

Baseball in Wartime Presents the Baseball WWII Timeline

Gary Bedingfield, editor of the Baseball in Wartime website, e-newsletter and blog, and author of *Baseball's Dead of World War II*, was interviewed by Joe Boesch on WGGB 1240AM SportsRadio New York on January 10.

Happy New Year to you all!

I know this newsletter is a little late but I hope you will find the wait has been worthwhile. For some time I've been working on a baseball/World War II timeline and I'm pleased to be able to present the finished results in this issue.

The timeline covers the years 1939 to 1945 and includes all major events in pro baseball, service baseball and the war.

Compiling the timeline has been extremely useful to me in piecing everything together—I hope it helps you too!

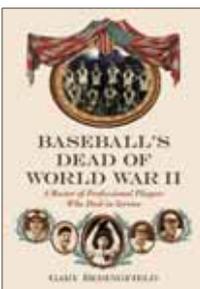
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You can listen to the 30-minute interview at the Baseball in Wartime blog
baseballinwartime.blogspot.com/2010/01/gary-bedingfield-on-new-york-baseball.html



NAS Kaneohe Bay Klippers 1945



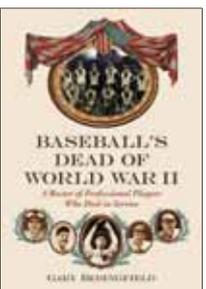
Baseball's Dead of World War II

A Roster of Professional Players Who Died in Service

by Gary Bedingfield

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WWII Baseball Timeline 1939 to 1941

1939

September 1

Germany invades Poland.

September 3

Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa declare war on Germany.

September 10

Canada declares war on Germany.

October 8

Yankees clinch the World Series in four games against the Reds.

November 4

In response to the growing turmoil in Europe and Asia, U.S. Congress passes the Neutrality Act.

November 12

Dom DiMaggio, the youngest of the three DiMaggio brothers, is acquired for \$40,000 by the Boston Red Sox from the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League.

December 7



Lou Gehrig, who played his last game for the Yankees on April 30, 1939, and was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) on June 19, is elected unanimously to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

1940

February

French White, shortstop with Anniston of the Southeastern League and former baseball captain at the University of Chicago, enlists and begins training as a flying cadet at the Naval Reserve Training Station at Glenview, Illinois.

April 16

Bob Feller pitches a 1-0 opening day no-hitter against the Chicago White Sox.

May 10

Germany invades France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands

May 26

Britain evacuates 300,000 surrounded British and French troops from Dunkirk, France.

June 10

The Italian government ends its neutrality and declares war on France and Britain.

June 14

Germans enter Paris.

June 17

Hugh Bedient Jr, son of the former major league pitcher, Hugh Bedient, who pitched a handful of games with the Evansville Bees of the Three-I League, is killed while serving with the Army Air Corps when two twin-engined bombers collide above a residential area of Queens, New York.

June 22

France surrenders to Germany.

July 9

The National League defeats the American League, 4-0, in the All-Star game at Sportsman's Park.

July 31

The PONY League's James Gaynor is the first umpire from organized baseball to enter military service in WWII. Gaynor will become a captain based at 5th Army Corps Headquarters, Camp Beauregard, Louisiana.

August 23

First German air raids on London, England.

September 16

The Burke-Wadsworth bill - known as The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, and more commonly referred to as The Draft - is passed by the Congress of the United States, becoming the first peacetime conscription in American history. The Act requires those men between the ages of 21 and 35 to register with local draft boards for 12 months of military service.

September 24



Jimmie Foxx hit his career 500th home run.

September 27

Germany, Italy and Japan sign a tripartite treaty.

October 8

The Cincinnati Reds clinch the World Series in seven games against the Tigers.

October 30

Fred Price, first baseman with Clinton of the Three-I League becomes the first minor

league player to enlist following the announcement of the draft when he joins the Army.

November 18

First 30,000 selectees are called into military service. Most major league baseball players are safe from draft. Joe DiMaggio has draft number 5,342.

