



Biographical Research Committee Monthly Report
December 1994

Catching A Fish

For the second month in a row, Bob Richardson captures the *Find of the Month* award for his excellent job of nailing Charles Fisher of the 1884 Chicago and Kansas City Unions. Bob began his search with notes from both Harold Dellinger and Joe Simenic that Fisher was from Lynn, Massachusetts and had played with St. Joseph, Missouri in 1886 before being sent home to Newburyport, Massachusetts to recover from malaria. The papers reported the return of the player, but called him Charley Fish. Bob also found a Fish playing sporadically around Lynn as early as 1877.

Bob began tracking the only Charley Fish that fit and found two marriage records for him. The second marriage in 1894 showed his name as Charles G. Fisher. Bob couldn't find him in the 1900 Massachusetts census, so showing the acute perception that marks the members of this committee, he decided to check for him in Alaska. There he was, listed as Charles G. Fisher, born 1852 in Massachusetts, occupation gold miner. Bob wrote for the death certificate and received word that Fisher died February 18, 1917 in Eagle, Alaska. (For those who don't know where Eagle is, it's a few miles north of Chicken.)

Now the only thing to do was prove that the Charles Fisher who died in Alaska was the ballplayer. The New England papers referred to the St. Joseph player as Charley Fish and Fish was never active locally while Fisher was playing in the Midwest. Then Bob found Fish playing in the Eastern New England League in 1885 and found a note that Charles G. Fish had signed and was 32 years old. Everything fits together. Great work on a tough guy!

New Members

We have 2 new members. Their addresses and code numbers are:

Charles "Newt" Weaver
2 South Baltimore Avenue
Ocean City, Maryland 21842 (W5)

Daniel Mumford
12620 Sheffield Road
Ocean City, Maryland 21842 (M5)

By the way, due to several inquiries I have had, I will print a complete list of committee members and code numbers in the January newsletter.

The Smith Brothers

While loading my 1994 data into my computer, I noticed that the 1994 Baltimore Orioles had 4 players named Smith (Lee, Mike, Dwight, and Lonnie). Does anyone know of any other team that had at least 4 players who shared the same last name?

Oh Pa, That Song Makes Me Cry

I also noticed that the Oakland Athletics had two pitchers, John Briscoe and Ron Darling. Does anyone know who Briscoe Darling is? Fans of Andy Griffith would know in a second.

What a Ham

David Arcidiacono has done some research on the man we list as Homer (Ham) Allen. It's possible that we have his first name wrong. The May 16 1871 *Hartford Post* reported that Edward A. Allen had joined the Mansfields from the Marlboro Fairmounts. Later in the year, articles referred to him as Ham Allen. (Did you realize that if we got Ham Allen, Turkey Mike Donlin, Eddie Bacon, Jackie Mayo, and Sweetbreads

Bailey together, we could make a pretty good club sandwich?)

To further complicate things the 1871 Middletown city directory lists a Frank E. Allen, whose occupation was listed as "base ballist." David feels that Homer was a nickname given to Allen because in the 1870 season he was the first batter to hit a fair ball over the outfield fence at the Mansfields' new park. It looks as if either Frank or Edward was Allen's first name and Ham and Homer were nicknames bestowed on him. Anyone have any more information?

Birthday List

There are four nonagenarians celebrating birthdays in January. Be sure to send a card.

January 6	Robert Barnes	93
January 12	Joe Hauser	96
January 27	Milt Gaston	99
January 29	Ray Hayworth	91

Irked About Burke

We list Joseph A Burke as playing with St. Louis (AA) in 1890 and Cincinnati (AA) in 1891. Neither his birthdate nor death date is known. Joe Simenic and Pete Cava both sent me information on Burke and thus Burke becomes our December *Mystery of the Month*.

On September 26, 1890 Philadelphia and St. Louis played a doubleheader in St. Louis. A player named Burke played third base in both games for St. Louis. Sporting Life made no mention of his first name nor where he came from.

On July 23, 1891, St. Louis and Cincinnati played a game in Cincinnati. Sporting Life said, "Joe Burke, an amateur, played second base for Cincinnati." The January 21, 1899 Sporting Life carried an item that "the latest addition to the Syracuse team is third baseman Joe Burke, late of Mansfield." There was also a Joe Burke playing in the Texas League from 1903-07.

On July 17, 1893, the captain of the Muncie team, Joseph E. Burke, was struck by a pitched ball and broke his spine. He died of this injury on August 27. In his obituary carried in one of the Muncie papers it states, "During the existence of the Indiana State League a few years ago, he as a member of Muncie's club, during which time he married a Muncie lady. (He married Mary Baker on March 11, 1890.) After the season was over, he resided in this city until the next season when he played with several

teams in the National League."

