

INTERVIEW THE CHARLIE JAMIESON

Yep, I go up to see old Joe Wood nearly every weekend. He's up there in Shohola, Penna., right near Milford. Only 59 miles from here. Nothing at all. Got a nice little place in the country, around 350 acres or so.

You know what he used to do? ~~Was~~ Well, see he had this real baby face, and, well, he used to pitch for the Bloomer Girls. They thought he was a girl. Had another fellow would catch for him. Oh, yeah. He was a star there, you know, struck all the girls out, and the girls didn't know the difference. And he never used to shave! Then, too, he was balk-headed when he was young. Never could get him to take his bat off, you see.

He was one of the best pool shooters in baseball, you know. I used to shoot with him. Four, five hours at a time. ^{day in and day out.} We'd think nothing of it. It's a real good game. Lot of trikks to it too. Well, without bragging, next to Woodie, I was the second best in baseball. He could spot me a few, but we'd have some real good games. I used to like ~~ix~~ 18 point pool, or billiards.

Well, when I was 15 years old, I was pitching on semi pro ball. First I started with a YMCA team, called us junior boys, but as I remember

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we used to beat the big boys too. Then I went with the Lafayettes of Paterson. See, I was born in Paterson. And, when I was 15 years old I started pitching for the Patterson Lafayettes. They were a heavy semi-pro team. They called ^{it} the heavy semi : see they were big fellows, married men, like that. See while I was pitching for the YMCA team they had been watching me and they asked me if I would join them, cause they played only on Saturdays and Sundays. And they started paying me money, so I thought that sounded good. Then we used to go around the East a bit. We'd play the Bushwicks, and the Farmers, and Dan Broughters' Colts and the Cuban Giants when they came to New York way. Oh, yeah, we'd get around.

Course I was working in the silk mill at the time. Started there when I was 14, as an office boy. Then when I was 17 they put me in charge of the workers and liners: 28 men and 14 women. Then Buffalo offered me a contract. Course my Dad used to play with McGraw. Yeah, my Dad played semi-pro ball when McGraw was playing semi-pro. Dad was a catcher and a third baseman. Loved baseball. So did my Mom. But my Dad really wanted me to be a ballplayer. Wanted to see me in a World Series game. And in 1920, he did! Oh, he was all for it. All my brothers wanted to play ball. We had a large family, six of us boys and three girls. Couple of the boys played semi-pro, but I was the only one to go up. I had one ✓

brother was six foot three, and he'd have made a good ballplayer. He liked basketball.

So, in 1912 Buffalo offered me a contract. I was just 17 when I signed, in August of 1911. I was up playing in the Hotel League, in the Adirondacks. My father sent me a telegram telling me that Buffalo wanted me to report the next evening....course he had made a mistake, they wanted me the next March, but he was so excited I guess...

I was surprised when I heard about it, when they sent me a telegram to come home. ^{The way} ~~And when~~ that happened, a big league pitcher who was a neighbor, lived right in back of our haouse, George Marik, came over to see me play semi-pro ball, when he was a pitcher for ~~semi-pro~~ Buffalo, near the end of his career. He liked me and told them so, they signed me up. \$250 a month. Not bad for those times. Well, they didn't play me that first year, but then they got wise. I was a pitcher then, see. And in those days, the pitcher was really the star of the club. He had the best arm and the best eyes and all. That's the way it was in semi-pro. If you could pitch, you were the best ballplayer on the team.

Course nowadays pitchers don't get any practice in hitting. You only get your batting practice the day you're going to pitch. And then they're laying the ball right in there for you to hit. ✓

During my ktime at Buffalo, sometimes I'd go in to run, sometimes I'd play the outfield, you know. We only carried 15 or 16 men, so if someone gut hurt and you were fast on your feet, why you played. That's the way it was in those days. So I pitched for three years and then they asked me... I was getting worse as a pitcher...and they put me in the outfield.

