



The American Indian Integration of Baseball

JEFFREY POWERS-BECK

With a foreword by Joseph B. Oxendine

THE AMERICAN INDIAN INTEGRATION OF BASEBALL

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Brian J. Beck,

my twin brother and double-play partner

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Foreword

Baseball is a noble game, a game of tradition, of allegiance and camaraderie. It is played at an unhurried pace, with no clock. Baseball has generally avoided the physical combativeness, the confrontational style, and the demonstrative behavior often exhibited in professional football, ice hockey, and basketball. For more than a century, from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, it was unchallenged as our “national pastime.”

The character of baseball is consistent with traditional American Indian traits and attitudes toward sport. Consequently, young Indians “took” to the game as soon as it was introduced to them in boarding schools during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. They quickly became involved in and contributed importantly to the early development of baseball in this country.

In this book Professor Powers-Beck presents the most extensive compilation of Indian baseball players and related information ever assembled. Using a vast array of resources from official baseball documents, published materials, and commentaries from historians, he tells the story of the successes and the travails of Indians in baseball from the 1890s until 1945, concentrating on the earlier years when regulatory standards were less perfect than they are today. This book is about Indians in organized baseball at all levels, not just the Major Leagues.

Reading this book is a genuine treat not only for the baseball fan but for those persons interested in the personal struggles of Indians in the non-Indian world. It is well crafted and reveals a keen understanding of the subtleties of the baseball world and a sensitivity to the Indian personality. The author not only provides information about well-known successful Indian Major League players but also presents interesting profiles of little-known players.

Perhaps most importantly, the author exposes societal prejudices during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and how those attitudes became a part of Indian/non-Indian interaction on and off the baseball field.

This book assists the reader in understanding the pressures encountered by Indians in adjusting to the game and to life in the non-Indian world.

The author puts into social context the personal lives of a selected number of Indian baseball players, both well known as well as several “cup-of-coffee” players (those who spent very limited time in the Major Leagues; that is, only long enough to have a cup of coffee). He describes Indian responses to abusive teammates, opponents, fans, and sportswriters – and the pressures and expectations to play the role of stereotypical Indians as conceived by non-Indians.

In the minds of most observers, the entry of Jackie Robinson into Major League Baseball in 1947 marked the beginning of integration and racial issues in baseball. Dozens of volumes and commentaries have been written about this dramatic milestone in baseball and in American social life. The entry of American Indians into baseball during the previous half-century and the persistent racism and abuse directed toward them is not so well known. Powers-Beck brings this pre-Jackie Robinson racism into focus. Anti-Indian behavior was in some instances bolder and more vocal than anti-black behavior.

Though not legally prohibited from playing organized baseball, as were African Americans prior to 1947, American Indians encountered a reception marked by both curiosity and open hostility. This book makes it clear that all Indian players, from the most prominent to the least, faced this treatment. Hostility revealed itself in persistent taunts such as “Go back to the reservation,” “Dumb Injun,” “Redskin,” “Kemosabe,” “Heap big Injun,” “war hoops,” and similar comments. Such expressions were issued both in personal encounters and in the public press. Of course, it is a well-established tradition that all baseball players, especially rookies, are “razzed.” With the Indian players this treatment took on a racial tone that was especially painful for sensitive young Indians in a strange climate.

On the other hand, there were seemingly innocent expressions based on curiosity or fascination. For example, practically all Indians were referred to as “Chief” not necessarily as a derogatory term nor out of belief that they were real chiefs of their tribes. Rather, it was a means of identifying or labeling the Indian. Though it was not something they preferred, most Indians did not seriously object to being called “Chief.” Some sportswriters had fun with Indian images, creating a near-burlesque climate with comments such as “the Chief is on the warpath,” “add another scalp to his belt,” “put on war paint,” and so on. Of course, early in the twentieth century, political correctness had not asserted itself.

In a move widely acclaimed as “honoring” American Indians, the Cleve-

land American League team was renamed the “Indians” in 1915, reportedly to pay tribute to Louis Sockalexis, who played with the team several years earlier. In another “positive” depiction Moses Yellow Horse became the source for a rallying cry for the Pittsburgh Pirates. Yellow Horse had only a modest record for two or three years as pitcher, but when the team faced a crisis on the field, the chant “Bring in Yellow Horse” rang out through the stadium whether or not there was any likelihood that he could solve the problem. The exhortation appeared to be based on fun, not reality.

Powers-Beck points out that each Indian player developed his own style in dealing with overt and covert racism. Charles (Chief) Bender, a Hall of Fame pitcher with the Philadelphia Athletics, referred to such critics as “foreigners,” while others were openly hostile or resorted to negative, sometimes self-destructive behavior. Perhaps the widely reported “drunken Indian” was to some extent the result of constant racism encountered by these very Indians.

This book presents authoritative and interesting biographical reviews of the most noteworthy Indian baseball players. It also provides an interesting analysis of their personalities, which may have been a factor in their efforts to cope with life in a very competitive non-Indian world. For example, Chief Bender was most fortunate to play for the gentle and supportive Connie Mack of the Philadelphia Athletics. Their good relations were mutual. In contrast, Jim Thorpe played for the fiery John McGraw of the New York Giants. After several years as an all-American football player at Carlisle, followed by two Olympic Gold Medal wins, Thorpe was a confident and strong-willed individual when he began playing for McGraw. He bristled at McGraw’s dictatorial style, and the two of them frequently clashed. On the other hand, John “Chief” Meyers, catcher for the Giants, played for McGraw with less tension. Consequently, he had a more successful career, playing in almost every game for the Giants over an eight-year period and earned the title “Iron Man” because of his tendency never to miss a game. Extensive reviews are provided for other players who had varying degrees of success in relating to managers and other players.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, American Indians earned a reputation as “natural athletes,” achieving extraordinary successes in football (for example, the nationally prominent Carlisle Indian football teams of the early twentieth century), long distance running (Boston Marathon and other world-championship running performances), and in baseball (for example, Bender, Meyers, Jim Thorpe, and Sockalexis, all prior to 1920). John Steckbeck, the Carlisle Indian School historian, pointed out the great success of Indian athletes early in the century and concluded

that they “then vanished from the sporting scene forever.” While Steckbeck perhaps overstated the demise of the Indian athlete, the truth is that there were few noteworthy success stories, especially in baseball, following the first quarter of the twentieth century.

The reasons for the decline of American Indian baseball excellence following 1925 are complex. The author of this book suggests that the hostile treatment of the players may have been a factor. Perhaps the impact of this treatment extended back to the home communities of the players, thus discouraging others. The Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania produced six Major League players then closed in 1918. The downscaling of the Haskell Institute athletic program in Kansas no doubt diminished opportunities for the development of future athletes.

This book chronicles the careers of Bender and Meyers, and mentions “Superchief” Allie Reynolds, each of whom achieved distinction as being among the very best players of their eras. Yet it also presents other Indian players of legendary talent who did not fulfill their promise. For example, reports from credible observers list Louis Sockalexis among the most talented players of all time. Hughie Jennings, a Major League manager at the time stated that “Sockalexis should have been the greatest player of all time.” Similarly, Moses Yellow Horse was widely reported as being the strongest, hardest-throwing pitcher of his day, comparable to Walter “Big Train” Johnson. Sadly, neither of these players achieved great success in Major League baseball. One can only speculate as to the reasons for this. Perhaps it was their inability to deal effectively with the hostile treatment that they received in the non-Indian world. It was also widely reported that their skills were diminished by alcohol consumption. Perhaps these factors were interrelated.

In almost all cases the Indian baseball player was a loner on the team, having no other Indian teammates for support. In contrast, following the entry of Jackie Robinson into major league baseball, there quickly developed a critical mass of other African American players who provided mutual support. Years later the same occurred with Latino players in Major League Baseball.

A compelling aspect of this book is the presentation of the careers of several players who achieved great visibility and almost legendary status as Minor Leaguers. Full chapters are presented on Moses Yellow Horse, Louis Leroy, and George Howard Johnson, each of whom had great Minor League careers but spent only a short period in the majors.

Powers-Beck weaves Indian and baseball folklore into personal profiles on the Indian players. The informality of baseball and the lack of rigid

controls, particularly in the early days, allowed for the creation of many interesting anecdotes.

This is a monumental work with significance for both baseball and American Indians. The concluding chapter on the portrayal of the American Indian in today's sports in the form of mascots, names, paraphernalia, and behaviors provides a fitting conclusion, showing that the issue of racism in sport continues.

Joseph B. Oxendine

Preface

In telling this story, the story of great athletes, many forgotten, who integrated professional baseball for American Indians, I must acknowledge my methods. I have not been trained as an ethnologist, anthropologist, or specialist in Native American studies. My training has been, rather, that of a literary historian with strong interests in baseball and American cultural diversity. As a member of the Society of American Baseball Research, I have begun my research with the materials that historians of baseball's deadball era (1900–1919) generally prefer: early twentieth-century sports periodicals, newspaper stories and columns, printed interviews, published biographies, biographical dictionaries, the *Spalding* and *Reach* baseball guides, and the archives of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and of the *Sporting News* library. In addition to these sources, I have also found valuable information in the records (preserved in the National Archives and Records Administration) of American Indian boarding schools, especially Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania and Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, and in the scrapbooks of the family members of several players – Elijah Pinnance and Louis Leroy. While I have attempted to contact family members of the players, I have found few living with memories of the playing days of these men, especially from 1897 to 1920. The result is that too often the voices of American Indians are underrepresented in the narrative and that references to Native players are often repeated from periodical accounts. Early twentieth-century sportswriters seldom reported with care the tribal affiliations of American Indian players. For example, it was quite common for a player to be labeled “Sioux” by sportswriters but very rare for a player to be said to be a Lakota Sioux from the Pine Ridge Reservation. In many cases, therefore, throughout the book, the reader will find that band affiliations cannot be given with precision. In such cases, my intention is not to misidentify or to slight any member of an Indian Nation but simply to provide the limited information that is available from imperfect sources.

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THE AMERICAN INDIAN INTEGRATION OF BASEBALL

1

“Chief” – The American Indian Integration of Baseball

“No matter where we play I go through the same ordeal, and at the present time I am so used to it that at times I forget to smile at my tormentors, believing it to be a part of the game.”

Louis F. Sockalexis, Interview, June 19, 1897

They were called “Chief”: the dozens of American Indians who played Major League Baseball from 1897 to 1945, the hundreds who played Minor League ball, and the thousands who played collegiate and semipro ball. While the story of the African American integration of baseball has been told in great detail, the story of the Indian initiation into professional baseball, starting with Louis Francis Sockalexis in the spring of 1897, has not yet been fully told. Although Indians did not face the same obstacles to participation in professional baseball as did blacks at the turn of the century, they too endured an integration experience that began with the derisive nickname of “Chief” and extended to many other forms of racism. In one chapter of *Baseball: The People’s Game*, Harold Seymour began to tell that story:

Of the two races that fared worst in the United States, the blacks and the Indians, the Indians came off better as far as baseball was concerned. Unlike the blacks who, except for a short space, were barred from the House of Baseball until after World War II, the Indians at least had access to its basement, from which they could aspire to its upper story. For Organized Baseball accepted Indians and rejected blacks. Prejudice toward blacks was racial, but toward Indians it was mainly cultural.¹

And while Seymour and his spouse Dorothy Mills certainly deserve great credit for their seminal work, the analogy of “the House of Baseball,” with the basement for Indians and the outbuildings for blacks, is misleading as well as illuminating.

With all respect to Seymour, the prejudice against American Indians athletes was *both* racial and cultural. Indian players were indeed recruited by

professional clubs for their athletic talents and for their popularity as ticket-sales drawing cards, but even the Indians who reached baseball's "upper story" could not escape racism. The first ballplayers of the twentieth century to hear "Nigger!" from the stands of Major League stadiums were not African Americans but were Indians like John Meyers and Jay Clarke, and they also heard "Back to the Reservation!," "Dog soup!," and other jeers. The legends like Sockalexis, Jim Thorpe, and Charles Albert Bender and the overlooked veterans of many Minor League seasons, like Frank Jude, Louis Leroy, and Elijah Pinnance, were all submerged in the cauldron of racism, far different from the American myth of baseball's supposed "melting pot." These players triumphed in enduring the integration experience of name-calling, race-baiting, mob mockery, and mistreatment by players, managers, and fans, all part of the pervasive racism of America's "Progressive" Era.

Apart from Seymour's pioneering chapter, historians and scholars of American Indian studies have seldom documented the history of American Indians in collegiate or professional baseball. In a classic ethnological study, Stewart Culin briefly noted that Navahos imprisoned at Bosque Redondo in 1863 had incorporated elements of baseball in their own game of *aqejólyedi* (run around ball), and social historian Patty Loew has recently written of the rich baseball traditions among the Lake Superior Chippewa.² Many studies of government boarding schools have, however, recognized the prominence of athletic programs at those schools: Michael C. Coleman included sporting activities such as baseball among the "extracurricular activities" that "motivated even students who were critical of the [boarding] school" to continue their education; Genevieve Bell indicated that Carlisle Indian Industrial School's athletic accomplishments "became symbols of the institution and the focus of pride for students and former students alike"; and John Bloom reported that sports in boarding-school athletic programs "created a context for the celebration of intertribal cooperation and identity, sometimes on a scale rarely ever seen before."³ But it is a rare study like Seymour's chapter or Ellen Staurowsky's 1998 article, "An Act of Honor or Exploitation?," that actually treats the history of American Indian players in professional baseball. Staurowsky's study of Louis Sockalexis examined the renaming of the Cleveland Naps in 1915 as the Cleveland Indians and found that team officials did not, as once claimed, conduct a fan contest to rename the team or single out Sockalexis for honor.⁴

Since Staurowsky's article, several biographies have broken the silence about the pioneering feats of American Indian athletes in professional baseball. Todd Fuller's *Sixty Feet Six Inches and Other Distances from Home*, a life

of the Pawnee pitcher Moses Yellow Horse, was published in 2002 by Holy Cow Press of Duluth, Minnesota. In this colorful if eccentric biography, Fuller includes his own poems alongside Pawnees' stories about the Pirates relief pitcher. *Sixty Feet Six Inches* perpetuates the common misconception that Yellow Horse was the "first fullblood Indian in [the] Major League," but it still makes a very valuable point: "YellowHorse's story, like that of other Indian ballplayers, touches on [significant] aspects of American culture and history, including assimilation, identity, and survival."⁵ Later in 2002 came three notable biographies of Indian baseball players: David L. Fleitz's *Louis Sockalexis: The First Cleveland Indian*, Royse Parr and Bob Burke's *Allie Reynolds: Super Chief*, and Patrick and Terrence McGrath's *Bright Star in a Shadowy Sky: The Story of Indian Bob Johnson*. Fleitz's biography is especially important as it tells the story of the Cleveland outfielder who began the American Indian integration of Major League Baseball. Fleitz examines both Sockalexis's meteoric rise and sudden fall in historical detail, praising him as a "pioneer" of integration, as "the first non-Caucasian in the National League," even while recounting his struggle with alcoholism. Although Fleitz is concerned with Sockalexis primarily as a ball player and only secondarily as an integrator, his biography is well documented and points up the need for a fuller study of the American Indian integration of baseball.⁶

This introductory chapter, which is historical and documentary in nature, will show that professional baseball was a crucible of *both* racial and cultural prejudices for the first generations of Native players, and this crucible was often heated by the educational programs of federal Indian boarding schools. In documenting the American Indian integration of baseball, this book uses newspapers, periodicals, correspondence, interviews, and early Indian school accounts to examine the relationship of baseball and American Indian identity. This first chapter will provide contexts for the study of the American Indian integration of professional baseball, focusing especially on the federal boarding schools, Indian baseball traditions, and Sockalexis's integration experience. The second and third chapters will examine the institutional history of Indians playing baseball in more detail by focusing on the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's baseball program – a school that sent seven players to the big leagues – and on baseball's best Indian barnstorming team, the Nebraska Indians. Later chapters will document the lives of three stars (Bender, Meyers, and Thorpe, chapter 4) and three forgotten heroes of baseball's Indian integration (Louis Leroy, chapter 5; George H. Johnson, chapter 6; and Moses Yellow Horse, chapter 7). An epilogue provides a final

commentary on the long shadows of anti-Indian caricature, which stretch across baseball history from Sockalexis's debut in 1897 to the Chief Wahoo logo of today's Cleveland Indians.

PLAYERS CALLED "CHIEF"

At the turn of the twentieth century, William A. Phelon, a Chicago baseball writer, glibly hailed the segregated sport's power to transcend all economic, social, and racial differences: "Do you wish to see the one spot where the nations meet and mix on equal terms, where pride of race and birth and ancestry are laid aside? . . . Go to a ball park."⁷ For Phelon, the crowded baseball stadium was the epitome of the American melting pot. Yet, when the same writer described American Indians in baseball, he did so in combative terms with the stereotype of the "stone-faced Indian":

The Indian, sad, morose, receives applause
Without a smile upon his Sphinx-like face,
And, inwardly, thinks he gets even when
He draws big wampum from the pale-skinned race!⁸

When Native Americans played ball outside of reservation and Indian school fields in this era, they often faced large raucous crowds and choruses of war-whoops, "ki-yi-yi's," and screams of "Redskin," "Indian," and "Back to the Reservation!" Rudy York, a slugger of Cherokee heritage, who was described disparagingly in newspapers as "part Indian, part first baseman," noted aptly, "Any time an Indian puts on a baseball uniform he becomes about six times as much of a character as any other player." Sadly, the popular fascination with American Indian players was countervailed by a harsh strain of anti-Indian bigotry. So York added, "All an Indian's got to do is be seen drinking a beer and he's drunk."⁹

Starting with Sockalexis in 1897, many Indian players in professional baseball, especially those with clear affiliations with tribes and ties to reservations, were nicknamed "Chief." In addition to "Chief" Charles Albert Bender and "Chief" John Tortes Meyers, there were "Chief" Moses Yellow Horse, "Chief" George H. Johnson, "Chief" Louis Leroy, "Chief" Ike Kahdot, "Chief" Euel Moore, "Chief" Ben Tincup, "Chief" Elon Hogsett, "Chief" Pryor McBee, "Chief" Emmett Bowles, "Chief" Jim Bluejacket, and "Superchief" Allie Reynolds, among others. Historian John P. Rossi called the epithet "a perfect reflection of the naiveté and racism of the age."¹⁰ The adjective *perfect* sounds very much out of place with the noun *racism*, but there is no doubt of the racist effect of the epithet. Joseph Oxendine,

the author of *American Indian Sports Heritage* and a Lumbee from North Carolina, was himself called “Chief” as a Minor League Baseball player in the early 1950s. He explains:

It is really used by non-Indians to say, “Hey, you’re an Indian. Therefore, that’s how I can define you and keep you in your place.” . . . They used to call me “Chief” because I was the only Indian in school [college]. . . . Nobody believed that you were chief of a tribe. . . . Billy Mills, the long-distance runner, reacted very testily to people calling him “Chief.” Most Indians do not want to be called “Chief” because it demeans the significance of the [tribal] chief, and it’s a constant reminder, like saying, “Hey, Indian.” You don’t mind being known as an Indian, but you don’t want it to be your whole identity.¹¹

In the early decades of the century, it appeared virtually impossible for a baseball player of admitted Native origin to be known popularly as anything but “Chief.”

When, for example, Arthur Lee Daney, the Choctaw pitcher and Haskell Institute star, played for the Philadelphia A’s in 1928, his coach Kid Gleason thought even “Chief Daney” didn’t sound like enough of “an Indian name”: “He said he was going to give me an Indian name. He said he once knew a pitcher named Whitehorn, so I became Chief Whitehorn.”¹² Most of Daney’s teammates called him “Chief Whitehorn,” except for Ty Cobb, who called him “Chief Coolem Off,” a mocking reference to Daney’s fiery temper as a young man. Certainly, the “Chief” epithet was not meant to honor American Indian identity but to appropriate and cartoonize it as an “Other” in the manner of the cigar-store Indian or the Wild West show Indian.¹³

Another example is the case of Elijah Edward Pinnance (Ojibwe), the first full-blood American Indian to play in a regular season game in the majors, a feat he accomplished on September 14, 1903, pitching for the Philadelphia Athletics at Washington against the Senators.¹⁴ On this occasion, “Chief” Pinnance received a second nickname, which mocked the pronunciation of his last name: “As soon as Pinnance stepped to the rubber he was christened ‘Peanuts’ by the bleacherites and this name will probably stick to him for all time.”¹⁵ When Pinnance was asked by a Washington reporter about the new nickname, he deflected the question with a gracious but dark sense of humor: “Why should that name annoy me? I’ll be roasted more or less, and from what I’ve been able to observe, the roasting process vastly improves the peanut.” While many rookie players were subject to hazing in this period, the same newspaper story contained an astonishingly ignorant and racist comment about Pinnance and Bender by a “prominent [white] ball player”: “I don’t think it looks right for these foreigners to be breaking into the

game.”¹⁶ In effect, the racism of white fans, writers, and players had made foreign America’s original peoples.

EARLY HISTORY OF AMERICAN INDIANS IN BASEBALL

At the turn of the twentieth century, many American Indians commonly described as “Western Indians” or “Blanket Indians” still had limited access to Seymour’s House of Baseball as a professional enterprise. Missionaries, traders, and neighboring baseball clubs were, however, introducing the sport on reservations, and some American Indians were taking to the game. In an admonition to the Dakota Association in 1887, Eli Abraham, a Santee Sioux, noted the fitness of Indian youths for both baseball and schooling: “Our boys like to take exercise in playing base ball, and I have noticed that when the base ball clubs of white young men from the towns around come in to play ball with them, the white young men get beaten; or when they try their speed with our boys in foot races, they also get beaten. And it seems to me if that our young men can be rightly instructed, they are sure to make progress.”¹⁷ Likewise, “Apache Indians captured and jailed at Fort Sill with their famous chief Geronimo, played baseball under the watchful eye of Army guards.”¹⁸ Yet not until Apaches like Asa Daklugie were transferred from Ft. Marion (a POW camp in St. Augustine, Florida) to classrooms in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, did baseball hold social and professional promise for them.

Sporadically, American Indians began to try out for Minor League teams in the 1880s in New York, Michigan, Illinois, and Nebraska. Henry Legg, described by newspapers as a Sioux (band unknown) from South Dakota, was one such player. He came to Illinois to play for the Decatur and Danville teams in the short-lived Central State League in 1888. Playing second base, catcher, and occasionally shortstop and right field, Legg was praised for doing “great work as a backstop,” but after the Decatur team folded in June, and the Danville team in July, the paper reported, “Bro. Legg is again adrift.”¹⁹ According to Decatur player-manager Jerry Harrington, Legg’s teammates invented a mock-Sioux name for him – “Rats-in-the-Garret” or “Rats” for short.²⁰ Still opportunities like Henry Legg’s, such as they were, were not available to all Indians even after the turn of the century. When amateur baseball leagues appeared in Alaska in the early 1900s, for example, the Gwichin and Han peoples were actively segregated from Anglo indoor and outdoor baseball clubs. While white clubs played baseball games during Independence Day and Empire Day in the Klondike, Indians were excluded

except as “clowns, often as participants in pie- or bun-eating contests; no such events were organized for non-Native competitors.”²¹

CARLISLE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

Those Indians who had the best access to the House of Baseball were the students of government boarding schools, especially Carlisle (Pennsylvania), Chilocco (Oklahoma), Chemawa (Oregon), and Haskell (Kansas), but they were also subjected to prejudice. That prejudice, often masked by genial concern, began with the attempt to extirpate indigenous languages and cultures. The extirpation included removing their traditional clothing, ornaments, hairstyles, languages, marriage and social customs, religions, and even their Indian names. Superintendent Richard Henry Pratt, who founded Carlisle Indian Industrial school in 1879, explained the school’s assimilationist philosophy:

It is this nature in our red brother that is better dead than alive, and when we agree with the oft-repeated sentiment that the only good Indian is a dead one, we mean this characteristic of the Indian. Carlisle’s mission is to kill THIS Indian, as we build up the better man. We give the rising Indian something nobler and higher to think about and do, and he comes out a young man with the ambitions and aspirations of his more favored white brother. We do not like to keep alive the stories of his past, hence deal more with his present and his future.²²

In place of traditional education by tribal elders, Pratt emphasized military discipline, including marching and dormitory inspections; vocational training for blacksmiths, printers, painters, carriage makers, and seamstresses; an outing system by which students were hired out to work for merchants, tradesmen, and farmers; and academic instruction in English, composition, mathematics, and some sciences. Extracurricular activities, including brass band, drama, and athletics, especially football and baseball, were also adopted by Carlisle and other boarding schools as part of the assimilationist program, and sports proved to be the off-reservation schools’ most effective means of achieving national recognition.

Carlisle’s baseball program began officially in June of 1886 with Pratt’s purchase of team uniforms, and an Indian agent who visited the school in 1889 found numerous boys at play on the school baseball field: “The Indian boys are adept at the fashionable game of base ball, and have a ground assigned to them.”²³ Already, Carlisle students were playing baseball intramurally on teams from the vocational shops, were playing against

local YMCA and semipro teams, which they defeated soundly, and against top-flight college teams such as Dickinson, Holy Cross, and the University of Pennsylvania, which they played competitively. As the teams met with success, Pratt contended that athletic accomplishments prepared the young men for “the broader and keener contentions of life they are to engage in later.”²⁴ In 1899, he had hired Cornell’s former football player and coach, Glenn S. “Pop” Warner, as Carlisle’s football and baseball coach and athletic director, and almost immediately Warner brought national recognition to the school. In the same years, two Carlisle students were named to Walter Camp’s all-American team (Isaac Seneca, first team; Frank Hudson, second team).²⁵ In 1898, a year after Sockalexis had broken into the majors with Cleveland, the first Carlisle baseball player signed a professional contract with Philadelphia.

The first Carlisle signee was Jacob Jameson (although almost all the press reports gave his name as “Jamison,” “Jimmerson” or “Jimmeson”), a Senecan with a sweeping curve ball. The news of Jameson’s signing made both the *Sporting News* and *Sporting Life*, the two leading baseball periodicals of the day. The cover feature in *Sporting Life* announced:

Pitcher Jacob Jameson, the pitcher of the Carlisle School team, is a native and to the manner born of the Seneca tribe of the great Iroquois Nation of New York . . . Jameson is not only a good base ball player, but an all-around athlete of no mean pretensions in field or gymnasium. He has played with success in every position in a base ball nine, and last season held up strongly the place of left half-back on the foot ball team of the Indian School. He is 23 years. . . . In 1894 he was placed upon the regular nine and during the latter part of that season was pitcher and captain of the team. In 1896 the business men of Carlisle hired a number of base ball players, from which was formed a semi-professional team which found a place in the Cumberland Valley League. Jameson was signed as pitcher on the Carlisle organization. He played with success, and was particularly successful at throwing a drop curve which puzzled the best batters who stood at the plate. . . . At Carlisle, he learned the trade of house painting. . . . He is proud of his good record in the school. . . . In complexion, he is light. . . . He has none of the make-up of a blanket or Western-reservation Indian.²⁶

The final racist barbs – that Jameson had a light complexion and did not have “the make-up of a blanket or Western-reservation Indian” – were the same kinds of invidious distinctions made by whites between compliant and resistant African Africans. In this case, it was between the Christianized, “civilized” Indians who could be trusted and the Western “savages” who could not.²⁷

Jacob Jameson (see chapter 4 for more about him) pitched effectively but not sensationally for the Philadelphia Nationals (Champs) in spring training of 1898, developing a sore arm and just failing to make the team for its regular season schedule.²⁸ Jameson, unlike many Carlisle athletes, did graduate from the Indian Industrial School, and actually made an oration entitled “Indians as Allies of the United States” to his graduating class on March 3, 1898.²⁹ In many ways his short career was representative of baseball success at Carlisle: players were multisport athletes, seldom specializing in baseball alone; they often took up baseball late in adolescence; and they were often recruited by Minor League or semipro baseball teams long before they graduated from Carlisle. When Jim Thorpe played baseball in the East Carolina League in 1909 and 1910 before returning to Carlisle to star in football and to win Olympic glory, he was only following a long Carlisle tradition begun by Jameson and Charles A. Bender (who had played semipro ball as “Charles Albert”). Warner’s outstanding football players often found it was to their advantage to play baseball for pay during the summer rather than play for the Carlisle nine. In fact, when Carlisle ended its college baseball program in 1910, it was partly because the program could not succeed against top-flight competition while many of its best athletes were running on the school track team or away playing semipro ball. Furthermore, Warner as athletic director did not wish for professional baseball to taint the amateur status of the college football team, and Carlisle superintendent Moses Friedman did not want professional sports to jeopardize the integrity of the school’s academic programs.

In spite of the difficulties that beset Carlisle’s baseball program, the school boasted an impressive roll of Major League baseball players, including not only the legendary Thorpe and Hall of Famer Bender but also Louis Leroy (Stockbridge-Munsee), Michael Balenti (Cheyenne), Frank Jude (Ojibwe, Libby, Minnesota), Charles Roy (Ojibwe, Beaulieu, Minnesota), and George H. Johnson (Ho-Chunk, Winnebago of Nebraska). Carlisle also enrolled many players who boasted fine Minor League careers, including Bill Garlow (Tuscarora), Frank Leroy (Stockbridge-Munsee), James “John” Bender (White Earth Band of Chippewa), William Newashe (Sac and Fox), and Charles and Joe Guyon (White Earth Band of Chippewa). Clearly, Charles A. Bender’s phenomenal success with Connie Mack’s Philadelphia Athletics attracted considerable interest to Carlisle’s athletes and led directly to the professional signings of his brother John, his cousin William Cadreau (or “Choneau”), and Elijah Pinnance (Ojibwe, Walpole Island First Nation). Bender personally recommended that Mack sign Joseph Graves, an Ojibwe player from Brainard, Minnesota, and “the veteran hurler” took “the new

recruit under his personal charges.”³⁰ And Bender’s influence even led Mack to donate the Athletics’ used uniforms to Indian school baseball teams like St. Mary’s Mission School in Omak, Washington.³¹

How did the Carlisle Indians of the gridiron and diamond do it? How did they beat football teams like the University of Michigan and play competitive baseball against Ivy League competition? The Yavapai physician Carlos (Wassaja) Montezuma saw Carlisle athletics as a wedge opening many areas of American life to Carlisle students: “If the people will let ALL of us Indians loose in the East we shall compete with them not only in football, but in everything. This is the true solution to the Indian problem. . . . If football will open the gate . . . , I am in favor of football.”³² Likewise, Carlisle’s football coach and athletic director Glenn Warner credited his students’ success to a key psychological factor that motivated them: “The Indians know that people regard them as an inferior race, unable to compete successfully in any endeavor with the white men, and as a result they are imbued with a fighting spirit, when pitted against their white brethren, that carries them a long way toward victory.”³³ This factor applied both to the Carlisle football team, which played most of its schedule on the road, where it endured boisterous heckling, and to Carlisle baseball players in professional leagues, who faced frequent racist treatment. Unlike the legendary football team, however, the Carlisle baseball team was handicapped by its sharing of talented athletes with the track-and-field program, which Coach Warner preferred decidedly (see chapter 4).

AMERICAN INDIAN UMPIRES

One of the most unusual stories to come from Carlisle’s baseball program was that of Charles Mayo Guyon (the brother of Joseph N. Guyon), who was better known as Charles M. Wahoo at Carlisle. On July 2, 1912, “Wac Wahoo” Guyon (as the newspapers called him) became the first American Indian umpire in professional baseball, in a Class D Appalachian League game in Cleveland, Tennessee. Guyon left Haskell Institute to become a multisport star at Carlisle, playing on the football, basketball, and baseball teams in 1905 and 1906. Guyon played Minor League Baseball for five seasons, starting as a catcher in Canton, Ohio, before becoming a salesman for A. G. Spalding Sporting Goods in New York. In 1910, the Spalding Company transferred Guyon to Atlanta to become its regional director for college and school sales, and he was featured that fall in a story in Carlisle’s *Arrow* as an exemplar of Indian vocationalism: “Charles M. Wahoo [Guyon] . . . expressed his firm conviction that while athletics was a matter of great importance in school

life, it should only be carried on with the understanding that it was . . . supplementing the work of the teachers in rounding out a boy's character. Wahoo is a good example of this theory, his educational attainments enabling him to hold a responsible position with a large business concern there."³⁴ "Pop" Warner, when interviewed by the *New York Herald* in the fall of 1912 about his greatest athletes, recalled Guyon, his former end, as a "fine-looking Chippewa" who was "now the head of a branch of a large retail concern at Atlanta," and who had "married a white girl [Ethel M. Rankin of New York City]."³⁵ The crass remark was only too typical of Carlisle administrators' attitudes about Indian success and achievement.

In late June of 1912, Guyon found himself with several weeks of vacation coming in July, and Appalachian League president Jacob Smith found himself with an umpire problem. Smith, who had just fired an umpire named McLaughlin, appeared desperate for a competent umpire and gave the salesman a tryout on July 2, umpiring a game at Cleveland, Tennessee, with Knoxville visiting. A brief addendum to the usual game story in the *Knoxville Journal and Tribune* read, "Wahoo, a new umpire, worked today, and gave satisfaction."³⁶ Based on Guyon's successful tryout, Smith hired him immediately for an interim position. His being signed as an umpire did bring out fans, and it actually attracted national attention, gaining mention in newspapers as far away as St. Paul.³⁷ On July 3, a story in the *Knoxville Sentinel* read,

The new man is an Indian, by the name of Wac Wahoo, and it is stated that he umpired in a satisfactory manner at Cleveland Tuesday. It will probably not be long before this husky brave will be giving his war-whoop on every diamond of the Appalachian league, which will be the signal for beginning hostilities. Wac Wahoo, the Indian, is said to be familiar with the national pastime, and his entry into the league as an umpire will no doubt put the Appalachian league in a "class" with National and American leagues, in that Philadelphia is represented by Big Chief Bender and New York by Big Chief Meyers. The Appalachian will now be represented by Big Chief Wahoo.³⁸

From Cleveland, Tennessee, Guyon rode the train to Bristol and then to Johnson City in the northeast corner of the state to umpire two more series that July. While umpires were a short-lived commodity for league president Smith that summer (he had issued four dismissal notices by mid-July), Guyon appears to have umpired his games during his short stint without managers' protest, under far from ideal conditions. He could have expected a daily diet of war-whoops, and perhaps even greater unpleasantness, given the high level of acrimony between players, managers, and umpires in the

Appy League in the summer of 1912. When Guyon arrived in Bristol on July 4, he “was met by a number of fans,” but “he gave perfect satisfaction” – not an easy feat for any umpire to accomplish in small rural towns in 1912.³⁹ Guyon also umpired in the Empire State League in Georgia in 1913. His career led him to coach football at Georgia Tech in 1921 and to coach football, baseball, and basketball at Eastern High School in Washington, D.C., from 1921 to 1951.⁴⁰ Billy Phyle, a former Major League pitcher of Sioux extraction, umpired in the Pacific Coast League later in the teens; and Ben Gover, a Haskell star who had pitched in the Texas-Oklahoma League in 1914, umpired in the Oklahoma State League in 1924.⁴¹

OTHER INDIAN BOARDING-SCHOOL BASEBALL PLAYERS

Following Carlisle’s model of athletic attainment were other off-reservation boarding schools throughout the United States. There were twenty-five federal off-reservation boarding schools at the turn of the century, and most of them featured talented baseball teams. Pratt’s model of athletic achievement at Carlisle had become the Indian school model, and even after Carlisle’s closure in 1918, the athletic traditions at Haskell, Chilocco, Flandreau, Santa Fe, and other Indian schools continued until the Meriam report of 1928 exposed problems in the boarding-school system. The report, officially entitled *The Problem of Indian Administration*, noted that “the larger Indian boarding schools have developed athletics extensively, but it is almost wholly athletics of the specialist type, in which only the ‘star’ athletes . . . have any chance at participation.” The report called for a “clean-up” of recruiting in the Indian school athletic programs and more emphasis on physical education for all students.⁴²

Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, gained fame as the “New Carlisle of the West,” especially for its nationally ranked football teams, but its baseball stars included Major Leaguers Ike Kahdot (Potawatomi), Lee Daney (Choctaw), and Ben Tincup (Cherokee) and Minor Leaguers Ben Gover, Anthony Wapp (Potawatomi), John Levi (Arapaho), John House (Oneida), and Walter M. and Garland Nevitt (Delaware). Some Major League players who attended Carlisle Indian School had also attended Haskell Institute, including Louis Leroy, Jim Thorpe, and George Johnson. Anthony Wapp (Wah-pe-coniah) was the son of an Indian team manager and an imposing figure on the mound at six foot five inches, 210 pounds, who pitched for three years in the minors in the early 1930s but never fulfilled his big-league potential. The all-American John Levi was a rare combination of power and speed, built very much like Jim Thorpe, and by all accounts he was

a better baseball player than Thorpe. Levi signed a pro contract with the New York Yankees in 1925, and he was hitting over .300 in Harrisburg and leading the New York-Penn League in doubles, when he “became homesick for his people” and returned to a coaching position at Haskell, aborting his professional baseball career.⁴³ John House, an outfielder for twelve years in the minors, nearly reached the Major Leagues with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1907 but had to settle instead for playing in the Pacific Coast League with Sacramento in 1908.

Other Indian schools in the Midwest also developed fine ball players. Known regionally for their fine baseball teams, Flandreau Indian School, a federal school in South Dakota, and Morris Indian School, a mission school in Minnesota, gave Charles Roy his formative experience in baseball before sending him east to Carlisle and then to the Philadelphia Nationals.⁴⁴ Although the Genoa Indian Industrial School in Nebraska emphasized agricultural and manual labor, its baseball team included early Nebraska legends such as pitchers Ed Hedges (Sioux, band unknown), Jean Baptiste (Ho-Chunk, who later played at Carlisle), and Willie Weaver (Ojibwe). Guy Wilder Green and Oran “Buck” Beltzer, the enterprising owners of the Nebraska Indians barnstorming team (see chapter 3 for more), recruited some of their finest players from Genoa between 1897 and 1917 when the Nebraska Indians regularly beat college and semipro teams throughout the United States.⁴⁵ They also recruited players from the Santee Sioux Normal School in South Dakota, where Eli Abraham taught, and from Haskell.

In the Northwest, Chemawa Indian School in Oregon excelled in baseball, with legendary athlete Reuben Sanders (Tututni, Rogue River Band), a player of Major League ability, and Minor Leaguers Sam Morris and Joseph Teabo.⁴⁶ The Sherman Institute in Riverside, California, also boasted a fine team, and in 1905 made national headlines in *Sporting Life* for playing Tokyo’s touring Waseda University team.⁴⁷

In the Southwest, Cherokee Male Seminary in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, graduated the fleet-footed outfielder Adair B. “Paddy” Mayes (Creek), later to play with the Philadelphia Phillies; and the Sante Fe Indian School in New Mexico featured talented Navajo players including Gilbert A. Sandoval, who enlisted in the U.S. Navy soon after his graduation from the school and became a Golden Gloves boxing champion during World War II.⁴⁸ But the major baseball power in the Southwest was Chilocco, a longtime athletic rival of Haskell Institute. Chilocco Indian School in Kay County, Oklahoma, contributed the legendary Moses Yellow Horse (Pawnee) to the Pittsburgh Pirates as well as a group of fine Minor League players including Milton Perry (Choctaw) and first baseman Bill Wano (Potawatomi) of the Arkansas

Travelers. “Bring in Yellow Horse!” became a rallying cry at Forbes Field for years, following the Pawnee relief pitcher’s brief glory with the team in 1921 and 1922.⁴⁹ Perry was an all-American in baseball at Oklahoma’s Stigler High School. He signed a professional contract with the St. Louis Browns in 1933 and pitched for the (AA) Milwaukee Brewers but returned home to become an amateur and semipro legend.⁵⁰ William “Chief” Wano led the Arkansas Travelers to their 1920 Southern Association Pennant and toiled for some fourteen years in the minors without a chance to play in the majors. In 1930, near the end of his career, he hit .331 for St. Joseph of the Western League in 143 games.⁵¹

Other academic institutions also enrolled and developed American Indian baseball players. Much like the federal boarding schools, Hampton Institute of Virginia offered industrial and agricultural training for African Americans and American Indians and in its early years segregated its baseball teams and its classes. The school had two Indian teams in 1892, including an impressive battery of pitcher Longtail and catcher A. Metoxen, hailed by fans as one of the best college batteries in the country.⁵² An Ivy League baseball power, Dartmouth College also had a special scholarship program for American Indians, which brought John Tortes Meyers (Cahuilla) from semipro ball in Arizona to the college in 1905. Soon the burly catcher rose to the majors and stardom as Christy Mathewson’s catcher on the New York Giants.⁵³

Although the off-reservation boarding schools wrought an awful toll on American Indian languages and traditional cultures, the students themselves seized upon the opportunities offered to them to compete and maintained a deep pride for their athletic achievements against much larger white colleges. In his fine study of boarding-school athletics, John Bloom concluded that the students themselves expressed real satisfaction for their participation in athletics at both intramural and intercollegiate levels, even though they often felt ambivalent about boarding school life. Asa Daklugie, the well-known nephew of Geronimo, said, “The thing that pulled me through was the athletic training at Carlisle.”⁵⁴ James McCarthy, a Papago at the Sante Fe Indian School, recalled how his pitching and catching exalted him in the eyes of his younger peers: “Many small boys came to see me; the boys liked to carry my baseball mask and my pitcher’s glove when I played ball. Everybody seemed to like me.”⁵⁵ John Fire (Lame Deer) recalled how he enjoyed playing baseball and how he had broken a school window while playing ball. He observed with personal pride but with bitterness toward the boarding school program, “I think in the end I got the better of that school. I was more of an Indian when I left than when I went in.”⁵⁶

According to John Bloom, boarding-school students typically associated success in sports with “cultural memory and pride,” enabling them to “[s]how what an Indian could do.”⁵⁷ Bloom’s title, *To Show What an Indian Can Do*, is a quote from a boxer at Santa Fe Indian School, but Hiram Thorpe had said the same words to his son Jim, when he left for Carlisle in 1904: “Son, you are an Indian. I want you to show other races what an Indian can do.”⁵⁸ Boarding-school directors sponsored athletics as a means of teaching discipline and as a means of assimilation, but the students themselves often thought of baseball, football, track, and boxing more complexly. Philip Deloria writes that boarding-school athletics offered both a reenactment of a “refigured warrior tradition,” and at the same time, “an entree into American society – a chance to beat Whites at their own games, an opportunity to get an education, and, even at its most serious, an occasion for fun and sociality.”⁵⁹

AMERICAN INDIAN BASEBALL TRADITIONS

Researcher Michael C. Coleman concluded that extracurricular activities, especially sports and holidays, “positively motivated even students who were otherwise critical of the school,” providing needed compensations for the rigors of boarding-school life.⁶⁰ Does this conclusion mean that athletics programs were a sugar coating that helped Indians choke down the bitter pill of assimilation? Or that Anglo games were dangerous temptations, distracting American Indians from their immediate political concerns? Both of these interpretations are possible, but they neglect the power of Native students to appropriate and refashion European games into their own athletic traditions and cultures. When, for example, Pratt decided to cancel football at Carlisle in 1897 after a student’s leg was broken in a game, he was met by a group of forty student protestors surrounding his office who negotiated the continuation of the program.⁶¹ Likewise, when Warner became football coach in 1899, players immediately reacted to his use of obscenities and verbal abuse in practice by refusing to attend practices until Warner recognized his mistake and called a team meeting to apologize.⁶² These athletes owned the games they played and made them part of their own culture, fostering a new pan-Indianism. In fact, when the Indian Citizenship Act was finally passed in 1924, it was in part through the efforts of Louis R. Bruce Sr., formerly a pitcher and outfielder for the Philadelphia Athletics. Bruce was also an organizer of the National Congress of American Indians and had played professional baseball primarily to pay for his education at the University of Pennsylvania Dental College. His son, Louis R. Bruce Jr., also a fine athlete

at Syracuse University, went on to become U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs.⁶³

In this context, Coleman's term "cultural resistance" seems a fitting description of the manner in which American Indians played both baseball and football. While most Indians found it foolhardy to reject Anglo society outright by running away from it or violently confronting it, neither did they wish to accept en masse all parts of European culture in a thoroughgoing assimilation. The third option was a limited compliance that contained implicit forms of "cultural resistance." Coleman wrote, "Resistance means those forms of . . . opposition . . . that were compatible with continued attendance, often compatible with impressive achievement."⁶⁴ Most examples of American Indians' distinctive use of baseball had to do with "beating whites at their own game" (making baseball part of what Deloria calls a "refigured warrior tradition") and with making a life-quest out of what was supposed to be a leisure-time recreation. While American society generally considered play a welcome respite from agricultural or wage labor, Indians traditionally saw play as a means of acquiring survival skills and as an initiation into manhood. "We practiced only what we expected to do when grown," wrote Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa) of his boyhood in the nineteenth century: "Our games were feats with the bow and arrow, and foot and pony races, wrestling, swimming, and imitation of the customs and habits of our fathers."⁶⁵ To many Indians, games like blind man's bluff made little sense, but non-Indian games of athletic strength, endurance, skill, and coordination, like football and baseball, coincided with their own traditions of stickball and lacrosse as the "little brother of war." Since the federal Indian schools were often criticized for offering extracurricular athletics, it was the Indian students themselves who insisted on football and baseball programs and who pursued the sports as professional careers in opposition to the schools' vocational ethic.

All Indians, not just professional athletes, could make baseball their own, and the ways in which it was done were almost as numerous as the participants themselves. It appears that the Indian nations who played baseball most enthusiastically, including the Cherokees, Ojibwes (Chippewas), Potawatomis, Ho-Chunks, Wabanakis, and Choctaws, all had vibrant traditions of Indian ball games, especially stickball, lacrosse, cha ha, and shinny, which they combined syncretically with baseball. Children on the Bad River Reservation even used lacrosse sticks to launch baseballs for batting practice early in the twentieth century. In the early teens, the Bad River Chippewa formed a baseball team called the Odanah Braves, which regularly defeated white teams from nearby lumber towns. Patti Loew writes:

For the Chippewa, there was a certain coherence about baseball, even without matching uniforms. They had always been a people who united in common purpose, but whose egalitarianism allowed for and celebrated individual feats of distinction and heroism. As warfare and subsistence hunting and fishing gave way to wage labor and day work, however, Chippewa men found fewer and fewer opportunities to distinguish themselves. Furthermore, their lives increasingly were controlled by Indian agents and outsiders. On the baseball diamond, those who played controlled their own destiny. Like tribalism, baseball provided a unity of spirit, and for individual team members, a chance to shine.⁶⁶

This Ojibwe love of baseball was clearly in evidence at both Carlisle and Haskell, where the White Earth Chippewas formed one of the largest tribal affiliations and where Charles Bender's success with the Philadelphia Athletics was celebrated.

Likewise, the Choctaws of Mississippi and Oklahoma had (and still have) a rich tradition of stickball or *toli*, an ancient form of lacrosse, which coalesced early in the twentieth century with baseball and softball. For hundreds of years, Choctaws in separate communities in Mississippi have come together for stickball games accompanied by picnics, dancing, gambling, and community festivals. In the early 1900s, some Choctaw picnics in Mississippi featured baseball games on Friday nights, followed by dancing, and stickball games on Saturday.⁶⁷ Kendall Blanchard described how important baseball had become as a community ritual to the seven Choctaw communities in east-central Mississippi. Blanchard's description focused on Albert Willis, a thirty-two-year-old welder, but more importantly, a pitcher for his Connehatta community team:

Albert is not an anxious person, but today he is nervous. Baseball is an important part of his life, perhaps *the most* important. Unlike his many different jobs, there is great consistency to his ball playing. He has been on the same team for five years, and has always pitched or played left field. He has missed only one game during those five seasons. . . . Playing baseball is not just play for Albert, though he may refer to it as such. It is a serious enterprise, an essential dimension of his life-style. It means community and predictability. . . . It means responsibility and obligation. . . . It means personal pride and recognition.⁶⁸

In addition to the hundreds of local heroes like Albert Willis and Milton Perry, the Choctaw had their Major League players as well, including Lee Daney, Pryor McBee, Albert Youngblood, and Cal McLish.

Among the Wabanaki peoples of Maine – the Penobscots, the MicMac, the Maliceet, and the Passamaquoddy – baseball began to be played com-

petitively in the 1880s and with all the passion that the people once had for their form of lacrosse, called *ebesquamogan* by the Passamaquoddy. An old Passamaquoddy legend, recorded by Mrs. W. Wallace Brown, the wife of the Indian agent in 1890, explains the Northern Lights of the Aurora Borealis as being the ball play of the Wababanal, the mythical spirits of the north.⁶⁹ The telling of the myth typically began with the question, “How do you think the Indians learned to play ball?” and the myth spoke of Old Chief M’Sarrtto, Morning Star, whose only son had run away to the far north. The chief traveled the Milky Way to a distant country, where he found his son playing ball with the wonderful Wababanal, who wore *Menquan* or Rainbow Belts and shining lights on their heads: “Old Chief was very glad to hear the news of his son, and soon the ball game began, and many beautiful colours spread out over the playing field. ‘Do you see your son playing?’ the old man [of the Wababanal] asked. ‘Yes, the boy with the brightest light on his head is my son.’ The two men, the chief of the Passamaquoddy and one of the Wababanal, then went to see the Chief of the Northern Lights. The old man spoke up and said to him, ‘The Chief Morning Star of the Lower Country wants to go home and desires to take his son with him.’”⁷⁰

This beautiful myth shows that ball play was not seen simply as a leisure activity by the Wabanaki but as a communal ritual that united father to son and tribe to tribe. Donald Soctomah, the Passamaquoddy representative to the Maine State Legislature, related this Wababanal myth to me, indicating that the same value that Wabanaki peoples attached to traditional ball play was transferred to baseball late in the nineteenth century.⁷¹ This was at the time that Sockalexis won national acclaim for his play in Cleveland, and baseball competitions between Wabanaki town teams had become anticipated summer events. Henry Mitchell, a Penobscot canoe maker who played shortstop for the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, said Sockalexis was “one of our greatest heroes . . . the famous ball player. Poor Sock!”⁷²

Wabanaki peoples played baseball avidly against one another in town baseball leagues in Northern Maine from the 1890s through the 1940s. The Penobscots, Passamaquoddy, and MicMac frequently played on town and reservation teams to the accompaniment of their own brass bands and their own Algonquin languages. *Spalding’s Base Ball Rules* was even printed in the MicMac language in 1912 and frequently reprinted.⁷³ The memory of these rivalries between Old Town, Pleasant Point, and Princeton – and between Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, and Maliceet teams – is still alive for David Francis, director of the Wabanaki Museum in Pleasant Point, Maine, and a player in the 1930s. In the fall of 2000, David Francis still beamed with pride about baseball games played more than sixty years earlier:

I was about eighteen when I joined the Pleasant Point team in 1935. I was a catcher. I only weighed about 140 pounds, but I was fast, and I had a good arm and could pick the runners off second base. . . . The Pleasant Point team practiced hard, and the scores were low, with no errors, so you knew it was good baseball. . . . We played in leagues with six to eight teams from towns nearby, and teams from St. John and St. Andrew in Canada came down and crossed the bay to play us. The teams in the 1920s had some great players. Sam Dana was built like Babe Ruth and he could really hit. He got shot later and his leg had to be amputated. Dave Sopiell was a six-foot-five-inch left-handed batter, and he could really rip that ball. He fought in World War I. Peter Stanley and Moses Neptune were also fine players. I didn't know at the time that Minor League and Major League scouts came to our games, but people say they did. One of our players, Eugene Loring, went down to Old Town to try out with the Boston Braves.

We drew big crowds at our games because we had good pitchers and the games were exciting. We also had a traveling Indian band that would play at our games. They would play marches and popular music of those days, and they would march on and off the field between innings and during intermissions. They had a good band master who led them, and although most of them couldn't read sheet music, they memorized their songs and played well. We all spoke Passamaquoddy, and it was an advantage for us as a baseball team. Whenever the manager wanted someone to bunt, he just hollered it out. When we stole signs at second base, we would just holler out the pitch and the batter would rip it. So it was an advantage, but one time it was used against us. We were playing an N.Y.O. team (National Youth Organization) with players from all over the country. This Italian kid on their team asked the little children what the Passamaquoddy word was for bunt (The Passamaquoddy word for "bunt" is *contahan*, which means "you bunted" or "you laid it down." The C has a hard sound.). They told him and he paid them a quarter. For every baseball word they told him, he paid them another quarter. So when our manager told our first player to bunt, they knew what was coming. That time it was used to our disadvantage, and we had to use hand signals for the first time. We felt proud for being on such a good team, especially when we won the championship from Dennysville in 1938. The game went right down to the end, and it was decided by a sacrifice bunt. Every town had three teams in those days, and there were multiple leagues. So winning a championship was a matter of great pride. One time we played the Maliceet Indians from New Brunswick. They were unbeaten that year until we beat them. You could call it semipro ball. We called it a "town team." We played because we loved to play baseball. That's all we did growing up. There was a lot of unemployment then, in the Depression, so we couldn't get jobs, but we could play baseball. We didn't make money from the games, except for expenses. We passed the hat around, and we made just enough

to pay for balls, bats, catcher's equipment, and gasoline. We didn't have a bus. We had a great big truck, a Ford truck, a flatbed. We rode in the back, and we put side rails on the side so we wouldn't fall out. We played the Penobscots on Labor Day, or the Fourth of July, or [on the Feast of] Corpus Christi, in June. There would be Indian dances, canoe races, and baseball in the afternoon."⁷⁴

It is very difficult to ascertain now if any of the players that Francis remembers so fondly were of Major League quality. Still, it is beyond question that baseball had become a deeply ingrained part of Passamaquoddy culture. More generally, baseball was not just the "American national pastime," but increasingly was a passion of many American Indian nations during the period from 1890 to 1945. Baseball had become as Indian for the Passamaquoddy people of this time as *contahan*, "you laid it down."

AMERICAN INDIAN FAMILIES IN BASEBALL

Given the appropriation of baseball by many tribes, it was not at all surprising that many American Indian family members played ball together and supported one another's Major League ambitions. Cherokee outfielders Robert Lee Johnson of the Philadelphia Athletics and Roy Cleveland Johnson of Detroit were the best-known Indian brothers in the Major Leagues, but others included Zack and Mack Wheat (Cherokees), Sam and William "Tex" Covington, and, possibly, Clarence and George Twombly.

Even more often, American Indian brothers appeared in the minors: Cherokees Austin Ben Tincup and brother Ed Tincup; White Earth Chippewas Charles A. Bender, Frederick Bender, and James "John" Bender; Stockbridge-Munsee pitchers Louis and Frank Leroy; Delawares Walter M. and Garland Nevitt, an Indian battery; and the Choctaw outfielders from Oklahoma, John Robinson, Thomas H. Robinson, and Robert Robinson. Ben Tincup, who played for two seasons with the Philadelphia Athletics, was a Minor League legend in the American Association, winning 251 games in the minors as a pitcher, including a perfect game for Little Rock against Birmingham on June 18, 1917. A strong hitter, Ben Tincup also often played the outfield when not pitching.⁷⁵ Ben's brother Ed played briefly with Pawhuska in the Western Association in 1920.⁷⁶ The Leroy brothers, Louis and Frank, won an even more remarkable distinction: both pitched Minor League no-hitters – Louis, the ex-Yankee and Red Sox player, in the American Association in 1910 and Frank in the Southern Michigan League in 1911.

Similarly, on the strength of Charles Bender's Major League reputation, his brothers John and Fred were given professional tryouts, and John proved

a talented Minor League player. Unlike the pitcher Charles, James “John” Bender was an outfielder and a study in contrasts from his brother: John was moody, passionate, and unsettled, whereas Charles was gracious, smiling, and unflappable. In 1908, while playing for Columbia in the South Atlantic League, John got into an angry disagreement with manager Win Clarke and stabbed him, for which crime he was barred from baseball for more than two years. He returned to play again in the Western Canada League in 1911, but on September 25, 1911, playing left field, he died of heart failure during the course of a game.⁷⁷ Fred Bender, like his older brother Charles, was a pitcher, and the *New York American* reported in 1913, “Fred Bender . . . may get a tryout with Cleveland. The youthful twirler showed great speed and control in the field day event yesterday at Old Point, and a Cleveland scout offered him a chance to join the American League club on a trial agreement.”⁷⁸ The Nevitt brothers, Walter and Garland, made an impressive battery at Haskell Institute, with Walter as pitcher and Garland behind the plate. Walter, who played semipro football and signed a professional baseball contract with Des Moines in the Western Association in 1912, pitched three no-hitters in two years for Haskell.⁷⁹ Garland played for Battle Creek and St. Thomas as catcher in the Southern Michigan League before becoming athletic director at Mt. Pleasant Indian School (later Central Michigan University).⁸⁰ For their part, two Robinson brothers, John and Thomas H., played together in Minor Leagues in Oklahoma and Texas for most of the teens, and in 1915 they were joined by brother Robert. That year the Indian outfielders made headlines as John tore up the Western Association, hitting .323 and leading the league in batting average and hits with 160.⁸¹

There were also instances of Indian fathers and sons in the professional baseball, including Thornton and Don Lee, and Vallie and Jerry Eaves in the minors (Cherokees). The Lees were the more talented pair, combining for 157 Major League wins, but the Eaveses also had noteworthy careers. Vallie Eaves was nearly disabled by a bone infection in his early teens, but he recovered well enough to pitch professionally over a span of twenty-two years with twenty-five different clubs, including the Chicago Cubs, the Chicago White Sox, and the Philadelphia Athletics. In 1957, at age forty-five, Vallie came out of retirement briefly, with Hobbs in the Southwestern League, to play alongside his twenty-year-old son Jerry.⁸² Jake Jameson of Carlisle fame helped train two of his sons, Earl and Elliott, for professional baseball in the Eastern League in the early 1920s. On a visit to the Seneca Reservation in New York in the teens, Carlisle’s Richard Pratt noted of the Jamesons, “I found that he [Jake] had established on his own property in western New York a baseball and football park, where he trained Indians

in both branches of sport and sent teams to travel the country thereabouts to make money. Two of his big lusty sons were on the teams.”⁸³ Other American Indian family members in professional baseball included Charles Bender and his cousin Cadreau, and Sockalexis and his nephew Saul Joseph Neptune, a fine hitting and fielding shortstop in the Eastern and Blue Ridge Leagues, who was well coached by his famous uncle but whose career was unfortunately interrupted by his service in World War I.⁸⁴ Ben Tincup also had two talented baseball players for nephews: Frank, who pitched for nine years in the New York Yankee organization, including three seasons in the AAA Pacific Coast League; and William, who played baseball at Chilocco and in the service with the Minter Field Flyers, a World War II Army team stationed at Bakersfield. Finally, Jim Bluejacket, a Shawnee and a fine Federal League and Minor League pitcher during the teens, was succeeded in the majors by his great-grandson Bill Wilkinson, who pitched for the Seattle Mariners in the 1980s: the only known case of a great-grandfather and great-grandson both in the Major Leagues.⁸⁵

JAMES M. TOY AND LOUIS F. SOCKALEXIS

Who was the first American Indian baseball player in the Major Leagues? Most baseball historians answer Louis Francis Sockalexis because of the notoriety of his debut on April 22, 1897. Probably the first American Indian to play professional baseball in the big leagues, however, was James Madison Toy, of Sioux ancestry (band unknown), born on February 20, 1858. Toy was a catcher and utility infielder who played 109 games with Cleveland in 1887 and 43 games with Brooklyn in 1890 before a serious groin injury abbreviated his career. Born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, his Indian ancestry was well disguised behind a handlebar mustache, and he apparently gave few clues to his contemporaries of his ancestry. In the 1880s, when even the Irish faced considerable discrimination on eastern baseball clubs, Toy’s silence is only too understandable (given, for example, Henry “Rats-in-the-Garrett” Legg’s treatment by his Decatur teammates in 1888). Had not one of Toy’s nephews written to the *Sporting News*’ Lee Allen in the spring of 1963, the story of his identity probably would have never been told.⁸⁶ Toy was significant not so much as the first American Indian to have played in the majors but as one of the first American Indians to have concealed his identity in order to play professionally with whites.

Such was not the case with Louis Francis Sockalexis, the Penobscot outfielder from Old Town, Maine, who initiated the American Indian integration of Major League baseball in 1897. As Robinson and Doby would

be two generations later, Sockalexis, was the object of intense racial fascination, which Cleveland management happily exploited in order to sell tickets, and also the object of bigotry. Though he could run, hit, and throw like few who had ever played the game, he was seldom simply described in the press as “Sockalexis the great player” but usually, instead, as “Chief Sockalexis,” “Sockalexis, the Big Medicine Man,” “the Redskin,” “the Indian,” or the “genuine descendent of Sitting Bull.” At Holy Cross, against the best college competition in the country, he hit .436 in 1895 (scoring thirty-one runs in twenty-four games) and .444 in 1896 (scoring thirty-eight runs in twenty-six games).⁸⁷ Called “the Deerfoot of the Diamond” at Holy Cross, he stole six bases in one game and in another game against Harvard unleashed a “lightning throw” that allegedly traveled four hundred feet on the fly.⁸⁸ Even if the four-hundred-foot throw is a fable, it is certain that Sockalexis had eight outfield assists in his first six exhibition games in Cleveland and was leading the team in hitting in the spring of 1897.⁸⁹ Well before his regular season debut on April 22, 1897, Sockalexis had created a tempest of spring training press reports in Cleveland and was attracting rave reviews in the national media.

