

INTERVIEW WITH BENNIE BENGOUGH

See, I never hit that good. 275, 260 that sort of thing. My catching and throwing ~~was~~ was my main asset and I led the league in fielding a couple of years in a row. But I never thought much about that. See, I was young and making pretty good money, for that time, \$300, \$400 or \$500 a month was a lot of money then. You could live in Buffalo for \$5 a week, board and room.

Well, my dad and mother always wanted me to play ball. They always followed me around to see me play. In fact my dad, he ran a club at Niagara Falls named the Carter Coombs (?) after the business my dad was in. Made all the business forms they used in department stores, you know. Semi-pro club. Matter of fact he'd also have some regular National League players who were finishing up their careers, you know. They'd come down and get \$25 a game. He didn't manage, but he ran it. Lost money. Ballplayers got all the money. Oh, he loved baseball. Never was an athlete himself but he did love baseball.

My dad and mother saw the '27 world series and the '28 Series I played in. They were very proud. He loved baseball. Especially when I was sold to the Yankees, of all people, he was really pretty proud, being from New

New York State.

Yep, those were old horse and buggy days, you know. That was when you'd walk two miles to play ball. We only had a couple of real closed parks, you know. And they were tough to get at, cause you had to go quite a distance, either on a streetcar or, if you had a horse and buggy, you could drive out there. Used to have special horse and buggy gates at the semi-pro club fields.

Then, of course, in the big leagues, like with the Buffalo ball club, those were the days of the wooden stands, you know. They didn't have any of these steel structures or anything. The minor league fields weren't bad. They were small, of course. But, like Buffalo, when they had the dead ball, in the days when I played, it looked pretty large to me. It was plenty large for us. Fellow that hit 10 or 15 home runs a year was a pretty good hitter.

Montreal, Harrison, New Jersey, and Newark, Boise City, they were all wooden stands and just bleachers. They were lucky if they could seat 12,000, and that would be a big crowd. Baltimore had the old Federal League park, then. Jank Dunns Boys. They had a great ballclub. We always came in second after them, you know. They were great. Had Lefty Grove and Ernshaw, Curley Ogden, Thomas, fellows of that type. Then they had Mays,

Bowlie, Bishop, Bently, Jakobson and Lowry in the outfield. Stiles, they had, and old Ben Egan catching for them. They had a great ballclub. Well, they kept Bowlie in the minors there for about six years because none of the big leagues could compete with the pretty good money we was paying him almost as much as the big leagues. Maybe he didn't care about that too much, but I'd say that Bowlie could have made the big leagues in two or three years before he did. Bishop the same way. Course Bently had been with the Giants and then went down there. Fritz Maxel had played with the Yankees and he was, you might say, a veteran at that time.

At Buffalo? Well, there was Bill McKerran at third, now scouting for the Red Sox. We had Snooks Dahl at second base and Walter Keating at shortstop and Wilsy played some at first base and Big Bill Sweeney from Syracuse there. Had Lee Strait and Craven in the outfield. And a fellow named Jacobs and Ed Barrity, played with Pittsburgh, he was in the outfield. Lee Strait was quite a hitter there for us.

We had some good pitchers down there. I never have played in the lower leagues, but I did manage there, after. I was only 19 years old when I joined them, and it was rough company to get into. One of the youngest on the team. But see, it was during the wartime and I got my start cause Jack Oswald was called up by the Giants. Chief Myers had just gone

into the Marines and they needed a catcher. So they called him up. And then
Buffalo
they needed a bull~~xxx~~ pen catcher. That's how I got my job. I got my job
through a pitcher that pitched for Niagara when I was there. Guy's a preacher
now, down in Penna. He was a pitcher then, spitball pitcher. ^{Ondorschak.} Onders^och~~sk~~^k,
he's now a priest in Taylor Penna. He's the one in Niagara Falls who told
me that Buffalo wanted a bull pen catcher. He went on to Buffalo.~~xxxxxxx~~
~~xxx~~ See, the Yankees owned him and they had sent him to Buffalo. I'd caught
him in college. All his days in college, I'd caught him, see. So he
recommended me to Buffalo. We had another fellow there, Daly, he was the
an
~~only~~ other catcher, ~~wilthxCasey~~ he later went to the Red Sox. Then we had
Joe Casey, Transgressor, who caught for the Phillies later. Frank Rugey,
I roomed with him, was one of the catchers. See, we had Dick McCabe,
with the Red Sox. Jimmy Ring from Cincinnati. Gip Jordan, spitball pitcher
Bucky Harris played with me in 1919, before he went to Washington. Played
second base for Buffalo. Oh, we had some good fellows up there. Bucky
was always an aggressive kind of guy. Very aggressive. Good second baseman
and hit well enough...not a real long hitter, but a good hitter and good
glove man. He knew his baseball. Won two pennants in a row for Washington

I got to the Yankees cause there was three teams after me, to buy me: Yankees, Detroit , and the Brooklyn Dodgers. Well, Buffalo had given the Yankkes till midnight of a certain day in August, 1922 to make a decision about me, or they would sell me to Detroit or Brooklyn. They told me I was being talked about, but I didn't know who was doing the talking. Finally, just before the time ran out, Paul Critchell (?) bought me from Buffalo for the Yankees and I joined them in the Spring of 1923, in New Orleans, for spring training. I was 25 years old that July.

'23 was a great team. Won the pennant by 16 games, you kow. First year that yankee stadium opened up. Their first World's Championship. They had played the Giants in '21 and '22 and were beaten, see. But that year we beat the Giants in six games. When I joined them see, I thought, well, gee , they've won two pennants in the last two years, they're certainly not going to win another one this year! But I nver had any doubt that I would stick with them. I had plenty of confidence in my own ability as a catcher. Course they had Schang as a regular catcer, but he was getting along...wasn't old, but only lasted for about five more years, all told. Then they had Freddie Hoffman as second string catcher and had sold them third string catcher to the Boston Red Sox . So I was the only catcher they had. Thy had Chick Autrey down there on trial with me, too. But I

they'd bought me, so I knew I'd at least stay around a little. Turned out I caught 19 games that year!