So what does all this mean? Was the player who died in Muncie the 1890-91 major leaguer? Were the 1890 St. Louis player and the 1891 Cincinnati player even the same man? I think it is entirely possible (albeit unlikely) that the 1890 St. Louis player was 15-year-old Jimmy Burke, who was from St. Louis and was a third baseman. Certainly more research is needed on this player.

The Scoreboard

	IN	OUT	PCT
Total Complete Names	14195	73	99.488
Total Complete Births	13507	761	94.666
Total Complete Deaths	7065	475	49.516
Total Assumed Alive	6728		47.154
Total Bats	12911	1252	91.160
Total Throws	13158	1005	92.904
Total Heights	13137	1026	92.756
Total Weights	13070	1093	92.283
Total Debut Dates	14268	0	100.000
Total Questionnaires	9971	4297	69.884
Total Completion			92.2011

Rupert Frank Mills

By Cappy Gagnon

B: October 12, 1892, Newark, New Jersey
D: July 20, 1929, Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey
BRTR 6-02 185

"He gave his life to save that of a friend." The opening line of the second paragraph of The Daily Record of Morristown, New Jersey, July 22, 1929 summed up the heroic death of Rupert Mills. The first paragraph stated, "Rupert F. Mills, well known to Morristonians for his activities in collegiate, sporting, military, and political circles, was drowned at Lake Hopatcong on Saturday afternoon."

Death came to Mills while he and former state assemblyman Louis Freeman were boating in a canoe. The craft capsized. Mills asked Freeman, a non-swimmer, to grab the canoe paddle and he dragged him approximately 100 feet to shore. As rescuers pulled Freeman out of the water, Mills sank in fifteen feet of water. It took an additional thirty minutes to locate his body and pull him from the water. He died of a suspected heart attack.

At the time of his death he was running as the Republican candidate for sheriff of Essex County. According to clippings located by Gerry Tomlinson, Mills' election was regarded as a certainty. Mills' military funeral was attended by a huge contingent of his friends and admirers. Mills had been a cavalry captain. His death shocked his many friends, including Knute Rockne, who attended the funeral. Mills had served as an eastern scout for the Irish. He also hosted the Notre Dame football team on its visits to New York to play the Army.

Mills was a four sport star at Baringer high school. Winning the state high jump title, he received pro baseball offers, but was convinced to take an athletic scholarship to Notre Dame after talking with Notre Dame grad Cy Williams at a big league game in New York. Rupe later duplicated his four sport mastery at Notre Dame, becoming only the second man in school history to earn four monograms in a single year. He was the starting basketball center for three years, leading the team to records of 13-2, 11-5, and 15-2. (The first four sport star at Notre Dame, Dutch Bergman, also played in the majors.) Mills played first and second base for the Irish, hitting .394 in 1914.

After graduation, Rupe signed with the Newark Federal League team. Randy Linthurst points out that Mills "was the only Jersey boy on the Newark team." At the beginning of the following season Mills became part of a comic labor relations situation. As Al Kermisch pointed out in the 1986 Baseball Research Journal, Mills single-handedly kept the Federal League alive in 1916.

The league had succumbed to tremendous financial losses after two years of bucking the two traditional major leagues. Mills had a contract and a law degree, so he decided he would not accept the small settlement he was offered to forget the second year of his contract with the Newfeds. For the first two months of the 1916 "season", Mills went to the Newark Federal League park each morning, worked out, took a lunch break, and then called it a day at the supper hour. The Newark News humorously covered Rupe's Newfeds workouts in a May 6 story, "'Yes, I've played ten games since the season started and won them all,' said Rupe Mills the Peps first baseman yesterday just after he reached the bench after scoring from second on his own single to left field."

Finally in June, Mills negotiated a settlement with Harry Sinclair and signed a Detroit Tigers contract and an agreement to play with Harrisburg, where he hit .256 in 70 games. Rupe moved up to Denver in the Western League in 1917 and had a strong year. He hit .285, slugged .417, and led the league in games played (149), 2-baggers (37), assists (75), and fielding percentage (.987). Mills was well-positioned to move up to the majors for 1918, but World War I intervened. Mills enlisted at Anniston, Alabama.

Mills saw service in France as a lieutenant with the 11th field artillery division. In August, 1918, John McGraw took a team to France to play a team of Army stars coached by Johnny Evers. Rupe was selected to play for the Army stars along with Dots Miller and Hank Gowdy.

The obituary notices for Mills were befitting a national leader. One correspondent related, "An inspiration to other young men. Even as his tall handsome figure lifted itself above any crowd, so did Rupe Mills' personality impress any group of which he was a member. His manliness, friendliness, and charm of manner had carried him far. He was an ideal for youth."