In spring training in 1897 with their new star from Holy Cross and Notre Dame, the Cleveland Spiders were now being called the Cleveland Indians, and their intrasquad games, usually called “the Regulars vs. the Yannigans,” were now being advertised as “the Indians vs. the Paposes.”⁹⁰ While team officials never mentioned Sockalexis during the 1915 official renaming of the baseball club as the Indians, he was credited in press reports about the 1897 Cleveland Indians as the inspiration for the new team name.⁹¹ How did Cleveland fans and others in the National League welcome the new star? One of the keenest observers of the spectacle, Elmer E. Bates of *Sporting Life*, commented frequently on the “thousand derisive voices” that “Sock” often heard. Here is a short litany of the abuse:

War whoops, yells of derision, a chorus of meaningless “familiarities” greet Sockalexis on every diamond on which he appears. In many cases these demonstrations border on extreme rudeness. In almost every instance they are calculated to disconcert the player. . . . It was during a pandemonium of “ki yis” directed to his ears, that he yanked down the drive that saved Thursday’s game, and it was to the accompaniment of a thousand derisive voices that he banged the ball to the fence Friday for a home run. (May 8, 1897)⁹²

All eyes are on the Indian in every game. He is expected not only to play right field like a veteran, but to do a little more batting than any one else. Columns of silly poetry are written about him, hideous looking cartoons adorn the sporting

pages of nearly every paper. He is hooted at and howled at by the thimble-brained brigade on the bleachers. Despite all this handicap, the red man has played good steady ball. (May 15, 1897)⁹³

The red man is still a big drawing card. Sunday's immense crowd surged on the diamond, and old Sox was in the middle of a merry, jolly, jostling throng of fans over in left field. But when a ball was batted sharply towards him the Indian dashed in among the chattering spectators who had been filling his ears with merry war whoops and yanked the soaring sphere down to the music of a thousand terrifying yells. (April 23, 1898)⁹⁴

By July of 1897, Sockalexis was leading his team in batting and even outpacing the future Hall of Famer Jesse Burkett, who had recommended him to Cleveland's manager, Patsy Tebeau. His batting average in late July was near .400, and he had gone hitless in only a handful of games in the first half of the season.⁹⁵

How did Sockalexis respond to the daily abuse? What did he have to say about the fans' war chants and about rumors that the Cleveland players were jealous and trying to "freeze him out"? The Brooklyn sportswriter Joe Vila of the *New York Sun* asked Sockalexis these questions in early June of 1897. He responded with grace and characteristic gentleness, saying that "Jesse is proud of me because I have made such a good showing" and "the white players can't do enough for me." This was before, however, his injury to his ankle in July, after which "the players . . . felt that the big Indian [was] personally responsible for the team's . . . position [fifth place]"; and his teammates Burkett and Jack O'Connor "joshed the redskin whenever he came to the bat."⁹⁶ Then, his teammates turned decidedly against him. "Don't ask me about that beat peddler. He's a Jonah," Jesse Burkett told Charlie Reilly of the Washington Senators. "Wait till I strike my gait and I will make him go back to the woods and look for a few scalps."⁹⁷ By 1898, rowdy fans were taunting him mercilessly from the stands about his love of "firewater," and a sports writer from the *Washington Post* dismissed him with utter contempt: "So much for freaks in baseball."⁹⁸

More ambivalent than Sockalexis's praise for his teammates was his comment to Vila about the constant race-baiting by fans: "If the small boys and the big boys of Brooklyn and other cities find it a pleasure to shout at me I have no objections. . . . No matter where we play I go through the same ordeal, and at the present time I am so used to it that at times I forget to smile at my tormentors, believing it to be a part of the game."⁹⁹ Sockalexis would not have been human if he had not been disturbed by the ordeal of the war-whoops, but he gradually learned to tune it out during the 1897 season.

It also is clear that he was intent on becoming the very best professional baseball player he could be. “Will I succeed? Why of course I will. You have no idea how anxious I am to learn every point and trick of the game,” he said with definite emphasis. Even after his awful struggle with alcohol had begun, and he was hobbled by injury, Sockalexis maintained this attitude. In April of 1898, in an interview with the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, he apologized to his manager and teammates for his downfall in 1897 and insisted, “I will not go down town all the season. My mind is made up and it is no joke. I have a good future as a ball player and only have to take care of myself to keep in the game.”¹⁰⁰

Did Sockalexis succeed? For two years at Holy Cross and for five months in the Major Leagues, he played brilliantly. Then came a fall from grace in Cleveland because of a fall from a second-floor hotel room in Pittsburgh, resulting in an ankle injury, and a struggle with alcohol for the next two seasons – a story that has often been told. Seldom has it been mentioned, however, that chronic hypoglycemia may have contributed powerfully to his alcoholism.¹⁰¹ Sockalexis’s bouts with alcoholism were so intense that, according to Tebeau, he “would actually get up in the night and walk a block on his plaster bound foot to get a drink of whisky,” and when he was confined to a hospital room for blood poisoning he desperately attempted to get alcohol.¹⁰² Likewise, it is also not usually mentioned that Sockalexis vainly tried to disguise his badly injured ankle as an injured toe and to recuperate within three weeks of the injury, from which premature return to the game he incurred blood poisoning. All of this resulted from Sockalexis’s deep fear of reprisals against a “drunken Indian.”

Unfortunately, the fear was only too well founded. Failing to comprehend the disease of alcoholism, the press lashed out at Sockalexis fiercely, condemning his “dalliance with grape juice and his trysts with pale-faced maidens,” calling him “A Wooden Indian,” “A Red Romeo,” and “Nothing more or less than a tobacco sign in right field.” Even Tebeau, who had promoted Indians as the team’s new name, blamed Sockalexis for the team’s failures in 1897 – “Sockalexis threw us down.”¹⁰³ On July 14, 1897, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* ran a story entitled “The Fall of a Great Chief” in which “two broken hearted boys,” in typical “say-it-aint-so” fashion lamented Sock’s “Fall.” On July 22 and July 31, the sports editor of the paper lashed out more directly:

It is admitted at headquarters that Cleveland is after a good outfielder, and this at once suggests “how the mighty have fallen.” It means that unless a certain young man “takes a tumble to himself” one of the most promising players of the year will soon have gone wrong. Too much popularity has ruined many a good ball

player, but it would seem that a man with brain enough to complete a college course would know too much to be led astray. . . . It is no longer a secret that the local management can no longer control Sockalexis. . . . Discipline had no effect. When a player begins to realize he is the whole thing, nothing can stop him [from ruin]. (July 22, 1897)¹⁰⁴

Sockalexis, Cleveland's sensational right fielder, is on the ragged edge. . . . [He was fined and suspended by team officials]. This action will not be a surprise to many who have observed the Indian carefully, and the only wonder is that he did not get into trouble with the management of the club before this. (July 31, 1897)¹⁰⁵

The references to “how the mighty have fallen” and the “tumble to himself” were scathing allusions to the fall from the hotel balcony, which the writer blamed naively on Sockalexis's popularity and a frivolous taste for alcohol. Clearly, the disease of alcoholism was badly understood at the time, and Cleveland's great rookie player received no effective help for his ailment.

For the rest of his life, Sockalexis read the same criticisms in the press, even after he had returned to Old Town, Maine, and attempted to put his life back together, working as a logger at thirty dollars a month and as a local umpire and youth baseball coach. In August of 1912, less than two years before Sockalexis's death, a writer for the *Philadelphia North American* traveled to the Penobscot Reservation to interview the once-famous player. He did not describe how Sockalexis had given up alcohol and turned his life around. Instead, the writer described him thus: “He is just a fat, smoky, lazy Indian, who lives with the tribe. . . . He doesn't work much because he doesn't have to. . . . They say that the downfall of Sockalexis dated from his first pay day. . . . He simply would not listen to managerial advice or recognize any discipline.”¹⁰⁶ Likewise, in reporting Sockalexis's death in December of 1913, a *Sporting News* writer cynically labeled him a signal member of a class of lifelong drunkards: “They had their thirsts long before they ever wore a uniform.”¹⁰⁷ Subscribing to the racist myth of Indians' natural “weakness for firewater,” the press was inclined to judge Sockalexis categorically as a flagrant case of a “drunken Indian.” Unfortunately, Sockalexis was not the only American Indian ballplayer to struggle with alcoholism in the deadball era, and others – like George Howard Johnson of the Cincinnati Reds – endured similar retributions.

In his biography of Sockalexis, Fleitz notes that “alcohol use and abuse varies widely among American Indian populations and appears to be more closely linked to poverty and hopelessness than to racial identification.”¹⁰⁸ Citing the research of North Carolina physician Amir Rezvani,

Fleitz hypothesizes that Sockalexis's struggle with alcohol fits within a well-established pattern of Indians who become addicted to alcohol during a period of "time out" from their traditional tribal customs and relationships. "If Sock's drinking was a 'timeout,' . . . it might have served as a respite from the stress Sock felt in performing a balancing act between the white and Indian worlds," Fleitz writes.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, while very few of the Native pioneers who integrated baseball struggled with alcohol abuse, all of these players were affected by the clash between Indian and non-Indian cultures. John Tortes Meyers, the longtime catcher for the New York Giants, summed up this experience in a comment to Lawrence Ritter: "And I don't like to say this, but in those days, when I was young, I was considered a foreigner. I didn't belong. I was an Indian."¹¹⁰

FOLLOWING LOUIS SOCKALEXIS

Sockalexis, Johnson, and Meyers were not alone. The dozens of American Indians who played Major League baseball from 1897 to 1945, the hundreds more who played in the minors or the Negro Leagues, and the thousands more who played college and exhibition ball in the period were subjected to similar prejudices. Even the greatest of American Indian players were not exempt. Charles Albert Bender heard the same war-whoops even after he had become a World Series hero in 1905. In fact, after he threw a shutout against the New York Giants that year, the *Sporting News* "praised" him as "being just sufficiently below the white man's standard to be coddled into doing anything that his manager might suggest."¹¹¹ This was not simply a "cultural prejudice" toward someone who lived differently but a starkly racist prejudice toward someone who looked different. The burden of racism that Bender shouldered was much greater than that of starting a World Series game. It was the same burden that Sockalexis shouldered in the spring of 1897. It was the burden of Meyers, who heard fans yell "Nigger" from the stands, and whose manager, John McGraw, did not trust an Indian catcher to call pitches. It was the burden of Jim Thorpe, who angrily chased the same McGraw around the Polo Grounds for calling him a dumb Indian. And it was the burden of several generations of American Indian players with nicknames like "Chief," "Nig," "Squanto," and "Kemosabe."

To be sure, popular perceptions of American Indians changed considerably during the period from 1897 to 1945. The patriotic service of many thousands of American Indians in the world wars made a favorable impression on the American public, and some long-neglected reforms in Indian education and political life were finally initiated. In 1924 the Indian Citizen-

ship Act expanded suffrage rights for many Native communities, although Indians in Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico were still blocked from voting by state laws until after World War II. In 1928 the Meriam Report – published as *The Problem of Indian Administration* – focused national attention upon the problems of infant mortality, disease, and poverty on reservations and upon the needs for reforming the boarding-school system. As a result of the report, the government relaxed its policies on forced haircutting and discouraging the use of Native languages in 1929; the outing programs that often allowed Indian children to be used as cheap menial labor also were reevaluated; and the “professionalization” of Indian student athletes, especially in Haskell’s baseball and football programs, was dramatically curtailed. The Yankee’s Allie Reynolds was named the nation’s top professional athlete by *Sport’s Illustrated* in 1951, and Bender was elected to baseball Hall of Fame in 1953, indicating that perhaps attitudes had changed. Yet Reynolds was known as “Superchief” throughout his playing career, and sporting cartoons described him as “A Good Indian Who Delivers Goods” and “Chief or Medicine Man?”¹¹² Reynolds himself said in a 1991 interview, “I’ve gone through hard times being an Indian too. I’ve been called Copperhead and Chief and Superchief and Gut-eater, and what have you.”¹¹³ Reports of players from the 1940s and 1950s, such as Reynolds and Rudy York, (“All an Indian’s got to do is be seen drinking a beer and he’s drunk”) suggest Native players still faced racist stereotyping. And, discouragingly, overall participation of American Indians in Major and Minor League Baseball was declining markedly as many professional scouts, after Haskell downsized its athletic programs, appeared to have stopped scouting American Indian athletes altogether.¹¹⁴

An instructive case from the 1930s was that of the veteran sinkerball pitcher Elon Chester Hogsett, a reliever for the 1935 world champion Detroit Tigers. Of mixed Pennsylvania Dutch and Cherokee heritage, Hogsett’s high cheekbones and dark features led him to be nicknamed “Chief” while he was pitching for the Montreal Royals in 1929. In the same year, an Iroquois band in Montreal honored Hogsett with the name Ranantasse, meaning “sling-arm,” a fact he proudly divulged for a *Sporting News* article in 1932. Also that year, Harold “Speed” Johnson described the fans’ treatment of Hogsett in a typical game: “Whenever he goes to the hillock, the fans make ‘Whoop! Whoop!’ noises just like all the Indians do in the movies, but this does not disconcert the big fellow. He is amiable and takes it all as a part of the day’s work.”¹¹⁵ Apparently, however, Hogsett did not take the war-whoops simply as part of the day’s work. He became aggravated with press reports referring to him as “the cheerful Cherokee” or “the cheerless Cherokee,”

depending on whether he won or lost; and in a 1934 news article, quoting his mother, he disclaimed his Indian ancestry altogether.¹¹⁶ Although Hogsett later reacknowledged his Native ancestry on a player questionnaire form sent to the Hall of Fame, the confusion concerning his identity long persisted, and Brent Kelley, the last researcher to interview Hogsett, believed that he was not Cherokee after all. In effect, even after the integration experience of Louis Sockalexis and Charles A. Bender, at least through the 1940s, there was still pressure on lighter-skinned American Indians to repudiate their heritage. And though the decline in American Indian participation in professional baseball, caused by the downsizing of Indian school athletic programs and the reduction of semiprofessional opportunities, marks the end of this study circa 1945, anti-Indian prejudice in baseball by no means ended in that year.

BASEBALL AND ETHNICITY

Just as William Phelon hailed baseball in 1910 as the sport in which “all nations meet,” though it was aggressively segregated at the time, so writers continue to emphasize baseball’s status as our multiethnic, national, and international pastime. One of America’s foremost baseball writers, Thomas Boswell of the *Washington Post*, exclaims: “In a country that is proud of its melting-pot roots and ideals, baseball’s demographics come much closer to mirroring the country as a whole than any other major sport.”¹¹⁷ And so baseball commissioner Allan “Bud” Selig applauds that baseball has triumphed over its segregationist past: “Today, baseball truly is a melting pot that reflects the evolving American population as well as or better than any other sport or enterprise.”¹¹⁸ Lawrence Baldassaro and Richard Johnson’s recent book, *The American Game: Baseball and Ethnicity*, documents the experiences of African Americans, Germans, Italians, Irish, Jews, Slavs, Asians, and Hispanic immigrants in baseball but somehow neglects American Indians. Nor does Boswell or Selig mention Native American players as part of the American melting pot. Are these omissions an accident? Or selective amnesia? Do they say something more about the continuing place of American Indians in Major League Baseball?

Certainly, one can cite the dismantling of federal boarding-school athletic programs as an important factor in what has sometimes been called “the eclipse of the Indian athlete” on the diamond: “It is apparent that Indians were in the forefront of sports visibility during the early part of the 20th century, and it became equally clear that their visibility in national sports diminished shortly thereafter.”¹¹⁹ In spite of this change, though, talented Indian athletes have continued to play baseball at the highest levels,

like Gene Locklear (Lumbee), Bucky Dent (Cherokee), and Dwight Lowry (Lumbee) in the 1970s and 1980s, and Jayhawk Owens (Cherokee) and Bobby Madritsch (Sioux, Lakota) in the 1990s and 2000s. American Indian children do not lack the athletic potential to succeed in baseball anymore than do African Americans, whose participation in Major League Baseball has also declined over the last generation. Yet while Major League Baseball began its R.B.I. program (Reviving Baseball in the Inner Cities) to provide facilities and equipment for inner-city children to play baseball, it has not provided equivalent opportunities for children on reservations. The reasons for this neglect are unclear, although it remains a disturbing fact that of all ethnic groups playing Major League Baseball, only American Indians are routinely caricatured, as the mascots for the Cleveland Indians and Atlanta Braves.

In conclusion, repeated game accounts, sporting columns, and personal interviews all lead to the same conclusion: that American Indians endured their own integration experience in professional baseball, an experience that began with Sockalexis but that continued into World War II and still echoes today. The integration experience was propelled by government boarding schools, which used baseball as a tool for assimilation and for prestige and profit, but the players on those teams often found in the sport their own means of cultural resistance and source of pride. But this integration experience was different from the integration of African Americans in 1947, from which Jackie Robinson emerged as a national hero (his jersey number, 42, is now retired in every Major League stadium). Neither Sockalexis, nor Bender, nor even Jim Thorpe, has attained the same mythic status for triumphing over racial abuse. And more importantly, the racist epithets inflicted upon Robinson and Doby, the calls of “Darky” and “Nigger,” have now become anathema in American life. Yet the Cleveland Indian’s red-faced Wahoo, a racist vestige of the 1950s that was revived in the 1980s, still grins its absurd grin in mock Indian headdress. And the demonstrations of the American Indian Movement notwithstanding, the same war-whoops and chants that greeted Sockalexis, Pinnance, and Bender on the field are still heard in Cleveland and Atlanta. So documenting the story of baseball’s American Indian integration in historical detail is a significant undertaking not only for changing America’s multibillion-dollar sports industry but also for advancing the greater political and identity struggles of North America’s first peoples.

2

Carlisle Indian Industrial School Baseball

“I do not think about going home.

Every evening we play jail.

Every evening we play ball.”

“A Tiny Boy’s Letter,” Carlisle Indian Industrial School, June 1886

While histories of the Carlisle football team such as John Steckbeck’s *Fabulous Redmen* and Jack Newcombe’s *The Best of the Athletic Boys* have become minor classics of athletics history, no documentary account of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School’s baseball team has yet been written¹ – this, in spite of the fact that seven Carlisle Indian players made the Major Leagues, and many other Carlisle players participated in Minor League Baseball. Indeed, one of the best books in recent years on American Indian athletes, John Bloom’s *To Show What an Indian Can Do*, features a photograph of early Carlisle baseball players on its cover but focuses its discussion of the school squarely upon the football team. The emphasis is unsurprising, given the fame and controversy of Glenn “Pop” Warner’s teams, and the legend of “Jim Thorpe, all-American,” but it neglects the passionate interests that Carlisle’s own athletes expressed for baseball and the history of the “national pastime” as a force for assimilation at the school. This brief history of Carlisle baseball will argue that the young students’ passion for baseball was appropriated by the school administration – first indulged by Superintendent Pratt and the school’s first baseball coach, Fisk Goodyear, but later restricted by Warner – and only intermittently developed. Otherwise, the school’s baseball history might have been equally renowned or “fabulous” as its football history.

CARLISLE’S BASEBALL FEVER

If the enthusiasm of players and fans is an important factor in the success of an athletic program, Carlisle Indian Industrial School had that ingredient in abundance. Even before the mania over the heroes of the gridiron began

in the 1890s (and long before Pop Warner's arrival in 1899), baseball fever spread contagiously at the Indian School. Indeed, not long after Superintendent Richard H. Pratt's establishment of the industrial-training school in 1879, the Indian children's eagerness to play ball manifested itself clearly. Many of the school periodicals, from the earliest editions of the *Morning Star* and the *Indian Helper*, testify to the students' (both the boys' and the girls') love of baseball. They played,

Ball, back of the hospital; ball, back of the school house; ball, in front of the Girls' Quarters; ball, all around, has been the order of the hour after supper, this week.²

Colonel Pratt began the school's baseball program officially in June of 1886 with the purchase of uniforms, but much of the initiative for the program came from the students themselves. They organized pickup games after supper with friends throughout the school grounds; they played baseball during the school's summer vacation sessions in July at Pine Grove Park near Fort Sells; they formed shop teams (the Blacksmiths, the Printers, and so on) and occasionally tribal teams for intramural and extramural competition. Even boys who played on Carlisle varsity team or the Juniors established other school teams such as the Young Americans, Unions, and Union Reserves. Such was the fervor that baseball boys like Harry Kohpay appeared in multiple team photographs from the early 1890s and must have played on several teams simultaneously. In 1890 for example, and not counting the intramural squad and pickup teams, there were at least five Carlisle teams with uniforms: the Carlisle first and second team squads, the Young Americans, the New Beginners, and the Amateurs. One photograph, circa 1892, shows boys with Y.A. (Young Americans), Indians, and Carlisle jerseys mingled with boys with white shirts and suit coats.³ "Couldn't all school be base ball?" the *Red Man*, the school newspaper in 1901, asked with boyish yearning.⁴

Throughout most of the school's history, the athletic program maintained three baseball teams for the months of April, May, and June. The first nine or C.I.T.S. (Carlisle Industrial Training School) varsity squad; the second team, which practiced with and filled in for the varsity players; and the junior varsity or Juniors team. More than thirty students participated on the three teams, and even more students tried out. The *Red Man* reported in 1903 that "Baseball candidates [were] commencing training last week. There were over sixty names handed in, which shows the interest taken in this branch of sport."⁵ In fact, when Charles "King" Pittinger agreed to coach the team in the early spring of 1906, he was given the names of "over seventy-five base-ball enthusiasts" who wished to try out. Accordingly, he

had the names of the leading candidates printed in small type in the school newspaper, now known as the *Arrow*, along with orders to report at either 7:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. for tryouts.⁶ By comparison, the number of students trying out for the football team was usually around sixty. This, despite all the public honors and private benefits bestowed upon the football squad (cash payments, Walter Camp's all-American awards, the annual football banquet honors, campus celebrity, new clothing and accessories at Mose Blumenthal's in downtown Carlisle).⁷

And while the ambitions of Indian boys to make the college baseball squad continued to grow until the end of the program, their participation in pickup, intramural, and amateur teams was still unabated, so much so that William Mercer, Pratt's successor as superintendent, was obliged to remind them, "Unauthorized base ball games resulting in infractions of the rules are a rather expensive luxury, *as some score or so of boys will testify to*" (my emphasis).⁸ The green spaces between academic buildings at Carlisle apparently made inviting spots for pickup games, especially near the boys' and girls' dormitories and the school's Hessian Guard House. When Carlisle pitcher Louis Leroy was locked up for running away from the school (to play with a professional team) in 1901, he suffered the agony of listening to boys organizing and playing pickup games on the school grounds just outside his grate.

Interestingly, female students also expressed considerable interest in playing baseball and organized dormitory and pickup teams on their own initiative. The "ball, in front of Girls' Quarters" mentioned above was in fact played by the girls themselves. An Indian agent visiting the school grounds in 1889 noted the boys at play at "the fashionable game of base ball" and the girls apparently also: "The sight of Indian girls at play, after supper, on the green grass, their agility, happy, spirits, kindly ways, etc., deeply impressed me."⁹ As with the boys, teams of young women played frequently at Pine Grove Park during the school's picnics and summer camp sessions. A photograph, circa 1910, shows a group of nineteen Carlisle young women in summer dresses and aprons, holding bats, balls, and mitts, ready for a game in a grassy meadow.¹⁰ The *Indian Helper* was eager to point out that "The girls are not practicing at ball to beat the Regulars or the Young Americans, but only for the fun of it and for the exercise. They have splendid good times, and the batting, catching, and running make rosy cheeks."¹¹ Despite the apparent approval of girls' baseball, there is also an undercurrent of sexist discomfort in the comment that girls were not seeking to challenge the boys but merely playing "for the fun of it." The boys were, in fact, often playing for much more than the fun of it as many Carlisle young men

escaped the manual labor of the school's summer outing system by playing semipro baseball instead.

Parallel to the efforts of the Indian boys to develop their own amateur teams, such as the Unions and Union Reserves, a group of Indian girls formed the U.C. (Unions Carlisle) Baseball Club in 1893. Again, the school newspaper, known then as the *Indian Helper*, could not resist comment: "The latest in base ball is a team of small but ambitious Indian girls. They call themselves the U.C.'s and have suits of dark skirts and blouses, upon which the letters 'U.C.' are conspicuous: they wear low shoes and gay caps, all made by themselves. They don't wear aprons, for some of them can catch the ball without one. They are pretty little runners, and upon the whole the exercise will do them good."¹² While the comment apparently approves of the team, it does so with a great deal of condescension toward the women players – "for some of them can catch the ball without" an apron. The Unions Carlisle team, however, may have been much more than "pretty little runners" with "gay caps" to the young men. The women had discovered a source of community in athletics that could be threatening to the boys. As researcher John Bloom has found through interviews with women students at Indian boarding schools, sports offered to the women a means to "circumvent rules that were directed toward the management of their sexuality" as well as "a resource for expressing pleasure and enjoyment."¹³ The smiles on the faces of Carlisle's young women players in surviving photographs attest strongly to the pleasure they too experienced through the game.

And what of the boys, who played baseball in nines multiplied throughout the school grounds? What were the sources of their baseball fever? Social historian Michael C. Coleman has found that athletics provided a valuable outlet and compensation for the first generation of Indian students, especially those compelled by Indian agents or parents to leave their tribes. Coleman quotes James McCarthy, an early baseball player at Santa Fe Indian School: "Many small boys came to see me; the boys liked to carry my baseball mask and pitcher's glove. When I played ball, everyone seemed to like me."¹⁴ As Superintendent Pratt's famous before-and-after photographs showed, the Indian boys' long hair was cut, by force if necessary; their native clothes and jewelry replaced with school uniforms; and their indigenous languages actively repressed. All children were urged to write and speak in English and to accept Pratt's notions of civilization: "They will never become civilized if they don't let their own way go down and let the white's people's way come up. . . . Indian ways will never be good any more."¹⁵ So it is no wonder that the "tiny boy," Jose, whose class diary entry forms the epigraph of this chapter, said he did not think about going home as he could play "ball" and

“jail” every evening. That was precisely Pratt’s objective – to distance the children from their homes and Native culture: “The slogan early adopted at Carlisle was: ‘To civilize the Indian, get him into civilization. To keep him civilized, let him stay.’”¹⁶ And it also was little wonder that boys and young men kept far away from their parents and homes found real consolation in the company of others playing baseball.

Carlisle students like Jose played jail for related reasons as an imaginary recuperation of lost freedom. Pratt’s first students were U.S. government prisoners (Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne from the Red River War) transported from Leavenworth to Florida and eventually to Carlisle’s barracks. The boys also knew that running away from the school could result in a lockup in one of the six narrow cells of the school’s guardhouse. And while the game of jail represented an imaginative attempt to take control of a repressive system, the new sport of baseball represented something more to the “tiny boy,” Jose, and hundreds of his schoolmates. In learning this non-Indian game and in discovering that they could play it better than their white mentors, the children found a new sense of athletic mastery. Amid the dispiriting lectures on adopting “the white people’s way” and rejecting the evils of tobacco and Indian language, religion, and customs, news of baseball evoked proud images of athletic strength and accomplishment. The first players clearly had deep pride and ownership in their teams: “The base-ball club wants it understood that the name they are going by this year is the ‘Indian Athletics.’ Conrad Roubidoux is their Captain, and he considers that he has a good team.”¹⁷ Although Conrad Roubidoux was forced by family circumstances to return to South Dakota and to work as a painter, he wrote back to Carlisle, expressing a desire to return to its campus and baseball diamonds.

After the first decade of baseball at Carlisle Indian School, yet another cause for baseball fever arose and spread fervent interest in the sport – the prospect of a professional career. Even before the news of Louis Sockalexis’s play for the Cleveland Spiders reached students in the spring of 1897, professional baseball coaches were enticing Carlisle Indian players with money and contracts. In early June of 1896, while Jacob Jameson (also known as Jamison and Jimmerson) was still captaining the Carlisle Indians squad, the manager of the Carlisle team in the Cumberland Valley League approached him. On June 6, the *Evening Sentinel* reported jubilantly, “Jamison has at last been secured. The necessary papers were signed last night and the prize is ours.”¹⁸ And the money and fame for Jameson were very much multiplied when he signed a professional contract with the National League’s Philadelphia Champs in February of 1898. Likewise, his battery mate, catcher Jacob

Buckheart, embarked on a Minor League career in the summer of 1898, and the allure of professional baseball became a lasting presence at Carlisle. In 1901 Carlisle's Louis Leroy was courted by professional teams and managed to slip away to the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, railway station. An angry Coach Warner soon retrieved him, however, with the words, "These summer play-days are over," and with some thanks to Warner, Leroy become known on campus as the boy with "the ten thousand dollar pitching arm and a five cent head."¹⁹

As Leroy, Charles Bender, Frank Jude, Charles Roy, and Mike Balenti all made the Major Leagues (Jim Thorpe and George Johnson would become the final Carlisle products to make it in 1913), the golden dream exercised even greater power. Many Carlisle players pursued Minor League careers, including Bill Garlow, James "John" Bender, Charles "Wahoo" Guyon, Joe Guyon, Joseph Twin, Lloyd Nephew, William Newashe, Jesse Youngdeer, and Wilson Charles. The *Arrow* reported favorably of Newashe, Balenti, and Twin:

William Newashe, who is playing with the Hagerstown nine, is making good and looks forward to the time when he can sign B.L. after his name (Big League).

§

Advices from DuBois, Pa., show that Michael Balenti, one of our base-ball boys and a thorough all-around gentleman, is making good with the baseball team at that place. Mike can make good any where and any time, and we are glad to note his success.

§

Joseph W. Twin was asked where he was going to play ball this summer, [and] his reply was, "The contracts are coming in from different parts of the country."²⁰

By this time, more students were pursuing pro baseball as a career, and many others saw Minor League or semipro baseball as exciting and remunerative summer work. Traveling with a semipro or Minor League team, dreaming of the Major Leagues, and making much more money than could students in the outing program were powerful incentives for Carlisle's students to play ball during the summer. For good reason, Carlisle's superintendents, beginning with Pratt, worried about the resulting disruptions to the school's outing system and to students' education.

When Thorpe, Youngdeer, Stencil "Possum" Powell, and Joseph Libby made their famous trip to North Carolina to play with Rocky Mount in the East Carolina League in June of 1909, the Minor League jaunt had become a well-known Carlisle ritual. Jack Newcombe called it "the seasonal flight of the Indian ballplayers to the professional and semi-pro leagues."²¹ "The

evils of summer or professional baseball,” as Carlisle’s administrators called it, were rife in the program. Even players like Charles Guyon, Caleb Sickles, and Wilson Charles whose professional baseball careers soon ended were able to find sports-related employment – Guyon as a salesman for Spalding and Company in New York City and Atlanta and later as a football coach at Georgia Tech; Sickles as a baseball coach at Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio; and Charles as Haskell Institute’s baseball coach in Lawrence, Kansas. Ironically, it was the successes of the players (“[t]he base ball boys could not very well be prevented from engaging in professional base ball”) that eventually led to Pop Warner’s decision, supported by Superintendent Friedman, to eliminate the Carlisle baseball program in 1910.²²

From the beginning, Superintendent Pratt, as anthropologist Genevieve Bell points out, far preferred military drills, marching, and band performances to athletics, and he feared the danger of student injuries from competitive sports, especially football.²³ Intensely idealistic by habit of mind, Pratt however was realistic in his support of the baseball and football programs. He accepted intercollegiate games of baseball and later football, purchased the first team uniforms in 1886, built a new gymnasium in 1887, recruited Warner as athletic director and football coach in 1899, and oversaw the creation of the Carlisle Athletic Association to fund team sports at the school. Rather than wage a losing battle to suppress athletics, he chose instead to reinterpret them as means of exercising moral virtue, of assimilating the children in non-Indian culture, and of motivating students to learn. Thus, after initial misgivings, he championed football as a worthy moral crusade: “Football players must be abstemious and moral in order to succeed. If it was in my power to bring every boy into the game of football . . . I would do it, and feel that I was doing them an act of the greatest Christian kindness.”²⁴ In supporting team sports, Pratt established a model that later Carlisle superintendents followed energetically. Superintendents William Mercer and Moses Friedman made physical education compulsory for all students, and they saw the glory and financial rewards of the football team grow under their administrations. Mercer, who lured Warner back to Carlisle in 1907, spoke of the football team as a personal accomplishment: “I developed the most wonderful athletes and the best football team in the country in 1906.”²⁵ Like Pratt, Friedman, who enjoyed taking junkets to the school’s football games, justified the sport as a moral endeavor: “Instead of destroying discipline, football and other sports will help it.”²⁶ And even more than Pratt, Friedman appreciated how athletics contributed to Carlisle’s national reputation.

Again, it was Pratt who initiated Carlisle’s athletics program with the

acceptance of a baseball program in June of 1886, four years before the Indians' first collegiate football game. The superintendent recognized that the school's baseball fever could be used to motivate students to learn English and lessons of American citizenship. The May 6, 1887, issue of the *Indian Helper* ran the following contest for the improvement of the boys' English vocabulary and writing abilities:

A BASE BALL.

For the Indian Boy now at our School who will Write the Best Answers to the Following Questions:

What is the name of the first street we come to in going to Carlisle down the lane?

Name the street below?

On what two streets is Meck's store?

What street does the Rail-Road run through?

What are the names of the Principal Business Houses in Carlisle? . . .

You may ask anybody to *help* you, but you must do the writing your own self and it must be neatly done, and sent to J. B. Givens, before next Thursday. The best will get a base-ball worth \$1.25.²⁷

But beyond the effort to cajole the boys with the prize of a one-dollar-and-twenty-five-cent baseball, Pratt saw the institution of a baseball team as an important lesson in "citizenship" – that is, assimilation – for the Indian children.

Actually, it was not Pratt himself who inspired the baseball program, but a group of boys led by Conrad Roubidoux (Sioux, Rosebud) who had formed a team in May of 1886 and sought to represent the school in extramural competition. Nevertheless, Pratt did pronounce his blessing on the team on June 11, 1886, in the *Indian Helper*: "Come, boys! You have your suits [uniforms] now, pitch in and learn to play!"²⁸ And, as with his later concessions to the football team, the superintendent justified the expenses of a baseball team as a small price to pay for an important lesson in citizenship. Although the first Carlisle Indian teams were known as the Reds and the Athletics in imitation of the professional teams, the suits that Pratt eventually ordered had the initials C.I.T.S. (for Carlisle Indian Training School) emblazoned on the front. Lest anyone miss the moral significance of the initials, Pratt explained them, for a Decoration Day game, 1890: "On Decoration Day the Base Ball Nine from the Educational Home, Philadelphia, came to play the Carlisle

Indian Training School Nine – The C.I.T.S., as it were, standing out in bold letters on their shirts. (See how near that comes to being an abbreviation of ‘citizens,’ which they all are aspiring to become?).”²⁹ And Pratt’s charges did not miss the lesson. They named their own amateur teams patriotically after his example – the Young Americans, the Unions, the Union Reserves, and the Unions Carlisle. A young boy in the *Morning Star* even wrote, “The big boys have organized a base-ball club and they have their suits made. I have nothing more to say, but I wish I was a citizen.”³⁰ As baseball was the new national pastime, the newly uniformed team represented Pratt’s vision of the Indian children’s full assimilation into American life. Hence, the urgency of his telling the boys to “pitch in and learn to play!”

CARLISLE’S FIRST BASEBALL COACH

Although Carlisle’s boys needed little encouragement to learn to play baseball, they did need coaching and an adult chaperone for their away games. The first Carlisle Indians baseball coach was a young clerk named Fisk “Tim” Goodyear, who taught at the school from December 1887 through 1893.³¹ Only nineteen when he was hired by Superintendent Pratt, “Mr. Goodyear” (as he was called) appears in the early team photographs as a slight young man and as something of a dandy in coat, vest, starched collar, and tie, his watch fob dangling ostentatiously.³² Yet he had a serious expression, with eyes fixed determinedly, which Pratt may have favored, and he was the eldest son of local merchant and sheriff Jacob M. Goodyear. When Dr. Hepburn, Pratt’s administrative assistant, was on leave, it was Mr. Goodyear who served in his absence as a clerk. School newspaper accounts also make clear that Goodyear was an avid sportsman – he enjoyed trout fishing at Big Spring with Mr. Campbell and played tennis in mixed pairs on the Carlisle lawns. And, when a girl, smoking in her dormitory room, caught her apron on fire, he was the comic hero of the account: “Fire! A moment of excitement. Over a mere smoke in the Girls’ Quarters. . . . Mr. Goodyear was the first man to the front.” So he was a very earnest fireman, but what kind of baseball coach was “Tim” Goodyear?³³

Unlike the coaches that were to follow him (Warner, Harry L. Taylor, Charles R. Pittinger, Eugene E. Bassford), Goodyear had no collegiate or professional experience as an athlete. He was a teacher and clerk who oversaw the farm work of the Indian students on the school’s summer outing program, toiling at a teacher’s salary but apparently enjoying the opportunity to coach the boys. With the Indian boys themselves, Goodyear organized the school’s first Athletic Association in 1892. Dennison Wheelock served

as the first president, and Goodyear as treasurer helped in the writing of a constitution and bylaws.³⁴ It was only a shadow of the powerful organization that would eventually pay Pop Warner's salary, but the new Athletic Association did further the organization of Carlisle's sports programs. And although Goodyear could not loom over the boys like Pop Warner nor tell tales of the old big leagues like Taylor, he did have several distinct virtues as a baseball coach. He was well liked by the boys, and he was committed to baseball at Carlisle, coaching from his first spring at the school, in 1888, to his last spring in 1893. He served as manager not only of regular school team but also of other teams such as the Union Reserves of 1891. In 1894, Jacob Goodyear transferred his lime and building materials business to his sons Fisk and Samuel, and so Fisk left his teaching post.³⁵ But he had built a baseball program and prepared it for a significant transition: from an amateur team playing mostly intramural games with occasional matches against the Carlisle town teams and Dickinson College's freshmen to a major college team with games against Dickinson, Bucknell, Gettysburg, Penn, and Penn State. While game records are scarce for the program's early years, it is clear Goodyear's baseball boys met with some success.

The following early Carlisle Indians game results appeared in the school newspapers, the *Morning Star* and *Indian Helper*, and in Carlisle's local newspaper, the *Evening Sentinel*:

October 1886 Carlisle Indians win vs. Dickinson College Freshman Team

Carlisle Indians lose vs. Dickinson College Preparatory Team

May 1888 Carlisle Indians win vs. Dickinson College Preparatory Team, 19–8

May 1888 Carlisle Indians lose vs. Carlisle Team, 10–11 (ten innings)

July 4, 1888 Carlisle Indians win vs. Carlisle Team, 24–0 (five innings)

June 1889 Carlisle Indians win vs. Newville College, 5–2

April 1890 Carlisle Indians lose vs. Dickinson College, by two runs

May 1890 Young Americans win vs. Dickinson College Preparatory, 26–12

April 1891 Carlisle Indians lose vs. Dickinson College, 11–4

May 1891 Carlisle Indians win vs. Undines [semi-pro team], 12–11

Of these ten early games, the C.I.T.S. team (and the Young Americans, with whom the C.I.T.S. team interchanged players) won six and lost four. More important than the cumulative record, however, was the progress

that the Carlisle Indians team made, advancing from playing Dickinson's freshman and preparatory teams to playing its first team and playing it competitively. The Carlisle Indians were still far from playing Penn and Penn State competitively, but Goodyear had helped the team advance from amateur to college competition. For a teacher and clerk waiting to inherit his father's building materials business, Goodyear had done well as Carlisle's first baseball coach.

GLENN S. WARNER, CARLISLE'S COACH

Following Goodyear, Carlisle Indian School's baseball history presents some puzzling facts. Given the program's auspicious start, the high quality of athletes Carlisle attracted, the number of future Major League and Minor League players on its rosters, Carlisle's dynamic athletic director Glenn S. Warner, and the school's strong support for athletics, success would seem to be assured. But it did not come. Carlisle's baseball team seldom had a winning season – there were only five winning campaigns in fifteen years of the program. Instead, it usually stumbled badly against the same Ivy League competition that Carlisle's football teams played competitively and often defeated. The same athletes who annually won all-American honors in football – Jim Thorpe, Frank Hudson, Jimmy Johnson, Wilson Charles, Bill Garlow – played baseball, and they lost more often than they won on the baseball diamond.

Lest there be any doubt, the Carlisle teams' annual records make the point clearly (see table 1). Why did the Carlisle Indians baseball team consistently underperform (a .466 winning percentage), while the Carlisle Indians Football team consistently triumphed (a .707 winning percentage)? And if the athletes were truly inferior as baseball players, would so many have made it in professional leagues? One student, Gordon Shaw (Pawnee), thought he had the answer to the riddle and voiced it on the front page of the *Arrow*: "Carlisle has a more popular football team than baseball, because the boys like to play football [more]."³⁶ For several of Carlisle's most famous athletes, including Thorpe, Shaw's assessment is right: Thorpe apparently would have preferred having a major college coaching position in football to playing Major League Baseball, but barred by prejudice from the former, he accepted the latter. But what of the others, like Charles Bender, Charles Roy, Michael Balenti, and Frank Jude, who were pursuing professional baseball eagerly?

In one sense, Gordon Shaw's view was accurate: the success of the Carlisle football program generated intense student interest and football eclipsed

Table 1. Carlisle Annual Team Records

YEAR	BASEBALL		FOOTBALL	
1895	2-2		4-4	
1896	4-4		6-4	
1897	5-4-1		6-4	
1898	3-4-1		5-4	
1899	5-4		9-2	
1900	8-8-1		6-4-1	
1901	12-11-1		5-7-1	
1902	5-11		8-3	
1903	7-9		11-2-1	
1904	11-14		9-2	
1905	12-10-1		10-4	
1906	16-14		9-2	
1907	11-13		10-1	
1908	13-14		10-2-1	
1909	11-16		8-3-1	
TOTALS	124-142-5	.466 Pct.	116-48-6	.707 Pct.

Sources: Cumberland County Historical Society (John Faller, 1995), *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle), *Daily Herald* (Carlisle), *Red Man*, *Arrow*, *Indian Helper*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *North American*, *Spalding's Official Base Ball Record* (1909).

baseball as the school's favorite sport. But it did not have to be so. The decline of baseball at Carlisle was the deliberate result of a decision to de-emphasize baseball, announced by Warner in 1903 but apparently made earlier. At the beginning of the 1903 baseball season, after the disastrous 4–15 campaign of 1902, Warner announced a program change in the *Red Man and Helper*: “It is expected that the track team will be stronger than ever this year and there will be more contests to engage in. Since track and field seem more adapted to the Indians than baseball and as it is almost impossible in the limited time for practice to have successful teams in both of these branches of sport, it has been decided that track athletes will have preference over baseball, and all our energies will be devoted to the former.”³⁷ In effect, Warner was making explicit a policy of preferential treatment for track. He told the *Evening Bulletin* of Philadelphia that “*blood will tell* and the modern Red Man may emulate the forest runners of America's early history in speed and endurance” (my emphasis).³⁸ The track athletes were provided a daily training table, whereas baseball players ate in the student mess. The many track athletes who also played baseball (Charles, Jude, James Schrimpscher, Archie Libby, Balenti, Thorpe) usually missed baseball prac-

tice for track practice and missed baseball games for track meets. Also, track athletes were given incentives for first-place performances (jerseys, watches, caps), whereas baseball players received no such incentives for winning games. Finally, the decision allowed Warner to devote his own energies in the springtime principally to coaching track and field, to recruiting football players, and to preparing the fall football schedule, leaving the baseball team to the team captain or short-term coaches. During Warner's three years away from Carlisle (at Cornell), Superintendent Mercer recognized the need to provide additional baseball instruction and arranged for Charles Bender to provide coaching in March of 1904 and Charles Pittinger in March of 1906. Though the baseball team had two winning seasons during Warner's absence, in 1905 and 1906, it reverted very much to form upon his return in 1907.

Although Warner announced the antibaseball policy in January of 1903, he had already begun to implement it during the 1901 season when he hired former Louisville first baseman Harry Taylor to coach baseball in his place. The policy was expanded in the 1902 season when track athletes were allowed to use the indoor baseball facilities for pole vaulting, hurdling, running, and shot putting, displacing the baseball players. Also, in 1902 pitcher Wilson Charles and left fielder Frank Beaver were pulled from baseball games for track meets, and second baseman Jimmy Johnson and other players were allowed to leave the baseball team for band trips.³⁹ The result was that the baseball team's 1902 road trip south began a string of seven straight losses, and the team's season culminated in a dismal 4–15 record. Then, in 1903, more baseball stories like this appeared in the *Red Man and Helper*: "The team that plays the Penn Park professional team at York to-morrow will be considerably weakened by the absence of [pitcher Wilson] Charles and [left fielder Frank] Jude who will remain at home to compete in the dual meet with Bucknell."⁴⁰ But surprisingly the baseball team did not immediately wither. Its 1903 record of 7–9 was seen as a revival; Charles Bender's rise to stardom in Philadelphia was lauded by all; and the lure of professional baseball was greater than ever. Yet, Warner's model was still in place and had a lasting impact on many Carlisle baseball players.

Of course, Warner was not sacrificing baseball for track out of personal preference alone. He was coaching at a school with about five hundred male students (and many of them young boys) and competing against Ivy League schools such as Harvard, with an enrollment of five thousand male students.⁴¹ To do so, he needed to recruit aggressively, to keep his best players at the school as long as possible (Martin Wheelock, for example, played on the Carlisle football team for eight seasons), and to urge his athletes to

participate in multiple sports.⁴² So Carlisle's athletic program created a series of multiple-sports stars such as Thorpe, Hudson, Joe Guyon, Wilson Charles, and Bill Garlow. Carlisle's famous marathoner Louis Tewanima was a rare commodity at Carlisle – the one-sport star. Quite correctly, Warner realized the difficulties of having Frank Jude pole vaulting while playing left field, or of James Schrimpscher practicing for the two-mile run and playing shortstop, or of Thorpe preparing for the decathlon and pitching for Carlisle. In each case, Warner asked students to sacrifice baseball for track. Some students recognized the need themselves. Frank Mt. Pleasant, who pitched in the Minor Leagues without college experience, chose to captain the track and football teams but not to play baseball. So Mt. Pleasant made the 1908 Olympics, and Tewanima, as a one-sport star, competed in two Olympics and won a silver medal in 1912.⁴³

The effects of Warner's decision rippled throughout the baseball program, which had been winning at least half of its games through 1901. In effect, however benign his intentions, Warner apparently developed a racial theory of sport: "Track and field seem more adapted to the Indians than baseball." The conclusion fit the stereotype of American Indians as Ward Churchill, and others have put it, as "overwhelmingly physical creatures."⁴⁴ This stereotype was depicted vulgarly by A. P. Adams's "Hurry Up Hot-foot" cartoons, presenting a demeaning caricature of a Plains Indian who won every possible athletic competition by grossly assaulting or cheating his opponents. Every one of Adams's cartoons concluded with Hurry Up Hotfoot vocalizing his customary "Ugh!"⁴⁵ In Warner's more genial words, Carlisle's football success owed to "the rough, hardy outdoor life that the players have been inured to from the day they were born"; that is, , Indians were the tough children of the forests and plains.⁴⁶ While the athletic director had paternal feelings for his Indian athletes, his stereotype of Indians promoted football and track at Carlisle and inhibited the development of both college and professional baseball players. Yet the pitching of Bender and George Johnson, and the batting of John Meyers and Louis Sockalexis all strongly belied Warner's conclusion – American Indians were succeeding at the highest levels of professional baseball.

In one sense, Warner was right about track versus baseball – many of Carlisle's athletes arrived with extensive running experience, but with crude baseball skills. In fact, many Indian athletes came to Carlisle never having been coached in baseball and some, especially in the school's early days, had never played ball as young boys. Axtell Hayes (Nez Perce), catcher for the 1909 team, put it this way: "[I] never had any chance to show what I could do in that line as I have been out in the country."⁴⁷ Jim Thorpe, though he had

played “prairie ball” as a child, received little formal coaching in the sport even at Carlisle. For Carlisle to succeed in baseball as it did in football, the players needed extensive and constant drilling – infield grounders, outfield fungoes, cutoff drills, base-running drills, sliding practice, bunting practice, and long practice in the batting cage. With Warner’s emphasis on track, his limited knowledge of baseball, and the limited practice hours available, most players never received the instruction they needed: “Baseball is not being given the attention that it has had heretofore.”⁴⁸

The lack of attention given to baseball coaching, combined with the players’ considerable need for training, resulted in a baseball team with extraordinary athletes but unskilled players. Although the Indians frequently had stronger pitching and much speedier runners than their opponents, they struggled at bat to drive in runs and in the field to save runs. Hence, the team was repeatedly described as a fast or talented squad that lacked support. Batting and fielding statistics are unavailable for most seasons, but when Coach Eugene Bassford compiled the team’s batting and fielding averages through May 4 of 1909, the team was hitting .224 and fielding .960. If the team’s hitting was often anemic, the muffing of grounders and flies was much worse. In their game against highly touted Harvard on April 19, 1905, the Carlisle Indians exposed their signal weakness in defense:

The Indians were never in it for a minute, their pitcher was wild, their fielding full of errors, and their team work exceedingly ragged. But if the Carlisle fielders had done their work only fairly cleanly, Harvard’s score would have been less than half what it was. Easy flies were muffed, grounders were handled so slowly that the runner reached the initial bag before the ball. If he did not, the throw was so wild that the runner was unfortunate who did not make two or more bases on an easy grounder.⁴⁹

Carlisle lost this game 23–2, largely thanks to fourteen errors. In its most embarrassing defeat in school history, in May of 1895, Carlisle lost to the University of Pennsylvania 41–4 after committing twenty-two errors. The team’s play in the field was especially disconcerting to fine pitchers like Bender, Leroy, Pratt, and Roy, as game stories typically reported, “Bender seemed to have the better of the argument, but his support was not sufficient to enable him to win the day.”⁵⁰

In Warner’s defense, he did try intermittently to educate himself about baseball skills and strategy and to coach players when time permitted. Charles Bender generously recalled that Warner had taught him to throw the change-up in 1900: “[Warner] taught me virtually all I knew about pitching. He had read a lot and talked a lot with different baseball coaches,

and he showed me how to work a change of pace. The value of a slow ball was explained and taught to me by 'Pop.'"⁵¹ And when Warner returned to Carlisle in 1907 and began contemplating the elimination of the baseball program, he and 1908 team captain Michael Balenti made a last-ditch effort to coach the baseball players. The results of that effort did show in both the 1907 and 1908 seasons: "Our boys are commencing to realize that what 'Pop' tells them about certain plays generally turns out about as calculated, and the pretty little 'squeeze play' that brought in Youngdeer and Balenti, scoring two runs all in a minute, was all worked out long before it happened" (April 26, 1907).⁵² Carlisle's *Arrow* reported the following sentiments of fans: "'When the ball is hit anywhere every Indian seems to get under it and if one does not get it why another one does.' 'See how those Indians back each other up,' and so it was. The result was an errorless game. Keep it up boys and you will make those who say, 'Somehow, the Indians can't play baseball as well as they do football,' change their minds before the season is over" (May 20, 1908).⁵³ Furthermore, Warner developed the novel idea of having a "Field Day" at Syracuse with both a track meet and baseball game, so Carlisle's two-sport athletes could compete in both events. And finally, for the 1909 season, he hired Eugene Bassford, Fordham University's successful coach, to work his magic on the team. Yet, none of these last-chance efforts transformed the baseball program? Why not?

The answer to the question is again the problem of the multisport-athlete model. In picturing the impending clouds over the baseball program, the *Arrow* hinted at the source of the problem: "The baseball team started out with good prospects, but as in former years, the team seems to get worse rather than improving, and it is possible that this branch of sport may be discontinued in the future."⁵⁴ Indeed, the Carlisle Indians baseball records shows that the team often played much stronger baseball in the early weeks of their schedule than in the final weeks. The reason was principally that the school played more of its home games early in its schedule and had most of its athletes available for those games. From March to mid-June, the Indian athletes became increasingly distracted by competing in two sports simultaneously; the best athletes were often pulled from baseball games for track meets; and the two-sport athletes suffered both mental and physical fatigue. In 1909, for example, Jim Thorpe, the team's best pitcher and first baseman, played only a few games, as Warner urged him to develop his track skills and to compete in every meet.

The multisport-athlete model at Carlisle had its most detrimental impact on the baseball players, especially those seeking to play professional baseball. Jim Thorpe, the Olympic Champion and all-American, it was assumed, was

ready to take on the professional baseball world in 1913 when he was signed by the New York Giants, but Giants manager John McGraw found out otherwise. "He is learning more rapidly than any ball player I have had on a team of mine. . . . In another year he should be ready to play," McGraw said hopefully in July of 1913 after discovering that his outfielder needed more seasoning.⁵⁵ But Thorpe was to endure a series of disappointing seasons while learning to hit the curve ball. Thorpe's roommate with the Giants, Al Schacht, put it this way: "But when it came to baseball, he had virtually no experience and was faced with the very best of pitching as soon as he started. . . . They also say that he was curve-balled out of the major leagues. This is not true either. He had difficulty with it in the beginning. What do they expect? He had never seen one before and all of a sudden he was up against the greatest."⁵⁶ And what was true for Thorpe was more true for Frank Jude, Michael Balenti, Charles Roy, and Jacob Jameson. In every case, their Major League careers were washed out suddenly after they were called up prematurely without sufficient coaching and game experience. Bender was the one remarkable exception – a player so naturally gifted, so superbly self-trained, and so dedicated to baseball above other sports that he surmounted the difficulties that beset the others.

STRIKING OUT CARLISLE INDIANS BASEBALL

After two seasons of rumors, the elimination of the Carlisle Indians baseball program came in early January of 1910. The decision made by Warner and endorsed by Superintendent Friedman was a controversial one among students, although press reports minimized the students' dissatisfaction. In place of Carlisle's three baseball teams, Warner substituted one new team, lacrosse, so the headline in Carlisle's *Evening Herald* read, "Lacrosse Begun at Indian School."⁵⁷ One does sense the controversy clearly, however, in the closely written defense of the decision printed in the *Arrow* on January 14, 1910. The statement begins:

This school will not be represented by a base ball team [in] the coming season. In place of base ball, lacrosse will be taken up as a school sport. This change has been considered for several years, and has been decided upon only after most thoughtful consideration. It is thought that, because of the evils of summer or professional base ball and the fact that many students have been lured away from school and into temptations and bad company by professional offers before they had finished school, it would be best not to develop, by encouraging base ball, an ambition in the students to become professional players, since so few have the

strength of character or the ability to engage in such a calling successfully. The base ball boys could not very well be prevented from engaging in professional base ball in the summer, because the students, in stead of going home in the summer vacation, as college students do, are put to work under the Outing System, and boys who could earn from fifty to one hundred dollars a month during the summer playing base ball were naturally not contented to go out to the sea shore or on a farm for from \$15 to \$20 per month, even though it would pay them in the long run to do so. For this and other reasons it has been thought best not to develop base ball players to the point where they will be subjected to the tempting offers of the "Bush League" managers.⁵⁸

At heart, Warner and Friedman were pleading that the elimination of the baseball program was an academic victory over vulgar commercialism. Discontinuing baseball would keep more students in school, involved in the summer outing program, and would steer them away from the dissolute life of Minor League and summer-league players. This argument evinces again the appeal of professional baseball for Carlisle's students, but its reasoning is otherwise unconvincing. Students like Leroy and Youngdeer came to Carlisle to be educated in some part because of its baseball team, and removing the team meant they were more likely to leave the school prematurely for a school like Haskell Institute, whose baseball program was still intact. Also, discontinuing the program did not stop Thorpe or Garlow or Balenti from playing Minor League Baseball during the summer of 1910, and it would not stop others like Joe Guyon, Emil Wauseka, and Frank Leroy from pursuing such baseball careers long after the program had disappeared.

As long as Indian students were presented with bleak prospects for employment at home and school (like the twenty-dollars-per-month farm labor that Warner mentioned), they would not stop dreaming their summer baseball dreams. In fact, the "evils of summer" were a positive good to many young men at Carlisle Indian Industrial School, and even some of the boys who welcomed the addition of lacrosse grumbled at the loss of collegiate baseball. William Newashe, who played summer baseball for three years and Minor League Baseball for many years, wrote to Superintendent Friedman in April of 1912, telling him that he could "make out better by playing ball" than doing manual labor.⁵⁹ Far from inhibiting its athletes from playing professionally, the ban may have had the opposite effect. When Thorpe signed with the Giants in 1913, he claimed that the elimination of the team's baseball program had encouraged him to play semipro baseball in North Carolina: "I always liked to play baseball, and that is one of the reasons I joined that league in North Carolina. You know, we haven't had

baseball at Carlisle for two or three years. If we had baseball at the college I might never have become a professional.”⁶⁰ Although Thorpe played in the Eastern Carolina League before Carlisle had formally eliminated its baseball program, he may have known in the summer of 1909 that baseball was on its way out at Carlisle. And Warner’s emphasis on track – and field had given Thorpe little experience on the diamond and tempted him to find other opportunities to play baseball.

In fact, in the 1914 Linnen report to Congress, an investigation of abuses in Carlisle’s athletic program and administration, students protested the loss of the school’s baseball team. A 1914 petition to Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, signed by fifty-five student athletes asked for the removal of Glenn S. Warner as athletic director. The students alleged that Warner “possesse[d] a weak moral character,” “continually use[d]s profane and abusive language in the presence of the boys,” and “used the foot-ball team for the purpose of gambling.” A lesser, but still significant charge in the petition was that Warner “prove[d] himself selfish, abolishing branches of athletics that he was not capable of coaching such as base-ball and basket-ball.” Among the athletes signing the petition was Joe Guyon – who sought to pursue a professional career in baseball.⁶¹

The charge that Warner abolished the Carlisle baseball teams out of selfish motives was stinging and may have had some basis in fact. Throughout his tenures as athletic director, it was noted that “Mr. Warner has devoted most of his time to the track team and the base-ball boys have had to develop themselves to a great extent.”⁶² The success of Carlisle’s track team was small comfort to the baseball boys seeking athletic success. More darkly, Warner’s decision in early 1910 to eliminate baseball coincided with Amos Alonzo Stagg’s vigorous arguments against allowing professional baseball players to participate in college football. In the summer of 1909, Stagg, the University of Chicago football coach, protested: “To allow baseball men, when professionals, to compete on college teams would simply introduce anarchy into our collegiate sports.” “The great mass of college football players,” he said, “are genuine amateurs and have a sentiment against commercializing themselves and debasing the game, and they are backed up by the best public opinion.”⁶³ Stagg’s influential argument resulted in a nationwide reversal of college policies and new restrictions against the participation of baseball professionals in college sports. Warner, realizing how many of his prized football players were “commercializing themselves” in summer baseball, took determined action to avoid a baseball scandal embroiling the football team. Thus, Carlisle’s baseball team, it appears, was ultimately sacrificed to protect the Carlisle football team and the powerful Carlisle Athletic Associa-

tion. But the hope was very much in vain, as gambling, payments to players, and other abuses brought national scandal to Carlisle's sports programs in 1914 and ended Warner's tenure at the school.

Whereas Superintendent Pratt had instituted baseball at Carlisle to promote assimilation and the patriotic ideal of citizenship among the first Indian students, Superintendent Friedman eliminated it in order to preserve the star-studded football program. In all, baseball was a fascinating game at Carlisle Indian Industrial School, as administrators batted the program in opposite directions. The baseball fever that Pratt appropriated to make his C.I.T.S. team into citizens matured into a hope of professional promise for Carlisle's talented athletes, and that hope was partially fulfilled in seven Major League careers and many Minor League careers. Unfortunately, the athletic promise was not fully developed by Carlisle's baseball program because of the competing demands of other sports upon the school's best players. Still, the school's best athletes on the diamond, like its fleet runners and darting halfbacks, were also remarkable players.

3

The Nebraska Indians Baseball Team

“They ran ads in the local newspapers, cartoons of feathered savages with big teeth and tomahawks running bases. Word of our winning preceded us, and opposing teams shot beanballs at our heads in the early innings. Sometimes it was a hard sell to get the men interested in playing us at all.”

