77 pp

Interview With

HANS LOBERT

Q You were from Pittsburgh?

A Originally, yes. I was born in Wilmington, Delaware, and then my folks moved to Williamsport, and then from Williamsport, we went into Pittsburgh, around -- oh, I guess it was in the 80's. Of course, I don't remember.

Q Did you start playing ball in high school?

A Well, no, we didn't have any baseball in high school. See, we didn't have any baseball in high school while we were in Pittsburgh. I mean, the schools were there, but we didn't play any baseball. I learned my baseball in Williamsport. They had a team called the Denver Sewing Machine, and I only lived about two blocks from the grounds, and I used to go out there every -- in the evenings.

Q Denver Sewing Machine?

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Q How old were you then?

A Oh, I guess I was about ten or twelve, something like that. I recall going into Williamsport - the old Athletic Field there - and I used to crawl under the fence to watch the Williamsport

Athletics play, and it was -- they weren't a semi-pro, but the Denver Sewing Machine team played there, and I'd crawl under the fence so I didn't have to pay my ten cents.'

Q Ten cents, huh?

A Then I'd quickly brush the dirt off, and I got caught, so whoever the watchman was took me up in front of the ticket office, and here's a big bull dog, and they chained me right next to the bull dog. Of course, the bull dog couldn't get at me. Well, that was to stop me from crawling in. So, he kept me there for four innings. "Now," he says, "what are you going to do?"

Q Could you see the game?

A No, I couldn't see it. See, I was in front of the stands, so he come over and unloosened the chains, and he says, "Now, what are you going to do?" I says, "I'm going to watch the game." He thought that I was going to get up and run home. Next day, I was out again.

Q Did you play with the Denver Sewing Machine?

A No. See, we moved on to Pittsburgh. We only lived in Williamsport four or five years.

Q How did Pittsburgh come to give you a trial?

A Well, see, I played with a semi-pro club in Pittsburgh called the Pittsburgh AC, and Melvin Matthews was chief of police there, and he was our manager, so I happened to be playing -- we took

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Q How did Pittsburgh come to give you a trial?

A Well, see, I played with a semi-pro club in Pittsburgh called the Pittsburgh AC, and Melvin Matthews was chief of police there, and he was our manager, so I happened to be playing -- we took

a trip to Atlantic City -- they call it the Pittsburgh Athletic Club -- I was a member of it, semi-pro, and Barney Dreyfus, the owner of the Pittsburgh Pirates, happened to be in Atlantic City, and he saw me play at the old Inwood Park, so he asked me where I lived, and I told him in Pittsburgh. "Well," he says, "how would you like to come out to Exposition Park"- it was over in Allegheny - "and have a trial?" "Oh," I says, "I'd be tickled to death to have a trial with the Pirates." So, I went over there, and I was with them for about two weeks in the fall of 1903 - I think that was the year they played the Boston Red Socks, and they made that song - "Tessie, You Made Me Feel So Badly."

Q Uh, huh - with Fred Clark managing --

A Fred Clark was the manager, and I went up on the porch -- they had a trainer, a colored trainer, named Ed LaForce. He says, "What do you want?" Oh, he was gruff - scared the tar out of me, soon as I was about to enter the club house, and who was in there but Hans Wagner, so Hans Wagner says to me, "Hey, come on in here and get in my locker."

Q How old were you?

A Oh, I guess I was about 18 or 19. And I says, "Well, no, I better see Mr. Clark first." See, Wagner was my idol. Well, when Fred Clark came, why he asked me who I was and who sent me, and I told him. So, they put me in uniform. Old Paul Kruger was the

third baseman at the time, and he was hit in the head, so Fred Clark asked me - he said, "You ever played third base?" I said, "Yeah, that's my position." We were playing the Giants that day. First time I had seen the Giants play, in 1903, and Joe McGinnety was pitching - the first major league pitcher I ever faced. So, Wagner said to me -- he called me Hans Number Two, and he was Hans Number One. "All right," he says, "here's my bat. You go on up there and don't look for anything but a curve ball. See, McGinnety was an underhand side-arm pitcher. I picked up his bat, and Lord, I couldn't even swing it. It was too heavy. I says, "Oh, Mr. Wagner, that's too heavy for me, I can't swing that bat." So he says, "Now, don't look for anything but curved balls." And McGinnety, when I first went up - first ball over, curved ball. Strike. Strike two. So, Roger Dressenham, catching, said to me, he says, "Hey, young fellow, get that gun off your shoulder." So, I was scared to death, you know, first crack at the big leagues, so I didn't care where the next ball was thrown. I says I'm going to swing at this one, wherever it's thrown. Sure enough, it was a curved ball, and I hit it down to Bill Donlen, the shortstop, and he just threw me out - I was a very fast runner - I don't brag about it, but I got a great kick out of running, and it was fun to me. So, when I walked back - I think I was the third hitter, Wagner was the fourth hitter. He says, "What'd he throw you?" I says,

"Three curved balls." He says, "Didn't I tell you?" Well, in the -- I didn't get any hits until the eighth inning.

Q This was your first big league game?

A Yeah, and I had two strikes on me, and McGinnety -- see, you can bunt a curved ball, because it slips over the outside, but I bunted with two strikes and beat it out. So, McGraw, coaching at third base - I reached third base - and he says, "Say, young man, whoever taught you to bunt with two strikes?" Well, I said, "Nobody ever taught me how to bunt. I like to bunt and nobody was looking for a busher, a rookie, to bunt with two strikes." He says, "Well, you keep at it. That's the way to keep them on their toes up there." And he and I became friends from that day on, until he died.

Q Is that right?

A John McGraw and I, just through that one little thing, and I addressed him as Mr. McGraw. A lot of youngsters used to call him Mugsy, and oh, how he hated that word - Mugsy.

Q Did he?

A I remember one time in Marlin, Texas, we were training, and some young fellow called him -- McGraw was telling him something, and he says, "All right, Mugsy." He says, "Wait a minute. You been reading the sporting news I guess." He says, "You address me as Mr. McGraw. Don't you ever call me Mugsy again." Oh, the kid was scared to death.

Q When you went up to the plate in 1903, was Breznerhand wearing shin guards?

A No.

Q He hadn't started?

A No, he didn't start wearing shin guards until I was with the Cincinnati club, and that was around -- well, I went to Cincinnati in 1906. Must have been in 1908 or '09 when shin guards first came out. Oh, everybody -- they hooted and everything else, because you wore shin guards, and in those days, they were real big things. They looked like - like a big board on his leg, but they soon fixed them up so that they were able to put them on easily and run with them.

Q Yeah. Did all the other catchers adopt them --

A After that, yeah.

Q No holdouts? They all --

A Everybody wore them. Well, they used to get clipped on the kneecaps, and broken kneecaps. I wouldn't be a catcher for the world. I tried it.

Q You did?

A I was with the Johnstown club in 1905.

Q What league was that in?

A Tri State League. Johnstown, Pennsylvania. See, I -- my first experience in baseball was with the Des Moines, Iowa club in the Western League.

Q Oh. Did Pittsburgh sign you then?

A Oh, yes, they finally sent me -- well, I went to Little Rock. The Pirates were training in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Barney Dreyfus sent me down to Little Rock, experience and more seasoning. Well, I only stayed there three weeks. I got sick. I got malaria down there, and finally they let me go, and I went to Des Moines, Iowa. He got me a job at Des Moines, and I stayed at Des Moines until 1904, and then in 1905, I jumped to the Tri State League.

Q That was an outlaw league?

A Oh, yes. That was Johnstown, Altoona, Harrisburg, Leabanon, Wilmington, Delaware --

Q What did the Pirates say when you jumped over there? Did they say --

A Well, see, I was getting $175 a month in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1904. So, the Kantilians bought the club in the Western League, and they offered me a contract for $125 a month the next year, 1905, so I sent the contract back and said no I wouldn't sign for $125. I received $175 the year before, and I wouldn't accept that cut, so anyway, they wrote a terrible letter. They said, "Strange you were overlooked in the draft or the sale price." See, then I went with Johnstown for a pretty good salary.

Q Did you figure you could get back in organized ball --

A Well, I didn't know. This was off the record. I went to Barney Dreyfus for advice, and I told him what had happened. He says, "Well, keep my name out of it. If you wish to sign with them, go ahead." So, that's how I then -- the Cubs bought me from Ken Tillyan in the fall of 1905, and Ken Tillyan had never seen me play, and they got $5,000 for me.

Q Wow.

A See, I was a free agent.

Q Yeah. Did you go up with the Cubs then?

A I went up with the cubs in the fall of 1905 where I was traded during the winter for Harry Steinfeld of the Cincinnati Reds.

Q Was Chance managing the Cubs?

A Frank Chance was the manager, and see, he was the president of the club when I went to the Cubs.

Q Were Tinkers and Evers there at that time?

A Tinkers, Evers and Chance. Schleigel and Jimmy Sheppard and Frank Schulley were in the outfield, and Johnny Kling was the catcher. Archer came in later.

Q Then you saw a lot of Tinkers, Evers and Chance as the years went on?

A Oh, yes.

Q And you've seen a lot of them all through the years? The question I want to ask you, were they as good as we hear they

were?

A Well, baseball is much faster today than -- they were real good ball players. Wagner was an outstanding ball player in my book.

Q What about Tinkers, Evers and Chance?

A Well, see, they were -- Tinkers and Evers were a great combination around short and second. See, they were fairly fast and had a good pair of hands and good judges -- of course, the ball wasn't as light as it is today. It was sort of a dead ball, and they made the plays around there. They were slick, and they were tough, too. Chance, boy, was he a tough one. Aggressive. I believe that the players in those days were more aggressive. See, we were only permitted to have seventeen players on our club.

Q Seventeen?

A That was the lim it.

Q Wow.

A If you got banged up, you had to play. Of course, if you had a broken leg, you couldn't play, but now, get a little scratch on your finger, they take you out, but the game is a lot faster. See, there are a greater number of better players playing today, and they're not as rough as they were in the early days when I first broke in. If you weren't playing in the game, why the older players would break your leg to keep you out of there, but if you got in the game, then they were for you, but if you weren't in the

game, they really made it tough for you.

Q So you went up with Cincinnati in 1906?

A 1906, yeah.

Q How did the veterans treat you - coming up as a rookie?

