

They Played the Game

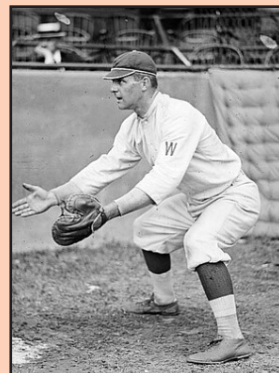
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Bob Fitzke



One of the original two-sport pro athletes, Robert Paul Fitzke had a "Cup of Coffee" with the Cleveland Indians in 1924 and then followed that by playing 16 games with the NFL's Frankfort Yellow Jackets a year later ... better known as "Bob" rather than "Paul," he originally enrolls at the University of Wyoming in the fall of 1920 and stars on the school's football team at fullback, punter and drop-kicker and on the baseball team as a standout pitcher ... he earns unofficial all-conference football honors both in 1920 and 1921 ... in 1921 he leads the nation in drop-kick field goals with six, including a college-best 43-yarder ... when the season ends Fitzke transfers to the University of Idaho causing Utah football coach Tommie Fitzpatrick to call Fitzke "a tramp athlete," and states that Utah will not play Idaho the following year if Fitzke is allowed to compete ... Fitzke plays one game the next season, before sitting out per conference transfer rules, but Idaho still hands Utah its only defeat of the season 15-0 ... after leading the Vandel basketball team in scoring, Fitzke is playing baseball in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, when he signs with the Cleveland Indians on July 23 ... joining the Indians on August 3, its almost a month before he appears in his lone major league game on September 1, 1924, against the St. Louis Browns where he allows two earned run on five hits and three walks in four in-

John Henry



Reportedly a descendant of Founding Father Patrick Henry, and the sixth of 14 Amherst College players to make it to the major leagues, John Park Henry parlays excellent defensive skills and leadership into a nine-year major league career with the Washington Senators (1910-1917) and Boston Braves (1918) ... his best season comes in 1916, posting career-high numbers in batting average (.248), RBIs (46), run scored (28), games played (116) and extra base hits (15) ... in his nine major league seasons, Henry hits only .207 with 54 doubles, 15 triples and two home runs while driving in 171 runs in 688 career games ... fleet of foot, he manages to steal 55 bases, including a career-high 12 in 1916 ... active in player-management issues, Henry is selected as the players' spokesman and plays a major role in keeping the players' association from leaving crucial talks with the national commission in February of 1914 ... three years later, Henry faces ouster from American League President Ban Johnson for urging members of the Players Fraternity to strike ... Henry is spared when it is revealed that he did send a letter, but only to his Washington teammates ... Henry's career comes to an end on August 10, 1918, when he suffers a compound fracture of his right thumb ... later in life, Henry is an umpire in the Arizona-Texas League for several seasons.

Bill Shipke



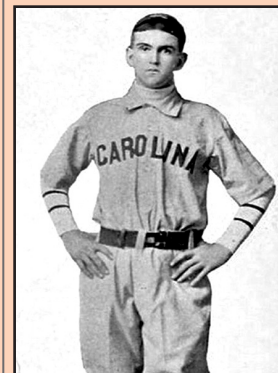
The preverbal good field-no hit infielder, William Shipkrehaver later changes his last name to Shipke to fit the box scores ... the St. Louis native plays four seasons in the major leagues with the Cleveland Naps (1906) and the Washington Senators (1907-1909) ... in 186 career games, Shipke hits .199 with 11 doubles, 10 triples and one home run ... his lone home run is a three-run inside the park round tripper against Boston's Ralph Glaze in September 1907 ... in 1908, his only season as a regular, he establishes career-highs in batting average (.208), hits (71), doubles (7), triples (8), RBIs (20) and stolen bases (15) as the Senators finish next-to-last in the American League with a 67-85 mark ... he makes his pro debut with the Springfield Reds as a 19-year-old in 1902 ... a year later, he hits a minor league career-high .306 for the Fort Scott Giants of the Missouri Valley League ... drafted by Omaha in 1904 and then drafted from Omaha by Cleveland in 1905 ... after the 1906 season, Cleveland releases him to Des Moines, where he plays a key role in helping that club win the Western League pennant ... Des Moines sells Shipke to the Senators when Joe Cantillon assumes the team's management in 1907 ... he later plays five seasons (1910-1914) with the Omaha Rourkes of the Western (A) League ... following his playing days, Shipke scouts for Cleveland and Cincinnati.

Barney Slaughter



Barney "Doc" Slaughter, is 0-1 with a 5.50 ERA and one save in eight games for the Philadelphia Phillies over a two-month period at the end of the 1910 season ... a curveball pitcher of note, the "Ambler Phenom" applies for a job in February with Phillies' manager Red Dooin, but is told to report back when the team gets done with its spring training trip in April ... he eventually debuts with a two-inning relief appearance against the Cubs on August 9 ... in his first and only major league start on the final day of the regular season against John McGraw's New York Giants, he yields seven runs on 11 hits and four walks in 4 1/3 innings before giving way to another Phillies' rookie right-hander Bill Culp in a 12-7 loss ... on a positive note, the 25-year-old does collect his only major league hit, a third-inning double off of future Hall of Famer Rube Marquard ... on October 26, Slaughter is one of the first Phillies to sign his contract for the 1911 season ... two months later, three days after Christmas, Slaughter is sent to Scranton of the New York State (B) League, where despite some contractual issues, he is the opening day starter for the Miners in 1911 and he finishes 9-18 before being sold to Louisville of the American Association ... after a 1-5 record with Erie in 1913, Slaughter leaves pro baseball and plays on various semipro teams until 1935, and the age of 50.

Fred Stem



We know that Frederick Boothe Stem batted .224 with 14 RBIs in 93 career games with the Boston Doves between 1908 and 1909, but there seems to be so much more just beyond our reach about this highly-educated man ... born in Oxford, North Carolina, but raised in Darlington, South Carolina, he attends the University of North Carolina where he plays baseball and is the team captain as a junior in 1906 ... he is ruled ineligible for his senior season when it's discovered that he played two games, without payment, with the Danville Red Sox of the Virginia (C) League the previous summer ... he stays in Chapel Hill, earning his master's degree in chemistry in 1908 ... after graduation he works in Cuba as a chemist with the Guantanamo Sugar Company ... returning to America he resumes his playing career and hits .286 for the Trenton Tigers of the Tri-State (B) League ... in mid-July Baltimore Orioles manager/owner Jack Dunn offers Trenton manager Jack Carney five players in exchange for Stem ... on September 13, the Boston Doves buy Stem and two other players for a reported \$2,000 ... with the Doves he hits .278 in 20 games ... on August 22, 1909, Boston sends Stem to the Lynn Shoemakers of the New England (B) League ... Stem will play two more years with the Western League's Sioux City Packers before calling it quits after the 1911 season ... a year later, he accepts a job with British-American Tobacco Company in Constantinople.