Jon Billman, *When We Were Wolves*

Before the Kansas City Monarchs, before the House of David, before the bloomer girl teams of the early twentieth century, the Nebraska Indians took the diamond, one of the first great barnstorming teams to leave an indelible mark on American culture. For twenty-one years, from 1897 to 1917, the team averaged over 150 games per season in almost as many towns, often drawing crowds in the thousands, from Wahoo, Nebraska, to Lexington, Kentucky, to Brooklyn, New York. Billed as the “Only Ones on Earth” and the “Greatest Aggregation of its Kind,” they were only one of many American Indian professional teams, but they were the longest lived and most successful such pan-Indian club. In many of their seasons for which records survive, the Indians won over 80 percent of their games, and they scored victories against talented amateur teams, college teams, and Minor League teams. Crowds assembled eagerly, hoping that their local heroes would play the Indians competitively. Fans also came to be entertained, and the Indians obliged with a combination of Wild West showmanship and zany baseball antics. Most significantly, as the sports editor of the *Omaha Bee* put it in 1902: “A large crowd is expected at the park to see the Indians in a role new to the race” (my emphasis).¹ As the Nebraska Indians struggled against anti-Indian prejudices, their baseball performances enabled new visions of American Indian roles.

The Nebraska Indians team was established in June of 1897 by Guy Wilder Green, a recent graduate of the University of Nebraska Law School. Green tells the story of the team in two dime booklets he sold between 1900 and

1907, *The Nebraska Indians: A Complete History*, and *Fun and Frolic with an Indian Ball Team*. Green played outfield at the University of Iowa in 1892 and afterward for his town's team in Stromsburg, Nebraska, where he happened to encounter the Genoa Indian Agricultural and Industrial School team in the summer of 1896. Immediately, he recognized the profit potential of Indian ball teams:

I observed that even in Nebraska, where an Indian is not at all a novelty, a base ball organization composed of red men drew everyone who was alive. When the Indians came to Stromsburg business houses were closed and men, women and children turned out *en masse* to see the copper-colored performers corral the festive fly. . . . I reasoned that if an Indian base ball team was a good drawing card in Nebraska, it ought to do wonders further east if properly managed. I accordingly determined to organize the Nebraska Indians.²

It is not surprising that an Indian school team served as Green's model, since Genoa, Flandreau, Santee, and Haskell all had teams playing in Nebraska throughout the 1890s. In fact, through 1910, Haskell Institute played schedules of up to fifty games, sometimes hiring players and making tidy profits for its athletic program from mid-summer games.

In early June of 1897, Green organized his new club very hurriedly. The young lawyer had no more than raised his glass to serve as toastmaster for the annual Nebraska Law School banquet on June 9, when he launched out on a trip to recruit a dozen ball players. The Genoa Industrial and Agricultural School, the Santee Normal School, and the nearby Omaha and Winnebago reservations were Green's starting points, along with his contacts at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. The *Nebraska State Journal* described Green as "one of the brightest men in his class" and a witty toastmaster, but reservation Indian agents and boarding school superintendents were not enchanted with Green's proposition.³ As he put it, "[t]he government officers, under whose control they lived, were not enthusiastic in their support of the enterprise."⁴ In fact, the agents were probably right to worry that Green's venture might be aborted and strand the Indian players far from home. And the Indian school athletic directors would not have been eager to have Green sign their best players and to compete with their teams for box-office profits.

Surprisingly, Green was able to cobble together most of a twelve-man team by June 20, 1897. The *Nebraska State Journal* reported that Green "gathered the team together from Santee and Genoa, and from South Dakota and Kansas."⁵ Thus, Green may have traveled as far as Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, in search of players. Green advertised the club as the "All

Nebraska” Indian Baseball Team – a talented nine that would “no doubt put up a stiff game” against the best semipro competition.⁶ Green’s original club consisted of nine Indian players and three non-Indian players. The idea of supplementing Indian players with local non-Indian talent, especially pitching talent, was one that Green and his successor Oran Beltzer resorted to in every season the team played. Curiously, it was also a strategy used by Indian school teams early in the twentieth century. The Haskell Institute baseball team, for example, coached by W. B. Charles, a former Carlisle star, employed a University of Kansas pitcher named Parnell and another white player named Headers throughout its 1909 tour of Nebraska. Charles eventually chose to “let Headers go, as he is not playing good enough for the money he is getting.”⁷ Like the Nebraska Indians, Indian school baseball teams at the turn of the century were pan-Indian and integrated money-making ventures, professional in everything but name.

Inauspiciously for Green, the Nebraska Indians began their first season with two losses to Wahoo, Nebraska, 12–0 and 10–5, on June 20 and 21. In a wagon-train procession driven by the team’s luggage man Sandy Leach, the Indians pushed on to nearby Fremont on June 22 and 23 and split a pair of afternoon games, winning the first game 4–3 but losing the second 10–7.⁸ Green excused the early losses thus: “Most of my players had come directly to the place of opening. They were stiff from travel, were out of condition and lacking in practice.”⁹ In addition, Wahoo had one of the best teams in the state, led by the future Hall of Famer Sam Crawford, and Fremont also featured a “crack team.” It was not until the Nebraska Indians reached Lincoln on June 25 and 26 that they began to show their mettle. On June 25 they defeated the University of Nebraska in a slugfest, 18–12, with a little extra help from a friend in Wahoo. Green, badly desiring a victory, had hired Sam Crawford to pitch the game for the Indians. And although Wahoo Sam pitched indifferently, he went 3–6 at the plate, helping the Indians to its six-run victory. Perhaps more important than the victory, however, was the carnival atmosphere that the Indian players established on the Lincoln diamond, a vital factor in the team’s economic success.

As the title of Green’s second dime pamphlet, *Fun and Frolic*, suggested, the Nebraska Indians aimed to entertain spectators, both on and off the field. Before the House of David put on its “pepper ball” exhibitions, or the Kansas City Monarchs played “shadowball,” or Negro Leaguer Lloyd Bassett caught his pitcher from a rocking chair, the Nebraska Indians were devising their own baseball gags to draw big crowds. For the 1897 season, Green had hired the Indian twins J. Keeler and H. Keeler to play second base and third base respectively, and the possibility of mistaking the two

inspired some ludicrous base-running antics. The *Nebraska State Journal* reported, "They seldom caught a ball or made a base without making some elaborate gesticulations intended solely for the spectators. . . . Their favorite amusement was to have the baserunner and the man coaching so nearly alike in appearance that the catcher mixed them up and often tried to put out the wrong man."¹⁰ The *Lincoln Evening News* elaborated upon the gag:

Much amusement was created by the Keelers, who are twin brothers. Several times, when one of them was on third base, the other would stand on the coaching line and for the life of him Conley could not tell which was which. The coacher would start for home at every opportunity and if the ball was thrown wild to catch him, the brother on the base would then come in and score. Umpire Scott finally made the boys stop the imitation business, much to the regret of the spectators. . . . It was also suggested that the university team would shortly begin suit for false impersonation.¹¹

And, as Green's pamphlets make clear, the Keeler brothers' impersonations merely commenced the team's barnstorming antics. Green sometimes staged races between his fleetest base runners and the local track stars in the towns they visited, knowing the contests would excite gambling interest, and on other occasions he asked each of his nine starting players to pitch an inning of the game. He also promoted his team whenever possible not only through newspaper notices, posters, and handbills but by also dressing his players in buckskin and feathered headdresses. His longtime player-manager Dan Tobey appeared in a "clown costume" and "in company with the Indians in savage dress, announce[d] the game upon the streets." Green called this circus-style street promotion "a good ballyho."¹²

In fact, one of Green's most colorful anecdotes involves Dan Tobey and the clown costume. During the team's 1904 tour of Illinois, Green badly wanted revenge upon the small-town team of Illiopolis, Illinois, which in spite of its size had defeated the Indians twice in 1903. Tobey, a talented semipro baseball player and an enthusiastic showman, concocted a clever ruse with the clown outfit. Dressed as a hobo and carrying a satchel with the costume, Tobey approached both Green and the Illiopolis manager. In a tale of fabricated woe, he claimed to have been a clown in a small traveling circus that had closed down and stranded him in Decatur and that he was also a good pitcher and would like to pitch against the Nebraska Indians. The Illiopolis manager curtly replied that he "did not want to monkey with any tramps," but Green took mock pity on the unemployed clown. The stands were packed the next day in Illiopolis as the town had heard that a hobo clown would be pitching for the Indians. Green relates, "The game

finally started and Tobey went into the box for me. For five innings he shut out the Illiopolis team. Then he shed his clown blouse, exposed the Indian shirt, which he was wearing underneath it, rid himself of his clown hat and put on his Indian cap and the secret was out. A roar went up from the spectators when they realized the clever ruse that had been worked. We won the game eleven to two.”¹³ Green later sold postcards of Tobey in the clown suit and added the tale of the ruse to the fourth edition of *Fun and Frolic*. The victory had been sweet for Green, but it was even sweeter when he could profit handsomely from it.

In addition to the clowning and the team’s exciting play, the team relied on the American Indian identities of its players to draw large crowds in a way quite similar to the Wild West shows that were then in their heyday. Baseball historian Harold Seymour notes that the team was sometimes called “a traveling baseball circus” and traded on picturesque Wild West stereotypes.¹⁴ Green took his team on eastern tours, where, as he put it, Indians were “novelties,” playing many games in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey; and he appealed to audiences “interested in the Indians as a disappearing race.”¹⁵ Like the Wild West shows, the team traveled by train, eventually purchasing its own Pullman car, and set up an encampment or “Indian village” on the local baseball grounds. Green explained, “We traveled by rail and lived in tents and found this the most desirable mode of travel and existence while on the road. The Indians were nervous and ill-at-ease while cooped up in hotels. But the minute they were furnished with tents they felt at home and gave me their best efforts.”¹⁶ One cartoon in *The Nebraska Indians: A Complete History* shows an Indian ballplayer in the foreground and a circle of tepees in the background. The *Stromsburg Headlight* commented, “The team is composed of genuine Indians. . . . Then, too, they camp right on the grounds where they play and live in true savage style.”¹⁷ Other cartoons show Indians in buckskin and feathers dancing and performing other feats popular in the Wild West shows – one walks on a tightrope, while another acrobatically balances a barrel on top of his foot, and yet another balances a wagon wheel on his chin.

Green’s Indian encampments on ball fields not only allowed his players to escape from the prejudices of local hoteliers, who sometimes denied entrance to Native Americans, but they also fanned local interest in his team and saved the owner considerable expense for lodging. Like Buffalo Bill Cody and Gordon “Pawnee Bill” Lillie, Green hoped to parlay his Indian entertainments into a small fortune. Or as the *Tecumseh Chieftain* put it in 1901: “They are under the management of a man named Green, who is in

the base ball business strictly for the money he can get out of it.”¹⁸ Typically, Green scheduled most of the Nebraska Indian’s games in modest hamlets in part to appeal to fans with little opportunity to experience a Wild West show atmosphere. On one occasion, in Alliance, Ohio, in 1900 the Nebraska Indians happened to arrive in town at the same time as Gordon Lillie’s Wild West show, and Green was noticeably perturbed: “Pawnee Bill’s Show was in town the same afternoon and we were afraid we should have no crowd at all. The factory shut down work, however, and the hands came to the game in preference to going to the show. We had about as many people as Pawnee Bill drew and we won the game by a score of 11 to 1.”¹⁹

Ironically, Wild West shows, which usually performed on fair grounds or circus grounds, sometimes were forced to play on town baseball grounds. For example, the fences at St. George grounds, where the New York Metropolitans played in 1889, were pocked with bullet holes from the trick shooting of Wild Bill Cody’s show.²⁰ And Lillie’s show advertised itself as “Too Large for the Largest Tent” as it prepared to perform at the Base Ball Park in Decatur, Illinois, in June of the same year. Green’s Nebraska Indians could not offer the assortment of circus animals, trick shooting, and Western melodrama presented by the shows, but they did have the advantage of appealing to local athletic pride. Town papers promoted their games enthusiastically, usually cheering for the home team: “The Nebraska Indians will be in town next Tuesday, April 17. Come and see our fellows do ’em up. Eh?”²¹ In most cases, however, it was the Nebraska Indians who did up the local team.

Inasmuch as Green and his successors, the Beltzer brothers, exploited their players’ Native identities to draw large crowds, they also inadvertently subjected them to summertime regimes of racial harassment. Like other American Indians who played baseball professionally early in the twentieth century, the Nebraska Indians were greeted on almost every diamond with a chorus of mock war-whoops. The mockery was so predictable an event that one newspaper promoting an Indians game encouraged fans: “Don’t fail to be on hand when the first war-whoop sounds.”²² Similarly, newspaper coverage of the team often featured a lip-smacking series of anti-Indian clichés. The outcome of almost every contest was reported as a scalp being taken, either by the “savages” or their white opponents. The *Omaha Bee*, for example, reported, “The Nebraska Indians arrived in the city last night. . . . Today they will give their war dance and raise their supplications to the great Manitou to be propitious to them. . . . The Aborigines . . . come to Omaha laden with the scalps captured from baseball aggregations in Ne-

braska, South Dakota, Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas.”²³ The Indian names of the players were likewise often the subjects of tasteless jokes as when the *Knoxville Sentinel* reported, “Moffett [the Knoxville manager] says he will make Green’s bunch of red-skins all look like Rain-in-the-Face.”²⁴ Other accounts indulged in even more lurid anti-Indian stereotypes as did the *Lincoln Evening News*: “With wild yells and flourishing tomahawk, with unsheathed knives and poisoned arrows, with plenty of war paint but no fire water, a band of Indians from western Nebraska and Kansas swooped down upon a small encampment of Lincoln baseball players yesterday afternoon, and in less time than it takes to enunciate John Robinson’s cognomen, nine bloody scalps were dangling from the belts of the savages.”²⁵ While the race baiting of fans and newspapers was characteristically jocular, it was also offensive to the men who suffered from it.

To his credit, Green himself recognized that his players were burdened by the racial harassment they confronted. As team owner of the Lincoln Western League team in 1908 and early 1909, Green had transferred his best Indian player, George Howard Johnson, from the Nebraska Indians to the Lincoln Greenbackers. In an interview with the *Sioux City Journal* in 1909, Green reflected upon Johnson’s experience as an Indian pitcher with both teams. A meticulous and sympathetic observer, Green commented on the racist epithets that Johnson endured wherever he pitched:

“Johnson, my Indian twirler . . . pitched for my Nebraska Indian team three seasons. During that time we played an average of 150 towns annually in the United States and Canada. That makes 450 towns. Johnson is now pitching his second season in this league. He has never yet stepped to the mound to pitch a game anywhere on earth that three things have not happened. Numerous local humorists have started what they imagine to be Indian war cries; others have yelled ‘Back to the reservation,’ and the third variety of town pump jester has shrieked ‘Dog soup! Dog soup!’ If you were at the game Tuesday you heard this. If you see him pitch in Pueblo or Sitka or Kamchatka you will hear the same thing. You would think people would get all that kind of patent inside stuff out of their systems after awhile, wouldn’t you? But they never do.”²⁶

Of course, mock war chants, “Back to the reservation,” and “Dog soup!” were not the only racist barbs hurled at Johnson and the Nebraska Indians. The newspapers themselves contributed their share, “Injuns,” “Savages,” “Poor Lo” (meaning a wretched, godless Indian), “Blanket Indians,” “Redskins,” and many more.

As might be expected, the racist treatment of the Nebraska Indians did

not stop at name-calling and mockery by ignorant fans. In his two dime books, Green records a catalog of incidents in which his Native players were harassed by local police and citizens:

1. In Indianola, Iowa, “a prominent taxpayer missed a slab of bacon from his smoke house,” and called for a marshal in Lucas, Iowa, to search the pantry of the Nebraska Indians.
2. In Murphysboro, Illinois, a “frantic mother” called police to investigate whether “the savage red men had kidnapped her ‘che-ild’” [*sic*].
3. In Center Point, Iowa, “the mayor appointed a large force of special police before we arrived in the town . . . [who] guarded the sleeping citizens through the . . . night, while an occasional voter put in the lone hours with a trusty gun across his knee waiting for an uprising.”
4. In Collinsville, Illinois, one of Green’s players stopped to ask directions and was taken by gunpoint to the local jail, where he spent the night.
5. In Kokomo, Indiana, newspapers carried a fabricated story that the Nebraska Indians players attempted a holdup, and while the superintendent of police had insufficient evidence against the men, he opined that “your red Men should be called down, and called down proper.”
6. In Plymouth, Indiana, a drunken fan ran down the first-base line and assaulted Green’s left fielder Hopkinah, who promptly “knocked his tormentor down.”
7. In Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the manager of the Lancaster Actives swore a false affidavit that Green’s left fielder had stolen his seventy-five-cent glove.
8. In White Bear Lake, Minnesota, a man missing a suit of clothes telegraphed authorities, asking them to “arrest the whole team.”²⁷

While Green recounts repeated instances of racism with wry exasperation as “the treatment a stranger sometimes receives in a strange land,” it is doubtful whether his players would have shared his amusement.²⁸ There is little funny about being accused of robbery because of one’s skin color, Native clothing, or tribal identity. Of course, some townspeople did look upon the Nebraska Indians favorably. The *Boone County Recorder*, a Kentucky weekly, noted in 1907, “The team sustained its past record for gentlemanly conduct.”²⁹ But even such compliments contained a note of condescension. It was the kind of patronizing statement that would not need to be made about most visiting ball clubs.

In addition to the name-calling and police harassment, the Nebraska

Indians also constantly faced the judgments of hostile umpires. In fact, Green discovered from his first days with the club that he could not rely solely upon the judgment of local umpires, and so he bargained with local teams to allow two umpires to officiate each game. The bargaining enabled Green to hire his own umpire, a man named Olson from Wahoo, Nebraska, and, when necessary, to trade bum calls with the opposition.³⁰ The practice was unusual but not unheard of among Indian teams. Baseball historian Harold Seymour notes that the fine Passamaquoddy baseball teams of the 1920s and 1930s (centered in Pleasant Point, Maine) often “took the further precaution of using a native umpire and scorer.”³¹ In a few cases, the issue of umpiring came up in game stories about Nebraska Indians, as in this one from Syracuse, Nebraska: “There was a little bit of misunderstanding about who was umpire and who was not, but it ended amicably.”³² Yet the team’s issues with umpires went well beyond baseball game scores. On one occasion, Green’s team captain Roberts objected to the call of an umpire in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. The confrontation suddenly turned violent when “the umpire produced a knife about a foot long and threatened to cut somebody’s ‘innards’ out while the crowd yelled ‘Stick ’im, Stick ’im. We’ll stand by you.’”³³ In a similar case, in Ripley, Tennessee, Green’s umpire Olson called a ball fair and was threatened by men in the stands waving “long, keen, shiny knives.” Olson wisely changed his call to “foul ball.”³⁴

Why then did players from Genoa, Haskell, and Carlisle, and reservations throughout the Midwest join the Nebraska Indians? How long did they play with the team and what were the playing conditions? They were promised daily food and lodging, although they spent much of the summer camping out on baseball fields or sleeping in Pullman cars. The schedule was grueling, usually over 150 games in almost as many towns from Nebraska to New Jersey, and the players constantly had to put up and pull down the team’s tent city and hustle from game to railway station to make it to the next town. In the team’s first season, the schedule was especially exhausting, though abbreviated, since the team traveled by covered wagon and suffered predictably from the travel: “The boys were literally worn out. It was often necessary to ride all day and all night and then play a game of ball as soon as the end of the drive was reached. This was more than human flesh and blood could stand and the season was curtailed as a result.”³⁵ For all the ensuing seasons, the Nebraska Indians traveled whenever possible by Pullman car, resorting to hired wagons only for travel to and from towns without a railway station. Occasionally, the manager was forced to call a game for time and to send the players bustling in their baseball uniforms to catch a departing train at the railroad station.

The travel and playing conditions of the Nebraska Indians appear to have resembled closely those of the other pan-Indian exhibition team of the era that toured nationally, John Olson's Cherokee All-Stars of Watervliet, Michigan (1904–1912). In her essay, "John Olson and His Barnstorming Baseball Teams," historian Barbara Gregorich described the team's travel by Pullman car:

For decades ballplayers – major leaguers, minor leaguers and barnstormers – all traveled by rail. But while major leaguers traveled in three Pullmans, barnstormers could afford only one. No sooner had Olson arrived in Watervliet than the *Record* described the coach. When the Pullman, christened Clementine, pulled out of town on May 1 for a tour of Michigan and Canada, it carried eleven baseball players, four canvasmen, the two owners and their wives. The undercompartment, which he had specifically added to the coach, carried a 1,200-foot-long, 12-foot-high canvas fence; a portable grandstand that would seat 1,000; and a complete lighting plant for night games.³⁶

More than coincidentally, Harold Seymour reports that the Nebraska Indians "traveled in a private railway car that sidetracked in towns where they stopped to play" and "enclosed the Bemidji field [in Minnesota, 1904] with a canvas fence supported by tall poles on which they hung lights, powered by the local electric system, for a night game."³⁷ Since, according to Green's *Fun and Frolic*, the Nebraska Indians did not play a single game in Minnesota in the summer of 1904, Seymour apparently confused Olson's team with Green's.³⁸ Still, the traveling conditions of the Indian teams were similar, and the same profit incentive that motivated Olson to use electric lights also induced Green to schedule two games per day whenever possible. The profit motive worked very powerfully around the lucrative July 4 holiday when large crowds turned out to see the Nebraska Indians play. In 1901, Green reported that he "enjoyed the novel experience of celebrating the nation's birthday on three different dates," as with a series of rained-out celebrations the team was able to play to big crowds on July 4, July 5, and July 13.³⁹

How much did Green and the Beltzers and other Indian team owners pay their players? The standard salary in addition to food and lodging is uncertain, but it was probably no more than the fifty-five dollars per month that the Pawhuska, Oklahoma, Indian team offered to Theodore Brunt, a fine Haskell ballplayer, in the summer of 1908⁴⁰ and much less than the one hundred to two hundred dollars per month salary of a Western League player during the period. In fact, Green quite deliberately avoided compe-

tition for players with Minor League managers. The *Nebraska State Journal* reported, "In past years, Mr. Green was careful to keep his Indians away from towns supporting minor league teams. This was wise management, as it prevented the professional managers from hiring his best performers away from his team and signing them to national agreement contracts."⁴¹ Indeed, the Nebraska Indians' only Indian star to make the Major Leagues, the Winnebago George Howard Johnson, was signed to a Minor League contract by none other than Green himself when he bought the Lincoln Western League team in 1907 and swapped players between his two teams. The Indian players' primary motivations to join the team would seem to have been other than financial as few of the Indian players continued on the roster for more than two seasons. Some, like Johnson, John Bull Williams, or Haskell's Walter Nevitt, undoubtedly were seeking an initiation in high-level semiprofessional baseball before trying out for a spot on a Minor League team. Others were proud to play for the team with its reputation as a perennial all-star squad and saw the long season as an opportunity to travel the United States doing something they very much enjoyed.

Now, almost one hundred years later, it is unlikely that any former players of the Nebraska Indians or of Olson's Cherokee All-Stars remain to tell of the living and playing conditions that the Indian teams faced. However, in the spring of 2001, I did correspond with Alan J. Caldwell, the son of Menominee baseball player James J. Caldwell, a third baseman for Olson's Cherokee All-Stars in 1912. Caldwell, director of the Menominee Culture Institute in Keshena, Wisconsin, reflected upon his father's baseball career:

My father was not the type of person to talk much about his past. What little he told us about his baseball playing days was about the part of the country he traveled to such as the southeastern region. He didn't say anything that I recall about how they were treated or received in the towns that they played in. I think my father played for the pleasure of playing baseball and as a source of income. I think he may have also joined the team as a way to satisfy his sense of adventure. I envied my father. Though he only played semi-pro baseball he was a terrific player based on stories I heard from his peers.⁴²

While James J. Caldwell might well have made the same income through manual labor as playing baseball, the Indian barnstorming teams certainly appealed to the young men's wanderlust and love of baseball.

From 1898 (its first winning season) to at least 1914 (the last season for which a record is available), the Nebraska Indians established an impressive reputation as one of the most formidable exhibition teams in the country.

Table 2. Nebraska Indians' Team Records

YEAR	WINS	LOSSES	TIES	PCT.
1897	21	26		.447
1898	81	22		.786
1899	108	35		.755
1900	90	53	1	.629
1901	135	26	1	.839
1902	136	15	1	.901
1903	123	24	1	.837
1904	149	25	1	.856
1905	163	27	1	.858
1906	151	31	2	.830
1912	101*	27		.789?
1914	101	25	3	.802

*Won or tied. Ties are not calculated in winning percentages in other seasons.

Sources: Guy Green, *Fun and Frolic with an Indian Ball Team* (1907); Nebraska Indians postcards (1912, 1914).

The team records given in Green's *Fun and Frolic* and in the 1912 and 1914 postcards sold by the Beltzer brothers indicate the following totals⁴³ (see table 2). The cumulative total for these years is a remarkable 1237-336-11, for a redoubtable .786 winning percentage. And while the Indians generally avoided embarrassing small-town teams, they trounced Fort Madison, Iowa, in 1898 by the score of 40-4 and Mystic, Iowa, in 1905 by the score of 34-0.

Just as impressive as the team's cumulative record is the roster of teams that the Nebraska Indians played competitively or defeated. Annually, through at least 1906, they played the University of Nebraska; they faced other state university squads in Iowa, Indiana, and Kentucky; and they challenged colleges and normal-school squads throughout the country. Occasionally, they confronted Lincoln's Western League team, and in 1908 the Nebraska Indians played eight exhibition games against the six teams in the Class D Blue Grass League in Kentucky (Frankfort, Lexington, Richmond, Lawrenceburg, Shelbyville, and Winchester), going 7-1, including a 1-0 victory against second-place Lexington.⁴⁴ On August 22, 1909, the *Nebraska State Journal* reported that the Indians had lost only one game in their previous thirty-nine contests.⁴⁵ While many local teams offered meager challenges to the Nebraska Indians, other amateur teams such as the Chicago Lawndales and Gunthers, the Cincinnati Shamrocks, the Brooklyn Brightons, and the Baltimore All Stars, presented top-flight competition. And local teams with all-star players such as Wahoo, Nebraska, in 1898 with

future Hall of Famer Sam Crawford and Burwell, Nebraska, in 1906 with future Hall of Famer Grover Cleveland Alexander, also made formidable opponents.⁴⁶

Certainly, the toughest competition that the Nebraska Indians faced was from the Negro League teams they played: the Cuban X-Giants, the Algona (Iowa) Brownies, the Indianapolis ABCs, the Columbia Giants, and the Philadelphia Giants. Green himself lamented his team's inability to win against the Negro League clubs: "The Columbian [*sic*] Giants were a little bit the fastest lot of ball players we ever encountered. . . . We were mighty glad when we finally severed the ties that bound us to the colored boys. We had nothing but kindly feeling for them, but they played too good a game to suit us."⁴⁷ Green's admission, however, is hardly surprising given that the Negro League teams were among the very best professional teams of their day – often better than their white Major League rivals. Against those teams, the Indians routinely faced Hall of Fame players such as John Henry "Pop" Lloyd and Rube Foster and players of high Major League ability such as Pete Hill, Bruce Petway, George "Chappie" Johnson, Charlie Grant, and Bill Monroe. And, further, they found that the Negro League teams often excelled at the same slap-hitting, base stealing brand of baseball they did, so they had neither athletic nor strategic advantages. While the Nebraska Indians could not match up with the very best professional teams of their day, they merit recognition at the least as "a semipro team that cut a wide swath in the state" and "one of the best semi-pro teams in the Midwest" of the era.⁴⁸

THE NEBRASKA INDIANS OWNERS

The two principal owners of the Nebraska Indians are profiled here. For the stories of the team's great players, see appendix 2.

Guy Wilder Green who founded the Nebraska Indians in 1897, was an energetic baseball promoter until he sold the team to the Beltzer brothers in 1911. Green said, "I cannot remember a time, when I was not interested in base ball."⁴⁹ He played first base on his town team and then for Doane College in Crete, Nebraska. At age seventeen, he received his B.S. from Doane in the spring of 1891, played outfield briefly for the University of Iowa but returned to his home town of Stromsburg, Nebraska, to work at the post office and play amateur ball.⁵⁰ Taking his law degree from the University of Nebraska in 1897, he organized the Nebraska Indians hurriedly in June just after his graduation. He apparently received some assistance in the team's early years from "my handsome and accomplished pardner," John

DeYoung Smith, a Lincoln lawyer and salesman.⁵¹ But it was Green himself who traveled with the team through 1907; recruited, coached, and managed players; kept the books; recorded the game scores and notable events in the team's travels; and profited from the sale of Nebraska Indians pamphlets and postcards as well as from gate receipts. Soon Green's name appeared on the team postcards as "Sole Owner and Manager" of the team, though he was employed by the Lincoln Machinery Company on North 10th Street through 1904 and then as an attorney with offices on 109 South 10th Street, from 1905 to 1906.⁵² As the Nebraska Indians succeeded, Green attempted to repeat the success of his novelty team by founding an exhibition team of Japanese ballplayers in 1906 after the visit of Japan's Waseda University to California had excited public interest in Asian baseball. The Japanese team quickly folded, but Green attempted an even greater challenge, purchasing the Lincoln Western Association Club in the fall of 1907 and acting as president and general manager of the club in 1908 and early 1909, while Billy Fox acted as field manager and coach. Green's Lincoln team played mediocre ball, inspiring verses such as,

THE GREENBACKERS
There was a "Guy," he came to town –
We guess he came to win –
But for a while it looked as if
His chances were "durned" slim,
When "Jack" and "Bill" and "Gag" and "Fen"
Who always had been it,
Right up till thirty days ago
Could seldom make a hit.
The fans were sad as every day
They rooted all in vain,
While ciphers on the big black-board
Told how each hope was slain.⁵³

In July of 1909, in the middle of his second season, Green sold the Lincoln franchise to Don C. Despain and Lowell Stoner, actually profiting from the sale.⁵⁴ Following his marriage to Minnie A. Ericson in 1910, Green gave up traveling with the Nebraska Indians and sold the team in late 1911 or early 1912 to Oran and James Beltzer.⁵⁵ As a Lincoln attorney, Green maintained an interest in Western League baseball and in 1912 served as an attorney for parties suing Western League commissioner Norris O'Neil and the National Association.⁵⁶ In the early 1920s, Green moved his family to Kansas City.⁵⁷ Beyond his formation of the Nebraska Indians, Green's greatest contribution

to American Indian baseball was his recording of anecdotes and the history of the team in *The Nebraska Indians: A Complete History and Fun and Frolic with an Indian Ball Team*.

Captain of the University of Nebraska football and baseball teams in 1909, Oran A. "Buck" Beltzer gave his name to Buck Beltzer Field, the baseball diamond on the Lincoln campus. Inspired by Green's example, Beltzer founded the Oxford Indians team in 1908, recruiting nearby Sioux players along with local white talent and selling postcards of the team in war paint with tomahawks and headdresses. The *Hebron Champion* said of the team, "Whoever plays with the Indians may look for a dirty game."⁵⁸ Playing third base and shortstop, Beltzer tried out with the Philadelphia Athletics in 1910 and, failing to make the team, joined the Nebraska Indians. He bought the team with his brother James in 1911 or 1912 and continued to compile an impressive record. Although he hired some talented Indian players such as Thomas Reed and Jesse Youngdeer, he increasingly relied on local white players. Under the Beltzers, during difficult wartime conditions, press coverage of the Nebraska Indians diminished, attendance dwindled, and the team finally folded in 1917. Beltzer went on to become president of the Grand Island Trust Company in Grand Island, Nebraska, and a large contributor to University of Nebraska athletic programs.⁵⁹

CONCLUSION

What was the cultural significance of the Nebraska Indians exhibition baseball team from 1897 to 1917? Clearly, it was an athletic and financial success, playing hundreds of games throughout the Midwest and East and southern United States during the period and proving itself against both amateur and professional competition. The most successful of the Indian teams, it paved the way for many others including John Olson's Cherokee All-Stars (c. 1904–1912); Gus Whitewings's All Indian Baseball Team (1907)⁶⁰; Kate J. Becker's Carlisle Indian Base Ball Club, a pan-Indian team unaffiliated with Carlisle Indian school (1916)⁶¹; T. H. Schimfessel's Arizona Indian Ball Team (1926)⁶²; William Mzhickteno's Potawatomi Indian Ball Team (c. 1925); the Dakota Eagles, an All-Sioux team based in Flandreau, South Dakota (1933); and Ben Harjo's Oklahoma Indians (1933), a pan-Indian team that included, albeit very briefly, forty-six-year-old Jim Thorpe. The list of touring teams, if it were extended to tribal teams with strong baseball traditions, such as the Chippewa of White Earth, Minnesota, or the Winnebago of Walthill, Nebraska, could be continued for many pages. These teams were remark-

able for confronting discrimination and triumphing over it through skilled play on a baseball diamond. Though social historians have produced an extensive literature concerning the portrayal of American Indians in Wild West shows like Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West or the Miller Brothers' 101 Ranch Real Wild West, it seems that they have largely neglected baseball "circuses" and exhibition teams like Green's Nebraska Indians.⁶³ Like the Wild West showmen, Guy Green considered the Indians he traveled with to be representatives of "a disappearing race," but he also admired and promoted their considerable talents as ballplayers. They out-hit, out-ran, and out-played their opposition consistently and even more consistently triumphed over the hecklers whooping and calling "Back to the Reservation!" from the grandstand. In this sense, the thousands of spectators who witnessed the Nebraska Indians' play often came "to see the Indians in a role new to the race." That new role of skilled professional athlete did not suddenly and of itself dispel anti-Indian prejudice. Yet it did raise American Indians such as Jim Thorpe and Charles Bender to new pinnacles of public admiration, while urging a new pan-Indian pride that contributed to political actions on behalf of many Native peoples, such as the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924.

4

Bender, Meyers, and Thorpe in the Big Leagues

“If my race continues to devote the same attention to the diamond game that it has within the past few years, there will soon be a pretty large tribe in organized baseball. The national pastime has opened a profession to the Indian in which he can best employ those natural senses . . . that centuries of life in the open have endowed him with.

“It would be false modesty on my part to declare that I am not thoroughly delighted with the fact that my race has proven itself competent to master the white man’s principal sport. In the two major leagues to-day are four young Indians who have attracted more or less attention. Albert Bender of the Athletics; George Johnson of the Cincinnati Reds; Jim Thorpe and myself of the Giants.

“All of us have made good, I think.”

John Tortes Meyers, *New York American*, May 25, 1913

“All arguments to the contrary notwithstanding, there are good Indians, and three of the greatest and best of these are ‘Chief’ Bender of the World Champion Athletics and ‘Chief’ Meyers and ‘Jim’ Thorpe of the Giants, leaders of the National League. This trio represents the highest type of the red man, viewed from the standpoint of the athlete, in the public eye today.”

Ed A. Goewey, “The Old Fan Says,” *Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly*, November 13, 1913

After Louis Sockalexis, three Indian baseball players captured national sporting headlines from 1903 to 1919: Charles Albert Bender of the Philadelphia Athletics and John Tortes Meyers and Jim Thorpe of the New York Giants. During this period, many other Native Americans played Major League Baseball, but the trio of Bender, Thorpe, and Meyers were undoubtedly the most widely celebrated and at times, especially in the case of Thorpe, the

most harshly criticized. Although Thorpe is justly the most lionized of all three athletes today, he was in terms of career baseball statistics the least impressive of the three: Bender was enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1953 for his pitching excellence and World Series heroics, Meyers was hailed as Christy Mathewson's hard-hitting catcher, but Thorpe was dogged by reports for the rest of his life that he had been "curve balled out of the major leagues." Of the three, Thorpe was the most disparaged by both writers and fans alike for failing to "live up to his potential." In this case, as in so many in professional baseball history, statistics and newspaper columns tell only part of the story. All three players, as Meyers would later say, were often treated as "foreigners" by fans, teammates, and the press, but all three did indeed make good, although each in his own very distinctive way. This chapter considers the accomplishments of Bender, Meyers, and Thorpe, as these stars presented three distinct models for triumphing over anti-Indian prejudice on the diamond: Bender by ostensibly denying that he faced such prejudice but also by working with his manager behind the scenes on behalf of Indian athletes and Indian school athletic programs; Meyers by frankly discussing the mistreatment of Indian nations by the U.S. government while minimizing his differences with racist teammates and fans and waiting to assert his rights at crucial moments; and Thorpe by openly challenging the attitudes of his manager and refusing to accept the label of a "dumb Indian," even though his defiance severely impaired his baseball career.

CHARLES A. BENDER: "ONLY I COULDN'T LET IT OUT"

Charles Albert Bender, who won admission to the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown in 1953, heard war-whoops from the stands throughout his career and was of course called "Chief," a nickname he disliked. Yet "when teammates teased him, he referred to them (teasingly or dismissively) as 'foreigners.' When admiring children crowded around him in the street and sought to ingratiate themselves with war-whoops and rain dances, he never lost his patience."¹ It had not been easy for Bender, who had grown up betwixt and between Indian and non-Indian cultures. He was born and lived on the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota, but as an adolescent he was sent for four years to the Lincoln Institute in Philadelphia (an educational home for boys). He returned home, but then ran away to attend Carlisle Indian Industrial School and Dickinson College and to a career in baseball.² He went on to win 212 Major League games, against 127 losses, with a 2.46 ERA, pitching a no-hitter against Cleveland in 1910 as well as another in the minors. He starred in five World Series for the Philadelphia Athletics, in 1905, 1910, 1911,

Table 3. Charles A. Bender Career Statistics

YEAR	AFFILIATION	GAMES	INNINGS		LOSSES	PCT.	STRIKEOUTS	ERA
			PITCHED	WINS				
1903	Philadelphia, AL	36	270	17	14	.548	127	3.07
1904	Philadelphia, AL	29	203	10	11	.476	149	2.87
1905	Philadelphia, AL	35	229	18	11	.621	142	2.83
1906	Philadelphia, AL	36	238	15	10	.600	159	2.53
1907	Philadelphia, AL	33	219	16	8	.667	112	2.05
1908	Philadelphia, AL	18	138	8	9	.471	85	1.75
1909	Philadelphia, AL	34	250	18	8	.692	161	1.66
1910	Philadelphia, AL	30	250	23	5	.821	155	1.58
1911	Philadelphia, AL	31	216	17	5	.773	114	2.16
1912	Philadelphia, AL	27	171	13	8	.619	90	2.74
1913	Philadelphia, AL	48	236	21	10	.677	135	2.21
1914	Philadelphia, AL	28	179	17	3	.850	107	2.26
1915	Baltimore, FL	26	178	4	16	.200	89	3.99
1916	Philadelphia, NL	27	122	7	7	.500	43	3.74
1917	Philadelphia, NL	20	113	8	2	.800	43	1.67
1019	Richmond, VL	34	280	29	2	.931	195	—
1920	New Haven, EL	47	324	25	12	.676	252	1.94
1921	New Haven, EL	36	195	13	7	.650	131	1.93
1922	Reading, IL	30	183	8	13	.381	88	2.42
1923	Baltimore, IL	13	93	6	3	.667	44	5.03
1924	New Haven, EL	12	91	6	4	.600	55	3.07
1925	Chicago, AL	1	1	0	0	.000	0	13.00
1927	Jamestown, ML	13	103	7	3	.700	39	1.33

Abbreviations: AL, American League; EL, Eastern League; FL, Federal League; IL, International League; ML, Mid-Atlantic League; NL, National League; VL, Virginia League.

Source: Charles A. Bender File, American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame.

1913, and 1914, totaling a 6–4 record and a 2.44 ERA in World Series play.³ Connie Mack, the Athletics’ clever and gentlemanly manager, called Bender “Albert,” as if he were a son and singled him out for recognition beyond Hall of Famers Eddie Plank, George “Rube” Waddell, and Robert “Lefty” Grove. Mack said of Bender, “If I had all the men I’ve ever handled and they were in their prime and there was one game I wanted to win above all others . . . Albert would be my man.”⁴ After retiring from the majors and working in the World War I shipyards in 1918, Bender returned to pitch in the minors with Major League prowess, earning a 29–2 record in the Virginia League in 1919 (and throwing like a man to boys) and a 25–12 record in the Eastern League in 1920.⁵

If any player could utterly dismantle the racist stereotype that Indian athletes were “lazy” and lacked competitiveness, it was Bender. The tall, sinewy right-hander did not simply want to win baseball games, he burned with a white heat to win them and to win too at billiards and trapshooting (he was a champion marksman, ranked as one of the best ten shots in the country), and to excel at landscape painting and jewelry craft.⁶ “Bender, when it comes to pitching an individual game, has no equals,” wrote F. C. Lane. “In a short series like the World’s Champions’ contests, no pitcher in the business can excel Bender.”⁷ In 1910, a Chicago sportswriter foretold that “Bender was built for the Cubs [to hit] in the World Series,” so the pitcher clipped the story, put it in his wallet, and defeated the Cubs 4–1 on three hits in the opening game.⁸ Noting that Bender had thrown “every ounce of his energy and steam into the series” in 1910, *Baseball Magazine* predicted in 1913 that Bender would “waver” against the New York Giants’ withering attack and “lose at least one game.”⁹ Proving his critics wrong again, Bender pitched well in the Athletics’ 1913 World Championship, winning two games without a loss. He had also pitched a four-hit shutout of the Giants in second game of the 1905 World Series, four times pitched in the opener of the World Series, and defeated Christy Mathewson 4–2 in his first of two wins in the Athletics’ 1911 World Championship. In all, he pitched nine consecutive complete games in the World Series – a feat no other pitcher has accomplished.¹⁰ Although his demeanor on the mound was usually described with adjectives such as “stern,” “cool,” “stoical,” and “impassive,” there was no doubting Bender’s intensity in crucial games.

Not only did Mack often call on Bender to pitch his pennant-clinching and World Series games, but Bender also sometimes implored his manager to start him in those games. In 1905, for instance, the Athletics needed two victories against the Washington Senators to clinch the AL pennant: Bender pitched a shutout in the first game and came in as a reliever in the second game to save a 9–7 victory.¹¹ According to another often-told anecdote, Mack had asked Bender before the 1913 Series how much he owed on his mortgage, offering to pay it off for him if he could win two games against the Giants. Bender, demurred, but Mack learned what the figure was, and after the A’s won the Series, issued him a bonus check in the exact amount.¹² But it was not so much money (he seldom made more than \$2,500 in a baseball season) as pride that motivated the A’s great pitcher. In 1907, with the Athletics locked in a tight race with Detroit, Bender won eleven consecutive games before being defeated 1–0 on August 21. In fact, not more than two runs were scored off him in any game of the streak.¹³ Similarly, in 1906,

he had become uncharacteristically exasperated at New York Highlanders player-manager Clark Griffith, who had baited him viciously and had defeated him in a game from which Bender was ejected on May 4. On the very next day, Bender “begged Connie Mack . . . to allow him to erase the blot placed on his escutcheon,” and when the manager gave him the ball, he downed the Highlanders 9–3 and hit a home run in the eighth inning to cap the performance.¹⁴ Finally, and most memorably, in the sixth and final game of the 1911 World Series, most observers expected Eddie Plank to pitch for the A’s, although Bender was also warming up. Just as the home plate umpire approached Mack for a lineup, Bender turned to him and said, “Get a new ball out of the bag for me, Connie.” The manager agreed, and his pitcher went on to defeat the Giants 13–2, allowing only four hits.¹⁵

What made Bender such a great competitor in big games? In addition to a blazing fastball, a very good slider and change-up, and an ardent desire to win, Bender was possessed of keen intelligence. The *Philadelphia Press* reported on the climactic game of the 1911 Series: “Bender pitched Thursday with brain and nerve rather than with brawn. This is a fact that the prince of strategists, Connie Mack, verified last night.”¹⁶ Mack himself wrote that one of his primary goals as a manager was “to develop more intelligent baseball players” by teaching them baseball as “a scientific system, which in the long run must bring results.”¹⁷ And Mack loved Bender for his baseball smarts as well as for his strong arm. The “tall tactician,” as Mack was sometimes known, credited a brilliant decision by Bender (who repositioned an outfielder when he pitched to the last Giant batter of the fifth inning) for winning game four of the 1913 World Series: “I doubt if many in attendance gave the ‘Chief’ credit for a splendid piece of strategy. . . . A rally, in other words, was nipped in the bud – by Bender’s foresight. That was the turning point of the game.”¹⁸

It was the same baseball intelligence that enabled Bender to develop a new pitch in 1910, the nickel curve, now known as the slider, that baffled the American League for more than a season. Soon after perfecting the new pitch, Bender pitched a no-hitter against Cleveland on May 12, 1910. In his next start, five days later, he shutout the White Sox on four hits.¹⁹ Likewise, Bender was known throughout his career for his ability to steal (decipher) the opposing team’s field signals as he sometimes coached first base for Mack or stole signs from base or the bench.²⁰ That intelligence made Bender a formidable scout, coach, and manager later in his career, leading the New Haven Weissman to an Eastern League Pennant in 1920 and leading his Virginia League team to second-place in 1919. Although he apparently

did not (or could not) seek a position as a Major League manager, he scouted for the Athletics in 1945 and 1947–1950, and coached for the club from 1950 until his death in 1954.²¹

But as a player, what forms of anti-Indian prejudice did Charles Bender confront on the diamond? Certainly, he was saddled with the “Chief” nickname, which he disliked for good reason: it was “a racial slur similar to calling a young black person ‘Sambo.’”²² So, when asked for autographs, he often signed his name Charles or Charley Bender, and his manager addressed him respectfully as Albert. And, just as certainly, although he did not express it visibly, he tired of raucous crowds making war-whoops and racist banter when he came to the mound. When Bender won the first game of the 1910 World Series by 4–1, a writer for the *Philadelphia Press* speculated that a “Constant Effort Against [the] Scoffing World Fitted Him [Bender] for Supreme Struggle”: “A story worthy of a Dickens or a Stevenson lies back of the marvelous Indian’s stolid skill. . . . It is the story of a life set apart by race distinction, of nerves hardened by many slights cast upon a sensitive spirit.”²³ And while Bender loved Carlisle Indian Industrial School, his alma mater, he did not recommend that other Indian school players follow his example. In fact, he wrote that he “wouldn’t advise any of the students at Carlisle to become a professional base ball player. It’s a hard road to travel.”²⁴

Yet some of Bender’s own comments about his identity as an American Indian indicate that he felt little prejudice. Amazingly, on October 19, 1910, he told a sportswriter for the *Chicago Daily News*: “I adopted it [baseball] because I played baseball better than I could do anything else, because the life and the game appealed to me and because there was so little of racial prejudice in the game. . . . There has been scarcely a trace of sentiment against me on account of my birth. I have been treated the same as other men.”²⁵ There is a small mountain of evidence that contradicts this statement, and even some of Bender’s own words belie it. One should, as Stephen Thompson has pointed out, recognize the context for such statements: “The interview in question occurred while Bender was an active player, negotiating contract and living from day to day with teammates and opponents who presumably read the newspapers.”²⁶ Likewise, Bender was quoted after his shutout victory in the 1905 World Series as saying, “I do not want my name presented to the public as an Indian but as a pitcher.”²⁷ On other occasions, however, Bender expressed considerable pride in his Chippewa ancestry and dismay at misunderstandings of Indian culture. Why, then, would he *not* want to be “presented to the public as an Indian”?

In the context of the early twentieth century, the answers to this question are manifold, and some of them are quite obvious. During the 1905 World

Series, he was being “presented to the public” relentlessly as a racial formula rather than as a person: as “Chief,” as “Hiawatha,” as a savage “scalping” the Giants. He was caricatured even in his home newspaper, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, with a large feather on his cap and a tomahawk on his belt, staring into the eyes of a Giants player and hypnotizing him with an “Indian sign,” while pronouncing, “UGH!”²⁸ And this cartoon was generous in comparison with some of the other statements made about Bender in 1905. Before the series began, *New York American* columnist William F. Kirk used the games as an opportunity to write a series of “Hiawatha” verses and to predict the scalping of Bender by Mathewson. Years later, according to Kirk, a grandchild of a Philadelphia fan would find the scalp of Bender lying by a creek:

Quoth she, “Dear grandad, here’s a scalp,
I found it near the brook.”
The Quaker scanned it carefully,
And then a sigh he took.
“That’s Big Chief Bender’s scalp,” said he,
“It was a glorious victory.”
“It was the Giants,” he explained.
“Who put C. Mack to rout.
Though how they turned the blooming trick
We could not well make out.
But every one declared,” said he,
“It was a glorious victory.”²⁹

And even this scalping fantasy seems mild when compared with some of the statements. On October 21, 1905, Bender’s photo appeared in *Sporting Life* under the headline “Glory for the Indian,” and this is how the writer, Charles Zuber, praised him for his shutout: “Bender, according to reports, is a *typical representative of his race – being just sufficiently below the white man’s standard to be coddled into doing anything that his manager might suggest* – and to the proper exercise of this influence on the part of Manager Connie Mack much of the Indian’s success as a twirler is due. *Like the negro on the stage, who . . . ’will work himself to death if you jolly him,’ the Indian can be ‘conned’ into taking up any sort of burden.*” (my emphasis)³⁰ This is a starkly racist prejudice toward someone who looked different, classing Indians with blacks as groups suitable for exploitation by their “coddling” and “conning” masters. Clearly, if this was a popular perception of American Indians, Bender must have been loathe to accept it.

It is little wonder, then, if in his public statements, Bender de-emphasized

his Indian identity. Not only had he been taught by his Indian-school education to emphasize his vocation and diminish his Native culture, but he had also long recognized that stressing his ancestry to the press would render him more a mascot than a man. He had had that experience since he started pitching for Philadelphia in 1903: he often appeared in the cartoons on the sports pages as an Indian caricature in buckskin with a Sioux headdress (though he was Ojibwe), sitting by a tepee or menacing a foe with a bat or tomahawk. In his first season an even more startling image leered at him from Sunday sports section of the *North American*: “Nelán shows Bender hunting for his Wampum Belt in St. Louis.”³¹ On June 22, 1903, Bender had left his sleeping compartment on a Pullman car to use a washroom, but when he returned to the sleeper, he found his wallet, which contained one hundred dollars, missing. Although Bender asked officials that his teammates not be searched, St. Louis detectives frisked all of the Pullman passengers without finding the wallet. But the syndicated New York cartoonist Charles Nelán made Bender himself, not the mysterious thief or the St. Louis constables, the unsettling focus of a June 28 cartoon. Nelán, who had a genius for creating grotesque, angular figures whose twisted bodies said as much about them as their faces, depicted Bender in fringed buckskin, moccasins, a striped jersey, feathers, hoop earrings, and trinket jewelry, looking for his “wampum belt” on the floor of the sleeper. While the lurid image of a Hollywood Western Indian (that bears little resemblance to Bender) crouches, the elderly passengers in the car rise with looks of alarm on their faces, fearing that the victim of a crime might be a skulking culprit instead. The obvious irony must have appeared humorous to Nelán and some of his readers but almost certainly not to Bender.

Of course, Bender could avoid some anti-Indian prejudice in the newspapers by refusing to read such pieces, but it was an inescapable presence on the playing field. Bench-jockeying was accepted as an inevitable part of the game, and racial and ethnic slurs were commonplace, although they were seldom mentioned in the press, unless a brawl broke out. When the A’s played the Washington Senators in an early series in May of 1903, Philadelphia’s *Evening Bulletin* reported that Senators outfielder Kip Selbach “tried to rattle Bender with choice Choctaw, but the ‘Chief’ would not scare a bit.”³² It appears that Bender learned, probably in his days at Carlisle, to tune out slanders. In the 1905 World Series against the Giants, he faced such harassment constantly from fans and opponents alike: “‘Back to the tepee for yours,’ hooted a rooter. ‘Giants grab heap much wampum,’ yelled another, giving an imitation Indian yell. Bender looked at his foes in stolid

silence but smiled widely as the running fire of comments continued.”³³ And even Giants manager John McGraw got into the act, saying, “It will be off the warpath for you today, Chief;” to which Bender replied, “It’s uncertain, . . . but I did it [won a World Series game] once, and I’m going to do my best to do it again.”³⁴ Only very occasionally did the insults ever occasion a serious incident, but it did happen when Bender faced the New York Highlanders’ Clark Griffith in 1903. Although he admired Bender’s pitching greatly, “Griffith was one of the many players who tried the patience of Bender with racial slurs. . . . But . . . he had to threaten Griffith physically to put a stop to it.”³⁵

In the press, the only remarks that Bender admitted upset him – and that he stood up to challenge – were those that concerned his wife Marie. At the start of the 1907 season, for example, *Sporting Life* reported the pitcher’s following “Just Protest” printed in the *North American*: “Charles Albert Bender feels that a gentle kick has arrived at his domicile, and he proceeds to register the same. In several accounts of the opening game he pitched, it was stated that a fair Hiawatha beamed down upon Mr. Bender from the pavilion. Inasmuch as the late Mr. Hiawatha was a male Indian and Mrs. Bender is a *beautiful young white woman*, Charles Albert failed to appreciate the well-meant compliment. Ugh! The Big Chief has spoken.” (my emphasis)³⁶ Bender, usually impervious to tabloid stories, was troubled by this dim-witted allusion to the legendary Mohawk hero Hiawatha as a woman. Why would he bother asking for a retraction of such an ignorant comment? Clearly, everyone knew he was married to a woman, but many may not have suspected that she was a “beautiful young white woman.” Was Bender trying to find a comfortable place in Anglo society in Philadelphia by stressing Marie’s whiteness? Or was he simply offended that the name of Hiawatha, an important figure in Iroquois history, was being treated so flippantly? Or was he signaling to the press and opponents that he wouldn’t tolerate any dallying with his wife’s name and reputation? Whatever the case, he might well have decided that it was counterproductive to ask the press for a retraction, when even their corrections ended with “Ugh! The Big Chief has spoken.”

Finally, what effect did the war-whoops and slurs have on Bender? The press, writing of the “stoical” pitcher, generally assumed that they had no effect whatsoever, that Indians were naturally impassive and unfeeling. But there was a very good reason that Bender lacked the stamina of the A’s other great pitchers and that his pitching career began to unravel in 1915. He later explained the physical and emotional breakdown that he suffered when he moved to the Baltimore Federals that year: “I was always nervous

like anyone else – maybe twice as nervous – only I couldn’t let it out. Indians can’t. After I left the A’s my nerves got worse. The acid in my stomach made it impossible to eat. I got thinner and thinner. I broke out in a rash, which several doctors said was the hives and I spent hundreds of dollars. This lasted until 1918, when I ran into a doctor in German town who cured me for a quarter. . . . But if only I had learned before how to relax.”³⁷ In other words, for most of his playing career, Bender “couldn’t let out” the tension he suffered from, since doing so as an Indian player would only exacerbate the abuse. For such reasons, he wished to be known more as a pitcher than as an Indian. Perhaps now, some eighty years later, he can receive a measure of credit for the grace and strength with which he helped integrate baseball for Native Americans, even though he could not admit doing so at the time. Fittingly, on a bronze plaque in the Baseball Hall of Fame, in Cooperstown, New York, he is remembered both as an American Indian and as a great pitcher. The plaque reads:

CHARLES ALBERT BENDER
“CHIEF”
PHILADELPHIA AL 1903–1914
PHILADELPHIA NL 1916–1917
CHICAGO AL 1925
FAMOUS CHIPPEWA INDIAN. WON OVER 200
GAMES. PITCHES FOR ATHLETICS IN 1905–
1910–1911–1913–1914 WORLD SERIES.
DEFEATED N.Y. GIANTS 3–0 FOR A’S ONLY
VICTORY IN 1905. FIRST PITCHER IN
WORLD SERIES OF 6 GAMES (1911) TO PITCH
3 COMPLETE GAMES. PITCHED NO-HIT GAME
AGAINST CLEVELAND IN 1910.
HIGHEST A.L. PERCENTAGES IN
1910–1911–1914.³⁸

JOHN TORTES MEYERS: “I WAS CONSIDERED A FOREIGNER”

As Charles Bender was reaching the pinnacle of his career, another Indian player burst upon the national scene and commanded almost as much press coverage, playing for the powerhouse New York Giants. He was John Tortes Meyers, a tremendous hitter and good catcher for the Giants’ outstanding pitching staff. And, unlike Bender, he talked openly to interviewers about his Indian identity and some of the conflicts that he suffered on the baseball

field. In an oft-cited interview late in his life with Lawrence S. Ritter, he said, “And I don’t like to say this, but in those days, when I was young, I was considered a foreigner. I didn’t belong. I was an Indian.”³⁹ Also, near the end of his life, he told John Lenkey of the *Sporting News*, “I was pushed around in baseball because I was a foreigner.”⁴⁰ And he went on to Ritter, “In those days, you know, the Indian was in the position of a minority group. Still, is, for that matter. . . . Every night [in Westerns] you see them on the television – killing us Indians. That’s all they do.” In fact, even during his playing days, Meyers’s candor about his mistreatment was bold, even courageous, extending to political statements in behalf of Indian rights. As early as 1909, Meyers said to a reporter about playing in New York, “I don’t know. This is a strange country to me. I’m a stranger in a strange land.”⁴¹ And in 1912, he wrote, “If I had it to do all over again, knowing what I know now, and offered the same opportunity that I once had, I probably wouldn’t be a professional ball player.”⁴²

Born in Riverside, California, in 1880, John Tortes was the son of a town saloon keeper, who had once been a captain in the Union army, and Felicite Tortes, a member of the Cahuilla band of Mission Indians. His father died in 1887, and his mother went to work for the nearby Mission Inn. He attended elementary school and high school in Riverside but also spent time at the Santa Rosa reservation and played baseball with the Santa Rosa team.⁴³ In 1912, Tortes, now known as Meyers, wrote an account of his life, and said this about the Cahuilla:

My people are Mission Indians. There are not many of the Indians left now, but it is one of the oldest tribes on the American Continent. A few are still gathered together on a Government reservation about ninety miles from Riverside, living under agency control and keeping the old customs; but the younger generation live for the most part in the towns, and have long since broken away from the traditions of their people.

The Mission Indians were founded by the earliest Christian fathers when they went into California, and the fathers converted most of them to Catholicism. They speak a language of their own tongue and Spanish. The language of the Mission Indians themselves [Takic] was limited to about 250 words and to signs, in the beginning. The tribe no longer has a chief, but they elect a captain and a few other officers. The Government agent is really their law.⁴⁴

That John Meyers was dispirited about the future for the Cahuilla people and their culture is evident throughout the account. Writing in 1912, when Indians were routinely denied U.S. citizenship, tribal autonomy, and basic rights and when federal and local education systems sought to extirpate

Native languages and cultures, Meyers had little reason to be anything but dispirited. Yet, he did do something about it – he voiced his protest against U.S. Indian policy.

While most Native baseball players during this period stayed far away from the subjects of Indian agents and policies, Meyers criticized both federal actions and local Indian agents in the press. In 1909, in an interview with J. W. McConaughy, he referred to the Crazy Snake movement, then at its final crisis:

“They say that the Indian has never shown a disposition to adopt the civilization of the white man, but he has never had a chance. They are treated like irresponsible children. They are herded on reservations, and when some railroad or land company wants the reservation, they are driven off of it and onto a worse one. Poor old Crazy Snake, a weak, old man, who didn’t have even a butcher knife, was accused of an uprising and his land was taken away from him and he was driven into the cold. He never stirred a finger. But the white men who are robbing him and other Indians are believed by the public and not the Indian.”⁴⁵

Chitto Harjo, or Crazy Snake, led a movement among his Creek people, which spread to the Five Nations of Oklahoma (the Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles) against federal allotments (or forced divisions) of Indian lands. Harjo protested that the Dawes Act of 1887 violated government treaties, especially the Treaty of 1832. For his resistance, Harjo was imprisoned in Leavenworth from 1902 to 1904, and though he addressed the U.S. Senate in 1906, his protests went unheeded. After an episode of violence, Harjo’s house was burned to the ground, and the great leader died in exile in 1909.⁴⁶ Clearly, Meyers was not mentioning Crazy Snake to win public approval as most Americans in 1909 viewed Harjo disapprovingly as a radical activist and troublemaker. Meyers was, rather, using his own fame as a baseball player to educate the public about the enduring injustices of U.S. Indian policy.

John Tortes, known as Jack to his friends, developed his skills as a baseball player in school and with his elder brother in Riverside as they alternated in the roles of pitcher and catcher. He played for the Riverside town team and the Santa Rosa team, but he dropped out of high school before graduation and took a job stamping wooden crates at a raisin packing plant for twelve dollars a week.⁴⁷ He then moved to El Paso, Texas, to catch for a semipro team while working as a Spanish interpreter, but in the summer of 1905, he joined teams in Morenci and Clifton, Arizona. At the Southwestern Tournament in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he faced a pitcher named Ralph Pierce of the Big Six Athletic Club of Colorado. Pierce was actually Ralph Glaze, a Dartmouth

pitcher who would eventually play for the Red Sox, and he recognized Tortes's ability immediately. Glaze recalled, "He was a fine ballplayer. I could see that. He was big and strong, too, and I began to think what an asset he would be to the Dartmouth football team, if he could be persuaded to go there. And naturally he would be a great catcher for the baseball team the next spring. . . . So I asked John Tortes to consider going back to Dartmouth with me for a college education."⁴⁸ Although the prospect of college football did not appeal to Tortes, baseball at Dartmouth and in the Major Leagues did, so he caught a train with Glaze, taking his catcher's mitt and little else.