November 25

Bill Embick, outfielder with the Harrisburg Senators of the Interstate League, is the first minor league player to be drafted.

December 12



Billy Southworth Jr, Toronto Maple Leafs' outfielder and son of the Cardinals' manager, Billy Southworth, enlists in the Army Air Corps.

1941

March

Tom Ananicz, a pitcher with the Kansas City Blues of the American Association, declares himself a conscientious objector and is classified Class 4-A. He will work in a munitions factory should war be declared.

March 6

Saginaw of the Michigan State League is the first team to lose a director in the draft as Burrows Marley reports for duty with the Army at Fort Custer, Michigan.

March 8

Hugh Mulcahy of the Phillies is drafted by the Army and becomes the first major league regular in military service.

March 11

President Roosevelt signs the Lend-Lease Act which allows the United States to supply the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, China, France and other Allied nations with vast amounts of war material for, in the case of Britain, military bases in Newfoundland, Bermuda, and the British West Indies.

March 13

Don Stewart, Western International League umpire, is killed in a German bombing raid on Scotland while serving with the Canadian Army's Calgary Highlanders.

May 7

Tigers' outfielder Hank Greenberg reports for

WWII Baseball Timeline 1941 to 1942

duty at 6.30am with the Army at Fort Custer, Michigan.

May 15



Joe DiMaggio starts his 56-game hitting streak.

June 2

Lou Gehrig dies in New York, aged 37.

June 20

United States Army Air Corps becomes United States Army Air Force.

June 22

Germany launches a surprise invasion of the Soviet Union - Operation Barbarossa.

July 8

The American League defeats the National League, 7-5, in the All-Star game in Detroit.

July 13

W. G. Bramham, president of the National Association, announces the appointment of a Defense Service Committee, designed to lend any possible assistance to minor league players now serving in the armed forces. "We want all our players who have entered the ranks, to know that we are interested in their welfare," said Bramham. "This committee is ready to help them in contacting friends or relatives, offering counsel or handling other problems which the boys are unable to look after themselves ... We urge any of them who are in need of such help to communicate with the committee member nearest their base." Tom Fairweather, president of the Three-I League and Western Association is named chairman of the Defense Service Committee.

July 17

The longest hitting streak in baseball history ends at 56 when the Cleveland Indians hold Joe DiMaggio hitless.

July 25

Lefty Grove of the Boston Red Sox earns his 300th career win, which is also his last.

September 28

Ted Williams ends the regular season with a batting average of .406.

September 29

The Fort Custer, Michigan, team wins the national amateur championship of the American Baseball Congress with a 3-2

victory over the Charlotte, North Carolina team.

October 6

The New York Yankees clinch the World Series with a 3-1 win at Ebbets Field against the Brooklyn Dodgers in Game Five.

November

The National and American Leagues list the following 14 major league players as being on the National Defense List: Gene Stack, White Sox; Al White, Browns; Hank Greenberg and Bob Uhle, Tigers; Lefty Brewer, Elmer Gedeon and Lou Thuman, Senators; Pat Cooper, Athletics; Mickey Harris and Lawrence Powell, Red Sox; Tom Gorman, Giants; Hugh Mulcahy, Phillies; Oadis Swigart and J Addis Cople, Pirates.

November 25

Cleveland Indians shortstop Lou Boudreau is named as the new team manager. At 24 years of age, Boudreau becomes the youngest player to manage a team in the 20th century.

November 27

The Sporting News publishes the National Defense List for the first time, listing 286 professional baseball players in the armed services.

December 5



Sergeant Hank Greenberg is discharged from Army after Congress releases men aged 28 years and older from service.

December 7

Japanese carrier aircraft launch a surprise attack on the US Pacific Fleet, anchored at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Japanese forces simultaneously conduct attacks on US military installations in the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island and Midway Island, as well as attacks on British military bases in Hong Kong and Malaya. Over 2,340 Americans are killed plus another 876 are reported as missing.

Jerry Angelich, a pitcher who had trials with Sacramento in the mid-1930s, is killed during the attack while trying to man a machine gun.