A Oh, terrible. Wouldn't speak to you, and push you aside, but it was a damned good lesson. They taught you how to take it in a jam. I just read yesterday, I think it was, Andy Kruger - I played with him in Cincinnati - he was coaching there, he coached afterwards - he was with the Braves here, and then he went coaching at Columbia University. He was quite a pitcher. I'll never forget Andy. He used to kid me, and he had a saying - "Being unable to assert with any degree of accuracy, I am loathe to assume, fearful lest I should err." And every time Andy would see me, he would say that little verse.

Q Where did he get that?

A I don't know where he got it.

Q Yes, he was quite a pitcher.

A I recall Andy and Breslerhan used to run up on a pitch, and Andy told him to stay back -- I was playing third, and he ran up and Kruger hit him right there and knocked him down, and oh, blood come out of his nose and his ears, so they rushed him off to the hospital immediately, and he overcame it, but he never ran up on a pitcher after that.

Q Speaking of hospitals in this, what were the training facilities - the club house training facilities like in --

A Oh, they'd give you a rub with a bottle that says alcohol on the bottle and probably had water in it. The trainer in those days - he had to take care of all the uniforms and everything.

Q There was just one man?

A One man, yes. See, today, they got two or three men in the club house; there's a trainer, a doctor. They had no doctors in those days. "Is there a doctor in the stands?" - if somebody got hurt. I know I got hit in the head. I thought I was down about five seconds, and here I was down about ten minutes, and when I come up - when I came to -- I had to play, too. Today, oh, they wouldn't take a chance on a player if he was hit in the head with a pitched ball.

Q Who was the pitcher - do you remember?

A Jim Rollerroy, and he played with me in Cincinnati, and him and I roomed together, and he was traded to the Cubs. This was about 1909 or '10. Ed Hanlen was our manager, and he had -- I had three and one, three balls and one strike, and if he called your first name, that meant to hit. So, he yelled, he says, "Make him pitch, Hans." And soon as I heard the word Hans, I knew I was to hit. And he let go with a high fast one, and it hit me right here, and down I went. Well, when I came to, every step that I would take,

I felt the ground was meeting my feet, or I was stepping into a hole, and I had to play, oh --

Q You kept in the game?

A Oh, yeah, I had to play, they had nobody else, so I was all right for two weeks, and then I got so plate shy up there. I couldn't stand up at the plate. and I had these terrible headaches at night. That was in the fall, and I went to Hanlen, and I says, "Ed," I didn't call him Ed. I called him Mr. Hanlen. I said "I'm unable to play. I have these terrific headaches at night. We have our position established. If you let me go home, I'll be all right next year." So I went to a doctor then. Well, I had a concussion. See, the ball had hit me right there.

Q You had a concussion for two weeks and --

A Yeah, and I played. Oh, I was all right for a week or ten days up at the plate, and then I got so that I couldn't stand up there. I couldn't see the ball quick enough.

Q How were you the next season?

A Oh, I was all right. Didn't bother me at all. Oh, I've been hit many a time. That was the worst blow I ever got.

Q And there was no doctor, so --

A No, they wouldn't even take you to the hospital.

Q Oh, boy.

A Today, as soon as a player is hit, he's removed on a stretcher and taken to a hospital. Oh, the game has changed. Of

course, the equipment is a lot better.

Q What kind of a glove did you use at third base? Compared to a modern glove.

A Oh, these are peach baskets they have now. It was a small glove, just -- I don't think I have mine. Some kid stole it. Very small glove. Today, they're big things with those webs in between. They're like a peach basket. Yeah, the equipment is a lot better, as I say, and there were a lot of college players came in. See, in the early days, a row of kids off the sandlots, and rough, tough boys --

Q What did your parents think when you started to become a professional baseball players?

A They didn't say much about it - they knew that I liked it and --

Q Did they ever see you play?

A Oh, yeah, my father used to go every Saturday.

Q When you were in the sandlots --

A No. On Sundays in Pittsburgh, he used to come out and watch me play.

Q When you were with Cincinnati?

A No, when I was with the semi-pro club in Pittsburgh.

Q What about when you got in the big leagues?

A Well, he worked every day, and he could only get out there

on Saturdays - they didn't work Saturday afternoon. He'd take the whole gang from the shop out there. He was a cabinet maker.

Q What were you going for a living while you were playing semi-pro ball?

A Well, we had a dairy at home and see, I went to school until I was about 17 and I had a dairy with ten cows - brother and I.

Q Were you on a farm?

A No, we lived right in -- it was a little town called Buttersilver outside of Pittsburgh, and my duties were to milk those cows every morning, ten of them, and then deliver the milk, and then I had to go to school besides. Of course, we only lived about two doors from the school.

Q How big a little farm did you have. You had to have a place for the cows to graze. Well --

A Oh, we took them to the pasture. See, you'd drive them, after the milking and feeding, and take them to the pasture.

Q Somebody else's pasture?

A Yeah. Well, it was a big farm right near where we lived.

Q Is that what gave you those wrists --

A I guess so. Milking? I could milk a cow in five minutes, I mean a two-gallon milking. I guess it done me a lot of good, kept me out of trouble, I know that. I had to go to bed at seven o'clock

at night and get up at four.

Q You would have had a tough time playing night base ball?

A I'm glad I didn't have to play night baseball. I just happened to be on this American Legion program here, the final game was played between all of Western Pennsylvania and all the East, and we had about, oh about 35, 38 players on each team, and we only got to see about three innings - each player would play three innings. We played in Williamsport, and the lights -- I hadn't played there in a year -- and the lights were brutal. How those kids saw the ball, I don't know. And see, they had been off ten days, and they were out of condition. They hadn't practiced. I could tell that as soon as I saw them play, that they were out of condition, hadn't practiced much. Then, with those bad lights -- Oh, I've been in some parks --

Q What were the parks like in 1903, '04, '05 --

A Well, they didn't take care of them like they do today. One groundkeeper.

Q One groundkeeper?

A One groundkeeper. He took care of the field.

Q How would it compare to a park today in terms of the --

A Rough, terribly rough.

Q How much of it was skin, compared to today?

A Well, it was the same. Some fields were all skin. There

was no grass on them at all.

Q None at all?

A No.

Q Like where? Where would a park be that -- a major league park?

A Yeah, in Pittsburgh, they had no grass on the infield and - see, they had a terrible flood there. They were right along the Ohio and the Allegheny River right at the point, and when they had the flood in the spring, all that water would back up in there and kill everything. I remember on Decoration Day, we played in there in water up to here in the outfield --

Q Really?

A -- of course, the infield. See, then they started putting grass infields in. But there was some rough fields - I'll tell you. And they had no batting cage, and a ball would last -- they'd use about six balls in the whole game. Today, they use more than six in an inning.

Q Did you chew tobacco?

A No.

Q I thought an infielder was supposed to chew tobacco?

A I tried to, but I got sick. I used to chew chewing gum.

Q How could you get the ball dirty for the pitcher then?

A Oh, we'd put a little dirt in our glove, licorice.

Q The ball got black, in other words?

A Oh, a lot of players would chew licorice, see, and spit the licorice juice in your glove and then bingo. Rub it in there. And sometimes, when we only had one umpire behind the pitcher --

Q In the big league games?

A Yeah, when I first broke in, there was only one umpire.

Q And where did he stand?

A Behind the pitcher.

Q Oh.

A See, then he just strikes and balls and watch the -- oh, we cheated on him and everything else. He couldn't see whether we touched the base or not. Finally, they got two - now, they've got four. Oh, baseball has advance a whole lot, and of course, with the radio and TV --

Q You said the players in those days that were good were rough, tough people.

A And they were beer drinkers. See, they never drank hard liquor. After a game, we would go in and have a couple of glasses of beer or something like that.

Q Were they -- what kind of condition did they keep in compared to today?

A Oh, they were in good condition.

Q You hear a lot of stories that most of them were up all

night - most of them were heavy drinkers --

A Some of them stayed up late, but that wasn't true. I know I -- as I said, I broke into the major leagues in the fall of 1905, as a regular, and then I stayed in until 1918, and during prohibition was when it was tough. See, I was coaching then and players -- they didn't want to drink, but just because they couldn't get it, then they'd go out and drink.

Q There was more drinking in prohibition than --

A Oh, yes. And it was impossible to catch them. I'll tell you how they used to do it. They would -- now, like you and I - we'd have a room on, maybe the eighth floor. Well, we'd order the setups for the eighth floor, for our room, then we'd take it down, walk down two floors with the setups, and go to some other room. You couldn't catch these guys. I know, McGraw told me - he says, "I want you to watch these players and see what they're doing." I was coaching for McGraw at the time, and I said, "John, I can't be a stool pigeon." I said, "I cannot tell you." I said, "I wouldn't dare tell you," I says, "because the players are my friends, and I know what they're doing." And he finally caught them, and he thanked me for not telling him. I'll never forget - we were playing in Philadelphia here --

Q The Giants?

A The Giants were playing the Phillys on the 4th of July,

a double header, oh, it was a beastly hot day, and it was during prohibition. So, I knew a place where you could get good beer - it wasn't near beer - it was a way they could get the beer, so Bill Terry came to me after the game, and he says, "Hans, you know a place here (I lived here in Philly)." I says, "Yes, I do. I can't tell you, Bill." I says, "If you'll ask Mr. McGraw and he get the information, why then I'll tell you." So he went to McGraw and told McGraw, he says, "John knows a good place where we can get a good glass of beer, and the players need it right after this hot day," and McGraw didn't say anything. So, finally he came and he says, "And Hans knows the place but won't tell us." So, finally McGraw came over to me, and he says, "Hans, where is this place where you can get good beer?" That was Louis Horn's, about five blocks from the ballpark. So, I told him. He says, "Did Bill Terry ask you about the place?" I said, "Yes." I says, "But I'm a coach for you. I can't tell them where the place is, because if something happened, why I'd be to blame for it." "Well," he says, "you go and tell them where it is." Well, they went over there, about fifteen of them, over to Louie's, and I gave Bill a note and told who Bill Terry was, and I said, "He's bringing over a lot of the Giant players. Please take care of them." See, you had to go through the back door, and look through a peephole and all that. Well, they stayed there. They had their dinner - served very good food - and McGraw and I --

John said to me, "Come on down." Charles Astone was the owner of the giants at that time. He says, "Come on. We're going down to the Ben Franklin Hotel, and we'll see Mr. Stolen down there, and I want to have a talk with you." So, we went down. It was about quarter of eight. He says, "Where is this place where you can get that good beer?" Well, the three of us jumped in a cab and off we went, and when we got there, here's Bill Terry, with that gang, still in there. So, I took Louie off. I says, "Tell them to get out quick." I says, "McGraw and Stoneham are here." Well, they sneaked out the back door, but McGraw saw them. He didn't say anything, but none of them were drunk. They just relaxed and had a few beers.

