playing days, Breitenstein umpired for ten years in the minor leagues. He returned to his hometown of St. Louis and engaged in various business enterprises. Breitenstein eventually became a laborer for the St. Louis City Parks Department.

He died from heart disease at a field house in Forest Park in St. Louis on May 3, 1935 at the age of 65.





Dave “Dauntless Dave” Danforth

(1890 – 1970)

Born in Granger, Texas, Danforth was a clever left-handed pitcher who earned his nickname for the grit he showed by pitching in almost constant pain.

Danforth made his major league debut on August 1, 1911 with the Philadelphia Athletics. During two seasons with the A's Danforth compiled a 4 – 1 (.800) record. He played with the Chicago White Sox from 1916 – 1919, but he left the White Sox pitching staff before the 1919 World Series. He developed and taught Ed Cicotte the “shine ball.” He also played for four seasons (1922 – 1925) with the St. Louis Browns. His major league career record is 71 – 66 (.518) over 10 seasons.

Danforth came to the Southern Association in 1927 with the New Orleans Pelicans, going 16 – 4 (.800) with a 2.25 ERA for manager Larry Gilbert’s pennant winning club. He spent the next two seasons in New Orleans, compiling an 18 – 18 (.500) record. He played the 1931 season with Chattanooga, but at age 41 could only manager a 4 – 6 mark.

Danforth passed away at the age of 80 on September 19, 1970 in Baltimore, Maryland.

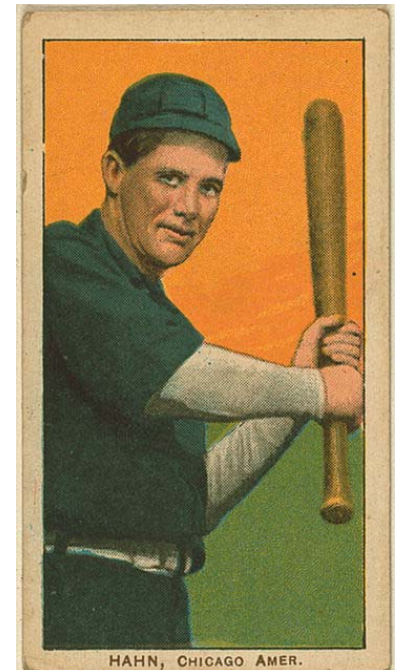
Ed Hahn

(1875 – 1941)

A native of Nevada, Ohio, Hahn was a member of the Pelicans’ 1905 pennant winning club that played much of the season on the road due to the yellow fever quarantine that closed New Orleans. He played 108 games in the outfield, leading the team in hits (125) and stolen bases (31). Hahn’s performance earned him a late season call-up from the New York Highlanders (Yankees), making his major league debut on August 31, 1905. He played in 43 games and batted .319 for the season.

He was traded to the Chicago White Sox the following season and spent the next five years (1906 – 1910) in the outfield at South Side Park. Hahn compiled a career .237 batting average and was a member of the White Sox 1906 World Series team that beat their cross-town rivals, the Cubs, in six games.

Hahn died at Lutheran Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa on November 29, 1941 from complications caused by stomach ulcers. He was 66 years old.



The New Orleans Pelicans

The Early Southern Association 1901 - 1926

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