December 8

Congress declares war against the Japanese in response to the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor.

Japan invades the Philippines.

Indians' Bob Feller enlists with the U.S. Navy. He is sworn in at a Chicago courthouse by Lieutenant-Commander Gene Tunney.

December 11

The German and Italian governments, bound by their Axis treaties, declare war on the United States in support of the Japanese.

December 12

Pete Viselli, a shortstop with Landis of the North Carolina State League in 1939, becomes the first former professional ballplayer to lose his life fighting the Japanese when his twin-engined bomber fails to return from a reconnaissance mission at Luzon

December 19

The Selective Service and Training Act is amended, extending the term of service to the duration of the war and six months, and requiring the registration of all men eighteen to sixty-four years of age.

1942

By the start of 1942, at least six former minor league players have lost their lives in military service including Spokane's Marcel "Major" Serventi and Lexington's Eldred "Whitey" Burch.

January 5

Bob Feller reports to Norfolk Naval Training Station, Virginia.

January 8



Ted Williams passes his first physical examination by the military.

January 14

Kenesaw Mountain Landis writes to President Roosevelt to ask what baseball should do in time of war.

January 16

President Roosevelt replies to Landis with his "Green Light" letter. "I honestly feel," he wrote, "that it would be best for the country to keep baseball going."

January 26

The first American troops arrive in Europe as over 4,000 men of the 34th Division disembark in Northern Ireland.

January 27

Hank Greenberg returns to military service

WWII Baseball Timeline 1942

reporting to Fort Dix, New York.

February 7

It is announced today that all major and minor league will display "Hale America" health shields on the sleeves of players and umpires in co-operation with the wartime physical fitness program, directed by John B Kelly, head of the Physical Fitness Division of the Office of Civilian Defense.

February 10



Lieutenant Gordon Houston, an outfielder with the Texarkana Liners in the East Texas League in 1940, is killed when his P-43 Lancer fighter plane, hits a ditch and flips over

after landing at McChord Field in Tacoma, Washington.

March

President W.G. Bramham of the National Association announces that 581 minor league players are in military service.

March 1

Baseball decides that players in the military can't play for their professional teams when on furlough.

March 27

Mickey Cochrane receives his Naval commission as a lieutenant. Cochrane will coach the baseball team at Great Lakes Naval Training Station in addition to assisting Lieutenant Commander J Russell Cook, athletic officer, in other phases of the year-round physical education program being set up.

April

Japanese Americans sent to relocation centers.

April 9

American and Filipino troops surrender to the Japanese from the last fortified positions on the Bataan Peninsula.

April 25

The first recorded baseball game by American troops in Europe in World War II is played between the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 133rd Infantry Regiment, 34th Division. A crowd of more than 1,000 locals are treated to a play-by-play account over a public address system, a concert by the regiment band, and an impromptu jitterbug demonstration on the sidelines. Pitching for the winning 3rd Battalion in the 14-4 game is

Corporal Robert Lange who had an 8-4 win-loss record with the Flint Arrows of the Michigan State League in 1940. In the sixth inning, Corporal Leo J. Robinson, a 24-year-old semi-pro outfielder from Harper's Ferry, Iowa, hits the first home run by an American serviceman in Europe in World War II.

May

A new incentive is offered to all service teams to participate in any one of the 45 state championship semi-pro tournaments. Army teams may qualify through any one of the state tournaments, not necessarily the one in the state where the camp is located. As a result of this incentive all teams in the finals between 1943 and 1945 are service teams.

May 6

The besieged American and Filipino garrison at Corregidor Island in Manila Bay surrenders to the Japanese, giving them control of the Philippine Islands.

May 7

Allied naval and air forces eliminate a Japanese task force in the Coral Sea, sinking 100,000 tons of Japanese shipping between New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. The Japanese had planned to land forces either in Australia or the New Hebrides. This battle marks the first serious Japanese setback of the war.

