

Negro Leaguers in Service

If they can fight and die on Okinawa and Guadalcanal in the South Pacific, they can play baseball in America.

Baseball Commissioner AB "Happy" Chandler

This edition of the Baseball in Wartime Newsletter is dedicated to all the African-American baseball players who served with the armed forces during World War II. More than 200 players from baseball's Negro Leagues entered military service between 1941 and 1945. Some served on the home front, while others were in combat in Europe, North Africa and the Pacific. These were the days of a segregated military and life was never easy for these men, but, for some, playing baseball made the summer days a little more bearable. Willard Brown and Leon Day (the only two black players on the team) helped the OISE All-Stars win the European Theater World Series in 1945, Joe Greene helped the 92nd Infantry Division clinch the Mediterranean Theater championship the same year, Jim Zapp was on championship teams in Hawaii in 1943 and 1944, and Larry Doby, Chuck Harmon, Herb Bracken and Johnny Wright were Midwest Servicemen League all-stars in 1944.

Records indicate that no professional players from the Negro Leagues lost their lives in service during WWII, but at least two semi-pro African-American ballplayers made the ultimate sacrifice. Grady Mabry died from wounds in Europe in December 1944, and Aubrey Stewart was executed by German SS troops the same month.

With Brown and Day playing for the predominantly white OISE All-Stars, Calvin Medley pitching for the Fleet Marine Force team in Hawaii, and Don Smith pitching alongside former major leaguers for the Greys in England, integrated baseball made its appearance during the war years and quite possibly paved the way for the signing of Jackie Robinson.



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Name	Team	Service	Location	Years
Wilbur Adkisson	Nashville Cubs	Army		1943-1946
James "Jimmie" Armstead	Baltimore Elite Giants	USAAF	USA	1942-1944
John S. Armstrong	Knoxville Giants	Army		1942-1946
Russell Awkard	Newark Eagles	Army	ETO	1941-1945
John "Red" Bailey	Toledo Crawfords	Army	USA	1942-
Eugene W. Baker	Kansas City Monarchs	Navy	USA	1943-1946
Hudson Baker	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1944
Dan Bankhead	Birmingham Black	Marine Corps	USA	1943-1946
John T. Banks	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1943-1946
Richard Banks	Newark Eagles	Navy		1942-1945
Richard A. "Skeeter" Banks	Richmond Giants	Army	MTO	1941-1945
John Q. "Bud" Barbee	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	MTO	1943-1945
Sam Barber	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		1942-1945
William "Bill" Barnes	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	USA	1942-1945
Charles Beatty	Philadelphia Stars	Navy		
Leonard G. Bender	Negro League Umpire	Navy		1943-1945
Jeremiah "Jerry" Bennett	Philadelphia Stars	Army	Pacific	1942-1945
Charlie Biot	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	Pacific	1942-1946
Dan Black	Baltimore Elite Giants	Navy	USA	1942-1943
Joe Black	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1943-1945
Garnett E. Blair	Homestead Grays	Army	USA	1942-1945
William "Bill" Blair, Jr.	Cincinnati Clowns	Army		1942-1945
Fred Blaylock	Homestead Grays	Army		1943-1946
James "Fireball" Bolden	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		1942-1946
Lyman Bostock, Sr	Birmingham Black	Army		1942-1945
Robert R. "Bob" Boyd	Memphis Red Sox	Army	USA	1944-1946
Herb Bracken	Cleveland Buckeyes	Navy	Pacific	1944-1945
Joe Bracy	Newark Eagles	Army		1942-1946
Willie Bradford	Negro League Umpire	Army		1942-1945
Luther H. "Lee" Branham	Birmingham Black	Army	USA	1943
Sherwood "Woody" Brewer	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	Pacific	1943-1946
Leroy Bridges	Atlanta Sunshine Stars	Army	Pacific	1941-1945
Barney Brown	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1943
James P. Brown	Newark Eagles	Army	ETO	1944-1945

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Name	Team	Service	Location	Years
Willard "Home Run" Brown	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	ETO	1944-1945
Allen "Lefty" Bryant	Kansas City Monarchs	Army		1941-1945
Chester Buchanan	Philadelphia Stars	Navy		1944-1945
Ernest Burke	Baltimore Elite Giants	Marine Corps	Pacific	1943-1946
Hewitt "Taft" Burton	Nebo Indians	Army	ETO	1942-1946
Bonnie Campbell	Fort Worth Black Giants	USAAF	USA	1942-1946
Matthew "Lick" Carlisle	Homestead Grays	Navy		1945
Andrew D. "A.D." Carpenter	San Antonio Indians	USAAF	USA	1943-1947
Elmer "Snake Eyes" Carter	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	ETO/MTO	1942-1945
Marlin "Mel" Carter	Memphis Red Sox	Coast Guard	Pacific	1943-1945
William J. "Chick" Carter	Philadelphia Stars	Navy	Pacific	1943-1946
James "Bus" Clarkson	Philadelphia Stars	Army	Pacific	1943-1945
Alton B. Clay	New York Black Yankees			1943-1946
Leroy W. "Zack" Clayton	New York Black Yankees	Navy	USA	
James C. "Fireball" Cohen	Indianapolis Clowns	Army	USA	1942-1946
Cecil E. Cole	Newark Eagles			1941-1946
Charles Coleman	Chicago American Giants			1940-1946
Jim Colzie	Indianapolis Clowns	USAAF	USA	1943-1945
Bill Cooper	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1943-1945
Lewis "Suitcase" Cotten	New Orleans Black Pelicans	Army		1941-1945
Lavell "Ox" Cowan	Kansas City Monarchs	USAAF		1943-1946
George Crowe	New York Black Yankees	Army	CBI	1944-1946
Jimmie Crutchfield	Chicago American Giants	Army		1943-1945
Willie Lee Curry	U.S. Pipe	Army		1943-1945
Leroy Dancy	Kansas City Monarchs			1944-1945
Ross "Satchel" Davis	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		1944-1945
Spencer Davis	New York Black Yankees	Army		1944-1945
William Davis	Philadelphia Stars	Army	USA	1945-1946
Leon Day	Newark Eagles	Army	ETO	1943-1946
Jim "Big Mitt" Dillon	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	ETO	1942-1946
Larry Doby	Newark Eagles	Navy	Pacific	1943-1945
Mahlon "Mal" Duckett	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1944-1945
Frank Duncan, Jr	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	ETO	1942-1943
Frank Duncan III	Kansas City Monarchs	Army		1942-1943