Q What was McGraw like as a --

A Finest manager I ever played for. I mean he was what we called a quick thinker in baseball. See, he was acting while the other fellow was still thinking. Ty Cobb was on the same type. See, they're what we call a quick thinker in baseball. Soon as a situation came up, grab it. Don't wait. Of course, we made a lot of mistakes, sure, but McGraw was a fine man to play for. He had a heart as big as gold. Many a time, he would bawl a player out - it wasn't just for the player. It was an object lesson for the rest of the players. I recall a game where we were playing the Cubs - I was playing third base for the Giants. See, I went --

Q You went from Cincinnati --

A I went from Cincinnati to Philadelphia. See, I was at Pittsburgh 1903 to 1904; Johnston, 1905; also Chicago. Then in Cincinnati 1906 to 1910; then I came here in 1911 to 1914 --

Q You went to Philly?

A Philly. Then, New York, '15, '16, and '17. Then I went to the United States Military Academy --

Q You coached at West Point?

A Yeah, I was there about eight years. I was under General MacArthur for four years.

Q Were you?

A Red Blake played left field for me --

Q Is that right?

A Yeah, then I went coaching for the Giants in '26, '27 and '28. Then they sent me up to Bridgeport to run their farm club in '30, '31 and '32. Then I came back to Philadelphia here, as a coach, 1934 to '41. Then I managed the Phillies in 1942, and then I went coaching with the Cincinnati club in '43 and '44, and now I've been a scout for New York and San Francisco since 1945.

Q And you're still an active scout?

A Oh, yes.

Q And you still travel a lot?

A Well, I don't travel as much as I used to.

Q But you travel?

A Oh, I -- see, I do most of the Philadelphia area here. You see, it's very easy for me, but when this American Legion program was on, then I have to -- well, we go as far west as Williamsport. I used to make a Western tour also, but I stopped that -- too much.

Q You keep hearing that McGraw was a ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ tyrant.

A I wanted to tell you about this game I was in -- Marty Kardrome was hooked up with Christy Mathieson. The score was 2-2 in the eleventh inning, and I led off with a double in the bottom half of the eleventh, and Larry Bell was the next batter, and he sacrificed me to third. Well, ordinarily, in modern baseball, see, you'd walk the next two men, because we're the home team, and one run's going to beat you. So they didn't walk him, and I forgotten -- Merkel was the next batter, and he hit a real short fly into right field. I'm on third base, and Cy Williams -- he didn't have what we call a real good strong arm and wasn't too accurate -- so, McGraw at third base says to me, "Johnny, stay here." I says, "I'm going in." I said, "He's got a poor arm and he's not accurate." He says, "Stay here!" Well, here I am getting ready, and I saw Cy - he was out of position, and he caught the ball, and then he wheels around and throws it in, and if they'd ever had a stop watch on me, I'd have broken all records, running ninety feet. See, I had disobeyed orders.

I says, "Lord, I've got to travel now," and sure enough Cy made a bad throw off to the side. I stood by Jimmy Archer, and the game was over - three to two. Then the players came up --

Q That's the old boy at work --

A Oh, you haven't heard the half of it. We used to call McGraw the Little Round Man. I says, "That Little Round Man told me to stay there." I says, "Wait 'til we get in the club house." Sure enough - everybody's patting me on the back for a great piece of base running. We got in the club house, and Bill and I were sitting next to each other, and I'd taken off my shoes and my baseball shirt, and Larry says, "Oh, that's the way to run those bases." I says, "Wait 'til that door opens." The office door. Sure enough, we're sitting there, and all of a sudden McGraw runs in at me - he had a little bit of a run from the club house office, and he come up to me and he called me every name he could think of. He said, "What did I tell you do?" I says, "You told me to stay there." He says, "Well, what did you do?" I says, "I told you that I was going in." "Oh, he says, "you're the manager, eh?" And then he ripped into me something terrific, and here's Doyle - he says, "Don't let that guy call you those things," pulling my pants leg. I didn't dare say anything. "Now," he said, "for being so smart, that'll just cost you fifty dollars. Now, what have you got to say?" Well, ordinarily, a player, in the heat of a battle, you'll say

well, make it a hundred. And you know what he would have done - made it two hundred. So, I kept my mouth shut. Well, he got turned off, and he got back in the office, and the players got together and they said, "We'll take up a collection and pay your fine." I says, "No, you won't." I says, "He told me to stay there and I disobeyed orders. I'll have to stand the fine." Now, so here's the object of going over, giving me that pretty good going over - it was an object lesson for the rest of the players. It wasn't just for me, not to disobey orders. See, he took all the responsibility, so the players, they all started to leave, and Larry and I were the last two in the club house.

Q Was Doyle the captain then?

A Yeah, he was captain, so we were in the shower, and old Doyle, he says, "That so and so, he couldn't bawl me out like that and call me all those names." Oh, he used to give that bird an awful going over. Well, here's Doyle - soaking himself - got his fingers in his ears and soap in his eyes, and all of a sudden I see McGraw coming in the shower. I says, "Nix, Larry, here comes the Round Man, keep quiet." Well, he's got his fingers in his ears - he can't hear, and he's popping off to beat the band. I must have hit him six or seven times, and he's got soap in his eyes, and he don't see McGraw coming in, and he's popping off while McGraw comes in there. When he opened his eyes, he beat it out of the shower, soap

and all. So, when I went out, he says, "You think he heard me? I said, "Cripes, you could hear you down on Broadway." Well, I was the last man leaving the club house. I was putting on my necktie, and I was just going to go out of the club house door when McGraw came over to me, and he says, "John what are you doing tonight?" Why, I said my wife was waiting outside and we were going to dinner. He says, "All right. Mrs. McGraw is out there. You go out there and we four will go to dinner together." He never mentioned that play once going down. He had a car and a chauffeur - never mentioned the play once, and we went down to Billy the Oyster Man's, down on Fifth Avenue just below 34th Street - Oh, a beautiful and wonderful eating house. It was in the latter part of September, about the middle of September, and he says, "John," - oh, we had a wonderful mean - he says, "I'm going to buy you a bottle of champagne." He says, "You look drawn, thin, overtrained and all that." Well, what could I say? You know, we had three bottles of champagne. It was on a Saturday night, and we didn't play Sunday ball at that time, and, of course, eating - and the woman had a few glasses, but John, he drank most of it. He was a champagne drinker. I ~~qui~~ drank quite a few glasses myself. Well, you know, Monday - whatever that champagne had done to me - cripes, I wanted to jump through a wall. You talk about a tonic. Well, Monday was payday, and in my envelope, with the check, there was a little note in there. "You are hereby

notified for disobeying orders in the game Saturday (whatever date it was), you are hereby fined $50 which has been deducted from your salary check." That was all right. So, that Monday, oh, we played a hell of a game. I had new life or something, and I made a couple of plays helped save the ball game against the Cubs, so when the game was over, we were in the club house, and all of a sudden, McGraw opens the door. He says, "John! Com'ere. I want to see you!" So, Doyle says, "Go on in there and get it again." I said "I didn't do anything wrong today." So, I went in, and he said, "Now, here, John. For saving that ball game today and making those two great plays is $100." He gave me a hundred - I made fifty bucks on the deal. Well, he was rough and gruff, but after he gave you a pretty fair going over, he'd speak to you in the next minute. Never carried a grudge off the field. That's what I liked about the man.

Q Was it fun to play baseball for him?

A Oh, cripes, he had you on your toes. I mean, you had to play. He wanted you to play, and you'd better not pull any dumb plays with him. Oh, he hated a player that pulled dumb plays, I mean lack of thinking out there - throwing the ball to the wrong base, or not taking a sign.

Q How many signs did he give. Did he tell every play, or practically everything to do, or were you on your own a lot?

A Well, I coached for him at third base, and he gave me signs from the bench. You see, I had individual signs with every player. We had very few signs. I'd have a set of signs with you, and for the next player, your set might be just the opposite. That's from experience. You learn whether to take, bunt, steal, squeeze play -- I recall a game in St. Louis. Larry Doyle was our -- he had charge of our uniforms. He was what we call a traffic man.

Q When was this? This was about '15 or '16, huh?

A Well, no, this was -- I was coaching then -- that was in the twenties, '26, '27, or something like that, and he had a sign with me tu bunt any time that I rubbed my forehead twice with my left hand - that's the bunt sign. It was a beastly hot day, and we got three on the bases, and Jackson was at bat. Jackson's got three and two on him. Now, everybody's going to run, so I looked in and said, "Jesus, he doesn't want Jackson to bunt like that, does he?" And, he did it again. So, I flashed Jackson the bunt sign, and he laid down a beautiful bunt and was thrown out, and I saw McGraw jump up off the bench, and raised cane on the bench. When I got down there, he said, "Who give Jackson that sign?" I says, "I did." Well, he says, "Who gave it to you?" I says, "You did." He says, "What is the sign?" I said, "Rubbing your forehead twice with your left hand." The right hand didn't go.

He says, "God damn you. I was chasing a fly off my forehead." I said, "Well, I ~~xxxxxxx~~ couldn't tell what you were doing - I took that for the sign." This boy was standing at the bench, and he fell down laughing, and he says, "I'm going to bring some flypaper up to the bench tomorrow." I mean, those are the funny things that happen in a game.

Q Did he give his players a lot of room for initiative.

A Oh, yeah.

Q He did? He didn't tell them everything to do when --

A No, sir. He only took charge in a jam, when there were men on the bases, like on the opposing side - I used to give the signs when I was coaching. I sat two men from him. Chief Meyers was the catcher. George Schley, and we had other catchers --

Q When was that?

A It was in around the thirties, I mean the twenties. Then in the forties I used to be there, and I'd flash curve ball or change of pace or fast ball. See, everybody was watching McGraw to give signs, and here I was giving them. And I had to be damned quick. You had to be on your toes. He'd give you a sign like that.

Q You played with McGraw?

A Oh, yeah, I was with him in -- I played for him in 1915, '16 and '17.

Q Were you on that team - in 1917, was it - that won the pennant?

A Yea .

Q Was that the year that Heinie Zimmerman chased Ed Cones across the plate? Were you there then?

A Yeah. That wasn't Heinie's fault. Nobody was there to cover the plate.

Q Reardon wasn't there.

A Well, Reardon was in the run-up, see, and Hoakie, the first baseman should have been in covering the plate, because there was no player on first or second. See, it was Hoakie's fault, not Zimmie's. Zimmie kept chasing him, and when they started, Collins was about that far ahead of him - he could see him just spreading out, and of course nobody there to throw the ball to. Heinie had to chase him.

