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McGRAW OF THE GIANTS

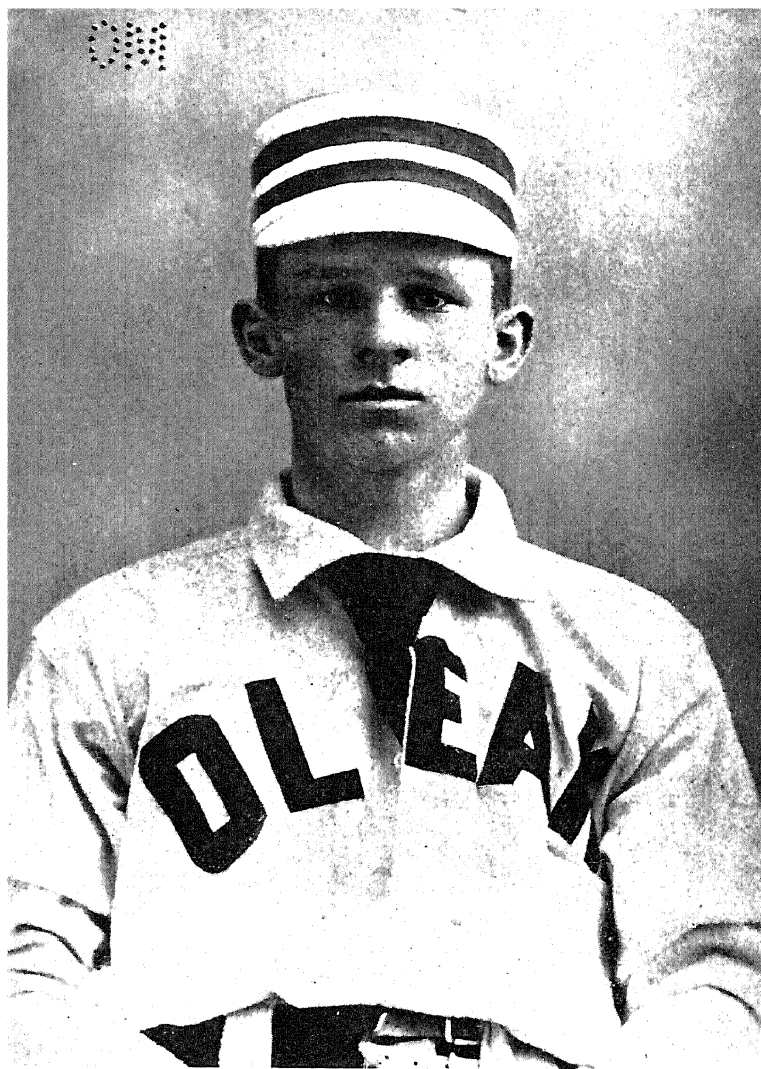
*By Frank Graham*

LOU GEHRIG: A QUIET HERO

THE NEW YORK YANKEES

MCGRAW OF THE GIANTS





YOUNG JOHN AT OLEAN



**MCGRAW**  
**OF THE GIANTS**

⊖  
AN INFORMAL BIOGRAPHY

⊖  
BY FRANK GRAHAM

G·P·PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK

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## I ⊖ THE BOY FROM TRUXTON

**J**OHAN JOSEPH MCGRAW, who was born in Truxton, New York, on April 7, 1873, and died in New Rochelle on February 25, 1934, was a small-town boy who parlayed a love of baseball and a dynamic personality into world-wide fame and hundreds of thousands of dollars. A professional player at the age of seventeen, he became, successively, third baseman of the immortal Baltimore Orioles, manager and later part owner of the New York Giants, the dominant figure in the sport, and, by reason of the far-flung expeditions he headed in 1913 and again in 1924, its ambassador to the world at large.

From the wooden sidewalks of Truxton, his feet led him along the broad highways of the world. New York knew him best, of course—but they knew him, too, in London, Paris, Dublin, Havana, Berlin, Cairo, Melbourne, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hongkong. No man had a wider acquaintance, from kings to the riffraff of all the continents. Few have had more glamorous, more exciting lives.

He was, distinctly, a robust temperament. He was generous and loyal to his friends, implacable toward his foes. He was vain about some things, extremely modest about others. He irritated persons in the mass and charmed them as individuals. His charities were numerous, and he genuinely resented any attempt to publicize them. He forgave many injuries done him—but forgot none of them. He enjoyed many fine friendships and had many quarrels.

It has been said of him that he would have been as successful in any other field as he was in baseball because he possessed the qualities that would have made him a leader wherever his choice had rested. Perhaps. Yet there is nothing in the record to bear this out. The record is that whenever he ventured beyond baseball he failed dismally, and that he lost tremendous sums playing the races, dabbling in oil and speculating in Florida real estate.

But in fairness to him, since he devoted his life to baseball, he should be judged only in that field—and in that field he was touched with genius. He was accused by some of his rivals of “buying” pennants because he paid huge sums for players he thought could win for him. Yet he developed more players than all his carping rivals put together. Many of these players, becoming managers in

the minor or major leagues, taught their players the kind of baseball he had taught them and so, by their own achievements, deepened his impress on the game.

And so, whatever else he might have been, had destiny pointed the way along another path he had a full life and an exciting one in baseball; and, in his fashion, he was a great man.

His father, called John, was born in Ireland. Arriving in this country in his youth, he had wandered about considerably and was a widower with one daughter, Anna, when he settled down in Truxton. There he met and married Ellen Comerfort, of a family long resident in that region of upper New York State. There were eight children born to this union: Margaret, Ellen, John, James Michael, and four whose names have been forgotten even by members of the family, and of whom it is remembered only that they died of diphtheria in infancy.

His mother died when John was twelve years old. Her death, and that of the four younger children within a short time, broke up the family. The father, who worked as a farm hand or with a section gang on the Elmira, Cortland and Northern Railroad, sent the surviving children to live with relatives, and paid scant attention to them thereafter. The only one in whom he appears to have had any interest at all was John. This interest manifested itself mainly in attempting, sometimes forcibly, to discourage him from playing baseball—once giving him a thrashing and locking him in a woodshed all night for having played when he had forbidden him to do so.

John's schooling was brief and sketchy, but he quickly learned any subject that interested him. He earned money driving cows for neighboring dairy farmers, but had no desire ever to own a farm or, for that matter, even a cow. His father, almost constantly nagging him about his ball playing, endeavored to interest him in railroading, and, as a beginning, got a job for him as a candy butcher on the E. C. and N. He didn't care particularly for that. But it was better than driving cows or digging in the fields. And it gave him a chance to see something of the world—at least that part of it which lay between Elmira and Cortland.

Between runs on the E. C. and N., McGraw played with the Truxton Grays in Truxton and the other small towns near by. He was a pitcher, mostly, although when he wasn't pitching he would



jump in and play second base, third base or short stop. But he liked to think of himself as a pitcher, and it was as such that he first attracted attention. The manager of the team in East Homer, five miles away, offered him two dollars a game to pitch for his team.

He leaped at the offer. He won his first two games—trudging the five miles to pitch and five miles back when the game was over—and then, having established himself, said to the manager:

“Do you want me to pitch again on Saturday?”

“Sure I do,” the manager said.

“That’s fine. But the price has gone up. From now on, I want five dollars a game—and hack fare both ways.”

The manager was horrified. He protested, threatened, cajoled, but to no effect. McGraw remained unmoved. Five dollars and hack fare—or no McGraw. The manager was compelled to give in. After all, the boy was a winning pitcher, and already had established himself as favorite with the East Homer fans.

For a few more weeks he pitched for East Homer, riding back and forth in state. Then Al Kenney, who owned a hotel in Truxton, but managed the Olean team in the New York and Pennsylvania League, offered him a job at forty dollars a month and board. He lost no time in accepting it, overcoming the protests of his father by the simple expedient of walking out on them.

There was, however, a jolt in store for him in Olean. Kenney, who had watched him pitch and play the infield, decided he was a better infielder than he was a pitcher, and assigned him to third base. Swallowing his pride at this summary dismissal of his talents as a pitcher, he manfully plunged into the task of playing third base—and did so badly that at the end of a week he was on the bench.

He could field ground balls all right, and he could hit. But he had what is known in baseball as a scatter arm, which meant that his throwing to first base was erratic. Diligent practice in the mornings during the short period he was out of the line-up enabled him to get the range on the bag. Thereafter there was no complaint to be found with his throwing.

But Olean, attractive as it had seemed in the beginning, couldn’t hold him for long. Before the season was over he made a couple of skip-stops in Hornellsville and Canisteo, and wound up in Wells-ville, where a friend of his named Al Lawson was the manager.

Years later he was inclined to date his start as a professional ball player from his engagement in Wellsville.

"How about Olean and those other towns?" they would ask him.

And he would shrug and say:

"I really got started in Wellsville."

Maybe this was because he got sixty dollars a month there, lived at a hotel where he could have steak for breakfast every day if he wanted it and had his first taste of hero worship as the town sports around the cigar store and pool hall pointed him out to strangers as Johnny McGraw, the ball player.

Near the end of the season Lawson said to him:

"I am taking a team to Florida for the winter and we may go to Cuba. I'd like to have you go with me. Are you interested?"

Interested? Sure, he was interested. Florida . . . Cuba . . . they were names in the geography he'd had in school, and the very prospect of seeing them was exciting.

"I'm not sure we'll get to Cuba," Lawson admitted, "but it looks good. Anyway, we ought to do all right in Florida. We'll be the Ocala team and we'll play in Jacksonville and Gainesville and Tampa and a lot of those towns. It will be a good place to spend the winter—you know you can play ball all the year round down there—and you might make a little money. I'll pay your way down and give you sixty dollars a month, and if we go to Cuba and make some money there, there'll be a split for the players."

McGraw was in no mood to haggle over terms. He had been wondering what he was going to do all winter, what sort of job he could get. Now he was to spend it where the sun shone every day and he could play ball—and he would be as well paid as he had been in Wellsville. Well, that was all settled. In a couple of weeks the season would be over and they would be on their way. He knew his father would object, of course. But that wouldn't hold him for an instant. Nor did it, when, on going back to Truxton to pack some clothes for the journey, he saw his father.