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Name	Team	Service	Location	Years
Jake Dunn	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1942-1945
Howard Easterling	Homestead Grays	Army		1944-1945
Jim Elam	Newark Eagles	Army		1944-1945
Lacy Ellerbe	Homestead Grays			1943-1944
Charlie England	Philadelphia Stars	Army	USA	1942-1946
Thomas "Monk" Favors	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1943-1946
Wilmer L. "Red" Fields	Homestead Grays	Army		1943-1946
Joe "Fireball" Fillmore	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1943-1946
Jake Flowers	New York Black Yankees	Army	ETO	1944
Willie Fordham	Philadelphia Meteors	Army	ETO	1945-1947
Carl Forney	Indianapolis Clowns	Navy		
Jonas Gaines	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	USA	1943-1945
Howard Gay	Seattle Steelheads	Navy	USA	
Jerry Gibson	Homestead Grays	Army		1944-1945
Louis "Sea Boy" Gillis	Atlanta Black Crackers			1943-1946
Eugene "Goon" Golden	Kansas City Monarchs	Navy	USA	1943-1946
David "Red" Gray	Atlanta Sunshine Stars	Navy	Pacific	1941-1945
Pancho "The Legend" Gray	New York Cubans	Army		1941-1944
William "Bill" Greason	Birmingham Black Barons	USMC	Pacific	
James "Joe" Greene	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	MTO	1943-1945
James Griffin	Houston Black Giants	Army		1942-1946
Bob Griffith	New York Black Yankees	Army	ETO	1944-1945
Acie "Skeet" Griggs	Atlanta Black Crackers	Army		1941-1943
Louis Gunn	Portsmouth Grays	Army	USA	1943-1945
Arthur M. Harding	Portsmouth Barons	Army	ETO	1945-1946
Harold "Hal" Hairston	Homestead Grays	USAAF	Pacific	1941-1945
Luther Hall	Tuscaloosa Red Sox	Army	Pacific	1942-1945
Paul Hardy	Birmingham Black Barons	Army		1943-1945
Chuck Harmon	Indianapolis Clowns	Navy	USA	1943-1945
David "Bill" Harvey	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1944-1945
Johnny Hayes	New York Black Yankees	Army	ETO	1944-1945
Curtis Henderson	New York Black Yankees	Army		1944-1945
George W. Henderson	SP Giants	Army	USA	1944-1946
Leo "Preacher" Henry	Indianapolis Clowns	Army		1944-1945

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Name	Team	Service	Location	Years
Eugene "Gene" Holmes	Ford Bruins	Navy	Pacific	1943-1946
Billy Horne	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		1945
Sammy T. Hughes	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	Pacific	1943-1946
Monford "Monte" Irvin	Newark Eagles	Army	ETO	1943-1945
Clarence "Pint" Israel	Homestead Grays	Army		1943-1945
Joseph Jackson	Cocoa Black Indians	Army		1943-1946
Willie Jefferson	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		1942-1943
Bobby Jenkins	Orlando All Stars	Army		1944-1946
Daniel "Lefty" Jenkins	Durham Eagles	Army	Pacific	1943-1946
Byron E. "Mex" Johnson	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	ETO	1943-1944
Clifford "Connie" Johnson	Kansas City Monarchs	Army		1943-1945
Eliga "Pete" Johnson	New York Black Yankees	Army		1943-1946
Josh "Brute" Johnson	New York Black Yankees	Army	ETO	1942-1945
Ralph Johnson	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1942-1944
Thomas F. "Tom" Johnson	Philadelphia Stars	Army	Pacific	1942-1945
Walter Johnson	Memphis Red Sox	Navy		1945-1946
James "Lefty" Jones	Baltimore Elite Giants			1944-1946
Larry "School Boy" Kimbrough	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1944-1945
Alton King	Detroit Wolves			1944-1945
Elmer "Go Get 'Em" Knox	St. Louis Stars	Navy	USA	1944-1945
John Westly Lee	Chicago American Giants	USAAF	Pacific	1942-1946
Rufus "Lew" Lewis	Newark Eagles	USAAF		1943-1945
Wilbur T. "Toney" Lothery	Detroit Brown Bombers	Navy		1944-1946
Frank Luster	Guthrie Black Spiders	Navy	USA	1943-1945
Fred Major	Newark Bees	Navy		1942-1945
Maxwell "Max" Manning	Newark Eagles	USAAF	ETO/Pacific	1942-1946
Ed Martin	Philadelphia Stars	Navy		1945-1946
Tom Martin	Homestead Grays	USAAF	USA	
Nath McClinic	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		
Clinton H. "Butch" McCord	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1944-1945
Walter McCoy	Chicago American Giants	Army	USA	1943-1944
George "Smoky" McFadden	Atlanta Black Crackers	Army		1942-1944
William McNeely	Birmingham Black Barons	Marine Corps	USA	1943-1946
Calvin Medley	New York Black Yankees	Marine Corps	Pacific	

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Gibby Meeks	Brooklyn Brown Dodgers	Army		1942-1946
John "Mule" Miles	Chicago American Giants	USAAF	USA	1942-1945
Ray "Junior" Miller	Birmingham Black Barons	Navy	USA	1944-1945
David "Pepsi Cola" Mobley	Indianapolis Clowns	Army	ETO	1943-1945
Herbert Moore	Detroit Black Sox	Army	USA	1943-1946
James "Red" Moore	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	ETO	1941-1945
Lawrence "Lefty" Napoleon	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	USA	1943-1946
Don Newcombe	Newark Eagles	Navy	USA	1943
John J. "Buck" O'Neil	Kansas City Monarchs	Navy	Pacific	1943-1945
Warren "Dadd" O'Neill	Detroit Stars	Marine Corps		1943-1946
Tom Parker	New York Cubans	Army		1944
Charlie Parks	Newark Eagles	Army	ETO	1943-1945
Andrew "Pat" Patterson	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1942-1945
Bertrand Patterson	Shreveport Black Sports	Army	Pacific	1943-1946
Oscar H. Pendleton	Indianapolis Clowns	Army	USA	1942-1946
Bill Perkins	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1944-1945
Howard Pernel	Detroit Stars	Army	USA	1942-1946
Leornard "Len" Pigg	Indianapolis Clowns	Army	Pacific	1940-1945
Luis G. Pillot	New York Black Yankees	Navy	USA	
Horace Pitts	Shreveport Black Sports	Army	ETO	1942-1946
Nathaniel "Nat" Pollard	Birmingham Black Barons	Army		1944-1945
David Pope	Pittsburgh Crawfords	Army	USA	1943-1946
Willie "Bill" Pope	Pittsburgh Crawfords	Army		1942-1944
Ernest Powell	San Antonio Black Sox	USAAF	USA	1945-1946
Frederick "Freddy" Powell	Mitchellville Tigers			1941-1945
William "Bill" Powell	Birmingham Black Barons	Army		1942-1945
Henry "Hank" Presswood	Kansas City Monarchs	Army		1945-1947
Laymon Ramsey	Atlanta Black Crackers	Marine Corps		1943-1945
William T. "Sonny" Randall	Homestead Grays	Navy	USA	1943-1946
Leonard Randolph	Memphis Red Sox	Army	USA	1942-1946
Robert Rankin	Greensboro Red Wings	Army		1943-1946
Ulysses A. "Hickey" Redd	Birmingham Black Barons	Army	Pacific	1941-1946
Porter Reed	Muskogee Cardinals	Army		1942-1945
Joe Reynolds	Detroit Speed Kings			1943-1946