In many respects, it is surprising that Meyers ever made the Major Leagues, let alone took classes at Dartmouth. With Glaze's help, he forged a high school diploma and passed most of his freshman classes. He joined Kappa Kappa Kappa fraternity, practiced on both the football and baseball teams, and studied very hard. History was his favorite subject, and he showed real eagerness to learn. So it was that from his time with the Giants to the end of his life that Meyers expressed disappointment for not continuing his studies: "The biggest regret of my life is that I never finished my college education," he told Lawrence Ritter and many others.⁴⁹ Yet he was already twenty-five-years-old, a late age to be starting college and an even later age to begin a career in baseball. Recognizing that fact, Meyers shaved several years off his age, and began his Minor League career in the summer of 1906 with Harrisburg in the Tri-State League. Dartmouth baseball coach Tom McCarthy had let Meyers know that the manager of the Harrisburg team needed players, and "Tom mentioned a sum [\$250 a month] that I could receive for playing professional ball, which was more money than I had ever seen in my life, and I couldn't resist."⁵⁰

His trials in Harrisburg was one of the most stressful periods of his career. He called his first two weeks with the team "one of the hardest experiences of my life": "They did not even speak a friendly word to me in all that time. If I picked up a bat some veteran would yell, 'Drop that, busher.' I was almost completely frozen out, but I made up my mind not to quit, no matter what they said or did."⁵¹ He said, "Every man on the team [was] eyeing me as if I had the bubonic plague," and it got worse.⁵² After eleven days of the silent treatment, the manager called on him to catch the spitball pitcher Frank Leary. Meyers continues the story:

"Well, I had a gay young time with that club. The only catchers they had were . . . three of the oldest veterans in the game, *and they certainly laid themselves to make me a happy Indian.* . . . For the next two weeks I was afraid to move.

“Then, on the Fourth of July and before the biggest crowd that they had in Harrisburg that year, [manager] Calhoun sent me in to catch . . . and to catch Frank Leary, a spitball pitcher. I didn’t know a spitball from a pair of shoes. I was so scared when I went out that first inning that I could not have told whether we were playing golf or bridge whist. It was a good hot day and Leary’s spitball was breaking great. *It was also breaking one Indian.* I was getting it everywhere but in my glove. They were plugging me in the chest and bouncing off my shins. I had five passed balls in two innings and then Calhoun took me out.” (my emphasis)⁵³

Given that Meyers told this story often, always with bitterness, it appears that his baseball career began with a trial of harassment, severe because he was a rookie and cruel because he was an Indian. In some ways, the story resembles the famous incident between Toledo pitcher Tony Mullane and catcher Fleet Walker in 1884. Walker was the first black player in the Major Leagues, and Mullane admitted trying to cross Walker up while pitching to him because he “disliked a Negro.”⁵⁴

Happily, Meyer’s hazing by Calhoun had a more satisfying conclusion than Walker’s by Mullane. Meyers became so enraged with his manager that, “mad enough to be brave,” he went to Calhoun and “balled him out like a regular veteran. I asked him what the howdy-do he meant by putting me in there to catch a spitball pitcher on a day like that when I had never seen one before – and so on.”⁵⁵ Surprisingly, the stunned manager then apologized to his rookie catcher, and the team began to accept him. So by asserting his rights at crucial moments, Meyers found that he could maintain a tenable relationship with his manager and teammates. The episode seems to have initiated a pattern that the catcher would repeat in his days with the Giants: having to tolerate manager John McGraw’s domination for a long period until finally speaking his peace and receiving some form of acknowledgment.

Meyer’s rise to Major League stardom as the best hitting catcher of the Deadball era was unlikely for yet other reasons besides his age and Indian ancestry. As a very big man, he was a slow runner, and baseball of the Cobb era was a game for sprinters, catchers included. So, in analyzing Major League catchers, *Baseball Magazine*’s F. C. Lane criticized Meyers pointedly:

For a big man he is fast on his feet, but his great size and massive build make him a strange anomaly. . . . This slowness handicaps him not only on the base paths . . . but also militates against him in the handling of foul flies. Slowness is no advantage at any position, and . . . such lack of speed as Meyers presents is a serious handicap at best. As a backstop Meyers is a capable but by no means a

brilliant performer. . . . As a catcher, then, in practically every department of the game Meyers is not above mediocrity, but as a batter he has few equals.⁵⁶

In fact, Meyers was told by every Minor League manager he had – by Calhoun in Harrisburg, by Russ Hall in Butte, and by Tim Flood and Michael Kelley in St. Paul – that he wasn't a Major League catcher: "They all insisted I wouldn't make a catcher, but I am still sticking, so I must have something," he said in 1912.⁵⁷ Just after McGraw had purchased Meyers's contract with St. Paul in late 1908 and handed the check to the Saints' manager, Kelley told him, "The Indian is all right for this club, but he'll never make a Big Leaguer."⁵⁸ To his credit, McGraw believed in Meyers's potential, and though he tried out eight catchers in spring training of 1909, he kept Meyers for the 1909 season and never regretted it. Still, believing that Meyers's lack of speed was a rally killer, he batted his best hitter eighth, and he employed Sandy Piez in the 1914 season for the sole purpose of pinch running for Meyers.

Yet, the fact that it was McGraw who signed Meyers undoubtedly made his transition to the majors more difficult. Not only was New York, then as now, a tough media market with a large handful of daily newspapers covering the Giants, but also McGraw's own personality, as "the Little Napoleon," and his prior history with the Orioles presented challenges for Meyers. As the Baltimore manager in 1901, McGraw had discovered a light-skinned black player named Charlie Grant playing brilliantly in Hot Springs, Arkansas. McGraw attempted to sign Grant as an Indian named Chief Tokahoma, but White Sox president Charles Comiskey exposed the deception and prevented Grant from passing as an Indian.⁵⁹ Still the episode put fans on guard, so when Meyers joined the Giants, he suffered the consequences of the Chief Tokahoma episode. In 1905, Meyers's teammate Ralph Glaze had commented about the impression that his dark complexion made at Dartmouth: "Some of the boys were pretty surprised when I piled out of the fancy rig with this very big, *very dark* Indian" (my emphasis).⁶⁰ Even the tolerant and Bucknell-educated Christy Mathewson commented, "Meyers is *naturally dark* and when he becomes tanned, *his skin is unusually so*" (my emphasis), noting that at times he couldn't see his catcher's dark fingers signaling pitches.⁶¹ Now, the Giants' new catcher had to worry about being accidentally crossed up by his pitcher while maintaining his "composure despite occasional epithets like 'nigger' shouted by smart-aleck fans."⁶² And Nathan Aaseg elaborated: "Meyers not only had to endure war-whoops and his unwelcome nickname [Chief], but frequently heard shouts of 'nigger!' from the stands."⁶³ The fan frenzy was also intensified by the newspapers'

Table 4. John Tortes Meyers Career Statistics

YEAR	AFFILIATION	GAMES	AT BATS	HITS	BATTING AVG.	ON-BASE PCT.
1906	Harrisburg/Lancaster, TSL	40	132	31	.235	—
1907	Butte, NWL	90	353	91	.258	—
1908	St. Paul, AA	88	329	96	.292	—
1909	New York, NL	90	220	61	.277	.359
1910	New York, NL	127	365	104	.285	.362
1911	New York, NL	133	391	130	.332	.392
1912	New York, NL	126	371	133	.358	.441
1913	New York, NL	120	378	118	.312	.387
1914	New York, NL	134	381	109	.286	.357
1915	New York, NL	110	289	67	.232	.311
1916	Brooklyn, NL	80	239	59	.247	.336
1917	Brooklyn–Boston, NL	72	200	45	.225	.292
1918	Buffalo, IL	65	204	67	.328	—
1919	New Haven, EL	84	276	83	.301	—

Abbreviations: AA, American Association; EL, Eastern League; IL, International League; NL, National League; NWL, North West League; TSL, Tri-State League.

Source: John T. Meyers File, American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame.

apparent fascination with the Indian player: “Chief Myers has been snapped [sic] so many times this season that he has acquired the camera habit. . . . T[eddy] Roosevelt used to be the most photographed man in America, but the former Great White Father never had anything on his sun-tanned ward.”⁶⁴

Within weeks of his debut on April 16, 1909, however, Meyers had won over McGraw and most of the fans in New York with his warm personality and his sizzling bat. At the Giants’ small park in Marlin, Texas, in spring training, 1909, Meyers had already “established a world’s record as a spring hitter by rapping out twenty-nine home runs within a month.”⁶⁵ McGraw called him “a vicious hitter” and “the greatest natural hitter in the game,” and his skill at bat was soon a matter of Major League record.⁶⁶ In the years 1911, 1912, and 1913, he hit .332, .358, and .312, respectively, leading the league in on-base percentage in 1912 with a .441 mark and frequently drawing intentional walks in an era in which they were almost unheard of.⁶⁷ *Leslie’s Illustrated* columnist Ed A. Goewey raved about Meyers in 1912: “His big bat is feared more than that of any slugger in the National [League], not even excepting the mighty ‘Honus’ Wagner, for when he connects with the ball it is sure to travel some. This stick work of the big redskin has caused him to become a record-breaker of a novel kind. To date the various pitchers facing him have

openly confessed their fear of his batting prowess by deliberately giving him free passage to first base considerably more than twenty times.”⁶⁸ In a game against the Cubs on June 10, 1912, he hit for the cycle (a home run, triple, double, and single in the same game), making Meyers the first Major League catcher to accomplish the feat.⁶⁹ In World Series play, he hit .300 against the A’s in 1911 and .357 against the Red Sox in 1912, but then, as so often, placing him eighth in the batting order prevented McGraw from making maximum use of his best hitter.⁷⁰ Meyers’s .291 lifetime average ranks first of any catcher in the Deadball era, excluding Ted Easterly (who played far fewer games), but including Giants’ Hall of Famer Roger Bresnahan, A’s and Yankee’s star Wally Schang, and Cubs’ stars Johnny Kling and Jimmy Archer.

For his part, Meyers was justly proud of his baseball accomplishments, and he wanted to show the public that if he couldn’t go back to Dartmouth, an Indian player could at least hit, and catch, and think as well as anyone else on a baseball field. He did this not only through his day-to-day play but by publishing a series of articles for the *New York American* from 1912 to 1914, some of which were syndicated nationally: “‘Chief’ Meyers, McGraw’s mighty mainstay behind the bat, and one of the deadliest hitters in the National League, will contribute his first article in *The Sunday American*.”⁷¹ The articles focused on baseball strategy and stars, especially the Giants, but Meyers also was able to address his Native identity in one of the articles. As a whole, the series – with titles such as “Batters Can Be Developed, Says Meyers,” “Chief Meyers Tells of ‘The Job of a Catcher,’” “Improved Pitching Staff Will Bring Third Straight Flag” – bespoke his expertise at all aspects of the game. And the articles often made telling points. His article on hitting for example giped against that the axiom that “hitters are not made but born.” “I disagree with such logic. There is the same opportunity for improvement in batting as in fielding or base running. . . . Baseball is nothing more than a battle of wits. The best batter is the one who masks his hands,” Meyer wrote, possibly thinking of the many who praised him as a natural hitter and failed to credit his own hard work and intelligence.⁷² In another article, “When Ball Players Rest,” Meyers noted that when he traveled with the team, “The natives [of other cities] can always spot me, because of my Indian appearance, so I’m usually the one they make for. . . . The other boys give a laugh because I’m the goat for all the questions. The fans can’t recognize the other players in their street clothes.”⁷³ And in at least one of the articles, concerning Jim Thorpe, he wrote, “It would be false modesty on my part to declare that I am not thoroughly delighted with the fact that my race has proven itself competent to master the white man’s

principal sport.”⁷⁴ He cited Bender, Thorpe, George Johnson, and himself as examples of this athletic mastery and defended Thorpe forcefully against the charge that he was a “side show attraction.”

Of course, John Meyers was not able, even with the help of Bender, Johnson, and Thorpe, to dispel the many stereotypes under which Indian players labored. He was called “Chief” (and still is) persistently, although he scoffed at the baseball nickname: “Every Indian who ever goes into baseball is a ‘chief;’” and he said seriously, “My real name, in Indian, is Tortes, but I was never a chief among my people.”⁷⁵ He heard his share of war-whoops and ugly epithets, but as the *New York American* pointed out, he answered them with a silent stare.⁷⁶ As a young man he could not vote, but he refused angrily to pay poll taxes, telling a tax assessor in California, “I know the laws, all right, and from my babyhood I have been taught to fight for my rights. The Government don’t allow us Indians to vote, and on account of that they don’t make us pay poll tax. Now, if you want to buck Uncle Sam, go ahead.”⁷⁷ And when a new umpire showed a heavy bias against him in spring training in Marlin, Texas, he asked John McGraw what to do about it. McGraw told him flatly, “Get rough with him,” and Meyers briefly did. So “a day or so later Charlie [the umpire] left Marlin for New York. His ambition to become an umpire had been throttled by an angry Chief.”⁷⁸

Far beyond his statistical accomplishments, perhaps Meyers’s greatest feat in baseball was the relationship he developed over seven seasons with Giants manager McGraw. While McGraw was openly autocratic and often verbally abusive, mixing racial epithets with other choice words, some players such as Meyers thrived under his supervision, while others such as Thorpe clearly did not. But Meyers spoke highly of McGraw in almost every interview: “What a great man he was! Oh, we held him in high regard.”⁷⁹ While most of his other managers discounted his talent, McGraw recognized Meyers’s ability and was willing to give a slow-footed Indian catcher a chance. Meyers deeply appreciated this about McGraw – that he was willing to see the potential in his players, whatever their race: “His ball team never lost a game; he lost it, not his players. He fought for his ballplayers, and protected them.”⁸⁰ Seeking to prove himself “competent to master the white man’s principal sport,” Meyers was an eager student of McGraw’s, a man who loved to talk baseball endlessly and knew how to win. And Meyers found that if he accepted the manager’s instructions, eventually he would also have an opportunity to have his own say.

Although Meyers no doubt disliked batting eighth, he accepted that place in the order, and McGraw reciprocated, saying, “The catcher . . . I do not insist on being fast,” and praising Meyers as “one of the best catchers in

the National League,” “a quick thinker,” a team leader, and “all around a very valuable man.”⁸¹ As McGraw himself said, “Some [players] I talk to like children, and I reason to others,” and Meyers was willing to accept this attitude as long as he was generally classed with the adults. On an even more uncomfortable subject, the calling of pitches, he also accepted McGraw’s domination. While Meyers studied batters diligently and prepared to call games throughout his career (“That’s a catcher’s job all his catching life,” he wrote in 1912), he found that McGraw increasingly called pitches by signals from the dugout and always in big games with the exception of Mathewson’s starts.⁸² In an unflattering article entitled “Myers’ Weakness,” in *Sporting Life*, Giants infielder Charles “Buck” Herzog criticized Meyers’s intelligence in calling pitches, saying that “The Indian [was] in constant need of Manager McGraw’s admonition,” or he would call for pitches that “would be instantly slaughtered by even the weakest batsman!”⁸³ And while McGraw did continue to supervise and overrule Meyers’s calls, he traded Herzog happily in 1913, two years before he traded Meyers with considerable regret.

To sum up Meyers’s baseball career, he wrote of the “four young Indians,” “All of us have made good,” though with some “unpleasant experiences” along the way. He was not the only Indian player to be called “Nigger” by hecklers in the stands. His American League contemporary, catcher Jay Clarke, a Wyandotte from Michigan, was nicknamed “Nig” by his teammates; and when Moses Yellow Horse made the Pirates in 1921, Commissioner Landis feared another Chief Tokahoma (see chapter 7). But Meyers possessed an uncommon ability to tolerate hard knocks and then at the right moment to strike back. This ability is captured well in two anecdotes, both concerning his relationship with McGraw. The first Meyers himself told to Jeane Hoffman:

“Before every game, Mr. McGraw always went over the batters with us, so that we knew beforehand how he wanted us to pitch. But this time I called for one high and outside, and Hornsby blasted the fences with it.

“When I slunk back to the dugout apprehensively, Mr. McGraw shouted to me, ‘Meyers! Why did you call the pitch that way?’

“‘Why, Sir, I thought’ I began.

“‘You THOUGHT?’ he screamed. ‘What have you to think with?’

“Five years later, the identical thing occurred at the Polo Grounds. This time Heinie Zimmerman hit a home run in the ninth off a high and outside pitch to win the game. When I crept back to the dugout, Mr. McGraw . . . asked me the same question.

“Well, sir,’ I began cautiously, ‘it appeared to me –’
 “APPEARED?’ Mr McGraw raised his eyebrows.
 “Yes, sir,’ I repeated, staring him in the eye. ‘It APPEARED.’
 “All right, Meyers,’ he grinned. ‘You win that one!’”⁸⁴

And just as Meyers’s wit enabled to get the best of McGraw in this case, so did his tenacity in a another case. At Marlin, Texas, for spring training in 1913, the forty-year-old McGraw, once a fleet runner, challenged Meyers to a race around the bases: “It was a go-as-you-please affair, and but a very close and exciting struggle. Each tried in every way to take any advantage possible. . . . McGraw kept the lead until the second base had been passed by crowding the Chief on the turns and trying to give him the hip. But the Indian got even on nearing third by pushing the manager off the path as well as out of his stride. The Chief came into the bag ahead and was able to hold the lead over the plate, although McGraw was at his shoulder.”⁸⁵ So, by wit and courage and the occasional shove, Meyers was able to circle the bases of the Major Leagues, stride by stride with a Hall-of-Famer, showing himself “competent to master the white man’s principal sport.” In 1972, two years after Meyers’s death, he was inducted into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas.⁸⁶

JIM THORPE: “I HIT .326. I MUST OF HIT A COUPLE OF CURVES.”

Superficial attacks on Jim Thorpe’s baseball career often began glibly, stating that the world’s greatest athlete could not hit in the Major Leagues, that he was “curve balled out,” that he liked football better, that he was quite possibly too lazy or mentally ill-equipped to play baseball, or worse, a drunk, a “bad Indian.” The press fired potshots like these again and again in the newspapers in Thorpe’s day, in passages like those below:

Lo, the Poor Injun
 Were I a base ball player
 I would not be a star:
 I would not be a Mathewson,
 Or e’ en a Charley Carr. . . .
 I’d like to have an easy time
 And still keep out of jail.
 I would not like expressions
 That might my beauty warp;
 All I want’s an iron-clad contract,
 To just sit around like Thorpe. — *Pittsburgh Post*, circa 1915⁸⁷

That a ball player is not necessarily an athlete, according to the accepted meaning of the word, has been shown rather conclusively, in the release of Jim Thorpe. . . . Our best [guess] is that Thorpe's mind was not of the peculiar caliber necessary to outguessing a pitcher while at bat. — *Bozeman Bulger*, May 22, 1915⁸⁸

[International League Umpire Frank] Brown seems to think that Thorpe does not care a whole lot about base ball and is a failure because he is playing indifferently and not putting the necessary pepper into his work. — “Thorpe Has No Interest in Game,” November 27, 1915⁸⁹

FAMOUS ATHLETE HAS BEEN ‘BAD INJUN’ AT TIMES

Thorpe was hardly a “good Indian” in the real sense of the term [morally good], and he was far from a “good Indian” in the traditional sense [sober]. . . . Oh, yes, Thorpe has been in the immediate vicinity of a number of interesting happenings. In all probability, he will furnish the sources for numerous others that will find their way into print, provided he remains in the big leagues. — Innis Brown, Fall 1913⁹⁰

Yet all of these comments contradict Jim Thorpe's own statements about his baseball career, and more importantly, they neglect significant evidence of Thorpe's success in baseball. Although Thorpe never performed in the Major Leagues at the level of Bender or Meyers, he was largely prevented from doing so by the Giants' management. Moreover, given Thorpe's Minor League accomplishments (he was a fine hitter with power, speed, and a very strong arm) and his Major League struggles in playing baseball, Meyers's 1913 statement that “All of us have made good” rings as true of Thorpe's baseball career as of his own.

Some accounts of Thorpe's baseball career, however, begin with a misleading view of his statistics: In six Major League seasons, he hit .252 in 698 at bats, spending most of his time on the Giants' bench. In comparison with his decathlon and pentathlon records in the 1912 Olympics (his score of 8,413 points in the decathlon was 700 points ahead of the silver medallist and would not be surpassed in Olympic competition until 1932), and his legendary feats as Carlisle's all-American halfback in 1911 and 1912 (in one play against Army in 1912, he ran almost two hundred yards to score a touchdown, because of an offside penalty), the record seems disappointing at best.⁹¹ The facts come into clearer focus, however, when one establishes that Thorpe hit .320 with a .476 slugging average in the minors (mostly at the very top, in the American Association, International League, and Pacific Coast League), that he starred in the Giants 1913 World Tour with the White Sox, that he hit .327 in his last year in the majors, and that he improved

consistently and dramatically throughout his Major League career.⁹² Why, then, did John McGraw seldom play Thorpe and then release him in 1919 with the scathing remark, “The bum couldn’t hit a curve ball!”? Thorpe himself rightly denied McGraw’s charge in every printed interview, telling Charley Paddock in 1929, “It is not true, for I could hit any kind of a ball from any kind of a pitcher,” and Al Stump in 1949, “My last season up, I hit .326. I must of hit a couple of curves.”⁹³ And teammates such as Meyers and Al Schacht concurred that Thorpe could hit curve balls. The answer to the question of his release lies rather in a fatal compound of unreasonable expectations, athletic mismanagement, and anti-Indian prejudice.

Another injustice, the U.S. Amateur Athletic Union’s rescinding Thorpe’s amateur status and the loss of his Olympic gold medals in January of 1913, initiated his career in baseball, and it did so with unfortunate clamor. When his contract was purchased by McGraw’s Giants on February 1, 1913, Thorpe was reeling from the loss. Meyers, his roommate in spring training, recalled, “I remember, very late one night, Jim came in and woke me up. I remember it like it was only last night. He was crying and tears were rolling down his cheeks. ‘You know, Chief,’ he said, ‘the King of Sweden gave me those trophies, he gave them to me. But they took them away from me, even though the guy who finished second refused to take them. They’re mine, Chief, I won them fair and square.’ It broke his heart, and he never really recovered.”⁹⁴ And the painful loss was aggravated by McGraw’s immediate signing of Thorpe. He reported for spring training at St. Louis, to take a train to Marlin, Texas, on February 18, less than three weeks after he had been stripped of his metals. The A.A.U. secretary, James E. Sullivan, was still rubbing salt in Thorpe’s wounds on April 3, stating that if Thorpe had only disclosed his previous professional activities “when signing as an entrant to the Olympic games last year, he might have been absolved of his transgression” and allowed to participate.⁹⁵ Meanwhile, crowds of writers were looking for interviews, eager to size up Thorpe the baseball player. Meyers recounted that Thorpe couldn’t begin practice at the same time as most of the players because of the press commotion: “He is afraid to be misunderstood by the public and does not get as much practice before the games as most of the recruits.”⁹⁶

The expectations for Thorpe, already proclaimed the world’s greatest athlete and a “star baseball player,” were fabulous and unrealistic, given Thorpe’s limited experience. He had last played professionally, at Class D Rocky Mount (a big step away from the Major Leagues) in 1910, had played only a few games at Carlisle as a pitcher and first baseman before the program was cancelled in 1910, and had devoted the last two years of

Table 5. James Francis Thorpe Career Statistics

YEAR	AFFILIATION	GAMES	AT BATS	RUNS	HITS	BATTING AVG.	STOLEN BASES
1909	Rocky Mount, ECL	44	138	11	35	.253	6
1910	Rocky Mount, ECL	29	76	11	18	.236	4
1913	New York, NL	19	35	6	5	.143	2
1914	New York, NL	30	31	5	6	.194	1
1915	New York, NL	17	52	8	12	.231	4
	Jersey City/Harrisburg, IL	96	370	51	112	.303	22
1916	Milwaukee, AA	143	573	85	157	.274	48
1917	New York/Cincinnati, NL	103	308	41	73	.237	12
1918	New York, NL	58	113	15	28	.248	3
1919	New York/Boston, NL	62	159	16	52	.327	7
1920	Akron, IL	128	522	102	188	.360	22
1922	Portland, PCL	35	120	13	37	.308	5
	Hartford/Worcester, EL	96	381	59	131	.344	19

Abbreviations: AA, American Association; ECL, Eastern Carolina League; EL, Eastern League; IL, International League; NL, National League; PCL, Pacific Coast League.

Source: *The Minor League Register*.

his life to Carlisle football and track, Olympic training, and occasionally his college studies. He was in Meyers’s words, “the greenest recruit you could imagine.”⁹⁷

That conclusion was by no means surprising. Even though Major League teams were scouting the all-American football player, Thorpe had not played competitive baseball for two-and-a-half years (aside from one game of baseball as an exhibition Olympic sport in Stockholm).⁹⁸ He had not faced top competition on a diamond, and he did not know whether McGraw was signing him as an outfielder, first baseman, or pitcher. The problem was a general one with Carlisle’s talented athletes, who often received inadequate preparation in baseball and were called up the Major Leagues before they were ready (see chapter 2). McGraw summed up Thorpe’s training in this way: “I can see there are some edges to be smoothed down. He is not sure in the field, and at times appears to be over-anxious as well as over-confident,” and “There is one good thing about Thorpe. He knows very little about baseball and therefore he hasn’t any bad habits to unlearn.”⁹⁹ So McGraw’s strongest recommendation for Thorpe’s baseball skills in the spring of 1913 was that he didn’t know enough about baseball to have any bad habits yet. Both Meyers and McGraw suggested that Thorpe had not yet fully learned how to play the outfield, hit breaking pitches, bunt, steal, and run bases. If it

had been any athlete other than Jim Thorpe, he would have found himself catching a train steaming to the Minor Leagues. Instead, the report was, “Big Jim will remain with the Giants all season.”¹⁰⁰ Or as Gus Axelson of the *Chicago Herald Record* put it: “Thorpe was an awkward fielder, erratic, a lunging, hard swinging, uncertain batter, and he had most of the faults that would be considered fatal in young players. McGraw kept him while almost any other manager would have fired him as a hopeless prospect.”¹⁰¹

As surprising (or cynical?) as McGraw’s decision to keep Thorpe with the Giants for the 1913 and 1914 seasons was the writers’ surprising, or cynical, dismay that Jim could not magically be transformed from an Olympic hero into a Major League star. As soon as Thorpe arrived at Marlin, he was greeted by a cannonade of flashbulbs, “First Photograph Received Showing ‘Big Jim’ Thorpe in a Giants’ Uniform,” and (with Meyers) “McGraw Has Pick of the Indian Race.”¹⁰² Likewise, for the first few weeks Thorpe’s home runs at the small Marlin field were instant headlines, and a myth was born that he had hit three home runs in a game at Texarkana, one that landed over the left field fence in Arkansas, one that landed over the center field fence in Texas, and one that landed over the right field fence in Oklahoma. In 1921, Thorpe did indeed hit three home runs in a game for Toledo, but the Texarkana trifecta was a myth: the Oklahoma border, for one, was some thirty miles away.¹⁰³ But, then, within a few weeks, the writers turned on Thorpe, and the second-guessing began in earnest:

“There are those now who are commencing to declare Jim Thorpe is a false alarm as a baseball player.” — Walter St. Denis, March 15, 1913¹⁰⁴

“Will Jim Thorpe ever be a baseball player?” — Sid Mercer, March 24, 1913¹⁰⁵

“Jim Thorpe is up against his reputation” — *Globe and Commercial Advertiser*, April 9, 1913¹⁰⁶

“An international committee holds that Jim Thorpe is a professional baseball player, but John J. McGraw knows better.” — George E. Phair, “Breakfast Food,” May 5, 1913¹⁰⁷

“Possibly we are mistaken, but John McGraw once hired a youth known as Jim Thorpe.” — George E. Phair, “Breakfast Food,” May 14, 1913.¹⁰⁸

And the final, and most persistent, rumor was that Thorpe was a sideshow. “There is a general impression,” wrote Bozeman Bulger, “that McGraw signed Thorpe purely for the sake of having a world-wide famous attraction for the Giants.”¹⁰⁹ And Frank Graham pitched in, “McGraw didn’t know how

well Thorpe could play ball. The chances are he didn't care particularly. . . . McGraw, always a showman, knew that if Jim only hit in batting practice he would be a drawing card wherever the Giants played."¹¹⁰

As rumors go, the "Thorpe is a side show" slander was brilliant. It contained an element of truth that baseball fans knew was virtually undeniable (that Thorpe was the drawing card McGraw wanted) and an element of falsehood (that he was destined to fail at baseball) that was deliciously cruel. For his part, Meyers took exception to the rumor and defended both his friend and manager: "Thorpe is with the Giants because McGraw believes in his possibilities. Those people were fooled who thought our manager engaged the lad as a side feature to parade the king of all athletes as a sort of circus. I am sure no one has seen Thorpe in any such role. And I am confident, as is McGraw and Thorpe himself, in the future of this sensational recruit."¹¹¹ Meyers was right to be offended. Thorpe was a world-class athlete among world-class athletes.

In addition to Thorpe's inimitable feats in football and track – and field, he was a talented basketball player, boxer, and wrestler; he often golfed in the 70s and bowled over 200.¹¹² There appeared to be no sport at which he could not excel, given enough time and practice. Unfortunately, at the Polo Grounds in 1913 and 1914, Thorpe was given little game experience: he totaled scarcely over thirty at bats per season, occasionally pinch running or pinch hitting but never getting the hundreds of plate appearances that Minor League players need to learn to hit professional pitching. When he did begin to get those at bats in Jersey City and Milwaukee and Akron, he improved dramatically, and his average rose consistently throughout his career. Thorpe had indeed signed with the Giants, knowing he would not be a starter in 1913 (the lowly St. Louis Browns had offered him a starting position) and as he wanted to play for a winner. Yet he must have imagined getting more than thirty-five at bats in a season and occasionally starting in his second year.¹¹³

This bench dwelling cost Thorpe badly. As Al Stump put it: "During the stretches he played regularly in left and center field, Thorpe hit well over .300. Then McGraw would bench him and his average would slump. Meanwhile, Jim fretted and grew bored."¹¹⁴ There may be a slight exaggeration in "Thorpe hit well over .300," but only a slight one. His .320 Minor League average, mostly in top leagues, indicates that he hit very well when playing every day. Likewise, his Major League average as a pinch hitter (14–65) was .215, suggesting that Thorpe withered as a bench warmer.¹¹⁵

When for the first time he played regularly, on the Giants–White Sox

exhibition World Tour in the late fall and winter of 1913–1914, he caught fire. The *Chicago Herald Record* reported, “Then the round-the-world trip started. Thorpe had the opportunity of watching different kinds of ball players, and he suddenly cut loose and commenced to execute the things he had seen the famous players do. [The] playing of the Indian proved the sensation of the tour.”¹¹⁶ Facing tough White Sox pitchers Jim Scott, Joe Benz, and Reb Russell, Thorpe proved he could hit big-league pitching as well as run and play good defense. In a game in Springfield, Illinois, he homered off Scott, making the first home run of the tour. In another game in Kansas City, he stole a triple from Sam Crawford with a fine outfield play, and he later stole a base and scored for the Giants.¹¹⁷ Meyers also thrived on the tour, winning a game in San Diego with a home run and receiving an abalone pin from an admiring fan.¹¹⁸ As the tour moved on to Japan, Australia, Rome, England, and back, Thorpe vied with Tris Speaker for top honors in hitting,¹¹⁹ frequently received standing ovations from large crowds, and Gus Axelson of the *Chicago Record-Herald* buzzed, “Jim Thorpe . . . promises to be the most sensational baseball player of 1914.”¹²⁰

What happened then to the promise of 1914 and to Thorpe the sensation? The unfortunate answer was John McGraw. Ultimately, Graham was right about McGraw the showman: he had little inclination to play Thorpe in 1913 and 1914 but kept him on the Giants roster largely to sell tickets. McGraw had admitted Thorpe’s huge box-office potential: “Of course, I realize that he will be a big novelty for the public,” and though he found Thorpe resistant to his domination, he did not wish to relinquish the ticket sales.¹²¹ So Thorpe got even fewer at bats in 1914 than the year before, almost all being pinch-hit appearances, and he grew more restive and angry on the bench. When he did play, McGraw often asked him to take pitches, bunt, or hit-and-run, when Thorpe wished to swing away. In his interview with Al Stump, Thorpe attributed his freeze-out to two incidents. First, pitcher Jeff Tesreau, a bear of a man, had challenged Thorpe to wrestle, and when Thorpe eagerly obliged, he wrenched Tesreau’s pitching shoulder badly, making McGraw furious.

But an even more deeply felt encounter occurred one day in the dugout when the manager accused Thorpe of visiting a New York bar. The encounter went like this:

[McGraw:] A young fellow like you shouldn’t ever drink. *Besides no Indian knows how to drink.*”

The way he said “Indian” irked Thorpe. “What about the Irish?” he came back.

McGraw bridled. “Listen you,” he snarled, sensitive about his own barroom escapades, “don’t get smart with me!”

“I’m not,” replied Thorpe, “It just happens that I’m Irish, too.” (my emphasis).¹²²

The brilliant flash of wit made Thorpe “even more unpopular” with his manager, and McGraw’s response made Thorpe distrustful of McGraw’s attitudes about Indians.

After Thorpe had left the Giants, McGraw was approached one day by a well-meaning friend who said, “Mac, I’ve got a great prospect for you. He’s an Indian and – ,” at which point, the manager cut him off short with, “That’s enough!”¹²³ While McGraw was uncommonly accepting of the athletic skills of players in the Negro Leagues, and he got along well enough with the contemplative Meyers, he expressed deep racial distrust of Thorpe. He disliked his rough-and-tumble personality, his playing of football in the off-season, and his “disturbing influence” on other Giants’ players.¹²⁴ Clearly, Thorpe was one of the players that was treated as a child and baited as an Indian. In fact, soon after Thorpe joined the Giants, McGraw appointed Meyers as Thorpe’s “supervisor,” since “Indians were supposed to be protected or supervised.”¹²⁵ As Thorpe’s supervisor, Meyer was asked to open Thorpe’s mail, including love letters from his fiancée Iva Miller. The regime of supervision ended badly one day, as Blanche McGraw recalled:

Thorpe simply exploded one day when he actually found one of his precious letters [from Iva] in the Chief’s locker. The blast took place when John was in his office at the ball park. It consisted of *the wildest yells ever heard on or off the prairie*. Fortunately no one but workmen were in the ballpark that morning, for John rushed out to investigate the yelling and found *Chief Meyers running for his life or scalp with Thorpe definitely on the warpath*.

Clad only in Turkish bath towels, which each carried in his hand, the two Indians were racing up and down the aisles, around the big grandstand. Meyers was screaming protests of innocence. Thorpe shouted threats at the culprit who had tampered with his mail. But he failed to catch Meyers. Anyone seeing the spectacle could only laugh, and John enjoyed it.

“Looks as though the wrong Indian competed in the Olympic Games,” John chuckled, and returned to his work. (my emphasis)¹²⁶

For this account, it appears that McGraw’s attitude toward his Native players could be patronizing at times (with Meyers) and could at its at worst be deeply prejudiced (with Thorpe).

Although Thorpe was not exempt from the war-whoops of crowds or tasteless cartoons in the newspaper, he often heard cheers of “Thorpe! Thorpe! Thorpe!” and found his greatest struggle was against McGraw’s

domination.¹²⁷ Long before he released Thorpe, McGraw was noting to writers that his outfielder often looked bad on curve balls, and “He has heard so often that he can’t hit a righthander’s curve ball that he believes it.”¹²⁸ But, if that were true, the manager himself did not remedy that perception, seldom starting Thorpe against right-handers and removing him from his only World Series start (in 1917) in the top of the first inning, when the White Sox went to right-hander Eddie Cicotte.¹²⁹ So Thorpe contended, “I could have hit it [the curve ball] if he [McGraw] only let me alone. It wasn’t the curves that bothered me so much as it was his way of telling me when to swing and when to take one.”¹³⁰ And teammates John Meyers and Al Schacht both concurred with Thorpe:

When the pitchers started to curve the ball he was dumfounded. Now he can hit the curve just about as well as he can hit speed. — John Meyers¹³¹

Many people have said that he was a disgrace as a baseball player. This is not true. They also say that he was curve-balled out of the major leagues. This is not true either. He had difficulty with it in the beginning. What do they expect? He had never even seen one before and all of a sudden he was up against the greatest. — Al Schacht¹³²

The myth, though, never completely died. Created by McGraw and New York writers such as Robert Leckie, the myth was even promoted by syndicated cartoons in the 1920s: “Jim Thorpe was curve-balled out of the pastime.”¹³³

What ultimately led McGraw to release Thorpe to the Boston Braves in May of 1919? At least two well-known accounts exist, one told by teammate Al Schacht and one by Thorpe himself as told to Al Stump. Both accounts involve the Giants’ manager verbally abusing Thorpe as an Indian, and it seems very likely that both incidents occurred, although the latter one was most likely to be the decisive event:

Jim missed a signal while running the bases and it cost a run. McGraw was furious and called Jim a “dumb Indian.” This was the only thing that Jim would not tolerate and he took out after McGraw and chased him all over the Polo Grounds. It took half the team to stop him. When Jim was dismissed, McGraw used the excuse of his inability to hit the curve ball and the writers have echoed his statement ever since. (my emphasis)¹³⁴

The manager became critical of Jim’s swing, and gave him a lot of orders that were merely confusing. Jim recalls starting in right field one season, where he hit .600 or better for the first six or seven games. Against Grover Cleveland Alexander, one

of the greatest of moundsmen, he broke up one game with a tremendous triple off the fence. A few days later, McGraw benched him. "I'm giving Red Murray a try in the field," he announced, intimating that Thorpe didn't satisfy.

Jim's anger smoldered as he sat in the dugout. Finally, a clutch situation arose where the Giants desperately needed a base-hit. McGraw waved Murray back and told Thorpe, "Go up there and get on." As Thorpe picked up a bat, he said loudly, "Why not let Murray hit? He can do a helluva lot better than Jim." McGraw was livid as he went to bat.

There is triumph in Jim's voice . . . as he tells how he squared accounts that day with McGraw. "I took three fast cuts without looking – missing 'em a mile – and came back and sat down. I saw McGraw glaring at me. So I said to him, 'See, I told you Murray could do better.'"

At that, says Jim, *McGraw leaped up as if shot in the pants and yelled, "You lousy blank blank Indian! You'll never make a monkey out of me again! You're all through with this club!"* (my emphasis)¹³⁵

A national athletic hero still, he knew he didn't have to accept anyone calling him a "dumb Indian" or tolerate, "You lousy blank blank Indian." It was a proud human feat but not one captured in record books or statistics. Thorpe's baseball career soon ended, giving way to his career in professional football with the Canton Bulldogs and New York Giants among others. As always, exuberant, rowdy, rough-and-tumble, Thorpe rushed to the next sports arena with dignity and never looked back. In January 1983, thirty years after his death, the International Olympic Committee presented his children with replicas of his 1912 Olympic medals.¹³⁶

These then were the three legends that, after Sockalexis, helped integrate Major League Baseball for American Indians. One was a canny and intense performer, a World Series hero who faced whooping crowds, race baiting, and disparaging caricature. In the midst of it, he denied feeling any prejudice, but the suffering showed on his body and in his pitching, and he later admitted, "I couldn't let it out." The second was a slow-footed catcher, who bested all predictions in making the Major Leagues then survived intimidation from teammates and shouts of "Nigger!" from the stands, to become a bulwark of the New York Giants' champion teams. He tolerated the domination of his manager, who batted him eighth and seldom trusted him to call pitches, but he spoke his mind about being treated as "a foreigner," a "stranger" who "didn't belong" because he was an Indian. The third was the greatest athlete of his time, perhaps of his century, but who came under fierce attack from the start of his career while he had yet little professional training. He compiled impressive records when he was given

the chance to play regularly and was cheered wildly on the Giants–White Sox World Tour but performed his best in defying a manager who called him a “dumb Indian.” They were Bender, Meyers, and Thorpe. None was a plaster saint. They were just ball players who “made good,” and American Indians integrating the national pastime, and a lot more besides.

5

The Many Trails of Louis Leroy

“The Stockbridge-Munsee people . . . have adopted as their symbol the Many Trails.”

Dorothy W. Davids

They were some of the first English-speaking immigrants to Wisconsin, the six hundred members of the Stockbridge-Munsee band of the Mohicans, who had once lived on the banks of the Mahicanituk (Northern Hudson) River in New York. The Stockbridge, along with the Delaware Munsee, began their migration to Wisconsin in 1818 to land purchased by missionaries near Menominee lands in the Fox River Valley. By 1910, most of the tribal lands had been lost through the government policy of dispersing the lands to individual members, who were unable to afford property taxes and were forced to sell. By the 1930s, the Stockbridge-Munsee were all but “landless and destitute.” The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 allowed the tribe to acquire twenty-five hundred acres of its present lands, in Bowler, Wisconsin, but on this tract of swampy and cutover forest the people found new hope.¹ Since the band’s move in the late 1930s, tribal numbers have grown to fourteen hundred members, and the tribal lands now number some forty-six thousand acres with one-third of the land held in trust by the U.S. government. While tribal members largely lost their Mohican language and culture during the 1700s and 1800s, young members are endeavoring to learn the language and to reinvigorate their indigenous traditions. The people’s history is perhaps best expressed by their tribal symbol, called the Many Trails, a walking-stick design created by Stockbridge-Munsee artist Edwin Martin. It is a symmetrical bead-work figure with multiple lines, circles, and arches all emerging from a central axis. Stockbridge historian Dorothy W. Davids says the Many Trails “symbolizes the strength, hope, and endurance of the Mohican people.” “The main thing about it,” Davids continues, “is that we’ve survived. And I think that that’s something deep in us. We’re a people.”²

Today, the survival and strength of the Stockbridge-Munsee is on exhibit

Table 6. Louis Leroy: Major League Pitching Statistics

SNS	G	GS	CG	W	L	SV	IP	H	BB	K	ERA
3	15	5	3	3	1	1	72	66	15	39	3.22

Source: *Total Baseball: The Official Encyclopedia of Major League Baseball*, 5th ed.

at the Arvid E. Miller Memorial Museum, named for the tribal president who guided the band for twenty-six years. In the museum, amid the birch-bark baskets, arrowheads, and tribal documents are photographs and documents of a remarkable early twentieth-century athlete named Louis Leroy Sr. (Carlisle football and baseball player and Major League pitcher, 1905–1906, 1910). In his day, Leroy received less acclaim than two other tremendous Stockbridge-Munsee athletes – James E. Johnson (Carlisle football; all-American, 1901, 1903; and College Football Hall of Fame), and Charles E. Williams (Carlisle football, all-American honorable mention, 1903; Carlisle team captain 1902). Yet, Leroy’s pitching career of eighteen professional seasons represents well not only the many trails of his people but also the many trails of American Indians who played professional baseball from 1897 to 1945.

While remembered by the Stockbridge-Munsee, Louis Paul Leroy (1879–1944) has been largely forgotten by baseball historians – written off as a “cup-of-coffee player.” These are players who had very short careers in Major League Baseball, but often long and outstanding careers in Minor League Baseball. Today, cup-of-coffee players usually fail to make big league squads after tryouts in the months of September or April, and they usually end their professional careers by age twenty-eight. But, during the “ivory hunting” era, before Branch Rickey’s development of the Minor League farm system, when talented players often spent years toiling in the Pacific Coast League and American Association, those who had one or two cups of coffee in the majors still could have very significant professional careers. Although he played for two Major League teams and in three separate seasons, Louis Leroy compiled few Major League statistics (see table 6). A good but meager record one might conclude and perhaps not quite good enough during the low-scoring games of the Deadball era.

Examining Leroy’s complete professional record, however, provides a very different context for understanding his pitching career (see table 7). And even these statistics are misleading, as no save totals are given (and Leroy would have accumulated dozens of Minor League saves by modern rules), and the innings-pitched totals omit two seasons (perhaps more than five

Table 7. Louis Leroy: Career Pitching Statistics

TEAM	LEAGUE	YEAR	GAMES	WINS	LOSSES	INNINGS PITCHED
Buffalo Bison	Eastern (A)	1902	20	13	5	—
Buffalo Bison	Eastern (A)	1903	[24]	13*	11*	—
Montreal Royals	Eastern (A)	1904	31	14	10	245
Montreal Royals	Eastern (A)	1905	32	18	12	250
N.Y. Highlanders	American	1905	3	1	1	24
N.Y. Highlanders	American	1906	11	2	0	44
Montreal Royals	Eastern (A)	1906	21	6	14	177
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1907	40	15	22	302
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1908	49**	16	21	332
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1909	57**	20	17	372
Boston Red Sox	American (ML)	1910	1	0	0	4
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1910	46	14	16	268
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1911	60**	18	23	300
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1912	44	20	10	277
St. Paul/Indianapolis	American Assn. (A)	1913	44	11	20	235
Indianapolis Indians	American Assn. (A)	1914	44	12	5	201
Salt Lake City Bees	Pacific Coast (A)	1915	30	6	9	143
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1915	11	3	2	57
Springfield Ponies	Eastern (B)	1916	23	10	8	137
Muskegon Reds	Central (B)	1916	8	3	3	47
Joplin Miners	Western (A)	1917	1	0	1	3
La Crosse Infants	Central Assn. (A)	1917	20	10	7	129
St. Paul Saints	American Assn. (A)	1918	3	0	2	19
Seattle Giants	Pacific Coast Intl. (B)	1918	14	6	5	108
Mitchell Kernels	South Dakota (D)	1920	26	18	6	200
TOTAL	18 Seasons		[663]	249	230	[3875]

[] Indicates partial totals

— Indicates missing totals

* 1903 record combines Buffalo figures mistakenly divided between Leroy and Laroy (two spellings of the pitcher's name)

** Indicates league-leading totals

Sources: *The Minor League Register*; *The Pacific Coast League: A Statistical History, 1903–1957*; *The International League: Year-by-Year Statistics, 1884–1953*; *The American Association: Year-by-Year Statistics for the Baseball Minor League, 1902–1952*.

hundred innings). Leroy led the American Association in games pitched for three seasons, twice won twenty games, won ten or more games fifteen times though pitching for mediocre teams, tossed a Class A no-hitter in 1910 (the highest Minor League designation at that time), and frequently relieved between starts, earning the sobriquet “Rubber-Armed Leroy.” Like most Indian players of his generation, he suffered other nicknames – especially “Chief Leroy” and “the Redskin Leroy” – and crude caricatures and incessant war-whoops throughout his career. His characteristic response was to avoid answering the hecklers in the bleachers and to let his pitching speak for him.

“CUP-OF-COFFEE” PIONEERS

Despite the tendency of Major League historians to use statistics as measures of accomplishment, the records of baseball’s first Indian players – men like Louis Sockalexis, Elijah Pinnance, Louis Bruce, Frank Jude, Mike Balenti, Jim Bluejacket, Ben Tincup, Ike Kahdot, and Louis Leroy – considerably understate their achievements as athletes and pioneers of integration. These cases are very much like the statistics of baseball’s first African American players – men like Satchel Paige, Don Black, Bob Thurman, Sam Jethroe, Luke Easter, Dan Bankhead, and Sam Lacey – whose Major League records undoubtedly do not reflect their achievements on the diamond. Take, for example, Austin “Ben” Tincup, a Cherokee from Adair, Oklahoma. He, like Leroy, was a longtime star in the American Association but has a succinct entry in the Major League encyclopedia. Tincup played for parts of four seasons with the Philadelphia Nationals and the Chicago Cubs, winning 8 and losing 11 in 48 games. Just another cup-of-coffee player? Hardly so, as Tincup chose to sign with the Louisville Colonels for a higher salary than Philadelphia offered to him. Like Leroy, he twice won twenty or more games in the American Association; and he tossed a perfect game against Birmingham in 1917, totaled 251 wins in the minors, and pitched until he was fifty-two years old. An excellent hitter, he sported a .271 batting average in 1203 Minor League games, often playing the outfield in addition to pitching. Perhaps most importantly, Tincup returned to the majors in the 1940s and 1950s as a scout for the Boston Braves, Pittsburgh Pirates, and Philadelphia Phillies, succeeding in a role accorded to few Indian former players.

An even more obscure example of the noteworthy cup-of-coffee player is Elijah “Ed” Pinnance, an Ojibwe of the Walpole Island First Nation in Ontario. Called up from Lebanon, New Hampshire, to Connie Mack’s Athletics in the late fall of 1903, he pitched well in two games, earning a save and allowing five hits in seven innings for a 2.57 ERA.³ For these meager

statistics, Pinnance has never been mentioned in any biographical encyclopedia of Major League players. Yet, when the pitcher made his debut against the Washington Senators on September 14, 1903, Pinnance became the first full-blood American Indian to play baseball in the Major Leagues, an honor often bestowed upon Moses Yellow Horse of the 1921 Pittsburgh Pirates. A big right-hander with good control, an excellent curve, and both overhand and underhand deliveries, Pinnance pitched for a decade in the minors – for Portland in the Pacific Coast League, for Albany and Troy in the New York State League, and for Nashua in the New England League, among others. On the day of his big-league debut, he had just pitched three times in two days for the Lebanon club and had been struck on the elbow by a batted ball. But he was needed by Mack to relieve Weldon Henley in the eighth inning against the Senators. Coming in from the bullpen, the pitcher, usually known as “Chief” or the “Big Injun,” was hailed by fans as “Peanuts” (in response to the French pronunciation of his surname). He saved the game for the Athletics, and he observed wryly, “Why should that name annoy me. I’ll be roasted more or less, and from what I’ve been able to observe, the roasting process vastly improves the peanut.”⁴ In fact, Pinnance’s characteristic response to hooting and whooping fans was to smile: “Chief Pinnance was the candy kid yesterday, and his smiling countenance proved most baffling to the Aberdeen bunch, for the chief would toss a wide grin before every pitch.”⁵

Following the first generation of Native players, Moses Yellow Horse, Ike Kahdot, and Euel Moore continued the tradition of Leroy, Pinnance, Bruce, Bluejacket, Balenti, and Tincup. Yellow Horse, a full-blooded Pawnee from Oklahoma, pitched 126 innings in two seasons for Pittsburgh, but made “Bring in Yellow Horse!” a rallying cry for thousands of Pirates’ fans (The story of his career is told in chapter 7). Kahdot, a Potawatomi from Georgetown, Oklahoma, was a pint-sized infielder who got two at bats without a hit for Cleveland in 1922 and was sent down to the minors, never to return.⁶ A product of Haskell Institute, he had led the Southwestern League in 1921 with 111 runs scored and had hit .322, but he never got a chance at the majors. For fifteen years, the third baseman played every day in the minors in the Western League, Texas League, Western Association, Piedmont League, and South Atlantic League, appearing in 150 or more games in all but one season of his career.⁷ Although he never made more than four hundred dollars a month during his playing days, he remained grateful for the rest of his life for his baseball career during the Depression, and he dismissed questions about his “Chief” nickname and the Cleveland Indians’ logo. “Baseball’s been good to me. If I hadn’t been playing ball, I

wouldn't be here today," he told a reporter in 1992.⁸ Euel Walton Moore was a Chickasaw from Reagan, Oklahoma, who was known as "Chief," "Big Chief," and "Monk" by his teammates. He pitched for parts of three seasons with the Philadelphia Phillies and New York Giants, mostly in relief, compiling a 9–16 record with three saves.⁹ In fact, although he pitched two no-hitters in the Texas League, Moore was simply happy to be pitching at all, as a pitched ball shattered his right arm in 1930, and he was released by Wichita. For his courage in coming back from injury and defying racism, as well as for his pitching talent, the gritty pitcher was inducted into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame in 1989.¹⁰

The many trails of Louis Leroy follow: the story of one American Indian player's peregrinations in college, the minors, and Major League Baseball in the days when professional baseball crowds were fascinated by Native players but were still often frankly anti-Indian.

EARLY TRAILS: FROM KESHENA TO HASKELL

Soon after Louis Sockalexis won meteoric fame with the Cleveland Spiders in 1897 and the Senecan pitcher Jacob Jameson signed a contract with the Philadelphia Nationals early in 1898, Louis Leroy began to dream of making the Major Leagues. Listed at five feet ten, 180 lbs., and apparently even smaller, Leroy was hardly the size of a professional pitcher even in the deadball era (New York writer W. J. Sullivan described him as "about the size of [Wee Willie] Keeler").¹¹ But he had a lively arm, a dancing spitball, a level head, enormous grit, and a big-league dream that he pursued for almost twenty years. He was born on February 18, 1879, to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Leroy in Red Springs (or Omro), Wisconsin, near where the Stockbridge live today and near the larger Menominee reservation.¹² His Carlisle Indian Industrial School records indicate that he was one-half Indian (Stockbridge-Munsee) blood.¹³ His French Canadian surname was pronounced "La Roy" and was written variously as, "Leroy," "Le Roy," "Laroy," and "La Roy." Like his younger brothers Frank, Roy, and John, and younger sister Lucinda, Louis was raised in the timber country of Shawano County and attended Keshena School (a reservation school for both Menominees and Stockbridge-Munsee) before transferring to federal off-reservation boarding schools.

As a boy, Louis learned to hunt and fish and trap in those heavily wooded areas, and he later would return to a small farm there from the baseball diamonds of the American Association for fall and winter respites from the long season. In fact, when he rejoined his Indianapolis team in March of 1914, he complained of the city's hard sidewalks: "One of the best trained

men right now is ‘Chief’ LaRoy, who put in the winter hunting and trapping in the wilds of Wisconsin. The real Indian reported in perfect condition, but the hard pavements of this little city have ‘stoved up’ his legs a bit. He says he has found the going a little rough after the tramping through the woods of his native heath.”¹⁴ Leroy played his first organized game of baseball with the Keshena school team, apparently in 1894, where he recognized his ability as a pitcher. He enrolled at Haskell Institute, the off-reservation boarding school in Lawrence, Kansas, on August 29, 1895, at age sixteen, and remained there until August 26, 1898, when he was dropped from the school rolls, apparently for desertion.¹⁵ While Louis certainly pitched for the Haskell Institute nine, no records remain of his play for the team.

CARLISLE’S “TEN THOUSAND DOLLAR ARM”

From Haskell, after a year’s intermission, Leroy applied to Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania and was accepted on March 30, 1899, just in time for the baseball season. His entry into the school was hailed eagerly: “Lewis Leroy, of Stockbridge, Wisconsin, has joined the forces at Carlisle as a student. He is a baseball player and a lover of athletic sports in general.”¹⁶ But Carlisle’s *Red Man and Helper* also reported that “Leroy was admitted to Carlisle . . . on solicitation of his friends, and when it was known that he had previously deserted from Haskell Institute.”¹⁷ Listed at five feet seven and 155 lbs., he matriculated in the eighth grade, received vocational training in the blacksmith shop, and worked on at least one summer outing (in the school’s summer-work program) with “M. Reed” in Ervinville, New Jersey, in July of 1899. While Louis played on both baseball and football teams at the industrial school, he was often absent without permission during the winter and summer months.

Remarkably, Leroy’s Carlisle record shows that he ran away four times in all, between his stints with the 1899, 1900, and 1901 baseball teams.¹⁸ Again, the *Red Man and Helper* reported: “While at Carlisle he deserted four times. Twice he was arrested and brought back, and twice he was re-admitted on his own urgency and promise of reformation.”¹⁹ On February 2, 1900, for example, the school news observed, “Louis Leroy is with us again. He has had many and varied experiences since he left Carlisle last year, and is now ready to settle down to steady, hard work and study.”²⁰ The problem of desertion was especially acute for Indian boys at the school as Genevieve Bell points out – a total of 1483 male students deserted Carlisle and some of them made multiple attempts.²¹ Superintendent Pratt was particularly disturbed by Leroy’s repeated violations, and when Leroy and Edward Demarr deserted

from the football team in November of 1901, Pratt advised sternly, “This notice is to warn all Indian schools not to harbor either of these young men.”²² Among the deserters, the baseball boys commonly ran away from the school to play with Minor League or semipro teams during the months of June and July. The boys could make fifty or seventy-five dollars per month on semipro baseball teams, whereas labor in the school’s outing program seldom paid more than twenty-five dollars per month. Louis Leroy was not the first or last Carlisle student to leave school for baseball, but he was to be the most notorious, until Jim Thorpe left Carlisle for Rocky Mount, North Carolina, in the summer of 1909.

Almost as soon as Leroy joined the Carlisle baseball team, he became its star pitcher. Reports in the *Red Man* and the *Carlisle Evening Sentinel* were somewhat subdued but did indicate Leroy’s pitching talent:

It was a fine game [Indians 6, Dickinson 2]. Leroy as pitcher and [Charles] Roberts as catcher make a fine combination. — (*Red Man and Helper*, June 2, 1899)

The pitchers are getting into first class condition, and the team this year should be very strong in that department. [Charles] Bender, Leroy and [Arthur] Pratt are the pitchers who give the most promise. — (*Red Man and Helper*, February 22, 1901)

The Indians saved Leroy, who is probably their best pitcher, for the game with Dickinson tomorrow. — (*Evening Sentinel*, April 19, 1901)

Leroy, in the first place, pitched well, but as on former occasions, catcher [Hawley] Pierce seems to have encountered difficulty in catching him. — (*Evening Sentinel*, April 30, 1901)²³

All early reports of Leroy’s pitching agree that he threw extremely hard (one of his nicknames at Buffalo was “Speedy”) though erratically at times, so it appears that Pierce “encountered difficulty in catching him” for both of these reasons.

Before long, managers and scouts from professional teams began to notice Leroy, starting with Jimmy Collins of the Boston Nationals in 1899. It was the duty of Glenn “Pop” Warner, Carlisle’s hulking football coach and athletic director, to restrain Leroy. His difficulty in doing so was revealed in his mocking nickname for Louis (“the boy with the ten thousand dollar arm and the five cent head”) and in the tale of his frustrations as Carlisle baseball coach in his autobiography. In this account, Warner details Leroy’s escape from the school in June of 1901 as he was signed under an alias to pitch the summer months in a Pennsylvania semipro league:

We had one ballplayer at Carlisle, Louis Leroy . . . that ran away from the Indian School each spring as soon as [the] baseball season was over. His escape schedule was like clockwork.

Leroy was crazy about playing baseball and was always trying to land a job with a professional baseball team, thus the reason for his annual spring madness.

And each fall, like clockwork, Leroy would return to Carlisle and beg to be able to re-enter the Indian School. . . .

After the third time that Leroy returned to Carlisle in the fall, Major Pratt, the school's superintendent, made up his mind that the next summer Leroy would have to remain at the Indian School during the summer break and not be given the opportunity to run off and play baseball. . . .

The following spring of 1901 while on our last baseball trip, Leroy jumped off the train during a brief stop in Lancaster, Pa., on the return trip to Carlisle. . . .

After a few days of checking out several false leads, I finally located Leroy when I went to visit a minor league pro baseball team that was in a nearby town. The team's manager told me that . . . he had just signed up a young Italian pitcher. . . . Yes, it was Leroy and he knew why I was there in his doorway.

"Come along with me, kid," I said as I yanked him out into the hallway. "You're going back to Carlisle. These summer playdays are over!" . . .

Upon our return to Carlisle, Leroy was placed in a dungeon beneath the Barrack's old guard house for punishment.²⁴

In fact, Leroy was confined in a narrow gray-granite cell of the school's Hessian guardhouse from mid-June until early September of 1901. It must have been a miserable summer indeed for the young man, who from his barred, slit-like window could see boys playing baseball on the school grounds. Leroy did briefly escape one day in midsummer by hitting a guard over the head with the heel of his shoe, but he was soon discovered in the hayloft of a nearby barn and re-incarcerated. In fact, Pratt was so determined to make an example of Leroy to the other students that it was the beginning of the fall term and the opening of the 1901 football season (Leroy was the substitute halfback) before the superintendent finally relented and returned him to the athletic dormitory.

Ironically, the September release only occasioned Leroy's fourth and final escape, while on a road game with the Carlisle football team with Edward Demarr. Both Leroy and Demarr were scheduled to start in the backfield in the game against Michigan at Detroit on November 2. From the team's hotel in Detroit, they slipped out before noon on the day of the game, and Warner again pursued, but unsuccessfully: "They lost track of LaRoy up in the timbers and although they made ineffectual overtures to find him

and bring him back to Carlisle, he was safe for all time.”²⁵ In part because of the desertion, Carlisle lost its game to Michigan, 22–0, which, as John Steckbeck put it mildly, “caused quite a stir.”²⁶ Warner himself wrote that “their desertion put us in a pretty tough spot,” and it is quite likely, given the coach’s fiery temperament and salty mouth, that he said something a good deal stronger at the time.²⁷ The desertion indicated not only that Leroy and Demarr were unhappy at school but also that they wanted to assert their power over their lives and allow the school authorities to suffer for their absence – on the hallowed football field. As Genevieve Bell says of the boys who fled Carlisle, “running away from school was a way of asserting their independence in a system that was designed to deny that independence; it was also a way of protecting themselves against a system in which they had no recourse.”²⁸ Such seems to have been the case with Louis Leroy.