Ruth was hitting 59 home runs in the Polo Grounds the year before, you know. But of course the Polo Grounds was a little easier to do that. But even so, he used to get them over in the big stadium. When he broke in after the ~~xxx~~ scandals, people started coming to see him.

They treated me wonderful. Wonderful. They were wonderful to me. Course I was always pepper and vinegar, you know. Used to catch batting practice and I can throw a ball you know. Not bragging but I was maybe one of the better arms in baseball. I just got along great with the fellows. Schang Shag really used to take me up. Even though I may take his job. We'd sit around and talk about the game. If we played in different innings, he'd tell me all the hitter's weaknesses and all. Wanted me to absorb all of it, you know, cause he knew eventually I would be taking his job. And I did, in '25, and they traded Hoffman off, so I became the first string catcher.

Course, when Gehrig came in, he and I were very close. Just like brother, you know, together all the time. Good friends.

Well, that 's what I've always said about the Yankees. The great teams! They had a lot of ability but there was never what you would call

dissention on the team. Unless you'd call friendly rivalry among the stars, and they were all great ballplayers. See, one fellow, if you'd have a party to go to, there'd be maybe 12 or 15 other Yankees around and there was never any rough stuff, ever. Oh, they had a lot of ability.

They were a good hitting team, but also a good fielding team. They didn't throw many games ~~aw~~ away. Had good pitching too. Same Jones, Joe Busch, Pit Grass. Elsie Moore (?), Erv Schocker, Zacherly (!) , Miles Thomas. Had a pretty good lineup. Always did have. Pennock and Hoyte were good for 10 or 15 games each year, you know. And Sam Jones. They were great pitchers, really. Each one was a little different from the other, but they were all teally great. Great. Pennock and Hoyt were great money pitchers. Wait Hoyt was a terrific oompetitor.

Hoyt pitched me the first game I play~~ed~~ in at Buffalo. He was the 16 year old Schoolboy from Erasmus High School in Brooklyn then. And he's big, too, good looking kid. And boy was he a good looking pitcher. He could throw those high hard ones. First guy I ever hit against. Hit the ball, but didn't get a hit off him.

First game in the big leagues, Carl Mays was there. First pitcher I caught in my first game. In St. Louis. Got a foul ~~kick~~ tip and hit my little finger and raised it up some. Had to leave the game about the 6th

or seventh inning. Had a sinker ball. Went down deep wih it. But he was slipping off at that time, too. Never mentioned Chapman much. I guess he just figured that it was one of those things. See Mays was fast, and his ball was heavy and when he hit him in the head, well. But he never mentioned it much. Certainly didn't affect his pitching any. He was a great competitor on the field. Off the field he wasn't mean, but on the field, he didn't like to lose, you know. Well, in those days, they didn't have any protection at all. Ad I've seen fellows get hit, accidentally you know, but shoot, they'd just get up and play. Now they take them right to the hospital and have them x-ray'd and held for observation, and all. I^N the old days, they never thought of taking you to a hospital. In fact x Rays were practically unknown in the early days. And when they did come in, they were a lot of money and the clubs, I guess , just wouldn't spend that kind of money just cause you got hit.

We had a trainer, if you could call him that. We never had the diathermy machines of anything of that sort. The trainer took care of your paraphenalia and hung up your sweatshirts. Used alcohol , that's all, if you got hit with a ball. In those days, you know, why if your arm was feeling good, why you never let anyone fool around with it. You were always afraid they might hurt it, see. Now, of course, they lay on that

on that table and get thermal rubs and all that kind of thing. In the old days, they'd never devote that much time to you. And these men today are all chiropractors or osteopaths or something. Have degrees to practice that. But in the old days, they were just like yourself and myself. Some of the old ballplayers even became trainers. Just used to rub your arm and stretch it a bit. They said, if your arm was good, you never went into the trainer. Never let anyone ~~kk~~ fool around with it.

Course they all had trainers, even in the minors. But he was just a friend, someone who wanted to be around the clubhouse, you know. Now, at the Yankees, they had Doc Woods when I first went there. He was a trainer and he did- know something about rubbing arms and all. You know, if there was a broken arm or anything, why a doctor would have to come to set it. ~~Nowkax~~ They could take care of your need, of course, but not as good as they do today, with the machines and the whirlpools and all. Which is great. Wonderful. Training rooms look like hospitals now. Even give you pills now, if you have a headache or something.

Now a pitcher was brought up different then, you might say. See, it's all the way you've been educated. In those days, only had about five pitchers in the staff and three probably were the regulars and the other fellow sjust filled in. And they were supposed to and took pride in going

nine innings. No relief specialists then. They were expected to pitch nine innings and even more. Sometimes they pitched double headers on a Sunday, you know. That was a common occurrence, to have a good pitcher go in for both games. Used to pitch every third day, and sometimes every two. That's just the way they were brought up.

See, they didn't score so many runs, then. If you scored 5 or 6 runs, you were really having a big day, then. Now a 5 run lead is nothing. I imagine that was another reason that they didn't use up too many pitcher, you see.

Naw, you didn't hear about the sore arm then. They had them, I guess, but there used to be a saying: Pitch it out, you know. Which is, probably, many times, just the wrong thing to do, but that's the way they did it.

