





# Sol White's Official Base Ball Guide

BY  
SOL WHITE

Introduction and Notes  
by Gary Ashwill



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## INTRODUCTION

By Gary Ashwill

In the spring of 1907 a team called the Philadelphia Giants started selling a small paperbound book at their games. Its cover said it was the *History of Colored Base Ball*, by Sol White, captain of the Giants, the “World’s Colored Champions.” Inside, the title page named it *Sol White’s Official Base Ball Guide*, and added that it had been edited by H. Walter Schlichter (who also held the copyright). At 5 ¾ by 3 ½ inches, it could be described as a thick pamphlet or even a “brochure,” as White would later call it.<sup>1</sup> The book’s 128 pages were packed with tiny print and photographs illustrating the exploits of professional African American ball clubs and their players going back a little more than 20 years. It also featured essays on “How to Pitch,” by Rube Foster, the best black pitcher in the country, and “The Art and Science of Hitting,” by Grant Johnson, the best black everyday player. Like a game program, it was sprinkled with advertisements, mostly for businesses related to the Philadelphia Giants or run by the owners of other black teams, as well as a few other Philadelphia-area concerns. And for good measure it reprinted “Casey at the Bat” and one of its sequels, “When Casey Slugged the Ball.”

Just four years earlier, W. E. B. DuBois had declared in *The Souls of Black Folk* that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line.” It was certainly baseball’s problem. The tentative reconstruction era that baseball had undergone in the 1880s, when dozens of black players, and a few

black teams, infiltrated the minor leagues and even (briefly) the majors, had shuddered to a halt in the 1890s. The last black player to appear in organized baseball was Bill Galloway, who played in five games for the Woodstock club of the Canadian League in 1899. By 1907 a “veil,” as DuBois would put it, had descended over the world of black baseball. Sol White’s little book was a guide to this world.<sup>2</sup>

Even as the minor leagues were struggling with the idea of racially-integrated dressing rooms, all-black professional teams were forging ahead, finding opponents and venues, attracting crowds, making (at least some) money. Sol White identified the Cuban Giants, founded in 1885, as the first black professional club; in fact, they were “neither giants nor Cubans,” and may not have been the first professionals.<sup>3</sup> But they did make by far the biggest splash on the sporting scene of any African American team to that point, getting dates with big league clubs within only a few weeks of their founding. They spawned imitators and competitors, and so many of them called themselves “Giants” that the name eventually became a code word or euphemism meaning “black baseball team.” By the time Sol White was leading the Philadelphia Giants, dozens of African American professional or semiprofessional clubs (most of them Giants of one sort or another) dotted the country.

But this was not yet the era of the Negro leagues. The teams were not organized, and did not actually spend most of their time playing each other. In 1903, for example, the Philadelphia Giants played 130 games, but only 7 of those were against other

black professionals. The rest were against white teams—minor leaguers, college teams, semipro. It's crucial to understand that the world Sol White describes in his *Guide* was a sports world very different from anything we'd recognize now. The minor leagues were free and existed for their own sake, to run their own pennant races, rather than just to develop players for the majors. And beyond the minor leagues were the independent professionals, or semipro. They represented small cities and towns that weren't in leagues—but they also existed in big cities like Chicago, New York, and Boston. In those pre-television, pre-radio days there was a huge demand for live baseball, and even Philadelphia, with two major league teams, had room for a more local, and cheaper, brand of diamond entertainment.

A reporter, writing about Sol White in 1927, said that he had “given his life, unselfishly, to the game purely for the love of it... Some others went into the game to make money, and made it, but Sol takes greater pride in having watched the game develop to where it is today, although he has no money to show for it.”<sup>4</sup> No doubt this is true; still, as this book shows, money was greatly important to White, both as a player and as a manager. He was, after all, trying to make a living, and later trying to keep money-making enterprises afloat. It's worth reflecting that in 1907 slavery was still well within living memory, and that it was even more recent in the 1880s when White begins his story. Several of the original Cuban Giants—and most of Sol White's immediate family—were born in slave states before the Civil War. Though their early histories are not known in detail, it seems

virtually certain that some of them were born into slavery—or at the very least possessed intimate knowledge of the institution. Now they were attempting to make baseball their profession. And while this was a possible path for African American men around the turn of the century, it was not an easy one, and it did not typically produce a stable, steady career progression—as a look at Sol White's own life and career shows.

### **Sol White the Ballplayer**

Sol White's family background is hazy, though there are a few things we do know. He was born (as he tells us) in Bellaire, Ohio, just across the Ohio River from Wheeling, West Virginia, on June 12, 1868. His parents and four older siblings were all born in Virginia; the circumstances of the family's arrival in Ohio remains unknown. Within two years of his birth his father was dead and his mother, Judith White, a washer woman according to the 1870 census, was raising five children alone.<sup>5</sup> As a boy Sol hung around a local team called the Globes. One day in 1883, playing against a Marietta, Ohio, team captained by Ban Johnson (who would go on to found the American League), a Globes player hurt his finger and had to come out of the game—so they drafted Sol to take his place.<sup>6</sup>

He had heard stories of Bud Fowler, the black professional ballplayer.<sup>7</sup> The Cuban Giants had been founded in 1885, and Frank Grant joined the Eastern League and then the International League in 1886. Consequently the idea of a career in baseball for a black man may not have seemed so far-fetched to Sol. When the

National Colored League started up in 1887, he saw his chance, and earned a spot on the Pittsburgh Keystones. Unfortunately the league didn't live up to Sol's ambitions. It crashed within a couple of weeks, leaving players stranded hundreds of miles from home with no money, and while the Keystones struggled through as an independent team, Sol went back home to sign with the Wheeling club of the Ohio State League.

It's clear that had he been white, he would have been a huge major league prospect. As a 19-year-old third baseman with Wheeling in 1887, he batted .370 and slugged .502, with 20 extra base hits in 53 games. His teammate, the catcher/outfielder Jake Stenzel, hit .387 and slugged .474, with 8 extra bases in 41 games. Stenzel would go on to play over 700 games as a major league outfielder, batting .338 with a 134 OPS+. Eventual Hall of Famer Ed Delahanty, the same age as White, hit .351 and slugged .475 as a second baseman for the Mansfield club in the same league—and wound up hitting .346 in the big leagues, with a 152 OPS+. While Delahanty and Stenzel were certainly outliers (there were other comparable hitters in that league who did not go on to great major league careers), the fact remains that White as a player was showing similar abilities at a similar age, and would certainly have gotten every chance to make a similar mark in the majors if it weren't for the colorline.<sup>8</sup>

What happened next was Sol White's first substantial experience with baseball Jim Crow. In the off-season the league (now renamed the Tri-State League) passed a rule barring all black players. The *Wheeling Register* noted that "[v]ery many of our

citizens will regret this on account of Sol. White, as he was a favorite with the patrons of the game in this city, being not only one of Wheeling's best players, but also a perfect gentleman in his actions."<sup>9</sup> Weldy Walker, the former major leaguer and catcher for the Ohio State League's Akron team, wrote a fiery letter denouncing the action, which was published in *The Sporting Life*.<sup>10</sup> Within a few weeks the ban was rescinded. The president of the Wheeling club, aware of White's popularity, promptly signed him and sent him to meet the team at Lima, Ohio—but the new manager, Al Buckenberger (who would later manage the Pittsburgh Pirates), apparently did not want a black player on the team, and White was turned away.<sup>11</sup>