At last it was the day of departure. Lawson had collected most of his players from the New York and Pennsylvania League, and would pick up one or two more in New York. The players, laughing and clowning, climbed aboard the train at the Wellsville depot, waved good-by to the friends who had come to see them off—and were on their way to New York as the bell clanged and the train

jerked and rumbled forward. The great adventure had begun.

It was McGraw's first real break with home, the beginning of his first journey across the horizon that stretched beyond Wellsville and Olean and the other near-by towns. He was going a long way—and he wasn't coming back. He hadn't said anything about that to anybody. It is doubtful whether the thought had taken on a clear outline in his mind. But it must have been there, for never once during the winter that followed did he speak of returning.

His brief experience in Wellsville and Olean had convinced him that he was on the right track. He had wanted to be a professional ball player, thinking it was a good life, and he had found that it was. And professional ball players—the good ones—didn't stay in the New York and Pennsylvania League. They went from league to league and, if they were good enough, they got to the National League some day. That was where he was going. Not now. Not for a few years, perhaps. But some day. And this was a start. He would play ball all winter, and when another spring rolled around he would be in just as good condition as he was now. And you never could tell where he might land.

First, there was New York, which he never had seen before. He wasn't there long. Just a couple of days. But what he saw of the town he liked very much, and vowed that there would be a time when he would know it better. And then the long, tiring trip to Jacksonville, and from Jacksonville to Ocala, a pleasant town then, even as it is today—a town just about halfway between the coasts of the peninsula, where the ancient oaks were hung with what the natives called Spanish moss.

Parts of the Florida of that day were almost primitive. The roads were few and poor, and traveling wasn't easy. But he was young, and eager to see as much of the world as possible. He didn't mind the jolting rides in the carriages or carryalls, or on the trains that puffed uncertainly along the undulating right of way that stretched across the sandy terrain. He saw all the towns Lawson had promised, and many more that Lawson never had heard of. And in the years to come, when he was traveling up and down or across the state, and the train would stop at some inland town, he would peer out the window and recognize the name on the station sign board, and he would say:

“I played here once . . . a long time ago. The ball park was right over there, about where those stores are now and. . . .”

One morning Lawson told the players they were going to Cuba. A schedule of games had been arranged for them in Havana, and guaranties had been posted by Cuban sportsmen, so that they were assured not only of getting over but of getting back. They went to Tampa and there boarded a ship for Havana.

The Havana that McGraw saw for the first time was very different from the Havana he was to know in later years. The Spanish-American War still was eight years away, and the city was filled with Spanish soldiers, there to hold in check the restless subjects of their king. It was crowded and dirty and noisome. The hotel at which the players were quartered was old and moldy. The food was not to their liking. But they managed to enjoy themselves. They were delighted with the interest that the Cubans took in baseball, to which they had been introduced but a year or so before by Frank Bancroft, an old burlesque showman and baseball manager, who had made the first invasion with two teams of strolling minor leaguers.

Lawson's team played seventeen games with other American teams that were spending the winter there—the Cubans had not yet had time in which to develop any skill of their own—and won fourteen of them. McGraw, who played short stop, was immediately popular with the natives. He was young and slight and quick. They never had seen anyone who could scurry around and pick up ground balls as he could, or anyone who took such obvious delight in playing. (A year later, when Lawson returned with another team, the first player the Cubans asked for was McGraw. They were disappointed that he was not there, and the stories of the team's arrival were sprinkled with the regrets of the writers over his absence.)

When, in the early spring of 1891, the party got back to the States and Lawson was interviewed by a Tampa newspaperman, he heatedly denied that his players had been drunk much of the time and had tossed the games they had lost.

“No, sir!” he said, indignantly. “I want to say for my boys that they behaved themselves at all times and any talk you may have heard about them betting on the games and losing three of them on purpose is rot.”

And then he said:

"The best player on my team is Johnny McGraw. He is a hard, left-handed batsman, a fine short stop, a good base runner and, last but not least, a gentleman. He is one of the coming stars of the profession."

There still remained some weeks before the thaws started in upper New York State. Lawson and his players were in no hurry to leave the warm sunshine of Florida. They resumed their barnstorming, moved up as far as southern Georgia and then went back to Gainesville. It was there that McGraw got the break that sent him whirling up to the National League within two years.

Reminiscing years afterward, he said:

"I was in Gainesville with an All-America team and Cleveland came down there for spring practice. There were Pat Tebeau, Ralph Johnson, Big Ed McKean and Chippy McGarr on that team.

"They were a bit raw, having had only a few days' practice, while I was as spry as a kid at my age could be. We played the Clevelands one afternoon with Viau in the box, and Viau was a good pitcher in those days. But, of course, he did not have a seasoned arm, so he just lobbed the ball up to the plate. And maybe I didn't soak the horsehide! I got three doubles and a single, and it proved to be the start of my career.

"The funniest thing was no one ever got on to the fact that the pitcher was just lobbing them over the plate. A few days afterward I was receiving telegrams from all over the country. Some offered me \$60 a month, and that still was good money to me. I kept putting them off, however, until the Cedar Rapids club wired me an offer of \$125. I didn't even stop to take off my uniform, but ran all the way to the telegraph office to accept the offer."

It was a good story as he told it—but there was more to it than that. Apparently, he accepted terms with some of the other clubs, too. Baseball was loosely organized outside the major leagues, and an agreement between a player and a club didn't mean much unless both parties to it were of a mind to go through with it.

"John McGraw, of Gainesville, Fla.," was well known—by telegraph—to a number of club owners. Rockford claimed him. So did Fort Wayne. Davenport not only claimed him, but the owner of the club had sheriffs and process servers looking for him and was determined to have him hauled into court and compelled to abide by his acceptance of terms.

“Did he take any money from you?” the irate owner was asked.

“No,” he said. “He wired back that he would play with my club and wanted me to send him money for his railroad fare, and I did, but he never collected it. It’s still there waiting for him, and I’ve got his wire to prove he belongs to me.”

That, in substance, was the tale the others told. Hearing of his slugging against Viau, they had wired offers to him, and he had accepted them and asked for his transportation. They had sent it and then had heard nothing.

It would seem that, with all those offers rolling in, John was bound he would capitalize on one of them, and, while waiting for the best, had lined up the others. In these days, of course, he would be ordered to join the club that had received his first acceptance. But then it didn’t matter. He knew it, and he was safe in Cedar Rapids, playing short stop and thumbing his nose at Davenport, Rockford and Fort Wayne.

## II ☉ BALTIMORE AND THE ORIOLES

**H**E WAS MOVING FAST NOW. Olean . . . Hornellsville . . . Canistota . . . Wellsville . . . Ocala . . . Havana . . . Gainesville. Now Cedar Rapids. Moving fast, developing as an infielder, hitting the ball. Making a reputation in the Illinois-Iowa League, stirring up rows, making friends—friends such as Henry Fabian and Dick Kinsella. Henry was to become more famous as ground keeper at the Polo Grounds than he ever was as a ball player. Known as Tex Fabian, he was the right fielder on the Cedar Rapids team. Kinsella, in years to come, not only was to remain McGraw’s staunch friend, but was to prowl the minor leagues for him and come up with players who won pennants for the Giants. Moving fast . . . and keeping his eyes on the National League.

It was an old-time short stop named Bill Gleason, who had been with the St. Louis Browns in the American Association and had slipped back into the Illinois-Iowa League, who recommended him for promotion.

“I got a letter from Billie Bernie today,” he said to McGraw one afternoon.

Barnie managed the Baltimore Orioles, then in the Association.

"Yes?" McGraw said. "What did he have to say?"

He didn't know Barnie and was curious as to why Gleason should have told him of the letter.

"He wants to know how good you are," Gleason said.

McGraw laughed.

"Tell him I'm as good as they come," he said.

Gleason laughed, too. But he liked the way the boy played ball . . . the zing and spirit he put into it, the way he handled himself when games were tight and the chips were down.

"Take him," he wrote to Barnie. "You'll like him."

McGraw had played only thirty-one games for Cedar Rapids when Barnie wired him, offering him a berth with the Orioles and, by way of persuading him to accept in a hurry, informing him a ticket for Baltimore awaited him at the depot. McGraw figuratively grabbed the offer and the ticket with one hand and waved good-by to Cedar Rapids with the other. Not all the pleadings of the Cedar Rapids club owner could detain him. He was moving too fast for that.

This was a step nearer the National League. Of course, the American Association (not to be confused with the present-day circuit of the same name) was a big league, too, but even so it lacked the solid prestige of the National. So far as McGraw was concerned, there was only one league. But the Association would do—for the time being.

He started badly in Baltimore, picked up a little later, but still finished the season with a batting average of only .245. And then, during the winter of 1891-1892, he suddenly found himself in the National League without, you might say, moving a muscle. The National League, expanding to twelve clubs, simply had reached out and absorbed Baltimore as the Association tottered and fell.

The new manager of the team was Ned Hanlon, one of the great leaders of all time. It was from him that McGraw was to learn much that he knew of the strategy of baseball and acquire much of the skill he afterward employed in building or rebuilding a team. Hanlon made a number of trades that winter that strengthened the team. One of them also brought into McGraw's life a man for whom he formed a friendship that ended only with death. This was Hughie Jennings, who had been with the Louisville club.

Through 1892 and 1893, as Boston maintained a supremacy it

had established in 1891, Hanlon continued to build—and McGraw continued to develop as a ball player. Finally, in 1894, Ned had his team. These were the Orioles whose fame has grown so great during the years that it has become one of baseball's brightest legends. This was the team:

Brouthers on first base, Reitz on second, Jennings at short stop and McGraw on third. Willie Keeler in right field, Walter (Steve) Brodie in center and Joe Kelly in left. Robinson and Clark were the catchers and Sadie McMahan, Esper, Hoffer, Gleason, Pond and Clarkson the pitchers.