I used to catch knuckle balls, butterfly balls, course now they have those big gloves, and that's a help. Cause a knuckle ball isn't like a fast ball or a curve. You never get a real good grip on it. It kind of lands in there and ~~spring~~ spins around. All you feel like you might do it knock ~~it~~ it down and keepnit in front ~~of~~ you ~~do~~ you would get a hold of it. The big glove gives you more space, if it's doing tricks.

Course, to me, a big glove would have been an insinuation that you can't catch too well! Cause we caught them with those little gloves. Even

even smaller than the regular gloves they use. We might have had as many passed balls, but we still caught them pretty good. You'd feel kind of self-conscious in those days. You'd never think of getting a bigger glove. Like telling everyone you couldn't hold a ball. Lot of pride in it, see. Only a few today, still, that use the big ones. See, if you're a good receiver, you're supposed to catch any fellow that throws any kind of ball. And you don't kneed all this other stuff....course it helps, but its alwo more cumbersone, too.

When I first started, on the Buffalo club they had four or five fellows that threw spitters. But we never had any fear of that. Didn't faze us a bit. Never gave a thought to the spitball. Only thing was, that it was a little harder to handle due to the wetness on it. But as for being afraid, well, it was just part of the job. Didn't even think about it. Only it makes you look bad, if you can't catch a ball, amybe that's why some catcher's didn't like it, that's all. Some of them, shoot, they'd have 14 to 16 passed balls each year. See, that 's looks bad, on the record.

And, of course, when you're catching that ball, and you catch the wet part, it skips and slides, and when you throw it, if you have to throw to second or something, you've got to be careful to handle only the dry part cause, if you throw with the wet part, why it's liable to go anyplace.

We used to call those pitchers "cheaters" if they put anything in their gloves, you know. Used to put emory and pebbles in there, you know. Used to cut the face of the glove out, you know, pitchers did. That's ~~xxxx~~ where they put the emory papers and everything. Rip the gall on the buckle of the glove, had buckles on the gloves in those days. Course, we called them "cheaters" but we didn't figure it was cheating in those days. You could do anythig you wanted with a ball in my day. But you'd have to keep your head up ~~w~~ith one of those fellows. But you didn't really fear them. Always looking for it, you know. Used to use, like Cicotte, parafin in the glove and make the ball do tricks. Used to be black as the ace of spades, too. Used licorace, tobacco juice, anything and everything. Used to give the public a "pass" if they'd throw the ball back, or find it in the street and bring it back. Course, In Buffalo, used to have special fellows would ~~xxxx~~ chase the ball, take thhem away from the people who caught them in the stands. Nowad~~s~~ys they keep everything for souvenirs. Clubs don't seem to mind.

Course, when I was with the Yankees in the 20's you were bothered all the time for autographs, but not anything the way it is now. Maybe 10 or 15 kids would be waiting when we'd get to the ballfield. Gets kind of tiresome, though, especailly when they give you little scaps of paper,

and not a book or anything. But Babe Ruth was great on this. He was great with the kids. I've seen him many times stand there for half an hour or so, just standing there signing autographs, 150, 200 autographs, every time you move.

Yes, that's a picture of Joe E. Brown, from that show "Hi Jinks", about 1926, I think. Great fan. Friends for years. He used to work out with the Yankee, you know. Used to ~~pxk~~ [play second base. He'd go down to Florida to work out with them. Have everybody laughing, you know, had to stop coming out on the field som much. Played minor league ball. Great fan. Frustrated ballplayer, you might say. Would have rather'd play ball than been in show business, I think.

Course Babe Ruth did think he should maaage the Yankees, yes. I do think managers are imoportant in this way: they have to know their strategy, they have to know their ballplayers, to know how to handle them. I'd say that that's the main thing, on the outside, handling and understanding ballplayers. On the field, why , some things will be right and some wrong. But you're making some move, see. But, like, take Huggins. Gee, he had all these big stars to handle, and he handle'd them wonderful, really did. H w as a good manager, even if Ruth didn't think so. Hug fined Babe \$5,000 one year, you know. But he had a good ballclub and knew how to handle tjem/

Bet your life. He knew how to handle them. They didn't fool around. They'd get a little out of hand and he'd get them together, you know, call a meeting and tell them they'd have to do this and that, and they'd start winning again. They weren't a real carousing club though. Even Ruth, has such a reputation for carousing, but there'd be plenty of nights he'd be sitting in the hotel. No, that team wasn't any worse than any other ball club in that respect. They were successful. I know that the pitchers that were going to pitch the next day, why you couldn't get them out for love now money. They wouldn't go out anywhere on the night before they pitched. Might go out the night after they pitched and stay out a little late or something but not the night before. Huggins must have been a good manager. Won a lot of pennants, 21, 22, ^{'23}/24, ~~26~~, 27, 28...Course he died in '30. Of the eight years he was with them when I was there, we only finished once out of the money, we finished seventh once.

But everyone thinks they can manage, you know. And everyone thinks they know baseball, but when you come down to it and you're sitting on that bench and you have one guess -- it's got to be the right one. You've got to know what you're doing. Can't make too many wrong moves in the big leagues, maybe in the minors, but not in the big leagues. Too many outstanding bo-bo's and you don't last long as a manager. Well, it's a personnel

too. I've seen managers take a fellow out with ~~xxx~~ two strikes on him and put another fellow in. And the pinch hitter hits a home run and the manager looks like a million dollars, but if he strikes out....why he made the wrong move, and all.

Got to keep the ballplayers happy and know when to work them and when not to and when to talk and when not to talk. And if you have nine good men, you play them every day if you're winning, but if you're losing, then the fellows on the bench resent them, cause the fellow on the bench always thinks he could be better than the fellow playing. That's when you have to keep them contented. Know when to put them in every once in a while. And knowing when to change the pitchers, you know.