With the exception of one interlude in 1895, White would spend the rest of his career on all-black teams, although a few of them would play in white leagues. For the rest of the 1888 season he re-signed with the Pittsburgh Keystones. In August he accompanied them to a four-team "Colored Championship" tournament put on by John M. Bright in New York. The Keystones finished second to Bright's own Cuban Giants.<sup>12</sup>

The next few years were a whirlwind of teams and leagues for White. Although primarily an infielder, he played virtually every position. Like all the other best black players of this era, he was caught up in the battle between the Cuban Giants and their arch-rivals, the New York Gorhams, who competed both on the field and off, constantly raiding each other for players. White spent two different spells with the Gorhams, and all or part of five seasons with the Cuban Giants. He also played for the

1890 York Colored Monarchs, a white-owned club that signed up most of the 1889 Cuban Giants; a revived version of the Pittsburgh Keystones in 1892; the Boston Monarchs in 1893; the Hotel Champlain team in Bluff Point, New York, which was organized by the head waiter Frank P. Thompson, one of the men who had founded the Cuban Giants; the Fort Wayne, Indiana, club in the 1895 Western Interstate League (White's last experience in a white minor league); and the Page Fence Giants of Adrian, Michigan, one of the great black teams of the nineteenth century. At various times his teams played in the Middle States League, the Eastern (and Western) Interstate League, the New York Semiprofessional League, and the Connecticut State League. During these years his wages advanced from the paltry \$10 a week he earned as a catcher/infielder with the '89 Gorhams to the \$75 to \$80 a week he got from the '95 Page Fence Giants and Ft. Wayne teams.<sup>13</sup>

Two key developments in White's life took place after he spent the 1896 season with the Cuban Giants. First, he entered Wilberforce University as a preparatory student, and spent the next four years playing ball in the summer and studying in the winter. Second, he left the Cuban Giants for the Cuban X-Giants. The "X" signified "ex-Giants," as the team had been founded when a group of Cuban Giants became fed up with John M. Bright's sharp dealing and left. They engaged Edward B. Lamar to be their business manager, and played on the "cooperative plan," "a system whereby all expenses were deducted from the gross receipts and the balance evenly distributed between

the players.”<sup>14</sup> White had stayed loyal to Bright for one season after the X-Giants revolution, but eventually decided to join. Put together, his entrance into college and his defection to the co-op team seem to indicate an interest in bettering his situation, achieving a measure of self-determination.

His next stop, after leaving school, was the Columbia Giants of Chicago. They were formed in 1899 when the Columbia Club, an organization of young black businessmen in Chicago, purchased the Page Fence Giants from their white backers.<sup>15</sup> After another season with the Cuban X-Giants, White teamed up with H. Walter Schlichter, sports editor of the *Philadelphia Item* (a white paper), and Harry Smith, baseball editor of the *Philadelphia Tribune* (a black paper), to found the Philadelphia Giants. For the first time Sol White would serve as captain and manager.

#### **“The Strongest Organization of the Time”**

Now he entered the years that he would later consider “the heyday of his glory,” the years when he made the Philadelphia Giants champions and wrote the book that might be his true legacy. The Philadelphia Giants kicked up a rivalry with White’s old team, the Cuban X-Giants, that echoed the Gorhams/Cuban Giants rivalry of the previous decade, especially in the propensity of the two teams for raiding each other’s players. In 1903 the Cuban X-Giants, behind a young fireballer from Texas named Andrew Foster, defeated White’s Giants 5 games to 2 to claim the “colored base ball championship of the world.”<sup>16</sup> So

White and Schlichter signed Foster from the X-Giants, along with Charlie Grant and a young Pete Hill. When they met the X-Giants again for the black championship a year later, Foster set the tone by striking out 18 of his former teammates in the first game, and Philly took the series 2 games to 1.<sup>17</sup>

In 1905 White brought in the X-Giants captain and manager, Grant Johnson (who had actually twice been White's manager, with the Page Fence Giants and Columbia Giants), along with their lefthanded ace, Danny McClellan, and the coup was complete. Now he had what he called "the strongest organization of the time."<sup>18</sup> The Giants won 134 games, lost only 21, and tied 3, sweeping four games against the Newark International League team and winning nine out of ten games (tying the tenth) against the Brooklyn Royal Giants, the only major black team they faced that year.<sup>19</sup>

They could not stay on top for long. The 1905 Philadelphia Giants, for all their impressive firepower, were a precarious financial balancing act; they were too dominant, and had trouble booking enough truly high-profile games against worthy opponents. E. B. Lamar of the X-Giants, having been robbed of nearly all his stars, refused to meet the Giants; so did the All-Cubans, the team of Cuban League stars run by Abel Linares. So in 1906, when those erstwhile punching bags the Royal Giants offered Grant Johnson a big salary to be their player-manager, White and Schlichter couldn't stop them. Soon after, a new club called the Quaker Giants, run by the McMahan brothers from New York, signed away Bill Monroe and Chappie Johnson.<sup>20</sup>

Despite these setbacks, the Giants won the 1906 championship of the local, racially-integrated International League of Independent Professional Base Ball Clubs, as well as the informal colored championship. That same year Sol White wrote his *Official Base Ball Guide*, outlining the history that had led up to this point. Unfortunately, just as he had already lost Grant Johnson to the Royal Giants, he now lost Rube Foster (and a couple of other players) to the Leland Giants of Chicago. White compensated by bringing in a young second baseman named John Henry Lloyd from the Cuban X-Giants (which disbanded after 1906) and making him into a shortstop. The International League was replaced by the avowedly black National Association of Colored Professional Base Ball Clubs, organized by Schlichter and New York promoter Nat C. Strong. The Giants won their second straight pennant, which doubled as their fourth straight blackball championship.<sup>21</sup>

Difficulties continued to beset the club in 1908, including more defections—Rube Foster signed away Pete Hill and Emmett Bowman (who was one of White's particular favorites)—and the death of pitcher George Washington (“the Georgia Rabbit”), who suffered a heart attack in the team's dressing room before a game he was scheduled to pitch in Winsted, Connecticut.<sup>22</sup> White and the Giants persisted. They even ventured into the lion's den in Chicago and managed to tie Foster's Lelands, 3 games to 3.<sup>23</sup> But in the end they lost the black championship of the National Association to Grant Johnson's Royal Giants. More damagingly, the partnership at the heart of

the team, between White and Schlichter, broke up. In later years White admitted to being “high strung” during this period, which may have contributed to their falling out. Whatever started the “misunderstanding,” it led to White leaving the team and joining the Quaker Giants for 1909—whereupon Schlichter had White and his club, along with another black team, Pop Watkins’s Stars, “outlawed” by the National Association. Observers noted that this amounted to “the white managers of the colored clubs” keeping out the black managers.<sup>24</sup>

### **“The Peer of All Managers”**

In 1910 Sol White was hired to manage the Royal Giants, but only after Schlichter agreed to remove him from the National Association’s blacklist.<sup>25</sup> According to the sportswriter Harry Daniels, two of the Royal Giants’ best players, outfielder/pitcher Charles Babcock Earle and shortstop Bill Monroe, ignored White and seemed to be the “real bosses themselves.” Daniels criticized John W. Connor, the Royal Giants’ owner, for hiring the “peer of all managers” and then not allowing him to do his job.<sup>26</sup> One might wonder if White was losing his touch. If so, it didn’t stop the McMahon brothers from appointing him in 1911 to organize their new team, the Lincoln Giants, which was to play in Harlem’s Olympic Field. White signed John Henry Lloyd and outfielder Spottswood Poles. When in July he plucked the “crack battery” of youngsters Dick Redding and Louis Santop from the roster of the Philadelphia Giants, he sealed the fate of his old team—Schlichter disbanded the Giants within weeks.<sup>27</sup>