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Johnny "Vacuum Sweeper" Reynolds, Jr.	Detroit Stars			1943-1946
Harry "Lefty" Rhodes	Chicago American Giants			1943-1945
Ben "Chico" Richardson	New Orleans Black Pelicans	Navy	Pacific	1943-1945
Earl Richardson	Newark Eagles	Navy		1944-1945
John F. "Hoss" Ritchey	Chicago American Giants	Army	ETO/Pacific	1943-1945
Samuel Roberts	East Point Bears	Navy	Pacific	1944-1946
Henry . "Slow" Robinson	Baltimore Elite Giants	Navy		1943-1945
Jack R. "Jackie" Robinson	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	USA	1942-1944
Robert "Bob" Romby	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army	USA	1943-1945
Leon Ruffin	Newark Eagles	Navy		1943-1945
Frank Russell	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1945
William Samuels	Shreveport Tigers	Army		1945-1946
Joe Scott	Birmingham Black Barons	Army	ETO	1941-1945
Joe Burt Scott	Memphis Red Sox	Army		1942-1945
Dickie Seay	New York Black Yankees	Army	USA	1943-1945
Robert "Pepper" Sharpe	Memphis Red Sox	Army		1945-1946
Freddie L. Sheppard	East Point Bears	Army		1941-1945
Joseph J. "Jumping Joe" Siddle	Kansas City Monarchs	Amy	MTO	1942-1944
Hubert "Bert" Simmons	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1943-1945
David Sims	Homestead Grays	Army		1942-1945
Edward "Pete" Sims	Charlotte Black Hornets	Army		1940-1945
Herbert "Briefcase" Simpson	Homestead Grays	USAAF	ETO	1943-1945
Eugene Smith	New York Black Yankees	Army		1943-1945
John Ford Smith	Kansas City Monarchs	USAAF		1942-1945
Raymond Smith	Philadelphia Stars	Army		1943-1945
Robert Stephens	Cleveland Buckeyes	Army		1943-1946
Riley A. Stewart	Memphis Red Sox	Army		1943-1945
T R "Ted" Strong	Kansas City Monarchs	Navy		1943-1945
Mickey "Little Satch" Stubblefield	Kansas City Monarchs	Navy	USA	1944-1946
Lonnie "Carl" Summers	Chicago American Giants	Army	ETO	1942-1945
Alfred "Slick" Surratt	Detroit Stars	Army	Pacific	1943-1946
Jack Tanner	Seattle American Giants	Army	Pacific	1943-1945
Reece "Goose" Tatum	Indianapolis Clowns	USAAF	USA	1943-1945

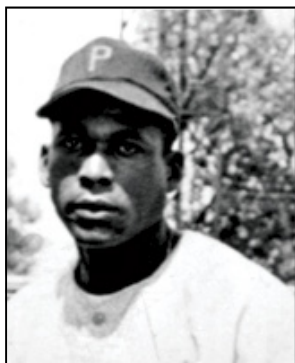
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Name	Team	Service	Location	Years
Johnny "Schoolboy" Taylor	New York Cubans	Army		1942-1945
Olan "Jelly" Taylor	Memphis Red Sox	Army		1942-1945
Henry C. "Hank" Thompson	Kansas City Monarchs	Army	ETO	1944-1945
Robert "Bob" Thurman	Homestead Grays	Army	Pacific	1942-1945
Ted Toles	Pittsburgh Crawfords	Army		
Thomas "Highpockets" Turner	Chicago American Giants	Army	USA	1940-1945
Wyatt Turner	Pittsburgh Crawfords	Navy	USA	
Cicero "Lefty" Warren	Homestead Grays	Army	Pacific	1942-1945
James "Nappy" Washington	Washington Panthers			1942-1945
John G. "Johnny" Washington	Baltimore Elite Giants	Army		1942-1945
Andrew "Big Six" Watts	Cleveland Buckeyes	Navy	Pacific	1944-1945
Sylvester Weaver	Daytona Black Cats	Army		1943-1946
Isaac Welch	Indianapolis Clowns			1942-1946
Roy H. "Snook" Welmaker	Homestead Grays	Army	USA	1942-1944
David "Speed" Whatley	Homestead Grays	Army		1944-1945
Cagney Williams	Dallas Brown Bombers	Navy		1944-1947
Emile Williams	Picayune Black Sox	Navy		1943-1947
Frank Williams	Homestead Grays	Army		1944-1945
Jesse H. Williams	Kansas City Monarchs	Army		1943-1945
Joseph Williams, Jr.	Ohio Bucks	Army		1942-1945
Junius Williams	San Antonio Black Sox	Army		1941-1942
Roy Williams	Cocoa Black Indians	Army		1943-1946
Samuel Williams	Birmingham Black Barons	USAAF	USA	1943-1946
Walter T. "Buddy" Williams	Newark Eagles			1941-1945
Wilmore Williams	Newark Eagles	Navy		1944-1945
Albert Williamson	Chicago American Giants	Army		1942-1945
Alfred "Apples" Wilmore	Philadelphia Stars	Army	Pacific	1943-1946
Emmett Wilson	New York Black Yankees	Army		1944-1945
Fred Wilson	Indianapolis Clowns	Army	USA	1944
Thomas "Tom" Womble	Durham Tigers	Army		1943-1946
Johnny Wright	Homestead Grays	Navy	USA	1944-1945
Sidney Wynn	Kansas City Monarchs	Army		1942-1945
James "Zipper" Zapp	Baltimore Elite Giants	Navy	Pacific	1942-1945

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Negro Leaguer Player Biographies

Jimmie Armstead



Armstead's baseball career was interrupted when he trained to be a pilot at the famous Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama. Although he did not make it as a pilot, he worked as a radio

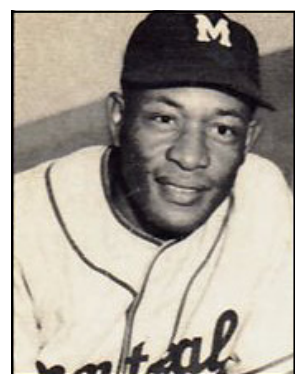
operator for pilot training up and down the East Coast.