Q How would you compare Eddie Collins to Hans Wagner as an infielder. Wagner, he just played by instinct. He was a natural. Collins was a real smart ball player. But, I mean I would have to take Wagner over Eddie Collins, because he was a great hitter, and I don't believe he ever read the rule book in his life. I don't believe that Wagner ever read the rule book. He just played by instinct, and I would say that he never made what we call a mental err on the field. He made mechanical errors, yes, striking out or

kicking the ball or throwing it, and McGraw, when I was with the Phillies in 1913, and in '14, he made a tour around the world, and asked me if I would go along as a player.

Q Who made the tour - the Giants, didn't they?

A The Giants and the Chicago White Sox.

Q Oh, and you went along as a -- you were on the Phillies --

A Yes. He took Mike Dunno and I from the Phillies. See, a lot of players - he didn't want all the Giant players. See, he took players from a lot of the various clubs, and we left on the 18th day of October, which is my birthday, and we got back March 6th.

Q And where did you go?

A All over the world.

Q Really.

A We went into Montreal, Canada first, from New York, and then we went into Liverpool, got off at Liverpool and played in London, Scotland, Ireland; No, we came back that way. The second tour was -- I went in '24 as the secretary. We crossed the United States, and we played 31 games in the States before we sailed out of British Vancouver. We played in Japan, China, Manila, Australia, up through India and Egypt, Italy, France, England. Then, in '24, I acted as Secretary, and we were only over there, just in Europe. We played in Scotland, Ireland and London.

Q I was going to ask you something about Rube Markward.

The first game Rube Markward ever pitched - is it true that you broke that?

A Bob Bescher and I -- Rube Markward -- I recall it as though it happened today. Bescher was leading off - he h leads off with a triple. I'm up next. I hit a triple, and here they had paid $11,000 or something for the great Markward - then they called him the lemon. That was his entrance into the major leagues at the Polo Grounds. We really gave them a shellacking, so McGraw --

Q He was pitching against Cincinnati - the first game that he ever pitched in the big leagues.

A McGraw says to me, "What's that young kid got out there?" I said, "He's very fast. " I said, "He's nervous out there, and he gets the ball over the dead center." I says, "That's why we hit it." I said, "He's got something. Don't worry about that."

Q Did you all knock him out?

A Yeah, we knocked him out of the box that first game.

Q You hit a h triple.

A Bob Bescher led off with a triple. I came along with a triple, and then somebody banged one, and oh, we had a terrific inning.

Q Boy, with Bob Bescher and you, that was a fast Cincinnati team.

A Yeah, well, we were two good base runners, and on that 1913 and '14 trip around the world, when I got back March 6th --

see, we played one game every two or three weeks on that tour. It took us six months for the tour. It was my honeymoon trip, too, and McGraw paid all of our expenses, all the way around the world, and then he told the players, he says, "If I make any money on this tour, I'll split with all the players." I got four hundred and something dollars as my share of this tour. Great, great trip for me. Oh, I liked to play with McGraw. A lot of players didn't like him, because he was too rough and gruff, but he had you fighting out there on the field. He made you play baseball. If you didn't play for him the way he wanted you to play, why you didn't stay there. But he'd bring a player back after he'd had words with him. He'd bring the player back again.

Q You were a teammate of Grover Cleveland Alexander?

A Yeah, he was Phillie.

A When I batted against him, and he hit me over the heart one day I thought he had killed me. Hit me right there, and I went down - I couldn't breathe. I had a lump that big in sight of a minute.

Q After you had been his teammate?

A After. Well, see, there was a man on first, and in those days, we played hit and run a lot, and I was trying to push a ball into right field, and jeeze, he threw it inside, and pow-eee, and I go down, and I had to play, too. Doctor come down on the bench

and I couldn't breathe. I couldn't get my breath. They were rough days.

Q Was he fast?

A Oh, he threw a heavy ball. See, he got the ball - he had little short fingers, and then, you see, if you throw off the tips of your fingers, why the ball rides, but he threw it back in here, and when it hit, it bore in like a lump of lead hitting you. Now, Matty was fast, but he threw a real right ball. It would sail, yeah, but it had a lot of stuff on it. The fastest pitcher that I ever batted against was Walter Johnson. Whew. He had a long arm that hung down there - then he'd throw his hip at you like that and come out of here, and you couldn't find the ball.

Q When did you bat against Johnson?

A When I was with the Phillies --

Q In the spring.

A In the spring, we were going to open the season, like today we played in Washington, and tomorrow, we're opening up the season. National League Season, and Clark Griffith put him in there, and I was the third hitter. The first two batters he hit. Hit one guy here and another guy there - broke this guys ribs. I was the third hitter. I see two of them going to the hospital, and the first ball he threw at me - jeeze. We hadn't seen that kind of stuff all year, and he was wild. That's why Griffith put

him in there. Wanted him to get control. And the next one - whoosh. Now, he's got me two and two, and the third one he threw behind my head. Well, naturally, when you look at the ball and it's coming at your head, you're going to go that way, and I did, and I just froze. If it had ever hit me, it would have killed me. So, I says, "Walter, there's the plate. I'm over here. I couldn't have hit him with a pole," but I finally hit down to shortstop, and we yelled at Griffith and asked him to take him out, because he was, oh, terribly wild, and Walter wouldn't hit you for the world. He was a wonderful man on the field, and off the field, as well. Same with Stan Musial. What a great man he was. No, I'd say there are a greater number of better players playing baseball today in both leagues than they were in the early days. Of course, we played a different brand of baseball.

Q How? How was that?

A Well, we had to hit and run a lot, and we bunted a whole lot.

Q And you stole a lot?

A And we stole a lot of bases. Today, they go for the big inning. Everybody is -- Babe Ruth changed the whole picture of baseball. I'll tell you this story about Babe Ruth. I am the first major league that batted against Ruth when he broke in. I came off that trip in 1914, and I was with the Phillies, and we trained in

Wilmington, North Carolina. Baltimore was over at Fayetteville training, and Jack Dunn was the manager, and that's the year that he brought Ruth out of the school in Baltimore. So, we were leading in the seventh inning. The score was four to two, so Jack - I knew him very well - he says, "Hans, I'm putting in a young pitcher the next inning, a lefthander. He said, I want you to give me your honest opinion of this young pitcher." I said, "All right." And here, when they trotted him on, he looked like a Negro, real thick lips and high cheekbones, big gangling youth with -- he had real thin legs, and the upper part of his body, he looked like Hercules. So, the first ball -- I was the first batter up -- the first ball he threw -- and my eye wasn't sharp enough then, and I said, "Oh, boy, I gotta be a little careful up here. That kid's got something." Well, I hit down to the shortstop, and I was thrown out, and on my way back, I had to pass Jack Dunn's bench, and he says, "Hans, what kind of stuff has that kid got?" I says, "Fastest I've seen this year. He's really fast." He says, "Wait until you see him hit." Well, we were playing inside a racetrack in Fayetteville, and Pasquet was playing center field for the Phillies. They had two on and two out and this kid's up. He hit one a country mile over Pasquet's head, and before the ball got back, the game was over, five to two or five-four. Yeah, they beat us five-four. It was four to two, and that night we were all staying in the same hotel

at Fayetteville, and the Phillie players started to kid this Ruth. The office was up on the second floor of the lobby, and he pulled out a knife and was going to whittle a couple of us. I wasn't in on it, but he pulled this knife out -- the Phillies, we were put out of the hotel that night, but the Baltimore club wasn't. I slept in the railroad station that night in Fayetteville. That's my experience with Ruth. He never could remember a name, and he used to say "Hi, old folks," but he had all sharp eyes, just like one of these Negro players - their reflexes are very fast, and they've got exceptionally sharp eyes. That Ruthcould read an automobile license sign two blocks away. See, those Negroes, all these good colored players now, they must have real sharp eyes. They've got to. Willie Mays, he doesn't know how he plays ball. It's just instinct - natural. I don't believe he's ever read the rule book.

Q You must have seen Joe Jackson play, too?

A Wasn't a real good outfielder, but he was a good hitter.

Q The fact is, in the '17 Series, most of the Black Sox were still White Sox. Gandeau and Weaver --

A Well, Daniel was the leader of that thing the way I heard the story. Of course, one man can't throw a game, but he got most of the dough the way I understood it. See, Abe Battell was the agent for the ~~gamb~~ gamblers. Abe Battell pocketed $25,000 by himself.

Q Getting back to Grover Cleveland Alexander - was he a drinker before World War I?

A Quite a heavy drinker, and he took epeleptic fits on the bench.

Q On the bench.

A We used to have to have a bottle of brandy or something on the bench to bring him back. Shearing McGee was the same way. He had those epileptic fits.

Q How often did this happen?

A Oh, maybe two, three times a year. Alek would be pitching a game and take one of them on the bench, and we'd give him a shot of brandy, and he'd be all right.

Q What would happen when he had the fit?

A Oh, he was -- like their tongue, you have to hurry up and open their mouth and grab their tongue so they don't choke themselves. You see them shivvering all over and, on terrific.

Q It never happened while he was on the mound, huh?

A No. Only when he'd get on the bench.

Q Never happened when McGee was playing either.

A No. I'll never forget McGee. Remember when he hit Fenlon, the ump umpire? Well, we didn't play Sunday ball in those days at Phillie, and we all went over to Atlantic City on Sunday. Oh, and the day we came back, Monday, was a beastly hot day, and

Sherry had been drinking and had a hangover out there, and I know I batted just ahead of Sherry, and Fenlon called a bad strike - it was up about here - called him out, and McGee, he was ready to take one of those fits, started frothing at the mouth, and he went at Fenlon, and Fenlon had his mask off, and he hit Fenlon right in the mouth, knocked him down, and we had to grab McGee because he was going nuts, see, from that fit and the drinking. Well, he was suspended for 30 days, and Bresslerham was catching in that game against us. He was with St. Louis, I believe, at the time, and Bresslerham said, "Well, the ball was right about here," but he wasn't going to declare himself. The ball was high, but maybe up in around here. Fenlon could have called it either a ball or a strike, I guess, but Sherry was out four weeks - never practiced a day while he was out, and the first day that he got into the game and was reinstated, we were playing in the Phillis' park and Bresslerham was catching, managing St. Louis. I was on third base; Sherry was on second and he was rusty and he got picked off -- they'd pick him off. One out. I was going hell bent for election for the plate, and Bresslerham walked up maybe eight, ten feet in front of the plate and says he's got me. So, I take my leap to slide, and -- I had a new pair of shoes on, with new spikes, and he says, "I got you." And he stuck his hand out, and he had the ball in there, and I hit him right here and knocked the ball out of his hand and cut a

terrible gash right in the fleshy part of his hand. I am safe. McGee comes charging over to the plate, and he says, "Yes, and if he hadn't gotten you, I would," see because McGee had accused Bresslerham of swearing falsely against him in that strike zone. Well, Bresslerham gave his players orders to get me. They took him to the hospital. It wasn't my fault. I said, "Roger, I did not try to cut you. I never try to cut a man in my life in baseball. Had you been back, I would have been on the ground, I wouldn't have cut you, but you were way up the line and stuck your hand out, and I was just making my leap for the plate." He says, "I'll get you!" Boy, did they give me a rough time - throwing at my head, and I know a couple of days later, that big catcher - weighed about 230 pounds - he jumped into me with both feet and hit me right here - broke both my kneecaps.

