

Luke Stuart, "A Quaker takes Big Train Deep"

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Stuart Clouts Homer Off Walter Johnson

On August 8, 1921, St. Louis Browns' rookie second baseman and Guilford (N.C.) College graduate Luke Stuart becomes the first player in American League history to hit a home run in his first major league at bat when the 29-year-old rookie clouts a two-run inside the park home run off of Washington Senators' Hall of Fame pitcher Walter Johnson.

A late inning sub for 21-year-old regular second baseman Marty McManus, Stuart's ninth-inning "vicious liner" to Griffith Stadium's 424-foot left field wall turns out to be the only hit in his all-too-brief three-game major league career.

Unfortunately, even playing long ball with a future Hall of Famer does not earn Stuart the proper recognition. In the game story the following day, *The Washington Post* reports, "Stewart, [sic] who had taken McManus' place at second base, crashed a home run to the far corner of left field."

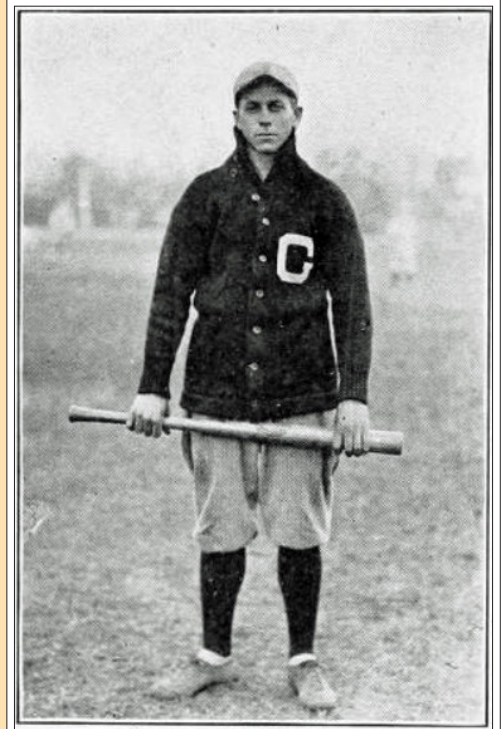
Stuart's plate appearance against Johnson, however, is not his major league debut. Ten days earlier, on July 28, he relieves 41-year-old second baseman Jimmy Austin in the bottom of the eighth inning, picking up one assist in a 6-0 loss to the New York Yankees in the Polo Grounds.

NATIONALS BAT FREELY, TRUNCING BROWNS, 16-5

Washington, Aug. 8. — Washington pounded a quartet of St. Louis pitchers today for seventeen hits and won the second game of the series 16 to 5. Score:

| ST. LOUIS | | WASHINGTON | |
|--------------|----|------------|----|
| ab. | r. | h. | e. |
| Tobin,rf. | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Wetzel,rf. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Ellerbe,3b. | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Sisler,1b. | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Williams,lf. | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Jacobs'n,cf. | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Severid,c. | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Gerber,ss. | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| McManus,2b. | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Stuart,2b. | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Bayne,p. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Kolp,p. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Lamb,x. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Morris,p. | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Burwell,p. | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Collins,z. | 1 | 0 | 1 |

Totals...38 5102413 Totals...35161727 4
 xBatted for Kolp in seventh.
 zBatted for Burwell in ninth.
 St. Louis0 1 0 0 2 0 0 2— 5
 Washington0 3 2 0 1 2 1 7 x—16
 Errors—Williams, Severid, Gerber, McManus, Harris, Shanks, O'Rourke. Two-base hits—Johnson, Rice, 2; O'Rourke. Three-base hits—Ellerbe, Rice. Home run—Stuart. Stolen base—Ellerbe. Sacrifice—Severid, Shanks, Harris, Milan, Judge. Bases on balls—Off Johnson, 2; Kolp, 1; Morris, 2. Struck out—By Johnson, 3; Morris, 1; Burwell, 1. Umpires—Connolly, Nallin and Wilson.



L. STUART, Short Stop

Luke Stuart Year by Year:

| Year | Team | League | Lev | AB | HT | 2B | 3B | HR | RBI | SB | AVG |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1912 | Guilford College | Carolinas Assoc. | Coll | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | --- |
| 1913 | Guilford College | Carolinas Assoc. | Coll | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | .406 |
| 1913 | Winston-Salem Twins | North Carolina | D | 384 | 102 | 20 | 2 | 11 | - | 14 | .266 |
| 1914 | Winston-Salem Twins | North Carolina | D | 419 | 107 | 22 | 5 | 6 | - | 17 | .255 |
| 1915 | Winston-Salem Twins | North Carolina | D | 418 | 99 | 17 | 2 | 10 | - | 20 | .237 |
| 1916 | Galveston Pirates | Texas | B | 478 | 126 | 5 | 4 | 7 | - | 20 | .264 |
| 1917 | Houston, Shreveport, Galveston | Texas | B | 281 | 53 | 12 | 4 | 0 | - | 8 | .189 |
| 1918 | 81st Division | Military Service | | | | | | | | | --- |
| 1919 | 81st Division | Military Service | | | | | | | | | --- |
| 1919 | High Point | Carolina Ind. | | | | | | | | | --- |
| 1920 | Richmond Colts | Virginia | B | 295 | 76 | 20 | 6 | 8 | - | - | .258 |
| 1921 | Richmond Colts | Virginia | B | 293 | 70 | 15 | 6 | 12 | - | - | .239 |
| 1921 | St. Louis Browns | AMERICAN | ML | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | .333 |
| 1921 | Tulsa Oilers | Western | A | 105 | 26 | 6 | 2 | 5 | - | - | .248 |
| 1922 | Tulsa Oilers | Western | A | 402 | 138 | 39 | 4 | 14 | - | 8 | .343 |
| 1923 | Tulsa Oilers | Western | A | 453 | 144 | 40 | 3 | 20 | - | 6 | .318 |
| 1924 | Tulsa Oilers | Western | A | 421 | 127 | 25 | 4 | 18 | - | 9 | .302 |
| 1925 | Tulsa Oilers | Western | A | 475 | 142 | 36 | 2 | 17 | - | 4 | .299 |
| Minor League Totals | | | | 12 years | 4424 | 1210 | 257 | 44 | 128 | - 104 | .274 |
| Major League Totals | | | | 1 year | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 .333 |

His home run earns Stuart a start at second base the following afternoon against the Senators. The Burlington, North Carolina, native is 0-for-2 against pitcher George Mogridge when Browns' manager Lee Fohl replaces him with McManus in a game that the Browns eventually win 8-6, in 19 innings.

Stuart opens the 1921 season with the Richmond Colts of the Virginia League and is referred to as the "Babe Ruth" of the B-level league by the *Richmond Dispatch*.

Stuart is among league leaders with 12 home runs when the Colts trade him to St. Louis on July 11, for infielder Tom Sheehan and an undisclosed amount of cash.

Luke Stuart [2 of 2]:

Three weeks after his home run, Stuart is sent to the Tulsa Oilers of the Western (A) League to take the roster spot of another second baseman, Billy Gleason, who the Browns had earlier recalled and then transferred to the Columbus Jets of the American (AA) Association. Stuart hits .248 with five home runs in 29 games and 105 at bats with the Oilers.

In 12 minor league seasons, the 5-foot-8 Stuart hits .274 with 257 doubles, 44 triples and 128 home runs. In 1925, his final season of professional baseball, Stuart hits .299 with 36 doubles and 17 home runs and is named to the Western League All-Star team as a utility player.

On March 22, 1926, Stuart announces his retirement from baseball to devote more time to his real estate business.



The Richmond Colts' starting second baseman in 1920, Stuart hits only .258, but ties with player/manager Lee Gooch for the team lead in home runs with eight, despite missing a month with an ankle injury.

On January 30, 1928, the *Winston-Salem Journal* reports that Stuart is ending his two-year hiatus from baseball and will report to Tulsa's spring training camp in two months. Stuart tells the *Journal* that he has been playing basketball and selling real estate to "keep in shape."

However, there is no evidence that Stuart returned to baseball in 1928

A father of nine, Stuart dies in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, at the age of 55 on June 15, 1947. The *Journal* reports that a janitor at the Pilot Real Estate Company, Stuart's place of employment, finds Stuart's body in a chair at the company's office with both of his wrists slashed and a pistol lying near the body.

There was also a note left for his brother Albert. The *Journal* reports that "It is believed that Mr. Stuart took his own life because of illness."

Former Baseball Star Ends Life In Winston

WINSTON-SALEM, June 17.—(UP)—Former New York Yankee baseball scout Luther Lane (Luke) Stuart's death today was listed as suicide by Coroner W. N. Dalton.

Stuart, 55, was found dead yesterday. Dalton said he had been shot to death and that his wrists had been slashed. A pistol lay by his side.

Stuart broke into organized baseball in the old Carolina League and later played with Tulsa, Okla., in the Western League for many years before becoming a scout for the New York Yankees.



1914 Guilford College Baseball Team. Left to right, top row: W. Barber (manager), T. Short, E. Shore, R. Edwards, C. Benbow. Middle Row: G. Moorefield, W. Nichols, W. Futrell, E. McBane. Front Row: L. Stuart, A. Riddick, R. Thompson

The 1913 Guilford College baseball team proves to be one of the best teams in the state, finishing with a 13-1 record. Ed McBane, with a .436 average, leads the team in hitting for a second-straight year. Six players - Stuart, McBane, Ernie Shore, William Futrell and George Moorefield - will go on to play professional baseball, including two, Stuart and pitcher Ernie Shore, who will play in the major leagues. (Photo courtesy of Herb Appenzeller)

LUKE STUART RETIRES FROM NATIONAL GAME

The real estate game won another battle from the national pastime yesterday when Luke Stuart, utility man for the Tulsa, Okla., club of the Western league, announced that he was retiring permanently from the baseball business in order to devote his time to selling houses and lots.

Luke started his baseball career with Guilford college and played his first professional ball with the Winston-Salem Twins. He went to the St. Louis Browns after spending a season with the Richmond club in the Virginia league. The American leaguers sent Stuart to Tulsa for more seasoning and he has been playing great ball in the Texas circuit for the past two or three years.