It may be that no other team ever had a spirit to match that of the Orioles. They were, truly, all for one and one for all. The ball game didn't end for them with the last out in the ninth inning. If they lost it, they played it over again across the dinner table—for they were inseparable off the field, too—taking it apart, analyzing it, highlighting the mistakes they had made, vowing not to make them again. If they had won—well, maybe they had uncovered some hitherto unsuspected weakness in the foe, a weakness they were bound not to forget, but to play upon in future.

They trained in New Orleans in that spring of 1894. With the enthusiastic encouragement of Hanlon, McGraw began to devise plays calculated to upset the enemy. He and Keeler originated the hit-and-run play. They all polished their bunting game. They invented so many tricks that, in order to curb them, the owners of the other clubs had to draft new rules or change some of the old ones. One change they forced, in due time, was the assignment of two umpires to a game instead of one. The idea of driving the single umpire crazy wasn't original with them. But they were in favor of it, and refined all the tortures to which he had been put before they were organized.

McGraw helped to hasten the advent of the two-umpire system by a simple trick that he worked successfully for a long time. With an opposing runner on third base, poised to dart for the plate when a fly to the outfield had been caught, McGraw would hook his fingers in the runner's belt—unseen, of course, by the umpire, who would be watching the flight of the ball. In the instant the ball had been caught and the umpire whirled to see if the runner had left third ahead of the catch, McGraw would let go but, nine times out of ten, the runner would be thrown out at the plate. Protests went unavailing. The umpire could base a decision only on what he had seen;



obviously, he couldn't watch the ball and McGraw at the same time.

Pete Browning, then with Louisville, checked this practice of McGraw's for a while. Ready to dash off third base one day, he surreptitiously unbuckled his belt—and when he headed for the plate there stood McGraw with his belt in his hand. Other runners took to doing the same thing. McGraw, too wary to be caught again, simply bided his time. When their vigilance was relaxed he went back to his belt-grabbing, and the screaming started all over again.

That year the Orioles captured the pennant in a final drive through the West on which they won twenty-four out of twenty-five games, eighteen of them in a row.

"We would have won all of them," McGraw once recalled, "if Robbie hadn't slipped in the mud in Pittsburgh chasing a foul fly. The big lummoX!"

At the time he spoke his friendship with Robbie still was firm—it was to crash a few years later—but so strong was his desire to win that, nearly twenty years afterward, he couldn't quite bring himself to forgive Robbie for having lost that game. Nor, quite possibly, could any of the other Orioles.

That—1894—was the first year of competition for the Temple Cup, which was donated by William C. Temple, president of the Pittsburgh club. It was to be given to the winner, in four games out of a possible seven, of a series between the clubs finishing first and second in the National League. Here the Orioles suffered a sharp reverse. The Giants, behind superb pitching by Amos Rusie and Jouett Meekin, beat them in four games.

They quickly recovered from that defeat, however, and their fame expanded as they won the pennant in 1895 and again in 1896. Ill fortune dogged them once more in the series of 1895. They lost to Cleveland, four games to one, as they fell before the pitching of Cy Young. But in 1896 they had their revenge, winning the cup from Cleveland.

Hanlon, of course, still was the boss on the bench, but McGraw was the leader on the field. He wasn't the captain of the team. Robbie had that title. But it was to McGraw that the other players looked. He was the one on whom they depended most in the pinches.

Around the circuit the fans hated him, taunted him, called him "Muggsy" to arouse his ire. They never failed in this, for he loathed the name. But it never was to their advantage to stir him to anger—

for then he was cold and hard and tough, and there was no holding him and no stopping him, at bat or in the field.

DeWolf Hopper once recalled a game at the Polo Grounds, with the Giants and the Orioles striving for the Temple Cup.

"I had just come from seeing some pictures of an Antarctic expedition," he said, "and among the views that fascinated me were those of some penguins on the ice. And now McGraw was up in a pinch, and the crowd was storming and yelling insults at him in an attempt to shake his confidence. But he stood there, firm and intense, paying no heed to all the clamor about him. And I thought to myself: 'Cold. He's cold. He's as cold as those penguins on the ice!'"

Baltimore was his home now. He was making friends all about him. Jennings and Keeler and Robbie and Kelly, and Frank Finley, a young medical student at Johns Hopkins, who was to be his friend through all his life. Truxton . . . Olean . . . Wellsville were a long way behind him.

His father, his brother Jimmy and his sisters—they were still in Truxton, or near by. He kept in touch with them, gave them financial help when they needed it, was always quick with a check for any of his relatives. But long ago he had cut the ties that bound him there and—then and ever after—spoke but seldom of his boyhood.

In the fall of 1894 he and Jennings had gone to St. Bonaventure College, not far from Truxton, where Jennings began the study of law—which he was to pursue—and where McGraw read up on all the subjects that interested him, while they paid for their learning and lodging by advising the college baseball team.

But of all the places he'd been, he liked Baltimore best. There, but for the changing fortunes of baseball, he might have remained. Certainly, for a long time—and for several reasons—he had no desire to leave.

The span of the Orioles' grip on the league ended with the winning of the pennant and the Temple Cup in 1896, although there was one last flash left in their pan. Finishing second to Boston in the 1897 flag chase, they smashed the winners, four games to one, in the cup series.

As their power dwindled through the next two seasons, so did the attendance and the gate receipts. H. B. Von der Horst, the owner of the club, was not one to stand continual losses in revenue when there was a way to circumvent them. He found the way in the winter

of 1898-1899. He purchased an interest in the Brooklyn club, with the intention of moving Hanlon and most of the good players to that city, while retaining ownership of the Orioles and operating that franchise with his lesser players and any he could scrape up in the minor leagues.

The cry of "Syndicate baseball!" promptly was raised against him. But he paid no heed to it, nor did any of his colleagues, who obviously didn't care how many clubs he owned or controlled. Hanlon went to Brooklyn as manager. With him went Keeler, Jennings, Kelly and some of the other players. McGraw and Robinson were ordered to go, too, but they refused. They were not linked to Baltimore entirely by sentiment. They were the proprietors of a prospering saloon called The Blue Diamond, and they were of no mind to damage their business by moving away from it. Not right then, at any rate.

Von der Horst raged at the rebels. Hanlon argued quietly with them. They remained obdurate. Von der Horst finally relented, and, since McGraw had shown qualities of leadership, was persuaded by Hanlon to permit the young man—he was then only twenty-five—to remain and act as manager of the team and to keep Robinson with him.

To help McGraw out, Hanlon sent him two promising young players, Jimmy Sheppard, an outfielder, who one day was to achieve fame with the Chicago Cubs, and Joe McGinnity, destined to become a great pitcher—the Iron Man, whose specialty was pitching double headers and who, in the years that followed, was to help win pennants for McGraw at the Polo Grounds. The rest of the team was pretty bad, but McGraw succeeded in negotiating another deal with Hanlon. First obtaining a short stop named Gene Delmont from Chicago, he talked Hanlon into taking Delmont for Jennings. This strengthened his infield and reunited him with his friend. It was his first big trade, and he was inclined to believe always that it was one of the best he ever made.

Inexperienced though he was as a manager, he learned rapidly. He drove his players hard, though no harder than he drove himself. They couldn't come even close to winning the pennant, but they created some excitement. Their player-manager attracted even greater attention than he had before. Other club owners began to make offers for him. But Von der Horst refused to sell.

"I wouldn't take \$10,000 for his contract!" he said.

Ten thousand dollars was a lot of money in those days. No one offered that much.

The struggles of McGraw's men, however valiant, produced disappointing results at the gate in Baltimore. Meanwhile, the club owners in all the cities were worried by the expansion of the Western League under the vigorous direction of Byron Bancroft Johnson, who, they knew, planned to develop it into a second major league and so challenge the monopoly they had enjoyed since the absorption of the American Association. The twelve-club league, they realized, had become unwieldy. Too many clubs were losing money. It was certain their line of defense must be shortened for the fight that lay just ahead. In the winter of 1899 Louisville, Washington, Cleveland and Baltimore were dropped—and McGraw and Robinson were sold to St. Louis.

Once more they refused to leave Baltimore. It may have been that only The Blue Diamond swayed Robbie in his refusal this time. But McGraw's horizons were widening again. He had been a manager for a season. He had no wish to revert to the ranks. He was beginning to slow down as a ball player, and he was troubled by an old knee injury. He didn't want to move to another town and be kicked around if he slipped still further. True enough, he had hit .390 in 118 games in 1899. But he had learned that when a player started to go, sometimes he went very fast indeed. He would have to have a better prospect than that if he was to leave Baltimore.

This time Von der Horst insisted. Frank de Haas Robison, the owner of the St. Louis club, suspected that McGraw might not like the idea of taking orders, now that he had learned to give them. He offered him the management of the team. By that time McGraw had made up his mind that he didn't want to go to St. Louis even as manager.

"No," he said.

The team went south to train . . . the season opened . . . the month of April faded. There was another call from St. Louis.

"All right," McGraw said. "I'll go—on certain conditions."

"What are they?"

"Well, in the first place, I don't want to be the manager. So we won't talk about that. Now: I want \$100 a game from now to the

end of the season—and I want the reserve clause stricken from my contract.”

The reserve clause is the hold that club owners have on their ball players, since it is an option on a player's services for the year following the expiration of the contract. In other words, McGraw was willing to go to St. Louis for the balance of that season, but when October came he wanted to be free.

This was a plain indication, whether Frank Robison realized it or not, that he wasn't going to tie himself up with the National League any longer when there might be a chance to do business with the new league that, it was rumored, was about to declare open war on the older circuit. Whatever the St. Louis owner thought, he gave in.

“How about your pal, Robbie?” he asked.

“He'll go where I go,” McGraw said. “But you've got to take the reserve clause out of his contract, too.”

That was the way it was, and on May 5 McGraw and Robbie went to St. Louis. It was not a happy summer for them. They didn't like St. Louis, played indifferently at times, and, more than once, deliberately provoked an umpire into expelling them from the game when the team was playing at home. There was a race track across the street, and McGraw already had developed a fondness for the horses. Robbie wasn't particularly interested in them, but, as McGraw had said, he would go anywhere just to be with his pal.