At the same time White had assembled the core of the next great African American baseball team, one that in 1913 would defeat Rube Foster's American Giants for the "negro baseball championship of the United States." Sol White would not be around to savor this victory, however. Before the Lincolns' first season was even over, he had left the team for unspecified reasons, replaced as manager by Lloyd.<sup>28</sup>

White made one last stab at success in fast company. For the first time he left the U.S. in pursuit of his baseball career, joining the Fe club in the Cuban League, and staffing it with black American players. It was a collaboration with his old ace pitcher, Rube Foster—both brought players from their respective 1911 teams, plus a few more from the St. Louis Giants and Leland's Chicago Giants. Unfortunately, the cream of African American baseball at the time—Joe Williams, John Henry Lloyd, Pete Hill, and Grant Johnson—had all joined the Habana club. The Sol White-Rube Foster team-up got off to a slow start, and the Fe management was exceedingly impatient. They lost five of their first six games, culminating in a 13 to 2 humiliation by Habana on January 29, 1912.<sup>29</sup> After this game seven of the American players plus White were let go.<sup>30</sup>

That was the end of the primary phase of Sol White's career at the top of the African American baseball world. In 1912 he was reported to be organizing a team owned by Ambrose Hussey, a well-known white promoter, to play at the Ridgewood Grounds in Brooklyn.<sup>31</sup> Apparently it was called the "Boston Giants," even though it was organized in New York. This team made no stir

whatsoever—there was virtually nothing about it in the press, and White (through Calvin) later admitted that “business was dull” that year.<sup>32</sup> Despite rumors that White and Schlichter had gotten together again to revive the Philadelphia Giants, or that White would undertake to manage the Pittsburgh Giants, in fact he retired from the game. He went home to Bellaire, Ohio, for the first sustained period since he began playing ball in 1887.<sup>33</sup>

Whatever he did in Bellaire during his retirement, around 1918 White began to get restless, evincing a renewed interest in baseball, and talking about putting together a team in Columbus, Ohio.<sup>34</sup> In 1919 he wrote a series of articles for the *Cleveland Advocate* on black baseball. Meanwhile his old ace pitcher, Rube Foster, had founded the Negro National League (NNL). After its first season, the Dayton Marcos franchise was moved to Columbus and renamed the Buckeyes, and White joined the organization as secretary. Lloyd was engaged as player-manager for the 1921 season, but despite his and White's efforts, the team sank to sixth place and folded at the end of the season.

He reemerged right away in 1922 as manager of a second-tier club in Cleveland, the Fears Giants, and followed this up by taking to the dugout as field manager of another NNL team, the Cleveland Browns, in 1924 (his first manager's job at the highest level in a dozen years).<sup>35</sup> White brought in his old third baseman from the Philadelphia Giants, the 45-year-old Bill Francis, and one of his outfielders was the 19-year-old Vic Harris, who would become a legendary manager for the Homestead Grays in the 1930s. But in the end the Browns were no better than the

Buckeyes. Under White's tutelage they went 11-20. He left in early July, replaced by the team's catcher, Otto "Jaybird" Ray.<sup>36</sup>

Shortly afterward he seems to have moved east. In December 1924 he disclosed a plan to W. Rollo Wilson of the *Pittsburgh Courier* to create a farm team for the Eastern Colored League (ECL) that would take players on loan from the various league clubs and "bring them up to major league ability."<sup>37</sup> While it's unclear whether this plan ever saw fruition, in 1926 he became involved with a new ECL club, the Newark Stars. The "young and progressive manager," Andy Harris, signed White as coach and advisor.<sup>38</sup> Wilson commented that "in his day" White "was cock o' the walk and the king-pin strategist of Negro baseball. Now he comes back to the game he knows and loves so well, and the week's salute goes to him, the mighty somnambulist of a vanished dream (if Mons. V. Hugo will pardon me)."<sup>39</sup> But all White's experience and Harris's youth and new ideas didn't avail the Stars, who won only one of the eleven ECL games they managed to play before they folded up.<sup>40</sup> This was the last big league team he was ever involved with.

#### **"A Wealth of Information"**

Sol White may have retired from baseball, but that didn't mean he had lost interest in the sport. In 1927 a major article by Floyd J. Calvin about his life and career, evidently based on extensive conversations with White, appeared in the *Pittsburgh Courier*. White "has been close to the game since its beginnings in 1885," Calvin wrote, "and he hardly talks about anything else."

He certainly wrote about it extensively. A second printing of *Sol White's Official Base Ball Guide*, presumably for sale during the 1908 season, added 9 more pages of text entitled "History of Colored Base-Ball During 1907." It's possible that the original intention was to produce subsequent editions, updated annually with such supplements. This wasn't to be. But reportedly by 1927 White had a second volume already written, described by Calvin as "a kind of second edition to his old one, bringing the game from 1907 down to date, and if there is anybody anywhere in sports circles who thinks enough of what has gone before to help Sol print his record, he will be glad to hear from them."<sup>41</sup>

Over the next decade White produced a series of columns and stand-alone articles for eastern African American newspapers, mostly the *New York Age* and *New York Amsterdam News*. It could be that some of these pieces were drawn from the manuscript mentioned by Calvin. In a 1936 letter, Schlichter suggested that White go "see the Editor of your colored paper and try to sell him a history of colored baseball which you could write either as a single article or as a series. Except for recent years you have all the data in the book and I would be glad to furnish the cuts and pictures. It looks to me to be worth trying."<sup>42</sup> He was evidently unaware that White had already been writing such articles for years. As late as 1940 White was still consulting Schlichter about "the feasibility of another brochure with a more elaborate discussion, or rather, comments about the teams, managers and players, the 'game' and the pertinence of the business..."<sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile the reputation of his little 1907 book grew, even as actual extant copies of it dwindled. By 1927, Calvin was writing that “Sol’s personal copy of his own book is the only one he knows about and it would be a historical tragedy if this should be lost.”<sup>44</sup> In 1936 H. Walter Schlichter had two copies left. He agreed to send one to White, who had evidently requested it, but “[t]he other one I will not part with at any price.”<sup>45</sup> In 1953 a collector of baseball guides placed an appeal in the *Pittsburgh Courier*, hoping that copies of White’s book “may be in the hands of your subscribers who are no longer interested in them.”<sup>46</sup> The sportswriter Malcolm Poindexter, Jr., penned a column about White’s book in 1954. “Few copies are available today,” he wrote, “but in the text is a wealth of information about the beginning of professional baseball....What a pity such great heritage is lost in the pages of a few volumes.”<sup>47</sup>

Despite its lack of availability (until recent decades) *Sol White’s Official Base Ball Guide* has exerted a tremendous influence on our understanding of the early black game. Its value was already clear when it was first published. Promotional copy that ran in both the *Indianapolis Freeman* and the *Baltimore Afro-American* was pretty accurate:

“Sol White’s ‘History of Colored Base Ball’ is just off the press. It is unique, in that no history of the popular pastime, as played by colored men, has ever before been written. No one knows more of the progress of the game better than he, and he writes most entertainingly. In addition to the full tale of the progress of the game there are nearly a hundred

half-tone pictures of old-time and present-time colored players, including all of the present-day celebrities, and a number of groups of the prominent teams of this and past years.”<sup>48</sup>

The ad copy rightly concentrated on the book's visual content, which is considerable (if overstated; the book actually contained 57 images rather than “nearly a hundred”). While some of the photographs here circulated independently of White's book, most of them are known only from these pages. The formal studio photographs of the Cuban Giants players in suits and ties are particularly valuable, historically speaking; for many of them, these are the only known images other than an appearance or two in team photos.