June 7

American air and naval forces win the Battle of Midway as they intercept the Japanese fleet attempting to seize the strategic island, inflicting heavy losses. The American victory checks the Japanese advance across the central Pacific and eliminates the threat to Hawaii.

June 14



Bob Feller hurls a 4-0 three-hitter in the Army-Navy game at the Polo Grounds, before a crowd of 15,000.

June 17

President Roosevelt authorizes a project to develop an atomic bomb.

July 6

American League all-stars defeat the National League all-stars, 3-1, at the Polo Grounds.

July 7

American League all-stars defeat Mickey

Cochrane's Armed Services all-stars, 5-0, before 64, 094 fans at Cleveland's Municipal Stadium.

June 26

Corporal Gene Stack, White Sox pitching prospect, who won 19 games with the Lubbock Hubbers in the West Texas-New Mexico League in 1940, suffers what is believed to be a heart attack and dies while returning to Camp Custer after pitching a ball game in Michigan City, Indiana. An autopsy reveals he died from pneumonia.

July 4

As part of the Anglo-American Independence Day celebrations, the first officially recognized baseball game in Northern Ireland since 1917, is played between the 34th Division (Midwest Giants) and the 1st Armored Division (Kentucky Wildcats). The Giants win 3-2.

July 30

The National Defense Service List shows that 937 minor league players are in military service (Class AA 122, Class A-1 72, Class A 42, Class B 244, Class C 205 and Class D 252)

August 7

U.S. forces invade Guadalcanal.

October 5

The St Louis Cardinals clinch the World Series with a 2-0 win at Yankee Stadium against the New York Yankees in Game Five.

October 21



Billy Hebert, who played second base with the Merced Bears in the California League in 1941, is killed during the Japanese bombing of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

November 1

The Brooklyn Dodgers name Branch Rickey as the team president, replacing Larry MacPhail who enters the military service. Rickey had resigned as vice-president of the St. Louis Cardinals only three days earlier.

November 8

Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of French North Africa, starts today with amphibious landings to seize the key ports and airports of Morocco and Algeria simultaneously, targeting Casablanca, Oran and Algiers.

WWII Baseball Timeline 1942 to 1944

November 17

Ted Williams arrives at Amherst College, Massachusetts, to begin the first leg of pilot training with the Navy.

December 1

At the major league meetings in Chicago, owners decide to restrict travel to a three-trip schedule rather than the customary four. Spring training in 1943 will be limited to locations north of the Potomac or Ohio rivers and east of the Mississippi.

1943

At the beginning of the year it is announced that 195 major league players are in military service. At least 19 former minor league players have lost their lives in military service since 1940, including Hickory's Gus Bebas and Borger's George Chandler.

January 27

First bombing raid by the U.S. Army Air Force on Germany (at Wilhelmshaven).

January 30

Fifty-three-year-old Hank Gowdy becomes the only person on a major league roster to serve in both World Wars when he reports for duty at Fort Benning, Georgia.

January 31

The main German forces in Stalingrad surrender to the Soviet Union (the first major defeat of Germany in World War II), ending a battle that has killed two million people, including 500,000 civilians.

February 8



U.S. forces capture Guadalcanal from Japan.

February 14

Battle of Kasserine Pass between the U.S. 1st Armored Division and German Panzers in North Africa is the first large-scale meeting of American and German forces. The battle rages until February 25.

February 17

Joe DiMaggio trades his \$43,750 salary with the Yankees for \$50 a month as an Army enlisted man.

February 23

Marshall Sneed, an outfielder with Paragould of the Northeast Arkansas League in 1940, is

killed when his fighter plane is shot down over Tunisia.

May 30



The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League begins its first 108-game season with teams in Rockford, Kenosha, Racine, and South Bend

July 9

U.S. and British troops land in Sicily.

July 12

A team of Armed Forces all-stars managed by Babe Ruth and featuring Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams play the Boston Braves in a fund-raising effort at Fenway Park. Babe Ruth, 48 years old, pinch-hits in the 7th inning and flies out to right, but the all-stars win 9-8 on a Ted Williams home run.

