

# John Cantley, "Gone Before His Time"

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On June 5, 1914, Opelika Opelicans pitcher John Cantley hits three grand slams and a single in four trips to the plate and drives in 15 runs in a 19-1 win over the Talladega Indians in a Georgia-Alabama (D) League game ... in his second season of professional baseball after leaving Auburn University before his senior season, the 23-year-old right hander, in pitching for the second time in three days, allows five hits and strikes out four en route to winning his sixth-straight game.

## CANTLEY WINS OWN GAME; GETS 3 HOME RUNS

### Talladega Is Swamped by Opelika Who Hit Three Pitchers Hard

Special to The Advertiser.  
**OPELIKA, ALA., June 5**—Opelika walked away with Talladega today with a one-sided score of 19 to 1. Cantley was the star of the afternoon, having perfect control and allowing the visitors only five scattered hits and featured at the bat by establishing a record as hitting pitcher. Getting 3 home runs and single out of five times, each time with the bases loaded. Pitcher Showers of Talladega was knocked unconscious by a thrown ball and was relieved by Howell.  
 The score:

| Opelika       | Ab | H | Po | A | Talladega    | Ab | H | Po | A |
|---------------|----|---|----|---|--------------|----|---|----|---|
| Spitan., ss   | 1  | 1 | 2  | 1 | Wilson, 3b   | 5  | 1 | 2  | 2 |
| Newell, 1b    | 5  | 9 | 3  | 4 | Crow, ss     | 4  | 1 | 4  | 3 |
| McLain, lf    | 3  | 1 | 0  | 0 | Camp, cf     | 4  | 0 | 4  | 3 |
| Steele, rf    | 3  | 1 | 1  | 4 | Baker, c     | 2  | 1 | 1  | 1 |
| Chambers, cf  | 4  | 1 | 1  | 0 | Coz, 1b      | 4  | 0 | 8  | 1 |
| Schwartz, 1b  | 5  | 3 | 11 | 9 | Robinson, p  | 4  | 1 | 1  | 0 |
| Blackwell, 1b | 5  | 1 | 3  | 3 | Howell, lf   | 3  | 0 | 2  | 1 |
| Williams, c   | 3  | 1 | 4  | 1 | Black, lf    | 1  | 0 | 0  | 0 |
| Cantley, p    | 5  | 4 | 1  | 1 | Showers, 1b  | 2  | 0 | 0  | 1 |
|               |    |   |    |   | Williams, rf | 3  | 1 | 0  | 0 |

Totals 39 14 27 15 | Totals 24 5 12 13

Score by innings  
 Opelika runs hits errors 110 100 22\*—13  
 Talladega runs hits errors 000 001 000—1

Summary—Runs, Spitsnagle, Newell, 1, McLain, 2, Steele, 1, Chambers, 2, Schwartz, 1, Blackwell, 1, Williams, 1, Cantley, 4, Robinson. Errors, Spitsnagle, Blackwell, Crow, 1; Camp, Coz, home runs, Cantley, 1; Steele, two base hits, Baker, Robinson, McLain, Steele, Chambers. Sacrifice hits, Williams, G. McLain. Struck out by Cantley, 4, Robinson, 1. Base on balls, off Cantley, 3 off Robinson, 1, off Showers, 1, off Howell, 1. Wild pitch, Cantley, Showers, Howell. Hit by pitcher, McLain, Steele, Williams. Umpire Mills. Time 3:00.

**GAME NOTE:**  
 If Opelika's linescore 7-7-0-1-0-0-2-2-x in the game story is correct, Cantley could not have hit three grand slams ... Talladega centerfielder Howie (Red) Camp will play five games with the New York Yankees in 1917, with six hits in 21 at bats.

## PITCHER CANTLEY OF EVAS TAKEN SICK

## CANTLEY'S ILLNESS RESULTS IN DEATH

Pitcher Cantley, Evansville's star twirler, who was scheduled to pitch Friday, probably will be out of the game the rest of the series. He was taken sick Friday and it is feared that he has developed typhoid fever. Wolf was sent in to pitch in his place in the first game.

Evansville Pitcher Was Taken Sick Here During Series That Decided Pennant.

Week before last when the Evansville club came here for games that would decide the Central league championship this year many smiled knowingly when announcement was made that Pitcher Cantley of the Little Evans was ill and threatened with typhoid fever. The unfairness of that smile is shown by the news dispatch coming today announcing the pitcher's death. Many were inclined to believe that the closeness of the race might have caused Cantley to avoid the issue when the championship was at stake. Since Cantley was leading the pitchers of the league in percentage of games won it meant a great loss to the Evansville club.

The first day of the important three days' play here by the Evansville club the following was wired to the Evansville papers by Manager Knoll of the Little Evans: "Cantley will not be able to pitch any more this season. We are going to finish with three pitchers and we are going to win the pennant." Knoll made good on his promise.

Cantley was sent back to Evansville from here and never really recovered from the shock of the long and tiresome journey when utterly unfit to travel. Sunday night he died at Evansville and typhoid fever was given by attending physicians as the cause of his death.

Cantley's death Sunday shows how easy it is sometimes to do a player an injustice. He pitched here Wednesday, April 27, and won his game 6 to 5. On June 15 at Island park he beat the Hillieris 6 to 4. No member of the Evansville team, unless it was Manager Punoh Knoll, was more responsible for the Little Evans' pennant win this year than Pitcher Joseph Cantley.

The following season, Cantley is 20-11 (with five shutouts) for the Evansville River Rats and is slated to pitch in the final game of a key three-game Central (B) League series with the second-place Grand Rapids Black Sox, when on August 20 he is taken ill and sent back to Evansville, where he dies from typhoid fever three weeks later on September 6, 1915.

### Cantley Chronology

May 31, 1912  
 Pitching for the Auburn University, Cantley strikes out 10 and allows only five hits in a 1-0 exhibition game loss to a semi-pro team from Opelika.

May 18, 1914  
 Cantley, pitching for Opelika, strikes out 12 LaGrange Terrapins, including five in succession, en route to a 7-to-6 win.

June 23, 1914  
 Cantley allows only four hits and strikes out eight and runs his record to 11-2-1 with a 4-1 complete game win over LaGrange.

April 1915  
 The Evansville River Rats purchase pitcher John Cantley from the Birmingham Barons, of the Southern (A) League, which drafted him from Opelika of the Georgia-Alabama (B) League.

September 6, 1915  
 Cantley dies in Evansville, Ind., from complications of typhoid fever.

### John Cantley Year by Year:

| Year                       | Team                  | League          | Level | W-L            | ERA              |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------|----------------|------------------|
| 1911                       | Auburn Tigers         | SIAA            | -     | -              | -                |
| 1912                       | Auburn Tigers         | SIAA            | -     | -              | -                |
| 1913                       | Talladega Indians     | Georgia-Alabama | D     | 10-13          | 2.23             |
|                            | Opelika Opelicans     | Georgia-Alabama | D     | -              | -                |
| 1914                       | Opelika Opelicans     | Georgia-Alabama | D     | 17-9-1         | -                |
| 1915                       | Evansville River Rats | Central League  | B     | 20-11          | 3.34             |
| <b>Minor League Totals</b> |                       |                 |       | <b>3 Years</b> | <b>- 47-33-1</b> |