Now, the percentage (right handers against left handers, and all) in certain places is good. But I think it's a little overdone. I don't think a left handed hitter will hit a right hander over a period of time any better. But sometimes you play the percentages sometimes, of course. Right handed hitter with a short field, you know. Take the case of Lefty Grove, great left handed pitcher, he had a tough time beating the Washington club and they had three or four....Goose Goslin, Rice and these fellows, Joe Judge, good left hand hitters and they used to murder Lefty Grove. Babe Ruth used to hit Grove pretty good. It's a little overdone, this taking them out,

But at times its good strategy cause you're playing the percentage and you're playing the ball to be pulled, or something like that, that's great, but I think it is a little overdone, cause they don't hit so much. Now some left handed pitchers, couldnt hit a left handed hitter with a paddle, no matter who would be pitching.No, you never heard about Di Maggio being taken out for a right handed pitcher, or Foxx, being taken out for left hander.

Made a big story when Sam Bird was once put in for Ruth, was so unusual. Nobody ever hit for Cobb, Eddie Collins and all those fellows. Course the trend is now to platoon. Stengle had such great success with the Yankees doing that that other clubs tried the same thing, but if you don't have the ballplayers, you can't do that, and you'd end up losing everything.

You know, too, it takes some of your initiative and confidence away if they take you out every time you're up at bat, you know. Confidence in yourself as a hitter would be gone after a while.

Lou Gehrig would have made a good manager, yes. He was a very serious minded fellow, you know. See, talk about managing is talking about several different things. There have been wonderful players who have made terrible managers. I gussess because they were perfectionists about themselves and expected the same from everyone. Like everyone couldn't be a Cobb, or a

Ruth or Walter Johnson. And Joynson was a great pitcher, should have known about pitchers and everthing else, but he didn't really make it as a manager. Well, you can't pitck a man and say, well he'd be a great manager, cause when he gets to be a manager, he may have a great disposition , but in handling 9 positions and 26 men into the bargain and do all the other work as well, you've got to be a diplomat with the newspaper men, a pulib relations man, you've got to be a good fellow and not blow your stack too much, just onee in a while. You've got to be in between . Gee, some fellows look like they'd be great and then when they get to be managers, they gchange altogether. So you never know. They caan go from one extreme to antoehre. And the one you never thought ~~xxx~~ would be the great one, why he turns out to be the great one. Even if he never played much big league ball...that doesn't seem to make any difference (like Alston) and they turn out to be great, with good ballclubs (like Joe McCarthy , who was a great manager with the Yankees, but when went to Boston, he didn't have the same ballclub, though he was still the same manager, didn't change that, but....) and take Casey stengle. He was a great manager with the Yankees, but he goes to the Mets and he coesn't have the material, and all the stragegy ~~or xxx~~ in the world isn't worth a nickle if you' don't have the men to execute them. He knows as much baseball now as he cid when he

~~next~~ was younger with the Yankees, but he doesn't have the horses now, that's all. You've seen fellows like Stankey...now he did pretty well for a while there. But if you haven't got the fellows to pitch for you, well....

Well, Lou , I knew him very well. He was the kind of boy, that if you had a son, he's the kind of a guy you'd like your son to be. Very modest, never would brag, never popping off about what he could do. And he was a great hitter and fine first baseman. Great competitor, played very hard all the time. He was what you'd call a fine boy. You know, his actions, his mannerisms, everything he did. Never heard of him betting mad or anything like that. He was wonderful to his folkd, his mom and dad. Just a wonderful kid and still had a lot of ability. He was shy for a while until he started to become the star. When he was in the shadow of Ruth, see, yxx he was younger. He'd always ask Ruth's advice on things but as he got older and began to be the star, then he bacame a little more outspoken, now I don't mean popping off, but he'd be able to take over a little more than he idd before. He was gracious, well met. Everybody liked the guy. Very congenial with everyone. Wasn't fresh or anything. Just a nice kid, nice boy. He liked fun, of course, but there was a difference..... He could later on, get up and talk at banquets and things... I wouldn't say he was a great orator or anything, but he could do that.

Then in later ~~xxxx~~ life, you know, he went into the movies and could do things on his feet, if he wanted to. But he just talked baseball, you know. Wonderful with the kids, too. When he first became a Yankee, he'd always be playing stickball with the kids in the parking~~ing~~~~ink~~ after the ball game. Morningside Park, near where he lived, you know. Yeah, he was great with the kids.

Babe was too. He'd do anything for a kid. Most ballplayers are that way. I've never seen a ballplayer push a kid aside and not grant his request. Always very kind to kids. You know, I can understand if you don't sign autographs all the time, especially if you've just lost a ballgame and all. So you say, well, I'll get you tomorrow, but you don't every push them off. But some kids are fresh. I don't like a fresh kid. Push something in your face as say "Sign this" you know, like you're supposed to sign it, and all, ~~ex~~ no please.

Course, just because a man played in my era, doesn't mean they were all ~~stars~~ stars. I think that fellows today have things a little easier today. Have things more built to order for them. You know, trainers, and flying. In the old days, you kind of shifted for yourself more. We didn't have all these conveniences they do now. Course it's better now, much better. We used to travel on day coaches from city to city. Like from Buffalo to

Syracuse. With the windows open and all and the cinders coming in and the smoke. ~~xxx~~ Couldn't get in the best hotels, then. Had to stay at second rate hotels. Wouldn't allow you in. Baseball players had the reputation of being a rough and tough bunch, you know. Were always out raising the dickens and all that kind of stuff. Now, they didn't get in because they did things differenty. Now you take Mantle and Musial and Mays and Mcovey and all. Good players, all. They could easily have played back in the old days. They would have had to play a different style of game, though. Now, you can't tell me that fellows like Spahn, and Ford and Roberts, these great pitchers, that they couldn't have been great in the old days! Just imagine if these fellows could fool with the ball, like they did in the old days, with the stuff they have! Feller, Drysdale, Koufax, my goodness, why they'd be just as great as the fellows back there. They would have had to play a different game, that's agl. The hitter would'nt be going for the home runs, and they played a different style of ballgame, that's all. Hit and run, squeeze, bunt, and steal, all those plays. They were very important in the old days, cause one run was so impostant. In the old days if you got one or two runs, why you were pretty sure of winning, you know. Use d to ~~xxx~~ steal bases as soon as you got on , in the old days. Catcher would throw, sometimes, eight or nine times in a game, to second base,