Course pitching was different then. They'd keep the ball in there and it'd get scuffed up and all. If it went out of the park, why we found it ~~wax~~ and played with it again. But I never monkeyed around with the ball, like some of them. No tacks, emory, talcum, licorise. I just pitched. The~~x~~ fellows sitting on the bench, like the pitchers who weren't pitching that day, they done the coaching. George Sprawlings maanged Buffalo that first year. Won that Miracle Pennant in 14. Then we had Bill Klimer in '13 and then in '14 Patsy Donovan took over. You've heard of him.

Let's see, George Gedd was sold to washington same time I was, from Buffalo. And he stayed there all the rest of his life, too. And Gilhooley. Didn'tlast long in the big league, though. Joe McCarthy played on that Buffalo, that is. team too./ One of his minor league stops.

I was utility man in Washington. Played the outfield, pitched, played first base, and believe it or not once I played thrid base. A left handed ✓

third baseman! Did that for pretty near half a game, till the regular showed up. And during batting practice, Walter Johnson always wanted me to catch for him. So, just for fun, really, I always caught Walter in practice. Boy, he was good. Very good. He was outstanding.

Course when I was a boy I thought the Giants were the tops. See, they had people like Christy Matthewson and all. Matthewson was the really big ballplayer of his day, you know. I ~~id~~ idolized him.

Yes, Walter Johnson was just wonderful. In every way. He was a gentlemen at all times. I remember one time, we were sitting on the porch of the hotel we stayed at in Phila. And Walter comes out and right across from us was a big ice cream parlor, you know. Course, in those days you could get sundaes for 15¢, with everything on it. So he says, Jamie, let's go over and buy us a soda or a sundae. I says, all right and we flipped coins to see who would pay and I lost. Well, he grabbed me and says, Now you wait a moment. I want to see somebody. So he disappears for a second and then comes back and takes me by the arm and here's half the ball ^{club} ~~park~~ coming out after him. He says, you lost and you said you'd buy the sundaes, so here we are. Oh, yes, he was a grand guy. Pull little capers like that. Swell guy. But that was a dirty trick, setting me up like that!

Well, I played with Washington for two years and then Clark Griffith traded me to Connie Mack. I played utility for Connie Mack too. Stayed there two years. He was a quiet guy. Everybody's father, you know. But he wouldn't pay any money! Boy was he tight with that dollar.

Well, after that, I didn't know what I was going to go. I was going to get out of baseball, I guess. Going to quit. Or going to go to the outlaw league. Down around Maryland, where Frank Baker had come from. Remember when Frank Baker jumped over? Well, they wanted me down there, too. When I was with Buffalo, of course, I made a mistake. I had an offer from the Federal League, and I should have joined them, then. I should have jumped. They offered me \$6500 for the next year and \$3500 for the rest of that season (see, the season was half over). Well, we had heard rumours that they were going to break up. Course they said, too, that if you signed up with the Federal League and it broke up, why you'd never get back into organized baseball. So everyone advised against it, and Patsy Donovan talked me out of it. But as it happened, when it did break up, why they shouldn't get the ballplayers back again to their teams fast enough! I'd have had \$10,000 for a couple of month's work!

Even way back then, never saw Connie Mack in a uniform. That score card, though, that was a bluff. Waving the scorecard? Naw. Nope when

not when I was with the ballclub. Might have done it before. Naw. He'd have somebody on the bench giving signals. Might be ~~be~~ the fourth fellow in....he'd tell him what to do and the fello'd flash the sign. The waving was just a bluff to draw their attention, and the fellows on the team would all know who was giving the signals that day, and look at that guy. Next day it would be another guy. That's how he worked it. But most of the time, according to how the game is going, you're on your own in hitting.

Course in my day, as a pitcher, we never took any signals from the manager or the catcher or anything. We wanted to throw. You throw your best pitch. That's all. Mack got some great teams all right, but he'd never pay them money and they'd all want to get away as soon as they could. He didn't want to pay any money.