Gene Baker



Baker served with the Navy in Iowa, and played both baseball and basketball, first for the Ottumwa Naval Air Station and then for the Seahawks of the Iowa Pre-Flight School in Iowa City.

Dan Bankhead

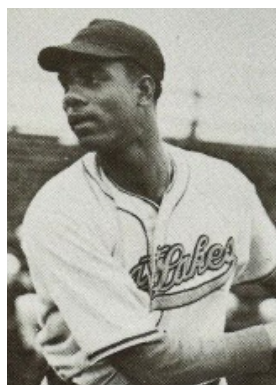


In April 1943, Bankhead enlisted in the Marine Corps. He was stationed at Montford Point, North Carolina, where, in addition to pitching, he also played shortstop and the outfield for the baseball team. He

attained the rank of sergeant before being discharged in June 1946.

Herb Bracken

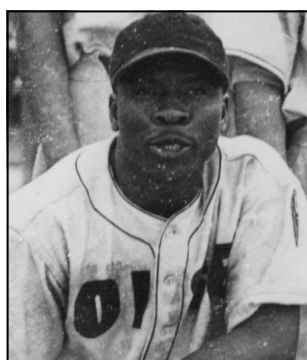
In 1944, Bracken pitched for the Negro Varsity team at US Naval Training Station



Great Lakes, Illinois. He was 13-1 during the regular season and pitched for the Midwest Servicemen League all-stars against the undefeated Great Lakes Bluejackets on June 17.

Despite allowing just one hit, Bracken lost the game 3-1.

Willard Brown



Brown served with the US Army, hauling munitions and guarding prisoners. While stationed in France in 1945, he was recruited by former Phillies' pitcher, Sam Nahem, to

play for the OISE All-Stars in the 1945 ETO World Series. The All-Stars were underdogs going into the series against the 71st Infantry Division Red Circlers, whose lineup featured Harry Walker and Ewell Blackwell. Brown was a key player as the All-Stars beat the Red Circlers in five games.

Ernest Burke



Burke enlisted in the Marine Corps and earned a medal as a sharpshooter. During his tour of duty in the Pacific, he played baseball on segregated Marine Corps teams against white teams. After getting three

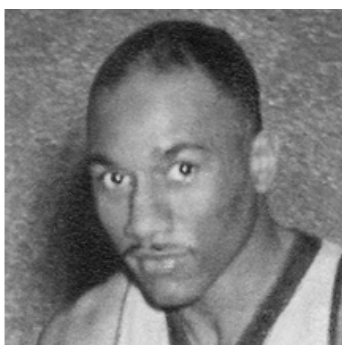
hits off an opposing pitcher who had played in the major leagues, the pitcher advised him to try out for a Negro League team after the war.

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Elmer Carter

Carter joined the Army in 1942. As a member of the 121st Engineer Combat Battalion, he served in North Africa and Europe. He was wounded by a land mine on Omaha Beach in Normandy during the D-Day invasion. He later drove a tank at the Battle of the Bulge, where he was seriously injured in a battle that killed the rest of his crew.

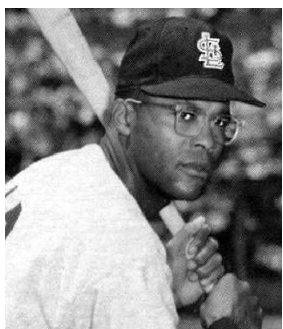
Zack Clayton



In 1944, Clayton was the catcher for the Negro Varsity team at US Naval Training Station Great Lakes, Illinois. He was a Midwest Servicemen League all-star

selection that year.

George Crowe

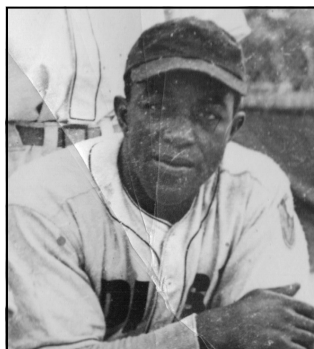


Crowe was stationed at Camp Lee, Virginia, with the 11th Colored Quartermaster Training Regiment and played first base in the Camp Lee Baseball League.

Attaining the rank of second lieutenant, he was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, before being shipped overseas to the China-Burma-India Theater for a year-and-a-half.

Leon Day

Day was with the Army in France in 1945, and was recruited by former Phillies' pitcher, Sam Nahem, to play for the OISE All-Stars in the 1945 ETO World Series. The All-



Stars were underdogs going into the series against the 71st Infantry Division Red Circlers, whose lineup featured Harry Walker and Ewell Blackwell. Day won the second

game of the series, allowing just four hits and helping the All-Stars clinch the series in five games.

Larry Doby



Doby played baseball for the Negro Varsity team at US Naval Training Station Great Lakes, Illinois, in 1944, and was a Midwest Servicemen League all-star selection that

year. He was also stationed at Camp Sam Roberts, Treasure Island and San Diego, California, before reaching Ulithi Atoll in the Pacific.

Willie Fordham

Fordham was with the Army at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, Fort Lewis, Washington and Geissen, Germany.

Bill Greason



Greason served in the Marine Corps at Monford Point, North Carolina, before embarking for the Pacific Theater with the 34th Marine Depot Company, 66th Supply

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Platoon. He arrived at Iwo Jima on the fourth day of the invasion. "People were dying all around me," he told baseball historian Nick Diunte. "Two of my best friends were killed on that island. I prayed and I said, 'Lord, if you get me off this island, whatever you want me to do, I'll do it.'" He went on to serve as the pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, for more than 30 years.

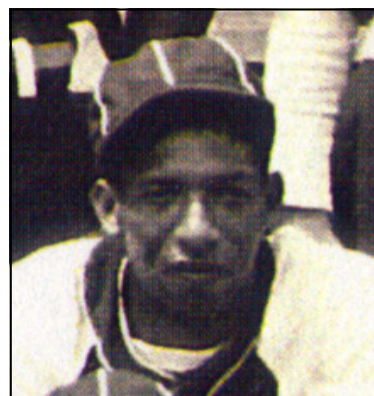
James "Joe" Greene



From 1943 to 1945, Greene was in the Army's 92nd Infantry (Buffalo) Division, spending nearly a year on the front lines of North Africa and Italy in a 57-millimeter anti-tank company. When his

company entered Milan, Italy, they found and lowered the bodies of Benito Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, who had been executed and hanged. Greene played baseball for the 92nd Division and they were Mediterranean Theater champions.