The book carried a significance beyond the photographs, of course. It has helped shape our perceptions of early black baseball, especially in its focus on the Cuban Giants as the first African American professional team. While it's hard to establish particulars in all cases, professionalism of one sort or another certainly antedated the Cubans. Philadelphia, for example, was said in 1882 to possess a “nine of colored professionals,” most likely the Orions, one of the Cuban Giants' predecessors. The 1883 St. Louis Black Stockings were called “colored professionals,” as were the 1883 Gordon Club of Chicago and the (black) 1884 Metropolitan Base Ball Club of New York.<sup>49</sup> As was the case with white baseball, it seems probable that professionalism grew in stages, and that there was no hard clear line dividing the amateur from the professional era. In general, Sol White

exhibits a (pardonable) bias toward events in the northeast, with a few nods to Chicago. There's no mention of the 1886 Southern League of Colored Base Ballists, which preceded the National Colored League by one year as the first Negro league.<sup>50</sup>

Another notable characteristic of White's *Guide* is its complete lack of statistics. It's without a doubt the most striking difference between this *Official Base Ball Guide* and the Reach and Spalding guides, which were *mainly* statistical compendia. The vast majority of Giants games were not league games, of course, and even the International League of 1906 and the National Association of 1907-1909, with very limited schedules of championship games, never published any individual playing statistics. One guesses that, as captain, manager, and sometime player, White simply didn't have time to compile statistical summaries from score sheets, and didn't have the money to hire someone to do it for him. The best he could do was to reprint box scores that were more or less identical to the box scores that appeared in the *Philadelphia Item* and other daily papers. Due to lack of resources and (to some extent) lack of interest on the part of team owners, problems with statistics would afflict African American baseball as long as the color line held, eliciting many complaints from fans, journalists, and players themselves.

It might be an exaggeration to claim that before *Sol White's Official Base Ball Guide*, there was no such thing as black sports-writing—but it would not be too much of one. Even in the black press, published material about African American baseball teams and players was largely confined to box scores, game

accounts, and brief items. After White published his book, everything began to change. Black baseball journalism became an identifiable genre. The *Indianapolis Freeman* led the way, opening its pages to the likes of Dave Wyatt, Cary B. Lewis, James H. Smith, and Harry Daniels, who wrote analyses and prognostications, picked all-star teams, and argued with each other. The *New York Age*, *Chicago Defender*, and *Indianapolis Ledger* followed suit, pointing toward the golden age of black sportswriting in the 1920s, when nationally-distributed papers like the *Defender* and the *Pittsburgh Courier* devoted two or three whole pages to sports each week.

If Sol White's book was unique in its day, it remained unique for decades afterwards. There were a few pamphlets published about black baseball, along with programs, some short-lived magazines, and yearbooks, and of course there was the voluminous newspaper coverage over the years. But there were no *books* solely devoted to the Negro leagues and African American diamond exploits—nothing with the scope and ambition of White's history, nothing that brought all the threads together and gave them shape and meaning the way he did. There were experts and scribes (Dave Wyatt, W. Rollo Wilson, Frank Young, Halley Harding, and many more) who could have produced a whole library of books, on baseball and other sports, if they'd been given the chance. But it wasn't until the 1970s that Sol White's magnum opus would at last find companions to sit beside it on the bookshelf of black baseball history.

Sol White would live to see Jackie Robinson finally break the color line in 1947. He would live to see Larry Doby and Roy Campanella and Don Newcombe follow Robinson. He would live to see the arrival of Minnie Miñoso and Willie Mays, before he finally passed away in 1955. While we have no record of his thoughts about these momentous events, we should count ourselves fortunate that history did preserve his detailed accounts of baseball behind the color line from a half-century before.

durham, north carolina  
february, 2014

### Notes

1 Letter: Sol White to H. Walter Schlichter, 15 January 1940. See Frank Ceresi and Carol McMains, "Sol White's 'History of Colored Base Ball,'" The National Pastime Museum. <http://www.thenationalpastimemuseum.com/article/sol-whites-1907-history-colored-base-ball> Accessed February 28, 2014.

2 W.E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903; New York: Library of America, 1986), 3.

3 "Notes and Comments," *The Sporting Life*, September 5, 1888, 2. On professionalism see note 46 below.

4 Floyd J. Calvin, "Sol White Recalls," *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 12, 1927, Second Section, 4

5 1870 and 1880 United States Census.

6 Johnson actually attended Marietta College—it's unclear whether he was captaining the school's baseball team or, as one 1927 article about Sol put it, "a hick town club" (Calvin, op. cit.).

7 Calvin, op. cit.; "Sol White Recalls," *New York Age*, December 27, 1930, 6.

8 Statistics from Baseball-Reference.com.

9 "Base Ball—Some Midwinter Gossip Concerning the Sport," *Wheeling Register*, December 1, 1887, 4.

10 "Why Discriminate? An Appeal to the Tri-State League By a Colored Player," *The Sporting Life*, March 14, 1888, 5.

11 "Bellaire," *Wheeling Register*, May 27, 1888, 3.

12 "For the Colored Championship," *New York Sun*, August 27, 1888, 3.

13 Calvin, op. cit. On the York Colored Monarchs see Michael E. Lomax, *Black Baseball Entrepreneurs, 1860-1901: Operating By Any Means Necessary* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 108-112; on the revived Pittsburgh Keystones, see "Morris-Madden," *Cleveland Gazette*, April 16, 1892, 1; on the New York Semiprofessional League and the Connecticut State League, both of 1891, see Lomax, op. cit., 116-117.

14 Calvin, op. cit. Like much of Calvin's article, this is most likely Sol White's explanation of the co-op system, which Calvin either transcribed or paraphrased.

15 "The Columbia Club's Colored Champions," *Illinois Record*, March 18, 1899, 3.

16 "Cuban X-Giants Win First Game," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 13, 1903, 14;

17 "Phila. Giants Trim Cuban X-Giants, Foster Fanning 18 Men at Plate," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 2, 1904, 6; "Phila. Giants Win Championship," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 4, 1904, 12.

18 Calvin, op. cit.

19 On the 1905 Philadelphia Giants, see Phil S. Dixon, *American Baseball Chronicles: The 1905 Philadelphia Giants* (Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge, 2006).

20 Calvin, op. cit.

21 "A New Local League," *The Sporting Life*, April 14, 1907, 17.

22 "Ball Player Drops Dead," *Washington Post*, July 2, 1908, 8.

23 Sol White, "Sol White Recalls," *New York Age*, January 10, 1931, 6.

24 Lester A. Walton, "Baseball Notes," *New York Age*, April 15, 1909, 6; Lester A. Walton, "Baseball Notes," *New York Age*, April 22, 1909, 6.