Q At third base?

A Yeah. I was on a play at third base, and I said to Kanetchy, I says, "I've never tried to cut a man in my life. But, your one man that I'm going to get." And Hank O'Day - oh, it was that same game, in the same day - O'Day says, "Well, you're getting some of your own medicine, huh?" Oh, and did I get on him. I called him everything. I says, "You haven't got the guts to put me out. You have no right to say that." I says, "I did not try to cut Bresslerham,"and he and I had a hell of an argument. But I says,

"You go ahead and put me out, and I'll declare myself and just say what you're saying now." He says, "You're getting a taste of your own medicine," and he and I had a terrible battle. I said to Kanetchy, "Now then, you better be careful. Never tried to cut a man in my life, but you're one man I'm going to get." Well, the next time up, I hit one down to the infield. You know where I jumped? I leaped at Kanetchy right there, and he just got in out of the way. "Oh," he says, "is that it?" I says, "Yes, that's it. I'm going to get you. I don't know when, but I'll get you some time." Well, we went over to St. Louis, and first day there I picked up the St. Louis Dispatch. Look who's here today - Hans Lobert and President Taft. They got me billed ahead of Taft. I wish you'd have seen what they did to me that day. Whew. Bresslerham was coaching at third - he was all right. They threw pop bottles at me - it took ten minutes to clear the field. I went after a foul ball over near left field bleachers. Well, the bottles come flying out of there - only one hit me on the leg. I went back. I didn't get the ball, because I'd have been killed, and Bresslerham got on me. I says, "Why don't you get in the game?" And he had Doake, a pitcher from Pittsburgh who was a neighbor of mine around Pittsburgh -- knocked me down three times, right at my abdomen. So, I walked out and I says, "Doake, if you hit me in the head, and I'm able to get up and come out here - you see that bat. I'm going to

hit you right across the head with it. You're trying to kill me. I'll kill you, if I'm able to get up." He says, "Well, I got orders to knock you down." Well, I says, "I'm giving you orders not to." He stopped throwing at me. Oh, boy, was I -- I had to wear shin guards out in St. Louis. Jeeze, they jumped at me from every angle, but nobody got me.

Q How long did that last?

A Well, it lasted for a year, and finally, we were in New York at a National League Meeting - the big leagues were having a meeting at the Waldorf, and Dick Cansello was a scout for the Giants and a great friend of mine, and Bresslerham would never speak to me, so I told a couple of fellows, "I never tried to cut that man. It wasn't deliberate. It was an accident." Well, he had heard about it, so we were staying at the Waldorf. Kid Gleason - I remember Kid Gleason managed the White Sox - well, Kid and I were great friends, and Bresslerham invited me up to his room. Well, I said, "Roger, all right. I told you I didn't try to cut you." He says, "Well, let's have you come up to the room." So, I said to Kid, "Kid, I'm going up to that room, but I'm not going alone. He may have a couple of guys up there, and they'll just kick the tar out of me." So, he says, "Come on, we'll go up. If a battle starts, get against the wall - don't get out in the open - so they can't surround you, and I'll be right near you." So, we went up, and I

rapped on the door, and he says, "Come in," and I wouldn't come in. I rapped again, and they finally opened the door, and here I look in there, and two of my best friends are in there. Vick Cansello and a doctor from Pittsburgh - I've forgotten his name, and they said, "We'll have a drink." I said, "No, I don't drink." Then, we started discussing the play, and Roger and I shook hands and we were friends after.

Q Don't you drink?

A Oh, I do now, but I didn't drink when I was playing ball.

Q Not even beer?

A No. I'll never forget in Cincinnati, we were sitting in Nemos' Cafe - Joe Kelly, Jim Dellahan, oh, a bunch of us, and they were all drinking beer, and they wanted me to drink. I said, "No, I don't drink beer. I never tasted beer,"and they grabbed me and held me, and then they started pouring this beer in my face, and I kept my mouth closed. I said, "You don't have to do that." They had beer all over me. I says, "I'll take a glass of beer." And Jim Dellahan and I were rooming together --

Q In Cincinnati?

A In Cincinnati -- he was a third baseman. See, I was sub. I took his job. I says, "I'll drink a beer." I says, "Don't pour beer all over me." Oh, they had me doused with beer, all those old timers --

Q But, they didn't treat you too good when you came up?

A Oh, no - talk about rough. They'd make you sleep in an upper berth - you couldn't sleep in a lower.

Q How did you treat rookies then, as --

A Well, I changed. I said, I'm not going to treat rookies the way they treated me. I couldn't do that. I said that don't belong in my book. But, I mean, it was good lesson for me, being able to stand abuse like that. They were fine on the field, but off the field, see, they didn't want you to take their job.

Q How did you feel -- oh, I wanted you back to Grover Cleveland Alexander. He was always a drinker -- somebody told me before World War I, he didn't drink and --

A Well, when he first joined the Phillies, around 1911 - I don't think he drank, but later on --

Q Do you think it was the epilepsy that did it?

A It might have been --

Q Living under that all the time. Must of been a hell of a burder.

A Then he had some difficulties with his wife. I think that's what started it. When he came back from the World War, he was a changed man.

Q Yeah --

A That's when he was drinking heavily.

Q Oh, he was just drinking lightly until then?

A Oh, after that - whew --

Q How could a man who drank like that last so long?

A He had a wonderful constitution, and he never ran. He wouldn't do any running as a pitcher. He'd get around third base and just field ground balls -- he wouldn't have to warm up long.

Q I thought it was the legs that were so important.

A They are. I recall the World Series, when St. Louis played the Yankees, at Yankee Stadium, he won his ball game, like today, then he was out all night, like tonight, drinking, and they sent him down the bullpen, and he was asleep down there and Jess Haines pulled a blister on his finger, and they sent for Alek to pitch. And Tony Roserri was up with three on, and they shook him and woke him up, and he threw five balls, and he walks up the field -- I can see him walking up from left field right now. He went in there, and Tony Roserri - the first ball that Alek threw up there - whew - he hit a line drive foul into the left field stands that must have awakened Alek. He struck him out, xexixe retired the side, and went on to win the ball game. And he was drunker than a hoot owl all that night.

Q Then he wasn't any kid any more?

A No, and then you see, he slept down there on the bench.

See, the managers knew that he was drinking. They couldn't stop him, and he wouldn't harm anybody, but boy, was he mean on the mound. He'd hit you right between the eyes.

Q Did you know George Gibson?

A I knew George when he was catcher with Pittsburgh, yeah.

Q You don't hear much of him , but I understand he was a good catcher.

A He was a good catcher. Of course, he was a real big man. Oh, he was powerful.

Q He caught for many years for Pittsburgh.

A Oh, yeah.

Q And you were a good base runner. How did you come out with him?

A Well, you don't steal on a catcher. You steal on a pitcher. See, you make a study of a pitcher when you're sitting on a bench. See, I knew every pitcher, what kind of a motion he had, when he was fast coming over there. That's the man you steal on, the pitcher, not the catcher. See, the one that you can get the jump on. See, a lot of runners -- I try to teach these youngsters -- see, I've been an instructor with the Giants, and I tried to teach -- I used to get a great kick out of base running, running, and any day that I had an off day, where there was a track

meet, I would go and watch these runners --

Q Would you?

A Oh, my, yes. Pacific Park, was it, in Long Island, New York, when they had the Sunday -- the Irish Americans would be running -- I'd talk with them and find out just how they started and -- see, the secret of running is to keep your head perfectly straight and run on your toes and be relaxed. See, I used to try to teach these young players - I says, "Don't throw your head up in the air. Don't look down at the ground. Soon as you do that, you chunk yourself, and you can't get any air in your lungs. You've got to be relaxed -- like, these are piston rods. Your arms are pistons - I know some of the players, they run like this, and they wobble - go in a straight line. I says, "You can see anybody that's right near you. You can see at least three to four feet behind you. Just keep your head straight."

Q How many bases did you steal?

A Oh, I had one real good year - 60 or 70 some. The best year was in around 80.

Q At Cincinnati, about 1908 or so?

A Around that - 1908, '09, '10.

Q Sixty or seventy. That was a good season.

A Oh, yeah. See, we had to run bases. That was the game then. Fast fellow would get on, the pitcher would waste the ball,

try to get you and all that.

Q Were any of the Cincinnati players, like Ed Rouch, with Cincinnati then --

A I left -- see, I went away from there. Ed Rouch wasn't there. We had -- when I first broke in there, we had Fred Ironwold, Joe Kelly, Cy Semore.

Q Cy Semore was there?

A Yeah. He was center fielder, and Joe Kelly was left, and Fred was in right.

Q That was after Semore left the Giants, I guess, was it --

A Well, he went to the Giants afterward. He had little short arms and fingers that looked like a woman's - real short fingers -- he was a pretty good hitter --

Q You were on the Giant team that won 26 straight in 19 --

A Yeah, I was on the Giants.

Q Fifteen? Was that --

A I've forgotten the year.

Q 1915. Yeah.

A Oh, I've got a ring. They gave each one of us a ring for winning 26 straight.

Q Oh, really.

A I don't know where it is now. It's some place.

Q You won that fourth, though, that year --

Q That's the year that McGraw accused Herzog of throwing the game, the 27th game --

A Oh, really?