While Pratt and Warner’s frustration with Leroy was understandable, it did neglect the young man’s own legitimate causes for discontent. To designate Leroy as “not worthy of confidence” as Pratt did or to call him “an eccentric little Indian” with “a five cent brain” as Warner did was more than a little unfair. Although treated as a ward of the government school, Louis was a twenty-two-year-old man in 1901 – who had been offered a Major League contract by the Boston Nationals at age twenty, only to be torn away from it by the long arm of Coach Warner. Warner insisted to Boston manager Jimmy Collins that “the U.S. government had a claim on the Indian, [and] that he was not able to leave the government’s school until after graduation.” The result was “[t]he deal was broken up, Collins was sorry; LaRoy was angry, and Warner watched the Indian like a cat.”²⁹ Furthermore, while Leroy had little interest in blacksmithing or the other vocational skills taught at the industrial school, he was deeply interested in a young woman at Carlisle, a Seneca Indian named Rose Poudry from Irving, New York. In short, he was ready to leave school, marry, and begin his baseball career just as school officials were urging him to wait for three more years until graduation at age twenty-five. In the end, Leroy felt his path was leading him to the baseball diamond, and he followed that path eagerly, despite his stays in the school’s guardhouse.

“DOGGED PERSISTENCE” IN THE EASTERN LEAGUE

Although he hurled a sizzling fastball, Louis Leroy was by no means guaranteed a career in professional baseball, not even in the minors. As New York’s *Globe and Commercial Advertiser* put it: “His . . . handicap is lack of weight

and height,”³⁰ and throughout his career, sportswriters referred to Leroy as “Little Chief” and “Little La Roy.” When Leroy traveled to Irving, New York, to court Poudry in the spring of 1902, he had not yet signed a professional contract for the summer. According to one account, he then called on Harry L. Taylor, once a professional player and a former Carlisle coach who was working as a lawyer in Buffalo. Taylor introduced Leroy to George Stallings, manager of the Class A Buffalo Bison, and Stallings, remembering Leroy’s pitching against Cornell in 1901, signed him to a contract.³¹ Louis showed up at Buffalo’s spring training with his old catcher and Senecan friend, Hawley Pierce, and the two were briefly proclaimed “the Bionic Indian Battery.”³² Neither one was assured of making the team, however, and Pierce (who was “promptly nicknamed ‘Big Chief,’” and applauded for his natural “ease” in the field and his strong throwing arm) was dropped from the roster after a few days, while Leroy hung on for his first of eighteen professional seasons.³³

He did not begin the 1902 season as a member of the team’s starting rotation, but he stuck as a reliever, substitute pitcher, and outfielder: “The Indian was given considerable time to get his bearings and in July and August . . . he pitched wonderful ball.”³⁴ In the meantime, Leroy impressed Stallings with both his relief pitching and his defensive play in the outfield. Although a mediocre hitter, Louis was fast on his feet and a good judge of fly balls, capable of making acrobatic catches. After he had made a juggling, one-handed catch against Montreal in August, the *Buffalo Evening News* celebrated: “Little Indian Saved the Game: La Roy Made a One-Handed Catch in the Eighth Which Was a Wonder,” and “Three Whoops for the Little Chief!”³⁵ It was on the mound, however, that Leroy had to prove his worth, and he showed even greater determination to succeed there.

Aside from his semipro pitching in Pennsylvania in 1901, Louis Leroy won his first professional game on May 26, 1902, against Montreal by a score of 3–1.³⁶ But it wasn’t until later, in July and August, that the rookie pitcher gained his position in Buffalo’s starting rotation and secured his place with the team. His late-summer victories included a 1–0 shutout of Montreal, a 2–0 shutout of Newark, a 10–0 shutout of Rochester, and a 2–1 defeat of Toronto, helping Stallings’s Bison to finish a very close second for the Eastern League pennant.³⁷ Equally impressive was the exhibition game that Leroy pitched against Honus Wagner’s Pittsburgh Pirates on September 23. In one and two-thirds innings, he allowed only one hit and struck out two batters – against the best-hitting team in all of baseball: “The [National League] champions couldn’t find the Indian safely, at least on such short

acquaintance.”³⁸ Through his willingness to play outfield one day and pitch the next, start one day and relieve the next, Louis had won a place on a Class A club and furthered his hopes of making the Major Leagues. But to achieve long-term success, he had to do something more, and Leroy did this too determinedly.

Many Buffalo sports stories relished the speed of Leroy’s fastball, but they also indicated the challenges he faced as a maturing pitcher. These scattered comments from 1902 are representative:

How would you like to get one of those awful Indian cannonballs which LaRoy serves up, right plump in the solar plexus? That was the portion of Luckless Jack Law yesterday at Worcester. — (August 16, 1902)

LaRoy pitched the rest of the game, and the wind from the first ball he discharged nearly upset the burly G. Sullivan. — (September 12, 1902)

The little Indian does not know how to “mix them up” very well, but yesterday his speed scared the life out of the Clamdiggers. — (September 12, 1902)

La Roy had all of his terrific speed with him and made the Skeeters “bow to him.” — (September 17, 1902)³⁹

Young Leroy’s heavy reliance on his brilliant fastball was natural, but it posed hindrances to his long-term success. At times, he “had all of his terrific speed,” but then his arm became tired, and he was hit hard; at times, especially early in games, he could blow his fastball by hitters, but then they grew accustomed to his speed and measured the pitches; and at times, he overthrew, giving up walks, hitting batters, or denting the backstop. The something more that Leroy had to do was to control his fastball and complement it with an assortment of other pitches. His accomplishment of these goals made him a success at all levels of professional baseball.

Over a three-year period, from 1902 to 1905, Leroy gained masterful control of his fastball, walking few batters; improved his curve; and developed a baffling new pitch, a one-fingered spitball (thrown with one moist finger and one dry for greater control) that opponents sometimes challenged as illegal. Known in Buffalo as a fastball pitcher, he became known in other cities as a spitball pitcher, a control pitcher, an iron man able to pitch whenever needed, and a golden-glove defender. The following three tributes, written between 1905 and 1910, illustrate Leroy’s development into a mature pitcher:

Laroy and his spit ball were too much for the Bronchos yesterday afternoon, and the Royals won from them . . . by way of a shutout. The score was 4 to 0. There

was no time in the nine innings that the little Indian did not have the home team at his mercy. His work was faultless. — (“Laroy and His Spit Ball”)

As a fielding pitcher, Laroy has no superior in America – you need bar no one on this. Slam them at him anywhere, anyway. You can’t make him duck. — (“Laroy, Best Pitcher”)

Mike Kelley says, “I never saw a more willing pitcher, and mighty few as good as Laroy is.” And so it goes. The knowing ones know that the “little Chief” is among the master box artists. . . . In other words, he has base ball brains. — (Larry Ho)⁴⁰

Even before these tributes were written, it was clear that the young pitcher’s persistence had earned large dividends. With greater control and less strain on his arm, Leroy was able to pitch complete games regularly, to relieve between starts when needed, and to pitch both halves of a doubleheader – a rare feat of endurance.

Near the end of 1904 season, as Montreal was suffering from a shortage of quality pitching, Leroy twice won doubleheaders for his team. On September 10, Leroy shutout the Rochester Bronchos, 4–0 on four hits and “felt so strong after it that he went right in again and won the second” 7–2 on seven hits.⁴¹ On September 16, he performed the feat again versus the Toronto Maple Leafs (or Hogtowns), winning the first game 3–1 and the second game 5–3 and allowing only eight hits in eighteen innings. The *Montreal Daily Herald* exulted in the victories: “This is the second time the little Indian has done a double victory this fall, and the fans got up on their hind legs yesterday and told Laroy that he was (1) A Dream, (2) A Lulu, (3) A Peach, (4) A Cuckoo, (5) The Real Goods.”⁴² The performances reminiscent of New York Giant star “Iron-Man” Joe McGinnity indicated that Leroy was now ready for the Major Leagues. They also demonstrated that he was very much worthy of the following praise: “Buffalo’s Indian twirler, Louis LaRoy, went through a siege of trial to become a professional ballplayer, and his dogged persistence and determination are responsible for his being one of the stars of the diamond today”⁴³ It was this resolute spirit that kept the Stockbridge-Munsee pitcher following the many trails of a baseball career.

LEROY’S CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

While his number of wins and games alone rank Louis Leroy among the best pitchers in American Association history, his career accomplishments extended beyond his play for the St. Paul Saints and Indianapolis Indians.

In 1909, sportswriter Larry Ho wrote of him, “Leroy – you all know him – premier of all A.A. pitchers, one of the greatest masters among modern boxmen – not only first among American Association pitchers, but among the very top-notchers in the entire country – a pitcher great enough in all departments of box strategy to shine in the big leagues among the top-liners. . . . I am sorry that he is not where he belongs, with the Browns and Mathewsons.”⁴⁴ If the praise sounds hyperbolic, it’s worth noting that the Minor League teams Leroy played for were perennial cellar-dwellers (providing little support for their pitchers). And when he did pitch in the big leagues, he performed admirably: a 3–1 record, a 3.22 era, only 66 hits and 15 walks, with 39 strikeouts in 72 innings pitched. Major League opponents hit only .244 against him and reached base at a .292 clip.⁴⁵ These statistics did not represent an aberration – Leroy pitched well against Major League teams in exhibition games throughout his career. In April of 1904, for example, he faced the New York Giants, the National League champions that year and pitched three hitless, scoreless innings: “the National Leaguers were all at sea when it came to connecting with it [Leroy’s spitball] safely.”⁴⁶ At St. Paul, Leroy led the league in games pitched three times, pitching as many as 60 games and 372 innings in a season – a staggering burden on any arm. Some thirty years after watching Leroy pitch, Ray Meehan, the former secretary of the St. Paul Saints, recalled, “He had a rubber arm, never had to warm up. And, besides, he was a pretty cunning pitcher.”⁴⁷

Leroy demonstrated his cunning and other pitching skills clearly in his games with the New York Highlanders (or Yankees as they were coming to be known) in 1905 and 1906. When he and Arch McCarthy were purchased by New York owner Frank Farrell in late August of 1905, Leroy was leading the Eastern League in strikeouts (166 in 250 innings pitched), and he was baffling opponents with his one-fingered spitball.⁴⁸ Both players were purchased (along with nine other Minor Leaguers) with the Yankee’s 1906 season in mind, but Leroy managed to impress New York manager Clark Griffith sufficiently that he was given a late-season tryout against the second-place Chicago White Sox. On September 22, 1905, he took the mound and lasted nine innings, defeating Chicago’s Nick Altrock 5–2. The following accounts from the *New York Times* and *New York American* tell the story of a successful Major League debut:

Le Roy, one of the new bloods Griffith has tied to himself for use next season, was dragged to the box – apparently for slaughter. Maybe Griff was content to lose a game, as he can't win the pennant, and Le Roy needed a little exercise. But that gentle youth, full of Canadian and Indian blood, shone as a torch in the darkness. He was stacked a team that is ten thousand miles from the slob class. He had Altrock, a pitcher with nerve, . . . confronting him. But little Leroy, who is about the size of Keeler and has Griffith's mannerisms to the point of mystification, was the leanest, cutest little thing on the grounds. The ladies adored him. The men cheered him. The scribes kept jotting down the cruel things he did to the seasoned, tough enemy. And he came out of the game with the flag flying free and the crowd cheering him with unalloyed sincerity. . . . I'm for that lad. If he isn't heard from next year, our dope is off its feed.—(W. J. Sullivan, *New York American*)⁴⁹

Manager Griffith gave Leroy, his new pitcher, late of the Montreal Club of the Eastern League, an opportunity to show his merits against the Chicago team yesterday, and he did so well that the visitors were beaten by a score of 5 to 2. The new-comer into major league ranks is a full-blooded Indian, of the same tribe, the Chippewas, that Bender of the Philadelphia Athletics hails from. In the Eastern League, he was considered one of the best pitchers, but as a member of the Montreal team he was dwarfed by the weak support he received. Yesterday, however, with splendid fielding to back him up, Leroy showed pitching ability of an unusually high order. He depended a great deal upon the wet ball, which he delivered with telling effect. Speed was not conspicuous in his delivery, but curves and drops appeared to be his stronghold. Six hits were all that the Chicagos could get, and he gave but one man a base on called balls. In only one instance did he show unsteadiness, the sixth inning, when [Frank] Isbell drove the ball to left field.—("American League," *New York Times*)⁵⁰

While the game stories indulged in both inaccuracies (Leroy was not full-blood nor a Chippewa) and irrelevancies (What did it really matter that "the ladies adored him"?), they did represent a genuine triumph. It was no mean feat to pitch a six-hitter in a Major League debut against one of the best teams in the American League, to shine "as a torch in the darkness," and to show "pitching ability of an unusually high order."

Although Leroy lost his second big league start to Jim Buchanan of the St. Louis Browns on September 26, he continued to impress New York player-manager Clark Griffith. Not assured of a Major League contract, he

threw well in spring training in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1906. As the team traveled north, he combined with his manager in a 8–1 victory against Jersey City and appeared strong both in starting and relief roles: “The probabilities are that Griffith will retain Leroy throughout the season.”⁵¹ He did, in fact, make the team and on April 30 pitched the Yankees to a 11–3 complete-game victory against Philadelphia before a crowd of twenty thousand strong (the gate receipts benefiting victims of the San Francisco earthquake).⁵² On May 23, Leroy also defeated the White Sox impressively, 4–1, giving up only 6 hits in 8 innings at Comiskey Park.⁵³ When Leroy was sent back to Montreal in June of 1906, he had won two games and saved another, without a defeat, allowing only 33 hits in 44 innings and recording a 2.22 ERA.⁵⁴

The decision to return Leroy to Montreal for cash was almost entirely a financial one. Since he had been unable to break into the Yankee’s strong rotation (with Hall of Famers Griffith and Jack Chesbro and star pitcher Al Orth) and was very much sought after by Montreal, it was in the club’s financial interest to make the deal. The *New York Evening Telegram* summed up the financial situation: “Some of the players who were signed during the winter have been allowed to revert to Minor Leagues. Griffith had so much good material on his hands that he did not need the men, and it would be foolish to keep them on the salary roll with little if any prospect that they would have much to do in a playing capacity.”⁵⁵ The demotion may also have been in Leroy’s best interest as he very much wanted to start and disliked long stints on the bench. Although the return to Montreal was dispiriting (and resulted in a poor record for the remainder of the 1906 season), it enabled Leroy to sign with the St. Paul Saints in 1907, his first year of many in the American Association.

Playing for the St. Paul Saints and Indianapolis Indians, Leroy was the star pitcher for a series of cellar dwellers. He won 15 games in 1907 for a last-place team, 16 games in 1908 for another last-place team (with a 48–105) record over all, and 20 games in 1912 for a sixth-place team. Major League scouts were not clambering to watch Louis throw, but St. Paul manager Mike Kelley and American Association competitors and press knew that he was still pitching at a big-league level. Leroy himself was deeply disappointed after the 1908 and 1909 seasons that no Major League club was interested. According to columnist Larry Ho, Leroy told him in 1909, “I don’t understand it, but I guess they’ve [the Major League owners] got it in for me. No matter how well I do, I can’t get a chance to go up.”⁵⁶

Soon afterward, however, Kelley worked out a trade with Boston manager Patsy Donovan, and Leroy was sold to the Boston Red Sox for the 1910 season. He won solid reviews for his pitching in spring training at Hot Springs,

Arkansas, and signed a contract with the Red Sox for a \$2100 annual salary on April 10, 1910.⁵⁷ On March 18, 1910, Boston's legendary sportswriter Tim Murnane wrote, "Leroy, the Indian pitcher, secured from St. Paul . . . is a natural pitcher with fine control and good speed."⁵⁸

Louis showed himself especially strong in relief, pitching two scoreless, hitless innings against the Cincinnati Reds on March 22.⁵⁹ He appears to have enjoyed himself too in Hot Springs, despite unseasonably warm temperatures in March of 1910: a photograph in his family scrapbook shows him with Red Sox pitcher Ed Karger, both dressed in suits and ties, riding the donkey-drawn Hot Springs water wagon.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, however, Leroy's final stay in the majors proved his shortest and least satisfactory.

A problem with the Red Sox management developed in spring training when manager Donovan asked Leroy to "shoot them fast" in exhibition games. Leroy did so, and "then my wing began to feel the strain, being unused to the hard work so early in the season." Leroy then reportedly had an April meeting with Donovan and told him, "See, here, Pat, I'm no spring chicken; I've pitched ball some time now, and there's still many good years of pitching in my arm if it isn't abused. I don't feel like throwing it away in these exhibition games; it isn't worth while." The result of the conversation was a sports story entitled "La Roy Doesn't Like Hard Work in Spring," which said among other things that Donovan "didn't know how to handle the red man."⁶¹ Whether it was Leroy's meeting with the manager or the sports story itself, Donovan had lost trust in his new pitcher and used him sparingly for the remainder of the spring and the early season. Although Louis was trim and one of the best-conditioned athletes in the Boston clubhouse, he had become a victim of one of the ugliest anti-Indian stereotypes – that of the "lazy Indian." He pitched only four innings in only one regular season game during the first three weeks of the 1910 season, and then a notice in the *Boston Globe* read, "Louis Leroy . . . was disposed of, yesterday, to the St. Paul club. . . . Leroy was perfectly satisfied to go back to his old wigwam in the far west."⁶² The demotion marked the end of Leroy's Major League career (though the dream was still alive through 1915). It is hard to fathom that Leroy was "perfectly satisfied" with being "disposed of," but perhaps he preferred life as a starting pitcher in Class A to riding the bench in the majors.

Not long after returning to St. Paul, Leroy proved his abilities were undiminished with a Class A no-hitter against the Indianapolis Indians on July 27, 1910: "The real Indian came back this afternoon and routed the whole tribe of make believe ones, practically unassisted."⁶³ Although it was his only official no-hitter in the minors, Leroy had pitched an even better game

on July 15 against the Toledo Mud Hens: allowing no hits or runs for nine and two-thirds innings, before Toledo catcher Grover Land singled and the Saints lost 1–0 in the tenth. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reported, “After pitching runless and hitless ball for nine innings, La Roy’s superb record was shattered today . . . when Grover Land accidentally pushed a single . . . into right field.”⁶⁴ The no-hit performances became even more remarkable when Louis’s younger brother, Frank, pitched a no-hitter for Bay City in the Southern Michigan League on July 18, 1911, making the Leroy brothers the first and perhaps the only American Indian brothers both to pitch Minor League no-hitters.⁶⁵

Also a Carlisle baseball star, Frank Leroy was a right-handed pitcher built very much like his elder brother but lacking his velocity and spitball. Frank joined the Bay City Cardinals in March of 1910 and pitched in the Southern Michigan League for five seasons (1910–1914), as Frank Leroy, “Chief” Leroy, and as “Frank Lawrence.” When Frank signed his first professional contract, the *Bay City Times* reported, “[Manager] Nugent has been on the lookout for several good pitchers. One, an Indian, with whom he is dickering is reported to be a wonder and has a brother in the big leagues. . . . The youngster is a right hander and has good control.”⁶⁶ The younger Leroy was a mainstay of the league for three years, going 15–16 and 21–10 for Bay City in 1910 and 1911 and 16–13 for Jackson in 1912.⁶⁷ On June 18, 1911, he pitched his most memorable professional game, shutting out Jackson with no hits, striking out eight, and doubling in the eighth inning to drive in Bay City’s only run for a 1–0 victory.⁶⁸ Although he never ventured farther than the Southern Michigan League (aside from a tryout with Rockford in 1913) and never made national headlines, Frank Leroy, like his elder brother, participated in the athletic legacy of the Stockbridge-Munsee people.

LEROY’S “INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE”

The greatest contribution of Louis Leroy to professional baseball, however, cannot be easily summed up in a statistical form on a scorecard or game record. For eighteen seasons in the majors and minors, in twelve different cities, he endured an integration experience. By “integration experience,” I mean he suffered frequent race-baiting, caricatures, and anti-Indian stereotypes, always from fans and the press but sometimes too from teammates, opponents, and managers. It was the same integration experience that a generation of American Indian athletes endured, starting with Sockalexis – beginning with the nickname “Chief.” As “Chief Leroy,” Louis was also referred to as “Big Chief,” “Little Chief,” “Hiawatha Leroy,” “the dusky son of the

forest,” “the young redskin,” “the poor Indian,” and “poor Lo,” among other nicknames. When he played for Indianapolis, he participated in scrimmages between the “Indians” (or Regulars) and the “Half Breeds.” Throughout his career, he opened the sports page to read stories like these:

LA ROY, HE BIG CHIEF: HE HAD HEAP MUCH CURVES
AND TREATED THE ROYALS LIKE SQUAWS AND PAPOUSES

The little Indian, Lee LaRoy, donned his war paint yesterday afternoon, gathered together a quiver full of speedy straight balls and a collection of curves and started as his ancestors did of old – after the scalp of loyal subjects of Great Britain. At 3:45 he began the journey over the nine inning trail followed by a lusty band of Buffalo Braves, some of them crippled to be sure, but all imbued with a spirit that boded nothing but victory. — (“La Roy, He Big Chief,” circa 1903)⁶⁹

With [Louis] Bruce and Laroy on the firing line there was a distinctly Indian flavor to the ceremonies. Bruce wears the war paint of the Blackfeet being a thirty-second cousin of Sitting Bull (Man-Afraid-of-too-Much-Water), while Laroy modestly hides his identity, denying the rumor that he is distantly connected with Sockalexix, the bounding fire water performer, who could absorb 73 glassfulls of red paint into his system before breakfast and then walk a tightrope to show that his balance was O.K. — (“Toronto Hit Hard,” 16 August 1904)⁷⁰

The Big Chief La Roy himself – he who spurned the delicious Boston bean – for the first time since his return led his tribesmen into the fray to the beat of tom-toms by Clarke. . . . They lifted the scalp of Richter, lefty twirler of the Kentucks, in the seventh after a blood-curdling fire dance about the bases, started by La Roy. — (“Colonels Are Scalped by Saints,” May 16, 1910)⁷¹

As a boy, the chieftain spent the happy hours on the Wisconsin Indian reservation, scalping boulder heads and chuckling with genuine Indian glee, watching his dad’s ponies hump when he plunked them in the slats with his little bow and arrow. . . . True to his ancestral instinct, the chief is a real stoic and never wastes his time kidding, which quality helps him over many a tight squeeze that every pitcher gets into. He already has won a no-hit game in the American Association, not to mention the numerous other feathers in his big war bonnet. — (“Brink,” circa 1911)⁷²

The mock-heroic descriptions of Leroy inevitably played on his Indian identity – as he “put on war paint”, carried a “quiver” and a “bow and arrow,” did the “blood-curdling fire dance,” scalped his opponents, and added victories to his “war bonnet.” Leroy seldom won a game without someone writing that he had “scalped” the other team or “added a scalp to his belt.” While the

tone was lightly mocking, the effect was to make Leroy into a human cartoon of the “Indian on the warpath,” and to ridicule Native names, speech, and heritage, making a tragic history into a Western burlesque. Even for a Christianized Indian like Leroy, paint, feathers, and dance were not idle Western props but were sacred parts of his Native heritage. In these anti-Indian stereotypes, as in most racial stereotypes, contradictions are also readily apparent – Leroy is presented both as a “stoic” who “never kids” and as a clowning child of nature, “chuckling with pure Indian glee.” In fact, Louis Leroy was neither a stoic nor a clown.⁷³ Though reticent with the press, he was a team leader who was relaxed and jovial with his teammates. At Buffalo, for example, he took up bowling and in his first game (with a one-hundred-pin handicap) competed against left fielder Matty McIntire, an expert bowler, with teammate Al Ferry serving as umpire. He also went on a hunting trip to Ohio with teammate Al “Shoddy” Shaw in 1902 and sent back a prank telegram asking for money to manager George Stallings.⁷⁴

The second passage quoted above indicates that Leroy was part of a generation of Native athletes, including Toronto and Philadelphia pitcher Louis Bruce and Cleveland outfielder Louis Sockalexis, whose Indian identities were flouted and caricatured. In the case of Bruce, the writer misidentifies the man’s tribe and fictionalizes his ancestry for a belly laugh. In the case of Sockalexis, the writer identifies him not as a Penobscot, but as a drunk. In this example, the tragedy of a player’s struggle with alcoholism is made into a joke and the man himself into clownish example of the “bad Indian” stereotype. Leroy was often cited as an example of the opposite, but equally destructive stereotype of “the good Indian,” the temperate “civilized” Indian. “There is not the slightest evidence that the red eye will ever prevent his becoming a pitcher,” a Buffalo writer penned, “LaRoy eschews the intoxicants entirely and has always done so.”⁷⁵ In other words, Louis had to be a model of temperance or he would be derogated as a Indian drunk. So said Springfield manager John Flynn too in 1916: “LaRoy is what Flynn terms a ‘good Indian.’”⁷⁶ The “good Indian” and “bad Indian” are both modern descendents of old and corrosive stereotypes – the “noble Savage,” “drunken Indian,” and “cruel Savage.” As James Wilson points out: “Ultimately, the ‘good Indian’ is no more real than the ‘bad Indian.’”⁷⁷

Like other Native players of his generation, Leroy was also subject to graphic caricature in the sports pages. Before the Cleveland Indians’ management had devised the “Chief Wahoo” logo, players like Leroy and Bruce were depicted in precisely this manner – as Indian mascots. One cartoon of Leroy by “Empty” Caine of St. Paul shows him comically hunched with

the same absurd toothy grin as “Chief Wahoo,” an eagle feather pinned to his cap, as he performs a mock-Indian dance while applying whitewash to a Toledo Mud Hen.⁷⁸ Native speech as well as appearance was also ridiculed in the cartoons. Although Leroy spoke English as his first language, in the caricatures he was transformed into a stereotypical savage speaking broken English: “UGH! Injun Heap Some Speed Boy Also,” a clownish Leroy says on the front page of the *Boston Daily Globe* in 1910 in a panel by cartoonist Wallace Goldsmith.⁷⁹ After the nine no-hit innings against Toledo in July of 1910, St. Paul’s Allman depicted Leroy as “Big Chief Tight Wad” wrapped in a Western blanket in front of a teepee, scowling, saying “Huh” (translated as “Meaning, nothing doing, kid”).⁸⁰

In the most egregious example of racist caricature, Leroy saw his pitching cartoonized together with the massacre of American Indians. An anonymous cartoon entitled “The Outbreak” shows a mob or posse of baseball players in the background lifting a pike with a scalp (labeled “Le Roy’s Scalp”) and exclaiming, “Yip” and “Wow.” Meanwhile, in the foreground of the cartoon, Leroy is depicted as shirtless and in fringed buckskin pants with a lump on his head, being pulled by travois over a cliff with the message, “To the Happy Hunting Grounds.”⁸¹ The prevalent anti-Indian attitudes of the time made even the scalping and massacre of Indians a possible subject for levity. The humorist Bill Nye had written in 1881, “A dead Indian is a pleasing picture,” and so it still seemed to be to some, even in the new progressive days of the early twentieth century.⁸²

Certainly, to say that Louis Leroy endured an integration experience is not to say that he was simply a victim – anymore than Jackie Robinson and Larry Doby were simply victims. Leroy was harmed by the war-whoops of fans, the racial nicknames and caricatures of writers and graphic artists, and the anti-Indian stereotypes of his managers. Clearly, Glenn Warner’s comment that Leroy had a “five-cent head” (a contemptuous reference to the Indian-head nickel) cast the pitcher into the stereotype of the “dumb Indian,” making his time at Carlisle (even the time outside the guardhouse) trying at best. Likewise, the stereotype of the “lazy Indian” appears to have injured Leroy’s relationship with Red Sox manager Patsy Donovan just when the pitcher was at the peak of his powers and aborted his last tryout in the majors. And even the “good Indian” label must have grown burdensome to Leroy over the years as the mature athlete was being treated as the ethical equivalent of a child. Yet, for all these indignities, Leroy, like Bender and Pinnance and like the pioneers of baseball’s black integration, was first of all a talented and determined baseball player. Although he must have been

disappointed not to pitch longer in the Major Leagues, there is no record in newspaper articles or in his scrapbook that he dwelt on the injustices. Rather, he continued down the path he had chosen – to Indianapolis, Salt Lake City, Springfield, Massachusetts, Seattle, and even Mitchell, South Dakota. There, in the Dakota League in 1920 in his final Minor League season, he went 18–6, pitching in the high-plains heat at age forty-one and leading the Mitchell Kernels to the only league championship of his career. In the end, and throughout his career, he was more victor than victim.

THE MANY TRAILS LEAD HOME

Pursuing a career in baseball entailed personal sacrifices as well as career triumphs. Louis's marriage to Rose Poudry Leroy broke up in 1908, apparently rather unhappily as he had difficulty in paying the alimony ordered by a St. Paul court.⁸³ His eldest son by his first marriage, Lee Daniel Leroy, would eventually follow his father's footsteps to Carlisle Indian Industrial School just before the Department of the Interior closed the school in 1918.⁸⁴ But as Leroy's baseball career continued, in the off-seasons he was increasingly drawn to his boyhood home in Gresham, Wisconsin, among the Stockbridge-Munsee. On November 11, 1910, he married Josephine Hoffman, a young woman from Gresham. During the long baseball seasons, Josephine took care of their two young children, Louis Paul Leroy Jr. and Arlene Leroy, but Louis returned to farm, trap, and tend to his family during the winter months.⁸⁵ Even after he had journeyed back to Wisconsin from South Dakota in 1920, Louis continued to play semipro baseball in the summer months, pitching for Gresham in the Wolf River Valley League. In 1924 at age forty-five, he devised a fitting finale for his baseball career with a no-hitter against the Wittenburg Grays in which "only two balls were hit to the outfield."⁸⁶ He played summer baseball, though, through 1925 and afterward assisted in coaching local high school teams while working as a "lumberman."⁸⁷

In 1936, Leroy retired from work but became increasingly involved in the affairs of the Stockbridge. In 1934, the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act, enabling many tribal members to reclaim lost lands and to live on the expanded reservation in Bowler, Wisconsin. In 1936, the Leroy family moved from Gresham to Bowler, to a log-cabin home in the new reservation on the site of the former Brooks and Ross logging camp. Bernice Miller and her husband Arvid E. Miller, the long-time Stockbridge-Munsee president, moved along with the Leroy family in 1936, and she recalls Louis often talking with Arvid about Stockbridge-Munsee politics:

Louie Leroy would come by to talk to my husband. He was a nice old feller. He was retired. I guess they talked about sports, baseball, and politics, about tribal politics, although I don't know what they said. They would always head outdoors.

They lived in a log house, a two-story. It was a nice house, but old. His wife Joe said that she was afraid she would outlive the house. She was a good mother and grandma. She liked to plant flowers and our boys would play together. . . .

You bet it was [an important time for the Stockbridge-Munsee people]. Until then, we didn't have a home.⁸⁸

In the end, the many trails of Louis Leroy's baseball career had brought him back to his people – to mixing baseball with tribal politics in talks with his friend, Arvid Miller. Leroy became ill in August of 1944 and died on October 10 at age sixty-five of liver cancer.⁸⁹ Although his statistical record in Major League baseball is brief, he was one of the first generation of American Indian players in professional baseball – a group whose integration experiences now call for recognition.

6

George Howard Johnson's Career in Professional Baseball

*"You cannot harm me,
you cannot harm
one who has dreamed a dream like mine."*

Dakota Fragment

"A man can be destroyed but not defeated."

Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*

George Howard Johnson, a member of the Ho-Chunk or Winnebago of Nebraska, is occasionally recalled as the second half of a baseball trivia question: "Who hit the first home run in Wrigley Field?" It was Art Wilson, the catcher for the Chicago Whales' Federal League team, on April 23, 1914. "Who did he hit it off?" Yes, it was Johnson.¹ But George Howard Johnson was far from a trivial figure in his three-year career in the Major Leagues and in his fourteen-year career in professional baseball. Indeed, from his trade to the Cincinnati Reds in April of 1913 to his jump to the Federal League in April of 1914 to his violent death in Des Moines in 1922, Johnson often captured local and national headlines. A five-foot-eleven-and-one-half spitballer (who usually weighed in between 200 and 220 pounds), Johnson won 40 games and lost 43 in three Major League seasons, notching a 2.95 ERA.² He pitched nine Major League shutouts and had a career winning percentage in the Major Leagues (.482) well above that (.466) of the teams for which he played.³ Broad shouldered and very muscular, he was consistently described as a "great physical specimen" and "strong as an Ox." But perhaps the most interesting story about Johnson did not concern his size and pitching prowess, or even his notorious contract-jumping to the Federal League, but his paradoxical assertion of his American Indian identity, the dignity of his people and heritage, through the Anglo game of baseball.

Johnson was born on the Winnebago reservation along the Nebraska-

Iowa border on March 30, 1886. He would live there on a farm in Walthill, Nebraska, for most of his adult life, and he would be buried in the agency cemetery nearby. He was one of five children, the two sons and three daughters of Louisa Johnson. His Carlisle Indian School records describe him as one-quarter-blood Winnebago.⁴ Various records list “Murphy” as Johnson’s nickname, middle name, or last name, but his daughter Elaine explained, “My father was part French and Winnebago Indian with his strain of Irish that made him ‘Murphy’ to the newspaper wags.”⁵ Johnson apparently did tell a newspaper reporter from the *Kansas City Star* that “Murphy” was his true surname; the story reads:

A bunch of bugs [fans] approached Johnson at the hotel last night and implored him to give them his right name. They expected a “Rain-in-the Face” answer, or at least “Boy- Afraid-of-His-Dog.” His answer was a surprise even to his teammates when he said:

“George Murphy.”

That’s his real name, too. His father was a real Irisher.⁶

Another account, in the *Boston Evening Globe*, stated that his paternal grandfather was an Irishman named George Washington Murphy, who left his son in the care of a family named Johnson during the Civil War.⁷ Whatever the precise details of Johnson’s parentage, it’s clear that he faced a struggle in defining his name and identity as Ho-Chunk names were mocked by the press of the day, and the idea of an Irish Indian was just as warmly ridiculed. And so, like so many other Indian athletes, he was given the facetious epithet of “Chief,” but his teammates also called him “Murphy” or “Big Murph.”

“Chief,” as has been demonstrated throughout this book, was the almost inescapable label of American Indian players in professional baseball from 1897 to 1945. The only Indian players who were able to avoid the label, such as Brooklyn Dodgers outfielder Zack Wheat, were those who downplayed their Native origins and identified themselves thoroughly with the American national culture. The “Chief” epithet was not meant to honor American Indian identity but to appropriate it in the manner of a mascot or a Wild West show Indian on display. Certainly, none of these players was ever nicknamed “tribal president” or “Cherokee nation president.” Like the other Indian players, Johnson may have grown accustomed to being called “Chief,” but certainly not to the racism inherent in being treated as a mascot rather than as a man.

The young George H. Johnson attended the local reservation school where he learned to read and write, but his father’s death (apparently when George was seven-years-old) interrupted his education. According to the

Boston Evening Globe, Louisa Johnson moved with George to Philadelphia and enrolled him in the Lincoln Institute, a government boarding school that accepted American Indian children, but he later attended Flandreau Institute in South Dakota.⁸ Other newspaper accounts place him at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, and school records confirm his brief tenure there from February 8, 1903, to October 6, 1903, where he performed summer outing tasks for a man named James S. Rich and may have played outfield briefly for one of the school baseball teams. However, there is no evidence that he played on the Carlisle varsity team in the spring of 1903. And on October 6, 1903, Johnson was discharged from Carlisle for running away.⁹

It is certain that Carlisle and other off-reservation boarding schools had a significant impact on Johnson as they had a profound effect on his people. David Lee Smith, tribal historian of the Ho-Chunk or Winnebago of Nebraska, says that “the boarding school experience” in the early twentieth century “brought about the almost total destruction of traditional Winnebago culture” as the children were “forced to give up their language, religion, culture, and tribal traditions.”¹⁰ Carlisle, Haskell, Chilocco, Flandreau, Genoa, and the other off-reservation boarding schools that the Winnebago of Nebraska attended promoted all necessary means for the students’ assimilation in the dominant European culture. The founder of Carlisle Industrial School for Indians, Supervisor Richard Henry Pratt, believed that removing youths from their tribal homes, eliminating traditional dress, cutting native braids, teaching English, and generally extirpating of Native culture and religion were crucial parts of the education of his students.¹¹ While Richard Pratt expressed care for the physical welfare of his students, he imbued his school with paternalistic Christianity determined to unlearn tribal education and eradicate Native identities. It is no wonder that Johnson might have been unhappy at Carlisle and have sought to run away. Many other students, especially boys, did.

According to researcher Genevieve Bell, “By the end of Pratt’s administration, there was a steady increase in the number of students attempting to desert from the school,” and in 1900 alone, there were eighty-five desertion attempts. Most of the runaways attempted to return home by hitching rides on empty freight cars, but one Ho-Chunk youth named Walter BigFire stole a bicycle in 1899, for which he served time in the Huntington Reformatory.¹² Before entering Carlisle, Johnson had also briefly attended Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas: he enrolled on October 14, 1902, but deserted on December 9, 1902, and was dropped from the school rolls on June 30, 1903.¹³ Apparently, the military discipline, academic studies, and culture at

the federal boarding schools did not sit well with Johnson, and he rebelled in the most common way, by running away.

Newspaper accounts, though, mention Johnson's boarding school experiences prominently as a tribute to his character, and he may have exaggerated his time at Carlisle (instead of his time at other schools) to burnish his reputation with the writers. Like his fellow Carlisle student and Major Leaguer, Frank Jude (an Ojibwe from Minnesota), Johnson was an exceptionally natty dresser, appearing for team photos in a tweed coat, bow tie, and driving hat. Harold D. Johnson described Johnson as a "gentlemanly, well-read Indian," and Harry A. Williams called him "that splendid child of nature, Chief Johnson, who prefers public life to the reservation with free food and government chewing tobacco" and who pitches "a highly civilized grade of ball."¹⁴ Such accounts considered reservation Indians as degenerate and in need of a program for civilization.

Although baseball was part of the boarding-school program for assimilation, it was also one of the most students' most popular outlets and a possible means of triumphing over bigoted attitudes. Another writer, Sam Weller commented, "Like many of his people, Johnson began playing baseball when a child. He liked the game and was quite an all-around player. . . . [He] was sent to the Carlisle school, in Pennsylvania, and there he began his baseball career."¹⁵ Pratt also recognized that football and baseball could be "a powerful tool for acculturating Indians to the American value system," and the athletic program steadily rose in prominence at Carlisle even after Pratt's departure.¹⁶ Under its legendary coach Glenn S. "Pop" Warner, the Carlisle football team enjoyed a high national profile from 1899 to 1914, and the baseball team also enjoyed some success against Ivy League competition. The Carlisle baseball program eventually foundered though, as chapter 4 makes clear, because Warner chose to divert the team's players and resources to the track program. Still Warner himself described keenly the psychological factor that motivated many of his best athletes: "The Indians know that people regard them as an inferior race, unable to compete successfully in any endeavor with the white men, and as a result they are imbued with a fighting spirit, when pitted against their white brethren, that carries them a long way toward victory."¹⁷ Similarly, researcher John Bloom has found that boarding school students associated success in sports with "cultural memory and pride," enabling them to appropriate Anglo athletics as a proving ground for Indian strength and courage.¹⁸ This, then, was the kind of identity that George Johnson would fashion through his baseball career: one "imbued with a fighting spirit" when facing hostile opponents, writers, or fans but also one that was proud of his own successes and his people.

In 1905, Johnson played outfield for a semipro team in Oakland, Nebraska, and he married another student from Carlisle, Margaret LaMere, a three-fifths blood Ho-Chunk woman. They were to have three children, Elaine, Catherine, and Joseph, while George played professional baseball during the summers and tended his homestead and barbered in Walthill during the winters. He played his first professional ball with Guy W. Green's Nebraska Indians, a nationally recognized barnstorming team, in 1906 and 1907. In fact, in 1907 Johnson pitched thirty-eight games for the Nebraska Indians and won thirty-two, earning him a mention in *Sporting Life* magazine as a talented new prospect in the Western League.¹⁹

The travel and playing conditions of the Nebraska Indians were tough, even for the time. The twelve Indian players would travel by Pullman car together, sometimes assemble when necessary for a parade in Indian head-dress to drum up a crowd, and play night games under their crude portable lighting equipment against college, semipro, and town all-star competition. The team often slept in tents on the ball fields to economize and because some hotel keepers refused to lodge Indians, and the players were even pursued by town constables with accusations of thievery. Green tells the story of one of his players who stopped to ask directions in Collinsville, Illinois: he was held at gun-point by a citizen and his wife and then locked up for a night in the local jail.²⁰ In 1906, the team traveled to well over one hundred towns in fifteen states, from New Jersey to Nebraska. By Guy Green's account, the team won 151 games, lost 31, and tied 2 and shut out their opponents 44 times. While most of their wins were against local teams, the Nebraska Indians also boasted victories against the University of Nebraska twice, the Indianapolis ABCs (a Negro League team), and all-star semipros like the Brooklyn Brightons and the Chicago Lawndales.²¹ In addition to his turns in the pitcher's box, Johnson also played outfield for the Nebraska Indians. (For a complete history of the Nebraska Indians, see chapter 3.)

It is from Guy W. Green's interview with the *Sioux City Journal* in 1909 that we can learn the most about Johnson's experience with the Nebraska Indians and with teams in the Western League. A meticulous observer, Green commented on the racist epithets that Johnson endured wherever he pitched. He said in the three years that Johnson pitched for him, from 1906 to 1909, "He has never yet stepped to the mound to pitch a game anywhere on earth that three things have not happened. Numerous local humorists have started what they imagine to be Indian war cries; others have yelled 'Back to the reservation,' and the third variety of town pump jester has shrieked 'Dog soup! Dog soup!'"²² Of course, mock war-chants, "Back to the reservation," and "Dog soup!" were not the only barbs hurled at George Johnson. The

Image Not Available

1. Elijah Edward Pinnance, Philadelphia Athletics, 1903. He was the first full-blood American Indian to play Major League baseball. Wallaceburg and District Museum, Wallaceburg, Ontario.

Image Not Available

2

2. Flandreau Indian School baseball team, Flandreau, South Dakota, circa 1910. South Dakota State Historical Society, State Archives.

3. Haskell Institute Baseball Team, circa 1920. U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Central Plains Region.

4. Louis F. Sockalexis, who began the integration of American Indians in professional baseball in 1897. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

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5. Carlisle's Union Reserve baseball team with coach Fiske Goodyear, circa 1889. Photo attributed to John N. Choate. Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

6. Young women students at Carlisle Indian School also learned to play baseball. These girls played during a summer camp session at Pine Grove Park, circa 1910. Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

7. Louis Leroy (far right on bench) with the Carlisle team, circa 1899. Coach Glenn "Pop" Warner is in the center of the back row. Courtesy of Sabina Carroll.

Image Not Available

8

8. Guy W. Green's Nebraska Indians, postcard, circa 1900. Nebraska State Historical Society Photograph Collections.

9. "Three of Our Stars," Guy Green's Nebraska Indians, circa 1910. The man in the center is Dan Tobey dressed in his clown outfit. The Nebraska Indians sometimes dressed in buckskin and headdresses to promote their games. Nebraska State Historical Society Photograph Collections.

10. Charles A. Bender, pitcher for the Philadelphia Athletics. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

Image Not Available

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Image Not Available

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11. John Tortes Meyers, hitting for McGraw's Giants, circa 1910. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

12. Jim Thorpe with the New York Giants, circa 1914. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

13. John McGraw, manager of the New York Giants (right) with coach Wilbert Robinson, circa 1910. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.



COME ON NOW CHIEF
AND BE REASONABLE
THERE'S NO REASON
WHY YOU SHOULD BE
SO TIGHT. COME ON
OLD MAN AND LOOSEN A BIT

LERROY
BIG CHIEF
TIGHT WAD

HUH

MEANING, NOTHING
DOING KID

LERROY, ALLOWED NO HITS SAVE ONE IN THE LAST INNIN

Image Not Available

14. Louis Leroy in cartoon, circa 1910. Courtesy of Sabina Carroll.

15. George Howard Johnson, Kansas City Packers, circa 1914. Courtesy of Michael Mumby.

Image Not Available

16. Moses Yellow Horse pitching for the Pittsburgh Pirates, 1921. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

newspapers themselves contributed their share: “Injun,” “Heap-Big Injun,” “Big Chief,” “Plenty-Saliva,” “Indian buck,” “Poor Lo,” “Redskin,” and on they would go for his entire career, providing Johnson’s “fight spirit” with plenty of fuel.

In 1907, Johnson advanced to the Minor League ranks, signing briefly with the Joplin Miners of the Class C Western Association. He did not stay in Joplin long, though, once Guy Green purchased the Lincoln Tree-Planters (and renamed them the “Greenbackers”) of the Class A Western League in 1908.²³ Green signed his former star in 1908, and Johnson impressed Western Leaguers immediately with his hard fastball and intimidating presence on the mound, recording a 19–16 record in his first year.²⁴ Johnson’s early success proved sporadic, however. Most Western League teams played with pitching staffs of five or six and three or four starters. The brutal schedule made it difficult to rely heavily a fastball, as pitchers were often called to pitch on successive days or to relieve in the second game of a doubleheader after starting the first. In his sophomore year, he slumped and Lincoln (now owned by Don Despain) traded him to the Sioux City Packers. But the trade did allow Johnson, or “Johnny” as his friends on the reservation called him, one moment of glory among his own people. Sioux City was scheduled to play the Walthill semipro team, a Ho-Chunk team featuring other talented Carlisle and Haskell players, at Walthill on September 30, 1909. In that game, Johnson pitched his team to victory, 5–2 in front of “nearly 500 fans coming from all parts of the reservation,” and he must have been proud not only of his own performance but also of the Indian team’s talented play against the Class A Packers.²⁵

During his first three years in the Western League circuit, Johnson was perhaps more renowned for his heavy batting. On July 6, 1909, he smashed a monstrous home run over the center-field fence in Lincoln, which was called “perhaps the longest drive ever made on the Lincoln grounds.”²⁶ When he joined the St. Joe Drummers in 1910, the *St. Joseph Gazette* introduced to him to fans with this story:

JOHNSON IS BEST FUNGO HITTER IN THE LEAGUE

Besides being one of the best fielding pitchers in the Western league, Johnson, Holland’s Indian twirler, is conceded to be the champion of all fungo hitters around the circuit. The big pitcher is doing the bulk of this work for the Drummers and he is driving Manager Holland’s outfielders back to the fence. Against a stiff wind that was blowing from the south the other day Johnson was sending long flies almost to the right field fence. With the wind with him he could probably knock the sphere a couple blocks.²⁷

Table 8. George H. Johnson Career Statistics

YEAR	WINS	LOSSES	TEAM	LEAGUE
1908	19	16	Lincoln	Western (A)
1909	13	17	Lincoln/Sioux City	Western (A)
1910	18	17	St. Joe	Western (A)
1911	12	12	St. Joe	Western (A)
1912	24	12	St. Joe	Western (A)
1913	14	16	Cincinnati	National
1914	9	10	Cincinnati	National
			Kansas City	Federal
1915	17	17	Kansas City	Federal
1916	8	14	Vernon	Pacific Coast AA)
1917	25	23	Vernon/San Francisco	Pacific Coast (AA)
1918	2	6	San Francisco	Pacific Coast (AA)
TOTAL	161	160		

Sources: *Sioux City Journal*; *Total Baseball*, 6th ed.; *Spalding's Official Baseball Record*; *The Pacific Coast League: A Statistical History, 1904–1957*.

Hitting a ball a great distance with a slender fungo bat (used by coaches for fielding practice) is a skill that even some Major Leaguers do not possess, and Johnson was one of the best at it. While Johnson never hit for a high average in the Major Leagues, he hit a home run in each of his three Major League seasons, and he played exhibition games in the outfield for the Cincinnati Reds in October of 1913.

In 1910, Johnson made a pitching breakthrough when he began to use his curve ball more often and to learn the spitball. Some of the best pitchers in the Western League, including Red Faber and Fidgety Phil Douglas, were spitballers, and Johnson learned the pitch eagerly, experimenting with different brands of slippery elm. Even though his light-hitting team provided little run support in 1910, he managed eighteen victories, including a string of impressive shutouts.²⁸ On April 5 of that year, he faced the American Association Minneapolis Millers in an exhibition game, a team that featured slugger Gavvy Cravath in the center of its lineup, and he pitched five scoreless innings, allowing only one hit.²⁹ His shutout victories included a twelve-inning 1–0 thriller against Lincoln on June 28, a three-hitter against Lincoln on August 6, a 2–0 whitewash of Wichita on September 10, and a two-hitter against the Topeka Jayhawks on September 19.

Although Johnson's 18–17 record sounds mediocre, he was the most effective pitcher on his team, which went 76–91 overall. The sports editor of the *St. Joseph Gazette* noted: "Chief Johnson sure is having hard luck this year.

He is losing more games in which he holds his opponents to a fewer number of hits than the Drummers get than any other twirler in the league.³⁰ Soon photos of the “Indian twirler” who was “pitching excellent ball” became a staple of the press coverage. He was recognized and cheered by crowds of fans, and he became a clubhouse leader for the Drummers. One tidbit about Johnson, provided by the *St. Joseph New-Press*, is especially interesting:

Chief Johnson, it is said, is the motion picture critic of the squad. He takes them all in and it is on his report that the other members depend. If Chief says that the pictures are good, then there is a sale of the 10-cent size, but if he says, “Heap bum,” then it is a quiet game of billiards or pitch [a card game] for the Drummers. They say Chief has had more than one offer to show his face and form as a warrior before the machine of the moving picture man.³¹

Here, the writer’s mock-Indian dialogue, “Heap bum,” is a commonplace imitation of Indian speech at the time. What makes the note fascinating is the information that Johnson was a curious observer of movie images during the silent-film era and that he was recruited to appear in some of the first Westerns. Rather than choosing to “show his face and form as a warrior” to the camera, however, Johnson chose to remain a warrior on the baseball diamond. It was a deliberate choice of creating an accurate image of himself in a white man’s game, rather than creating a false one in a white man’s film.

By this time, Johnson was making two hundred dollars per month pitching for the Drummers, and he had acquired a handsome house and farm in Walthill, where he would raise wild ponies and thoroughbred horses. If Johnson had never made it to the Major Leagues, he still would have been regarded as a success story by his boarding school teachers. The superintendent of Carlisle, Moses Friedman, wrote to Mrs. Margaret LaMere Johnson in December of 1910 to ask her for a photo of the family’s house:

I have learned through Mr. and Mrs. [Wallace] Denny who visited in your locality this fall, that you own a very nice home in Walthill. I am putting together a group of photographs of the homes of Carlisle returned students and would like very much to have a photograph of your home. If you have not one on hand, you could send me right away, could you have one taken for me? I will be glad to reimburse you for whatever [it] cost[s] you to have it taken, if you will send me the bill.

Wishing you continued success in all your undertakings, I am
Very truly yours
Superintendent [Moses Friedman]³²

The collection of photographs that Friedman was assembling was one of many that Carlisle administrators assembled and submitted to the Department of the Interior and Congress in order to demonstrate the institution's educational value. Superintendent Pratt had begun the practice by taking photographs of his students, first in their native clothes and hairstyles and then again after they had been barbered and dressed in European apparel. These pictures showed the legislators of the time that the civilizing process was at work at Carlisle or as Pratt put it, "This will show whence we started."³³ The purchase of a home was another such proof of Carlisle's success as a civilizing institution.

The 1911 season started brilliantly for Johnson. On April 21 he faced his former team, the Sioux City Packers before a crowd of eight thousand at home and pitched the first no-hitter of his professional career. He struck out six Packers, allowed no hits, and collected one hit himself in the 7–0 victory.³⁴ The no-hitter had to be especially satisfying for Johnson as he had been traded by the Packers to St. Joseph in 1910, and he was able to prove himself against his former team before such a large home crowd. (The no-hitter has been recognized in Minor League statistics but was long thought to have been pitched in 1912.³⁵) The promise of the 1911 season faded though when Johnson apparently suffered an injury in July and missed more than a month of the season. But he was at full strength again for 1912, when had his finest season in professional ball, going 24–12.³⁶ He was clearly one of the most dominating pitchers in the Western League in 1912: his fastball came plenty fast, his spitball danced and darted, he fought for every strike, he displayed fine control, and he used a tricky half-balk motion to first base.

On the strength of Johnson's pitching, St. Joseph found itself in the unusual position of first place for the first two months of the 1912 season, and fans knew why. When the Drummers returned from a road trip in first place on June 17, members of the team's boosters club met them at the Union train station, serenading them with a brass band and calling out for speeches. George Johnson, who spoke little in public, retreated from the crowd but to no avail. According to the *Gazette* report, "After repeated calls, 'Chief' Johnson was dragged from an automobile but enjoyed the welcome so much that he only bowed and shed a few tears."³⁷ It is hard to know exactly what emotions George Johnson's silent tears expressed. Were they tears of embarrassment by a reticent man? Or were they tears of confused joy and pain, joy for his new-found glory, and pain for the hard times behind? Johnson seldom articulated his emotions in public, but the broad smile he sometimes flashed and his silent tears belied the popular American stereotype of the stone-faced Indian.

As Johnson proceeded to compile his 24–12 record in 1912, scouts from three Major League teams took notice: Bill Joyce of the Boston Beaneaters and Jim McGuire of the Detroit Tigers came to St. Joe to see Johnson pitch, and a representative of the Boston Red Sox also inquired about Johnson in June. The Boston Beaneaters then made an offer to Jack Holland, the owner of the Drummers, but it was Charley Comiskey, owner of the White Sox, who bought Johnson for the 1913 season on the recommendation of Western League president James O’Neill.³⁸ Comiskey had bought James Gossett, the Drummer catcher, from St. Joseph the year before, so Johnson reported to spring training in California in 1913 with one familiar face and plenty of competition. The White Sox began 1913 with a very full stable of pitchers, and several spitballers: Ed Walsh, Jim Scott, Eddie Cicotte, Reb Russell, Doc White, and Joe Benz composed one of the strongest staffs in organized baseball. Whether Comiskey ever intended to keep his purchase is uncertain, but Johnson was saved another stint in Class A by a last-minute deal with the pitching-starved Cincinnati Reds. Reds scout Tom O’Hara recommended Johnson to manager Joe Tinker, who worked out a “probationary” deal, allowing him to send Johnson back to St. Joseph if he did not stick on the Reds’ roster.³⁹ But stick Johnson definitely did.

The 1913 Reds, led by player-manager Tinker, Ohio speedster Bob Bescher, and Cuban sensation Armando Marsans, was a colorful team, but it was not a very good one. The Reds finished the season with a .418 winning percentage, 37 1/2 games out of first place.⁴⁰ The team included a number of former Cubs stars – Tinker, Mordecai “Three-Finger” Brown, Johnny Kling, and Jimmy Sheppard – most of whom were well beyond their prime. And the pitching staff was cobbled together at best and was very soon to be uncobbled by the incursions of the Federal League. Johnson secured his place on the team almost immediately by pitching brilliantly in his first starts. After Cincinnati had lost its first two games of the season, Johnson stepped to the mound at Redland Field on April 16 and produced the following headlines:

WINNEBAGO Is a Great Nation
Chief Johnson Steps to Red Mound and Proves It
First Red Victory Due to Indian’s Fine Hurling⁴¹

He had shut out Miller Huggins’s St. Louis Cardinals on three hits.

And the headlines were amplified by Jack Ryder’s description of Johnson’s pitching:

The game was over when the sturdy and conscientious red man took up the burden. He came through with a collection of shoots and benders, which had the

Cards standing on their giddy little top-knots. . . . The Chief showed big league form in the box right from the jump. Never rattled, always there with the first ball over the plate, and following it with a spitter that broke a good foot or more, he outguessed the enemy at every stage. . . . The Indian's best showing was in the way of nerve and control. It was his first game in the big ring, but he acted as if he had pitched as often as Chief Bender.⁴²

Here, the noun *nerve* was apt, as it fit Johnson's fearless determination to win whatever the occasion. He soon became known in the majors, as he was in the minors, for pitching high and tight to batters, for arguing with both batters and umpires, and for never giving in. "Nerve" was what Warner called "fighting spirit," and what others called "moxie" or "guts." Ernest Hemingway called it "grace under pressure." This "nerve" became Ryder's favorite term for Johnson, and he used it in various forms, such as, "The big Indian . . . has the nerve of a lion and likes his game hard rather than easy," and "the Chief . . . is well supplied with the good old nervine."⁴³

In spite of suffering a brief letdown in June, George Johnson was unquestionably Cincinnati's best starting pitcher in 1913. He led the pitching staff in almost every category, including wins (14), games pitched (44), games started (31), complete games (13), innings pitched (269), strikeouts (107), shutouts (3), and hits-walks ratio (1.25 per 9 innings pitched).⁴⁴ Had he been pitching for the first-place New York Giants, he would have won more than twenty games easily. Giant pitcher Jeff Tesreau would certainly have preferred that prospect since the "Arkansas Bear" lost twice to Johnson by shutouts. Johnson himself lost a 1-0 heartbreaker to Hall of Famer Christy Mathewson on August 26 and could take consolation only in the headline, "Indian Johnson Outpitched the Great Mathewson."⁴⁵ After Johnson's considerable successes against the Giants, New York manager John McGraw even ordered his players to take more pitches and "wait the limit every time one of them went to bat and endeavor to tire out the twirler."⁴⁶ Yet, perhaps Johnson's most remarkable pitching accomplishment in 1913 is not recorded in any book of statistics and is mentioned only briefly in a news account.

Apparently, Johnson brought a Ho-Chunk medicine rite into Cardinal Park in St. Louis. The rite was described by Jack Ryder in his baseball notes on May 27, 1913:

Chief Johnson is anxiously awaiting his next turn in the box to try a new method of discomfiting the enemy, which was sent him by an old Indian doctor on the reservation in Nebraska, where the Winnebago tribe holds forth. The venerable medicine man forwarded to the Chief a package of potent herbs, with instructions for their use. The method of applying them is unusual, but the Indian doctor

says that it cannot fail. George is to chew up a mouthful of three different kinds of roots and then blow his breath in the direction of the opposing players, who will immediately wilt, lose their eye at the bat, and not have a chance to beat him. The package was accompanied by a letter from the ancient doctor describing just what George must do. . . . The essence of the treatment, however, is to blow the breath on the enemy, after chewing up the mixture. "This old doctor," said the Chief tonight, "is a great character. I have known him a long time and he is an expert on herbs and roots. He used to tell me that he had stuff which would make a hunter tireless and at the same time take the strength away from the game he was after, if the wind is blowing in the right direction. . . . I am willing to take a chance."⁴⁷

This note, which Ryder appears to have written for his readers' amusement, is only one of several mentions of Johnson's interest in Native medicines, and it clearly shows his reverence for his Ho-Chunk tribal elders: "I am willing to take a chance," he says, noting his white audience's disapproving attitude toward Native medicine as superstition. The rite that appears to be described is a medicine bag ceremony, a kind of medicine bundle typically used by some bands of Apache, Ho-Chunk, and other Plains tribes. The herbs would be carried in a small buckskin pouch suspended by a drawstring and worn around the medicine man's neck or waist.⁴⁸ The use of herbs in the rite displays the magical power of medicine, known to the Ho-Chunk as its *wasê*, rather than the medicinal power of medicine, known as its *ma kan*.⁴⁹

In its way, Johnson's medicine rite is also example of a syncretism (a blending of Ho-Chunk and Anglo cultures) that resists the destruction of American Indian culture and religion. While Johnson had clearly accepted the American game of baseball, he did so from the spiritual viewpoint of a Ho-Chunk, determined to resolve the game into his own culture. Baseball, as practiced in the rite, is seen as a "little brother of war," and the space of the diamond is sacralized by the mixture of the herbs, the human breath, and the winds. Without the power of the four winds, the rite has no efficacy, and so the practitioner prays for the power of the winds to assist him. Here, as Vine Deloria Jr. notes, a sense of the sacredness of space, rather than of time, separates American Indian religions from modern Christianity: "It must be spaces and places that distinguish us from one another, not time or history."⁵⁰ Ultimately, the four winds mark out the sacred spaces of the tribe, and they express the power of the one great spirit that makes all nature sacred. Although Jack Ryder makes no further mention of Johnson's medicine bag rite, the game record shows that Johnson won his next start in

St. Louis on May 31, 6–2. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported, “The pitching of Johnson was 18-karat all the way. He had his spitter working under perfect control and the Cardinals at times looked foolish.”⁵¹ Johnson had apparently done so by making more than his usual application of slippery elm to the ball.