And they'd throw to first, too. Anyplace, to try to catch them off. See, different style of ball. If these fellows were playing back in the days of McGraw, and they had to punt and they didn't bunt, well, that's just too bad, they'd take you out of the game for sure, if you couldn't like Baker. Hit 12 or 13 runs one time and gets the nickname Home Run Baker. Well, shoot these fellows, ^{even} ~~xxxxx~~ little bits of fellows now, shortstops, they hit 25 home runs a year now. But take Musial...he could have hit those old pitchers just as good, even maybe better, who knows.

Pitchers were sort of clannish in the days gone by. They were a separate group. They'd get together and talk baseball all the time. I'll tell you, the only thing you heard about in the clubhouse was baseball. Never heard about the new car or the new stock they just bought or anything like that, then. Course they never had the money like they do now, to invest and all. But today, the boys, well they talk about things that are upper most in their minds. They get big money and they talk about money. Don't thing you could fool a player today like they could back in the old days, with crooked deals and schemes and all. Today, he got someone to advise them, all these pension plans and insurance and all.

Baseball was your life, back then. You didn't have any outside influences then. Never went to a bank. Never heard of. Maybe once in a while, but they didn't have fun ^{banquet} going to a ~~bank~~ all the time, like they do now. Used to be, in the off season, if you were invited to a banquet, you'd say, thank you very much, and sit down. Well, nowadays, a lot of players they expect to speak for 15 - 20 minutes at a banquet, answer all questions, and all. That was never heard of before. They tell about signs and all. But if you ever gave out that kind of secret about baseball, why my goodness, they'd fire you. Give away signs, they'd fire you. Now, ask a player, what signs do you use. Kid says the signs. Well, they expect that nowadays. When they invite you to a banquet, they expect you to give them a whole show. I've been on my feet for an hour and a half recently answering questions and all. Now in the old days that was never heard of. They wouldn't even think to invite you, unless you lived in the town where a special banquet was held, or something. But you'd just say, thanks for inviting me, or thanks for the present, and you'd sit down. And that was very good. In fact, they're stopping a few of the ballplayers from taking on too much of this stuff. On TV and all. See, you have to be careful about what you say, you know. It comes out in print.

Old time player was a different breed. See, he lived differently. It was a closed circle. Didn't want too much of other people stuck by themselves. Today, these fellows go out and mingle with the show people and all that. It's altogether different. But the good ones today, and I work with them you know, these kids, the majority of them that are stars, could have been stars back in the old days, too. But they would have had to change the way that they play baseball, cause they did things differently. We never played the outfield 410 feet from home plate! Speaker played behind second base. Hit a little line drive single, and he'd catch it! Today, if you play the outfield, some of these balls go 410 feet, and you got to catch it! Couldn't have played that kind of baseball back in the old days. If you ever played 410 feet from the plate, why you'd never come close to hardly any of the balls. They'd all be in front of you. So you see, the style of baseball has changed, but the fellows themselves are the same, except for the way they live. They live great today, with all the big cars and big money and these outside jobs. You couldn't get an outside job in the old days. Ww

Weren't any jobs about. Had to take a job no one else wanted if you wanted to keep busy. And most of them didn't do anything, loafed all winter. Today, all these guys, gee whiz, they do public relations jobs with companies. Work

in all ~~xxx~~ kinds of companies.

Does make them a little more independent, though. Back in the old days, theI remember back in the White Sox, when they threw the game, the scandal. They'd say, take it or leave it. Well, the fellows didn't have any other livelihood, they had to play. Now, today, some of these fellows, gee whiz, when they get to be stars, they make more money on the outside than they even do out of baseball, see!

But in the old days, oh no. You couldn't...if you got a \$25 a week job then, which was fairly good money...you were lucky. Most of them just couldn't get a job in the winter time. What could they do. Know what I mean. I used to sell insurance in the winter. That was the only thing you could do. Sell insurance or get a part time job if someone was willing to let you have it. Weren't that many jobs about.

We used to go hunting in the winter, for a couple of months. And then just loaf, and work out in the gym and then the first thing you'd know spring training was around again. So you didn't worry about having a job, too much. Today, these kids, most of them are building up their own business, bowling alleys and all. They get jobs right soon as the season is over... they're right into a job soon as the season is over.

After they were finished playing ball, you know , when they got older, why they'd be guards in a prison, or a foreman or laborer on a construction crew. Any job they could get, they would. Some of them made a lot of money out of real estate and some were very frugal and saved their money, but most of them went into very ordinary jobs, in factories, and all. See, they didn't make too much, and they didn't save. They didn't have anything like a pension plan at that time, and they just got jobs like, with the city govt. in a park or something. Get anything they could handle.

My first year , went into the '23 Series. '26, '27 and '28 , too.

In '26, I was in the left field bull pen, when Lazzeri got up. I was down in the left field h[corner. We all thought it was a home run, you know. But it went around the pole. Foul. Other side of the pole, I'd say not even a foot. See, I had this broken arm and in '25 I caught 95 straight ball games ~~from~~ for the Yanks. That was the year they broke the team up.