25 Walton, "Sol. White to Manage Royal Giants," *New York Age*, May 5, 1910, 6.

26 Harry Daniels, "Season of 1910 in the East," *Indianapolis Freeman*, January 7, 1911, 7.

27 Lester A. Walton, "Philadelphia Giants Disband," *New York Age*, August 3, 1911, 6.

28 "Lloyd Succeeds White as Manager," *New York Age*, September 14, 1911, 6.

29 "El Juego de Ayer," *El Mundo*, January 30, 1912, 9.

30 "Wholesale Release of Players in Cuba," *New York Age*, February 15, 1912, 6.

31 "Making Ready for Baseball in the East," *Indianapolis Freeman*, March 16, 1912, 7.

32 Calvin, op. cit.

33 "Poles Quits Lincolns and Joins Royals," *New York Age*, June 13, 1912, 6; "Will Have One of the Strongest Colored Teams," *Indianapolis Freeman*, April 26, 1913, 7; Calvin, op. cit.

34 "Sol White to Have Fast Baseball Nine," *Chicago Defender*, February 2, 1918, 10.

35 Allen H. Dorsey, "White Lead Fears," *Cleveland Gazette*, June 24, 1922, 2; "Browns Open Next Sunday," *Cleveland Gazette*, April 12, 1924, 1.

36 "The Browns Win Both," *Cleveland Gazette*, July 19, 1924, 2.

37 W. Rollo Wilson, "Eastern Snapshots," *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 27, 1924, 12.

38 J. M. Howe, "Sport Sidelights," *Philadelphia Tribune*, April 17, 1926, 11.

39 W. Rollo Wilson, "Eastern Snapshots," *Pittsburgh Courier*, April 17, 1926, 14. Hugo's "might somnambulist" was Napoleon.

40 "Newark Stars Quit Eastern League, Players Disbanded," *Pittsburgh Courier*, July 10, 1926, 14.

41 Calvin, op. cit.

42 Letter, H. Walter Schlichter to Sol White, 18 July 1936. Jerry Malloy, compiler, *Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball, with Other Documents on the Early Black Game 1886-1936* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 157.

43 Ceresi and McMains, op. cit.

44 Calvin, op. cit.

45 Letter, Schlichter to White, op. cit.

46 William Puckner, "Collector of Baseball Guides Makes Appeal," *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 21, 1953, 11.

47 Malcolm Poindexter, Jr., "Sports I View," *Philadelphia Tribune*, May 3, 1954, 11.

48 Untitled item, *Indianapolis Freeman*, May 18, 1907, 7; "History of Base Ball," *Baltimore Afro-American*, May 11, 1907, 4.

49 "Notes," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, July 22, 1882, 5; "Red and Black," *The Inter Ocean* (Chicago), June 19, 1883, 5; "Local Gossip," *New York Globe*, March 8, 1884, 3. See also Lomax, op. cit., 49.

50 "A Colored Base Ball League," *Charleston News and Courier*, April 8, 1886, 8.





## Notes

### Who's Who in the Sol White Guide

**Page 8: "S. K. GOVERN"** A native of St. Croix in the Danish West Indies, Stanislaus Kostka Govern (1854-1924) came to the United States as a teenager and enjoyed varied careers as a head waiter, actor, journalist, and baseball manager. He was heavily involved in black baseball for at least a decade, working with the Manhattan Base Ball Club of Washington, one of the Cuban Giants' predecessor clubs, from 1881 to 1884, the Cuban Giants themselves from 1885 to 1889, the National Colored League (as a director) in 1887, and the Big Gorhams in 1891. See Rory Costello, "S. K. Govern," SABR Baseball Biography Project. (<http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/af52b171>)

**Page 12: "BEN HOLMES"** Benjamin F. Holmes was born in King and Queen County, Virginia, in 1858, and began his baseball career with the Douglas club of Washington, D. C., in 1875. By 1883 he was playing third base for the Washington Manhattans, another of the Cuban Giants' predecessor teams. "A fair batsman and good base runner," in 1885 he became the Cuban Giants' first captain, and continued to play for them through 1890 ("Good Game Promised by the Reorganized Cuban Giants," *Trenton Evening Times*, May 9, 1886, 8). At the age of 88 he was a guest of honor at the 1946 Black World Series, and furnished a baseball used in the 1888 black championship series to be thrown out by Joe Louis as the ceremonial first pitch ("Doby Hits Homer In Second Game; Eagles Win 7-4," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, September 28, 1946, 12).

**Page 14: "GEORGE WILLIAMS"** George L. Williams (1864-1918) played for the Washington Manhattans and Philadelphia Orions before joining the Cuban Giants in 1885. The following year he became their captain. Before the 1887 season he was approached by both the Minneapolis Millers of the Northwestern League and the Oswego Starchboxes of the International League, but turned them down to remain with the Cuban Giants through the 1889 season ("Base Ball Gossip," *Trenton Evening Times*, February 1, 1887, 1). Like many of his teammates he moved to the York

Monarchs of the Eastern Interstate League in 1890, winning the batting title with a .386 average. He spent 1891 with the Big Gorhams, then in 1892 joined the Philadelphia police department, becoming its first black detective in 1909. In 1918 he was shot and killed in the line of duty ("Detective Slain Battling Thugs—George L. Williams, Former Cuban Giants Baseball Player, Is Shot," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 10, 1918, 6).

**Page 16: "WILLIAM WHYTE"** William T. Whyte (1860-1936) served as pitcher and outfielder for the St. Louis Black Stockings and Boston Resolutes before joining the Cuban Giants in 1885. He stayed with them through 1893 (spending 1890 with the York Monarchs, where he went 11-5 with a 3.02 ERA in the Eastern Interstate League), and retired to Trenton, New Jersey, after that.

**Page 18: "CLARENCE WILLIAMS"** One of the most important figures in early black baseball, Clarence Williams (1866-1934) played professional baseball from 1882 until 1913, from age 16 to age 47. In between he played for the Cuban Giants, York Monarchs, Big Gorhams, Cuban X-Giants, Philadelphia Giants, and Paterson Smart Set, and took several winter trips to Cuba. In his youth was regarded as "a heavy batsman, fine base runner and good catcher" ("Good Game Promised," op. cit.). He was very popular, known both for his comedy coaching and for his quick temper. Even in his mid-forties, at the end of his career, Clarence Williams was still considered "a strong and heady baseball player, in the game every minute, and despite his weight and age, is still able to give a strong account of himself in a game" ("Clarence Williams' Clan Too Fast for the Locals," *Middletown Daily Times-Press*, June 29, 1912, 8).

**Page 20: "GEORGE PARAGO"** Born in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1861, George A. Parago first played professionally as a first baseman and catcher for the Keystone Athletic club of Philadelphia, then became a pitcher/outfielder for the Cuban Giants, where he stayed through the 1888 season. He was praised for "making some very difficult catches" in the outfield "with great style and ease" ("Good Game Promised," op. cit.).

**Page 22: "ARTHUR THOMAS (Deceased)"** A very tall player (6'4", according to Sol White), Arthur Thomas (1864-1895) first caught for the Manhattan Base Ball Club of Washington, D. C., at the age of 15 in 1880. He joined the West End club of Long Branch, New Jersey, in 1881 and 1882, and in 1883 rejoined the Manhattans under S. K. Govern before moving with Govern to the Cuban Giants in 1885. With the York Monarchs in 1890, Thomas hit .333 and led the league with 26 doubles and 11 triples, and finished second in slugging percentage with .567. After leaving big-time baseball Thomas settled in Trenton, New Jersey, where he caught for and captained both black and white semipro teams. He died in Trenton of consumption (tuberculosis) at the age of 30 on August 8, 1895 ("Died," *Trenton Evening Times*, August 11, 1895, 5; "Observations from the Grandstand," *Trenton Evening Times*, August 9, 1896, 3).