He sold me to Cleveland. You know, with Connie, you couldn't smoke ciagarette. And in those days, a lot of us did. But he couldn't see across the stree, you know, so' we'd keep a cigarette in our mouths, but a cigar in our hands, and whenever we'd see Connie, why we'd just wave the cigar! \$10 fine for smoking a cigarette!

Well, Clark Griffith'd madex~~up~~ us get down to the dining room for breakfast by 8 o'clock every morning. He'd h~~ave~~ the door shut at 8 and if you were late, why you couldn't get in. See, he'd have his meetings in the morning, right after breakfast. Then if anyone was missing, why he was fined...yeag, and the usual fine was a box of cigars!

One day, both Walter Johnson and I were late. Well, we got this big box of candy, see and we markhed in with it. Oh, it was a riot. Oh, Clark Griffith was good.

Yeah we'd have some good times. Goose Goslin and I...we used to kid each other a lot. Gosse'd take my glove and fill it with grass, and I'd ~~xxxx~~ hide his, and all. Goose was sure popular in Washington. He could hit a long ball.

Sure I used to see the stickes on the ball as it came up to me batting. If the pitcher wasn't too fast, that is. Got to keep your eye right on it when you're hitting you know. See, I was a slap hitter, and I would choke up on the bat and hit to all fields, and bunt. I was no slugger. Yeah, I got a lot of scratch hits. For a 300 hitter, I sure got those scratch hits. Got 340 and 350, so I guess they couldn't all have been scratch hits, but sure seemed like it. We'd call any hit that went through the infield a scratch hit.

I stayed with Cleveland for 14 years, you know, so I kind of associate myself with them more than any other team I played with.

Yeah, I remember one time Willie Kamm ^{with the White Sox} pulled the hidden ball trick on me.

I was on third base and Johnny Hogarth was on second base and nobody out.

Score was tied 2 - 2 in about the 3rd or 4th inning. The infield was playing in and Peckinpaugh was the manager of the team. He hollered out,

He Kamm, stay there, and motioned to let it go through, a fly ball way

out. He said, tell that dutchman I said to stay on third in case it goes through. So I said, okay, okay. I took a step off, and they puled

me back to the base. Well, he threw over to first base and that was

one out. And I turn around and there's Johnny ~~sax~~ standing on third

base with me! So I says, what are you doing here Johnny? He says,

oh, oh, I made a mistake, So he started back, and they got him in a

pickle (you know between the two bases and they chased him back and forth

and anytime I tried to make a break for home, they'd drive me back to

third base, and finally they tagged Johnny out). Now there's where the

play come in. Johnny comes past me, around third base and he's walking

nice and easy. He says, I hope the next guy popa up and comes running to

my position. He says, Peckinpaugh's going to shoot me. I says, well if

I had a gun, I'd shoot you. So, he's walking past me and he gets about

gets about half way home and he turns around and says, something and I couldn't hear him. Well, I walked off the base and asked, What did you say, you dutchman? So, Willie Kamm, sees me and says, hey Jamie Look waht I got! And he standing there on third base with the ball in his hand.

So, then they got me in a pickle, but they couldn't tag me. We ran all over the place, and finally I couldn't stand it any longer and I went over ~~to~~ to Kamm and went Ptui, and he got me out.

Yeah, I remember my first big league game. With Washington. ~~One~~ Joe Judge and I, the season closed in Buffalo round about Labor day and the big leagues didn't close till Water on, so we reported to Washington to play the rest of the season. So we made plans that I'd meet Joe in New York and get down to Washington on a 10 oclock train. Well the train broke down and just outside of Baltimeore it was delayed about an hour. So we weren't in Washington till abot 3 P M and theyused to plat at 3 PM, so they held up for us, they were expecting us. We had our pictures in the papers. I was going to play ,eft field and Judge was going to play first base. So when we got in there, to the ballpark, the fellows say Hurry up were're waiting for you. So the club captain threw two uniforms at us. We didn't even know he was the captain, he didn't stop to intorudce himself. Just said, hurry up, we waited for you.