The season over, they caught the first train out of St. Louis for Baltimore. By way of celebrating their escape, they threw their uniforms into the Mississippi as the train crawled over the long bridge.

Through the summer of 1900, while McGraw was in St. Louis, Ban Johnson, having decided to call his circuit the American League, had been completing his plans for a frontal attack on the National League, which would be launched before the coming of another season. One of these plans called for the establishment of a club in Baltimore, and it was Ban's notion that he couldn't find a better man to lead it than McGraw.

He called McGraw to Chicago that winter for a conference with him and Charles A. Comiskey, who had been famous as a first baseman in his playing days and now held the American League franchise in Chicago. At that meeting McGraw—free to go where he would, since he was not under contract to any National League club

—agreed to accept the management of the Baltimore Americans, one of the inducements offered being a block of stock in the club. It also was arranged that he would take Robbie with him, and that Robbie, too, should get some of the stock.

The news created consternation among the National Leaguers. They had sensed that McGraw was on the threshold of his career as a skillful, aggressive and colorful manager, and in the impending fight against the upstart Johnson they wanted him on their side. But it was too late to do anything now. McGraw had outwitted them, and no one knew better than they how much he had strengthened the cause of their opponents.

In Baltimore there was jubilation. Although they had not supported the Orioles under either Hanlon or McGraw, the fans resented the action of the National League in withdrawing from the city. Granted another chance to prove that Baltimore was big-league territory, its fans gave enthusiastic reception to the entrance of the invaders, and rallied quickly about McGraw.

McGraw, believing implicitly in the future of the new league, was confident and happy as the season of 1901 got under way. Unfortunately, his frame of mind underwent a rapid change as friction developed between him and Johnson. Both being very positive personalities, it was certain that this would happen, although neither seemed to realize it in the beginning. There could have been any number of reasons for trouble between them. It happened that they clashed over McGraw's conduct—and that of his players—on the field.

Johnson had felt for a long time that the National League had suffered in public esteem because the umpires were unable to enforce discipline and were subject to almost constant harassment by the players. This led to long quarrels and disorderly scenes that not only delayed the games but drove many of the more respectable fans away from the parks. He was determined that nothing of the sort should happen in the American League, and to that end assured his umpires that they had complete authority and, in the event of trouble he would support them to the limit.

McGraw, an umpire baiter from away back, soon was embroiled with the arbiters, and, incited by him, his players joyfully joined in the rows. Johnson cracked down on them sharply, handing out fines and suspensions to manager and players, and the breach be-

tween him and McGraw was opened. McGraw charged Ban with being unduly harsh with him, ranted at him for taking the part of what he said were incompetent umpires, and accused him of deliberately undermining the playing strength of the team and sapping the enthusiasm of the home crowds. Ban thundered that there was no room for rowdyism in the American League, and that he intended to curb McGraw and anyone else who failed to respect the umpires' decisions. This went on all season. At the end McGraw still was in high dudgeon—and his club was in the second division.

Meanwhile, he had been courting Mary Blanche Sindall, daughter of James W. Sindall, a well-known Baltimore contractor. Miss Sindall was one of the belles of the town and had many suitors. But McGraw, whom she had known for about four years, put the others to rout when he began calling at her home regularly.

"He never missed a Sunday night," Mrs. McGraw has said. "Of course, he was there lots of other nights, too. But Sunday night was special. My mother and father loved to have young people in the house and mother was rather famous for her Sunday evenings. We would have a cold supper and, afterwards, we would gather around the piano in the parlor and someone would play and we'd all sing."

They became engaged in the fall and were married in St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church on January 8, 1902. Most of the local notables were present and the ceremony made the front pages—with photographic spreads. They were deeply in love and remained so through all his life.

McGraw had patched up his differences with Johnson, at least on the surface. But as the league moved into the 1902 season friction between them soon was evident once more. McGraw learned, among other things, that Johnson was going to drop the Baltimore club from the league as soon as possible and transfer the franchise to New York. At first he believed that, when the move was made, the management of the New York club would be given to him. The prospect pleased him greatly. But within a short time a rumor reached him that Ban was planning nothing of the sort, but intended to pull out, leaving him and the other stockholders stranded. Johnson always denied this, and, in the years of enmity between them

that followed, repeatedly charged McGraw with having deserted the American League.

But McGraw believed it. Bitterly angry, since he had spent \$7,000 out of his own pocket to pay some of the club's bills, he called a meeting of the board of directors and demanded that they either reimburse him or give him his outright release. Unable to do the one, and unwilling to do the other because they realized the departure of McGraw would mean the collapse of the club, they stalled.

In New York word of the Baltimore situation got to Andrew Freedman, who owned the Giants. He knew, as everyone in baseball did, that Johnson was looking toward New York. He had fought hard and, up to that point, successfully to keep Ban out, and believed he could continue to do so. But the American League undoubtedly was growing stronger, and Johnson was preparing new blows to hurl against the National. In the all-out fight that was sure to come it was essential that New York have a strong team in the field.

At the moment it had the weakest, and was the despair of the rest of the league. Freedman, arrogant, quarrelsome, had wrecked his team almost single-handed, firing his managers one after another, abusing his ball players, fighting with the umpires and barring from the Polo Grounds all the newspapermen who had dared to criticize him. Efforts had been made by his colleagues to get him out of baseball, but he stubbornly remained, defying his attackers and insulting them when they came within sound of his voice.

In response to clamor on the part of the few fans who still were faithful to the Giants, he ostensibly had removed Horace Fogel as his manager a few weeks before and appointed George Smith, the short stop, in his place. But as Fogel not only remained with the club but actually directed every move Smith made, there was no improvement in the fortunes of the team, and the attendance at the games had fallen away to practically nothing.

Now, whether as a result of his own reasoning or at the behest of the other club owners, Freedman was ready to make another change. He sent Fred Knowles, the secretary of the club, to Baltimore to invite McGraw to come up to see him. McGraw accepted the invitation. After a brief talk with Freedman he returned to Baltimore that night.

"He offered me the management of the team," he told Mrs. McGraw, "but there was a hitch to it. He wanted me to take over



the concessions, too. I told him that I was a baseball manager and knew nothing about concessions, and, moreover, that he had a good man in Harry Stevens. You've heard me speak of Stevens. I knew him in Columbus when I was in the American Association."

Freedman made one more attempt to engage him in the dual capacity, but McGraw would have none of it.

"All right," Freedman said. "Have it your way. Come here as manager of the team."

"I will," McGraw said. "But first I've got to get clear of Baltimore."

He hurried back to Baltimore, called another meeting of the board of directors, and renewed his demand for payment of the \$7,000 or his release. But this time the demand was for instant payment. There would be no more stalling, he said. The directors threw up their hands. By this time they realized that, whether or not McGraw remained with them, they would be crushed in the conflict between the leagues. They gave McGraw his release.

### III ⊗ ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK

**I**T WAS IN JULY that McGraw entered New York to stay. The news of his signing a four-year contract with the Giants was a sensation. The other National League club owners, waiving for the moment their dislike of Freedman, warmly congratulated him on his master stroke. Ban Johnson, taken by surprise, denounced McGraw as an infamous, treacherous character. Giant fans, those who had been loyal to the team through all its difficulties and those who had been so disgusted by Freedman's actions that they had quit, were joyful. They knew McGraw. They hadn't liked him much when he played against the Giants, but they always had a tremendous respect for him. Now that he was at the head of their team they promptly swore allegiance to him.

Having completed his arrangements with Freedman, he had dashed back to Baltimore and signed Roger Bresnahan, Jack Cronin and Joe McGinnity of the Baltimore team to Giant contracts, which he wrote in longhand on his father-in-law's stationery. In another sortie he had corralled Dan McGann and Steve Brodie. Now he

was ready to go to work. The first thing he did was to release nine of the twenty-three players on the Giant roster.

Freedman screamed at that.

"You can't let those men go! They cost me \$14,000!"

"That's little enough—but more than they are worth," McGraw said. "And if you keep them, they'll cost you more. You're in last place, aren't you? Well, you're not going to get out of it with bums like that. I've brought some real ball players with me and I'll get some more. I'll get Sam Mertes, Billy Gilbert, Kid Elberfield, Ed Delehanty, Fielder Jones, George Davis—"

Freedman screamed again.

"You won't get Davis! I don't like him and I won't have him on my ball club!"

"You'll have him—and like him," McGraw said. "I'm running this ball club and I'll get the players I want."

Freedman seethed. He wasn't used to having anyone talk to him like that. But he knew he would have to stand for it.

"All right," he said, at last. "Go ahead. I'll let you run the team to suit yourself."

McGraw laughed shortly.

"You're damned right you will," he said.

He laughed again when he found Christy Mathewson, a young pitcher, had been posted at first base by Fogel, and later, at Fogel's direction, at short stop by Smith.

"You can get rid of Fogel, too," he told Freedman. "Anybody that doesn't know any more about ball players than he does has no place with a big-league ball club. The idea of trying to make a first baseman out of Mathewson! Why, that young fellow has as fine a pitching motion and as much stuff as any kid that has come up in a long time."

Fogel was dispatched, but Smith was allowed to remain—for the time being. McGraw moved him to second base and, for the want of a better short stop, took over that position himself. The Giants played their first game under him on July 19, losing to the Phillies by a score of 5 to 3, McGinnity yielding seven hits, while Hamilton Iberg held the Giants to six. The following brief account of the game appeared in the *Evening World*:

"John McGraw, the new manager of the Giants, and his Baltimore recruits made their local debut today before nearly 10,000 people,

who gave them a warm welcome. They also were pleased with the showing of the team, though disappointed over the result. The new team fielded brilliantly but failed to hit Iberg at the right time.

"All of the Phillies' runs were made in the third inning as the result of Iberg's single, four balls to Thomas and singles by Hulswitt, Jennings and Douglas. New York got one run at a time, Jones, McGraw and Washburn tallying for the locals in the first, seventh and eighth innings. Brodie featured with the bat for the locals, while Jennings helped the Phillies with a pair of hits."