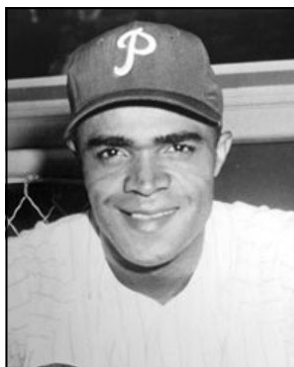
Hal Hairston



Hairston served with the Army Air Force and played baseball with the 7th Army Air Force team at Hickam Field in Hawaii. He was a teammate of major leaguers Joe

DiMaggio and Joe Gordon.

Chuck Harmon



Harmon played baseball for the Negro Varsity team at US Naval Training Station Great Lakes, Illinois, in 1944, and was a Midwest Servicemen League all-star selection that year.

Sammy Hughes

Hughes was with the 196th Support Battalion during the invasion of New Guinea in 1943.

Monte Irvin



Irvin spent three years with the 1313th Battalion, General Service Engineers. The battalion was in France and Belgium, where they built bridges and repaired roads. In late 1944, his unit was

deployed in Rheims, France, as a secondary line in case the Germans broke through at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.

Mex Johnson

Johnson was with the Quartermaster Corps at Normandy on June 11, 1944.

Josh "Brute" Johnson

Johnson served as a second lieutenant in an anti-aircraft unit, supporting the Red Ball Express convoy system in Europe.

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Max Manning



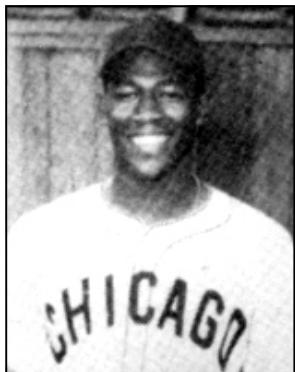
Manning served at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and then Richland Air Force Base with the 316th Air Squadron. He was later in England, France and Germany, as a driver on the Red Ball Express convoy system.

Manning also served in the Philippines and Japan.

Calvin Medley

Medley pitched for Fleet Marine Force team in Hawaii. His teammates includes major leaguers Dee Moore and Boots Poffenberger.

John "Mule" Miles



Miles entered military service in 1942, and attended the Aircraft Mechanic Journeyman Rating School in Tuskegee, Alabama.

James "Red" Moore

Moore was inducted into the army in 1942. He initially served at Camp Butner, North Carolina, before being sent overseas to England, Belgium, and France in a combat-engineer battalion attached to George Patton's Third Army.

John "Buck" O'Neil

From 1943 to 1945, O'Neil worked in a construction battalion with US Navy.

Ulysses "Hickey" Redd



Was drafted before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour and remained in service for the duration. He was at Saipan, Guadalcanal and Okinawa. He

played baseball and basketball after each island was secured.

Jackie Robinson



Robinson entered military service with the Army in April 1942, and attended officer candidate school, where he was commissioned a second lieutenant the following year. He served at Fort

Riley, Kansas, in 1943 and then with the 761st Tank Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas. Following an ankle injury, Robinson was medically discharged from service in November 1944.

Joe Scott

While based at Wright Field, Ohio, Scott played baseball for the Wright Field Kitty Hawks against the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1944. He later served in Europe as a staff sergeant with the 350th Field Artillery Regiment.

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Joe Siddle

Siddle served and played baseball with the Army's 92nd Infantry (Buffalo) Division in Italy.

Herb Simpson



Simpson was with the 2057th Quartermaster Truck Company of the Eighth Air Force at Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma, then England and France. He served as a dispatcher for the Red

Ball Express convoy.

Lonnie Summers

Summers served with the 614th Tank Destroyer Battalion in Europe.

Hank Thompson



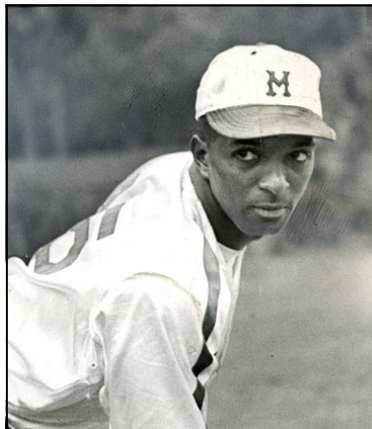
Thompson served as a sergeant with the 1695th Combat Engineers. In late 1944, his unit was sent to Europe, where he manned a machine gun during the Battle

of the Bulge.

Apples Wilmore

Wilmore served in the South Pacific with the 595th Field Artillery of the 93rd Division. While in the service he pitched for the 369th Infantry Regiment.

Johnny Wright



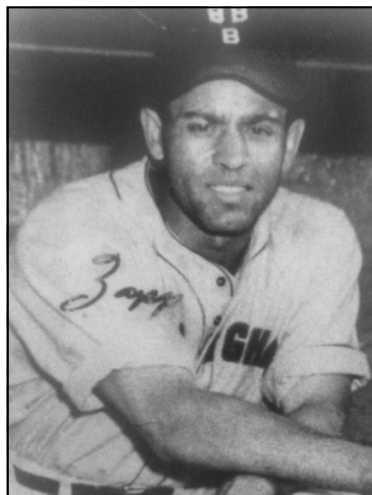
In 1944, Wright pitched for the Negro Varsity team at US Naval Training Station Great Lakes, Illinois. He was 16-4 during the regular season and a Midwest Servicemen

League all-star selection in June of that year.

Sidney Wynn

Wynn played baseball with the Third Army Quartermaster Corps and was stationed in California and England.

Jim Zapp



Zapp played third base for the Aiea Naval Barracks all-black team, then joined the barrack's integrated team. He also played at Manana Barracks in Hawaii. By April 1945, Zapp was back in the

mainland, playing baseball for the Navy at Staten Island, New York.