So ~~we~~ we rushed out on the field and I played left field and Judge went over to first base! That was my first major league day! And I got one hit out of four and Judge got two hits out of four!

Yep, that end of the season I played 17 games. Got about 270 I think. And the next spring, why Clark Griffith had 12 outfielders, then he whittled them down to nine. And he'd say, now this is the outfield for today, and he'd run down the fielders, and then he'd say, And if you don't get any hits, you don't play tomorrow. Man might get two bases on balls, but if he don't get a hit, he don't play the next day! Naw, I couldn't play ball that way!

I always give Babe Ruth credit for getting me to play regular. See, when I joined the Cleveland ball club in 1919, Lou Faul was the manager. We used to take taxi cabs out to the ballpark, only cost a nickel or a dime. Well, he says to me, Jamie, I haven't got a regular job for you. You're a utility man, see, cause I got my team picked. But, he says, you're my first man. I says, what do you mean? He says, well, if anybody gets hurt and can't play. So, I says, Listen, I'm a left-hander, what if the catcher gets hurt? He says, Why I don't care if the catcher gets hurt -- you'll catch. Well, I thought, that's sort of silly! But that's the way it was! I'd go in to pinch hit, I'd base run, I'll play the outfield

positions, all the infield (except first base). And S[eaker, he was in center field, and he just never got hurt, so I'd play left field or right field, you know. So that went on for about half the season. One day, when we were playing the Yankees, on a Sunday, and we had them beat by three runs in the ninth ining, and they got three men on and Babe Ruth come to bat. So we held a conference and Foul got the coaches together and talked things over. We all gathered around, everybody gathered around...what are we going to do. Well, we had Fitz Colby, who had a sore arm for about three or four weeks and hadn't pitched. But if his arm had healed by then, they thought he'd be okay. Well, they must have told Ruth, wait for that curve, he'll throw you a curve. And that's what he did and boy did he belt it, over the fence for a home run. So the game was over and we were all mad, you know, about getting beat and beat like that. You know, we were fighting for the pennant even then. So the next morning, Speaker come in the clubhouse in the morning. Says, come on boys we'll hold a meeting. There's a change now, I'm the new manager of the ballclub, and there are going to be some changes. Middle of the season, 1919. So, he says, Jamieson, you're leading off and playing left field. Now Jack ^{Graney}~~Raney~~ had covered left field for thirteen years. Old Jack Rainey. So I took his job away! And I stayed there for 13 years. That

made 26 years that just the two of us covered that left field! Isn't that something! Joe Boswick replaced me.

Course they'd have never won the pennant in 1920 if the White Sox hadn't hf been caught in that jam. They had a really great ball club you know. Wasn't till the middle of the season that the thing broke open, and we were running second. Well, when they lost all their ball players, they had to fill in with seim-pros or bush leaguers. And they still almost beat us out! Well, they sold out for peanuts, and the gamblers cheated them out of what they were promised. Gamblers got scared when Dickie Carr beat them that first game. They thought, what's going on here. Well Dickie Kerr wasn't in on the deal, neighter was Ray Collins, or Ray Schalk, or Nemo, in right field. Four men playing on the level took four games out of six! And then they say baseball's crooked! Gamblers couldn't pay these fellows enough money to throw a game now. They've seen what's happened. Course \$5,000 or \$6,000 in those days was a lot for a ballplayer/s earnings, cept for Cobb and Speaker and Ruth, of course.

Course I think Griffith was the tighest guy in all of baseball. Then comes Comiskey. But you know very wekl that Eddie Collins wasn't playing for peanuts, or Cicotte. You know, every man on that ballclub

was a star!