McGraw, at short stop, had one put-out and two assists, and made one hit in three times at bat. Jimmy Jones played left field; McGann, first base; Brodie, center field; Billy Lauder, third base; Smith, second; Louis Washburn, right field. Bresnahan was the catcher. In the ninth inning Frank Bowerman was sent in as a pinch hitter for McGinnity.

McGraw had the nucleus of a good team, but no more than that—as he knew, of course. He struggled through the remainder of the season, playing in thirty-four games himself, but couldn't avoid finishing in last place. However, the attendance had held up well, proving that the fans had faith in him; and he had great plans for the future. Not all of them were to be realized. But there was to be a sharp upswing in his fortunes. Within a year he was to establish himself firmly in New York and to lay the foundation for the greatness of the Giants.

He and Mrs. McGraw had made New York their home. They took a suite at the Victoria Hotel on Broadway at Twenty-sixth Street, where they lived quietly, their social life being restricted because, while McGraw's acquaintance was wide in the sporting world, he had few close friends in New York and Mrs. McGraw none at all. When the Giants were on the road Mrs. McGraw would go to Baltimore to visit her parents. Sometimes, when they were in New York, she would go to Baltimore to buy clothes. That always amused her husband.

"Women come to New York from all over the country to have their clothes made," he would say, "because, as everybody knows, the best dressmakers are here. But whenever you want a new dress, you run back to Baltimore!"

"They have no dressmaker here as good as mine," Mrs. McGraw

would say. "She knows just what I want and just how to fit me."

In the evenings they would go for walks on Fifth Avenue or to a vaudeville show, McGraw having little interest in the legitimate theater but being an enthusiastic vaudeville fan. Mostly they dined at their hotel, although sometimes of a Sunday night they would go to Rector's, Martin's or one of the other famous restaurants.

Mrs. McGraw was not completely happy in New York at first, and welcomed the opportunities to visit Baltimore. But as her circle of friends in New York widened slowly, she grew to like the town. And, of course, she was proud of the way John was getting on, and of how sure everyone was that soon he would have a winning team at the Polo Grounds.

In the winter of 1902 McGraw got a terrific break. Freedman sold the club to John Tomlinson Brush, who had made his money in the clothing business in Indianapolis. Brush had got into baseball in 1888 as the owner of the Indianapolis club, which then was in the National League. When that club had been dropped in 1889 he had taken over the Cincinnati franchise. Now, nurturing a long-standing personal dislike of Ban Johnson, and stoutly opposing the American League, he had sold the Reds and bought the Giants.

Hard-headed, practical, soundly trained in the baseball business, he visioned great profits to be reaped in New York, but he was willing to spend money first in order to make more later. A great admirer of McGraw, he gave him willingly the free hand that Freedman had given grudgingly. He wanted to make the Giants the greatest club in baseball, and he knew the surest way to do that was to let McGraw get the players he wanted and not to haggle over the prices demanded for them, no matter how high they might be.

McGraw, contemplating further raids on the American League which would net some players who could help the Giants and, at the same time, cripple his enemy, Johnson, was encouraged by Brush to do his utmost. Brush, with the help of Freedman's powerful friends in Tammany Hall, was fighting off a direct assault on New York by Johnson, and would have stopped at nothing. But the plans formulated by him and his manager were shattered when the National League yielded in the struggle and signed a peace pact that acknowledged its rival as a major league.

The agreement put an end to the raids and, over Brush's angry protests, permitted the American League to enter New York. The



MCGRAW AS THE NEW MANAGER OF THE GIANTS



© Brown Bros.

CHRISTY MATHEWSON

Giant owner continued to snipe at Johnson even after he had signed the pact, but finally was compelled to surrender when the owners of the new club, Frank Farrel and William S. Devery, marshalled political forces strong enough to frighten off those enlisted by Freedman. Johnson at long last had succeeded in transferring the Baltimore franchise to New York. The team was managed by Clark Griffith, and had taken up its stand in a hurriedly built park at 168th Street and Broadway. Its existence was a challenge to Brush and McGraw. They accepted the challenge—and answered it vigorously.

Compelled to acquire new players by legitimate means, McGraw moved swiftly. He signed Billy Gilbert, a second baseman who had been released by Baltimore, and bought George Browne, a fleet-footed outfielder from Philadelphia—these additions strengthening his team in two departments.

The Giants trained at Savannah that spring. The ball park was a long way from the hotel. After walking back and forth for a few days, the players asked McGraw if they might hire bicycles and ride to and from practice. He thought that was a good idea and readily gave his consent. He withdrew it a week later, however. This was because, inevitably, they began to race each other, especially on the way out when they were full of energy, and some of them had narrow escapes from serious injury in frequent spills.

It was at Savannah that a life-long friendship really began between John and Mrs. McGraw and Christy Mathewson and his bride. When the team got back to New York, they took a furnished apartment together for the season. This was a pleasant arrangement, especially for Mrs. McGraw, who still was not quite used to New York, and Mrs. Mathewson, who was an absolute stranger in the town. Mrs. McGraw recalls, with amusement, one incident of the summer.

“There was a portrait of an Aunt Matilda—or some such name; anyway, she was an aunt of the woman from whom we rented the apartment—hanging on one wall of the dining room, and directly beneath it stood a potted cactus plant. One night the picture fell with a crash and a point of the cactus was driven through one of Aunt Matilda’s eyes. We patched up the eye and rehung the picture, thinking the woman never would notice it. But when we turned the apartment back to her in the fall, she noticed it, all right. She said that Aunt Matilda had been hit in the eye with a champagne cork and we had to pay for having the painting repaired. A champagne

cork! In those days the only drink we ever had on the table was ginger ale.”

So well had McGraw molded his team that it made a brave run for the pennant, finished in second place, and drew greater crowds at home and on the road than any Giant team ever had before. It opened in Brooklyn to a crowd of 16,000, and had 18,000 at its home opening with the Phillies. It drew 31,500 at the Polo Grounds with the champion Pirates on May 16, and in June hit the peak, also with the Pirates, with a crowd of over 32,000. Brush delightedly increased his seating capacity. Around the circuit other club owners were rubbing their hands with glee. One day in Chicago the Giants and the Cubs pulled more than 29,000 through the gates. No club in the history of baseball ever had been seen by so many fans in the course of a single season.

Matty won 30 games and McGinnity 31. Dummy Taylor won 13. With a little help from the other pitchers—Ames, Cronin and Miller—the Giants would have won the pennant; but among them the three could account for only ten games.

Brush, counting his profits, said to McGraw:

“We’ll do even better next year.”

And McGraw said:

“Sure we will. We’ll win the pennant.”

Before the close of the 1903 season McGraw had bought Arthur Devlin, a rangy young third baseman, from Newark and Harry (Moose) McCormick, an outfielder and leading hitter in the Eastern League, from Jersey City.

Now he made a deal of tremendous importance to him—the one that later was regarded as having virtually clinched the pennant for him. He sent Jack Cronin and Charlie Babb to Brooklyn for Bill Dahlen, the short stop. Announcing the acquisition of Dahlen, he said:

“Now I have the man I have wanted ever since I have had charge of this team. There is no better short stop in baseball than Dahlen. To some, he may appear lazy and indifferent, but I notice that when the gong sounds to begin the game he pricks up his ears like a war horse and never misses a trick.

“The Giants will play to some very large crowds next season, abroad as well as at home. Dahlen is an iceberg before a big assem-



blage of rooters and does not know what it is to get rattled. He is the kind of man every club needs to steady the infield."

There was one more addition to the pitching corps before the opening of the training season. This was a young left-hander named George Wiltse, who supplemented his pitching skill with remarkable ability as a fielder and, for a pitcher, was a very good hitter.

The pennant race was exciting from the beginning. The Pirates, who had dominated the league for three years, still were powerful, while the Cubs and Reds had gained strength. But the Giants, with McGann on first base, Gilbert on second, Dahlen at short stop and Devlin on third base, had the best infield in the league. They had the best catcher—and one of the best all-around ball players that ever lived—in Bresnahan, and a fine pitching staff, with Ames and Wiltse swinging in behind Matty, McGinnity and Taylor. They could have used an added punch, and McGraw was on the alert for a hard-hitting outfielder. His chance to get one came late in the season.

Mike Donlin, of the Reds, a good outfielder and a rival of Hans Wagner for the batting championship of the league, was popular with the fans all over the circuit. But he was a lusty soul, who was irked by the training rules imposed upon him by the Cincinnati club. Consequently, he got into continual rows with Garry Herrmann, the president of the club. Herrmann, finally losing patience with him, was prepared to sell him to the St. Louis Browns. In order to do so, however, he had to obtain waivers from the other National League clubs. Six managers, unwilling to be concerned with Mike's off-the-field adventures, no matter how freely they acknowledged his ability as a ball player, agreed to waive. Not McGraw, however. This was precisely the sort of opportunity he had been seeking. And so he arranged a deal with Herrmann by which Donlin landed at the Polo Grounds.

Giant fans were delighted. Turkey Mike, as he was called because of his strut, was McGraw's type of player—hard, tough on the field, a slashing hitter in the pinches, a stout-hearted competitor. They believed that his presence in the line-up assured the Giants of the pennant, and they were right. His slugging and base-running were vital factors as the Giants knocked the Pirates down and outdistanced the Cubs and the Reds in the rush to the wire as the Pirates limped home in fourth place.

McGraw's prophecy had come true. He had won the pennant in

his second full season in New York, and he was the idol of the town. His playing days virtually were over—he had played in five games that year to relieve Devlin at third base—but he had become a dramatic figure on the coaching lines. His shouts of encouragement to his players, the taunts and insults he hurled at his opponents, his frequent jams with the umpires, and, over all, his aggressive direction of the team added to the liveliness of the Giants' games and made him as big a drawing card as any of his players. This included even Mathewson, who won thirty-three games that year and rapidly was achieving greatness.