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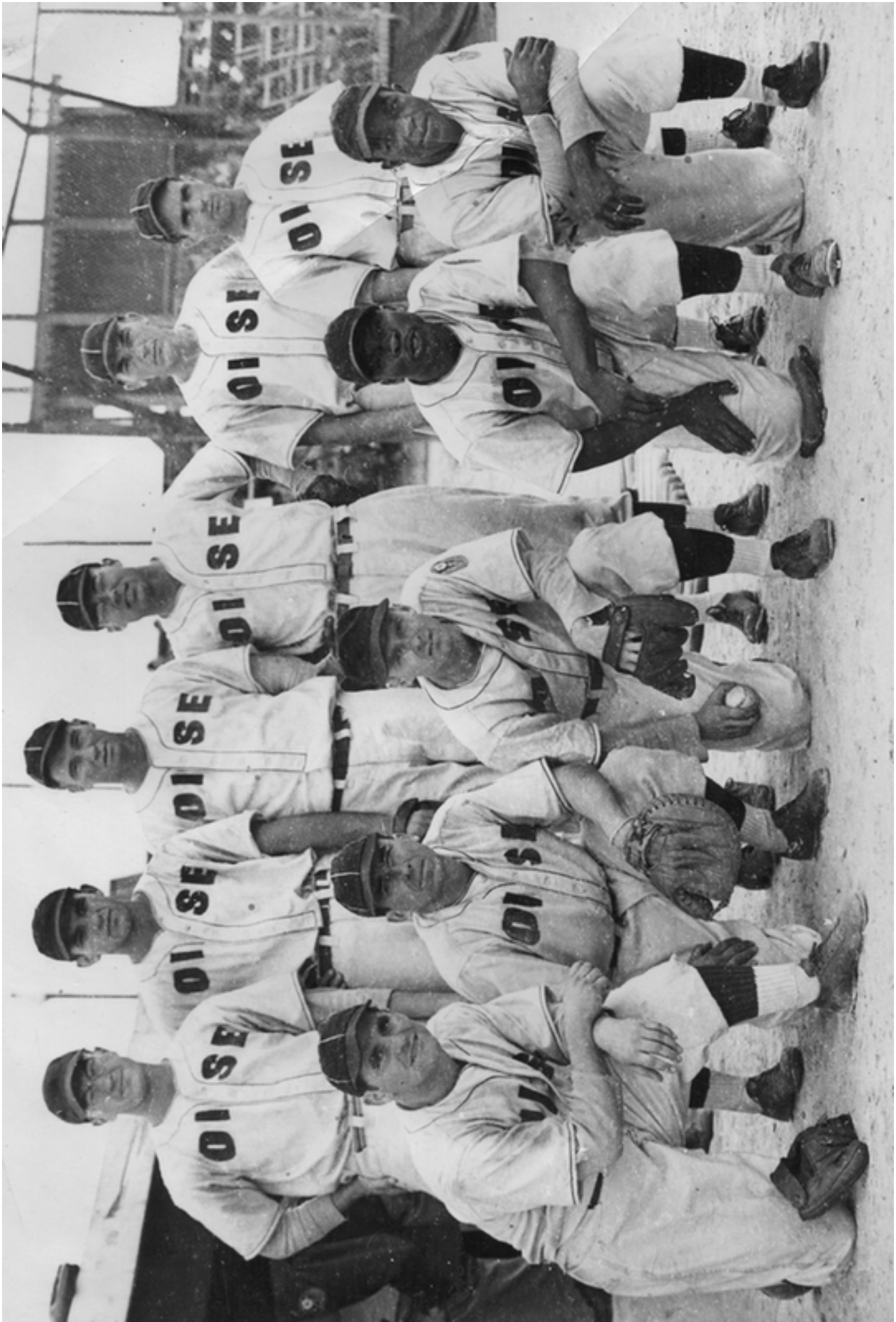
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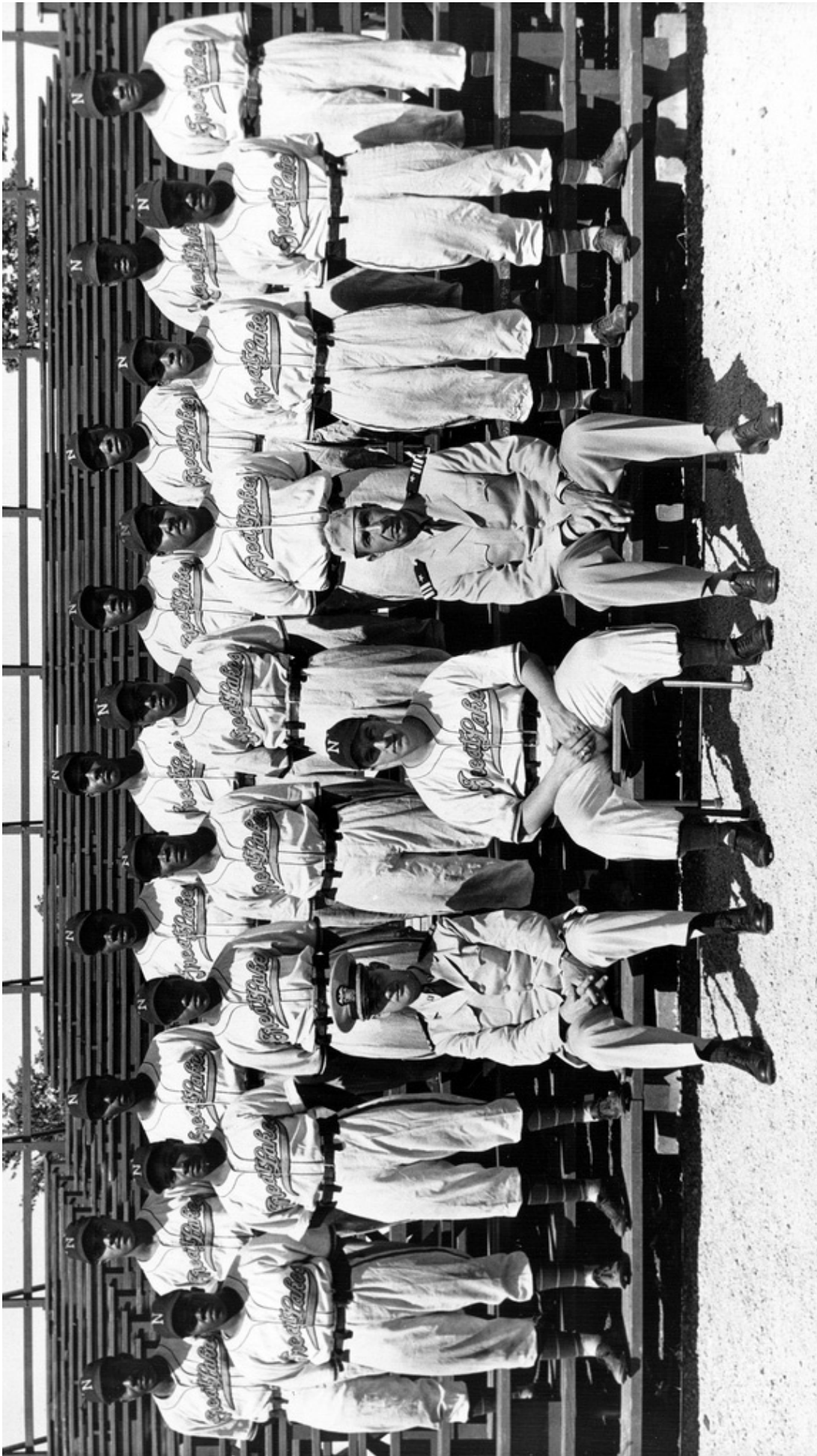
Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, baseball team