Joe Judge got me on to that White Sox team that year...I mean to watching them and seeing that something was wrong. But I just saw that half the boys weren't speaking to each other. And during the series when I saw balls going over Felsh's head, I thought, why what's going on out there. You know, to myself, how could he misjudge like that. Course the gamblers were giving 15 to 1, knowing that they had a sure thing! Abe Atell was the one that caused it all. The fighter.

Only thing that saved baseball was that Babe Ruth was coming up at the same time. That's when he started, you know. Started hitting that ball and bringing the crowds out again.

But, oh I loved to play ball. That's tru. I ~~wid~~wish I could get out there again.

In the off season a couplpe of up would pretend we were firemen and we joined the Fireman's league. We played for Paterson. Course, some times someone would come up ans ask my name. Why, I'm O'Reilly, I'd say. And what precint are you out of. Oh, the second, I'd say. The firemen had briefed us professionals on what to day. Oh, do you know so and so, they'd say. Why, of course I do, I'd say. Well, he died about five years ago, they's day.....and the last time I saw you you were playing

left field for Cleveland, right? Well, we played for them for two years. They wanted to give us ~~xx~~ money, but we donated it to their Widow's Fund, you know. Well, they thought that was great, so they presented me with a diamond ring, right in the Polo Grounds. The same day Ray Chapman was hit and killed by a pitched ball. My mother and sister were at the ballpark and they wanted me to quit right then. Ray Chapman had played on the team with me, in 1920. Was with me in '19 at Cleveland. He was going to quit that season. His wife was pregnant at the time. And his father-in-law, a millionaire, was going to set him up in a press foundry. My mother never went to another game.

Course in the days when I played you couldn't use a big glove. The only ones could use big gloves was the catcher and the first baseman. Against the baseball law to use big gloves, you know. Had a regulation size. I used the Tris Speaker model glove. Glove just like his. ~~5555~~ They called him the Grey Eagle and they called me the Ball Hawk!

Course they don't steal bases like they used to. They're hitting more home runs. But they got some good base stealers. That little Aparicio. He can steal. Course, we used the hit and run or they'd bunt you down more often than they do today. Cause we were playing with the dead ball. Didn't have so many runs. Had to work for them all.

I used the same kind of bat they use today. But I used to choke up on it. Used about a 32 ounce bat. I always tried to hit to left field. Cause I figured if I hit the shortstop, in two hops I was across first base. Course, these balls go down like bullets, now. And the i field is wider than it used to be. We ddn't have it that wide. Them fellows lay away back there and it comes roaring down and boom, they've got you on the first hop. Fast, you know.

Talk about superstitions. Somebody would be sitting on the bench and would ~~xxx~~ cross his legs and we'd all say, Now what are you doing, cut them out. Don't cross your legs. But I wasn't superstitious. But we'd always give the opposing team the horn signs. We'd all stand up there giving them the horns. Wouldn't have even made any difference if they'd have changed my number, you know. Always had the number 10. ~~x~~

We played all our games at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Except if we were playing a double header and then that would start at 2 o'clock. We always had two cars of the train, when we went on the road. Nobody slept in an upper berth on the Cleveland ball club. We used to travel on the pullmans at night and have our breakfast in the hotel. Wasn't bad at all. But I really couldn't sleep good on trains, and half the fellows would play cards and penochle and checkers all night.

We got \$4 a day for meals. Course meals were cheaper in those days. Had to make it \$7 for the more expensive hotels, though. Open you mouth in some of them and just that would cost money. We always stayed in good hotels, I'll say that. Course, with Bu\$allo, we stayed in second rate hotels, and no menu, you know, just ate what was in front of you.

But I saw a lot of good ballplayers. Lot of stars. Speaker, Cobb, Ruth, Heilman. I pitched against him once when he was with Baltimore. Don't really remember who won. That was away back in 1913.

My wife was never a ball fan. She was a worker, though. Her hands were always busy. Could make a shirt for you without even taking any measurements! Oh, she'd go to the games, but she'd bring some knitting or crocheting and if I'd made a good play, they'd all say, boy did you say that, and she'd say, why no, what happened?