There had been a World Series in 1903 between the Pirates and the Boston Red Sox, winners in the American League, but there was none in 1904. Brush, who had been dragooned into signing the treaty of peace with the American League, still looked with a jaundiced eye on the younger circuit. Now, by way of emphasizing his contempt for it, he refused to permit the Giants to take part in a series with the Red Sox, who had won again. Nor could he be moved by the clamor for such a series, even though his players joined in it and McGraw urged him to change his mind.

It was as a result of Brush's attitude that the National Commission—which was formed shortly after peace had come to baseball and functioned until the installation of Kenesaw Mountain Landis as High Commissioner in 1920—drafted its rules for the holding of a World Series every year, starting in 1905. These rules, with a few changes and additions made by Landis, still are in effect.

## IV ⊖ THE GREATEST TEAM

**A**LTHOUGH THE PIRATES had been beaten off and driven back in 1904, they still were the best team in the league except for the Giants. McGraw aimed his campaign at them in 1905. While he drove his team hard against all its rivals, he steamed it up to even greater efforts whenever it moved into Pittsburgh or made its stand against the Pirates at the Polo Grounds.

He fought with Fred Clarke, who managed the Pirates, and Barney Dreyfuss, the owner of the club. He raged at the umpires over every close decision against the Giants. He did that no matter whom the

Giants were playing, of course. But when the Giants were playing the Pirates his rages were more explosive than usual. The result was that his players were set on fire at the very sight of Pittsburgh uniforms. Even the mild-mannered Mathewson, who seldom had a word to say to anyone on the field and almost never protested a decision, often found himself tangled with the umpires when the Giants and the Pirates were engaged. Nor was there any lack of opposition on the part of the Pirates. They were tough, too, and willing to fight. The record of the games between the teams that year is one of almost unbroken strife that the umpires could only check now and then and never could quite put down.

"The bad blood that has always existed between the New York and Pittsburgh teams showed itself early," a reporter for the *World* wrote of a game played at the Polo Grounds the first time the Pirates entered New York. "Mike Lynch, the Brown University pitcher, began for the Pirates. In the first inning, with McGann on third, Bresnahan scored him with a ripping double down the left-field line. As Lynch was walking to the bench after the inning, Manager McGraw, who was on the coaching line, called out to the collegian:

"Stay in the game today, you big quitter and take your medicine! You'll get plenty of it!"

"Fred Clarke threatened McGraw for roasting Lynch and the Giants' manager retorted. It looked for a moment as though they would come to blows. Finally Umpire Johnstone separated the two managers and ordered McGraw off the field. Mac retreated to the closet alongside the New York players' bench and closed the door. The Pittsburgh players wanted him removed but Johnstone said:

"He is off the grounds and that settles it."

"In the next inning, Christy Mathewson ran into the diamond to protest a decision and he was sent to the bench."

The crowd of 18,000 at the game yelled for Johnstone's blood. The baseball writers scolded him and his partner, Bob Emslie, in their columns. In Pittsburgh, the newspapers railed against the rowdyism that was rampant at the Polo Grounds.

McGraw, of course, was delighted. He had succeeded in intensifying the rivalry between the teams, and the turnstiles clicked a merry tune. Moreover, the Giants were winning. They were out in front, holding a good lead on the Pirates—the only team he felt they had

to beat, since the Cubs still were a year away from their peak and the Reds, after a fine showing in 1904, had slipped.

A short time after the row between McGraw and Clarke, the National League was stirred by the celebrated "Hey, Barney!" case. At this distance, with all the years between, it may be difficult to understand why a taunt hurled by McGraw at Dreyfuss should have touched off such a fine brawl. But that was in a time of intense personal rivalries such as baseball never will know again.

So far as the public was concerned, the first intimation that trouble was brewing was given in a short piece in the *World* on May 23:

"President Pulliam of the National League yesterday received from Barney Dreyfuss, president of the Pittsburgh club, a polite but vigorous protest against the manner in which, Dreyfuss alleges, the Giant helmsman has been conducting himself at the Polo Grounds. The protest took the form of the following letter:

"I desire to and herewith make formal complaint against the conduct of John J. McGraw at the Polo Grounds Friday and Saturday, May 19 and 20.

"While sitting in a box with a lady and gentleman from Pittsburgh I was annoyed by McGraw's frequent personal references to me—sneering remarks that I personally be the umpire for the remaining games of the series.

"On Saturday, May 20, I was standing in the main entrance of the Polo Grounds, talking quietly to some friends, when McGraw, who had been put off the grounds for using foul language, appeared on the balcony of the club house and shouted:

"Hey, Barney!"

"I did not answer that too familiar greeting and did not respond to any of his several attempts to attract my attention. Then he urged me to make a wager. He was very insistent but I had nothing to say to him. He also made remarks about me controlling umpires and other false and malicious statements. Steps should be taken to protect visitors to the Polo Grounds from insults from the said John J. McGraw."

"The wager referred to, according to common gossip, was one in which McGraw offered to bet \$10,000 or some lesser sum that New York would win the game being played at the time.

“President Pulliam used to be secretary of the Louisville club for Dreyfuss.”

McGraw hammered right back, making the afternoon papers with his rebuttal:

“Why didn’t Pulliam keep the charges to himself until I had a chance to answer them? Why should the president of the National League, who is paid a salary by all the clubs, show partiality for any one club of the organization and try to further its interests to the detriment of the other clubs of the league? Cannot Pulliam forget that he was once the paid secretary of Barney Dreyfuss when the latter was the owner of the Louisville club and also of the Pittsburgh club? The fact that Dreyfuss used his influence to have Pulliam made the president of the league should not blind the young man to his duties to the other seven clubs that pay his salary.

“What sort of times have we fallen on when players or managers can be sandbagged by the officials of the league and held up to scorn and ridicule without the chance of telling their own side of the story? Why, there is no organization on the face of the earth, except the National League, that will convict an accused man without a hearing. We might as well be in Russia.

“If Dreyfuss and his employee, Pulliam, can prove that I have been guilty of conduct prejudicial to the best interests of the National League, well and good, but I must insist on having a fair hearing before sentence is pronounced on me. When I have such a hearing, the testimony that I will present is apt to put a very different face on the matter. Until I have such a hearing, I will not say anything further on the subject.”

The New York baseball writers rushed to McGraw’s rescue.

“Can Barney Dreyfuss kill baseball in New York?” Sam Crane demanded in the *Evening Journal*. “Will ‘Whoa Barney, Hey Barney or Barney Pulliam’ be allowed to do it?”

Pulliam, deciding that the matter was too hot for him to handle, called a meeting of the league’s board of directors, to be held in Boston on June 1, to pass on the charge laid by Dreyfuss. McGraw, hearing this, realized he had Pulliam on the defensive; and, calling him on the telephone, sought to force his advantage by berating the president soundly. Pulliam countered with a fine of \$150 and a fifteen-day suspension. Now a storm really broke about his unhappy head.

Twelve thousand fans signed a petition circulated by the *Evening Journal* calling on the directors to reject the charges. McGraw hurled names, imprecations and insinuations at Pulliam and Dreyfuss. Brush leaped into the fight, throwing verbal punches in all directions.

Then came the showdown in Boston. Dreyfuss, having reiterated his charge, amplified it.

"He asked me: 'Is that bet you made with Shad on the level?' I turned and asked: 'Are you on the level?' Then McGraw said: 'How about those markers to the bookmakers? I have nobody chasing me with back debts on racing bets. How are you on the level?' Then he cursed me and said that I controlled umpires."

McGraw admitted accusing Barney of not picking up markers he had given to bookmakers, but denied he had said that Barney was crooked or had influenced the umpires. The directors took little time reaching a verdict. They exonerated McGraw, blasted Dreyfuss for his undignified conduct in engaging in a public altercation with a manager, and commended Pulliam for the manner in which he had handled the case.

Now McGraw and Brush wanted to know what Pulliam intended to do about McGraw's fine and suspension. Pulliam said they would stand, and that McGraw would not be permitted to put on a uniform or sit on the bench for fifteen days. As the Giants were playing in Boston, Brush and his lawyers promptly applied to Judge Sheldon in Superior Court for an injunction restraining the president. This was granted. That afternoon McGraw, in uniform and full of fight, as usual, was in command of the Giants.

Eventually the case petered out, but it left a lasting bitterness with Dreyfuss, aggravated by the fact that for a number of years thereafter every time he appeared in a ball park other than his own he was greeted by the fans with shouts of "Hey, Barney!"

Nothing could stop McGraw now. Aggressive as he had been before, he became even more so. He got into rows in Pittsburgh . . . Cincinnati . . . St. Louis. In Pittsburgh one day he threw a baseball at Umpire Emslie. In Cincinnati he offered to fight everybody in the ball park, which prompted Mike Donlin to say:

"He's a wonder. He can start more fights—and win fewer—than anybody I ever saw."

But he had won the big one. He had beaten and humiliated Pulliam. And now he was blazing from town to town, and crowds that

hated him and, because of him, the Giants, were jamming the ball parks. He was out in front of the Giants—and they were out in front of the league. In his vigorous leadership—even in his rowdy tactics—he had the support of the New York baseball writers, so that Pulliam, still nursing his bruises after the Boston conflict, hesitated to take further action against him.

The unhappy victims of McGraw's increasing power were, principally, the umpires. He abused them on the field, and if they dared to order him from the scene they were abused in the New York newspapers.

"The life of a ball club," wrote Arthur James in the *Evening Mail*, "is enthusiasm. Crush this and you have embalmed baseball. Suppress McGraw's enthusiasm, McGann's spirit, Bresnahan's ginger and you would see the Champions hit a toboggan that would send them speeding to the realm of used-to-be's.

"The present attitude of the National League umpires, who take their cue from President Pulliam, is that baseball is a step-sister to parlor tennis and a foster-brother to drop the handkerchief. No proper citizen believes in rowdyism on the field but by the same token no proper citizen has a wish to see the national game put on a pink tea basis. Baseball is a live, strenuous thing, a contest of brain, skill and muscle, played by real men with real tempers and real enthusiasm. So then, to tie shut the safety valve of a strong man's enthusiasm—his voice department—is to invite trouble."