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Took Wally Schang out, Addie out, Roseland, Koenig on shortstop. Bill Coombs in centerfield. Traded Whitey Wood. Broke the team up. I went in to catch same day that Gehrig broke in as second baseman. He never missed the game from then until he had his trouble. I caught Bennie Freigstader)(?)

Then, during the winter, I went to spring training the following year, '26, over the winter, through an injury or something, my arm went

My arm went bad on me. I couldn't throw. Well, they had traded Wally Schang to St. Louis and figured me for first string catcher. They'd given me a nice raise, and everything, and I went to Spring Training, and by gosh, I couldn't throw.

I was 28 years old. That was a terrific thing. Cause I'd had a real good arm up till then. That was the first year I ever had a bad arm. Used to get sore sometimes, but never like that before. I couldn't throw. Couldn't throw to second base.

Well, I went along like that until way up in June of '26. July of '26 the hot weater came in and I started catching and I caught every game until 10 days before the series started and we were battling Cleveland for the pennant. We were only one and a half games ahead of them. Well, we went ~~unto~~ into Cleveland for a series and they ~~best~~ beat us the first game which brought us down to a game or a half a game ahead. Well, second game, I come up in the second ining to hit, and Euly threw a ball at my head. I had two strikes and nothing on him and leaned over, cause they used to curve the ball away from you if they were ahead of you. So, I'm looking for the ball on the outside and he threw right at ~~my~~ head. Well, I put my right arm up to protect myself. It hitkme arm and poked the bone right through~~k~~ and hit the forehead. So I was out of the Series and I saw the

series from the bench or the bull pen. Used to go down to the bull pen cause I knew all the pitchers and everything.

Well, anyway , I was down there when Alexander struck out old Lazzeri. I wasn't even wearing a uniform then. Sitting in the bull pen in civilian clothes.

Then in '27, same thing happened again. Arm didn't come around until June or July. But I caught a game in the third game of that World Series. Caught Pittgrass against Pitts^{field}grass and Pennock for a couple of innings in the third game. Course, he beat them four straight.

Then in '28, same thing again. Went back in the spring and couldn't catch but a few games till the hot weather hit. Then I caught all the games in '28 right into the series. And we beat Chi cago four straight again.

In '29, well I only caught 56 games. In '30, when Dickey was coming in, caught about 35 games. I was 32 years old and I broke Dickey in. I tried to treat him just like Schang had treated me. Taught him everything I knew about the game. He had his faults, too, you know. Dickey wasn't always a great catcher. We'd try, a couple of us, to help him. In fact, he gave me credit in the Sporting News for helping him. You don't really resent the kids, you know. To a certain extent, I guess you do, but you

always got to remember that you took someone else's job and you know that (course, if my arm had remained great, and not got bad like it did, then I'd have battled him for the job, maybe you wouldn't have ever heard of Dickey, or not for a few years anyway, cause you never even knew he was around when I was going good, see) but you know that you took someone else's job away, too, and that's the way it goes. But as it was, I couldn't catch and he was just coming up from the minor leagues, these little places like Salt Lake and all and he wasn't any great shakes as a catcher, in those days. Then we broke him in and of course, we taught him all we knew. Taught him all the things he wasn't very proficient in, and he became a good one. And he could always hit, which helped him. And then he became, in time, a great catcher, and a Hall of Famer. But, I guess that if my arm had been in good shape and I could really hold the job, then I would have been battling to keep him out of there, see. But due to the fact that I couldn't catch, then I felt, well I really should help the fellow cause if he can help us to win.....

Course, back then, when I was playing, in the old days, noone ever taught you a thing. You learned by yourself. Learned by your mistakes and learned from when the manager would ~~xxxx~~ bowl you out and give you a good going over about the play you made. That was the way you learned to

to play ball. They didn't teach you the way you do today. No teaching catchers all the fundamentals of the game and how to do this and how to do that. In those days, you did the teaching yourself. And the fellow managing or the occasional coach, if you went to him, he'd tell you, but if you didn't go to him, he'd never come over and help you. But today they have all those tutors and specialists that take the catchers alone. And infield coaches, outfield coaches, pitching coaches, hitting coaches. Everything.

Back in the old days, they had two coaches, or more likely, only one. He had to know everything about every position.

But it's the same today with those bonus babies. If a bonus boy breaks in they always ask them if they resent him. Well, they don't resent him. Maybe in ~~the~~ a certain sense they do, but some of these boys didn't get a nickel and some get 135,000 just for signing. But they feel mostly, I think well, I just wish we could have gotten it, see. They don't resent it.

I caught that game that Babe Ruth hit home run number 60! See, nobody figured that 60 was going to stand. We felt that Ruth ~~might~~ might just hit 65 the next year. Cause, see, he was the only real home run hitter. And Babe himself never even thought about it. Never thought, well I'll try to hit 90 homers the years, or anything like that. He just hit and hit and if he hit 60, well the next year, he probably figured, Well I'll probably

hit 65 or 70, who knows? But he never hit that many again, but we thought he might. Wasn't that important. I never even realized that I had caught that game. The 60th home run didn't mean anything. Cause I was catching and looking out for my own averages and the things I wanted to do, not worrying much about Babe, cause he could take care of himself. But, yes, I did catch that 60th home run game, and never knew it till someone published it in a paper, put the box score in and I saw that I'd caught the game. Wasn't any special event. No celebration or anything. He was always breaking his own record, see, and they didn't stand up and cheer or anything. He never said a thing about it. Not even when he was going around the bases or anything. Cause he figured, well tomorrow I'll hit another one. He had no one to battle, see. Well, Gehrig hit 46 the year he hit 60, but that's 13 less.