Although the *Enquirer’s* baseball-beat writer Ryder was one of the more sympathetic journalists toward Indians ballplayers in the deadball era, Johnson confronted cartoonish depictions of American Indians in Cincinnati as elsewhere. Anti-Indian stereotypes flourished in the daily baseball cartoons and headlines printed in the *Enquirer*. During the teens, when Indian team names and logos were becoming increasingly popular, the Reds seized upon the trend, often forgetting the stockings in their own team name. *Enquirer* headline writers and cartoonists often referred to Joe Tinker as the “Red Chief” and his players as a tribe. For example, when Johnson’s relief pitching combined with a Tinker hit on April 18 to gain a tie with Pittsburgh, the headline read, “Two Chiefs Stopped the War Dance. . . . Joe Drove Two Runs in for Our Boys in Ninth. Then the Redskin Held Pirates to a Tie after Three More Rounds.”⁵² And if the headlines were in poor taste, the cartoons were worse. When the Reds faced the Cubs in April, for instance, the *Enquirer* cartoonist Shafer presented the Reds as a band of savagely grinning Indians in war paint, brandishing tomahawks, knives, and bows and arrows, headed by Chief Tinker. Shafer’s cartoon spokesman, “Old Man Grump,” also appears in the cartoon, saying, “Here’s one time when I’m pulling for th’ Reds,” meaning the Cincinnati Redskins.⁵³ When the Cubs took three of four games from the Reds, Shafer responded with another Indian cartoon, showing a gloating bear carrying off an Indian’s bow, arrows, headdress, blanket, and moccasins and leaving the bruised and naked Indian standing behind in a barrel with the dialogue bubble, “Ugh! Well, anyway, he didn’t get th’ barrel!”⁵⁴

This anti-Indian mockery also went beyond racial caricatures of Indians to specific attacks on Johnson himself. When Reds manager Charles “Buck” Herzog criticized George Johnson in April of 1914 for jumping from his contract with his Reds and when Reds president August Hermann secured an injunction that prevented Johnson from pitching for Kansas City, writers and cartoonists also took up the theme. Russell, another *Enquirer* artist, pictured “Chief” Johnson, dressed in a blanket, moccasins, and headdress in a cartoon panel with the caption, “All dressed up and no place to pitch.”⁵⁵ For his part, George Johnson reacted to press accounts with considerable restraint. His one laconic comment on his contract problems was wry and defiantly ironic: “I should fret!”⁵⁶ He was making his point effectively that

he was being paid his Kansas City salary despite the legal maneuvers of the Reds' management. And ultimately, Johnson did not fret as he turned any personal animus he harbored to the combat on the baseball diamond.

Johnson's year with the Reds also made explicit a problem that he struggled with throughout his career. The problem was alcohol, and fairly or unfairly, he was branded as a "booze-fighter," the phrase commonly used for alcoholics.⁵⁷ Whether Johnson drank very often is uncertain, but over his career he established a pattern of binge drinking, especially on the nights before his scheduled starts. One sports story tells of Johnson being conned by an opposing manager in the Western League to go drinking on the night before a start, but he arose late and "ashamed" the next day, took a quick bath, and then threw a shutout for the Drummers.⁵⁸ It's unlikely that Johnson was ever so gullible, but he like many other Major League pitchers used alcohol to relieve stress before some of his starts. On August 14, 1913, Johnson missed a start against Philadelphia, and he returned to the team on August 15 with "a terrifying account of a siege of ptomaine poisoning far from the reach of a telephone." Joe Tinker, who was known drink himself, winked at the offense, levied a small fine, and started Johnson the next day with good results.⁵⁹ The same pattern occurred again on April 18, 1914, and it was a crucial factor in Johnson's decision to jump to the Federal League.

Aside from the Wrigley field trivia, George Howard Johnson's place in baseball history has largely been defined by his decision to jump from his Cincinnati Reds contract to a richer contract with the Kansas City Packers in April of 1914. Johnson, along with Bill Killefer and Armando Marsans, became the subject of numerous lawsuits between the National League and the Federal League. And it is quite true that Johnson, after having taken \$400 in advance money from the Reds, abrogated his \$3,300 contract with Cincinnati, to sign a \$5,000 contract with Kansas City. For this decision, he has been described as the "1910's version of Andy Messersmith."⁶⁰ He was almost universally disparaged by the press of his time as greedy and disloyal. Ben Mulford Jr. in *Sporting Life* described him as a "fellow with a price," and called him "poor Lo" (a stock epithet for the un-Christian savage): "Poor Lo will be scalped and kept out of the game."⁶¹ The Reds' manager Herzog described it as a case of "paying exorbitant salaries to men of that caliber," and Ernie Lanigan in his "Casual Comment" column bristled, "Let the Feds have their George Johnsons."⁶² And after a Chicago judge granted an injunction against Johnson, and he was summoned from the mound by police on April 23, 1914, at the first game in Wrigley Field, an anonymous poet in the *Sporting News* wagged his finger:

Lines to Winnebago Johnson
Mr. Johnson, it's no use!
That old Judge won't turn you loose.
Oh, Mr. Johnson please be good,
You can't hurdle from the Reds
To the Kansas City Feds.
So, Mr. Johnson, you'd best be good.⁶³

However, the assumption behind all these criticisms, that Johnson betrayed the Reds out of personal greed, is almost certainly mistaken. He had a compelling reason to leave the Reds on April 21, 1914, and it had nothing to do with money.

In the early winter of 1914, Johnson had been courted by several Fed officials, including his former manager Joe Tinker, and may have been offered considerably more than the \$3,300 for which he signed a contract with Cincinnati in January of 1914. If money alone were the object, he could have had it earlier rather than later, from Baltimore, Chicago, or Kansas City. Johnson was concerned in early 1914, rather, about his weight and also possibly about his drinking. He wrote to club president August Hermann, asking for \$100 advance on his salary, so he could travel to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and begin an early course of training. Johnson's letter reads:

Dear Mr. Hermann –

I have to have \$100 to use on the trip to Hot Spring[s].

If you can forward it at once I will be very grateful of you. Understand this is advance money on my account. I will send you all the details of each days work at the spring at the end of each week.

This is going to be a great help to me and I will do all I can to show you the great appreciation of an Indian during the season. I remain

Geo. H. Johnson⁶⁴

This scrupulous request, with its poignant promise to “show you the great appreciation of an Indian,” hardly sounds like the words of a man planning to betray his employer for a few more dollars. Johnson was taking an advance, after all, for his physical conditioning, upon which he was sending back weekly reports to the Reds' management. What happened, then, to make Johnson jump from the Reds on April 21, 1914?

The answer to the question is Charles L. Herzog, the new Cincinnati manager. Herzog was a player-manager who modeled himself after his mentor with the Giants, John J. McGraw. Like McGraw, Herzog played ball tena-

ciously and managed autocratically. While his fellow players respected him as a gutsy and talented infielder, many bristled under his dictates. Armando Marsans, Dave Davenport, and Marty Berghammer all departed Cincinnati after Johnson, with similar complaints against Herzog. Marsans, smarting under a fine from Herzog, quit the team, returned, and then quit again, swearing he would never play for Herzog again. And Berghammer put it bluntly, "All this talk about Herzog being on good terms with his players is tommyrot."⁶⁵ Herzog had fined Johnson fifty dollars earlier in the spring of 1914 for conditioning violations during a time when Johnson had the flu, and Herzog's comments in the press indicated he had a rather low opinion of Indians. While most writers and players credited catcher John "Chief" Meyers as being a vital part of the New York Giants' success, Herzog dissented: "Chief Myers is a great mechanical catcher. . . . but I tremble when I think of what might happen to him or his team if McGraw didn't exercise unfailing vigilance."⁶⁶ Here, Herzog was indicating that Meyers (who had attended Dartmouth) was not smart enough to call pitches himself and was in need of McGraw's constant corrections. And if anything, Herzog's attitude toward his pitcher Johnson was considerably more hostile than his attitude toward the Giants' Meyers. The depth of this distrust became evident to Johnson on April 18, 1914.

On the evening of April 17, Johnson was in Pittsburgh, facing a start the next day against Honus Wagner's Pirates. He thirsted for a drink and began another binge until he had broken curfew at some distance from the hotel. Early the next morning, Herzog sent a clubhouse attendant or a hotel detective to find Johnson. He found him, and Herzog issued the following one-hundred-dollar fine, which was preserved in Gary Herrmann's papers and eventually in Johnson's Cooperstown player file:

Sir,

This is to notify you that you are fined One Hundred dollars (100.00) for being in a disreputable house with a disreputable woman, for drinking to excess, and for being away from your hotel the entire night on the night of April 17, 1914.⁶⁷

The wording of the fine suggests Herzog had caught Johnson in *flagrante delicto* and meant to shame him. For Johnson's part, he denied Herzog's published charges against him (that he was guilty of conditioning and rules violations), although it's clear that he was badly hung over and unable to pitch on April 18. But in spite of the hangover, Herzog still started Johnson against the Pirates, and Jack Ryder reported the results: "When Johnson reported for duty Saturday, Herzog knew that he . . . was not in the best of

shape, but sent him into the game [anyway]. Johnson pitched poorly and was knocked out of the box after four innings.”⁶⁸ His manager had meant to embarrass the pitcher in front of his teammates, and Johnson resented it along with the fines levied against him. Ryder also reported that Johnson “insisted that Manager Herzog had it in for him” and thereafter he defied Herzog’s orders.⁶⁹ Although Johnson quickly repaid his \$400 in advance money to the Reds when he signed his contract with Kansas City, he refused to pay the \$150 in fines Herzog issued to him. In the end, Johnson’s breach of his Cincinnati contract had little to do with money but everything to do with his personal pride. Yes, he had an alcohol problem, but he wouldn’t let his manager bully and humiliate him for it.

The jump to Kansas City was also, as Johnson probably suspected, a jump into the courtroom. The sports pages were filled for the next two months with stories about the Reds’ legal maneuvers to prevent Johnson from pitching again. He started on Thursday, April 23, 1914, against the Chicago Whales at their brand-new ballpark, called in the papers “the Northside plant,” but stayed in the game just long enough to give up the first Wrigley homer, a two-run shot, to Art Wilson. At the end of the second inning, he was served with an injunction from Chicago superior court judge Foell.⁷⁰

Until it was dissolved, the injunction prevented Johnson from pitching, and for almost three months of the season it made him the best-paid batting practice pitcher in the Federal League. In need of pitching work, he even agreed to pitch one game for a local town team, Sweetwater, against the B’Goshes of Corder, Missouri. The episode, which reads like one of Satchel Paige’s famous exploits, is one of the most colorful of Johnson’s career:

Corder, Mo., July 16. – Indian Johnson, the Kawfeds’ pitcher . . . disguised himself in a Sweet Springs uniform last Sunday and assisted the sporting citizens of that town in taking a ball game. . . .

The Sweet Springs pitcher [Johnson] didn’t seem to be trained to a fine point, but appeared to have plenty of confidence. He lobbed one to the first batsman, and a hit was registered. When the dust and the cheers subsided, the Sweet Springs pitcher turned to the cocky Corderite on first and said:

“G’wan, steal. I won’t spear you.”

Then he turned his back on first and fiddled till the man did steal. Then the pitcher said: “That’s right. Now steal third.”

The Corderite refused to be kidded off the bag, so the big stranger calmly threw the ball away. While it was being recovered, the amazed runner took third. Then the pitcher said: “Now stay there.” And he struck out three men with nine pitched balls.

Not till the game was over did the Corderites learn who the opposing pitcher was, and then they could hardly believe it. Now Corder is trying to figure out some way of securing Walter Johnson's services for a day without letting anyone know it.⁷¹

And it's typical of Johnson that he performed this humorous feat not with Paige's circus-like exuberance but with his own broad smile and terse words. "Now stay there," he said, and Corder's B'Goshes did.

Johnson eventually did pitch for the Kansas City Federals in 1914. He logged 20 games, 19 starts, and 132 innings in the final two months of the season, making up for his lost time as much as possible. And while he was rusty at first, he pitched very well in September. On September 4, he threw a four-hitter at the St. Louis Feds, beating Ed Willet 1–0, and he came back two days later to defeat his old teammate Dave Davenport, also of St. Louis, 2–0. Overall, he was 9–10 for the year, with a respectable 3.16 ERA, a strong conclusion to what had been a very hard year.⁷² It was tough personally too as the strains of alcohol and long times away from home finally ended his first marriage. But Johnson began 1915 as hopeful as ever, on a new conditioning regime to lose weight recommended by manager George Stovall. A feature in *Baseball Magazine* in June of 1915 described Johnson as "one of the hurling mainstays of the Kansas City team" and said that he had adopted the exercise of "hoop rolling" in training camp "with such zest," that he was "in the best condition of his career."⁷³ The feature also noted, "The 'Chief' has found wolf-hunting in Iowa a pleasurable and profitable pastime. He has chased and caught wild horses, played lacrosse and taken part in all sorts of sporting carnivals promoted . . . by Redmen." This note is helpful, not so much because it establishes Johnson as a picturesque character but because it indicates his longtime interests in Native sports and values. The "sporting carnivals" of which it speaks were summertime Winnebago events, community homecoming celebrations that honored athletic prowess and outdoor skills. It is interesting that Johnson played lacrosse avidly, which was known in some tribes as "the Little Brother of War" for its combativeness. Into baseball, Johnson brought that same mentality. Twice in his Major League career, he was ejected from extra-inning games by the umpire for arguing balls and strikes. In both cases, he was the batter.

The record book shows that 1915 was Johnson's best year in Major League ball. He pitched in 46 games, logging 34 starts, 19 complete games, 281 innings pitched, 17 wins, 4 shutouts, and a 2.75 ERA.⁷⁴ He led his team with 118 strikeouts and contributed significantly to a team that depended more

Table 9. George H. Johnson's Nine Major League Shutouts

April 16, 1913	5-0	Cincinnati vs. St. Louis Cardinals, 3-hitter, defeated Pol Perrit
May 8, 1913	4-0	Cincinnati vs. New York Giants, 6-hitter, defeated Jeff Tesreau
Sept. 21, 1913	2-0	Cincinnati vs. New York Giants, 6-hitter, defeated Jeff Tesreau
Sept. 4, 1914	1-0	Kansas City vs. St. Louis Feds, 3-hitter, defeated Ed Willet
Sept. 6, 1914	2-0	Kansas City vs. St. Louis Feds, 7-hitter, defeated Dave Davenport
May 11, 1915	7-0	Kansas City vs. Newark Feds, 3-hitter, defeated George Kaiserling
June 2, 1915	4-0	Kansas City vs. Pittsburgh Feds, 4-hitter, defeated Cy Barger
Aug 14, 1915	6-0	Kansas City vs. Buffalo Feds, 6-hitter, defeated Gene Krapp
Aug. 21, 1915	6-0	Kansas City vs. Baltimore Feds, 6-hitter, defeated Albert Bender

Sources: *Cincinnati Enquirer*, *Kansas City Star*, *Sporting Life*.

on pitching than hitting for its winning record. Johnson's last shutout may have been especially memorable as he faced an Indian pitcher to whom he was sometimes compared, the great Charles Bender, and he won on a six-hitter. Attendance in the Federal League was poor in 1915, making its coming demise all but certain, but Johnson himself thrived. He met his future wife, a member of the Sac and Fox tribe, and bought a home in Kansas City, while still maintaining his farm in Nebraska.⁷⁵ As the end of the season and the financial collapse of the Federal League ensued, he like many of his teammates began to make contacts with other baseball clubs.

In January of 1916, Johnson began life in a new league, the Class AA Pacific Coast. He negotiated with both the Los Angeles and Vernon clubs before striking a deal with President Ed Maier of the Vernon Tigers. By March, Johnson was running on Sunday mornings in a rubber suit in order to lose weight and prepare for the season.⁷⁶ For many reasons, Johnson probably enjoyed his time in the West: the competition was excellent, the weather was temperate, and the sights were exotic. He could see Lillian Gish, Douglas Fairbanks, or Mary Pickford on stage, and he could escape the kind of intense press scrutiny he received in Cincinnati. Baseball was a popular sport on the Pacific Coast, but it was just one of many pastimes. Perhaps also for such reasons, Johnson's eldest daughter, Elaine, chose to live much of her adult life in San Francisco. As a proven Major League starter, Johnson's image graced ZeeNut baseball cards and occasionally the baseball pages of the *Los Angeles Times* and *San Francisco Chronicle*. But, of course, anti-Indianism was to be found in Los Angeles too. On April 14, 1916, Johnson had a tough outing against the San Francisco Seals and beat writer Harry A. Williams wrote:

Table 10. George H. Johnson's Pacific Coast League No-Hitter
 April 15, 1917, Los Angeles

	PORTLAND			
	AB	R	H	E
Hollocher, SS	4	0	0	1
Rodgers, 2B	4	0	0	0
Willie, RF	3	0	0	0
Farmer, LF	3	0	0	0
Williams, CF	3	0	0	0
Borton, 1B	3	0	0	1
Siglin, 3B	3	0	0	0
Fisher, C	2	0	0	0
Helfrich, P	1	0	0	1
Stumpf	1	0	0	0
Leake, P	1	0	0	0
TOTALS	28	0	0	3

Stumpf batted for Helfrich in the sixth.

	VERNON			
	AB	R	H	E
Doane, RF	3	2	1	0
Daley, LF	3	0	1	0
Galloway, 3B	1	2	0	
McLarry, 2B	4	0	0	0
Griggs, 1B	3	1	1	0
Callahan, SS	4	1	1	1
Mattick, CF	3	0	2	0
Mitze, C	4	0	0	0
Johnson, P	4	1	1	0
TOTALS	32	6	10	1

Portland 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0-0

Vernon 1 0 0 0 2 0 0 3 *-0

Three-base hit – McLarry

Sacrifice hits – Daley, Mattick

Struck out – by Johnson 9, by Helfrich 1, by Leake 2

Base on balls – off Leake 2, off Johnson 1

Runs responsible for – Helfrich 3, Leake 3

Innings pitched – Helfrich 5

Double plays – Borton to Hollocher

Sources: *San Francisco Chronicle*.

SEALS SCALP CHIEF JOHNSON

Washington Park was made uninhabitable for Indians yesterday. The Seals chased Chief Johnson to the underbrush in less than one round and later in the game a long foul went into the right field bleachers and almost hit a Washoe buck who came all the way from Inyo county on horseback to root for the Chief. The noble red man from Inyo then left the park, complaining that the white settlers had made this an unsafe place in which to live.⁷⁷

The mocking treatment of both Johnson and the Washoe man was typical of press reports at the time. It is notable though that in California as in the Midwest, Johnson attracted a small cheering section of American Indian fans, who supported him in the face of press criticism.

Of Johnson's three years in California, 1916–1918, he was healthy only in the middle year, when he won 25 games. He split his 1917 season between Vernon and San Francisco, and he compiled impressive statistics, pitching 399 innings, striking out 147, and recording a sterling 2.44 ERA.⁷⁸ That year he pitched the first Pacific Coast League no-hitter of the season against the Portland Beavers on April 15. The Beavers' roster included a number of fine Major League players, especially the Browns' speedy slugger Ken Williams, the Cubs' hot-hitting shortstop Charlie Hollocher, and the veteran catcher Gus Fisher, once with Cleveland and New York. But to George Johnson that day, they were all goose eggs. Johnson walked only one, and he struck out nine. The *San Francisco Chronicle* gave Johnson his due, more or less: "The chief was in fine form and had everything there was, although he had good support as a big factor in his fine showing."⁷⁹ It was to be the last great game of his career, however, as overwork in 1917 took its toll on his aging arm. His shoulder was injured severely in 1918, and he fell to 2–6. He made a comeback attempt in early 1919 with the Dallas Marines in the Class B Texas League, but the shoulder injury was irremedial.⁸⁰ After fourteen years of playing from coast to coast, from 1905–1919, from the barnstorming Nebraska Indians to the Cincinnati Reds, from the Lincoln Greenbackers to the KawFeds, he was through. Yet Johnson had one more sad headline to make.

After baseball, Johnson apparently went into the pharmaceutical business. The *Winnebago Chieftain* and other newspapers described Johnson in 1922 as an "Indian Medicine Man" who arranged exhibits at local drugstores, a description that corresponds with his earlier interest in Native herbs and shamanism. On the weekend of June 10, he "had been conducting a medicine show at the Blair & Haun drug store" in Des Moines, Iowa, apparently with his nine-year-old son, Joseph, and he was "expecting to leave for Omaha, and

then go to his home on the Winnebago agency.”⁸¹ But in the early morning of June 12, soon after 3:00 a.m., Johnson was shot twice at close range and killed. He was unarmed at the time. He had been playing dice and backing another player in the game as well, a woman described variously as a “negro” and “half-breed.” As usual, he was dressed well, and he was driving a new Ford coupe. The game took an ugly turn, however, when the host for the evening, Edward Gillespie, refused to pay for the alcohol consumed at the game. Johnson and Gillespie apparently began to fight, while the most of the other players bolted. When police arrived at the Gillespie residence, they found Johnson’s body in “a clump of weeds” behind the house, and soon after they discovered a .32 caliber revolver. George Howard Johnson had been killed in a quarrel over two dollars and fifty cents worth of alcohol.

As far as the Des Moines police were concerned, the case was simple. Several witnesses stated they saw the .32 in Gillespie’s hands soon after the shooting, and Johnson’s pockets had been rifled, his car had been torn apart, and evidence, including the body, had been moved from the Gillespie house. So Gillespie had shot and robbed Johnson, and they charged him with first-degree murder. The police quickly forced a confession from Gillespie, which he later denied. Although they did not locate a key witness (the missing woman), they ceased their search for her on June 14, only two days after the killing. In its deliberation in October, the jury heard evidence that the .32 was not Gillespie’s weapon and that whoever fired the weapon might have done so in self-defense against the hulking form of angry George Johnson. The jury deadlocked and then acquitted Gillespie of murder on October 24, 1922. In the end, Edward Gillespie’s freedom owed not only to the sloppiness of the Des Moines police but also to negative stereotypes of American Indians. Members of the jury were apparently convinced that Johnson was “on a wild rampage from the effect of liquor” and so were reluctant to convict Gillespie on any charges.⁸² Other racist statements concerning Johnson appeared in the papers, including “Johnson . . . was . . . of splendid appearance being practically white” and “Johnson, it is reputed, is of great wealth from an Indian standpoint.”⁸³ The report of Johnson’s death consisted of a very scanty paragraph in the *Sporting News* – a dismal end for a former Major League player.

It was not so in Winnebago, Nebraska, however. The *Winnebago Chieftain* ran two front-page stories on Johnson’s death, including a lengthy obituary. It noted that Johnson’s funeral was held at the Winnebago Agency church, and “The edifice was filled with a large congregation that came to pay their respected to the deceased chief.”⁸⁴ Johnson was respected and admired by the Winnebago of Nebraska, whatever the white newspapers might say.

But the life story of George Howard Johnson was not about an athletic saint. Even flashing his broad smile and in his finest garb, Johnson was a flawed man. A loving father and uncle, he was often at a distance from his family (he learned of the birth of his second daughter by telegram); he was twice divorced, once charged with abandoning his wife; and he often struggled with alcohol. But rather than seeing Johnson as the newspapers did as an example of the bigoted stereotype of the “bad Indian,” it is best, in conclusion, to place him in the context of his people and culture.

The Ho-Chunk people in the nineteenth century were divided by their own trail of tears between reservations in Wisconsin and Nebraska on which they had lost hundreds of members and possession of sacred tribal lands.⁸⁵ When they traded with white fur trappers, they were often paid with alcohol. Their Siouan language, religion, and culture were all under assault by Christian missionaries, government agents, and the federal boarding school system. Into this confusing and tragic world, George Howard Johnson was born, and for all his flaws, he struggled aggressively to make a better life for his family and to forge his own distinctive American Indian identity. It was a paradoxical identity: one that could fight like a warrior in the Native game of lacrosse, as well as in the white man’s game of baseball; one who watched the first Western films with fascination, but who demurred to be in them; one with a weakness for drink, but with the strength to defy a manager with a low opinion of Indians; one that could bring traditional medicines on the diamond and apply them to his spitball; and one who could answer the hoots of “Back to the Reservation!” with a strikeout. And, finally, one who wept silently when cheered by fans of any race.

7

The Baseball Legend of Moses Yellow Horse

“It makes one work better to realize the fans are pulling for him. Yours to the finish.”

Moses Yellow Horse, letter to Pittsburgh Fans, June 5, 1921.

*“My father saying, You had the dream, Horse,
and two men toss a baseball back and forth
as the sun dissolves . . .
along the creek so that the men, too, seem
to be on fire, and the other one, a tall Pawnee
named Moses Yellowhorse, drops his glove,
But I wasn’t a man there, and there, I know,
is Pittsburgh, and man means something more
like human.”*

B. H. Fairchild, *Early Occult Memory Systems of the Lower Midwest*

“Until recently,” wrote Gene Karst and Martin J. Jones in 1973, “yells of ‘Bring in Yellowhorse’ signaled [the Pittsburgh Pirates’] fans’ desire to see an ineffective pitcher replaced.” Karst and Jones also remarked that when Pittsburgh’s Three-Rivers Stadium was under construction in the late 1960s, fans proposed honoring Yellow Horse in the naming of the stadium.¹ Jim Nassium, otherwise known as Edward Wolfe, wrote in a column in the *Sporting News* in 1926 that when a professor at the University of Pittsburgh became lost and tongue-tied, fumbling through his notes, one student yelled from the back of the lecture hall, “Put in Yellowhorse.”² Yet in their biographical entry, Karst and Jones do not explain how Yellow Horse, in just two years in the Major Leagues, achieved such fan enthusiasm and loyalty. Nor does Fred Lieb in his history of the Pittsburgh Pirates identify the source of the Yellow Horse legend, nor do others who have written about Yellow Horse’s career,

Table 11. Moses Yellow Horse Major League Pitching Statistics

G	GS	CG	W	L	S	IP	HITS	K	BB	ERA
38	8	3	8	4	1	126	137	43	33	3.93

Source: *Total Baseball*, 5th ed.

including Todd Fuller, Bob Lemke, and William Jakub. It has often been claimed that Yellow Horse was the first full-blood American Indian to pitch in the Major Leagues, but that honor belongs instead to Elijah Pinnance (see chapters 1 and 5). Nor do Yellow Horse's Major League statistics explain his glory in Pittsburgh (see table 11). These are good statistics for a player with a very short career in the majors, but they are hardly the stuff of legend.

Whence came, then, the Pittsburgh legend of Moses Yellow Horse? What facts and factors made him so memorable to Pirates' fans? This chapter will tell the story of the hard-throwing pitcher who captured Pittsburgh's imagination on Memorial Day of 1921 and held onto it for years to come. And why did his promising professional baseball career end so abruptly? The prosaic answer to the question is that a severe shoulder injury effectively ended his career in 1924, although he had already been traded away from the Pirates because of the Pittsburgh management's determination to rebuild the team. Lieb, Lemke, and Jakub all suggest, mistakenly at best, that Yellow Horse "went 'the way of all bad Injuns'" – that is, he succumbed to alcoholism in 1921 and 1922 and aborted his auspicious career. But the enduring esteem of Pirates fans and, more importantly, the newspaper accounts of Yellow Horse's career do not fully bear out this conclusion. Nor would any set of facts justify perpetuating the Western "bad Injun" stereotype that Lemke repeats. As a young Pirates pitcher, he did drink with teammates Drew Rader and Rabbit Maranville, and he later struggled with alcohol, especially in 1924, after an arm injury had effectively ended his pitching career, but Yellow Horse's greatest struggles as a young man were against anti-Indian prejudice. He fought against verbal and physical abuse both on and off the diamond, and in 1920 with the Arkansas Travelers and in 1921 with the Pittsburgh Pirates, he triumphed against it. After his severe shoulder injury in 1924, Yellow Horse's baseball career and eventually his personal life unraveled, but even then he rebounded like the dun horse of Pawnee storytelling, and contributed much to his people. For all of these struggles, Yellow Horse merits recognition as both an outstanding American Indian athlete and as a Pirates legend.

THE DUN HORSE AND “PAWNEE BILL”

Born on January 28, 1898, in Pawnee, Oklahoma, to Thomas Yellow Horse and Clara Yellow Horse, of the Skidi band of Pawnee, the young Moses was carried on a baby board that had been brought by his mother from Genoa, Nebraska.³ The board became a treasured family possession, which the former pitcher presented to his longtime friend Sam Gordon of Sacramento, California, at a feast and war dance in honor of Yellow Horse's sixty-sixth birthday.⁴ Moses apparently treasured the board not so much because it represented his childhood but because it represented the travels of his family from their ancestral lands in Kansas and Nebraska, to the reservation in Genoa in 1859, to the reservation in Indian territory (Pawnee, Oklahoma) in 1875. It also represented the travails of his people, who had endured devastating poverty, famine, disease, and warfare throughout the nineteenth century. Gene Weltfish recounts that in the 1830s, the Pawnees numbered some 12,000 people, but after a smallpox epidemic in 1838 and violent struggles for buffalo territory with Siouan refugees from the east and arriving settlers, they were reduced to 3,400 by 1859. Weltfish continues: “By November of 1875, the last Pawnee contingent arrived in Oklahoma. Many met their death as a result of the change. Fevers and starvation took such a heavy toll that by 1879 only 1,440 survived, and, by the U.S. census of 1910, just 633 Pawnees remained alive.”⁵ Moses counted himself one of 714 Pawnees in 1921, but he lived to see the Pawnees expand (presently there are approximately 2,500 enrolled members) and to see himself honored as an elder of his people in 1964.⁶ This personal and tribal rejuvenation is perhaps best represented by the Pawnees' tale of the dun horse.

The Pawnees have a rich storytelling tradition with many tales of warfare, heroes, animals, and metamorphosis. The nineteenth-century ethnologist George Bird Grinnell visited the Pawnee Agency in 1888 and transcribed some of the folk tales told by Pawnee elders. Among these tales was “The Dun Horse,” a story which begins “many years ago” but vividly represents the plight of the Pawnees throughout the nineteenth century. The heroes of the story are a boy and his grandmother who are so desperately poor they live in “the meanest and worst lodge in the village” and often resort to scavenging pieces of hide and old blankets left behind when the village moves for a buffalo hunt. While trailing the others on the way to a hunt, they encounter “a miserable old worn out dun horse, which they supposed had been abandoned by some Indians. He was thin and exhausted, was blind of one eye, had a bad sore back, and one of his forelegs was very much swollen.”⁷

Rather than abandon the horse, however, as the others had done, the boy and the old woman lead it hobbling to the new camp. The next day the horse suddenly speaks to the boy, telling him to take him to the creek and plaster his body in mud. Emerging from the mud, the dun horse now runs faster than all the other horses and glides “along like a bird.” On this magically restored mount, the boy kills a prized spotted buffalo calf, though when the young men of the village report to the old woman that the boy has won the greatest prize of the hunt, she begins “to cry, she felt so badly because every one made fun of her boy, because he was poor.”⁸ Yet when the boy returns with the spotted hide and buffalo meat, his grandmother realizes the young men were not taunting her but congratulating her, and she rejoices. Later, with the dun horse, the boy counts *coup* on four of the greatest Sioux warriors, he marries the Head Chief’s beautiful daughter, and he becomes the new Head Chief of his people. In short, the story “The Dun Horse” represents the struggle of the Pawnees to survive in the face of extreme poverty, disease, malnutrition, and violent conflicts with the Sioux over the dwindling buffalo herds. Capt. H. M. Warton reported in 1854 that the sufferings of the Pawnees would “seem beyond belief of anyone who had not been an eyewitness to them.”⁹ The story also expresses the deep wish that the people would thrive again, regaining their lost prosperity and security.

In one sense, Moses Yellow Horse’s generation, born at the end of the long decline, fulfilled the deep wish of the tale, bringing the people back from the brink of depopulation and adjusting to their new home in Oklahoma. But he was raised at a very hard time for the Pawnees. Soon after the Pawnee Agency was established in Oklahoma, the buffalo hunts came to an end, razing an economic and cultural foundation of Pawnee life. “The disappointment of the Indians made an impression on me that grew deeper as the years passed,” said Gordon Lillie of the Pawnees’ last buffalo hunt in the summer of 1879.¹⁰ Lillie, a former Indian interpreter and Indian school teacher, offered a form of “assistance” (if it can be called that) to Pawnees during these lean years by hiring whole families to appear in his traveling Wild West show, known as “Pawnee Bill’s Historical Wild West, Indian Museum and Encampment.” The show toured throughout the East and Midwest in the 1890s and 1900s, and it later joined with Buffalo Bill’s Wild West, which also toured in Europe. Moses Yellow Horse told Charles “Chilly” Doyle of the *Gazette Times* in 1921 that some of his first memories were of the Pawnee Bill Wild West Show: “Moses himself, while a papoose, was carried around in the typical fashion of an Indian baby, and the lad has fairly good recollections of sensations experienced while he was a part of Pawnee Bill’s circus. Chief was aged

about 3 at that time.”¹¹ If indeed he were part of the show, the young Moses would have been part of a display, as Lillie put it, of a “bona fide Pe-haw-e-rat village of wigwams with lodge-poles and trappings . . . illustrating the modes of living and habits of the red man in his forest home, showing the squaws at their beadwork, sewing moccasins, tanning hides, and the braves in council smoking the peace pipe, or playing with the chieftain’s young.”¹² Another part of the show featured an Indian ambush of a wagon train, in which young Moses, according to Marshall Todd Fuller, played the part of a “savage Indian boy.”¹³

When I relayed this information to Rebecca Eppler, Pawnee Nation executive officer and cultural chairperson, she was surprised and looked into the matter further. She wrote back:

I asked my aunt who is 90 years old about the Pawnee Bill Wild West Show. His father Tom Yellowhorse wasn’t in the show nor his wife. His father didn’t want any part of it. Buffalo Bill had the first show and . . . Pawnee Bill started his show. In fact, Sweden just returned one of our Pawnee[s] by the name of White Fox a couple of years ago. He went overseas with Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show and got sick. The people of Sweden stuffed him and put him on display. Now I think you can understand why many of our people did not want to be put on display in a show. I’m sure Moses knew many of these things that were going on.¹⁴

If Moses was indeed part of the 1901 show, it is possible he may have been accompanied by other family members, while his father and mother worked the family farmstead of 160 acres.¹⁵ It also seems quite possible that the Yellow Horse family traveled with the show for a short time in which Tom Yellow Horse developed an enduring dislike of Gordon Lillie. The Wild West shows were for most American Indians, as Brulé Sioux leader and educator Chauncey Yellow Robe emphasized, “degrading, degenerating, and demoralizing.”¹⁶ As such, the shows may have been Moses’s first experience of Anglo culture’s love for exhibiting and commercializing Western images of Indians – an experience he would endure many times over as “Chief” Yellow Horse in professional baseball.

THROWING ROCKS AND PITCHING FOR CHILOCCO

Almost all accounts of Yellow Horse’s pitching begin with the story that he developed his “pitching accuracy . . . from throwing stones at rabbits and squirrels for the family stewing pot,” as D. Jo Ferguson, a longtime editor of the *Pawnee Chief*, put it.¹⁷ While very young, Moses developed a lifelong love of hunting and fishing, and one of his last published photographs featured

him smiling with a rod and reel in *Oklahoma Wildlife* in 1960.¹⁸ In fact, baseball writer Edward F. Balinger considerably amplified the legend of the rock-throwing boy in this story in the *Pittsburgh Post*:

When the Indian boy was 15 years old he was recognized as the champion thrower of his town of Pawnee – in fact his prowess had spread all over Pawnee county. His unerring aim enabled him to kill birds as well as rabbits. He took delight in hunting without a gun. . . . Chief Yellow Horse holds a record that probably stands without a challenge. It is vouchsafed by reputable citizens of his home town that he went to the fields during the rabbit season some seven or eight years ago . . . and returned with 62 cottontails, each of which had been killed with a thrown rock. The feat was performed in one afternoon and was certified by companions who accompanied the youngster on his excursions into the wilds. It is needless to say that all had their hands full lugging this killing back to Pawnee.¹⁹

However exaggerated the details, the story is based on the fact that Yellow Horse, like many Indian boys at the time (see chapter 2, “Axtell Hayes”), did not have the opportunity to play baseball with proper equipment on an organized team until his teen years. Thus, rock throwing was Moses’s Little League. Apparently, he did not pitch an official Reach or Spalding baseball until his midteens when he joined a Masham community baseball club.²⁰

Education and athletics went together in Moses’s family. His elder half-brother, Ben Gover, had attended Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, from 1902 to 1910 and had remarkable success as an athlete. Indeed, Gover undoubtedly served as a model for Moses in pursuing a career in baseball. Rebecca Eppler still remembers Ben Gover, known by his nickname “Ben Goose,” playing football in Pawnee on the courthouse lawn.²¹ On March 1, 1921, Gover wrote to Haskell superintendent H. B. Peairs, seeking a position as an assistant to the track and baseball teams, and he recounted his own athletic accomplishments:

In BaseBall I have been in five different Leagues as a pitcher going from Class “D” to Class “A” in organized Baseball, my last contract being with Sioux City, Iowa, in the Western League before entering the Army in 1916 for Border Service.

In track work my record there at Haskell in the Half Mile, established in 1910, still stands, also the High Jump record, which I think was Broken.²²

Sporting News records confirm that Ben Gover pitched for Durant in the Texas-Oklahoma League in 1914, and he umpired in the Oklahoma State League in 1924.²³ Service in World War I interrupted Ben’s baseball career, but Moses was fortunate to be called to service on the day of the Armistice and so he was not assigned.²⁴ And while Ben appears not to have pitched

for a long duration with any professional team, he was a talented athlete who inspired his younger brother's success. When Moses pitched for the Class A Arkansas Travelers in August of 1920 on the way to the Southern Association pennant, Ben came to cheer for his brother: "Moses Yellow Horse's . . . brother who weighs about 200 pounds and measures about six feet up and down and several feet around, was at Kavanaugh Field yesterday to see Mose pitch a game for the Travelers. . . . Yes, the boys surely did give Brother Yellow Horse a large afternoon's entertainment and according to last accounts the honorable guest . . . enjoyed it immensely."²⁵ Moses had followed in Ben's athletic footsteps and entertained his brother with a four-hit, 9–1 victory.

Young Moses was a good student at the Pawnee Agency school and later at Chilocco Indian School, the federal Indian boarding school, where he made excellent marks in deportment and acquired beautiful penmanship and some practical training in carpentry.²⁶ However, making the Chilocco baseball team was no easy matter for him even after his play with Masham. He enrolled at Chilocco in 1914, and although he tried out for the team in 1916, "[t]he coach assigned him the task of shagging flies outside the fence for a full season before he ever got a good look at the mound."²⁷ In 1917, he made the Chilocco varsity team and immediately starred at pitcher, winning seventeen games without a defeat.²⁸ Among his victories was a 5–0 shutout of Henry Kendall College of Tulsa, which was mentioned in the *Daily Oklahoman*.²⁹ Had the coach only known how hard and accurately the boy could throw, Moses would not have been shagging balls in 1916. He soon enjoyed a considerable local reputation for his blazing fastball. He pitched in the "Horseback League" for Ponca City on Sundays in the summers of 1917 and 1918 and was scouted by Class A Des Moines of the Western League. In fact, Yellow Horse signed a contract with Des Moines in early July of 1918, but wartime restrictions on baseball curtailed the 1918 Western League season by the second week of July.

Pitching for the Ponca City Oilers, however, Yellow Horse continued to awe fans and to attract scouts. A large newspaper advertisement in the *Ponca City Democrat* in May of 1918 read, "Base Ball, Sunday May 12: Wichita White Sox vs. Ponca City Oilers, At Marland Park . . . Don't Fail to See This Game. Everybody's Going. Yellowhorse is Pitching for Ponca City."³⁰ The sporting editor of the Ponca City newspaper also commented on the coming game: "Tomorrow the Wichita White Sox will come down to again try to win a ball game. . . . They will find Yellowhorse in the box and if they take the game they will certainly have earned it."³¹ After returning from his short stint in Des Moines, Moses pitched his best game of the summer for the Ponca City

Oilers on July 14, no-hitting the Blackwell B-Z's, in a 3–0 victory, striking out 11, and making 2 hits himself.³² Yellow Horse continued to wow the locals in 1919, but before the summer had ended, his former Chilocco teammate Bill Wano had recommended him to the management of the Class A Arkansas Travelers. He made the team and the starting rotation in April of 1920 and made manager Kid Elberfeld a very happy man on his way to a pennant.

YELLOW HORSE IN LITTLE ROCK

Quite simply, Moses Yellow Horse threw a baseball with stunning velocity. Elberfeld compared Yellow Horse's hard one to the fastball of Walter "Big Train" Johnson, the hardest thrower of the era, and Pittsburgh catcher Wally Schmidt said he had "more stuff than any twirler he had ever handled."³³ Likewise, B. H. Fairchild reports that his father, Bert Fairchild, a talented semipro catcher, "regarded Yellowhorse as the fastest he had ever caught or seen (and he saw some good ones, including Allie Reynolds)."³⁴ Pirates pitcher Charles "Babe" Adams put it more vividly: "He had a fast ball with more gas than Texaco."³⁵ And when Travelers catcher Boyce Morrow "was instructed to take Mose out and warm him up, it was Boyce who got warmed up. . . . Such smoke as the youngster showed!"³⁶ Writers called it a "speed ball" and "smoke ball," because "fastball" did not sound fast enough. "Moses Yellow Horse hurled like Man-O'-War races," wrote Henry Loesch – that is, blindingly fast.³⁷ Loesch also wrote that "[t]he fans had heard a lot about his speed ball and they wanted to see if it really was as fast as advertised. Most of them were convinced. The Chief's notion of a change of pace is to shift from his fast ball to a faster one."³⁸ The effectiveness of the fastball was further intensified by Yellow Horse's excellent control: "Control is one of Yellow Horse's strong points."³⁹

Within weeks of Yellow Horse's joining the team, Elberfeld was predicting big-league stardom for the new Traveler. The addition of Yellow Horse to a team with brilliant outfielders Bing Miller (later a star with the Philadelphia Athletics) and Harry Harper (who led the Southern Association in hits and batting average) and Rube Robinson on the mound carried the Travelers into uncharted territory – into contention for the league championship. Yellow Horse went 20–5, leading the loop in winning percentage, and Robinson went 26–12, leading the league in wins: "As long as we have the old reliable 'Rube,' we can't make Moses chief of the Traveler pitching staff, but he's making a splendid assistant chief," wrote Loesch on May 15.⁴⁰ In fact, had Yellow Horse not suffered a bout of malarial fever in July, he might have easily led the circuit in wins. He allowed 255 hits in 278 innings, walked

only 55 and struck out 138.⁴¹ As the season came to its close, the Travelers were in a tight race for the pennant with Johnny Dobbs's New Orleans Pelicans. Manager Elberfield needed a victory on September 15 against the Nashville Vols, and Elberfield selected Yellow Horse to pitch. Before a crowd of six thousand, Moses threw a six-hit shutout, defeating the Vols 1–0 and clinching the Southern Association flag. In the same newspaper announcing the championship was a photo of the young pitcher smiling broadly with the headline "Pittsburgh Club Buys Yellow Horse." The story went on to say, "The sale of Moses Yellow Horse, the sensational Indian boy pitcher of the Travelers, to the Pittsburgh Pirates was announced last night by President R. G. Allen of the Little Rock club. . . . The story of the development of Yellow Horse into a Class A star in one season reads almost like fiction."⁴² He was sold to Pittsburgh for eight thousand dollars, and although he lasted only two big league seasons, the sale was a bargain for Pirates fans.

"PUT IN YELLOW HORSE!"

The storybook drama of Yellow Horse's pitching career only intensified in his 1921 season with the Pirates. It reached its pinnacle in a Memorial Day game when "Put in Yellow Horse!" became a new rallying cry for impatient Pittsburgh fans. Even before he reached Pittsburgh, he was making headlines there from his performances in spring-training games in Arkansas, Tennessee, and Indiana: "Big Chief Yellowhorse, destined according to the judgement of some of the fans, to become a second Bender, showed fine speed from the start and good work is expected from this iron man from Little Rock," and "Moses Yellow Horse is the best looking of all the youngsters. . . . His fast ball is a wonder and he has just the proper amount of curve to cause trouble for those who face him. His chief asset is control and if he does not make his mark some mighty good judges are going to miss their guesses," and "Mose Yellowhorse . . . is about ready for the majors."⁴³

The enthusiasm of the writers was more than matched, however, by the cheering of the fans: "When Yellow Horse went into the box this afternoon he was instantly recognized and greeted with an outburst of cheering," "Manager Gibson called upon Chief Moses Yellow Horse. The little Pawnee Indian was given a rousing cheer by the more than 1,000 fans who watched the game," and "Chief Yellowhorse excited many Indian yells during his tenure on the mound. A great burst of cheering and hand clapping marked his entrance into the game."⁴⁴ Of course, the "Indian yells," "war-whoops," and "ki-yi-yi's" that Yellow Horse heard every game were far from innocent enthusiasm. Race-based taunting dogged Moses's every appearance on the

mound, but he almost always chose to interpret the fans' roaring generously as an endorsement of his pitching.

Yellow Horse displayed that generosity of spirit in his response to his greatest game as a Pirate – his victory over the Chicago Cubs on Memorial Day, May 30, 1921. Although Pirates manager George Gibson did not install Moses in the Pirates' strong starting rotation, he relied on him as a reliever and a replacement starter. Gibson's "particular forte being the development of young pitchers," the decision eased Moses's transition to the Major Leagues, and he pitched brilliantly in the early season.⁴⁵ While fans could not anticipate scheduled starts, they soon began cheering whenever he warmed up in the bullpen. When Yellow Horse relieved Elmer Ponder in the Opening Day game in Pittsburgh, before a crowd of 28,000, "a mighty shout swept the park," and Moses notched his first Major League win.⁴⁶ Another massive crowd of 28,500 fans was even more animated in the second game of the annual Memorial Day doubleheader at Forbes Field. The Pirates best pitcher, Charles "Babe" Adams, started the game against the Cubs but gave up four hits and three runs in the first inning. Soon, the throng of "well wishers acted like Indians," making "a dramatic appeal for the appearance of Chief Moses Yellowhorse," wrote Charles "Chilly" Doyle. But Moses did not get the assignment immediately, as Doyle recounts the game action:

The cries for Yellowhorse were drowning out every other noise as Gibby began to warm up relief pitchers. Ponder walked out to start the second inning, but Elmer experienced trouble after he had retired the first batter. The next two Cubs singled and once more the noisy enthusiasts shouted for the Redskin. The protracted yelling broke into a spasmodic riot of approval when the vast audience recognized the athletic boy of the dark visage as he walked coolly from the bullpen toward the mound. . . .

And what an exhibition the Indian gave from that early period of play through to the finish. . . .

From then on through the warm innings the Indian held the Cubs' attack runless. Moses went to the pitching post with the Pirates trailing by three runs, but the fourth saw the game deadlocked and the sixth saw us out in front. And all the time the dark-skinned aborigine was handing Walt Schmidt the ball in such a manner as to mystify the hitters of the Chicago club. Truly it was a great day in Moses' life.⁴⁷

At the fans' urgent request, Moses had pitched seven and two-thirds scoreless innings, leading the Pirates to a 6–3 victory before the ecstatic crowd. Likewise, Ed Balinger reported, "Moses Yellow Horse covered himself with

glory in the afternoon,” and “Yellow Horse made the enemy look foolish. He had allowed but five blows and left a trail of whitewash behind him.”⁴⁸

In short, the Memorial Day game was a consummate fantasy for many Pirates fans – of second-guessing the manager, of the manager acceding to the crowd’s desire, and of proving the fans unassailably right in victory. Had Yellow Horse never pitched in another game, he would have still become a Forbes Field favorite. After May 30, he could not venture onto the streets in Pittsburgh without nods of recognition and cheers breaking out. On June 5, the *Gazette Times* seized the opportunity to honor Yellow Horse with three photos of Moses and his roommate, the Syracuse left-hander Drew Rader, with a story entitled “Put Yellowhorse in!!!,” and with a letter from Yellow Horse himself to Pittsburgh fans. The letter reads:

Dear Fans,

I was certainly glad to be able to please you after the fine reception you gave me on Memorial Day and trust that I shall win many games for Gibby and the Pirates. It makes one work better to realize the fans are pulling for him.

Yours to the finish.

Chief Moses Yellow Horse

Pawnee Tribe.⁴⁹

It was typical of Moses that his response to the fan adulation was restrained and gentlemanly. D. Jo Ferguson of the *Pawnee Chief* wrote of him: “He was always very friendly to both his white and Indian friends and made a fine appearance – anywhere. I never knew him to look sloppy.”⁵⁰ And not only did he make a fine appearance, but he also interpreted the raucous “Indian yells” of the fans kindly: not as a bored cry for a novel amusement but as a genuine sign that the fans were “pulling for him.”

YELLOW HORSE, THE “CARD”

In addition to “covering himself with glory” on May 30, 1921, to throwing his “smoke ball,” and to carrying “the traditions of his race very becomingly,” Moses Yellow Horse had another great asset.⁵¹ He had a very warm and ebullient personality with a fine sense of humor. Many Pittsburgh fans were delighted to find that Moses was hardly the “stony faced Indian” of Western stereotypes. Indeed, he was the antithesis of that destructive stereotype. First, he loved playing baseball, and he played it with great joy: “Contrary to the usual stoicism of the Indians, Yellowhorse makes no effort to conceal his keen interest in the game. He takes to the game, and is as tickled over a good

ball [game] as a 3-year-old is with a bright new kiddy car, and is not afraid to show it.”⁵² Many photographs of Yellow Horse with the Pirates show him beaming a broad smile, and Doyle describes him similarly – approaching his teammates with “his face wreathed in smiles.”⁵³ In 1921 and 1922, he developed warm friendships with his roommate for each season – Drew Rader and Walter “Rabbit” Maranville, respectively. “The two have so much fun together,” the *Gazette Times* said of Yellow Horse and Rader, “that [Pirates’ right fielder] Possum Whitted had dubbed them “the Hallroom Boys, Percy and Ferdie.”⁵⁴ Whitted’s allusion was to a pair of teenage chums in “The Hallroom Boys” comic strip by Harold A. McGill, which was syndicated in newspapers from 1906 to 1923.⁵⁵ Moses’s sense of camaraderie with his teammates was so keen in fact that when a group of Pirates players took to the golf course for a day off, Moses, though he had never played golf in his life, “followed his mates for 36 holes.” That is – thirty-six holes of following a golf party and with crowds of boys pursuing Moses all the way!⁵⁶

“His sense of humor is striking,” said the *Gazette Times*, and “Chief Yellow Horse is giving [second baseman] Cotton Tierney a run for ‘wise-crack’ honors of the Pirates.”⁵⁷ So too the *Pittsburgh Post* described him as “a card” and “one of the big rackets in today’s workout.”⁵⁸ The fact was inescapable from Moses’s first days with the team. In taking his first batting practice in Hot Springs, Arkansas, he sent a long fly to deep left field, and just as Ray Rohwer caught it, he yelled, “Remember, I’m only a pitcher.”⁵⁹ When Moses won a spring-training game against the Boston Red Sox on March 27, 1921, he also began to play a part that he would continue to play for two seasons – that of straight man to the eccentric shortstop Rabbit Maranville. As the pitcher walked back to the dugout to the cheers of the crowd, Maranville stopped him, took off Moses’s cap, pushed his head over in a bow to the crowd, and ventriloquized, in an Edgar Bergen–Charley McCarthy manner, “Ladies and gentleman, I thank you very much.”⁶⁰

While such shenanigans would have irritated many teammates, Yellow Horse took them in stride and became Maranville’s roommate and good friend during the 1922 season. In fact, he may have been the only man on Pirates as eager to take up a zany challenge as Maranville was to give one. When Rabbit noticed that pigeons rested on the window ledges outside their upper-story hotel room, he challenged his roommate to play a game of “capture the pigeon.” The player who caught the most birds in fifteen minutes won a dollar bet (or, in another version, “80-proof winnings”). They both baited the window ledge with popcorn and started the contest: Maranville put his captured birds in his closet, and Yellow Horse carried his birds back to his own closet. Although Maranville won the contest 8–5, the

punch line of the story did not arrive until Pirates manager Bill McKechnie came in and opened Maranville's closet. As the pigeons flew out, McKechnie retreated to the other closet, but Maranville stopped him: "Don't open that door. The Chief's got HIS pigeons in there."⁶¹

Besides joining in the gags of the madcap shortstop, however, Moses created his own good humor in the Pirates' clubhouse in other ways. Lieb said that he had "a sense of southwestern humor that reminded listeners of the late Will Rogers."⁶² In fact, the *Gazette Times* baseball writer Chilly Doyle often sought out Yellow Horse to fill up blank space in his daily column "Chilly Sauce." Doyle found Moses an almost inexhaustible mine of witty and humorous narratives. He could quote several of Moses's baseball one-liners:

Yellow Horse was doing his bullpen stint the other day when [first baseman] Lefty Grimm asked him how he was getting along. "Not so bad," quoth Chief, "but I'm going to change my name to 'Chief Sitting Bullpen' if things don't change soon."⁶³

Chief Yellow Horse was listening to a crowd of Pirates and others as they extolled the hitting skill of Zack Wheat, the Dodgers' powerful cleanup hitter. "How do you work on Zack, Mose?" somebody inquired of the Indian boy. "I just throw and duck," retorted the Pawnee lad without a smile.⁶⁴

Or Doyle could rehearse Moses's comic tales of the absurdities of reservation life:

Chief tells some interesting things about checks to Indians. He says his people receive a check monthly . . . the money being due for rental on gas pipelines which pass through the . . . property at Pawnee.

Yellowhorse tells of the young Indian who was notified that a check awaited him at the bank. The institution was a little distant from the brave's home, so he paid a taxi driver 25 cents, thinking he could well afford the luxury out of the check. When he opened his envelope, he found a check for 24 cents.⁶⁵

George Gibson is still laughing at one of Chief's latest stories. It seems that many of the Indians [apparently, the Osage] . . . have struck it rich through oil. The automobile craze is rampant among the braves who thus acquired great riches. One buck tried to outdo the other. "I know one fellow who bought a seven-passenger touring car with all the latest equipment," said Yellowhorse. "The loud car made another chief jealous and he came up with a white hearse."⁶⁶

Or he could relate his tall tales about the Oklahoma town of Whiz-bang – the "toughest town on earth," where "everybody packs a lead pipe for a cane":

Chief is always good for a funny story about that tough town of Whiz-bang which borders on his home burgh. "A boy friend of mine saw an ad in the paper where somebody wanted to hire a young man of 21 years," said Chief. "This kid was only about fifteen, but he applied anyway. The man looked him over and stated that he didn't look over 16. 'Well, I've had the seven years' itch, three times,'" the boy snapped right back at him.⁶⁷

Chief still insists that the town of "Whiz-bang," in Oklahoma, is a pretty tough spot. They seem to do a lot of shooting there. "That's how the place got its name," said Chief, "They whiz all day and bang all night."

The Indian says he saw a fight in the hard burgh one day. One fellow was taking no part in it when a fellow ran up to him and shouted: "Are you in this fight?"

"No," replied the quiet fellow.

Whereupon the troublesome one punched the onlooker in the jaw and remarked: "Well, you're in it now."⁶⁸

Along with Moses, the irrepressible Maranville, the wise-cracking Tierney, and the equally animated first baseman Charley "Jolly Cholley" Grimm made the 1921 Pirates one of most rollicking clubs of the Roaring Twenties. Unfortunately, there was a penalty to be paid for all this clubhouse gaiety, and it cost Moses dearly.

YELLOW HORSE, INJURY, AND ALCOHOL

Although Yellow Horse soon became a favorite with the writers and most of the Pittsburgh players, the penalty for the levity in the Pirate clubhouse came in 1922. When the club finished in second place to the New York Giants in 1921 and, even more, when it fell in the standings in early 1922, Pittsburgh owner Dreyfuss became convinced that changes were in order. According to Lieb, the Pirates owner "always blamed the loss of the 1921 pennant on the shenanigans and horseplay in the club."⁶⁹ The *Sporting News* reported that "Gibson had lost his grip on the team" in late 1921, "if he had ever had one," and "[t]he players did as they pleased, some giving more attention to wine, women, and song than to playing ball," and "[t]his policy was held largely responsible for the team's failure to win the pennant last season."⁷⁰ So, on June 30, 1922, after a loss to St. Louis and under pressure from Dreyfuss to step down, George Gibson resigned as manager and was replaced by Bill McKechnie, known to his players as "the Deacon."⁷¹

To his credit, McKechnie was soon able to entice the team's holdout catcher, Walter Schmidt, to return to the Pirates, and under the new man-

Table 12. Moses Yellow Horse Career Statistics

1920	Arkansas Travelers (A, Southern Assn.)	20-5
1921	Pittsburgh Pirates (National League)	5-3
1922	Pittsburgh Pirates (National League)	3-1
1923	Sacramento Senators (AA, Pacific Coast League)	22-13
1924	Sacramento Senators (AA, Pacific Coast League)	1-4
1925	Mobile Bears (A, Southern Assn.)	2-0
1926	Omaha Buffaloes (A, Western League)	1-1
<hr/>		
TOTAL	54 wins, 27 losses (Pct. 66.6)	

Sources: *The Pacific Coast League: A Statistical History, 1903–1957*; *Arkansas Gazette*; *Sixty Feet Six Inches and Other Distances from Home*; *Total Baseball*, 5th ed.

ager’s leadership, Pittsburgh rose in the standings. It was also clear, however, that “the change of managers [was] the first step in the reorganization of a club” and that some players’ careers would be affected. In the first week of July, Dreyfuss released outfielder Walter Mueller and second baseman Jack Hammond, and soon after he acquired outfielder Ewell “Reb” Russell from Minneapolis, so further changes seemed to be in store.⁷² According to Lieb, Dreyfuss told McKechnie, “I suppose you realize you have a couple of wild Indians on your club – Yellow Horse and that Irish Indian, Maranville.”⁷³ McKechnie supervised them both closely through the 1922 season, and all of the “songbirds,” as Dreyfuss called them, were soon to be cast out of the Pirates’ nest: Tierney was traded to Philadelphia early in 1923, and Maranville and Grimm were both traded to the Cubs after the end of the 1924 season. Yellow Horse had also been stigmatized by alcohol use – in some part because of his association with the hard-drinking Maranville, and in greater part because he was an Indian.

Concerning alcohol, Yellow Horse certainly did drink while with the Pirates, especially with Maranville. B. H. Fairchild said his father, Bert, an acquaintance of Yellow Horse, told him, “Yellowhorse had a hard time adjusting to life with the Pirates and was doing stuff like getting drunk and throwing water balloons out of hotel windows. The latter might have had something to do with his being released after only a season and a half with the Pirates, but that is conjecture.”⁷⁴ Clearly, Yellow Horse’s reputation was seriously damaged by two events with the Pirates. Lieb cites both in his history of the Pirates: one, a late-night fight in 1921, allegedly alcohol-induced, for which the pitcher apologized humbly to Dreyfuss; and the second, an incident on a railway dining car in 1922 in which, after a few “quick beers on their empty stomachs,” Maranville and Yellow Horse introduced each other humorously to Dreyfuss.⁷⁵ Interestingly, when Dreyfuss determined

to trade all of his “songbirds,” he sent Tierney, Maranville, and Grimm to other Major League clubs, but he dumped Yellow Horse with three other players in a trade with Sacramento for a pitcher of mediocre ability. Like other Native players, Moses was easily subject to the label of “drunken Indian,” and once he received that label, Major League teams lost interest, even though he pitched great baseball again in the Pacific Coast League in 1923.⁷⁶ For the Sacramento Senators in 1923, he won 22 games, pitched in 57 contests, leading his team in victories and in innings pitched with 311, statistics that are difficult to reconcile with alcoholism.⁷⁷ And unlike the cases of other Native players whose alcohol use interfered with their play in the Major Leagues (for example, Sockalexis, chapter 1, and Johnson, chapter 6), no writer has adduced a game story or press report from the years 1920–1923 showing that Yellow Horse’s pitching performances suffered from the effects of alcohol.⁷⁸ Unlike Sockalexis, he never showed up for a game under the influence of alcohol; unlike both Sockalexis and Johnson, he never missed a game because of a drinking binge; and unlike both, he apparently was not fined from 1920 to 1923 for “violations of training rules,” the customary press euphemism for drinking problems.⁷⁹

When Dreyfuss resolved to trade Yellow Horse to the Sacramento Senators (or Solons) in December of 1923 for pitcher Earl Kunz, he had two possible reasons and one label. Injury and diminished performance were the reasons, and “drunken Indian” was the label.⁸⁰ Yellow Horse had been injured much of 1921 and 1922: he had missed July and August of 1921 with a ruptured groin that required surgery and weeks of recuperation. In July of 1922, he was hospitalized for a week with a severe bout with tonsillitis, and he pitched sparingly until late August when he suffered a shoulder injury that limited his pitching throughout the rest of the season. Doyle wrote on September 2, 1922, “Chief has not been working his arm much lately on account of a soreness in the shoulder. The Pawnee boy hurt his pitching wing in a recent game in Pittsburgh. He started well, but went down with a severe case of tonsillitis in the middle of the race, the sickness putting him out of the running for weeks.”⁸¹ The aching shoulder made Yellow Horse uncharacteristically wild in his final games of the season: his hits-and-walks-per-game ratio rose to 13.2 for the season, and his ERA rose to 4.52 in 1922.⁸² On September 26, he struck Ty Cobb with a fastball (perhaps through wildness, but more likely through anger at racist taunting), and the “Georgia Peach” was carried off the field on a stretcher.⁸³ Moses pitched better against the Cincinnati Reds in his final Major League game in 1922 (getting out three consecutive hitters including Ed Roush), and he struck out Babe Ruth in an exhibition game in Drumright, Oklahoma, in October

of 1922.⁸⁴ Still the tender shoulder was very much a concern as he had injured the shoulder before in May of 1920, and a shoulder injury would effectively end his baseball career in 1924.⁸⁵

In fact, several obituaries of Yellow Horse mentioned arm injury as the reason for his short professional career: “He pitched for the Pirates in 1921–22, but an arm injury retired him after that” and “He was with the Pittsburgh Pirates . . . but was sidelined by an arm injury.”⁸⁶ His career-ending arm injury came in a game against the Salt Lake City Bees early in the 1924 season when manager Charlie Pick called him to enter the game in relief after only three warm-up pitches. Moses himself said of that game, “I went in and I threw just nine, striking out in order John Peters, Tony Lazzeri and Duffy Lewis. . . . That was the finest job of pitching I ever did. But I couldn’t raise my arm the next day. Jack Downey was the trainer but he couldn’t stop the pain.”⁸⁷ In 1923, he had rebounded from the troubles of the 1922 season to lead Sacramento to second place in the Pacific Coast League.⁸⁸ Indeed, there was nothing in the Sacramento papers in 1923 – no accounts of Yellow Horse’s drinking, no training rules violations, no fines, to suggest that he might not return to big-league stardom. That situation changed dramatically, however, after his shoulder injury in 1924.