Montford Point Marine Corps, North Carolina, baseball team at Camp Lejeune



OISE All-Stars baseball team, Rheims, France, winners of the 1945 ETO World Series. The line-up included Willard Brown (front row, second from right) and Leon Day (front row, far right)



The Great Lakes Naval Training Station Negro Varsity baseball team of 1944

African-American Baseball-related Deaths During World War II

Grady Mabry of the semi-pro Colored Lindale Lions

Grady G. Mabry was from Rome, Georgia. Probably employed at a local textile mill, Mabry played baseball with the Colored Lindale Dragons. While the Northwest Georgia Textile League thrived with all-white teams, black workers - with support from their employers - formed their own teams and a fierce rivalry existed between the mills.

Mabry was among the first men drafted in the area after Pearl Harbor in early 1942. A Private First-Class, Mabry died from wounds received when his unit ran into a German machine gun nest in Italy on December 26, 1944. He was the first African-American from Rome to be killed in World War II.

Mabry was originally buried at Callier Springs Cemetery until 1956, when his body was exhumed and placed at Shadyside Memorial Gardens, Rome, Georgia.

Grady Mabry American Legion Post 506 is named in his honor.

Aubrey Stewart of the semi-pro Piedmont Colored Giants



James A. "Aubrey" Stewart was born in Piedmont, West Virginia in 1906, the son of James and Emma Stewart. His father was the first black employee at the local Westvaco Paper Mill and following high school Aubrey also went to

work at the mill. For more than two decades he also pitched semi-pro baseball with the Piedmont Colored Giants, an all-black team that played against other local sides including the Moorefield Black Sox, Frostburg Colored Federals and Cumberland Hurricanes.

In 1942, despite being 36 years old, Stewart volunteered for military service. He was inducted by the U.S. Army in December and trained with the 333rd Field Artillery Battalion - an all-black outfit - at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. In January 1944, the Battalion left for Europe and landed at Utah Beach, Normandy on June 29.

By December, the Battalion was in the Ardennes area of Belgium and faced the full brunt of the German offensive that was launched on December 16 and was soon to be labelled the Battle of the Bulge.

Cut off from Allied forces on the second day of the battle, Stewart and ten other men from the Battalion walked 10 miles in deep snow and freezing conditions before reaching the apparent safety of a farmhouse in the tiny hamlet of Wereth. The farmhouse was owned by the mayor of Wereth, Mathias Langer, who gladly took them in and fed them. But someone in town - a Nazi sympathizer - tipped off the nearby German forces. An hour later a four-man SS patrol pulled up and the 11 black Americans were marched into a cow pasture where they were executed. For two months, the body of 37-year-old Aubrey Stewart and his comrades lay in the snow until villagers directed a unit of the U.S. 99th Infantry Division to the site. Army autopsies later showed signs of torture with broken bones and bayonet wounds inflicted upon the American soldiers. Years later, they became known as the Wereth 11.

In May 2004, a memorial was dedicated to the Wereth 11 on the site where the massacre took place and a sign now stands in Piedmont, West Virginia, honoring Aubrey Stewart.

James Aubrey Stewart is buried at the Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery in Belgium.

In 2011, the story of the Wereth 11 was made into a docum drama, directed by Robert Child and starring Ken Arnold.

Can you help identify these men?



My dear friend, Judy Gordon, daughter of Yankee great, Joe Gordon, has sent me a couple of photos for which she needs help with identification. In the above photo, Joe is standing on the left, with Bill Dickey and Red Rolfe over on the right. But who is the gentleman in military uniform standing between them?



This photo of Joe Gordon (left) was taken on Tinian. Who is standing with him on the right?

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Can you help identify these men?



In this photo, probably taken at Hickam Field, Hawaii, Joe Gordon is on the far left, the tall officer in the middle is Captain Donald J. Broesamle and third from right is Dario Lodigiani. Any idea who the others are?

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Carl "Chubby" Proffitt - 1943 ETO World Series and D-Day Hero - Passes Away



Carl D. "Chubby" Proffitt, a key player in the 116th Infantry Regiment Yankees ETO World Series championship in 1943, and a Distinguished Service Cross recipient at Normandy, passed away in Charlottesville,

West Virginia, on June 30. He was 96.

Chubby was born in Charlottesville on November 23, 1918, and attended Lane High School, but stopped during his senior year to take a job to supplement his family's income. He played semi-pro in the local area and was a member of the Monticello National Guard. His unit was federalized into the U.S. Army in February 1941, and Proffitt served as a technical sergeant with Company K, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division.

In October 1942, the 116th Infantry Regiment arrived in England and was stationed in Devon. It was the beginning of an intensive training program that would last until May 1944. Chubby still found a little time for baseball in England. The 116th formed a team that played at a dog racing track in Plymouth and were known as the Yankees. They proved to be a formidable team in the local area, with minor league pitcher Elmer Wright on the mound and Chubby as their heavy slugging outfielder and first baseman.

In September 1943, the 116th Infantry Regiment Yankees played in a four-day U.S. services baseball tournament in London. The Yankees were a dark horse team at the outset of the tournament - unknown to most of the other teams who were already playing in well-established military leagues around Britain, but it wasn't long before they earned a place in the final and claimed the ETO World Series crown with a 6-3 win against the Fighter Command Thunderbolts. Chubby played first base that day.

Eight months after the 1943 ETO World Series was played the 116th Infantry Regiment Yankees were in a different kind of battle. They were among the first troops to land at Omaha Beach, Normandy, on June 6, 1944.

Frank Draper, who hit two triples in the series final; Elmer Wright, who pitched so effectively throughout the tournament; and Louis Alberigo, who played third base and had two hits in the final, all lost their lives on the beach.

"The beach was covered by withering enemy rifle, machine gun and artillery fire," reads the citation accompanying his Distinguished Service Cross. "In spite of the great number of casualties that were being inflicted on his company, Sgt. Proffitt on a number of occasions fearlessly exposed himself to this intense fire in order to encourage and lead his troops across the beach."

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Carl "Chubby" Proffitt - 1943 ETO World Series and D-Day Hero - Passes Away

It was, Chubby once recalled, the only way out.

"I thought to myself, 'There's only one way to go to get home from here and that's over the beach and through Germany.' And then I got going," Chubby told the Charlottesville Daily Progress. "You didn't want to waste a lot of time on that beach."