And in the '28 World Series I caught the game that the Babe hit those ³ ~~four~~ home runs in. See, he hit two and then a left ~~hitter~~ ^{hand pitcher} and he made a quick pitch at Babe and would have struck him out, but it wasn't allowed then in the American League, it was a "no-ball" call. So, the next ball he hit into the centerfield bleachers. That was the second or third home run

Tomy Lazzeri was an epileptic but I don't think Alexznder was. That's the way they found his body, you know, he'd fallen down these steps. He'd been alone, his wife was away for several days and when she ame home, she found his body. Had a fit come on him, I suppose, and had fallen down the steps. He had them every spring. Every spring. Never had them during the season, that I know of. Never in the clubhouse, anyway. Maybe when he was home, I don't know. But every spring, he'd have one ~~xxxx~~ coming down on the train. Tough on him. But we figured it was a good thing, cause everytime he'd have one, we'd win a pennant! But he'd get to froth at the mouth and all this kind of thing. Then he would come out of it and be just fine. I never did see him during the season once. Never during a game. Never under the pressure of the race or anything. Why you'd never know anything was wrong. He never worried about it, too much, I don't think. He was a very witty guy. Tony was full of fun, in a kind of soft way, you know. But he was always up to something. Wonderful fellow. Quiet, but always up to some trick. But he never seemed to worry about it . Never seemed to have anything happen on the field or in the clubhouse.

Alex, of course, he was a terrific drinker. That was something different. Didn't keep that at home. See, he finally died of cancer, but I never remember him being epileptic. He was a bad drinker. Great even

when he was drinking. A lot of fellows, you figure, if they didn't drink, would have made a difference, made them great or something, you know. But Alex, it made him little more loose and all. You'd wonder how he could even see the plate, but he could hit the eye of a needle with that ball. He drank all his life, and most of the games he pitched he was under the influence of drink. But he was great. It's very rare.

And Babe too, he did things that the next fellow couldn't possibly do and stay with it. He was, in a way, a superhuman man. Constitution was terrific. Never saw a man that in '25, is laid out with an operation and... I'd never before seen Babe at all sick. Why he'd say he had a little indigestion all the time and he'd belch or something, but never really sick in his life. Played with his wrist bandaged once in a while and hurt his ankle once, but he never really was sick. And oh, was he a good outfielder. That control, never throwing to a wrong base. Beautiful throws. Really good arm...you know he was a really great pitcher. Oh, yeah, he could throw that ball in very accurate and it was soft, you know, come in to you nice and easy, not one of those wild ones, you know. Very accurate.

Course Meusel had a stronger arm. Seen him stand in the outfield and throw flatfoot and right over your head. Threw a much heavier ball than Babe. Babe's balls were always very light, but very accurate.

Now, see, Earl Coats was a really great centerfielder. He couldn't throw, had a very poor arm, but was a great outfielder. Could go a country mile and get a ball. Could cover two positions. But he just never got the publicity that some like Babe and Meusal did. The papers would only print what Babe did. Lazzeri and fellows like that could hit two home runs in a ballgame and the Babe might hit one, but it would come out in print, Babe hits home run. They dused to kid about it. You were always under a shadow when you were on a club with a fellow like that. He was the one they were paying the money to and he was the one the papers and all were interested in writing about. He'd draw the crowds.

Even gehrig, when he was going great, he never got the publicity that Babe Ruth got . See, Babe was such a colorful figure. Not only as a player, but the things he did. He was always in a jam somewhere along the line. He was always good copy.....and he could produce for you, see. He'd hit home runs, win games inthe ninth and he'd get all the publicity. Everybody forgets about everyone except Ruth and maybe Gehrig.

Every once in a while someone would say something about Pennock if he won a game, but Ruth and Gehrig would be the ones would get the headlines. Well, that's natural.

People don't remember anyone except Ruth or Gehrig, either. May remember me or Lazzeri if you mention the name. Don't remember Earl Coombs, Haney. Couldn't tell you who played shortstop or third base. That's the difference. But it's the same in any town.

A ballplayer's really crazy if he doesn't get along with the newspapermen. He should keep his mouth shut if he can't. Cause the writers can make or break you in a way. They ~~fix~~ can write so much bad stuff about you, give you bad deals on hits and that and if they don't like you they take hits away from you, don't write you up, ignore you. So anyone.... course Williams, he was so great, they had to write him up, but the newsmen, got to get along with them.

The Babe was great with them. We had some swell newspaper men then, too. Fellows like Slocum, Rainey, Ford Frick, Seeger (Telly Seeger (?)) Frick joined us as a cub reporter and here he is commissioner! But, yeah, the Babe always got along with them. Didn't get real friendly with them, and you didn't hang around them just to get a write up, you know, cause they have to write you up if you're good, whether they want to or not.

But you can get so mad, you can pop some of them. Some of the stuff they print is putird. They can ride you so, that sometimes it does make you damn sore, like telling the readers that a fellows' playing down, not giving

not giving his best, and all that. Well, I mean, the fellow might be doing the best he can, but that kind of publicity the fans read and get on you and you start to slump off.

But to be very hostile towards a newspaper man is crazy for an athlete. McGraw always said, when you have a bad day, don't read the paper. When you have a good day, buy it, but don't read it on a bad day, cause you're going to read a bad write-up. Lot of fellows write sensational things, you know, and don't care, probably, who they hurt. They want to get the sensational stuff. Well, that's their livelihood.

I read about being traded from the Yankees in the papers, before they even notified me, see. One of the fellows picked up a paper and reads that I was traded to the Browns. Well, the Browns bought me and sent me to Milwaukee, in '31. That was when McCarthy came in to manage. Schalky had wanted that job, but losing 10 games in that '30 season put him out of a job and McCarthy came in and it was between Pennock and me as to who was going to stay and who would be let out. See, they had Dickey and all then. Finally, they sold me to St. Louis and then they sent me to Milwaukee. I was there for two weeks and then they called me back to St. Louis and I stayed there for '31 and '32. Bill Kelliver was managing then.