Hustling, fighting and playing great ball, the Giants rolled on, knocking the Pirates out of the race in late September, subduing the other contenders, and clinching the pennant on October 1 by beating the Cardinals, 9 to 2, in St. Louis.

"The Giants went at St. Louis from the call of time," a special dispatch to the *World* said. "St. Louis fought well for two innings but that flag was to be clinched and St. Louis was powerless to withstand the assault."

The Athletics had won the pennant in the American League, and on the eve of the World Series the teams appeared to be so well matched that, said the experts, luck would be the main factor in reaching a decision.

But in that series Matty was a greater pitcher than any series has known since. It was a series in which the pitchers dominated the

hitters—every game resulting in a shut-out—and Matty dominated the other pitchers. He won the first, third and fifth games, taking decisions over Eddie Plank, Andy Coakley and Chief Bender. McGinnity, losing to Bender in the second game, beat Plank in a great duel in the fourth.

It was a remarkable series in many ways. Not the least remarkable detail of it—considering that McGraw was a party to it—was that it involved no fighting. Hank O'Day of the National League and Jack Sheridan of the American, the umpires assigned for these games, had no trouble with McGraw or any of his players.

At the finish McGraw—who could be gracious in victory, although he might, and frequently did, howl in defeat—was charming to everyone, including Connie Mack and his defeated heroes. This, the greatest triumph of his life up to that time, was accepted by him with becoming modesty. He had praise for all who served him and all who opposed him.

Since the Orioles already were beginning to take on a legendary character and it was assumed that he, who had been one of them, always would regard them as the wonder team of all time, he surprised many with his statement:

“The New York National League club, as it lines up today, is the fastest baseball team that was ever organized. I played on the old Baltimore team of 1893, 1894 and 1895. I have often heard the Orioles spoken of as the fastest team ever organized. In my opinion, the Giants of 1905 can do anything the champion Orioles did—and have a shade on them, besides.”

This was spoken in the first flush of victory, but there is every reason to believe that he meant it then and ever after. His pride in the Orioles remained unshaken in the years that followed. He never ceased to brag of their devotion to each other and to the game of baseball, or of their ruggedness. He loved to tell of how he, for instance, broke his right collar bone in an early inning of a ball game, and yet, having had the broken bone taped, played not only through the balance of the game but for weeks after—or until the break had mended—by throwing underhand to first base. He would tell, with relish, of how a foul tip had ripped off the top of one of Robbie's fingers—and how Robbie simply had ground the bleeding digit in the dirt at the plate and gone right on catching.

But when somebody would mention the 1905 Giants, he would



beam proudly, and you knew that, in his heart, he believed that was the greatest team he ever had seen.

## V ⊗ THE PACE IS SLOWER

**B**Y THE SPRING OF 1906 his ego had been inflated; or, as your grandmother used to say, he was too big for his britches. Practically everything he could have asked for had happened in 1905. The Giants had won the pennant. His own popularity in New York, already great as the season opened, had become greater. He had put Dreyfuss and Pulliam in their places. He had terrorized most of the umpires so that they feared to offend him and quailed from the task of ordering him from the field on many occasions when he so richly had deserved banishment. As the final, crowning touch, he had won the World Series and thus not only had established the Giants as the top team in baseball but—equally sweet to him, if not sweeter—had made Ban Johnson writhe.

Where, now, was the American League in New York? The Yankees—or Highlanders, as they were called then—had finished in sixth place. Whatever progress they had made had been nullified by the spectacular surge of the Giants. They were lost, almost abandoned, as the mob swept and clattered about the Polo Grounds. They were quite forsaken in their little wooden ball park on the hilltop.

McGraw didn't forget to remind his friends—and his friends included the leading sports writers of the day, such as Bozeman Bulger, Allen Sangree, W. J. Sullivan, Sam Crane, Bill Curley and a young fellow named Sid Mercer, who rapidly was attracting a big following on the *Globe*—that the American League might have fared better in New York if the perfidious Johnson hadn't changed his mind about his choice of manager in the big town. Nor did the writers forget to remind their readers and, of course, Ban, who countered with the charge that McGraw was an ingrate and a contract jumper, so that the feud between the men was kept alive and popping.

McGraw had become a familiar figure on the Gay White Way, as the stretch of Broadway between Thirty-fourth and Forty-fourth Streets was known in those days. In the months between the end of

the World Series and the opening of the training season in 1906, he thoroughly enjoyed himself. He sought—or was sought by—the big bookmakers and trainers, the leading jockeys, the famous prize fighters and the great theatrical figures. He was seen almost nightly in the bars and dining rooms of the hotels or the more lavish Broadway restaurants.

The quiet walks on Fifth Avenue, the occasional Sunday night dinners “out,” the small gatherings of friends in an apartment shared with the Mathewsons—these were almost as far behind him as Truxton and Olean and Wellsville. Mrs. McGraw still was his almost constant companion when he went out of an evening; but, for her, there had been a bewildering change of scenes.

Perhaps it was bewildering to him, too. The evidence points in that direction. For the first—and only—time in his life, he seemed to take his success for granted. In the background the saturnine Brush grinned and said nothing as McGraw talked—even boasted openly—about the Giants. There was no one in New York to check him, and even those, outside New York, who hated him were stumped for answers to the statements he gave off, seemingly on the slightest provocation. After all, he had taken a last-place club in July of 1902 and had rebuilt it so swiftly and so deftly that it had finished second in 1903, and won the pennant in 1904 and 1905, and then had topped off the last performance by beating the Athletics in the series. Granted that he had to have the players in order to score these triumphs, it was incontrovertible that they had not appeared at the Polo Grounds by magic. He had taken them in raids, he had bought them or traded for them. Having got them he had whipped them into a smoothly working team. Then, by the force of his own personality, he had given them the fire they needed to make them champions.

Even in the case of Matty his critics were confounded. Matty had been in New York when McGraw had arrived, true enough. But McGraw’s arrival had rescued Matty from the clutches of Fogel and Smith. Under his guidance, Matty had been free to develop into greatness as a pitcher. Matty had so much stuff and such an instinct for pitching that he might have progressed as rapidly under any other manager not blinded to his skill as Fogel had been. But whatever might have happened in any other circumstance, it was undeniable that McGraw had helped Matty tremendously—as the pitcher

so frequently and generously said. Therefore, he was warranted in taking a few bows in that direction, too. This he did, and with gusto.

It was—although he had no means of knowing it—McGraw's time to strut—the time just before a fall. It was, perhaps, well that he made the most of it, for before the summer was out he was to know deep chagrin and to realize that his pace couldn't always be so fast, that somewhere along the way there must be a slowing down.

The Giants trained in Memphis, then hurried north for the opening of the season. That his players might be appropriately turned out, McGraw's design for their uniforms that year specified that on their shirt fronts should be emblazoned "World's Champions." And, in a time when the ball clubs were hauled back and forth between their hotels and the parks, he arranged that everywhere the Giants went they should be driven in open carriages, four players to a carriage; moreover, that the horses wear yellow blankets with "World's Champions" embroidered on them. This, he knew, would enrage the hostile fans. It was good showmanship, too, wasn't it? And hadn't he seen himself referred to in print as the best showman in baseball?

As the season opened, the baseball writers asked him if he thought he would win the pennant again.

"I do," he said.

There was no equivocation. No ifs, ands, or buts. He had spoken directly and truthfully. He had the best team in the league; he expected it to win again; and he said so.

He never was to make such a flat prediction again. In springs to come he would say that he thought he had a good team, that it was in shape and would give its rivals a tussle all the way. Sometimes he plainly believed he was going to win, and no matter how carefully he phrased his before-the-battle statements his absolute confidence would show through his cautious words. But now, in the spring of 1906, he had put himself squarely on the record: The Giants would win again.

For a time—for the space of four or five weeks—it looked as though he was right. Matty had contracted diphtheria almost with the opening of the season, but even without him the Giants snatched the lead, stretched it and breezed confidently along. Then they—and McGraw with them—were taken by surprise. The Cubs, having been put together carefully by Frank Selee and then turned over to Frank

Chance for that season, were at their heels...even with them... in front of them.

If McGraw thought this was a mere spurt on the part of the Chicago team he was to be sadly disillusioned. Those fellows—Joe Tinker, Johnny Evers and Frank Chance, Three Fingered Brown, Jack Pfeister, Johnny Kling and Wildfire Frank Schulte—weren't going to curl up before any drive or challenge by the Giants. Dismayed at first, then angrily determined, he set his team in hot pursuit; and one day, for his pains, he saw the Giants beaten by the Cubs by a score of 19 to 0. No more crushing defeat ever was administered to him; none ever galled him so.

By this time Matty had returned. But in one series with the Reds Mike Donlin broke a leg sliding into a bag, McGann suffered a broken arm and Bresnahan was hit on the head by a pitched ball. Struggling on under the handicaps imposed by these injuries to three of his best players, McGraw soon realized that he had to concern himself not only with the Cubs but with his old enemies, the Pirates. As his chances of overhauling the Cubs faded, the chances that the Pirates would overhaul him became brighter. And so, with the season waning, he found himself fighting, not with the pennant at stake, but second place. That would be too much—to yield not only the championship, but second place, too. Now he really was desperate. And this time his desperation paid off. In a final charge the Giants threw the Pirates back.

But the Cubs had won the pennant. McGraw, hurt and surly, wondered how he could have been so supremely confident in the spring.

In the quiet months that followed he had time to look back on the disaster that had overtaken the Giants and examine its causes. He realized then that while accidents had lessened the effectiveness of some of his players, other members of the team simply had slowed down because they were packing too many years. He had built swiftly and well in 1903. But for the most part the players he had chosen already were veterans. It was necessary now, he knew, to rip that team apart and build a new one.

By the spring of 1907, when the Giants trained in Los Angeles, there had been many changes. The accent was on youth—and speed. Most of the replacements had been brought up from the minor leagues. They lacked the sharpness and craftiness of their predecessors; but they were young, and eager, and tireless.