July 13

The American League defeats the National League, 5-3, in the All-Star game at Shibe Park.

August 7

In London, England, semi-pro hurler Bill Brech throws a no-hitter for the U.S. Air Force against the U.S. Army in an all-pro game watched by 21,500 fans.

August 29

The Camp Wheeler, Georgia, Spokes clinch the national semi-pro championship, defeating the Enid Army Air Field, Oklahoma, Enidairs, 5-3, before a crowd of 14,500.

September 8

Italian surrender is announced.

September 22

Norfolk Naval Training Station captures the Navy World Series in seven games against Norfolk Air Station.

September 30

The 116th Infantry Regiment Yankees clinch the ETO World Series title in London by defeating the Fighter Command Thunderbolts, 6-3, at the conclusion of a four-day, 20-team tournament. Nine months later, three of the Yankees' starting line-up are killed at Omaha Beach on D-Day.

October

The Casablanca Yankees clinch the North African World Series title with 9-0 and 7-6 wins over the Algiers Streetwalkers.

October 11

Yankees clinch the World Series in five games over the Cardinals.

1944

At the beginning of the year it is announced that around 340 major league players are in military service, plus more than 3,000 from the minors. At least 34 former minor league players have lost their lives in military service since 1940, including Paragould's Marshall Sneed, Olean's Jack Moller and Goldsboro's Fred Yeske.

January 16

Dwight Eisenhower is appointed commander of the allied forces in Europe.

January 22

Allied forces land at Anzio, Italy.

April 20

Elmer Gedeon, who played five games for the Washington Senators in 1939, is killed when his B-26 Marauder is shot down over France.

May 2

Ted Williams earns his pilot's wings and second lieutenant commission in the U.S. Marine Corps at Naval Air Training Center Pensacola, Florida. He also marries Doris Soule later that day.

May 21



Bert Shepard, a pitcher with LaCrosse of the Wisconsin State League in 1942, is shot down in Germany while strafing an airfield in his P-38 Lightning. In an effort to save his life his damaged right leg is amputated 11 inches below the knee by

German doctors.

June 4

Allied forces enter Rome.

Joe DiMaggio hits a 435-foot home run in a Seventh Army Air Force, 6-2, loss to the Navy in Hawaii, as Bob Harris throws a four-hitter.

June 6

Allied forces land in Normandy and begin the invasion of France. Three former minor leaguers are killed at Omaha Beach on D-Day – Forrest "Lefty" Brewer, who won 20 games with St. Augustine in 1938, Elmer Wright, who was a pitcher in the St. Louis Browns organization, and Joe Pinder, a pitcher with Fort Pierce of the Florida East Coast League in 1941, who would be posthumously

WWII Baseball Timeline 1944 to 1945

awarded the Medal of Honor.

All major league games are cancelled this day.

June 10



Fifteen-year-old pitcher Joe Nuxhall of the Cincinnati Reds makes his major league debut. He is the youngest person ever to play in a major league game.

July 11

The National League defeats the American League, 7-1, in the All-Star game at Forbes Field.

August 16

Philadelphia Athletics pitcher Phil Marchildon, serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force is shot down over Europe. He will spend nine months as a POW.

August 25

Paris, France is liberated by Allied forces.

August 30

The Sherman Field, Kansas, Flyers clinch the national semi-pro championship, defeating the Enid Army Air Field, Oklahoma, Enidairs, 5-4.

September 22

The Navy team opens the Army-Navy World Series in Hawaii with a 5-0 win on the four-hit pitching of Virgil Trucks. In an 11-game series the Navy will win eight games.

September 30

Detroit Tigers pitcher Hal Newhouser wins his 29th game, defeating the Washington Senators, 7-3.

October 9

The Cardinals clinch the World Series over the Browns in six games.

November 25

Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis dies aged 78. He is replaced by A.B. "Happy" Chandler.