In May of 1924, Yellow Horse lost his good fastball and his pin-point control, and with them, he lost his sobriety. Depressed and with a badly aching arm, Moses resorted to liquor as his painkiller of choice. And, on cue, a month later in June of 1924, the *Sporting News* reported, “Chief Moses Yellowhorse has gone the way of all bad Injuns. The Chief would not keep in condition, and was no longer of use to the team.”⁸⁹ It is unfortunate, however, that Lemke chose this quotation as a summation of Yellow Horse’s career, or that William Jakub concluded, “Yellow Horse was no exception” to the “widely held stereotype” of the drunken Indian. And it is even more troubling that baseball writer Harry Jones treated the whole matter as a joke: “Chief Moses Yellowhorse of the Pawnee tribe could remove a beer bottle cap with his teeth and often did. He could also consume the contents before you could say, ‘Whoa, Yellowhorse!’”⁹⁰ There is no arguing the fact that the man suffered from the effects of alcohol at the end of his career, but it is worth noting that he was stigmatized by alcohol use before he was debilitated by it. It is also worth noting that the stereotype that Lemke, Jakub, and Jones perpetuate – that “Indians have a tendency towards alcoholism” is deeply harmful to American Indians.

Devon A. Mihesuah, a member of the Choctaw nation of Oklahoma, explains the stereotype and some of the vexing social problems behind it:

The drunken Indian has been portrayed innumerable times in movies and in literature. Indeed, there are Indians who drink, including some who are alcoholics. Many, however, do not drink at all and some drink only occasionally, just like non-Indians. . . . With few exceptions, Indians did not drink spirits copiously until the Europeans brought liquor to them. It was found to be a profitable trade item soon after contact, so trappers, traders, and merchants found ways to bring alcohol to Indians in large quantities. . . . It was not long, though, before liquor was used by many Indians as a way to escape the grief of losing one's family, friends, lands, and culture, as well as to mitigate the social isolation and homesickness they felt. The problem was so great that in 1902 the government made it illegal to sell liquor to Indians, though this was repealed in 1953. . . . The rates of poverty, unemployment, disease, depression, and school drop-outs are much higher among Indians than non-Indians. While drinking too much can indeed cause problems, the degree of suffering which Indians as a population endure often encourages recourse to alcohol. Of course, Indians are not the only ones to drink in this country, historically or today. Drunkenness among other groups is often less visible due to the extent their positive socio-economic situation distances them from the streets, while the circumstances of Indians often force them to frequent cheap bars, where they become easy target for public criticism. Such is the situation in Gallup, New Mexico, for example, which has become known for this problem.⁹¹

Fundamentally, the stereotype of the “drunken Indian” dehumanizes American Indians. It equates a widespread human problem with Indian identity; it derogates the Indian rather than understanding the complex social roots of the problem; and it neglects the degree to which individuals of any race can ameliorate or transcend the problem. Far from meriting the label of “drunken Indian,” Moses Yellow Horse deserves recognition for, like the dun horse of Pawnee legend, overcoming real suffering, first as a baseball player and later as a tribal leader. Alcohol was only one of many forms of such suffering that Moses overcame.

“THE BEST SCRAPPER IN PITTSBURGH”

Growing up a generation after the last buffalo hunt, after the Pawnees had lost so many people and so much of their traditional culture, Moses would have grieved for those facts alone. On top of these griefs, he suffered the death of his mother Clara when he was eighteen in 1916, and his father in 1918.⁹² In spite of his affection for his teammates, he must have also suffered from cultural displacement when he moved to Pittsburgh. Pat Harmon

wrote that Yellow Horse “had insomnia; he couldn’t sleep in hotel rooms” – perhaps a witticism, but then again, possibly not.⁹³ Similarly, Rebecca Eppler, Pawnee cultural chairperson, who knew Moses and his family, provides her own perspective on his situation in Pittsburgh:

When you think of the vast differences between growing up in a small town and then living in a big city with money in your pocket and no strings to hold you down, why not party to pass the time? I’m sure he was very lonesome for the people back home but he had a job he loved doing and getting paid for it and knowing you yourself were just as good or a better player than some of the well-knowns at that time. I must say I admire him very much because I try to picture him as he faced some name-callings from the fans and press. He faced stereotyping since many of the people at that time knew nothing of Native Americans.⁹⁴

Eppler’s perspective closely matches newspaper accounts in both Little Rock and Pittsburgh. Managers Elberfield and Gibson allowed their young pitcher time during the 1920 and 1921 seasons to return to Pawnee, Oklahoma, to visit relatives, especially his ailing aunt and ill father. And the name-calling by fans and the press was another struggle that Moses endured daily.

Heckling by fans and players often began with Moses’s own name: the *Arkansas Gazette* referred to him as “Yellow Pony” and “the dark horse of the Traveler pitching staff,” for example, and also noted “[f]ans and players are having considerable trouble selecting a moniker for Chief Yellow Horse from the long list available, but the bug [fan] who greeted him as ‘Mule’ got a big laugh from the crowd.”⁹⁵ And after the young Travelers pitcher had defeated the Birmingham Barons 9–2, the *Arkansas Gazette*’s Henry Loesch reported, “Yellow Horse was a bucking bronco yesterday and when the Barons tried to ride him he flopped ’em.”⁹⁶ Here, the writer’s mock praise detects a deeper level of conflict, as “ride” is baseball jargon for the taunting of an opponent by players so as to disrupt the opponent’s performance. When the Birmingham players “tried to ride” Moses (that is, when they harassed him concerning his manhood, Indian name, or identity), he “flopped ’em” (that is, he pitched batters inside or knocked them down with his fastball).

When, with beer on his empty stomach, Maranville introduced Yellow Horse to the Pirates’ owner, he said, “And now, folks, it give me great pleasure to introduce Chief Yellow Horse, who not only is a mighty fine pitcher, but the best scrapper in Pittsburgh.”⁹⁷ The shortstop meant to gibe Moses for an altercation he had in Pittsburgh in 1921, but the title “best scrapper in Pittsburgh” was more than a little fitting. Although he was personally warm, gregarious, and gentlemanly in his manner, he often found himself in the

midst of a fight. In some cases, the fight was a sheer physical confrontation against another player, but more often than not it was the day-to-day confronting of racial fascination and anti-Indian stereotypes. Even the writers who meant to praise him referred to Moses as “the athletic boy of the dark visage” and “the dark-skinned aborigine,” noting that he was “as dark as the previous night’s lunar eclipse.”⁹⁸

Indeed, the pitcher’s sudden rise to prominence in 1921 apparently worried baseball commissioner Kennesaw Landis that he might have another Charlie Grant or Jimmy Claxton situation on his hands. Grant had been a talented black second baseman for the Columbia Giants whom John McGraw of the Baltimore Orioles had attempted to pass in 1901 as an Indian player named “Chief Tokahoma” until Chicago’s Charles Comiskey exposed the attempt.⁹⁹ Claxton was a Canadian pitcher of mixed European, African, and Native ancestry, who pitched briefly for the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League in 1916. Claxton claimed to be an Indian from Oklahoma before he was exposed as a black Indian and fired.¹⁰⁰ The color of Moses’s skin made him the subject of similar fascination and bigotry, starting with the baseball commissioner himself. Landis, who was the staunchest supporter of baseball’s segregation of African Americans, attended the Pirates series against the Chicago Cubs in early June of 1921, and “Judge Landis requested Manager Gibson to introduce the Judge to the young Indian brave.”¹⁰¹ The introduction was in fact an hour-long interrogation of Yellow Horse and manager Gibson in Landis’s judicial chambers, and it was followed-up by Landis’s visit to Forbes Field on June 20 to watch Yellow Horse pitch against Philadelphia’s Lee Meadows.¹⁰² Afterward, Landis “was particularly pleased with the pitching of Yellow Horse,” possibly meaning that he was particularly relieved that Yellow Horse was a full-blood as advertised and not a Chief Tokahoma.¹⁰³

While Yellow Horse confronted racism daily in the newspaper accounts of his pitching – references to his dark skin, to “redskins,” “war dances,” “the war path,” and “scalps” – and always heard war-whoops from the stands, he also faced racist intimidation and physical violence. Maranville called him “the best scrapper in Pittsburgh” because of a fistfight in 1921. Lieb’s account of the incident is usually cited as evidence of Yellow Horse’s alcoholism:

It was during prohibition, and one evening . . . somebody made the mistake of passing a bottle of bootleg TNT around a group after Chief Moses had enjoyed a few beers.

About an hour later, the usually good-natured Pawnee was howling war

whoops and biting the tops off beer bottles, being unable to find an opener. In doing so, he cut his lip and was bleeding when he got into an argument with a fan on a crowded corner. There was a report that Yellow Horse pulled a knife in the ensuing fight, but this was a libel. Most of the spattered blood was from his own cut lip. . . .

The next morning Yellow Horse was up and in Barney Dreyfuss' office at 9 a.m. He told his boss: "Mr. Dreyfuss, I got off the reservation for a few hours last night and got into a couple of fights. You will no doubt hear about it, so I thought I should tell you about it first."

Barney was so impressed with the Chief's forthrightness on that occasion that he let him go with a mild lecture – and no fine.¹⁰⁴

According to Lieb, Yellow Horse "was howling war whoops," and unlike his teammates, was a hapless victim of "bootleg TNT." However, Moses's report of the incident to the team owner, as Lieb pointed out, was humble and dignified, far from an alcoholic denial. Perhaps most importantly, Lieb failed to mention why the pitcher had gotten into the argument with the fan in the first place. What caused the fight? It was more than alcohol alone.

A probable answer comes from the photo album of Drew Rader, which was auctioned in September of 2000. Rader, who was Moses's roommate and inseparable companion for much of the 1921 season, witnessed one fight and made the following inscription on the back of a photo of Yellow Horse: "He sure is a mighty fine fellow if treated right. I saw a fellow treat him real mean one day and he told the fellow to lay off. The fellow continued, Chief just hit him once and he dropped. He is a real ball player, believe me."¹⁰⁵ The note is tantalizingly short, but it suggests that Yellow Horse's brawl in 1921 was not simply an alcoholic rage against a fan but was a confrontation with a racist taunter. Being "real mean" to an Indian in 1921 usually entailed racial persecution of one kind or another. This fact would further justify Dreyfuss's decision not to fine his pitcher for the incident.

Similarly, Yellow Horse told "Chilly" Doyle of an incident in the tough town of Whiz-bang, Oklahoma, in the winter of 1921. Although he often made light of the dangers of the town, "the only place I know of in this country where the hoot owls are afraid to hoot," he recounted this incident without his usual wry humor:¹⁰⁶

"I was in there one night with a bunch of young fellows. I wandered away from the gang and wasn't any too comfortable. Finally a mean-looking dude sauntered up to me and said:

"Say, young lad, are you going any place in particular?"

“I told him that I wasn’t and remarked that I was lost.

“‘Well, I can show you the way out of town,’ he shot back at me, and I was gone.”¹⁰⁷

The story implies that Moses felt himself in danger in this Anglo community when he was unaccompanied by other Pawnees and that people of the town were inclined to show Indians “the way out of town” very directly.

Even on the diamond, Yellow Horse repeatedly faced “riding,” as Henry Loesch put it, about his Indian name and identity: “Johnny Dobbs [the manager of the New Orleans Pelicans] may be an expert equestrian, but he didn’t have any luck riding Yellow Horse yesterday.”¹⁰⁸ In this instance, Loesch explains the riding at greater length: “Johnny Dobbs almost wore himself out trying to rattle the stoic red man. . . . Insults, abuse, gestures, taunts, everything that J. Dobbs knows . . . were wasted on the sturdy survivor of the once great tribe of Pawnees. Moses heard only the encouraging words of his team mates and saw only the signs given him from behind the bat by [catcher] Tony Brottem.”¹⁰⁹ As in the incident Drew Rader recalled, the young pitcher showed remarkable discipline in restraining himself against Dobbs. However, again as in the Rader story, after repeated provocations, he sometimes erupted in anger. In a championship exhibition game against the Fort Worth Panthers in September of 1920, “Mose Yellow Horse took to heart an insulting remark made to him by Clarence Kraft, Panther first baseman, and it required considerable effort on the part of umpires and Kid Elberfield to keep Mose from staging a scalping right there on the field.”¹¹⁰ Kraft, a former Major Leaguer whose nickname was Big Boy, was several inches taller and at least ten pounds heavier than Moses, but the pitcher felt compelled to defend himself physically against the insult.¹¹¹

In this context, it is also notable that the only Major League hitter whom Yellow Horse hurt badly with a pitched ball was Ty Cobb.¹¹² Cobb was widely renowned as “rude, thin-skinned, a racist, and a bully,” a player who menaced his opposition.¹¹³ While pitching in an exhibition game against the Tigers in Detroit on September 26, 1922, Yellow Horse hit Cobb in the leg (according to newspaper reports) in the fifth inning, and the Tigers’ star was carried from the field on a stretcher.¹¹⁴

Norman Rice, a Pawnee elder whom Todd Fuller interviewed in 1992, explained the incident further:

Ty Cobb was crowding the plate anyway, he always did. And Mose wasn’t going to let him get away with it. Cobb was up there yelling all kinds of Indian prejudice, real mean slurs at Mose, just making him mad anyway. So he shakes off four pitches until the catcher gives him the fast ball sign, and Mose nods his head. I

mean everyone in Detroit was whooping and all that silliness. So he winds up and fires the ball as hard as he could, and he knocked Cobb right in the head, right between the eyes. Mose knocked him cold. And a fight nearly broke out at home plate. All the Tigers' players came rushing off the bench. The Pirate players started running toward Mose. But no punches were thrown. They just carried Ty Cobb off the field. And all three of the Pirates' outfielders just stood together in center and laughed. Said they wished they could see it again.¹¹⁵

Rice's narration of the incident may be slightly embroidered (with the pitch hitting Cobb between the eyes), but it squares with the other accounts of fights by Loesch, Rader, and Yellow Horse himself. Indeed, it is the most eloquent of all the reports in explaining the reason why Moses Yellow Horse was "the best scrapper in Pittsburgh." He had to be to survive as an American Indian in professional baseball. The emphasis placed on his drinking by writers has obscured this fact and ignored key events. Yellow Horse did not enter organized baseball with a political agenda of any kind, but he often found himself in the midst of racial conflicts. He fought against anti-Indian prejudice as best he could with a broad smile and humor, with self-restraint, and when necessary, with his fists and a fastball.

LATE-INNING VICTORIES

As in the story of the dun horse and the Memorial Day victory in 1921, Yellow Horse's life is a tale of comebacks. After his shoulder injury in 1924, Moses began to drink more, and although he continued to play semipro ball through the 1920s, his career prospects diminished. Writing to Lee Allen in 1964, D. Jo Ferguson summarized: "He was probably his own worst enemy after he pooped out of the baseball program. They tell me he drank considerably although I never saw him drunk."¹¹⁶ His personal difficulties were undoubtedly exacerbated by the Great Depression. Rebecca Eppler described this period: "I don't remember anyone commenting on whether Moses had a job during 1927–1945. There were no jobs available here. . . . As for Moses and jobs, like I said, he really didn't need one since he stayed with different families and did odd jobs for his keep."¹¹⁷ Eppler remembers that Moses performed such odd jobs as cleaning stables and taking care of fighting cocks.¹¹⁸ Ferguson again says, "Mose probably made more money while pitching for the Pirates than he ever made again."¹¹⁹ By all accounts, the money, however, was of little importance to Yellow Horse, and his life in Pawnee enabled him to spend more time with his half-brother Ben and enrich his relationships with others in his community. The "journey he was

on as a pitcher,” recalls Eppler, “just made him more appreciative of his own people and their traditions.”¹²⁰

In 1945, Moses gave up alcohol altogether, and he began a period of greater community service. In 1947, he sought a position as a coach with the Ponca Dodgers in the K-O-M League but was offered the position of groundskeeper at Ponca City’s Conoco Park, which he “accepted with reluctance.”¹²¹ In 1950, he made headlines in the *Arkansas Gazette* for coaching and managing a team of teenage Indian ballplayers, and he offered to bring the team to Little Rock. Sportswriter Orville Henry quoted Yellow Horse reminiscing and joking about his baseball career: “I think my pitching helped them win Little Rock’s first pennant. . . . They should raise that pennant while I’m there, or present it to me, or something.”¹²² Moses continued his work with youth baseball, he umpired semiprofessionally, and in 1955 he umpired in the K-O-M League (Class D).¹²³ His abstinence from alcohol not only enabled him to coach teen baseball, but it also gave him considerable personal satisfaction. Lemke quotes Yellow Horse: “It was quite a surprise to my old friends when I went back for a World Series. They’d almost filled a room with the stuff, and they couldn’t believe it when I sat there and drank tall sodas. I’ve been very proud that I quit. Today I’m one of the happiest men in the world. I go here and there without fear and the people I meet and get to know have grown close to me.”¹²⁴ Yellow Horse was also active in Pawnee annual Homecomings, “whether as committee member or supporter as a volunteer to handle duties connected to the Homecoming,” and ceremonial dances.¹²⁵ Also, in the 1950s, he found gainful employment with the Oklahoma Department of Highways, first as a chainman and rodman on highway-construction projects and later as an inspector.¹²⁶

Along with Moses’s contributions to his community came honors in his later years. On his sixty-sixth birthday, he was given a feast and ceremonial dance in his honor. Both Moses and Ben Gover spoke on the occasion on January 28, 1964, and expressed their deep happiness and appreciation. A tape recording of the event was made by anthropologist Martha Blaine Collins, and Yellow Horse is heard to say, “The way things have gone with your help and cooperation, I am very thankful, very happy. You have made me happy. This was your dance, your gathering. . . . When I go home, I will remember everyone of you in my prayers.”¹²⁷ On April 10 of that year, he died of a heart attack.

However, the tributes were to continue. In 1971, he was inducted into the Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame and in 1994 into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame at Haskell Indian Nations University.¹²⁸ A baseball field and an annual softball tournament in Pawnee, Oklahoma, were also

named in his honor, and his baseball glove has been preserved at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. More importantly, Yellow Horse was remembered as an inspiration by a small boy who stood outside the outfield fence at Kavanaugh Field in 1920, to whom Moses had given a baseball and assisted in getting into an Arkansas Travelers game that year. That boy later said, “I learned from Moses Yellowhorse that American Indians, even fierce-looking ones, could be kind and generous and good-humored – and faithful friends. From that time, I scorned all the blood-and-thunder tales of frontier Indian savagery, and when I went to the Western movies on Saturday afternoon, I cheered the warriors who were always cast as villains.”¹²⁹ That boy was Dee Brown, the author of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, the classic retelling of the Wounded Knee massacre, which has sold over five million copies. With his humanity as well as with his fastball, Moses Yellow Horse had triumphed against anti-Indian prejudice. And he helped others to triumph as well.

Epilogue

Anti-Indian Caricature in Major League Baseball

“It’s what happens when you have these mascots and names, when it triggers all the other ridiculous antics that demean, degrade, and belittle a living people’s culture and spiritual way of life.”

Vernon Bellecourt, interviewed in *In Whose Honor?*

“Indians are human beings, not mascots!”

American Indian protest slogan

They look disturbingly familiar – the toothy smile of Chief Wahoo, the Cleveland Indians’ cartoon image, and the red tomahawks etched on the Atlanta Braves’ uniforms. And the amplified beating drums and the chanting of the tomahawk chop at Atlanta’s Turner Field also resonate in the same way. They are the familiar sights and sounds of racism disguised as entertainment. The cartoons and the caricature mascots have appeared and the chants, the mock drums, and war-whoops have been sounded more or less continuously since Louis Sockalexis began to play for the Cleveland Spiders in the spring of 1897. They are the continuing legacy of a racism that baseball’s first American Indian players suffered. As songwriter Joe Pickering Jr. told the *Native American Times*, “Sockalexis . . . went through hell . . . Fans would jeer at him, and would wear headdresses; people think the ‘tomahawk chop’ was created twenty years ago, [but] it was being done back then.”¹ This book has attempted to show that Sockalexis’s ordeal in Cleveland was part of a larger integration experience, shared by several generations of American Indian players from 1897 to 1945. These players, from legends like Charles Bender and Allie Reynolds to little-known veterans like Ben Tincup and Elijah Pinnance, were known derisively as “Chief,” whooped at by crowds, caricatured, and treated as foreigners in their own land. While the racial slurs that fans once hurled at Jackie Robinson and Larry Doby in 1947 are now considered anathema in American public life, the racial

mockery launched against Sockalexis in 1897 still lives and helps to sell caps, jerseys, souvenir towels, and plastic tomahawks in Cleveland and Atlanta.

This issue is far from trivial in what it says about American Indian identity. Starting in the late nineteenth century, baseball became more than an athletic diversion for many Native communities. It became an important proof that, in John Meyers's words, "My race has proven itself competent to master the white man's principal sport."² One forgotten Indian athlete provides another illustration of this important proof. This American Indian player never made it to the Major Leagues or even the minors, but he did play an exhibition game for an Indian team in Kansas City, and his name did make the pages of *Sporting Life* and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* in 1897 just as Sockalexis was integrating the Spiders. He was John Watka, or Wah Teh Nish, reported variously by newspapers to be a Choctaw or a Creek. The *Plain Dealer* said about him:

THIS CARD SHOULD DRAW

A remarkable story comes from Kansas City and is said to be true. Wah Teh Nish, a member of the Choctaw tribe, in Indian territory, is under sentence to be shot next Monday. Meanwhile Wah Teh Nish plays baseball, and very good ball, indeed, for he is a star player on the baseball team which upholds the honor of his tribe on the diamond.

It was originally intended that he should be shot Saturday, but the governor of the Choctaw nation is a man of tender heart and a rooter of the thirty-third degree. Therefore, when he learned that to hold the execution on Saturday would interfere with a game on that day, he postponed the interesting ceremony.

Wah Teh Nish appreciates the clemency of the executive very much and on Saturday *he will play the game of his life – and death*. No restraint is placed upon him. He runs bases and throws the ball with unerring skill. After the game he will leave with the team for Tuscahoma and be shot in due and proper form on Monday afternoon. (my emphasis)³

And according to *Sporting Life*, Watka traveled on parole to play the exhibition game with his team in Kansas City in August, and then, after making arrangements for his wife's future (he had killed another man in a fight over his wife), he returned for his execution by firing squad on October 31.⁴ But why would Watka, or Wah Teh Nish, bother to play one more baseball game when he had a death sentence to think about? Why would he travel to Kansas City to play "the game of his life – and death" before a largely white crowd?

For Watka, apparently, playing baseball gave some vital meaning to the last days of his young life. *Sporting Life*, again, noted, "He was easily the

most dexterous and enthusiastic member of the team, and won favor with the audience by his good humor. . . . The condemned man was 24 years old.”⁵ At this time, baseball gave meaning, and sometimes badly needed employment, to a generation of Indian athletes, at federal boarding schools, on touring tribal and pan-Indian teams, and in the minors and the Major Leagues. Even Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary had its own Indian baseball team during this period.⁶ The sport was promoted assiduously by boarding-school supervisors as a means of assimilation, but American Indian boys also appropriated it for themselves, using it for their own cultural purposes of resistance. It became an important point of pride that Sockalexis could hit or run as well as any professional player, or that Jim Thorpe was the world’s greatest athlete. And so, many Native players, like Meyers and Bender, played figuratively if not literally as Watka had done life-and-death games to show what an Indian could do. They faced whooping crowds, heckling opponents, hostile managers and teammates, and they played with passion and pride. Proving themselves, they played for the World Champion Philadelphia Athletics and the New York Giants, arousing cheers of “Thorpe! Thorpe! Thorpe!” on the Giants’ 1913–1914 World Tour and, in the case of Bender, winning induction in baseball’s Hall of Fame.

Unfortunately, the American Indian integration of baseball, unlike the African American integration, has never been fully appreciated. This may be in part because athletes like Bender felt they had to downplay their Native identity and their struggles against prejudice in order to escape further harassment. When Bender did on occasion ask the press for corrections concerning himself, even the corrections were punctuated with “Ugh! The Big Chief has spoken.” But the omission of the American Indian integration experience has also occurred because anti-Indian prejudice has so long been regarded as commonplace in American culture that it has not been recognized as prejudice at all. Americans for much of the twentieth century could drive in their Pontiacs on Savage Tires, chew Red Man Tobacco and watch the Braves and Indians play ball, without a second thought about the commercial exploitation of a race.⁷ “Who could object to a team like ‘The Braves,’ named to honor Indians?” said the Braves’ fans. They insisted in Cleveland, “The Indians were named in honor of Sockalexis.” The history of both franchises show, however, that their team names and mascots did not honor American Indians, not even Sockalexis, but exploited their identities for profit, making human beings into mascots. And so, as the first great Indian players have often been forgotten, the Indian mascots have been enthusiastically embraced by the public.

When Wild West shows were still touring the country and the first Holly-

wood westerns were being produced, entertainment magnates in the 1910s observed how much the American public loved to “play Indian.” A how-to book for young boys, for example, entitled *How to Play Indian: Directions for Organizing a Tribe of Boy Indians and Making Their Teepees in True Indian Style* had already been published by Ernest Seton in 1903.⁸ In baseball, Indianapolis, Spokane, Newark, and other Minor League clubs were busy selling themselves as Indians and sometimes pursuing American Indian players as drawing cards (Indianapolis, for example, hired pitcher Louis Leroy of the Stockbridge-Munsee in 1913, and the press called him “A Real Indian for the Indians”). So, when James Gaffney bought the hapless Boston Beaneaters in 1912, baseball magnate John Montgomery Ward advised shrewdly that he change the team name to the “Braves.” Gaffney was a member of a political organization in Tammany Hall known as the Braves, but the real point was to change the team’s luck and sell more tickets.⁹ So Boston stitched “Braves” across the chests of the players’ jerseys and added a patch with an Indian portrait on the sleeves. Immediately, the press began to notice the team positively, though in anti-Indian clichés. In an article entitled, “Boston Braves, Nee ‘Beans,’ Are Scalped by Giant Band,” Damon Runyon wrote, “It’s the best looking baseball club that has represented the National League in Boston in many a day, too, and that includes the picture of the Indian chief Old-Man-Afraid-of-His-Horses, which they wear emblazoned on their uniforms.”¹⁰ But the Boston team finished in last place in the National League in 1912, with a horrible 51–101 record, ameliorated only by the fan interest generated by their new name and mascot. The “Miracle Braves” surprisingly won the National League Pennant and World Series in 1914 though, making the Indian mascot more popular than ever before.

So when in early 1915 Cleveland released its aging second baseman, Nap Lajoie, the eponym of the Cleveland Naps team, the team did not have to wait long for a new name. Owner Charles Sommer invited Cleveland’s baseball writers to select a new team name, and the *Plain Dealer* reported, “The title of Indians was their choice, it having been one of the names applied to the old National league club of Cleveland many years ago.”¹¹ The team name did indeed owe something to Sockalexis’s spectacular play in 1897 when manager Patsy Tebeau began to call the team the “Indians, but no mention was made in the team name announcement in 1915 of honoring the former star. Until 1999, the Cleveland Indians organization claimed that the Indians’ name was chosen in honor of Sockalexis through a fan contest, but researcher Ellen Staurowsky has shown that no such fan contest actually existed and asserted, “There is no evidence that the team was named after Sockalexis.”¹² Biographer William Fleitz, however, citing a

mention of Sockalexis in the January 18 issue of the *Plain Dealer*, maintains, “It appears that the ‘Indians’ name is, at the very least, indirectly inspired by the short-lived stardom of Louis Sockalexis.”¹³

Strictly according to the historical records, Fleitz is right that a story in the *Plain Dealer* two days after the announcement stated that the new team name would “revive the memory of a single great player who has been gathered to his fathers in the happy hunting grounds,” Louis Sockalexis.¹⁴ Still, the sports cartoon that hailed the decision on January 17, 1915, was entitled, “Ki Yi Waugh Woop! They’re Indians” and reveled in anti-Indian caricature. The cartoon explains, “Mr. Fan, Since Larry [Lajoie] has left us our camp for good, we have decided to call ourselves that high spirited name *The Indians*.” It also features a white player donning a large Sioux headdress, fans screaming “Wahoo” and nonsense words from the stands, and an absurdly grinning Indian in buckskin, wearing one oversized feather, holding a massive bat, and grunting, “Heap Big Stick!” Finally, the cartoon also contains a mention of the new fortunes of the Boston Braves in 1914, and it hints that “a real for sure Indian mascot” would soon be employed by the team.¹⁵ So, in keeping with Staurowsky’s argument, it appears that honoring Sockalexis was at best a secondary interest of the 1915 announcement and that reviving flagging ticket sales with the Indian name, the war-whoops, and the mascot was the club’s primary interest.

In this regard, not a great deal has changed in the Indians’ and Braves’ organizations since 1915, although the Indian designs and props have been modified from decade to decade, sometimes in response to public pressure. In the 1950s, both the Braves, then in Milwaukee, and the Indians featured Indian-face arm patches on their uniforms. The Braves’ design was the face of a screaming Mohawk warrior, and the Indians’ Chief Wahoo logo was developed from an earlier “Smiling Indian” caricature.¹⁶ In addition to the Mohawk warrior logo, the Atlanta Braves also employed an actor in buckskin and feathered headdress, named “Chief Noc-a-Homa,” to emerge from a teepee, dance, and sometimes fire a musket or make a smoke signal to celebrate team home runs.¹⁷ And even more offensive was a Big-Red soft-drink commercial performed by Cleveland catcher Roy Fosse in the early 1970s. In the Big-Red commercial, Fosse in headdress and war paint uttered: “Me Ray Fosse. Me dodgin’ the posse. Me like wampum and me like Big Red.”¹⁸ But in response to public pressure in the early 1970s, both teams as Marc Okonnen put it, “cleaned up” and “quieted down” their uniforms: Atlanta removed the Indian-head caricature and the tomahawk from its uniforms, and the Indians also redesigned and de-emphasized its mascot. The change was short-lived, though. Nursing a nostalgia for the

1950s championships, Richard Jacobs brought back Wahoo, and Ted Turner revived the tomahawk insignia in the 1980s.¹⁹

Successful organizing against the Atlanta and Cleveland franchises, though, began in the early 1970s when Russell Means, an Oglala Sioux and director of the American Indian Center of Cleveland, brought a lawsuit against the Cleveland franchise for its Wahoo logo. “That Indian looks like a damn fool, like a clown,” said Means, mincing no words, “and we resent being portrayed as either savages or clowns.” He went on to explain that the racial slurs against American Indians in team logos were far from trivial but were “so ingrained in our society and institutions that they aren’t even recognized.”²⁰ And against Noc-a-Homa, he posed several unnerving hypothetical questions, “That’s ridiculous. What if we called the team the ‘Atlanta Storm Troopers,’ and every time there was a home run a man in German military uniform came out and knocked a few Jews over the head with a baseball bat? Or the ‘Atlanta Negroes,’ and an old black man came out of a shack and did a soft-shoe dance?”²¹

As a result of the activism of Means and many others, Cleveland and Atlanta were temporarily chastened, and a number of universities, including Stanford, Marquette, Cornell, Miami University of Ohio, and Syracuse, have since retired their Indian nicknames and mascots. The movement has had an even more profound effect in changing athletic mascots in high schools and junior highs throughout the United States, although by one estimate as many as twenty-five hundred schools still employ American Indian nicknames or mascots.²² Researcher Cornel Pewewardy describes the effects of these popular images on children in the education system: “The Indigenous portrait of the moment may be bellicose or ludicrous or romantic, but almost never is the portrait we see of Indian mascots a real person. Most children in America do not have the faintest idea that ‘Indigenous Peoples’ are real human beings.”²³ The danger of such mascots motivating anger in children against a racial group has also been recognized. In one of the most shocking examples of the phenomenon, in 1987 the high-school yearbook in suburban Naperville, Illinois, featured “87 Uses for a Dead Redskin.”²⁴ Increasingly, however, public pressure to change Indian mascots in secondary schools has been successful. Yet, the same cannot be said about protests against the well-known professional sports franchises, Atlanta, Cleveland, the Washington Redskins, and the Kansas City Chiefs, nor against the most intransigent college programs, such as the University of Illinois Illini with its Chief Illiniwek mascot.

When Chief Wahoo and the tomahawk chop returned to Cleveland and Atlanta, the protests also resumed with renewed energy. When, for example,

Atlanta played in the 1992 World Series with the Minnesota Twins, some five hundred protesters carrying placards such as “Respect Indian Culture,” “American Indians are Human Beings, Not Mascots,” and “Stop the Chop” stood outside the Metrodome.²⁵ And the protesters came again for the 1995 and the 1997 World Series and many games since. During the 1997 World Series, Vernon Bellecourt, Juan Reyna, and Juanita Helphrey were arrested for burning a Wahoo effigy at Jacobs Field, though the case was later dismissed. The experiences of protesters, such as Charlotte Teters and Vernon Bellecourt, at Jacobs Field are movingly described in Carol Spindel’s book *Dancing at Halftime*. Summarizing Jay Rosenstein’s 1997 film, *In Whose Honor?*²⁶ Spindel writes:

American Indians joke about buying the team themselves and renaming it the Cleveland White People with a hillbilly who plays the banjo for a mascot. This is obviously more than a joke; it’s a desire born out of frustration. They are tired of standing outside stadiums with bullhorns, tired of requesting meetings with owners at which the owners never appear. They are tired of being asked by security to leave the stadium because their banners are “offensive” to Cleveland fans. (This happened to two members of Florida AIM when they unrolled a banner behind home plate at a Cleveland-Devil Rays game in Tampa. The banner said, “American Indians Are Human Beings Not Mascots For America’s Fun and Games.”) They are tired of being told to lighten up. They would like, for once, to have a seat at the sports table for a serious discussion.²⁷

And the fight goes on. Bellecourt says, “We’re not going away until we can get rid of the Big Four: the Kansas City Chiefs, the Washington Redskins, the Indians, and the Braves. We’re not going to accept racism in our national pastime.”²⁸

So the bewildered fans in Wahoo caps continue to pass by the protesters, wondering “What’s the big deal? It’s only a game, right?” Yes, it is a game, but it’s not just a game. As John Watka’s exhibition ball game in Kansas City in 1897 was not just a game but a crucial confrontation that said something vital about his identity as an American Indian man. And when, for example, during the winter of 1905, Axtell Hayes bathed himself every morning in a frigid creek at Fort Lapwai, Idaho, so he could play baseball at Carlisle Indian Industrial School, he certainly considered it more than a game. And when Sockalexis died in 1913 with a tattered newspaper game story in his shirt pocket, and when Bender won a World Series victory in 1905 while fans screamed “Back to the tepee for yours,” and when George Johnson performed a medicine bag ritual on the mound in St. Louis in 1913, they all put American Indian identity within the lines of U.S. baseball diamonds.

And so John Meyers's insistence that Indians can master "the white man's principal sport," Jim Thorpe's defiance of a manager who called him a "dumb Indian," and Moses Yellow Horse's refusal to take a racial slight from Ty Cobb – they all made baseball more than a game. These integrators made baseball a means of cultural resistance and an important proving ground for American Indian courage, and so it remains. The integration experiences of American Indian players in professional baseball promised new opportunities for both Indian and non-Indian communities. Sadly, as long as the chants and chops continue, the promise is yet to be fully realized.

Appendix 1

American Indian Players

AMERICAN INDIAN MAJOR LEAGUE PLAYERS (1887–1945)¹

1. Balenti, Michael, ss (Cheyenne)
2. Bender, Charles A., P (White Earth Band of Chippewa)
3. Blankenship, Homer, P (Cherokee)
4. Bluejacket, Jim, P (Shawnee)
5. Bowles, Emmett, P (Potawatomi)
6. Bruce, Louis, OF, P (Mohawk)
7. Cheeves, Virgil, P (Cherokee)
8. Choneau (Cadreau), William, P (White Earth Band of Chippewa)
9. Clark, Jay J., C (Wyandotte)
10. Cooper, Orge P., P (Choctaw)
11. Cozart, Charles R., P (Cherokee)
12. Daney, Arthur Lee, P (Choctaw)
13. Eaves, Vallie, P (Cherokee)
14. Garcia, Edward Michael, P (Mission?)
15. Gladd, James, C (Cherokee)
16. Harter, Franklin, P (Cherokee)
17. Hogsett, Elon, P (Cherokee)
18. Johnson, George H., P (Ho-Chunk, Winnebago of Nebraska)
19. Johnson, Robert Lee, OF (Cherokee)
20. Johnson, Roy C., OF (Cherokee)
21. Jude, Frank, OF (Ojibwe)
22. Kahdot, Isaac, 2B (Potawatomi)
23. Leroy, Louis, P (Stockbridge-Munsee)
24. Marriott, William 3B (Cherokee)
25. Mayes, Adair B., OF (Creek)
26. McBee, Pryor Edward, P (Choctaw)
27. McLish, Calvin, P (Choctaw)
28. Meyers, John Tortes, C (Cahuilla)
29. Moore, Euell, P (Chickasaw)
30. Neighbors, Bob, ss (Cherokee)
31. Petty, Jess, P (Cherokee)

32. Phyle, Billie, P (Sioux, band unknown)
33. Pike, Jess, OF (Creek, Cherokee)
34. Pinnance, Elijah E., P (Ojibwe, First Nation of Walpole Island)
35. Reynolds, Allie, P (Creek)
36. Roy, Charles, P (Ojibwe)
37. Sockalexis, Louis, OF (Penobscot)
38. Thorpe, James, OF (Sac and Fox, Potawatomi, Kickapoo)
39. Tincup, Austin Ben, P, OF (Cherokee)
40. Toy, James M., C, 1B, OF (Sioux, band unknown)
41. Wheat, Mack, C (Cherokee)
42. Wheat, Zack, OF (Cherokee)
43. White, William B., SS, 3B (Cherokee)
44. Williams, Almon E., P (Cherokee)
45. Yellow Horse, Moses, P (Pawnee)
46. York, Rudy, 1B, C (Cherokee)
47. Youngblood, Albert, P (Choctaw)

MAJOR LEAGUE PLAYERS WITH AMERICAN INDIAN ANCESTRY (1897–1945)²

1. Aulds, Leslie D., C
2. Baker, Thomas C., P
3. Bauers, Russell L., P
4. Bearden, Gene, P
5. Bell, Fernando, OF
6. Benton, Alton (?), P
7. Bickford, Vern, P
8. Bishop, Charles T., P
9. Blanton, Darrell E. (?), P
10. Bragan, Robert, SS
11. Burke, Leslie K., 2B
12. Cantrell, Dewey Guy, P
13. Capron, Ralph, OF
14. Chambers, John M., P
15. Compton, Pete S., OF
16. Covington, Chester, P
17. Covington, Clarence, 1B
18. Crowell, Minot J. (?), P
19. Crowell, William T. (?), P
20. Culberson, Leon, OF
21. Curtis, Vernon, P

22. Davis, Thomas O., ss
23. Erwin, Ross Emil, c
24. Fannin, Clifford, p
25. Ferguson, Robert L., p
26. Flater, John, p
27. Fox, Howard F., p
28. Gallia, Melvin (?), p
29. Gardner, William, ss
30. Garrison, Robert, OF
31. Greengrass, James, OF
32. Hale, Arvell Odell, 2B
33. Hall, Herbert S., p
34. Hambly, James S., c
35. Harrell, Raymond, p
36. Harriss, William, p
37. Head, Edward, p
38. Herring, Lee, 1B, OF
39. Jones, Decatur, p
40. Jones, Vernal, 1B
41. Lacey, Osceola G., 2B
42. Lajoie, Napoleon, 2B
43. Lee, Thornton (?), p
44. Long, Dale, 1B
45. Lynn, Japhet, p
46. Lyons, Albert, p
47. Martin, Fred T., p
48. Martin, Morris W., p
49. Meeker, Charles R., p
50. Mills, Colonel Buster, OF
51. Molesworth, Carlton, p
52. Moss, John Lester, c
53. Mowe, Raymond, ss
54. Parker, Douglas W., c
55. Patten, Case L., p
56. Phippen, Henry H., p
57. Pyle, Harlan A., p
58. Rackley, Marvin, OF
59. Ramsdell, James, p
60. Rice, Harold H., OF
61. Shaw, Benjamin, 1B, c
62. Shirley, Alvis, p

63. Smith, Richard P., C
64. Speece, Byron, P
65. Spratt, Henry L. (?), SS
66. Stansbury, John J., 3B
67. Starr, Raymond, P
68. Stratton, Monty, P
69. Tate, Alvin W., P
70. Taylor, Benjamin H., P
71. Tipton, Joe H., C
72. Trucks, Virgil, P
73. Tucker, Thurman, OF
74. Twombly, Clarence, OF
75. Twombly, George, OF
76. Walker, Gerald H., OF
77. Warren, Thomas G., P
78. Washington, Sloane, OF
79. Webb, William F., P
80. Whitehead, John, P
81. Wilson, George F., C
82. Wilson, Owen (?), OF
83. Winham, Lafayette, P
84. Wynn, Early (?), P
85. Wyse, Henry, P

Appendix 2

Carlisle's Star Players and Team Records

The following profiles represent a gallery of achievement of Carlisle Indian School's baseball program. These twenty-seven players are only a few of Carlisle's many "base ball boys," but their success in both collegiate and professional baseball speaks strongly of the athletic ability in the program.

Chauncey Archiquette (Oneida)

After playing on the 1896, 1897, and 1898 baseball teams and the 1898 football team at Carlisle, Archiquette graduated in 1898, only to enroll at Haskell Institute and star on its baseball and football teams from 1899 to 1904, serving as Haskell's assistant disciplinarian during his last two years at the school. Archiquette was a speedy outfielder, an intrepid base runner, and a solid hitter. The full-blood Oneida was referred to as "the kinky haired Indian" at Haskell and as "a 'hole' in the field and a 'whirlwind' on [the] bases."¹ One game story reads, "Ah, Chauncey Archiquette is making a home-run, and another, see? He is the star catcher in the field too."² At age twenty-eight, Archiquette returned to Carlisle on staff in the fall of 1905 but played on the football team that fall and captained the basketball team during the winter of 1906, returning to his old position in left field on the baseball team seven years after his graduation. Later, he served as a clerk to the Osage Agency in Pawhuska, Oklahoma.³

Michael Balenti (Cheyenne)

A quarterback and drop-kicker on Carlisle's football teams, a leading member of the Standard Literary Society, and a relay team runner, Mike Balenti was most deeply devoted to baseball and served as the shortstop and captain of the 1908 and 1909 teams. He played semipro ball in Dubois, Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1907; with a Bridgeton, New Jersey, team in the summer of 1908; and with Myerstown of the Lebanon County League in the summer of 1909. A well-liked student and team leader, Balenti's rah-rah enthusiasm was modeled on that of the Detroit Tigers' Hughie Jennings and was undimin-

ished by the difficulties of the Carlisle baseball squad. He wrote in the *Arrow* in April of 1908, “To win these games, we must acquire that unconquerable [*sic*] spirit that successful teams possess. Beginning with our next game, let the team play as Jennings’ Tigers play. Let our supporters root as his supporters root.”⁴ In May of 1911, he signed with the Atlanta Crackers of the Southern Association and began a professional career that lasted ten years. He was called up to play with the Cincinnati Reds in July of 1911, although he was far from ready to face Major League pitching. The other highlight of his baseball career was his 1913 season with the St. Louis Browns, in which he played seventy games and displayed impressive range as a shortstop. In 1911, Balenti married his Carlisle sweetheart, Cecilia Baronovich, a native Alaskan. As with other Carlisle marriages, the Balentis’ marriage involved some unusual compromises. They built a home among the Cheyenne in Calumet, Oklahoma, but they often spent winters among Cecilia’s people. The *Sporting News* reported in February of 1914, “It takes so long for Mike Balenti, the Indian ballplayer, to travel to and from his home in Alaska, that he has decided it isn’t worthwhile for him to try to play ball. In fact, if he plays, he doesn’t get any time off at all. He hardly gets home after one baseball season before he has to turn right around and start back. Mike lives somewhere with his wife’s tribe a thousand miles from the railroad. It took him two months to get home last fall and he would have to start back about New Year’s to get back to Chattanooga, where he was booked to play this year, in order to escape a fine for reporting late.”⁵ In spite of those difficulties, he continued to play professionally until 1921. After retiring from baseball, Balenti did construction work in Altus, Oklahoma.⁶

John Baptiste (Ho-Chunk, Winnebago of Nebraska)

One of the Carlisle team’s earliest stars, Baptiste pitched and played infield for the 1891 and 1892 teams. He also played for Genoa Indian Agricultural and Industrial School and became a semipro legend in Nebraska. Guy W. Green wrote of him, “Then there was John Baptiste, a full-blood Winnebago, whose services were in demand all over Nebraska.”⁷ In this early report of a game against Franklin and Marshall in May of 1892, Baptiste starred as the Carlisle pitcher: “The copper-colored little pitcher sent a ball across the plate with a speed that was remarkable, relieving many on strikes.”⁸ Baptiste graduated from Carlisle in 1893, returning to Nebraska to work and play ball.

Charles A. Bender (White Earth Band of Chippewa)

The greatest baseball player to don a Carlisle jersey was Charles Bender, although he was considered the third-best pitcher on the team in 1901 be-

hind Louis Leroy and Arthur Pratt. In his first game for Carlisle, he relieved Pratt and Carlisle's *Daily Herald* reported, "Bender, a new and inexperienced pitcher, was given an opportunity to show what he could do. He was a little wild at first but kept the visitors' hits well scattered."⁹ Not long after, Bender was starting games himself: "Young Bender pitched the entire game in a very creditable manner, striking out eight men. Nori and Bender batted well."¹⁰ The tall and sinewy Bender soon proved the speed and unshakable calm on the mound that would make him a Hall of Fame pitcher for Connie Mack's Athletics. Named the team captain for the 1902 season, he led the Carlisle Indians by example. Carlisle's *Evening Sentinel* reported on his performance against Dickinson College: "Bender seemed to have the better of the argument, but his support was not sufficient to enable him to win the day. He seemed to strike out the Dickinson men at will and allowed but two scattered hits."¹¹ Like many of his teammates, he signed on with a team in the Cumberland Valley Association after his graduation in 1902 under the pseudonym of "Albert." Connie Mack himself discovered the young "Albert" pitching and signed him to a contract for three hundred dollars a month, and he pitched brilliantly in the spring of 1903. In the spring of 1904, after his first season with the Athletics, Bender coached the Carlisle squad for several weeks in late February and early March before heading south for spring training.¹² Not bad – to go from a number-three college pitcher, to advance to team captain, to a Major League star in three years! As part of his school outing system, Bender studied the watch and jewelry business through Conlyn's Store in Carlisle, and once established with the Philadelphia Athletics, he applied his jewelry experience to peddle diamond rings to new Major Leaguers.¹³ Bender's Major League career is treated more fully in chapter 4.

James "John" Bender (White Earth Band of Chippewa)

One of three Bender brothers to play professional baseball and the second to attend Carlisle, John resembled his elder brother Charles in his athletic build but failed to achieve the same success on the diamond. Attending Carlisle from 1896 to 1900, he was expelled for unknown reasons, perhaps an inauspicious sign of the personal troubles to come in his career.¹⁴ Although he did not stay at Carlisle long enough to make the varsity squad, he did play semipro baseball in Harrisburg and turned professional in 1905, signing with Charleston of the South Atlantic League as an outfielder. He also played with Augusta and Columbia in the Sally League, and with the latter team, he became involved in a heated dispute with manager Winn Clarke in 1908. Aboard a Clyde Line ship coming into Columbia harbor,

Bender slashed Clarke with a knife. Following the altercation, the National Association banned Bender from professional play indefinitely. In 1911, the National Association lifted its ban, and he was attempting a comeback with Edmonton of the Western Canada League, when he suffered a heart attack in a game on September 27 and died.¹⁵

Jacob Buckheart (Shawnee)

Jacob Jameson's sturdy catcher during the 1897 season, Buckheart, like Jameson, began a professional career in 1898. For a more complete account of his baseball career, see appendix 3.

Wilson B. Charles (Oneida)

An all-American honorable mention on the 1904 football team; a member of the School Quartet, the Invincibles Debating Society, and the basketball team; and the best pitcher on the Carlisle baseball team in 1903 and 1904, Charles was most widely recognized as a track star. Charles was the captain of the 1902 track squad on which he ran the 100-yard dash, the 120-yard hurdles, and the 400-yard relay (with Wallace Denny, Frank Mount Pleasant, and Jimmy Johnson), while broad jumping and putting the shot. He could broad jump twenty-two feet, and he could run the 100-yard dash in just over ten seconds. The father of Wilson "Buster" Charles, a member of the 1932 American Olympic team, he and his son shared the same remarkable athletic ability. The *Arrow* reported, "Wilson Charles . . . is the latest Carlisle Indian recruit to the pitching industry. He began that branch of the work a few years ago, but did not develop ability of a marked character till this season, when he surprised his mates by striking out sixteen men of Mount St. Mary's College a few days ago."¹⁶ Wilson was often reserved for the Carlisle track team from 1902 to 1904, leaving the baseball team without its best athlete and inhibiting Charles's own development as a pitcher. After his graduation in 1905, Charles signed as a pitcher with Green Bay in the Wisconsin State League, and in 1906 he played in the Penn State League. In 1907, he signed with Trenton of the Tri-State League, but a contract dispute between Green Bay and Trenton prevented him from playing. He returned to Carlisle briefly as a coach and in 1908 became Haskell Institute's baseball coach.¹⁷

Bill Garlow (Tuscarora)

The squat, stocky center on Carlisle's football teams, Garlow both pitched and caught on its baseball teams from 1906 through 1909. Known to his teammates as "Old Reliable," Garlow threw hard and eventually developed

a spitball that had opposing “players breaking their bats trying to connect with it.”¹⁸ An excellent gymnast, he performed the following stunt to excite student interest in the team: “One of our baseball pitchers gave an exhibition at last Saturday’s game by standing on his head and shoulders and fielding bunts. Come and see him pitch the first home game on April 3.”¹⁹ Garlow pitched on semipro ball teams in Harrisburg and Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, and soon attracted the interest of professional scouts. He signed with Jackson in the Southern Michigan League in 1911, moved to Hamilton of the Canadian League in 1912, and garnered the attention of the Boston Red Sox. He failed to make the big league team in 1914, however, and finished his career with Elmira in the New England League.²⁰

Charles “Wahoo” Guyon (White Earth Band of Chippewa)

The elder brother of Joe Guyon, Charles was a three-sport star (football, basketball, and baseball) at both Haskell Institute and Carlisle. He played at Haskell as Charles Guyon but entered Carlisle under the name of Charles Wahoo in 1905. For a more complete account of his career as a player, umpire, coach, and Spalding Company salesman, see chapter 1.

Joe Guyon (White Earth Band of Chippewa)

A second-team all-American in football in 1913 as well as a track star at Carlisle, the elimination of the baseball program prevented him from starring in yet another sport. Guyon’s great athletic prowess led one sportswriter to predict, “The Indian who will fill [Jim] Thorpe’s shoes is Joe Guyon.”²¹ Transferring to Georgia Tech in 1917, under John Heisman he made two more all-American teams, first as a tackle, then as a running back in 1918.²² On the diamond, Guyon was a speedy outfielder who hit for high averages – “a powerful hitter and a good intelligent fielder.”²³ In 1920, at age twenty-six, he began his professional careers in both football (with the Canton Bulldogs and Oorang Indians) and baseball (with Atlanta, Louisville, and Little Rock). One of the brightest stars in the American Association, he hit well over .300 in six of his eight Minor League seasons, carrying the Louisville Colonels to championships in 1926 (.363 with 152 runs and 106 runs batted in) and 1927 (.343 with 132 runs). His advanced age and an injury in 1928 prevented his stardom in the Major Leagues.²⁴

Axtell Hayes (Nez Perce)

A small boy with a big heart, Hayes won the admiration of teammates and fans for his hustling play. The catcher for the 1909 team, he had the hard task of catching spitball pitcher Bill Garlow, but handled him admirably.

“Hays, as usual, was all over the field and backed up Garlow in fine style,” said one report; and another: “Hays caught for the reds and was all over the country.”²⁵ Attending the Ft. Lapwai reservation school in Idaho, Hayes was a small boy at ninety-five pounds and sickly. By his own account, he virtually willed himself to health and passed the physical exam required by Carlisle. He wrote, “So I decided I would make myself strong and healthy, and in the year of 1904 and 1905 in winter I used to go to a creek nearby the school and take a good bath every morning, and kept it up all winter, and in early spring the boys were asked again if they wanted to come to Carlisle and I was the first to respond. . . . I passed the examination with the greatest ease.”²⁶

Frank Hudson (Pueblo)

The legendary quarterback and drop-kicker was also an outfielder and pitcher on the Carlisle baseball squad from 1897 to 1900. He captained the baseball team in 1898, and his pitching won rave reviews in the press. “For the Indians Hudson put up the star game, being especially effective at critical stages,” *The Evening Sentinel* reported, as Hudson led his team to a 6–2 victory over rival Dickinson College.²⁷ To the powerful University of Pennsylvania team, Hudson yielded only three hits in April of 1898. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported, “Hudson, who pitched the game through for the Indians, is the famous little drop-kicker of Carlisle’s renowned football team, and yesterday he held the Quakers down from almost the spot from which he dropkicked two goals against the Quakers last fall. Kind of his happy hunting ground, that spot.”²⁸ When he faced Gettysburg College in 1898, the *Evening Sentinel* reported, “Hudson had his opponents at his mercy and besides played a good fielding game.”²⁹ Later, Hudson served as assistant football coach under Bemis Pierce in 1905 and 1906. Following Warner’s return in 1907, he went to work for an advertising agency in Philadelphia and applied, unsuccessfully, for the position of head football coach in December of 1914.³⁰

Jacob Jameson (Seneca)

As a pitcher and second baseman Jameson (or Jamison or Jimerson) led the Carlisle Indians from 1895 to 1897. He served as captain of the baseball team in 1896 and dazzled spectators with his looping curve ball. George Stallings of the Philadelphia Champs signed him to a National League contract in 1898. Two of his sons, Earl and Elliott Jimerson, played Minor League baseball in the 1920s. Jameson’s story is told at greater length in chapter 1.³¹

George Howard Johnson (Ho-Chunk, Winnebago of Nebraska)

The big spitball pitcher from Walthill, Nebraska, who would later star with the 1913 Cincinnati Reds, stayed only a few months at the Indian School in the spring 1900 before running away. He did participate in the school's outing system, but he appears not to have played on the school's baseball squad. Had he stayed at Carlisle, his strength and athleticism might have made him an asset to both the football and baseball programs. The story of his professional career is told at length in chapter 6, and the story of his play with the Nebraska Indians barnstorming team is told in chapter 3.

Frank Jude (Ojibwe)

Known as the "automatic toe" on Carlisle's football teams, Jude also set a school record in pole vaulting, but his passion was playing left field on the baseball team from 1903 to 1905.³² Jude was hitting .330 for Toledo in 1906 when Gary Herrmann signed him to a contract with the Cincinnati Reds, but with little Minor League seasoning, he struggled to hit Major League pitching. Sadly, Jude would play Minor League baseball for more than a dozen seasons in the American Association, Western League, Three-I League, Northern League, and Sally League, while working in printing shops in the off season without another such opportunity. Jude was a sprinter with a short, quick stride. His style of play was described in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*: "Jude gets away from the plate quickly, and is liable to beat out a slow roller to the infield."³³ He also used his speed and agility on defense: "Frank Jude's catch of Shipke's short fly was the fielding performance of the day. The Chippewa warrior [was] trailing the ball on the dead run only to turn a circus summersault in the clover. He came up with the sphere in his hooks when the populace thought he had missed the play."³⁴ Most amazingly at age thirty-seven, Jude came out of retirement to play with Saskatoon in the Western Canada League in 1921 and tied for the league batting lead with future Major League star Babe Herman. The *Sporting News* reported, "The Indian was Frank Jude – yes, it can be no other – who played outfield for Hummel's Saskatoon team and batted .335 in an even 100 games. A remarkable thing about Jude's batting was that he struck out but 9 times in 345 at bats. If there is any ball player in the world who can beat that record for judging a pitched ball, let him stand up and be counted."³⁵

Harry Kohpay (Osage)

Arriving at Carlisle in 1882 at eight years of age and speaking little English, Kohpay stayed at the school for fourteen years, graduating in 1891 but continuing on the school rolls until 1896 while he attended Eastman

Business College.³⁶ A pitcher and infielder on the 1890, 1891, and 1892 teams, he appears in early Carlisle photographs, gripping a baseball in his hand, and posing with a proud expression on his face and a strikingly muscular physique. The *Evening Sentinel* reported in April of 1891: “The pitching of Kohpay was hard and deceived some of the batters by a swinging motion of the arm.”³⁷ Thoroughly schooled in Colonel Pratt’s “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” philosophy, Kohpay expressed Pratt’s view boldly with a different emphasis: “It is [not] only the Indian in them that ought to be killed; it is the bad influence of the white man that ought to be killed too.”³⁸

Frank Leroy (Stockbridge-Munsee)

The younger brother of Louis Leroy, Frank played basketball at Carlisle, and he pitched and played shortstop and third base on the 1906 and 1907 baseball teams. A right-hander with good control, Leroy signed with the Bay City Cardinals in the Southern Michigan League in 1910 under the pseudonym of “Chief Lawrence,” his first of five seasons in the circuit.³⁹ In 1911 he won twenty-one games, including a no-hit shutout on July 18, in which he drove in Bay City’s lone run.⁴⁰ Frank and Louis are one of the few pairs of brothers to throw Minor League no-hitters (see chapter 5).

Louis Leroy (Stockbridge-Munsee)

A pitching star on the 1899, 1900, and 1901 Carlisle teams, Leroy was known on campus as the boy with the “ten thousand dollar arm” and was recruited eagerly by professional scouts. His catcher, Hawley Pierce, had difficulty catching Leroy’s hard and sometimes wild fastball, but Pierce and Leroy tried out together for the Buffalo Bison in 1902 and were known as “the Bionic Indian Battery.”⁴¹ Leroy made the team, while Pierce did not. Eventually Leroy developed into an iron-armed pitcher with a dancing spitball and excellent control, pitching in the Major Leagues in 1904, 1905, and 1910 and annually leading the American Association in innings pitched. For a complete account of Louis Leroy’s professional career, see chapter 5.