**Page 24: "WILLIAM MALONE"** William H. Malone (1867-1917) first played professionally for the Philadelphia Pythians of the National Colored League in 1887 before joining the Cuban Giants in 1888 and 1889, the York Monarchs in 1890, the Big Gorhams in 1891, and the Page Fence Giants in 1895.

**Page 26: "BENJ. BOYD"** A veteran of the original Cuban Giants, Benjamin F. Boyd was born in Maryland in 1858, and started his baseball career in Washington, D. C., in 1874. "A good general player" and versatile infielder, he joined S. K. Govern's Manhattan Base Ball Club in 1883, and played for the Cuban Giants (1885-1889), the York Monarchs (1890), and Big Gorhams (1891).

**Page 28: "JOHN FRYE (Deceased)"** When he appeared briefly for the Reading Actives of the Interstate Association late in the 1883 season, John H. Frye (1864-1904) became the fifth known African American to play in organized baseball in the United States. He spent most of his career with the Cuban Giants, including a stint of three straight years in organized baseball from 1889 to 1891. He also played for white teams, including Lewiston of the 1886 Pennsylvania State Association. Frye

retired from baseball after the 1896 season and moved to Culpeper County, Virginia, where he died on June 10, 1904 (“Bits for the Fans,” *Harrisburg Telegraph*, June 11, 1904, 8).

**Page 30: “HARRY JOHNSON”** Born in 1860, he played semipro ball in Washington, D. C., before coming to the Cuban Giants. He was described as “a second Dunlap, covering more ground than ever was seen by any colored 2d baseman on the road, fair batsman, good base runner, and expert thrower” (“Good Game Promised,” op. cit.). He played for the Cuban Giants from 1886 through 1890.

**Page 32: “JOHN M. BRIGHT”** A co-owner of the Cuban Giants beginning in 1886, John M. Bright (1856-1913) took over sole ownership upon the death of Walter I. Cook in 1888. Sol White had a mixed opinion of Bright. In 1929 he wrote that he would “class Bright as the leading spirit of his day in keeping the game before the public,” but also called him “extremely selfish” and a sharp dealer (“The Grand Old Game,” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 18, 1929, 17).

**Page 34: “POP WATKINS”** John McCreary “Pop” Watkins (1870?-1924) was a legendary figure in early black baseball circles. His playing career petered out after he suffered a broken leg in a game in Oil City, Pennsylvania, in 1907. Watkins became known for two things: his comedic coaching, and his training of young players. For many years he ran a team called the Havana Red Sox, which played mostly in upstate New York, and served as the proving grounds for a number of future Negro league stars. See “‘Pop’ Watkins Is World’s Greatest Base Ball Scout,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, July 13, 1923, 15, and “‘Pop’ Watkins Dies in South,” *Watertown Daily Times*, February 26, 1924, 18.

**Page 36: “J. GARCIA (Deceased)”** White originally identified this player as “A. Garcia,” but his name was in fact John Garcia. He was a Cuban immigrant and quite possibly the only genuine Cuban ever to play for the Cuban Giants. On October 1, 1904, during a Cuban Giants game against a team called the Woodhulls at Kings Park in Jamaica, Long Island, caught a

foul ball, then collapsed. His teammates immediately carried him across the street to St. Mary's Hospital, but he was pronounced dead on arrival, apparently of heart failure. His death was front page news in the *New York Times*. Within a few days it emerged that he had had two wives, one black and one white. They unaware of each other's existence until both tried to claim his body ("Caught the Ball and Died," *New York Times*, October 2, 1904, 1; "Two Claimants for Body," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, October 7, 1904, 19).

**Page 39: "CHASE LYONS"** He pitched from 1899 to 1905, mostly for Chicago teams.

**Page 41: "CUBAN X-GIANTS Season, 1905"** The image from the original edition has been replaced by a (much clearer) postcard version of the same photograph. Standing L to R: Dangerfield Talbert, Ray Wilson, Edward B. Lamar, Robert Jordan, John Patterson, Clarence Williams; Kneeling L to R: Frank Grant, Bobby Winston, Johnny Hill, John Nelson, Harry Buckner.

**Page 44: "E. B. LAMAR, Jr."** Floyd J. Calvin, presumably getting his information from Sol White, called Edward B. Lamar "not a sportsman, but merely a follower. His job was principally that of bookkeeping." His brother was the catcher Pete Lamer (the two brothers seem to have spelled their names differently), who enjoyed a couple of very brief cups of coffee with the Chicago Cubs, and also played a number of years in the minors and on the semipro circuit ("Ed Hughes' Column," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 13, 1935, D2). E. B. Lamar was one of the most important baseball ambassadors between the United States and Cuba. He was the first to organize regular trips to Cuba by black teams, beginning in 1900 and continuing into the 1920s. He also booked and managed several traveling Cuban teams in the U.S. Sol White later wrote that Lamar "was held in the highest regard by the players ("The Grand Old Game," op.cit.).

**Page 46: "RAY WILSON"** Ray Wilson and Sol White knew each other well. They were teammates with the Cuban X-Giants, and Wilson played for White's Philadelphia Giants in 1907 and 1908. White would

later describe Wilson as “tall and well built, standing about six-two in his sox [sic]. In playing first base he was graceful, was good on ground balls and had a reach the fans used to talk about, and are still talking about” (“Old-Time Baseball Players, *New York Amsterdam News*, March 6, 1929, 6). He captained the Cuban X-Giants for several years, and in 1909 succeeded White as captain and manager of the Philadelphia Giants.

**Page 48: “JOHN NELSON”** Though he is fairly obscure even among historians, John Nelson performed at the top level of black professional baseball for two decades, from his start with the New York Gorhams in 1887 to his last appearance for the Genuine Cuban Giants in 1908. Nelson and Sol White are the only two players known to have appeared in both the National Colored League of 1887 and the National Association of Colored Baseball Clubs of 1907 and 1908.

**Page 50: “JOHN HILL”** A light-hitting glove man, Hill played from 1900 to 1910 for a number of east coast teams. Best known as a third baseman for the Cuban X-Giants, he accompanied them on two trips to Cuba. He was killed during a fight with a companion in Philadelphia in 1922 (Untitled item, *Chicago Defender*, October 7, 1922, 10).

**Page 52: “W. S. PETERS”** The original first baseman of the Chicago Unions, William S. Peters (1867-1933) also served as their manager from 1890 to 1900. Frank Leland took over the club in 1901 and changed its name to Union Giants; three years later Peters started his own Union Giants club, sparking a legal battle between Leland and Peters that resulted in Leland renaming his team the Leland Giants. Peters ran his Union Giants, mostly as a traveling team in the Midwest, until he was struck by a car and killed in 1933 (*Frank Leland's Chicago Giants Base Ball Club*, op. cit., 2-4; “Fight for the Union Giants, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 7, 1904, 8; “Peters, Baseball Man, in Fatal Accident,” *Chicago Defender*, April 8, 1933, 3).

**Page 54: “HARRY HYDE”** Harry Hyde played for the Chicago Unions and Union Giants from 1896 to 1906, then in a couple of games for the St. Paul Gophers in 1907.