December 16

Battle of the Bulge begins. At 5:30 A.M. a massive artillery barrage is followed by two powerful German armies plunging into the hilly and heavily forested Ardennes region of eastern Belgium and northern Luxembourg. This was Hitler's last desperate roll of the dice, with the optimistic aim to reach the port of Antwerp on the North Sea, trap four allied

armies, and force a negotiated peace on the Western front. The German offensive, aided by thick fog, achieved total surprise, but within three weeks, the determined Allied stand and the arrival of powerful reinforcements insured that the ambitious German goal was beyond reach. The Germans failed to meet their objective and all that they accomplished was to create a bulge in the Allied line, hence the name "The Battle of the Bulge."

The Germans lost irreplaceable men, tanks and equipment, and on January 25, 1945, after heavy losses on both sides, the Bulge ceased to exist. The battle claimed the lives of at least nine minor league players.

December 24

The troopship SS Leopoldville, bound for France from England, is sunk by a German submarine killing 2,235 soldiers of the U.S. 66th Infantry Division. Among the dead are Howard DeMartini, a pitcher with Salisbury of the North Carolina State League, and Leonard "Link" Berry, a pitcher with New Bern of the Coastal Plain League. Tigers catcher Harvey Riebe is among the survivors.

1945

By the beginning of the year, at least 80 former minor league players have lost their lives in military service since 1940, 47 in 1944 alone. Among those killed are Lancaster's Metro Persoskie, Cedar Rapids' Walt Lake, Albany's Jim Whitfield, Toledo's Art Keller and Charleston's Charlie Pescod.

January

This month proves to be the most costly with regards to baseball-related deaths in the military. Twelve former minor league players are either killed in action or die from wounds before the end of January, including New Orleans pitcher Hank Nowak, Lynchburg pitcher Elmer Wachtler, Orioles pitcher Earl Springer and Pacific Coast League third baseman Ernie Raimondi.

February 15

Billy Southworth, Jr., son of the Cardinals manager, is killed when his B-29 Superfortress crashes into Flushing Bay, New York.

February 19



U.S. Marines invade Iwo Jima.

March 6

Harry O'Neil, who played one game with the Philadelphia Athletics in 1939, is killed at Iwo Jima.

March 8

Jack Lummus, an outfielder with Wichita Falls of the West Texas-New Mexico League in 1941, who also played football with the New York Giants, leads an assault against Japanese positions before stepping on a landmine. Lummus dies the next day and is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

March 16

Japanese forces on Iwo Jima capitulate.

March 17

Warren Spahn, serving with the 276th Engineer Combat Battalion in Europe, has a lucky escape when the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen, the only remaining bridge to span the Rhine, collapses into the river with the loss of more than 30 U.S. Army engineers.

April 1

U.S. forces invade Okinawa.

April 15

Chuck Bowers, a second baseman with Johnson City, is the last former minor league player to lose his life in Europe when he is killed in action in Germany.

April 17



One-armed outfielder Pete Gray makes his major league debut with the St. Louis Browns.

May 7

Unconditional surrender of German forces.

May 8

V.E. Day (Victory on Europe)

July 1

Before a crowd of 47,729, Hank Greenberg returns to the Tigers after four years of military service.

July 27

The 20th Air Force Pacific Tour commences with a round-robin series of games played on Tinian. The three teams taking part were the 58th Bombardment Wing Wingmen, led by Tigers' catcher Birdie Tebbetts; the 73rd Bombardment Wing Bombers, managed by Buster Mills of the Cleveland Indians; and the

WWII Baseball Timeline 1945

313th Bombardment Wing Flyers, managed by Lew Riggs of the Dodgers.

July 30

Harlan Larsen, a catcher who signed with the Chicago Cubs organization before joining the Marines, is the last former minor league player to lose his life in the Pacific Theater when his is lost following the sinking of the USS Indianapolis.

August 1

Mel Ott hits the 500th home run of his major league career.

August 4

Amputee Bert Shepard makes his major league debut for the Washington Senators.

August 6

First atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima

August 9

Second atomic bomb is dropped on Nagasaki.

Five members of the Foster Field (Texas) Falcons baseball team, along with pilot Second Lieutenant Peter R. Davis, are killed when their plane crashes near Smiley, Texas, on the way back from a ball game.