Q -- but he was so damned angry -- I forgotten the -- Marquard -- no, I don't believe Marquard was pitching that game, but I told John, I said, "No, he just had a bad day - Herzog," but he and Herzog never got along. See, Herzog used to fight back, and, oh, I've forgotten who the -- he called some pitcher a little snot nose. This pitcher went back at McGraw, and McGraw says, "You're just a little snot nose." He'd say some of the funniest things. I would like to have recordings of McGraw made during a ball game, the things he'd say on the bench or out on the field, I mean about plays. They were classics, and when he had a club house meeting, I want to tell you, he very seldom had a club house meeting -- with all the players seated, but when he had one they were classics.

Q Why?

A Oh, the way he'd -- he'd always have a punch line for the finish and make the most beautiful exit that you ever looked at.

Q Lots of laughs, huh?

A Oh, I'll never forget. Rube Benton --

Q Rube Benton?

A Yeah, Rube Benton, a lefthander. I roomed with him in Cincinnati. So, that year, that was in 1918 or something like that - McGraw -- I was his keeper. I had to stay with him until the finish of the season when we clinched the pennant in St. Louis, so before that McGraw had a meeting, and oh, all the players were around, and he said, "You! I know where you were last night. And you, and you and you!" And he was going right down the line - oh, I mean, giving everybody a terrible going over, and he always left the punch line for last, and he said, "You, Benton, you dirty drunken bum," and he was giving him a terrible going over, so he gets him by the hand, and we had a big mirror as wide as that door, he gets him and says, "Take a look at yourself!" So, here's Benton, he's looking at himself, and McGraw makes the exit, see, and oh, we fell off the chairs laughing. So, Larry Doyle -- I says to Larry, "You and I will stay in the locker now, and don't let that one see us. I'll bet you a dollar to a doughnut that he goes and takes a look at himself in front of the mirror." Sure enough, all the other players left, and Doyle and I, we hid in the lockers, so we waited until he went up on the platform, a slight little elevation there, and he goes over and he looks. I says, "Hey, Rube, take a real good look." But that was a classic that day. Bancroft was with us at that time.

Q Wasn't Bugs Raymond around?

A Oh, I remember Bugs. You know, McGraw used to give ~~hxim~~ him a ball -- I told him one time -- I batted against Bugs, he had the best spitball I ever batted against. I says, "You don't spit on the ball." He was half drunk out there anyway. I says, "You blow your damned breath on the ball, and the ball comes up drunk." McGraw used to put him in the bullpen, see, and give him a new ball, and he'd grab an old ball out of a bag, and while he was down in the bullpen, he'd go down to that corner saloon there at 157th Street, it was, and Eighth Avenue, and give them the ball for a couple of drinks, and they'd send down to the bullpen - "Where's Rube? Or where's Bugs?" Here he is down the saloon. I'll never forget, McGraw had a meeting with Bugs, and he had a detective tailing him, and they had open streetcars, those summer cars in New York at that time --

Q Yeah.

A -- and this detective had to stay with him all the time, so Rube would be lagging along, and the car would be moving and he'd run, oh run and catch this car, and this detective after him couldn't make it, and then he'd go someplace up at 125th Street and get loaded up, so McGraw has the meeting, and he's giving this Bugs a terrible, oh, he says, "And here's the report. You left the Polo Grounds at 6:01. You ran and boarded a summer car, one of those trolley cars, and at 6:10, you stopped at Tongie's at 125th Street, and you had

two beers and cheese and crackers. You went from there to (a hundred and some other street), 110th Street, you had four beers in there and an onion." He says, "It's a damned lie. I never ate an onion in my life." Oh, McGraw had a lot of dandies. See, and Bresslerham was Phil Douglas' keeper, during that year, 1918, I think it was, or '17.

Q Everybody had keepers, huh?

A Well, we had to keep them straight. See, now like if Rube Benton had to pitch tomorrow, he didn't dare get out of my sight -- oh, I had to stay right with him and do just whatever he wanted to do.

Q How did you feel about -- I guess 1918 was your last active year. How did you feel when all that -- well, you just --

A Well, your legs go first, and then your eyes. I could tell. The boys that I used to beat out in the infield, I'd be thrown out a full step. See, the speed started to leave, and then your eyes, they're not as sharp.

Q How old were you then, by 1918?

A Oh, in '18 --

Q Thirty-seven, yeah.

A I was still fast, but I could tell that the legs were going back, and I could tell my eyes were -- I didn't wear glasses until I was aboutmaybe fifty.

Q What did you think about doing then, when that time came?

A Well, see, I was with McGraw. He was coaching. He took care of me, see, he'd give me a coaching job or a scouting job.

Q That was 1917-18?

A Well, see, I went to West Point for eight years.

Q How did you do that - how did that come about?

A McGraw. See, Sandy Stang, the old third baseman, was coach up there, and he had passed away, and McGraw recommended me up there.

Q Did you like it?

A Oh, I thought it was wonderful work with those cadets. See, of course, I didn't expect them to play big league baseball, but they really put out for you. I'll never forget Earl Blake as long as I live. He was a real aggressive fellow, very fast - he wasn't a real good hitter. Good fielder, and we were playing Penn State up at the Point right near the parade grounds - we didn't play out at the stadium then, and the score's 2-2 in the eighth inning, and Mickey Hanes hits a long, foul fly into left field -- no, Hanky was on third base - one out, and the batter hit a long foul fly into deep left, oh and this Blake was running after it, and I'm yelling - "Don't catch it! Don't catch it!" Because if he catches it, Hanky is going to try to tag up and score. He makes the greatest one-hand catch you ever looked at. Oh, I was up like that. I says, "You dumb so and so. Didn't you realize if you

caught the ball the man on third would score? Now, they're ahead of us 3 to 2. I called him everything. "No," he says, "wasn't that a great catch?" Oh, that's what burned me up. "Wasn't that a great catch! Here's the catch up here." So he comes up and it's the ninth inning. I said, "Red, we got a man on. Now, go on up there. I want you to have a good cut and go to the bounds." Man on first base and Red at the bat. I says, "Redeem yourself now. I'm not holding anything against you. I don't care if you strike out, as long as you give me that battle." He went up there, and he hit the damnedest screecher out at that Hinky Hanes in left field, and Hinky caught the ball and then hit it free, but he hung on to the ball. If he hadn't caught the ball, we'd of won it four to three. So he come in, and every time you'd see him, he'd say, "Wasn't that a great catch?" Red was a fine fellow, Red Weiner up there at West Point. I mean I never met any finer men. They were boys, and they had to be taught, and they'd do whatever you told them, because discipline came first. I used to sit and -- we had a training table, the baseball team. I thought I'd tell them wild stories and get them pepped up. They really battled for you. I had that Walter French - you talk about a -- Walter French played with West Point -- I don't think he ever graduated from there.

Q Then you went back to the Giants as a coach?

A Yeah. Then they sent me up to Bridgeport to run their --

I was up Bridgeport three years with their farm club.

Q Were there any people that --

A I used to tip McGraw off on a good college player, Frisch, Gerig, and Frisch was the first one I tipped him off, and he sent Devlin up to sign him, I mean Fordham - and Arthur Devlin was coaching at Fordham. I used to tip McGraw off on all the good college players. Landers called me in and he asked me about that. He said, "When you coached at West Point, did you ever tell any manager about a player?" I said, "Yes, sir, I did." He said, "Well, whom?" I said, "John McGraw. He sent me up there, and whenever I saw a real high-class college player, I would call him up." He says, "I'm glad you're telling me the truth." Oh, could he swear.

Q Landers --

A Oh, I thought I had committed a crime when he called me in at nine o'clock one morning.

Q Do you think Landers could swear better than McGraw or vise versa?

A Oh, Landers could swear better than McGraw. McGraw didn't swear much, but he was just rough and gruff on the field, but off the field, altogether different. Then he used to get into a lot of escapades with newspaper men, and he very seldom ate in the dining room, because he'd be annoyed so -- many a time I've eaten with him in his room. He'd never take a drink during the day, but

at night, before his dinner, he'd have a couple of drinks.

Q I saw a movie with Edward G. Robinson in it.

A Oh, that, he took my part --

Q Edward G. Robinson as Hans Lobert, yeah.

A It was called "The Big Leaguer."

Q "The Big Leaguer."

A Who was the fellow wrote the story, from New York?

Q I don't remember. Did you -- did you have anything to do with it, besides lending your name to it?

A Well, see, I was the technical director, and I had to live with Edward G. Robinson for two weeks. See, he had to get onto my sayings, and my actions and all that. The movie director, the man that was in charge, said "Why didn't you play your own part?" Oh, I says, "It wasn't me, I'm not an actor." He said, "Well, you could have done better than Edward G." He got the dough, I didn't. That was taken down in Milburn, I think, Milburn, Florida, one training trip, and we had all the players there for a little over two weeks to make that picture. The players got $10 a day. If they said anything, they would get ten more.

Q Yes, I remember that picture.

A He was a pretty good scout, that Edward G.

Q Was he a baseball fan?

A Yeah. See, Hubbel got about five grand out of it; I got

about two, and some guy in New York got my share.

Q McGraw was always -- he always had a lot of friends among actors.

A Well, see, he belonged to the Lamb's Club there in New York, which was an actor's club.

Q There was always sort of a connection. Rube Markward was married to Blossom Seeley for a while --

A That didn't last.

Q -- but there was always a sort of connection between the Giants and actors and so on.

A I spent fifteen winters with McGraw in Cuba --

Q On vacations?

A Yeah. Well, see, I worked at the track. I got me a job down there in the winter, at the track --

Q Oh - when was that --

A They owned the track at one time.

Q When was that?

A Oh, in the thirties. I'll never forget -- before that I went down. I played in Cuba several winters, but I quit it, because it takes too much out of you. We used to stay at the Country Club, two dollars a day, beautiful place. See, then Curly Brown had the racetrack, and he got me a job down there -- I had charge of all the gates, and I worked in the mutual department. Of course, they

had the gambling down there, and I just had to be around --

Q How much gambling was there on the ball club that you played with, when you --

A Not much. They would bet on horses, card games --

Q How big a stake in the poker games?

A Twenty-five -- twenty-five cents.

Q So most people didn't lose or win too much, huh?

A That would always wind up in a fight. McGraw stopped it. He was a great bridge player - he and Manny. Yeah, they had to stop the poker games, because some players get sore as blazes at losing -- we wouldn't permit any crap shooting.

Q Oh, no?

A He caught them in Chicago one time and fined them $25 for crap shooting. That stopped that. Manny was a great crap shooter.

Q Manny was a good poker player, too, wasn't he?

A Good bridge player. Great checker player.