**Page 56: "DAVID WYATT"** Dave Wyatt (1874-1950) played and managed in the 1890s and 1900s, but he made his greatest impact in journalism. Though his work for a range of African American newspapers in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was never collected into a book, he was probably Sol White's closest rival as a writer and authority on early black baseball. Wyatt was also closely involved in the 1901 attempt to smuggle Charlie Grant into the American League as a Native American (see page 93).

**Page 60: "ROBERT JACKSON"** Robert Jackson caught for the Chicago Unions from 1896 to 1900.

**Page 68: "PHILADELPHIA GIANTS. Champions. Season, 1905."** Standing L to R: Harry Smith, Harry Moore, Emmett Bowman, Sol White, Tom Washington, Danny McClellan; Seated middle L to R: Grant Johnson, Charlie Grant, H. Walter Schlichter, Rube Foster, Pete Hill; Seated front Bill Monroe, James Booker.

**Page 72: "H. WALTER SCHLICHTER"** A sportswriter for the *Philadelphia Item* (see ad on page 62), Henry Walter Schlichter (1866-1944) was a boxing promoter and co-founder of the Philadelphia Giants with Sol White and Harry Smith. In 1909, after a disagreement with White, Schlichter took over sole control of the team, and White was blacklisted by the National Association. They eventually reconciled and kept up a correspondence for many years. White would later write warmly about Schlichter, praising him as "my ideal of an owner of a colored baseball team" (Sol White, "The Grand Old Game," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 18, 1929, 17).

**Page 74: "CHAS. Kid CARTER"** He pitched from 1900 to 1906 for east coast teams, including the Cuban X-Giants, Philadelphia Giants, and Brooklyn Royal Giants.

**Page 76: "ANDREW (Rube) FOSTER"** A colossal figure in African American baseball history, Rube Foster (1879-1930) was the most celebrated black pitcher at the time White was putting his *Guide* together.

Foster would go on to found one of the great black baseball dynasties, the Chicago American Giants, and in 1920 he organized the first truly national Negro league. In 1981 he was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

**Page 78: "CHARLES GRANT"** Most famous as the player John McGraw tried to sneak into the major leagues as a Native American (see page 93), Grant was a fine defensive second baseman but only a fair hitter. Sol White would later remember him as an especially sure-handed fielder. "I will give any 'fan' a good ten-cent cigar," he wrote, "who will call my attention or, rather, recall my memory to an error on a ground ball or a muffed fly by Charley Grant" ("Old-Time Baseball Players," *New York Amsterdam News*, March 6, 1929, 8).

**Page 80: "J. P. HILL"** A mainstay of three of the greatest blackball teams (Sol White's Philadelphia Giants of 1904-1907, the Chicago Leland Giants of 1908-1910, and the Chicago American Giants of 1911-1918), John Preston Hill (1882-1951) was a celebrated slugger and outfielder. He previewed the coming lively ball era with the Detroit Stars in 1919, knocking 28 home runs over a cozy right field fence in just 80 games, with 16 of them coming in 38 games against top black teams. He was also an accomplished manager. In 2006 he was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

**Page 82: "DAN McCLELLAN"** This lefthander pitched in fast company from 1903 to 1913, spending his best years with the Philadelphia Giants. In the 1920s he managed another team called the Philadelphia Giants (with no connection to the great team of 1902-1911), which actually played most of its games in New England.

**Page 84: "EMMETT BOWMAN"** A truly versatile utility player who pitched and played eight positions for the Cuban X-Giants, Philadelphia Giants, and Brooklyn Royal Giants from 1905 through 1911. Sol White said of him in 1912: "I have put him in the box one day and placed him behind the bat the next against the strongest teams, and he showed up

equally strong in both departments. At any position on the infield he was sensational, and there was no better outfielder in the country." Bowman died of tuberculosis in 1912 at the age of 26 ("Ballplayer Bowman Dead," *New York Age*, March 7, 1912, 6; Wyatt, "Death in the Game," op. cit.).

**Page 88: "JAS. BOOKER"** James "Pete" Booker (1886-1922) was a catcher and first baseman for several top teams from 1905 to 1917.

**Page 90: "PHILADELPHIA GIANTS. Season, 1902."** Back L to R; Farrell (first name unknown), John Nelson, Sol White, Kid Carter, William Warrick. Middle L to R: W. Smith, Frank Grant, H. Walter Schlichter, William Bell, Harry Smith, Andrew Payne. Front L to R: Day (first name unknown), Pete Burns.

**Page 96: "GRANT (Home Run) JOHNSON"** Grant U. Johnson (1872-1963) was the best everyday player in black baseball from 1895 to 1909, and perhaps the first great black ballplayer who never played in a white league. In 1894 he became "Home Run Johnson" by clouting 60 round-trippers for the independent (and racially mixed) Findlay Sluggers. In 1895 he and Bud Fowler, the team's two black players, moved to Adrian, Michigan, to found the Page Fence Giants—and Johnson would spend the rest of his career in the blackball world. For the next 15 years, if you wanted to build a championship-caliber African American ball club, you pretty much had to get Johnson, or it wasn't going to work. His lengthy resumé of success includes the 1899 Chicago Columbia Giants; the 1903 Cuban X-Giants, recognized colored champions; the legendary Philadelphia Giants of 1905; the champion Brooklyn Royal Giants of 1908 and 1909; the 1910 Leland Giants; and the great Lincoln Giants of 1913—not to mention the pennant-winning Habana clubs of the 1908/09 and 1911/12 Cuban League, which Johnson captained.

**Page 98: "JOHN W. CONNOR"** John Wilson Connor (1875-1926) owned the Royal Café, a private club and cabaret (see ad on page 98). In 1903 he took over the Niantic Base Ball Club in Brooklyn Heights; in 1904 he renamed them the Royal Giants, presumably to tie in with his

other business. After the 1912 season he sold his interest in the Royals to Nat C. Strong, who had cornered the eastern independent baseball market ("Connor Retires from Baseball," *New York Age*, March 13, 1913, 6). But in 1919 he came back to baseball with a bang, teaming up with fellow magnate Barron D. Wilkins to finance a reorganization of the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants that made them into a powerhouse ("Saloonmen Become Baseball Promoters," *New York Age*, April 26, 1919, 1).

**Page 100: "ROBERT FOOTES"** A catcher for the Chicago Unions and Union Giants from 1895 to 1903, Footes moved to the east coast for the last part of his career, playing for the Philadelphia Giants and Brooklyn Royal Giants from 1903 to 1909.

**Page 101: "WM. S. MONROE"** An on-field comedian, inveterate trash-talker, and (incidentally) brilliant infielder at three positions, Bill Monroe (1878-1915) was always the focal point of attention on any team he joined. As Sol White later wrote, Monroe "was a natural comedian. He would pull some of the funniest stunts on the ball field you ever witnessed. He had a voice like a fog-horn, which could be heard blocks from the ball park. When not doing funny business, he would be having verbal spats with the bleachers or umpire" ("Our Baseball Leagues," *New York Amsterdam News*, February 20, 1929, 6).

**Page 102: "GEO. (CHAPPIE) JOHNSON"** George Johnson, Jr. (1877-1949), commonly known as "Chappie" or "Rat," hailed from Bellaire, Ohio, the same hometown as Sol White. He was a defensive specialist and an early adopter of shin guards. Johnson caught at the highest levels of black baseball from 1896 to 1915, and organized barnstorming teams for many years after that.