After the beach was overcome there were more obstacles ahead. A disabled American tank was blocking the one road troops could use to advance inland and a German machine gunner was pinning down the tankers and the troops.

"I said, 'Well, I'm going to see what I can do about getting rid of that machine gun nest over there.' I just kept my helmet and my rifle and went sailing off down the road there where this tank was and bullets were whizzing and ricocheting off that tank like you wouldn't believe when I jumped up on it," Chubby recalled. "You could hear the bullets ricocheting down the road. I was lucky. I was real lucky. I did it on the spur of the moment. I jumped up on the tank and I told the tank commander, I said, 'Swivel your turret around here and I'll point out exactly where that machine gun nest is.'"

Under Chubby's direction, the tank soon silenced the German machine gun.

Later in the war, near Hasenfeld, Germany, Chubby led his platoon in a futile attempt to reach American troops surrounded by German soldiers. With enemy mortars, rifle

fire and landmines blocking the way, his platoon was forced to give up the effort. The landmines proved disastrous to his men. Suffering serious wounds himself, he won his Silver Star for valor for making "repeated trips into the minefield under decimating enemy machine gun and artillery fire to administer first aid and evacuate the wounded," his citation states.

Three times Chubby was wounded as his unit rolled through France and Germany. Three times he returned to the unit, the last time with a fresh battlefield commission to lieutenant. By the end of his time in Europe, Chubby accumulated three Purple Hearts, a Silver Star and two Bronze Stars, along with the Distinguished Service Cross and his commission.

"People asked if I was afraid and I told them anyone who says they weren't is either lying or crazy. I didn't need to use my trenching tool to dig a foxhole," he joked in 2012. "I could just lie down and I was shaking so much that I'd dig a hole from fear."

Back home in Charlottesville after the war, Chubby worked for King & Roberts Wholesale, Inc., for 37 years, retiring as the general manager in 1983. He received the rare Virginia Distinguished Service Award in 1994 for his exploits and heroics in World War II, and attended the 55th anniversary of the D-Day Invasion in 1999 in France.

On July 13, 2009, accompanied by fellow "116th Yankees" teammate Joe Gubemot of

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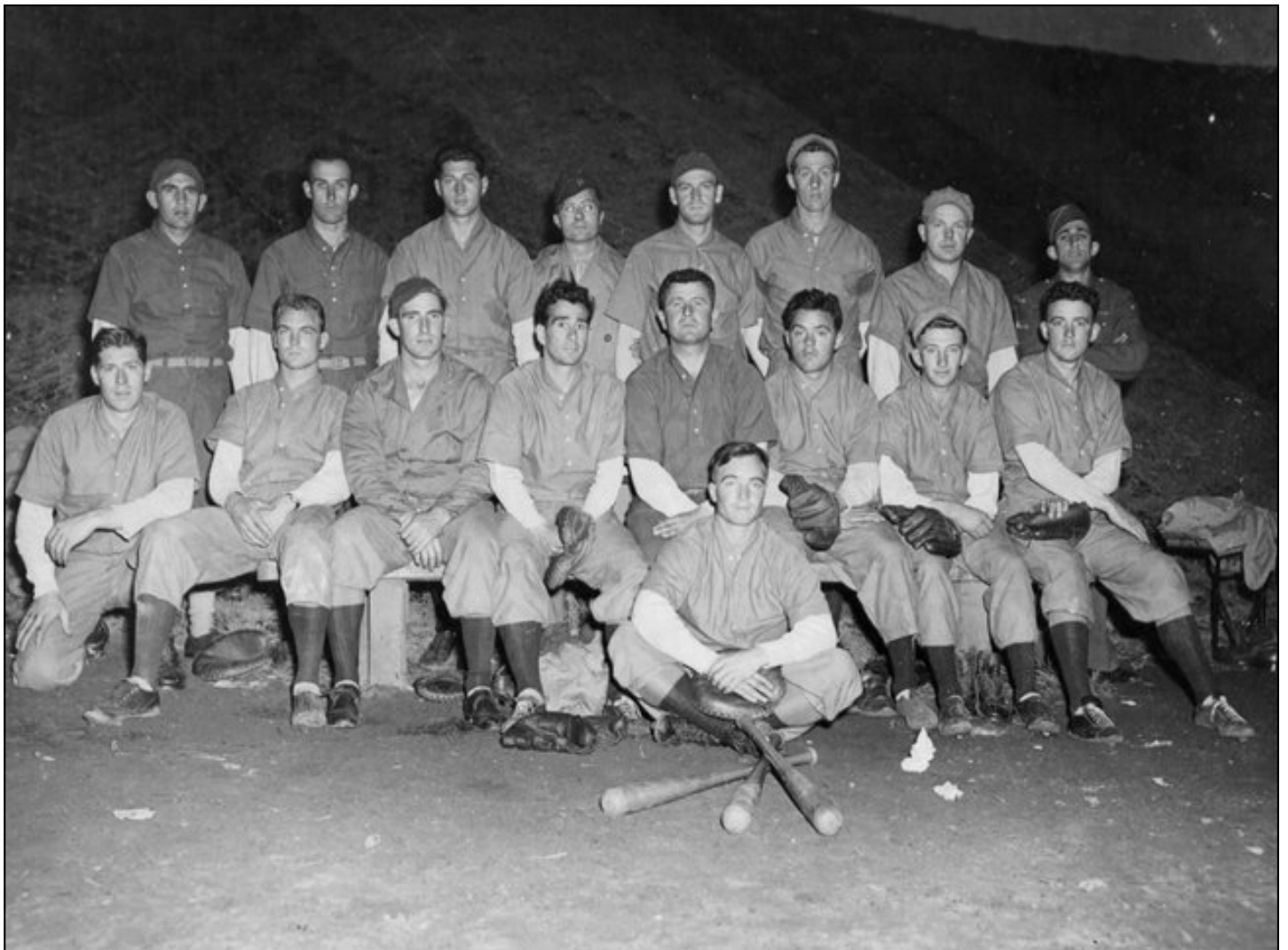
Carl "Chubby" Proffitt - 1943 ETO World Series and D-Day Hero - Passes Away

Shamokin, Pennsylvania, Chubby attended the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, to be video interviewed and archived as the last two surviving members of the 1943 ETO championship team. On February 15, 2012, Chubby traveled to the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. to receive the French Legion of Honor medal (Chevalier), France's highest decoration.

A funeral service for Chubby was conducted on July 7, 2015, at Cherry Avenue Christian Church. Burial with military

honors followed at Monticello Memory Gardens.

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The 116th Infantry Regiment Yankees following their ETO World Series victory against the Fighter Command Thunderbolts on September 30, 1943

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