Then, in the spring of '33, they released me and I went to Little Rock

in the Southern League and I stayed there for a month or so till the season opened. My arm still bothered me , still couldn't throw. But Little Rock wasn't drawing too well, so they let three or four of us who were making good money, go.

Well, I wasn't out of a job but a couple of hours when George Weiss called me from New York and wanted to know if I'd go and manage for them up in Washington, Penna. He wired me and called me. So I went up there and managed two years for them. D League. Rough. But I had some good, cute kids over there. Then two years later I went to Joplin, Western Assn. Class A.

In the D League, we played all twilight ball, every game was at 5 PM. Could just about see. See they were all factory towns we played at, you know, and they'd get out at four oclock, so we'd start the game at five. We ~~played~~ played till about 8 oclock, still light, but if it got dark, we'd have to call the game or something. We'd travel in cars, cause the jumps were only 40 or 50 miles. Had a station wagon and another car and we traveled that way. Only had about 15 ballplayers. We'd dress at home ~~and~~ at the hotel and then, why we'd pile in the cars and then bring them back. Do that every day. Saturdays, Sundays, we'd play in the afternoons. Penna. State Assn. Class D.

~~1931, 1932~~ 1936 or so, out in Joplin, we had lights then and we'd play all night games. '36 and '37. I liked managing. Liked to work with kids. Got in four playoffs in four years managing. Didn't win, though. Lost every playoff in the seventh game! But see, I had some good ballplayers. They sent me some dandys! Had Joe Banks, Pete Suder (played 2 base for the A's) picked him up free agent. Lindell, Sturmk, Deegan went to Cincinnati. Had a lot of good ones.

Then I went, in '38 and '39, went to Neward, as a coach for John Newel. We won two pennants up there. Coaching's good but you don't have the same authority, you know. I liked to manage. It's your team, and the kids are your kids. But coaching was good. In the money both years, you know.

Course I'd been up in a good bracket when I was playing. About \$10,000 in those days, which was a pretty good amount in those days. Real big stars might get \$22,00 or so and the regular players about \$7,000 or so. Didn't have any income tax, wither, see. That was good money. \$15,000 in those days would be about \$35,000 today. Just imagine, Babe making \$80,000. Today, that's about \$150 - 200,000 !

That '27 Yankee team, that was really great. For overall picture, with that team in its prime I'd be willing to play any team and I'd think we'd do a pretty good job. We were great offensively. Defensively we weren't too bad either, with Lazzeri, Gehrig, Coombs, Ruth, Meusel in the outfield. And pitchers like Hoyt and Jones and Moore and Pittgrass. That was a pretty good pitching staff. You threw a good pitcher at them every day. Didn't have any second stringers in there. All great.

And Fred Merkle and Charlie O'Leary were coaching on that '27 team. Then Art Fletcher came in, in '28. Merkle would still blow his stack if you pushed him too far if you were ribbing him, you know. Every once in a while.

Oh, there were so many great ballplayers that I was with. Played with and against almost all the really great ones. I guess you'd have to put fellows like Ruth, Cobb, Speaker, DiMaggio, Meusel...you have so many really great ones that you couldn't make up a team, just one team of greats.

But I'd say that Ray Schalk was really a great receiver. He could handle the pitchers so well. He was only a little guy, but a great receiver and thrower. And Cochran, gee, he was terrific. Schalk wasn't a great hitter, but he could always bunt and drag and get those runs in. Dickey

and Cochran , they could really hit. That Cochran used to lead off and everything else. He was fast on his feet, boy. He'd hit 325, 350, all the time. And Dickey could drive the runs in. But there's been better catchers, as far as receiving goes, fellows like Schalk and that type. Lopez, was another like Schalk and Sherman Lowry (?) with the White Sox.

But Schalk, he used to ~~take~~ take those throws from the outfield one handed, you know. Oh, he was great , great! Crandall and Campenella, they're good, too. That Campenella, he's the old-style Schalk catcher.

Why the infielders today, they ~~take~~ take two or three minutes to practice. Old days, we used to stay out there for 10 minutes. You'd think sometimes that we didn't want anyone else in there. But today, they don't care. In the old days, they'd put on a show for you. I used to love to see a good throwing catcher, cause I was a catcher myself. I used to love to see the plays and the catcher throw that ball out, which I used to do myself. Gehrig and I used to put on a real ~~was~~ show in Yankee stadium. Used to get more applause in the "2 oclock infield" than in the ballgame. We'd really put some pepper in it, see. But they don't do that ~~now~~ now and the managers don't insist on it, see. We used to love to do it. Remember the House of David when they used to pass the ball around? Well, people

well, people loved it, but they don't do it anymore. They figure it's making a joke out of the game. It's changed, but the people still love it.

I've been coaching since then. Since 1940. Went to the Braves and then in '46 came over here to the Phillies. Been here almost 20 years! Came here with Ban Chapman. He became the manager and wanted me to be coach. Good thing I came, too, cause I been here so long. Funny, John Quinn, who is now General Manager, was then GM of the Braves. I told him that I had an opportunity to go with another club, ~~but~~^{good} opportunity. Well, he told me that inasmuch as I had a wife and kids, that I should take the job that had the most to offer, the best opportunity. So I did. Been here ever since.

See, I'm public relations for them, mostly. For the Phillies. All the banquets. Stopped coaching about three years ago. Had a heart attack, but the doctors didn't want me to do it, so I didn't go down to Florida that year. I make about 100 banquets a year. Had four just this week, and another one tonight. All for the Phillies.

I enjoy it very much. Meet a lot of people. I know what I'm talking about and it isn't any effort for me to tell the stories and all. But getting there and getting back, that's the problem.