New Monthly Data

Questionnaires Received:

None

New Information Received:

1884 Butler, Frank Edward	Height: <u>5-06</u> Weight: <u>140</u>	(R1)
1873 Campbell, Hugh F.	B: <u>1850</u>	(M4)
	<u>Ireland</u>	
1911 Conwell, Edward James	D: <u>Chicago, Illinois</u>	(T1)
1926 Cullop, Henry Nicholas	Real name: <u>Heinrich Nicholas Kolop</u>	(T3)
1884 Fisher, Charles J.	Name: <u>Charles G. Fisher</u>	(R1)
	Real name: <u>Charles G. Fish</u>	
	B: <u>Mar 10 1852</u>	
	<u>Boxford, Massachusetts</u>	
	D: <u>Feb 18 1917</u>	
	<u>Eagle, Alaska</u>	
1944 Garbark, Nathaniel Michael	TR Height: <u>5-08</u> Weight: <u>143</u>	
	D: <u>Aug 31 1994</u>	(H1)
	<u>Charlotte, North Carolina</u>	
1944 Gladu, Roland Edouard	D: <u>Jul 26 1994</u>	(X3)
	<u>Montreal, Quebec</u>	
1871 Ham, Ralph A.	Eliminate 1872 Middletown record.	(A3)
	Record belongs to Ham Allen.	
1940 Johnson, Earl Douglas	D: <u>Dec 3 1994</u>	(W2)
	<u>Seattle, Washington</u>	
1905 LeRoy, Louis Paul	B: <u>Omro, Wisconsin</u>	(T1)
1944 McGhee, William Mac	B: <u>Sep 5 1905</u>	(H1)
	D: <u>Mar 10 1984</u>	
1884 McKeever, James	Height: <u>5-10</u> Weight: <u>170</u>	(R1)
1941 Meers, Russell Harlan	D: <u>Nov 16 1994</u>	(H4)
	<u>Lancaster, Pennsylvania</u>	
1882 Merrill, Edward Mason	B: <u>Maysville, Kentucky</u>	(B6)
1924 Miller, Jacob Walter	Name: <u>Walter Miller</u>	(T3)
1884 Murphy, Frank J.	Name: <u>Francis J. Murphy</u>	(R1)
	B: <u>1863</u>	
	Height: <u>5-06</u> Weight: <u>145</u>	
1884 O'Donnell,	Name: <u>John O'Donnell</u>	(D2)
1884 Oxley, Harry Havelock	Height: <u>5-11</u> Weight: <u>163</u>	(R1)
1994 Park, Chan Ho	B: <u>Kongju, South Korea</u>	(H1)
1942 Reynolds, Allie Pierce	D: <u>Dec 26 1994</u>	(C1)
	<u>Oklahoma City, Oklahoma</u>	
1933 Robello, Thomas Vardasco	D: <u>Dec 25 1994</u>	(C1)
	<u>Fort Worth, Texas</u>	
1951 Sacka, Frank	D: <u>Dec 7 1994</u>	(S9)
	<u>Dearborn, Michigan</u>	
1929 Scarritt, Russell Mallory	Name: <u>Stephen Russell Mallory Scarritt</u>	(H1)
	D: <u>Dec 4 1994</u>	
	<u>Pensacola, Florida</u>	

1960 Smith, Charles William	D: <u>Nov 29 1994</u>	(C1)
	<u>Reno, Nevada</u>	
1929 Stroner, James M.	Name: James <u>Melvin</u> Stroner	(H4)
	B: <u>May 29 1901</u>	
	D: <u>Dec 6 1975</u>	
	<u>Tarboro, North Carolina</u>	
1891 Taylor, John Budd	B: <u>Staten Island, New York</u>	(C2)
1944 Treadway, Thadford Leon	D: <u>May 26 1994</u>	(S3)
	<u>Atlanta, Georgia</u>	
1994 Vanegmond, Timothy Layne	Name: Timothy Layne <u>VanEgmond</u>	(H1)
1958 Vargas, Roberto Enrique	Name: Roberto Enrique Vargas (<u>Velez</u>)	(H1)
1880 Weidman, George Edward	Name: George Edward <u>Wiedman</u>	(BX)
1948 Wellman, Robert Joseph	D: <u>Dec 20 1994</u>	(D2)
	<u>Covington, Kentucky</u>	
1884 Wilson, George Archibald	Height: <u>5-08</u> Weight: <u>175</u>	(R1)
1924 Winters, Clarence John	<u>TR</u>	(B4)
1914 Zeiser, Matthew J.	D: <u>Chicago, Illinois</u>	(T1)