

# On This Date **January 24, 1899**

**Robert Leon "Bob" Berman** is born on January 24, 1899, in New York City. An outstanding college player at Fordham University, a 19-year-old Berman gets into two games with the Washington Senators over an eight-day span in June 1918.

The "Bronx Burner" makes his Senators' debut in Cleveland's League Park on June 4. Pinch running for starting pitcher Jim Shaw, who had twisted his ankle sliding into third base, Berman's major league debut lasts all about two minutes when he is thrown out at the plate trying to score on Bert Shotten's one hopper to first baseman Ed Miller.

Under age and not eligible for the annual baseball player draft, the 5-foot-7, 158-pound Berman signs with the Senators' Clark Griffith on February 19. Having observed Berman earlier, Griffith describes his newest signee as "a chunky youth of rather small stature," but with a strong arm and an ability to "maul" collegiate pitching.

Primarily the team's bullpen catcher, Berman gets into one final game when he goes behind the plate in the ninth inning to catch Walter "The Big Train" Johnson, on in relief of Stanley Rees. Johnson allows one hit, walks one and strikes out two in a 6-4 Senator win.

In 1919, Berman is sent to Jersey City of the International League and over the next couple of years, he plays with Binghamton and Syracuse. Returning to college after his playing days, Berman graduates from the Savage School of Physical Education and becomes a teacher in the New York public schools.

Berman dies on August 2, 1988, in Bridgeport, Connecticut at the age of 89.