August 14

Japanese agree to unconditional surrender.

August 24

In his first major league appearance after nearly four years in the Navy, Bob Feller beats the Tigers, 4-2, in Cleveland in front of 46,477 adoring fans.

August 29

The Enid Army Air Field, Oklahoma, Enidairs clinch the national semi-pro championship, defeating Orlando Army Air Field, Florida, 4-1, before 11,000 fans.

September 2

Japanese sign surrender agreement. V.J. Day (Victory in Japan)

September 8



Sam Nahem's OISE All-Stars capture the ETO World Series against the 71st Infantry Division in Germany.

September 9

Dick Fowler, released from military service the previous month, pitches a no-hitter as the Philadelphia Athletics defeat the St. Louis

Browns, 1-0.

September 14, 1945

Due to recurring problems with stomach ulcers, Joe DiMaggio is discharged from military service.

September 26

In the opening game of the Navy World Series in Hawaii, Clyde Shoun for the National League team outpitches Fred Hutchinson of the American leaguers with help from homers by Stan Musial and Ray Lamanno. In the six games series the National League Navy team win four games.

October 10

The Tigers clinch the World Series in seven games over the Cubs.

October 23



Jackie Robinson is signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers.

By the end of the year, 384 major league players had entered military service together with 4,076 minor leaguers. At least 131 minor league players and two umpires had made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.



Babe Ruth with Ted Williams



Bob feller receives his discharge after nearly four years of military service



Hank Greenberg



Mickey Cochrane with Johnny Mize at Great Lakes NTS



Red Ruffing



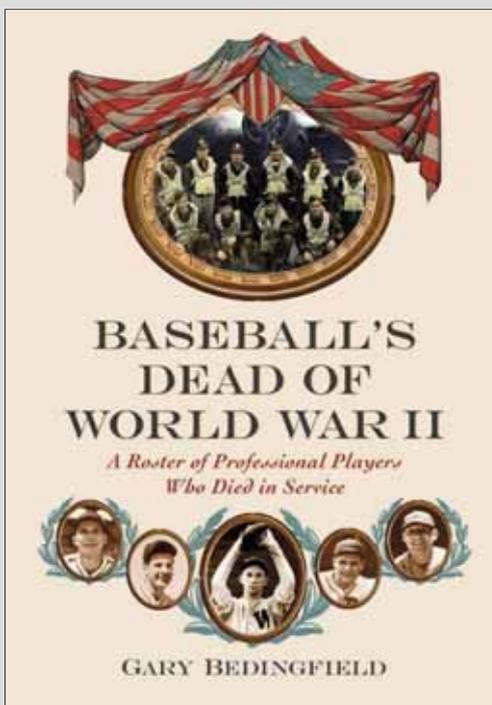
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While most fans know that baseball stars Ted Williams, Hank Greenberg, and Bob Feller served in the military during World War II, few can name the two major leaguers who died in action (they were catcher Harry O'Neill and outfielder Elmer Gedeon). Far fewer still are aware that at least another 125 minor league players also lost their lives during the war. *Baseball's Dead of World War II* draws on many years of extensive research and interviews with surviving family members to give the first published insight into the personal lives, baseball careers and tragic sacrifices made by all these men.

Some players, like pitcher Joe Pinder and shortstop Ed Schohl, had enjoyed long careers in the minor leagues; others like second baseman Chuck Bowers and pitcher Elmer Wachtler, were starting their steady climb through the lower leagues; while some like catcher Harlan Larsen and pitcher Jim Trimble, had signed contracts but had not yet thrown a ball in a professional game. Whatever their background in professional baseball they all shared one thing in common . . . they made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and their stories are in *Baseball's Dead of World War II*. I urge you to read about these heroes of our game and not let their sacrifice be forgotten by this and future generations. *Baseball's Dead of World War II* by Baseball in Wartime founder Gary Bedingfield is published by McFarland - leading publishers of scholarly and reference books in the United States.

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