Q He must have been quite a person --

A But he -- Matty was a peculiar fellow. I would never speak to him unless he'd speak to me. See, you'd say good morning to him, and he wouldn't even look at you. That was just his way, he couldn't help it. So, my wife said to me, "What kind of a man is he?" She says, "I say good morning to him down in Havana." I said, "Well, that's his way. Don't pay any attention to that.

Don't speak to him unless he speaks to you." He was a hell of a good golfer, too. He taught me how to play golf.

Q What kind of a man was Frank Chance? Rough?

A Oh, rough, gruff fellow. I know when I first joined them that first fall in 1905, we were playing in Pittsburgh, and I was on second base - a very close game - and I was thrown out at the plate by Tommy Leach -- Tommy was playing center field for the pirates, and he gave me a pretty fin - he says, "You should have scored on that play." Oh, rough and gruff. He says, "What kind of a start did you have?" I said, "I thought that I had a very good start. Just right on the dime - he just did get me." What could I say?

Q Now, you see, you say he was so rough and gruff, but when you --

A He was a different kind of a type from McGraw.

Q Right. But when you think of McGraw, you think fondly? When you think of Frank Chance, you --

A Oh, he was different.

Q What about Fred Clark, who was --

A Fred was a -- oh, a fighter. He was tough.

Q Was he sort of more like McGraw or --

A A different type. He was -- I can't explain this, but he wanted everybody to play like he played.

Q Clark was different than the others?

A He was a different type manager. He would get in fights, see, and then would he spike you - jump right high at you. He jumped me one day, and there was not play. It was with the Cubs that was. I was playing third base, and he jumped that high, and I went over and I took a kick at him. He got up, and right away, he was going to punch me.

Q Did he have a sense of humor.

A Oh, he was a tough bird. I never cared for him, even when I played with, played for him. I mean, he wasn't the sort they follow the guy.

Q But McGraw was?

A McGraw was. McGraw was out on the field, and he told Mel Ott when Ott first joined the club - Mel Ott was just a boy, about seventeen, and he came out on the field, and McGraw said, "You a catcher?" He said, "Yes, sir." Very polite kid. He says, "Well, get the mask and chest protector and shin guards." Yeah, we had shin guards then. He says, "I haven't got any mask or chest protector." "Well," he says, "what kind of a mechanic are you? Why don't you bring the tools out from the club house?" Oh, he give him a pretty good going over, in a nice way. And Mel told me, "I'll never forget my tools again. I'll bring them out every day."

Q Now, you've seen a lot of modern ball players, too. What

kind of a man is the present-day ball player, compared to the ball player back in 1908, 1909?

A Well, see, times have changed. See, your traveling is different, and you meet different people. See, in the olden days, you didn't mix up with people. Now, players mix up with everybody and, of course TV has made the game what it is today, I say, because it's changed everything around, and players stay in good hotels. We were allowed two ~~hours~~ dollars a day for meals on the road. Today, it's $7.50, $8.00.

Q Back in '19, back when you were with Cincinnati --

A '06, '07, '08 or '07, '08, '09, '10 --

Q Yeah -- roughly, what was the average pay about those days?

A Well, Wagner, when I first broke in, was getting $2400.

Q Has Wagner?

A Yeah, and when I broke in, I got $1800 with the Cubs, and if I stayed the entire year, I got $2400. We never got big money in New York - $4,000 or something like that. $4,500. Salaries weren't big then, and I missed out on the player's pension by one year.

Q By one year?

A See, I went out in forty -- '44 as a coach with the Cincinnati club -- and in about two years, '46, the pension fund came into existence. See, I'd be drawing about $450 or $500 a month now.

Q There was no such thing as pensions in those days?

A No. See, it started around the middle forties.

Q So, the game is different than it used to be?

A Oh, my, yes. See, the attitude of some of these players, I mean these bonus boys -- I don't blame a kid for getting the money, but their attitude -- ah, after they do sign and they get maybe $75,000 or $80,000, "I got mine - the heck with you," and all that stuff. Well, they straighten those kids out.

Q How can they straighten them out?

A Well, I had one experience with McGraw. One of the players they hired got a big bonus - I'm not going to mention his name - his attitude was terrible. Oh, he wouldn't do this, he wouldn't do that. "I got mine." So, McGraw says, "I want you to straighten that boy out."

Q I thought they didn't give bonuses in those days.

A Well, I mean -- this was in the forties --

Q Oh, oh --

A Yeah, there was a bonus -- so, I says, "I want you to get one player about his same size and get them into an argument. Then have this boy give it to him," which we did. Talk about straightening out a kid. They had an argument, and I took the boy off, and I says, "Don't break any bones, but give him a good shellacking," and he did - changed that kid like that. He was altogether different

after that, and he paid attention to what he was told. Then, you see a lot of players, among your experienced players, they've been with a club a great number of years, and some kid comes up with a big bonus, and oh, and then the player asks for a raise, and he doesn't get it --

Q Yeah.

A -- that's what causes a lot of trouble - a lot of dissension there. The player that's made the grade and been a big leaguer - then if he asks for a raise in the next year, why he doesn't get it, but they give this kid all that dough.

Q The game is different, because now it's a home run game, and it used to be a --

A Oh, they go for the big innings now.

Q Yeah, and they didn't used to.

A See, Babe Ruth changed the whole style of play.

Q What about the people involved? Are they the same kind of people that they used to be?

A Well, today more people attend games.

Q I mean the people that play ball, the big leaguer - is he the same kind of a man that he used to be?

A Oh, yeah, I would say -- there isn't much change. See, there's always a lot of bad earth in a basket.

Q I mean, is he interested -- I get the impression that,

in fact, in the turn of the century, 1910 and 1915, the ball player thought and talked and --

A He did -- he felt and talked more baseball than the present -- the present-day player is - wants to see how much money he can make, and then he wants to get into something different in the winter. Of course, we, in our days, we'd try to get a job during the winter - do some kind of work.

Q But baseball was more important to you than --

A Oh, my, yeah. We payed more attention - we couldn't wait until spring came around and we could go down in training. You know, this past year was the first time since 1906 that I didn't make it to spring training, on account of my sister, she was in very poor health, had a terrible heart attack, and she passed away on June 26th.

Q If you had it to do all over again, would you have been a ball player like you were?

A I certainly would have. I mean, I got -- I'm still getting a great kick out of baseball. Among the younger players, the ones that want to play, and they come and ask for advice; I am not Mr. Baseball - I don't know it all, and I learn something new every day, as old as I am, but the kick that I get out of baseball is I try to help a youngster and watch how he improves. That's the kick that I get out of the game today. Of course, I go watch the

big league games. See, after you look at a lot of college players, high school players, and minor leaguers -- see, you look at them, and oh, they look great, and the reason that I attend a lot of big league games is to get a different view. See, then I see how the big league plays, and I do n't feel so sharp about that youngster. Of course, you make mistakes. A lot of players that I've seen and passed up, they've made the grade. That's part of baseball.

Q You have no regrets at having been a baseball player?

A No. No, I still get a great kick out of it. See, and it was fun. In the olden days, we played ball just like we were playing for fun. Now, it's a business. They want to see how much money they can make and then invest in business. See, I invested mine in the stock market, and when we had the crash, on margin, and I lost everything I had.

Q What did you do then?

A Well, I went back into baseball as a coach and all that. That was in '29, I think, when we -- round then we had the crash. Whew - all my savings - whoosh. See, I had it on margin, most of the stocks, and it just wiped me out.

Q How did you ever get involved in doing that?

A Oh, I don't know, just -- Jimmy Wilson, he was managing the Phillies - he had some stock, and he --

Q They tell me that the modern ball player -- all he's

worried about is his stocks and bonds --

A Well, you see, I was through as a player then.

Q Oh, okay. I was through as a player, see. Then I wanted to see if I couldn't make some extra money.

Q All right.

A No, I was through. That was in '29. See, my last year as a major leaguer was '18. Yeah, Jimmy and I -- I coached for Jimmy for a few years, and he was telling me about these stocks, and oh, I had a few grand left around. I said, "Why, hell, I'm going to buy some of that stock." I did, and the crash came. Every day, the bank called me, "Come down and put up." If the market hadn't broken, I'd have lost this house. The market broke today, and see, every day I had to go down and just keep -- took all my savings. It's rough.

Q So, you think the old-time ball player had more fun that the present ball player?

A I believe it, yes, I do. We weren't permitted to play golf. Golf was taboo.

Q And now, a lot of them play a lot of golf.

A Well, McGraw never permitted players to play golf on days of games. Matty used to go out and then pitch in the afternoon and he was all in. It takes a lot out of you - you walk eighteen holes, and ball players on their day off - they won't play eighteen, they

want to play thirty-six.

Q How heavy a bat did you use?

A I don't know -- it was around 36, 38, 34 --

Q How big was Hans Wagner's --

A Oh, he had a 42 ounce bat, or something like that.

Q And speaking of that, sometimes you refer to people calling you John and sometimes Hans.

A Well, see, John in German is Johannus, and they shorten to Hannus, and then in Dutch it's Hans.

A Oh, I see.

Q I played basketball with Wagner in Pittsburgh, called Hans Wagner's Allstars -- well, he and I became very friendly. It was all through that first meeting of mine when he was in the Pirates' club house, when he invited me into his locker and kind of took a liking to me, and I took a liking to him - he acted like a father to me. I mean, he helped me when I needed help. So, I would get postcards from him when he'd be down in a training camp, and he'd always address it - from Hans Number One to Hans Number Two.

Q What kind of a person was he?

A Oh, talk about a grand old man. Real fine fellow. Wouldn't harm anybody. And he was always trying to help the kids. After a a double header - he lived in Carnegie and I lived in Bellsilver, which was about ten, twelve miles apart - after a double header, you

know what he would do? There would be kids playing out there, and he would go out there and play with those kids. Many a time I saw him out there. I'll never forget the first uniform I ever put on. I slept in it that night, as an amateur, and played right near Hans Wagner's home town, too - Bridgeville, I think it was. Carnegie. Yeah, I slept in that uniform that night. They couldn't get it off my back, and I'll never forget my first pair of baseball shoes, I never wore a cheap pair of baseball shoes. The Spaulding Feather-weight shoe at that time was $3.50, and my father, for Christmas, gave me a little spend money or a little Christmas. He said, "What are you going to buy?" I said, "I'm going to buy a pair of the best baseball shoes I can buy," and I went downtown to Pittsburgh and got a $3.50 pair of shoes, and there was snow on the ground, but when I came home, I put those shoes on, and here I am out there dancing in the snow, with those shoes.

Q Oh. How old were you about then?

A Oh, 18 - 17 or 18.

Q Did you think you'd ever really become a big league ball player?