**Page 103: "WM. HOLLAND"** A lefthanded pitcher from 1894 to 1896 for the Chicago Unions, Page Fence Giants, Algona Brownies, and Brooklyn Royal Giants.

**Page 104: "HARRY BUCKNER"** Harry E. Buckner (1872-1938) was an outfielder/pitcher from 1896 to 1918, a heavy hitter who played

several winters in Cuba. His brother William "Doc" Buckner was the trainer for the Chicago White Sox for many years, and Harry would go into the same line of work, training the Milwaukee Brewers of the American Association in the 1930s.

**Page 106: "Le Flor de Manuel Camps"** This is an advertisement for the tobacco business of Manuel Camps, owner of the Cuban Stars (see page 107).

**Page 108: "MANUEL CAMPS"** A Cuban immigrant and cigar manufacturer, Manuel Camps (1868-1943) collaborated with E. B. Lamar to found the Cuban Stars of Santiago de Cuba in 1906. In doing so he signed Cuban players away from Abel Linares and helped signal the death knell of the All-Cubans teams that Linares had been bringing to the U.S. for several years. Camps retained ownership of the Cuban Stars teams through 1909, and also served as an officer of the National Association of Colored Base Ball Clubs of the United States and Cuba.

**Page 110: "LUIS BUSTAMANTE"** One of the more celebrated Cuban players of the 1900s, Bustamante was a cannon-armed, slick-fielding shortstop who played from 1901 to 1912 in the Cuban League and 1904 to 1913 in the United States. The *Harrisburg Patriot* opined in 1906 that "Bustamante, the little shortstop of the Cuban nine, is one of the best players seen in the position in this city for a long time and if he does not get into faster company it will be because of race prejudice" ("Chat About the Tri-State Players," op. cit.). He was part of the inaugural class inducted into the Cuban baseball hall of fame in 1939.

**Page 112: "PEDRO MEDINA"** Medina was actually a pitcher. He went 7-8 over three seasons in the Cuban League and 2-5 in blackball competition for the Cuban Stars in 1906-07.

**Page 116: "JOHN W. PATTERSON"** In a professional career that lasted from 1890 to 1908, John Patterson (1872-1940) played for the Page Fence Giants, the Columbia Giants of Chicago (which he also managed), the Chicago Union Giants, Philadelphia Giants, and Cuban X-Giants, and

also played in Cuba. James H. Smith, a former teammate, called Patterson a “good hitter and excellent base runner,” and “one of the brainiest and shrewdest leaders of any team of color” (“The Past and Present in Baseball,” *Indianapolis Freeman*, May 28, 1910, 7). He retired to Battle Creek, Michigan, where he coached the Battle Creek High School baseball team to the state championship, then became a policeman in the Battle Creek Police Department. Patterson died in 1940 as a result of injuries suffered while trying to capture an escaped mental patient (“‘Pat’ Patterson Is Dead,” *Chicago Defender*, September 7, 1940, 20).

**Page 118: “WM. BROWN”** The traveling manager of the Chicago Union Giants and Leland Giants from 1902 to 1906, praised by James H. Smith for his geniality and “good leadership” (“The Past and Present in Baseball,” op. cit.). Dave Wyatt called Brown “the best handler of ball players that I have seen yet. He was a strict disciplinarian and commanded the respect of all players, and his knowledge of the traits of different individuals went a long ways towards solving knotty problems” (David Wyatt, “Sparks from the Diamond,” *Indianapolis Freeman*, January 22, 1910, 7).

**Page 120: “BERT WILLIAMS”** A vaudeville performer, singer, and comedian, Bert Williams (1874-1922) became famous as half of the celebrated “Williams & Walker” duo. Like later entertainers such as Louis Armstrong and Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Williams was a fan and patron of black baseball. In 1909 he was scheduled to umpire a benefit game that Sol White was helping to organize on behalf of Bud Fowler, who was suffering from a serious illness (Lester A. Walton, “In the Sporting World,” *New York Age*, March 25, 1909, 6).

**Page 122: “FRANK GRANT”** Probably the greatest everyday black ballplayer before Home Run Johnson, Ulysses Franklin Grant (1865-1937) played six consecutive years in organized baseball, a record for an avowedly black player that would last for six decades. Despite a smallish frame (at 5’7”), 155 pounds, “he was not of the strong rugged type,” as Sol White would later write) Grant was a fine hitter with some power,

compiling a career minor league average of .336 and a slugging percentage of .487. He was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006.

**Page 124: “W. W. WALKER”** Probably best-known as the brother of Moses Fleetwood Walker, Weldy Wilberforce Walker (1860-1937), like Fleet, played college baseball for Oberlin and Michigan and briefly appeared for the Toledo Blue Stockings of the American Association, a major league, in 1884. He played for a couple of minor league teams, and penned an open letter to the president of the Ohio State League (reproduced by White on page 94) protesting against the color line that had been newly drawn in that circuit. The Walker brothers later became exponents of the “Back-to-Africa” movement, and together published the book *Our Home Colony: A Treatise on the Past, Present, and Future of the Negro Race in America* (1908).

**Page 128: “THE ROYAL POINCIANA Base Ball Team of Palm Beach, Fla. Season, 1906.”** Standing L to R: Charlie Grant, Emmett Bowman; Kneeling L to R: Unknown, Sol White, Chappie Johnson, unknown, Bill Monroe, Rube Foster; Sitting L to R: Danny McClellan, unknown, unknown, Pete Hill. Beginning in the 1900s, two luxury resorts in Palm Beach, Florida, the Breakers Hotel and the Royal Poinciana Hotel, staged a series between rival black baseball teams every winter, usually from late January to March. They hired many of the top African American professionals in the country, sometimes importing whole teams from the north. The “Cocoanut League,” as it was known, lasted well into the 1920s.

**Page 130: “NAT C. STRONG”** The dominant independent baseball promoter on the east coast for thirty years, Nat C. Strong (1874-1935) controlled booking for many semipro venues and clubs as well as African American teams. In later years Sol White, who had ran afoul of Strong in 1909 when he managed an “outlaw” team, the Quaker Giants, would have some choice words about Strong: “For several years this mirage of colored baseball has lured owners of teams to streams of disaster and has stood by and laughed at their discomfiture. There is not a man in the country who has made as much money from colored ball-playing as Nat Strong, and yet

he is the least interested in its welfare" ("Our Baseball Leagues," *New York Amsterdam News*, January 23, 1929, 7).

**Page 132: "WORLD'S CHAMPIONS; PHILADELPHIA GIANTS. SEASON, 1906."** Standing L to R: William Binga, Ed Wilson?, Sol White, Rube Foster, Nate Harris. Kneeling L to R: Danny McClellan, Pete Hill, Pete Booker, Harry Moore, Emmett Bowman, Robert Jordan. The "World's Champion" jerseys seem to have been inspired by the failure of the World Series-winning New York Giants to answer Schlichter's challenge (see page 59).

**Page 135: "...ten Freihofer bread labels..."** Advertisement for the business owned by William Freihofer, president of the International League of Independent Professional Base Ball Clubs of 1906 and owner of the Philadelphia Professionals white semipro club; Freihofer Bakeries still exists today.

**Page 136: "A. A. COLEMAN"** It's unclear what business Coleman, "one of the fans," was advertising here. He was involved in baseball, and not just as a fan: in 1908 he organized a Philadelphia club called the Quaker Giants (not be confused with the 1906 club owned by the McMahons), which Sol White managed in 1909 ("They Are Now the Quaker Giants," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 31, 1908, 10).