Henry Mitchell (Penobscot)

The shortstop for the Carlisle Indians from 1902 to 1904, Mitchell was the team’s captain in 1903 and 1904. Growing up in Old Town, Maine, he knew and admired Louis Sockalexis. “One of our greatest heroes was, of course, the famous ball player. Poor Sock! Drink and the women got the best of him,” he said.⁴² Mitchell was highly regarded as both a musician and ballplayer, and so during summer vacations, he profited from both skills: “I’ve played in bands ever since I was old enough to blow a horn. One summer vacation

season while I was at Carlisle I got a job at the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Lewistown, Pennsylvania. I played in the band there and on the ball team. During another vacation season I played ball in Asbury Park, New Jersey, and I also played in the band there. . . . When I got through Carlisle I went to work in the car repair shops in Derby, Maine. I guess about all they wanted me there for was to play in the band and on the ball team. I worked in the pattern shop there and sometimes, counting what I got for playing ball and playing in the band, I got as much as forty five dollars a week.⁴³ Soon after his graduation in 1905, Mitchell returned to Old Town and set up shop as a master canoe maker. He was interviewed by Robert F. Grady in 1939, who reported that “He was a very good baseball player and I guess he could play a very good game now.” Mitchell was then fifty-four-years-old.⁴⁴

William Newashe (Sac and Fox)

The slugging first baseman for Carlisle from 1906 to 1909, Newashe played semipro ball during the summers at Hagerstown, Maryland, and at Hershey and Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He began his professional career with Harrisburg in the Tri-State League in 1910 primarily as a catcher, although he played first base and even pitched on occasion. That career would take him to the Southern Michigan League in 1911–1912; the Canadian League in 1913; various exhibition teams from 1914–1918, including Kate J. Becker’s “Carlisle Indian Base Ball Club” in 1916; the Western League in 1919; the Three-I League in 1920, the Western Association in 1921; and the Southwestern League in 1922.⁴⁵ Although his season in the Western League was his closest approach to the Major Leagues, Newashe preferred playing Minor League ball to doing manual labor. During the winters, Newashe found temporary employment such as meat-packing until the next baseball season. His attitude about his work is well expressed in this brief letter to Superintendent Friedman in 1912: “Mr. Friedman: Well I was over to that Packing Co. and I’ll start in Wednesday Morning. They say that they were filled up. But they will do the best they can. But I’m going to tackle it now. Hope that I can have steady work until 25 of April. As I can make out better by playing ball and try it again next fall. Yours truly, W. Newashe.”⁴⁶

Arthur W. Pratt (Sioux, band unknown)

A pitcher and outfielder for the Carlisle squad from 1899 to 1901, Pratt pitched in a rotation with future Major Leaguers Louis Leroy and Charles Bender, and he very much held his own. In May of 1900, he faced future Hall-of-Famer Eddie Plank of Gettysburg College, and the *Evening Sentinel* reported, “It was a pitchers’ battle, Plank getting the better of it, although

Pratt pitched remarkably well.”⁴⁷ In April of 1901, Pratt relieved Leroy in a game against Villanova, and the *Evening Sentinel* reported, “Pratt succeeded Leroy in pitching at the third inning, and had Villa Nova guessing for the rest of the game. In fact, they couldn’t hit him, they were at his mercy, for he struck out eight of the stalwarts. . . . Had Pratt been put in the game at the beginning there would have been a different story to tell.”⁴⁸ Unlike many of his teammates, Pratt did not choose to play Minor League baseball after graduating from Carlisle. Instead, he returned to his home, and from Crow Creek, South Dakota, he reported in 1903: “I am endeavoring to live up to the principles of Carlisle. I am at present bookkeeper and clerk and doing fairly well.”⁴⁹

Conrad Roubidoux (Sioux, Rosebud)

The first captain of the Carlisle Indians baseball team, the 1887 team, the young Rosebud Sioux was admired by his peers for his batting prowess. He was trained as a painter at Carlisle but left before graduation. The *Indian Helper* noted that “Conrad Roubidoux seems to be the best batter among the boys, and they enjoy catching his long-range balls.”⁵⁰ Roubidoux apparently chose the name “Indian Athletics” for the 1887 club and insisted that students use it. In the following year, the *Red Man* stated, “Conrad Roubidoux writes from his home at Rosebud Agency, Dak., of his discouragements in his attempts to find something to do, but that he didn’t ‘give up the ship,’ and finally succeeded in obtaining work.”⁵¹

Charles Roy (Ojibwe)

A pitcher and team captain for the Carlisle Indians in 1905 and 1906, Roy led the team to its most successful season in 1906. Having played at Flandreau Indian School in South Dakota, Roy immediately made the varsity team at Carlisle and by the summer of 1905 was considered as perhaps “the best college pitcher in the country today.”⁵² The Cincinnati Reds made an effort to sign him in the fall of 1905, but Philadelphia manager Connie Mack signed him in the spring of 1906. He was called up by the Athletics in June of 1906, and lacking any Minor League experience, he faltered in his sixteen innings in the big leagues in mostly relief appearances.⁵³ He later pitched for Newark, Wilmington, and Stuebenville, Ohio, but unlike Bender, he saw baseball as a stepping stone to other careers. In 1907, the deeply religious Roy was reported to be glad to be released by Newark and said that he “would never again sign a contract which required him to play on the Sabbath.” He went on to say, “I consider it no more a sin for a ball player to play ball on the Sabbath than I do for an engineer to run a train on that day. It is a case

of work for the ball player, as well as [for] an engineer, both making their livelihoods in a legitimate way, but in different channels. For me, personally, I prefer to cut out Sunday playing altogether.”⁵⁴

Edward Tabby-nana-aca (Piegan)

One of the most tragic stories in the annals of Carlisle baseball was that of Edward Tabby-nana-aca, a talented young ballplayer (apparently Piegan) from Oklahoma who made the varsity squad as the team’s regular right fielder in 1903. A report of the first game of the 1903 season in which Carlisle defeated Syracuse 8–7, singled him out for praise: “Tabbynanak in right field played a strong game, batting well and making a sensational catch of a long foul fly.”⁵⁵ He played and traveled with the team until late May when he became suddenly and desperately ill. Superintendent Pratt arranged for him to be escorted home by “Miss Pierre,” but Carlisle graduate William M. Hazlett (Piegan) soon relayed the unhappy news from Oklahoma: “I am sorry to inform you that Edward Tabby-nan-aca, who recently came home from Carlisle sick, is dead. I didn’t know anything about his death until after he had been buried or I would have taken charge of his body and given it a Christian burial. The Indians that had him in charge put him into a sweathouse and he died soon after coming out.”⁵⁶

Jim Thorpe (Sac and Fox)

An all-American halfback, the star of the 1912 Olympics and possibly the greatest athlete of the twentieth century, Thorpe played baseball well enough to make the big leagues. Unfortunately for his professional career, he received little experience at Carlisle, playing only in a few games in 1909. The *Arrow* commented favorably on his pitching performance, as he tossed a shutout against Eastern College at Hagerstown, Maryland: “Thorpe, in the box for Carlisle was a good opponent to Johnson, and with the superior support had no trouble shutting out the Whites [of Eastern College].”⁵⁷ His successful pitching and hitting in the Carolina League in 1909 and 1910 suggested that Thorpe could do it all on the diamond, but he was to receive no more training in baseball at Carlisle before signing his first Major League contract with the Giants in 1913. For more about Thorpe’s baseball career, see chapter 4.

Joe Twin (Ho-Chunk, Winnebago of Nebraska)

One of the stalwarts of Carlisle’s baseball team, Twin played on the team from 1904 to 1908 in centerfield, right field, third base, and second base. His younger brother Louis would take his place on the team in 1909. Joe

Twin played semipro ball in Connellsville and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, among other places. His Carlisle record shows that he was “On Leave to play baseball” in the summer of 1906 and “Absent to play Baseball” again in 1907. Twin was still playing summer ball when he wrote to Superintendent Friedman in June of 1914.⁵⁸ Twin was signed as an outfielder by manager Bill Malarkey of Connellsville for the summer of 1907. Sportswriter W. F. Brooks of the *Pittsburgh Gazette-Times* retold the story of his abbreviated 1907 season:

Twin’s chance came soon after the season opened when Connellsville opposed Scottdale at the latter’s park. Several innings passed into history without the Indian having anything to do. Along about the fourth inning, a Scottdale batter put out a high fly: Twin, in middle field, judged it accurately and was all set to make the putout.

Partisan fans in the grandstand emitted a series of war whoops just as the ball headed downward. The demonstration by his paleface brothers seemed to disconcert Twin. . . . He dropped the ball, the error let in several markers and Connellsville lost the game.

Twin’s Connellsville career, begun so inauspiciously, closed shortly.⁵⁹

Jesse Youngdeer (Eastern Cherokee)

As the team’s regular centerfielder for most of a decade, Youngdeer set the longevity record for the team, playing in every season from 1902 to 1909. He went on to play semipro ball and to barnstorm with the Nebraska Indians. For a more complete account of his career, see appendix 3.

CARLISLE INDIAN PLAYER ROSTERS AND RECORDS

Rosters of Carlisle Indian teams, schedules, and team records are compiled from many sources: the *Red Man*, *Indian Helper*, *Arrow*, *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle), *Daily Herald* (Carlisle), *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *North American* (Philadelphia), *Spalding’s Official Base Ball Record, 1909*, and from the notes of John Faller at the Cumberland County Historical Society, 1995. Identifications of tribes and some first names are taken from the Cumberland County Historical Society’s *Index of Indian Reference Documents*, vol. 1, ed. Jobyna M. Maclay and Charles E. Maclay Sr. (Carlisle: CCHS, 1997) and from Genevieve Bell, *Carlisle Student Name Index* (Names of File 1327, Record Group 75 at the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC), (Carlisle: CCHS, 1998).

1890 Carlisle Indians

Fisk Goodyear, coach
Peter Cornelius, P (Oneida)
Adam Metoxen, C (Oneida)
Mark Evarts, 1B (captain, Pawnee)
Albert Metoxen, 2B (Oneida)
John Tyler, 3B
Percy Zadoka, SS (Keechi)
Jamison Schanandore, LF
Fred Bighorse, CF (Sioux, band unknown)
George Baker, RF
James Cornelius, substitute (Oneida)

1890 Young Americans

Chester P. Cornelius, coach
Felix Iron Eagle Feather, P (captain, Sioux, band unknown)
Gary Meyers, C
Walter Anallo, 1B (Pueblo)
Harry Kohpay, 2B (Osage)
Benjamin Lowry, 3B
Oto Chief Eagle, SS (Sioux, band unknown)
Thomas Metoxen, LF (Oneida)
Lyman Kennedy, CF (Onondago)
Martinez Johns, RF

1891 Carlisle Indians

Fisk Goodyear, coach
Harry Kohpay, P (Osage)
Morgan Toprock, C (Apache, band unknown)
Fred Bighorse, C (Sioux, band unknown)
Palmer Schanandore, 1B
Whitney Powlas, 2B
Frank Everrett, 3B
Henry Fromm, LF
Joe Harris, CF (Gros Ventre)
Hill, RF

1892 Carlisle Indians

Fisk Goodyear (coach)
Morgan Toprock, C (Apache, band unknown)

Chief Eagle, c, 3B (Sioux, band unknown)
Palmer Schanandore, 1B (Oneida)
John Baptiste, P, 1B (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Joseph Wolfe, 2B
Cornelius, 3B (Oneida)
Harry Kohpay, ss, P (Osage)
Silas, LF
Fred Bighorse, CF (Sioux, band unknown)
William Lufkins, RF (Ojibwe)
Taylor, RF

1892 Union Boys

Miles Gordon, P (Ojibwe)
Harry Mann, c
Nicholas Parker, 1B (Seneca)
Whitney Powlas, 2B (captain, Oneida)
Thomas Moony, 3B (Assinboine)
Hugh Leider, ss (Crow)
Brigman Cornelius, LF (Oneida)
Charley Marvel, CF
Hiram Moses, RF (Seneca)

1892 Union Reserves

Fisk Goodyear, coach
George Baker (Kaw)
John Baptiste (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Fred Big Horse (Sioux, band unknown)
Felix Eaglefeather (Sioux, band unknown)
Joseph Hamilton (Piegan)
Joe Harris (Gros Ventre)
Harry Hutchinson (Ottawa)
Harry Kohpay (Osage)
Paul Lovejoy (Omaha)
Jonas Place (Apache, band unknown)
John Robe (Sioux, band unknown)
David Turkey (Ho-Chunk)
Morgan Toprock (Apache, band unknown)

1892 Secret Base Ball Club

Hugh Sowora, c

Stanley Norcross, P (captain)
Philip Lavatta, 1B (Shoshone)
Asbury Clark, 2B (Cheyenne)
Thomas Kishanai, 3B
James R. Wheelock, ss
William Leighton, LF (Crow)
Nelson Green, CF
Marpass Cloud, RF
David Abraham, Utility (Ojibwe)
Louis Caswell, Utility (Ojibwe)
Joseph Morrison, Utility (Ojibwe)

1895 Carlisle Indians

Jacob Jamison, P, 2B (Seneca)
Parkhurst, C
Harry Hutchinson, 1B (Ottawa)
Nori, 2B, P, 3B (Pueblo)
Presly Houk, 3B (Piegan)
Smith, ss
William Lufkins, ss, LF (Ojibwe)
George Shelafo, LF, ss, P (Ojibwe)
Robert Jackson, CF (Chehalis)
William Leighton, CF (Crow)
Frank Hudson, RF (Pueblo)

1895 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 2-2

Apr. 6: at Harrisburg, W 11-8
May 4: at York Y.M.C.A., W 8-3
May 11: at University of Pennsylvania, L 41-4
May 18: at Gettysburg College, L 4-1

1896 Carlisle Indians

Mr. Spay, coach
George Shelafo, P (Ojibwe)
Johnson Spenser, C (Shawnee)
Hawley Pierce, 1B (Seneca)
Jacob Jamison, 2B, P (captain, Seneca)
George Suis, 3B (Crow)
Yellowrobe, ss
Chauncey Archiquette, LF (Oneida)

Edward Rogers, CF (Ojibwe)
Robert Jackson, RF (Chehalis)
William Johnson, OF

1896 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 4-4

Apr. 18: at Dickinson College, w 6–2
Apr. 25: at Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, L 3–1
May 2: at Bucknell, L 12–10
May 9: vs. Pennsylvania Steel Company, w 16–8
May 16: vs. Gettysburg, w 4–1
May 23: at Dickinson College, L 13–9
May 30: at Lykens, w 8–7
June 6: vs. Hanover, L 13–3

1896 Carlisle Indians, Second Team

Frank Shively, P (Crow)
Yarlet, C
Silas, 1B
Paul Corbett, 2B (Nez Perce)
Johnny Tiger, 3B
Peters, SS
Irontail, LF (Oglala Sioux)
Corbett Lawyer, CF (Nez Perce)
Long, RF

1897 Carlisle Indians

Jacob Jamison, P (Seneca)
Jacob Buckhart, C (Shawnee)
Hawley Pierce, 1B, C (Seneca)
Christian Eastman, 2B (Sioux, band unknown)
Charles Roberts, 2B (Ojibwe)
Wallace Miller, 3B (Omaha)
George Shelafo, SS (Ojibwe)
Chauncey Archiquette, LF (Oneida)
Artie Miller, CF (captain)
Frank Hudson, RF (Pueblo)

1897 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 5-4-1

Apr. 3: at University of Pennsylvania, L 17–1
Apr. 10: at Dickinson College, w 3–1

May 1: at Gettysburg College, T 2–2
May 8: at Gettysburg College, L 5–3
May 12: at Dickinson College, L 10–1
May 15: at Mercersburg Academy, w 9–7
May 22: vs. Gettysburg College, w 27–1
Jun. 1: at State Normal School, Lockhaven, w 13–9
Jun. 4: at All-College, Harrisburg, L 3–1
Jun. 6: at Dickinson College, w 13–1

1898 Carlisle Indians

Frank Hudson, P (captain, Pueblo)
Jonas Mitchell, C (Ojibwe)
Hawley Pierce, 1B, C (Seneca)
Christian Eastman, 2B (Sioux)
Wallace Miller, 3B (Omaha)
Artie Miller, SS (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Chauncey Archiquette, LF (Oneida)
Edward Rogers, CF (Ojibwe)
Joseph Scholder, RF (Mission, band unknown)
James Johnson, Utility (Stockbridge-Munsee)

1898 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 3-4-1

Apr. 2: at University of Pennsylvania., Philadelphia, L 2–5
Apr. 16: vs. Gettysburg, T 2–2
Apr. 23: at Dickinson College, L 15–6
May 14: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, w 5–1
May 30: vs. Dickinson College, w 6–2
June 1: vs. Lehigh, L 8–2
June 4: at Gettysburg College, L 6–2
June 14: at Susquehanna College, w 18–5

1899 Carlisle Indians

Louis Leroy, P (Stockbridge)
Hawley Pierce, C (Seneca)
Charles Roberts, 1B (Ojibwe)
Artie Miller, 2B (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Wallace Miller, 3B (Omaha)
Arthur Pratt, SS, P (Sioux, band unknown)
Blackchief, SS (Seneca)
Caleb Sickles, LF (Oneida)

Edward Rogers, CF (Ojibwe)
James Johnson, RF (Stockbridge-Munsee)

1899 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 5-4

Apr. 14: vs. Syracuse University, L 9-2
Apr. 22: vs. Bucknell, L 8-6
May 13: at Mercersburg Academy, w 4-3
May 20: at Ursinus College, w 18-8
May 23: vs. Dickinson College, L 3-2
May 27: at Gettysburg, w (score unavailable)
May 30: at Dickinson College, w 6-2
June 1: vs. Gettysburg College, L 16-10
June 24: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, w 12-5

1900 Carlisle Indians

Glenn S. Warner, coach
Louis Leroy, P (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Hawley Pierce, C (Seneca)
Charles Roberts, 1B (Ojibwe)
Wallace Miller, 2B (Omaha)
James Johnson, 3B (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Blackchief, SS (Seneca) May 3: at Susquehanna College, w 9-6
Frank Beaver, LF (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Jesse Rulard, CF (Sioux, band unknown)
Edward Rogers, CF (Ojibwe)
Arthur Pratt, RF, P (Sioux, band unknown)
Frank Hudson, RF, P (Pueblo)

1900 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 8-8-1

Apr. 7: at University of Pennsylvania, L 7-6
Apr. 11: at Mercersburg Academy, L 12-11
Apr. 12: vs. Syracuse University, w 7-5
Apr. 18: at Lebanon Valley College, T 4-4
Apr. 21: at Cornell University, L 13-4
May 2: at Georgetown University, L 17-0
May 3: vs. Susquehanna College, w 9-6
May 5: vs. Mercersburg Academy, w 10-5
May 16: at Lehigh, w 17-9
May 26: at Bucknell, L 8-4
May 30: at Pennsylvania Railroad Y.M.C.A., L 10-8

June 2: at Lafayette College, w 2-1
June 9: at Gettysburg College, w 12-6
June 13: at Pennsylvania State, L 3-5
June 16: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, w 10-1
June 19: vs. Cornell University, w 12-6
June 20: vs. Bucknell, L 8-3

1901 Carlisle Indians

Glenn S. Warner, coach
Harry L. Taylor, coach
Louis Leroy, P (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Arthur Pratt, P (Sioux, band unknown)
Hawley Pierce, C (Seneca)
Miller, 1B
James Johnson, 2B (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Edward Rogers, 3B (Ojibwe)
Blackchief, SS (Seneca)
Frank Beaver, LF (Omaha)
Nori, CF
Antonio Lubo, RF (Mission, band unknown)
Charles Bender, RF (Chippewa, White Earth)

1901 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 12-11-1

Apr. 12: vs. Albright College, w 8-3
Apr. 13: at University of Pennsylvania, L 7-1
Apr. 18: at Pennsylvania State, w 10-3
Apr. 25: vs. Villanova, L 9-1
Apr. 27: at Mercersburg Academy, w 13-3
Apr. 29: at Dickinson College, L 12-9
May 1: vs. Lebanon Valley College, w 13-8
May 4: at Columbia University, w 16-3
May 8: vs. Gettysburg College, L 9-3
May 11: at Gettysburg, T 5-5
May 15: vs. Susquehanna College, w 21-0
May 18: vs. Mercersburg Academy, w 4-1
May 23: vs. Washington and Jefferson, w 8-4
May 30: vs. Dickinson College, w 16-2
June 1: at Albright College, w 11-2
June 5: at Princeton University, L 14-0
June 8: vs. Cornell University (at Buffalo), L 6-5

June 12: at Yale, L 9–5
June 13: at Brown, L 4–0
June 15: at Harvard, L 4–20
June 19: at Bucknell, w 11–7
June 20: at Bloomsburg Normal, L 6–0
June 21: vs. Bloomsburg Normal, w 5–4
June 22: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, L 6–4

1902 Carlisle Indians

Glenn S. Warner, coach
Charles Bender, P (captain, Chippewa, White Earth)
Decora, P (Ho-Chunk)
Pedro, P
Henry Tatoyopa, C (Sioux, band unknown)
Genus Baird, C, 1B (Oneida)
James Johnson, 2B (Stockbridge-Munsee)
Henry Mitchell, SS (Penobscot)
Jesse Youngdeer, OF (Eastern Cherokee)
Nori, OF
Wilson Charles, OF, P (Oneida)

1902 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 4-15

Apr. 5: at Franklin and Marshall, w 7–1
Apr. 12: at University of Pennsylvania, L 15–0
Apr. 16: vs. Susquehanna College, w 15–1
Apr. 19: vs. Dickinson College, L 2–1
Apr. 23: at Dickinson College, L 12–6
Apr. 25: vs. Lebanon Valley College, L 4–1
May 2: vs. Franklin and Marshall, L 14–8
May 16: vs. Dickinson College, L 9–4
May 20: at Cornell, L 12–3
May 22: vs. Lebanon Valley College, L 7–0
May 24: at Albright College, w 11–8
May 30: at Dickinson College, w 13–6
June 6: at University of West Virginia, L 9–4
June 7: at University of West Virginia, L 21–8
June 9: at Waynesburg College, L (Forfeit)
June 10: at Washington and Jefferson, L 6–2
June 14: at Gettysburg College, L 6–4

June 19: at Bucknell, L 22-1
June 21: at Chambersburg, L 8-6

1903 Carlisle Indians

Wilson Charles, P (Oneida)
Walter Regan, P (Hoopla)
Genus Baird C (Oneida)
Lloyd Nephew, 1B (Seneca)
Joseph Baker, 2B (Ho-Chunk)
Ollie Nicholas, 3B
Henry Mitchell, SS (captain, Penobscot)
Frank Jude, LF (Chippewa)
Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Cherokee)
Edward Tabby-nan-aca, RF (Piegan?)
James Johnson, RF (Stockbridge-Munsee)

1903 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 7-9

Apr. 10: vs. Syracuse University, W 8-7
Apr. 11: at Lebanon Valley College, W 9-4
Apr. 18: vs. Franklin and Marshall, W 10-4
Apr. 24: vs. Lebanon Valley College, W 16-1
May 2: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, L 9-2
May 9: at Albright College, W 5-3
May 9: at Lebanon Valley College, L 8-3
May 16: at Pennsylvania Park Club in York, L 4-2
May 22: at Lewistown Burnham Athletics, L 11-4
May 23: at Lewistown Burnham Athletics, W 10-8
May 30: at Gettysburg College, L 6-2, W 6-3
June 6: at Bucknell, L 6-2
June 9: vs. Bucknell, L 9-8
June 10: at Franklin and Marshall, L 9-5
June 13: vs. Lindner Athletic Club, L 1-0

1904 Carlisle Indians

Charles Bender, coach (during the month of March)
Wilson Charles, P (Oneida)
Roy Smith, P (Ute)
Lloyd Nephew, C (captain, Seneca)
Charles Dillon, 1B (Sioux, band unknown)

Joseph Libby, 2B (Ojibwe)
Joseph Baker, 2B (Ho-Chunk)
Frank Jude, 3B (Ojibwe)
Henry Mitchell, ss (Penobscot)
Titus Whitecrow, LF (Sioux, band unknown)
Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Eastern Cherokee)
Joseph Twin, CF (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Green, RF
Scroffs, RF

1904 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 11-14
(Partial Schedule)

Mar. 30: vs. Franklin and Marshall, w 7-5
Apr. 9: vs. Albright College, w 20-0
Apr. 15: vs. Lebanon Valley College, w 5-2
Apr. 19: vs. Villanova, w 17-6
Apr. 23: at Lebanon Valley College, w 5-2
Apr. 30: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, L 23-7
May 4: vs. Gettysburg College, w 8-7
May 7: vs. Wilmington, L 7-2
May 10: vs. Wyoming Seminary, w 3-2
May 11: vs. Lindner Athletic Club, L 9-8
May 12: vs. Lindner Athletic Club, L 9-4
May 14: at Millersville Normal, w 9-2
May 16: at Williamsport Athletic Club, L 8-6
May 17: at Williamsport Athletic Club, L 14-4
May 23: vs. Lindner Athletic Club, L 8-7
May 28: vs. Chambersburg Athletic Club, w 9-8
May 30: at Gettysburg College, L 4-2, w 5-1
May 31: vs. Bucknell, L 5-2
June 4: at Penn Park Athletic Club, York, L 7-1
June 8: at Franklin and Marshall, w 10-4
June 11: at Lebanon Athletic Club, L 6-4
June 15: at Harvard, L 14-4
June 18: at Lafayette College, L 3-0
June 22: at Bucknell, L 6-2

1905 Carlisle Indians

William Gardner, P, OF (Ojibwe)
Charles Roy, P (captain, Ojibwe)

Genus Baird, c (Oneida)
Brown, 1B
Joseph Twin, 2B (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Fritz Hendricks, 3B (Caddo)
Henry Mitchell, ss (Penobscot)
Frank Jude, LF (Ojibwe)
Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Eastern Cherokee)
Michael Balenti, RF (Cheyenne)

1905 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 12-10-1

Apr. 12: vs. Mercersburg Academy, w 11-3
Apr. 14: vs. Albright, w 11-8
Apr. 15: at Lebanon Valley College, L 3-1
Apr. 19: Harvard at Philadelphia, L 23-2
Apr. 21: vs. Ursinus College, L 17-1
Apr. 22: at Harrisburg Athletic Club, L 6-0
Apr. 26: vs. Villanova, L 5-3
Apr. 29: vs. Lebanon Valley College, w 16-2
May 5: vs. Wyoming Seminary, w 10-5
May 6: at Ursinus College, w 5-4
May 10: vs. Dickinson College, L 11-7
May 17: vs. Washington and Jefferson, w 3-2
May 26: vs. Susquehanna College, w 12-3
May 27: at Franklin and Marshall, w 6-1
May 30: at Gettysburg College, w 6-3, L 5-4
May 31: at Mercersburg Academy, T 3-3
June 3: at Dickinson College, L 10-4
June 9: at Burham Athletic Club, w 6-3
June 10: at Burham Athletic Club, L 1-0
June 13: at Lehigh, w 8-5
June 20: at Lafayette College, L 13-1
July 6: Oroes at Asbury Park, w 14-4

1906 Carlisle Indians

Charles R. Pittinger, coach (March)
Charles Roy, P (captain, Ojibwe)
Charles Lydick, P (Ojibwe)
William Garlow, P (Tuscarora)
Genus Baird, c (Oneida)
Michael Chabitnoy, c (Alaskan)

William Newashe, 1B (Sac and Fox)
William Pappan, 2B (Pawnee)
Fritz Hendricks, 2B (Caddo)
Frank Leroy, 3B (Stockbridge-Munsee)
James Schrimpsheer, ss (Wyandotte)
Chauncey Archiquette, LF (Oneida)
Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Eastern Cherokee)
Joseph Twin, RF (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Redwing, RF

1906 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 16-14
Apr. 7: vs. Franklin and Marshall, w 10-3
Apr. 11: vs. Ursinus College, w 5-0
Apr. 14: at Lebanon Valley College, w 7-6
Apr. 16: vs. Mercersburg Academy, L 12-5
Apr. 17: vs. Villanova, L 6-4
Apr. 18: at George Washington University, w 9-8
Apr. 19: at University of Virginia, Charlottesville, L 11-3
Apr. 20: at University of Virginia, Charlottesville, L 3-0
Apr. 23: at Georgetown, L 7-1
Apr. 27: vs. Bloomsburg Normal, w 17-6
Apr. 28: vs. Lebanon Valley College, w 10-5
May 4: vs. Susquehanna College, w 10-3
May 5: vs. Ursinus College, w 5-1
May 7: at Washington and Jefferson, L 13-5
May 8: at Waynesburg College, L (Forfeit)
May 10: at West Virginia University, w 12-8
May 12: at Annapolis, L 5-3
May 25: vs. Albright College, w 3-1
May 26: at Millersville Normal School, L 4-3
May 30: Villanova at Atlantic City, L 7-3
June 1: vs. Gettysburg College, w 7-5
June 2: at Susquehanna College, w 9-6
June 6: at Bloomsburg Normal School, w 2-0
June 8: at Mount St. Mary's, L 3-2
June 9: at Gettysburg College, w 7-0
June 12: at Lehigh, w 10-8
June 15: at Burnham Athletic Club, L 12-3
June 16: at Burnham Athletic Club, L 5-3

June 19: at Lafayette College, L 4-3

June 20: at Keystone State, w 5-3

1907 Carlisle Indians

Glenn S. Warner, coach

Thomas Eagleman, P (Sioux, band unknown)

Titus Whitecrow, P (Sioux, band unknown)

William Garlow, P, LF (Tuscarora)

Emil Wauseka, C (Cheyenne)

David Little Old Boy, C (Cheyenne)

William Newashe, 1B (Sac and Fox)

Clarence Woodbury, 1B (Ojibwe)

Fritz Hendricks, 2B (captain, Caddo)

Robert Davenport, 2B (Ojibwe)

Michael Balenti, 3B (Cheyenne)

James Schrimpsheer, SS (Wyandotte)

Frank Leroy, SS, P (Stockbridge-Munsee)

Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Eastern Cherokee)

Joseph Twin, RF (Winnebago of Nebraska)

William Shongo, RF, P (Seneca)

Bert Miller, RF (Stockbridge-Munsee)

1907 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 11-13

Mar. 29: University of Pennsylvania at Atlantic City, w 4-3

Mar. 30: University of Pennsylvania at Atlantic City, L 3-1

Apr. 3: vs. Mercersburg Academy, w 4-2

Apr. 6: vs. Franklin and Marshall, L 5-3

Apr. 12: vs. Ursinus College, w 11-3

Apr. 23: Tristate at Harrisburg, L 11-2

Apr. 18: vs. St. Johns College, w 3-2

Apr. 23: vs. Villanova, w 3-2

Apr. 25: at Seton Hall, L 5-1

Apr. 26: at Fordham University, L 6-2

Apr. 27: at Brown University, L 5-1

Apr. 30: vs. Pennsylvania State, L 6-0

May 3: vs. Susquehanna College, L 4-3

May 8: at Lafayette College, L 4-2

May 16: at Syracuse University, L 3-1

May 18: at St. Mary's College, w 2-1

May 24: vs. Albright College, w 9–0
May 25: at Millersville, w 10–2
May 29: Villanova at Atlantic City, L 5–0
May 30: Villanova at Atlantic City, L 7–1
June 3: at Mercersburg Academy, w 5–4
June 10: at Albright College, w 8–0
June 12: at Pennsylvania State, L 7–2
June 15: at University of Pennsylvania, w 6–1

1908 Carlisle Indians

Joseph Tarbell, P (Mohawk)
William Garlow, P (Tuscarora)
Emil Wauseka, C (Cheyenne)
William Newashe, 1B (Sac and Fox)
Leo Nevitt, 2B (Delaware)
Joseph Twin, 3B (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Michael Balenti, SS (captain, Cheyenne)
Joseph Libby, LF (Ojibwe)
Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Eastern Cherokee)
Felix, RF

1908 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 13-14
(Partial Schedule)

From *Spalding's Official Base Ball Record, 1909*
w Carlisle 10, Lebanon Valley College 4
w Carlisle 9, Western Maryland 2
w Carlisle 16, Franklin and Marshall 2
L Lehigh 5, Carlisle 0
w Carlisle 2, Mercersburg Academy 0
w Carlisle 6, University of Pennsylvania 2
L University of Pennsylvania 12, Carlisle 5
L Pennsylvania State 4, Carlisle 0
L Villanova 7, Carlisle 2
L St. Mary's College 3, Carlisle 2
w Carlisle 2, Washington College 0
L Syracuse University 3, Carlisle 1
w Carlisle 5, Dickinson College 0
L Albright College 7, Carlisle 6
w Carlisle 5, Winchester 3
L Hagerstown 6, Carlisle 1

L Mercersburg Academy 7, Carlisle 4
w Carlisle 14, Louisiana 1
w Carlisle 6, Dickinson College 1
L University of Pennsylvania 5, Carlisle 0
L Brown 11, Carlisle 0
L Hagerstown 2, Carlisle 0
L Holy Cross 6, Carlisle 0

1909 Carlisle Indians

Eugene E. Bassford, coach
Bill Garlow, P (Tuscarora)
Joseph Tarbell, P (Mohawk)
Peter Hauser, P (Cheyenne)
Axtell Hayes, C (Nez Perce)
Jim Thorpe, 1B, P (Sac and Fox)
William Newashe, 1B (Sac and Fox)
Joseph Poodry, 2B (Seneca)
Louis Twin, 3B (Winnebago of Nebraska)
Michael Balenti, SS (captain, Cheyenne)
Joseph Libby, LF (Ojibwe)
Jesse Youngdeer, CF (Eastern Cherokee)
Peter Jordan, RF (Ojibwe)

1909 Carlisle Indians Team Record, 11–16

Mar. 31: vs. Albright College, w 11–4
Apr. 3: vs. Franklin and Marshall, w 9–2
Apr. 7: vs. Ursinus College, L 5–2
Apr. 9: University of Pennsylvania at Atlantic City, w 4–2
Apr. 10: University of Pennsylvania at Atlantic City, L 8–2
Apr. 14: vs. Mercersburg Academy, L 6–4
Apr. 17: Tristate at Harrisburg, L 7–2
Apr. 23: at Pennsylvania State: L 4–2
Apr. 24: at Bucknell, L 10–4
Apr. 27: vs. Villanova, L 7–5
Apr. 29: at Andover, w 8–3
May 6: at Syracuse University, w 6–2
May 7: at Syracuse University, L 10–2
May 8: at Cornell University, L 5–0
May 12: vs. Dickinson College, L 7–4
May 13: at Seton Hall, L 6–1

May 14: at Fordham College, L 11-4
May 15: at West Point, L 4-0
May 18: at Eastern College, Hagerstown, w 3-0
May 19: at Dickinson College, w 6-1
May 22: at St. Mary's College, w 6-1
May 25: at Hagerstown, w 4-2
May 26: at Annapolis, L 1-0
May 29: at Mt. Washington, Baltimore, w 5-0
June 1: vs. University of Pittsburgh, w 3-2
June 7: at Albright College, L 3-1
June 12: at University of Pennsylvania, L 4-2

Appendix 3

Lives of the Nebraska Indians

Although literally hundreds of players donned Nebraska Indians jerseys from 1897 to 1917 and almost all of these players have faded into obscurity, it is still possible to present brief profiles of several of the most remarkable players. Fourteen profiles of their lives follow in alphabetical order.

Jacob Buckheart (or Buckhardt)

A Shawnee, from Shawnee, Oklahoma, he caught for Carlisle in 1897. In June of that year the *Boston Globe* reported, "There is another Indian [besides Louis Sockalexis] in the business [of professional baseball]. His name is Buck Heart."¹ At six feet one and a half and 195 pounds, he was a formidable athlete and played first base for the Nebraska Indians in 1899 and 1900 before returning to his farmstead in Oklahoma. Guy W. Green wrote of Buckheart as the star of a game at Payne, Ohio, in 1899: "With three men on the bases Buckheart came to bat. Buck is over six feet tall and has the strength of an ox. He let one strike go by and then lifted the ball squarely over the center field fence."² In 1913, Buckheart himself wrote a note to his friends at Carlisle that typified his attitude as a ballplayer: "I am fighting the battles of life as hard as I can at all times. Good regards to all. Hit [the] ball hard and run hard."³

Burnham

A speedy (Native American?) catcher with "a wonderful whip" from California who played on the 1909 team. During a team workout in Wahoo, Nebraska, the fleet-footed Burnham "caught up with a jack rabbit which he booted one and informed the hare to get out of the way and let someone run that could run."⁴

Ed Davis

A full-blood American Indian (Green does not mention his tribal affiliation), he played left field for the 1901 team and decided a game in Momence, Illinois, with a grand slam in the eighth inning: "He lost the ball in the next county somewhere."⁵

George Green

A Sac-and-Fox player who did double duty from 1899 to 1902, alternating between the pitching mound and infield positions. Green's most outstanding athletic ability was his foot speed. Guy Green wrote, "After a game there [Clifton Springs NY], George Green, who had pitched the contest for me, was persuaded to run 100 yards with a professional foot racer who was spoiling for a heat. George lost his man before the finish line was reached."⁶ The *Lincoln Evening Journal* described Green as the "crack twirler" on the 1902 staff that included Tobey and White Boy.⁷

George Howard Johnson

The greatest American Indian player to travel with the Nebraska Indians was George Howard "Chief" Johnson. Johnson, a Ho-Chunk or Winnebago from Walthill, Nebraska, pitched two Minor League no-hitters, one in the Western League and one in Pacific Coast League, and played for three years in the Major Leagues, one with the Cincinnati Reds and two with the Kansas City Packers of the Federal League. He pitched a shutout in his first Major League start, stymieing hitters with his spitball and intimidating them with his massive frame. Johnson played for the Nebraska Indians in 1907, pitching in thirty-eight games and winning thirty-two. *Sporting Life* described him in 1908 as "a husky lad of 22 years" with "terrific speed and lots of curves." Johnson, the article said, "will have a chance to climb the ladder."⁸ If only Johnson had not struggled with alcoholism and anti-Indian prejudice, he might have won even greater fame as a Major League player. See chapter 6 for the story of Johnson's complete professional career.

Juzicania

A Yaqui from Arizona, he was the center fielder on the 1906 squad. Green indulged in the anti-Indian stereotypes of "the Western blanket Indian" in writing of Juzicania: "I hesitated a long time before I added Juzicanea [*sic*] to my Team. He was the meanest looking Indian I have ever seen. He wore his hair long, surveyed everything suspiciously with piercing black eyes, and when he came down the street people moved to the edge of the sidewalk and apprehensively watched him pass."⁹

George Long

A full-blood Ho-Chunk (Winnebago of Nebraska) who played second base on the 1897 and 1898 squads; Long, according to Green, made "the longest hit ever on the Manchester [Iowa] grounds. He drove the ball clear into the river, which surrounded the Manchester park on two sides."¹⁰

Nakomas

A Wyandotte from Oklahoma who played second base for the 1906 squad, Guy Green embroidered several fantastic yarns about him in *Fun and Frolic with an Indian Ball Team*, including the following: "When he was with me in 1906, he was fifty-five years old, but played first class ball. Nakomas was the scrappiest player I ever had; he had been a fighter all his life, and when he came to me he was a mass of scars of various shapes, ages and variety."¹¹

Walter M. Nevitt

A Delaware Indian who played third base for part of the 1909 season, soon after graduating from Haskell Institute, where he starred as a pitcher. At five feet nine and 156 pounds, he was probably too small to be considered as a Major League pitcher, but he did pitch three no-hitters at Haskell, and he signed with the Des Moines Boosters, a Class A Western League team, as a pitcher in 1912. The *Nebraska State Journal* reported, "Captain Nevitt, on third base, is in a class by himself."¹²

Thomas Reed

An Ojibwe player from Cass Lake, Minnesota, Reed was Haskell Institute's second baseman in 1909 and also played on the school's highly touted football team. His baseball manager, Wilson B. Charles, wrote of him: "Reid [*sic*] could not see the ball very well when at bat, but he made some grand-stand catches at second base." He contributed his speed and defensive skills to the Nebraska Indians for the 1912 season.¹³

Daniel Tobey

One of the most colorful sports personalities associated with the Nebraska Indians, Dan Tobey achieved greater fame as a boxing and wrestling announcer and promoter in California after he stopped dressing in his clown suit for the Nebraska Indians. A native of Ulysses, Nebraska, Tobey was described in local papers as "the Adonis of unorganized ball" and "the only tow-headed Injun in captivity."¹⁴ Starting in 1902, "Ernie Tobey" [*sic*] alternated between the outfield and the pitching mound for the Indians: "Tobey is really the only white man on the Indian team this year. . . . But Tobey is no fake. Everyone knows on sight that he is a natural born white man, for he has the tow head and florid complexion that can never be mistaken."¹⁵ He served as player-manager of Green's Japanese team in 1906 and in the same capacity with the Nebraska Indians through 1909. Tobey himself said that he had "excellent control and savvy and nothing else. The only curve he had was in his legs."¹⁶ In fact, game accounts also suggested he had a

lively fastball, and in a game at Colon, Michigan in July of 1909, he shut out the opposition 24–0, “with one scratch hit,” striking out sixteen batters.¹⁷ During World War I, Tobey ventured to California and became an emcee, selling war bonds on tours with Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. He was best known as a ringside announcer, working at the Vernon arena and the Olympic Auditorium, calling the championship bouts of Jim Jeffries, Jack Dempsey, and Gene Tunney.¹⁸

White Boy

A diminutive Ho-Chunk man (Winnebago of Nebraska) with a strong arm, White Boy was a star pitcher for the Genoa Indian School in 1900 and pitched impressively against the Nebraska Indians. Green signed White Boy for the 1902 season. White Boy, Daniel Tobey, and George Green formed one of team’s strongest pitching staffs. Behind the three, the Nebraska Indians enjoyed an incredible .902 winning percentage.¹⁹

John Bull “Edward” Williams

An Oneida from Green Bay, Wisconsin, Williams was a sturdy six-foot outfielder for the 1907 Nebraska Indians. Having begun his professional career late at the age of twenty-four, he went on to play for Hannibal in the Illinois-Missouri League in 1908 and Marion in the Ohio State League in 1909. He tried out with the New York Giants in the spring of 1910 but was released to New Bedford of the New England League. A left-handed hitter and right-handed thrower, he was described by William Phelon in *Baseball Magazine* as “an outfielder of good repute in the Minor Leagues.”²⁰

Jesse Yellowdeer

A full-blood Eastern Cherokee from Cherokee, North Carolina, he was a center fielder for the Carlisle Indian baseball team from 1902 to 1909. A pint-sized player, at five feet six and 140 pounds, Yellowdeer played outfield for the Nebraska Indians in 1911 before returning home to work as an assistant farmer at the Cherokee School in North Carolina.²¹ Youngdeer was best known for traveling with fellow Carlisle players Joseph Libby, Stencil “Possum” Powell, and Jim Thorpe to join the Rocky Mount Railroaders in the Eastern Carolina League in 1909. It was Thorpe’s “professional” play in the Eastern Carolina League that ultimately cost him the medals he had won in the 1912 Olympics.²²

Notes

1. “CHIEF”

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4. Ellen Staurowsky, “An Act of Honor or Exploitation? The Cleveland Indians’ Use of the Louis Francis Sockalexis Story,” *Sociology of Sport Journal* 15 (1998): 299–316.

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14. Moses Yellow Horse, the Pawnee pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, 1921–22, has often been thought the first full-blood player to play in a regular-season game in the majors, but the proof of Pinnance's status as a full-blood Ojibwe of the Walpole Island First Nation is substantial: Lucille Ann Jacobs, membership officer, "Re: Adele Susan Sawmick," File E-6000–170, Walpole Island First Nation Membership Records, September 5, 1990; David W. White, (deputy director of Walpole Island Heritage Centre) letter to author, September 21, 2001.
15. "Athletics Make a Small Killing," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 15, 1903.
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68. Jack Ryder, "Johnson Jumps to the Feds," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 21, 1914, 6.
69. Ryder, "Johnson Jumps to the Feds," 6.

70. Harold D. Johnson, "Chifeds Open with a Victory," *Chicago Herald Record*, April 24, 1914, 10.

71. "Indian Johnson Goes in Against B'Goshes," July 16, 1914, George H. Johnson, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.

72. Thorn and others, *Total Baseball*, 1615.

73. "Who's Who in the Federal League," *Baseball Magazine*, June 1915, 64.

74. Neft and others, *Sports Encyclopedia*, 71. For more on Johnson's Kawfeds, see Marc Okonnen, *The Federal League of 1914–1915: Baseball Third Major League* (Garrett Park MD: SABR, 1989) and Lloyd Johnson, ed., *Unions to Royals: The Story of Professional Baseball in Kansas City* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 1996).

75. "Chief Johnson Laid Away," *Winnebago Chieftain*, June 22, 1922, 1.

76. "Tigers Take a Day Off," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, March 27, 1916.

77. Harry A. Williams, "Seals Scalp Chief Johnson," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, April 15, 1916.

78. Dennis Snelling, *The Pacific Coast League: A Statistical History, 1904–1957* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 1995), 35.

79. "No Hit Game for Chief George Johnson," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 16, 1917.

80. "Johnson, Geo. H.," *Sporting News* Player Contract Card.

81. "Think Murderer of Ball Player Escaped," *Des Moines Evening Tribune*, June 13, 1922, 10. My thanks to SABR's Alex Kleiner for supplying this and other stories about Johnson's death to me. George H. Johnson's death certificate states that he died on June 11, 1922, but the accounts in the *Des Moines Evening Journal*, the *Des Moines Register*, and in the October trial itself confirm that he was killed at about 3 a.m. on the morning of June 12, 1922.

82. "Assert Johnson on Rampage on Eve of Murder," *Des Moines Register*, October 17, 1922.

83. "Think Murderer of Ball Player Escaped."

84. "Chief Johnson Laid Away."

85. Smith, "Winnebago," 683.

7. MOSES YELLOW HORSE

This epigraph, from Fairchild's poem "Moses Yellowhorse Is Throwing Water Balloons from the Hotel Roosevelt," is not a strictly historical account, although Fairchild's father, Bert Fairchild, was a catcher from the Pawnee area who played with Yellow Horse. B. H. Fairchild writes, "The game of catch, and Yellowhorse saying, 'But I wasn't a man there,' is my own imaginative recreation of the two of them. Based on my sense of the general racism of the time, what it must have been like for a Pawnee boy to suddenly be transported to life in a major American city,

and the fact that they listed him as ‘Chief’ Yellowhorse, I am thinking that he must have been pretty much exploited by the Pirates. I also think that . . . if they had taken him seriously and taught him a wider range of pitches than just his famous fastball, he might have had a longer career (that is, if he had been able to adjust to life in the city, away from his people),” B. H. Fairchild, letter to author, January 9, 2003.

1. Karst and Jones, *Who’s Who in Professional Baseball*, 913–14. Throughout this chapter I will refer to the pitcher by his own preferred spelling of his last name, “Yellow Horse,” but in quoting other authors, I will retain the spelling used by the author (e.g., “Yellowhorse.”).

2. Bob Lemke, “Pirates Pawnee Pitcher Went ‘Way of All Bad Injuns,” *Sports Collectors Digest*, March 4, 1994, 60.

3. Copy of Certificate of Death, State of Oklahoma Department of Health, Moses Yellow Horse, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.

4. “Moses Yellow Horse, Famed Indian Athlete of Other Days, Is Dead,” *Pawnee Chief* (Pawnee OK) April 16, 1964, 1.

5. Gene Weltfish, *The Lost Universe: Pawnee Life and Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 3–4. See also George E. Hyde, *The Pawnee Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974); Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 199–211, and Martha Royce Blaine, “Pawnee,” *Encyclopedia of North American Indians*, ed. Frederick E. Hoxie (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), 472–74.

6. Inscription by Drew Rader, Photo Album of Drew Rader, Pittsburgh, 1921; auctioned by D. Davis Antiques (through E-Bay), September 1, 2000; Blaine, “Pawnee,” 474.

7. George Bird Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), 88.

8. Grinnell, *Pawnee Hero Stories*, 91.

9. White, *Roots of Dependency*, 207.

10. Glenn Shirley, *Pawnee Bill: A Biography of Major Gordon W. Lillie* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), 72.

11. Charles J. Doyle, “Put Yellowhorse In!!!,” *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), June 5, 1921, section 3, 3. Doyle also wrote, “As a boy he traveled with Pawnee Bill’s circus; in fact he was only a baby when he was with that famous amusement outfit”: Charles J. Doyle, “Chilly Sauce,” *Gazette Times*, March 27, 1922, 9.

12. Shirley, *Pawnee Bill*, 135. See also Allen L. Farnum, *Pawnee Bill’s Historic Wild West: A Photo Documentary of the 1900–1905 Show Tours* (West Chester PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1992); L. G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883–1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996); and David

H. Katzive and others, eds., *Buffalo Bill and the Wild West* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1981).

13. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 34. Fuller's book is by far the most complete account of the pitcher's life.

14. Rebecca Eppler, letter to author, October 12, 2000.

15. "Obituary: Moses Yellow Horse," April 25, 1964, Moses Yellow Horse, Player File. National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.

16. Ralph E. Friar and Natashe A. Friar, *The Only Good Indian . . . : The Hollywood Gospel* (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1972), 67.

17. William Jakob, "Moses YellowHorse: The Tragic Career of a Pittsburgh Pirate," *Pittsburgh History* 79 (Winter 1995–1996): 186–89.

18. "Pitching to Plugging," *Oklahoma Wildlife*, May 1960, 21.

19. Edward F. Balinger, "Mighty Hunter Is Lo, This Poor Aborigine, Chief Yellow Horse," *Pittsburgh Post*, March 7, 1921.

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21. Rebecca Eppler, letter to author, October 13, 2000.

22. Ben Gover to H. B. Peairs, March 1, 1921, Ben Gover Student File, Haskell Institute, National Archives and Records Administration, Central Plains Region, Kansas City MO, Record Group 75.

23. Ben Gover, *Sporting News* Player Contract Card, *Sporting News* Archives, St. Louis MO.

24. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 76.

25. "Yellow Horse Entertains Brother with 4-Hit Game," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), August 18, 1920.

26. Moses Yellow Horse, "Record of Pupil in School," Chilocco Indian School Student File, National Archives and Records Administration, Southwest Region, Fort Worth TX Record Group 75.

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28. "Hot Springs, Ark., March 16 (1921)," Moses Yellow Horse, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.

29. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 76.

30. "Base Ball, Sunday May 12," *Ponca City OK Democrat*, May 10, 1918.

31. "Tomorrow The Wichita White Sox," *Ponca City OK Democrat*, May 11, 1918.

32. "Oilers Win Again," *Ponca City OK Democrat*, July 15, 1918.

33. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 19.

34. B. H. Fairchild, letter to author.

35. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 99.

36. "Yellow Horse Looms Up as Best Prospect in League," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), June 10, 1920.

37. [Yellow Horse Wins 3–1], *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), June 12, 1920.
38. “Yellow Pony Shows Class,” *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), April 7, 1920, 14.
39. “Yellow Horse Looms Up.”
40. Henry Loesch, “Inside Stuff,” *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), May 15, 1920.
41. Lemke, “Pirates Pawnee Pitcher,” 61; Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 84, reports that Yellow Horse had an ERA of 3.72 in 1920, but this figure appears to be a runs-per-game average rather than an earned run average.
42. “Pittsburgh Club Buys Yellow Horse,” *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock, AR), September 16, 1920.
43. “Gibby Drives Batterymen,” *Pittsburgh Post*, March 9, 1921, 10; Edward F. Balinger, “Pirates Reach Top of Form,” *Pittsburgh Post*, April 10, 1921; and Edward Egren, “Sports Through Egren’s Eye,” *Pittsburgh Post*, March 21, 1921, 8.
44. Edward F. Balinger, “Notes about the Pirates,” *Pittsburgh Post*, March 20, 1921; Edward F. Balinger, “Pirates Make a Clean Sweep of Series with Red Sox,” *Pittsburgh Post*, March 28, 1921, 8; and “Between Showers at The Opener,” *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), April 22, 1921.
45. Frederick G. Lieb, *The Pittsburgh Pirates* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1948), 185.
46. Charles J. Doyle, “Pirates Defeat Reds in Home Opener,” *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), April 22, 1921, 1.
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48. Edward F. Balinger, “Buccaneers Bump Bruins,” *Pittsburgh Post*, May 31, 1921.
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51. Charles J. Doyle, “Chilly Sauce,” *Pittsburgh Times Gazette*, May 15, 1921, section 3, 2.
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59. "Notes About the Pirates," *Pittsburgh Post*, March 17, 1921.
60. Charles J. Doyle, "Red Sox Held in Check by Yellowhorse," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), March 28, 1921, 7.
61. Pat Harmon, "Chief Yellowhorse and the Rabbit," *Post and Times-Star* (Cincinnati OH), April 24, 1964, 21. Fred Lieb tells a slightly different version of this story in *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 196; and Babe Adams tells yet another version, as quoted in Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 100–101.
62. Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 192.
63. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), June 1, 1922.
64. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), August 25, 1922.
65. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), March 27, 1922, 9.
66. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), June 1, 1922.
67. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), August 25, 1922.
68. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), March 30, 1922; see also Charles, J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), 29 April 1922, 7.
69. Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 191.
70. Ralph Davis, "Puts Pep in the Pirates," *Sporting News*, August 10, 1922, 1; Ralph Davis, "Here's Where Gibby Did Quick Thinking," *Sporting News*, July 6, 1922, 2. See also Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 194.
71. Charles J. Doyle, "Gibson Quits Pirates: McKechnie Manager," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), July 1, 1922, 1.
72. "Here's Where Gibby Did Quick Thinking"; Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 191.
73. Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 195.
74. B. H. Fairchild, letter to author.
75. Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 192–93.
76. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 118.
77. Dennis Snelling, *The Pacific Coast League: A Statistical History, 1903–1957* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 1995), 51; Lemke, "Pirates Pawnee Pitcher," 62.
78. Fuller interviewed Pawnee elder Earl Chapman, who told him a tale of Forbes Field groundskeepers providing shots of whiskey to Yellow Horse in the bullpen, but Fuller admits the story has a "mythic quality" in the tradition of Pawnee hero stories, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 54.
79. Adams said that McKechnie fined Maranville and Yellow Horse for the pigeon incident, although no other account mentions a fine; Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 101.

80. Lemke, "Pirates Pawnee Pitcher," 62.
81. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," September 2, 1922, *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA).
82. Thorn and others, *Total Baseball*, 1786.
83. Lemke, "Pirates Pawnee Pitcher," 62; Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 57.
84. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 110.
85. "Pirates Box Scores," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), October 2, 1922; "Yellow Horse on Leave," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), May 21, 1920.
86. "Moses Yellow Horse, Famed Indian Athlete of Other Days, Is Dead"; "Yellowhorse, First Full Indian In Majors, Dies," obituary, Moses Yellow Horse, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.
87. Lemke, "Pirates Pawnee Pitcher," 62.
88. Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 51.
89. Lemke, "Pirates Pawnee Pitcher," 62.
90. Jakub, "Moses YellowHorse," 188; Harry Jones, "Fooled McKechnie," newspaper column, May 13, 1962, Moses Yellow Horse, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.
91. Devon A. Mihesuah, *American Indians: Stereotypes & Realities* (Regina, Canada: Clarity, 1996), 97–98.
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94. Rebecca Eppler, letter to author, October 12, 2000.
95. Henry Loesch, "Inside Stuff," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), April 8, 1920, 8; "Notes of The Game," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), April 7, 1920, 14.
96. Henry Loesch, "Inside Stuff," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), May 15, 1920.
97. Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 193.
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99. James A. Riley, *The Biographical Encyclopedia of the Negro Baseball Leagues* (New York: Carroll & Graff Publishers, 1994), 330.
100. Riley, *Biographical Encyclopedia*, 177.
101. Charles J. Doyle, "Bucs Rally in Eighth," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), June 21, 1921.
102. Jakub, "Moses YellowHorse," 188.
103. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), June 21, 1921.
104. Lieb, *Pittsburgh Pirates*, 192–93.
105. Photo Album of Drew Rader.

106. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA, May 14, 1922.
107. Charles J. Doyle, "Chilly Sauce," *Gazette Times* (Pittsburgh PA), April 29, 1922,
- 7.
108. Henry Loesch, "Inside Stuff," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), August 26, 1920.
109. Henry Loesch, "Miller's Homer Over Fence Wins for Yellow Horse," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), August 26, 1920.
110. "Jonnard Gives Travelers 4-3 Victory," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock AR), September 26, 1920.
111. Thorn and others, *Total Baseball*, 928.
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113. David Pietrusza, Matthew Silverman, and Michael Gershman, eds., *Baseball: The Biographical Encyclopedia* (Kingston NY: Total/Sports Illustrated, 2000): 213-18.
114. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 102.
115. Fuller, *Sixty Feet Six Inches*, 102-3.
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117. Rebecca Eppler, letter to author, October 13, 2000.
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121. Kaff, "Yellow Horses Hitches to Post."
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123. "Moses Yellow Horse," obituary, April 25, 1964, Moses Yellow Horse, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.
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EPILOGUE

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16. Marc Okonnen, *Baseball Uniforms of the 20th Century: The Official Major League Baseball Guide* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 1991), 12, 37; Fleitz, *Louis Sockalexis*, 185–86.

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24. F. Veilleux, "Educational Institutions Promote Racist Attitudes," *The Circle* 14, no. 5 (May 1993): 6.
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28. Ray Glier and Chuck Murr, "AIM Secures Permits, Plans Series Protests," *USA Today*, October, 19 1995. See also C. Richard King, ed., *Team Spirits: The Native American Mascots Controversy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

APPENDIX 1

1. I have compiled this list, "American Indian Major League Players (1887–1945)," largely from the Hall of Fame Player Questionnaire Collection at the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY. The approximately five thousand questionnaires in the collection represent only about one-third of the players to have played Major League baseball, but it is the best single source of census data available for professional baseball players from 1887 to 1945. I include in the list all players who self-identified their national descent with a tribal affiliation (e.g., "Cherokee and Irish") and those players whose tribal affiliation I could determine from other sources, such as newspaper accounts. Players who began their professional careers, usually in the minors, before 1945 are included in this list even if they did not make it to the majors until some time after 1945.

2. I have compiled this list of "Major League Players with Native American Ancestry (1897–1945)" likewise from the Hall of Fame Player Questionnaire Collection at the National Baseball Library. I include in this list all players who self-identified their national descent as "American Indian" or "Native American" (e.g., "Irish, Scotch, and Indian") but whose tribal affiliation I could not determine from the questionnaires or from other sources. Players listed with question marks, i.e., (?), are those that

have been listed as American Indian in press accounts but who did not identify themselves as such.

APPENDIX 2

1. “2 to 0 in Favor of Haskell,” *Indian Leader* (Haskell Institute, Lawrence KS) 5, no. 10 (May 10, 1901), 3; “The Baseball Trip,” *Indian Leader* (Haskell Institute, Lawrence KS), 5, no. 21 (August 23, 1901), 2.
2. “Base-Ball in the Country Last Saturday,” *Indian Helper* 13, no. 42 (August 5, 1898), 4.
3. “Chauncey Archiquette,” Record of Graduates, Carlisle Indian School File #1327, No. 5358, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, Record Group 75.
4. “Baseball,” *Arrow* 4 (April 3, 1908), 3.
5. “Balenti Really Can’t Find Time,” *Sporting News*, February 12, 1914.
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7. Green, *Nebraska Indians*, 5.
8. *Indian Helper* 7, no. 37 (May 27, 1892), 3.
9. *Daily Herald* (Carlisle PA), April 13, 1901, 1.
10. *Daily Herald* (Carlisle PA), May 2, 1901, 1.
11. “On the Diamond: Dickinson Defeat[s] Indians in a Hotly Contested Game,” *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle PA), April 21, 1902, 3.
12. *Redman and Helper* 18 (March 18, 1904), 3.
13. *Redman and Helper* 17 (August 7, 1903), 3.
14. James Bender, Carlisle Indian School Student File 1327, No. 377, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, Record Group 75.
15. “John Bender Dies in Baseball Game,” *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle, PA), September 30, 1911, 4.
16. “Indian Who Are Now Making Their Mark in Baseball,” *Arrow* 2, no. 43 (June 22, 1906), 3.
17. “Trenton May Lose Charles the Indian,” *North American* (Philadelphia PA), March 27, 1907, 14.
18. “About Carlisle Athletics,” *Arrow* 5, no. 28 (May 28, 1909), 2.
19. “Local Miscellany,” *Arrow* 3, no. 30 (March 22, 1907), 3.
20. William Garlow, National Association Player Contract Card, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY; “New York State League,” *Sporting Life*, April 17, 1915, 11.
21. “Indian Guyon Takes Thorpe’s Place as an All-Around Star,” *New York American*, May 17, 1914, section II, 4-L.

22. Oxendine, *American Indian Sports Heritage*, 246.
23. obituary, November 27, 1971, Joseph Napoleon Guyon, Player File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown NY.
24. Bill O'Neal, *The American Association: A Baseball History* (Austin TX: Eakin Press, 1992), 270.
25. "About Carlisle Athletics," *Arrow* 5, no. 28 (May 1909), 2.
26. Axtell Hayes, "Experience at Carlisle," *Arrow* 4, no. 22 (January 31, 1908), 4.
27. "Indians Defeat Dickinson," *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle PA), May 31, 1898, 3.
28. "Indians Play Penn a Close Game," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 3, 1898, 12.
29. "Indians 2, Gettysburg 2," *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle PA), April 18, 1898, 3.
30. Frank Hudson, Carlisle Indian School Student File 1327, No. 5305, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, Record Group 75.
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33. "Among the Ballplayers," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, September 13, 1907, sports section, 3.
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35. "Frank Jude Comes from the Happy Hunting Ground to Lead League," *Sporting News*, January 19, 1922, 8.
36. Bell, "Telling Stories," 281.
37. "Sporting News: The Indians Were Not in It on Saturday," *Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle PA), April 20, 1891, 2.
38. Harry Kohpay, "Harry Kohpay, a Graduate of Carlisle, Class '91," *Redman and Helper* 17, no. 36 (March 21, 1902), 4.
39. Frank Leroy, *Sporting News* Player Contract Card, *Sporting News* Archives, St. Louis MO.
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