A Well, when I started to play, yes, I did.

Q You did?

A I felt I had the chance to become a big league ball player, and when Barney Dreyfus gave me that chance, then I really was

wrapped up in baseball --

Q You thought you'd make it?

A Yeah, I thought I could make it, yeah. And Arty Hoffman, he played for the Cubs, he and I played together in Des Moines, Iowa, and we were roommates. Well, he went up to the Cubs in the fall of 1904. I think he's dead now. He was a great center fielder. They called him Circus Solly. Naw, baseball's been good to me, and I'm going to be good to baseball.

Q How much do you do now? What do you -- What are all these letters?

A Well, see, they're are a lot of all of the games that I have seen, and I keep score of every game that I attend. I just ran out of a couple of books. McGregor -- I don't know whether you know Pots Griley or --

Q No.

A Pots Crowley, of McGregor's. He says, "What are you going to do with these scores?" I says I may go down to the Dominican Republic, I don't know. I was down there one year --

Q What are all the letters?

A Oh, all kinds of letters, letters from young players --

Q Who takes care of all your correspondence?

A I do.

Q That's a lot of work.

A I know it is. That bunch there I'm going to answer right now, just that little thin bunch.

Q Boy, you keep -- you re a very busy man.

A Well, see, you see so many players, and I've got to send in those reports.

Q Somebody told me - speaking of players, somebody told me that Tinkers, Evers and Chance in their best years never made more than twelve or fifteen or so double plays, and --

A Well, that was just a byword - Tinkers to Evers to Chance. You took a chance. That's what it meant. Tinkers to Evers to Chance. See, they didn't make any more double plays. I think they make more double plays today, because the ball is so much faster.

Q Yeah, it's not that. You don't think that's it -- that it's because they're better pivoting or better pivoting fielding, but because of the fast ball --

A Fast ball. These balls are kit so hard and sharp --

Q Does the third baseman play about the same in your day and they play today?

A There isn't much bunting. Players don't try to beat out bunts like they did in the early days. See, you had to be up on the edge all the time, even with two out. Of course, in modern baseball, they don't bunt much with two out. He leaves it up to the next man to drive him in. See, but in my day, a bunt was two strikes.

Q How do you figure, in your day, without any training facilities and so on, and you still had pitchers going nine innings more than you do now. You had players with less injuries --

A Well, that was the dead ball. See, nine home runs led the league. I had seven one year, and six of those I legged it around the bases. I only hit one out of the park. See, your ball, what made the ball so large in my day, the yard - yarn's what makes the ball large. They were 75% yarn and 25% wool in those days. And then they added -- after that, when Babe Ruth came in, they put the 100% glue in the yarn and then put a rubber ball with a cork in the center, and the ball, I would say, was about that big in the center of the baseball, and it's wrapped tighter and sewed tighter. And the pitcher used to take the ball, and the cover --

Q Loosen it up, huh?

A That ball'd do tricks up there, come up there like that and wave at you, it's like a spit ball. See, a spit ball left the fingers first because you got saliva on there, and you gripped -- see, it would leave the thumb last, and slide off here. Now, Matty, when he threw his fade away, it came out of here.

Q Like a screw ball.

A Well, that's the screw ball. See, he called it a fade away. Now, you take a look at Crowell Helba's arm today -- You see, Helba threw his out here -- we used to watch his arm, see, and if we saw it up at an angle like that, we knew it was a screw

ball. Well, his arm was like that --

Q Uh, huh.

A See, he can't straighten his arm out. My right arm I can't straighten that either. That's as far as I can straighten it. Well, from throwing so much --

Q Oh, really?

A And Freddie Fitzsimmons - from throwing the knuckle ball, his arm's like that - his right arm. Goofy Gomez, you know, he says, "I'd hate to walk between those two guys." He says, "Both of 'em would have their hand in your pocket."

Q Did you ever play with Paine Brody.

A I've played against him. He was with the White Sox. I think I -- yeah, he was in my time. There are a lot of stories about him out in San Francisco - Paine Brody, the beer drinker.

Q Is he still out there?

A I don't know whether he's still alive or not. I was out in San Francisco last August - August a year ago, when Horace Stone gave all the old timers a big day out there. He had over a hundred players come in there --

Q Who did he have from the old -- 1910 or so?

A Well, let's see. Chief Meyers was there. He's eight years older than I am.

Q Is he in good health now. I hope he's in good health, too.

A Well, he didn't put a uniform on. I put a uniform on, but I didn't play. No, I'll be 82 this month. I feel all right, but I had a muscular spasm in this knee. I injured it, see. I had it busted, and of course, I went to the doctor, and he gave me some kind of medicine to loosen it up, which it has -- down in here. Oh, man, is that sore. Right down in my foot. I got to go to him tomorrow and see what he can do for it.

Q Chief Meyer seemed though, even though he didn't get dressed, he was --

A Oh, he looked all right. Fred Snodgrass was there. Oh, lot of players.

Q Snodgrass was quite an outfielder.

A He lived in Oxnard California. On that tour around the world --

Q He was a fast man.

A Yeah. We played in Oxnard. It's a great cattle and lima bean country. ~~They~~ The day we arrived, they gave us a big ox roast. There were about, oh, I'd say maybe 40 or 50 people in our party, and they got the lot of us off the train at seven o'clock in the morning, came down, those old cowboys, and they had a stage coach, and they took us to this ranch, and they had this ox roast, been roasting it for a couple of days, and lima beans with onions and all that and beer for breakfast. So after a while we had

taken all this good food, the mayor of the town got up and put me on the spot. He asked me if I wouldn't run a horse around the bases that afternoon. "Well, Lord," I said, "I'm not here to run horses around the bases, I'm here to play baseball."

Q That was in 1913, huh?

A Yeah, 1913, and so he wouldn't take no for an answer. Well, we played the game, and oh, it was a terrible rough field, and down in left field, there must have been 200 cowboys on horseback, watching the game, and they kept creeping up to the field, I mean, there were about 4,000 people at the game, and wouldn't let us finish the game. They wanted to see this race between the horse and the man. So, finally, McGraw came to me, and he said, "John, get ready and run the horse. We can't finish the game." "Why, we're leading three to two in the seventh inning," I said "and the game's more important to me than running that horse." He said, "Well, get ready, and you run the horse around the bases." So out of all this herd of horses, the most beautiful black animal came out of there with a Mexican cowboy on him. Oh, he was all dressed in his chaps and spangles, and he couldn't speak English. I said, "Senor, practico. We'll take a walk around the bases." I was to touch each inner ~~xxxx~~ corner of the base, and he was to go around, so as not to run me down. So, we walked around, and the crowd roaring, and they took moving pictures of it -- Pathe news was with us.

So, I got off - bingo, and I led at first base by at least ten feet, and second base, I had picked up and I was 20 feet ahead now, and instead of that Mexican going around second, he shot right into shortstop, and he only missed me that far. I had to dodge to get clear, and I lost stride, but I picked up immediately, and I was still in front on third, and we were going down the finish line -- it was just like that, at the finish. So, when I pulled up, I said to Clem - he was the referee - I said, "How was it?" He said, "The horse won by a nose." I said, "Now, listen. Don't ever tell me that. No horse could beat me by a nose." And I went after that cowboy. I was going to give him a good going over. See, now, he had no right -- I don't say I could have beaten him, but the horse was trained, see, to make those sharp turns.

Q I heard there was a -- I read somewhere there was a field day they had in Cincinnati --

A Oh, I was in that field --

Q With you going around the bases in a --

A Around the bases. We had to start with a pistol starter. See, one of them was here and the other, you'd stand behind it, and the pistol went off -- well, I ran that in 13/45ths.

Q Which was something.

A Well, that's still a record, I mean, with a pistol start. They say that Art Stephen beat it by a fifty of a second or a tenth,

but they took him from the time he bunted the ball, oh, he had seven or eight feet the best of it, a running start, but I was in perfect stride all the way around the bases. I hit every bad with my right foot -- see, my left foot was inside the diamond, and every bag I hit with a perfect stride, and I hit -- see, a lot of players today - they try to be cute and want to hit the edge of the bag. See, you either miss or you'll turn your ankle. Hit the bag on top, because you get leverage in it - it throws you inside. That's how I busted my knee up at Yale. The bag was loose, and I hit the bag on top, and the bag spun around, and I threw a cartilage out a day before the season.

Q Three more questions: One - Is there any difference between the whole attitude of the old time ball player toward baseball and toward living in general compared to the attitude of modern ball player?

A Well, as I say, times have changed. We're living in a modern age today, and players in those days, they used to visit each other and talk baseball. Today, they -- I don't believe they do that. See, I'm not around major league players much any more. See, I don't visit with them.

Q Well, let's say the players in the thirties and forties, when you did see them. Compared to --

A Well, see, they were changing then, in the thirties and

the forties. I had noticed it. They, of course, were making more money, and they were living up to the modern times and all that. In my day, we had no automobiles -- today, it's -- players don't walk anyplace. Everything in an automobile. I've never owned an automobile, and I don't drive. I started to get a car --

Q See, you really -- you just tell me it's different, that is that the modern player, he has different attitudes --

A Well, see, they stay in better hotels. The food is -- I would say the food is different and all that. I mean, you meet different kinds of people. See, in our day, they -- the fans would gather around the player, see, and the older players would talk to the fans. Now, it's everybody wants an autograph, and after they get that, they don't want to talk to you and all that stuff. That's the way it is today, I believe.

Q Did the fans ever affect your playing at all? Did you hear the fans?

A Oh, you'd hear them once in a while, but it goes in this ear and out that. At Cincinnati, they had what they call rooters row underneath the stand, and they had like benches there, and there was a little whelf here and they sold beer. Well, some of those fans would get pretty well charged up, and they'd call you every-thing. I mean, swear at you and I punched one guy in the mouth. He spit a big wad of tobacco juice on me - hit me from here down to here. I reached in and I plowed him. Gary Herman was commissioner

then, and he owned the Cincinnati club, and the man had me arrested, and I went down to the court with that tobacco juice on me. See, the fans were rougher in those days. Today, they yell, but it doesn't mean anything --

Q The fans and the players were rougher?

A Yeah. I mean I think they're rougher today.

Q The fans?

A Yeah. They weren't too rough with us.

Q Oh, really?

A See, they try to make friends with you, see, stand around and want to talk to you and all that, and I believe the old timers would talk more to the fans in those days than they do today. See, players today, soon as the game's over, they want to get out and -- we would meet the fans and have a chat with them and all that. They'd bring their kids around.

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