That year one of the most popular of all Giants arrived at the Polo Grounds. This was a dark-haired, smiling Irish kid out of Breeze, Illinois, by the name of Larry Doyle, whom Dick Kinsella had found, just a year or two away from the coal mines, playing with Springfield in the Three I League. A guileless kid, too. The first time he went to bat against the Brooklyn club, wise old Billy Bergen, the catcher, said to him:

"You look like a nice young fellow. What's your name?"

"Doyle, sir," the kid said.

"Doyle, eh? Do you like it up here in the big leagues?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what do you like to hit?"

"A fast ball," Larry said.

"On the outside?"

"No, sir. The inside."

"High?"

"No, sir. Not too high."

Bergen nodded, squatted back of the plate and signed to the pitcher. Larry didn't hit a ball out of the infield that day. He spent a long afternoon swinging at curve balls, high and on the outside.

But he learned. He learned to laugh when the opposing players tried to talk him out of base hits after that. He was one of the greatest natural hitters the Giants ever had. McGraw—and all the other Giants and all the fans—quickly developed a great affection for him. He was to stay at the Polo Grounds for a long time.

There was another—and even younger—boy who first impressed himself on McGraw's consciousness that year. His name was Eddie Brannick. He had been John T. Brush's office boy for a couple of years. He was a bright kid off the West Side of New York. McGraw had seen him around the office many times, but it was not until the summer of 1907 that he really began to notice him. McGraw had decided that, since too many baseballs were disappearing out of the ball bag every day, it would be a good idea to have someone sit on the bench and guard the bag. He spoke to Brush about it, and Brush said:

"I'll send my boy up. He has nothing to do in the afternoons."

And so Eddie, who had spent most of his afternoons clipping stories of the Giants out of the newspapers and pasting them in scrapbooks—wishing, all the while, that he could be at the Polo

Grounds—now was the happiest kid in the town, sitting on the bench every day with McGraw and the players. Brush was his boss and he was devoted to him. But McGraw was his idol. He soon was to learn that McGraw was his boss, too—more, that McGraw was the boss of the ball club.

Few had sensed that, in spite of McGraw's success as a manager and his constant growth in stature. But it was true. Brush still held the purse strings, of course. But McGraw's authority was undisputed. Fred Knowles, the secretary of the club, had been shrewd enough to note the trend—and follow it. Where once he had been always at Brush's side, now he was with McGraw most of the time and was McGraw's partner in a billiard room in the Marbridge Building on Thirty-fourth Street. Others in the office were listening to McGraw, where once they had listened only to Brush.

Eddie, bustling about for Brush in the mornings, scurrying up to the Polo Grounds in the afternoons, his mind on what he was doing and not on the changing situation, learned about it rather forcefully one day when he was late reporting to McGraw.

"Where have you been?" McGraw demanded. "Don't you know you're supposed to be here at one o'clock?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, where were you?"

"Mr. Brush sent me to the bank and—"

"I don't care where he sent you!" McGraw said, sharply. "When I say I want you here at one o'clock, I mean one o'clock and not fifteen minutes after. And if Brush or anybody else tells you to do something else, tell him you can't do it, that you have to be here. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, see that you don't forget it."

Years later Brannick, now secretary of the Giants, was to say:

"I never did forget it, either. And I knew then who was running the ball club."

The Giants, young, fast, hard-driven by McGraw, carried the fight to the Cubs that spring. The teams battled closely for the lead through the first six weeks of the season. But by the first of June the Cubs were in front. That first rush was all the Giants had. They weren't a threat after that, but fell back steadily. On their last

western trip they lost nine of thirteen games, the last seven in a row, and finished fourth. McGraw didn't feel too badly about that. He was willing to put that season down to profit and loss—realizing that, in spite of the way they had tapered off near the close of the campaign, his young men had learned much, and believing they would be solid contenders with the coming of another year.

Possibly because the Giants had been in the thick of the fight so briefly, it had been a quiet and orderly season, in which Pulliam had better control of the players than for some seasons past, or since McGraw had been a major factor in the league. At the December meeting a resolution was drawn up, complimenting the president on the fine job he had done; and he was elected for another year. The vote to return him to office was 7 to 1. Brush and McGraw still didn't like him.

## VI ⊗ THE MERKLE PLAY

**I**N THE SPRING OF 1908 McGraw sought a new training site for his team and found it in Marlin, Texas, a small town in the north-central part of the state, locally famous for its hot springs and within easy distance of Waco, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Houston, Galveston and Beaumont, where week-end exhibition games with the Texas League clubs might be played on a profitable basis.

The baseball writers, used to the comparative luxuries of Savannah, Memphis and Los Angeles, were more than slightly apprehensive about the probable rigors of six weeks in a small-town hotel that never had catered to a ball club before. Harry Stevens, sharing their apprehension, loaded them down with canned food on the eve of their departure. But it wasn't as bad as they had feared. True, the food at the hotel wasn't particularly good. But its worst fault was its monotony, and this was relieved by the tinned delicacies that Stevens had provided and by the excellent meals obtainable in the cities when the exhibition games started.

In other respects, Marlin pleased everyone. The rooms at the old Arlington were comfortable enough, even if the appointments were somewhat bare. The players dressed in the bath house that adjoined the hotel. Then, wearing slippers or sneakers and with their

spiked shoes under their arms, they walked down the railroad track a half mile or so to the spacious ball park. Sometimes the wind blew for days on end. But the sun was warm and bright and the hot baths were wonderful for curing the aches and pains incidental to the first few days of active training.

The townspeople were extremely cordial and made McGraw and his players, unused to such attention in the larger cities where they had trained, feel that they were most welcome. Dances were arranged for them, and fish fries on the banks of the near-by Brazos River. The last night the team was in town McGraw reciprocated by giving a farewell dinner dance at the hotel; and this became, in the ten years that followed, the outstanding event of the spring social season in Marlin.

Since the ball club had the hotel practically to itself—the few other guests being mostly invalids from the neighboring cities come to take the baths—McGraw had ample play for his rapidly developing fondness for practical jokes. The victims usually were rookie ball players or young newspapermen. But the veterans among both the ball players and their Boswells were not immune. More than one returned to his room late at night to find his bed stripped of its coverings and the bureau and other articles of furniture piled upon it—a sign that it had been visited by McGraw and his fellow pranksters.

McGraw also used to roam the town at night, accompanied by Mercer, Bulger, Crane and a Negro band of four pieces—guitar, trumpet, bull fiddle and jug—that he had engaged for the duration of his stay and that he paid off every night with a handful of half dollars, quarters, nickels and dimes. They would stop in the few saloons and the Greek restaurant on Main Street and, as a rule, wind up in a store that had been converted into a box ball alley.

One night as they were about to depart for the hotel, McGraw said to Mercer:

“As I pay these boys off, you switch the lights out—and we’ll run across the street and watch the fun.”

Mercer posted himself close to the light switch.

“All right, boys,” McGraw said to the musicians, jingling some coins in one hand, “that will be all for tonight. Here.”

As he handed the money to the trumpeter, who was nearest him, Mercer pulled the switch. McGraw, chuckling, hurried out, followed



by Mercer, Crane and Bulger, and made for the other side of the street.

The musicians moved out on the sidewalk to divide their night's pay under a street light. The trumpeter held out his hand. He had two nickels, a dime and some pennies.

"Where's the rest of it?" the bull fiddler demanded.

"That's all there is. That's all he give me."

"Don't tell me that," the fiddler said. "Mr. McGraw ain't cheap. He give you plenty. You know he did."

The other protested that that was all he had received. The argument waxed hotter as the guitar player and the man with the jug moved into it. The fiddler suddenly brought his instrument down on the trumpeter's head. Fists flew in all directions. The four of them rolled on the sidewalk. The bull fiddle was smashed. So was the guitar. The trumpet was flattened. Only the jug survived the free-for-all. McGraw and his companions departed, convulsed with laughter.

The next morning McGraw sent for the musicians and gave them money for new instruments. That night music was heard again in the saloons, the Greek restaurant and the box ball alley.

The Giants, leaving Marlin for the first time, moved into Dallas for Saturday and Sunday exhibition games. Right off the bat in the Saturday game the Dallas short stop began to ride the Giants. Their eyes popped as their ears crackled. That was something new. A busher riding the Giants!

"Shut up, busher," Devlin growled. "We heard enough from you."

The kid, his long chin thrust out belligerently, walked in to the edge of the grass.

"You talk big for a fellow the Cubs run off third base every time they come down that line!" he yelled.

Devlin, one of the gamest ball players that ever lived, almost strangled on his rage. While he was trying to find breath to pay off his tormentor, McGraw climbed into the row, cursing the kid up and down.

The kid laughed.

"You're McGraw, aren't you?" he asked. "The great McGraw! The yellow-bellied manager of a yellow ball club! I told the boss not to let you bums in here. Now, run back to the coaching line, where you won't get hurt."

McGraw burned. The players seethed. They'd fix that fresh busher. The first time they got on base, any of them, they'd cut him down to his proper size. They told him so, too. But they didn't. When they hurled their spikes at him, he hurled his right back at them. He called them more names—and better ones—than they called him. When some of them challenged him to fight after the game, he told them he would be waiting for them under the grandstand.

McGraw's anger gave way to admiration. Along about the sixth inning he said to his players:

"Lay off. I kind of like that kid."

The players were willing. They kind of liked the kid, too. Besides, the fire was getting a little too hot for them.

Near the end of the game McGraw said to Joe Gardner, owner of the Dallas club, who was sitting in a field box:

"I want to see you after the game, Joe. Come down to the hotel with me."

Gardner grinned and nodded. He had half a notion what McGraw wanted to see him about.

Back at the Oriental McGraw said:

"Where did you get that short stop of yours? What's his name? Fletcher?"

"Arthur Fletcher," Gardner said. "From Collinsville, Illinois."

"Where did he play before?"

"Semi-pro around St. Louis."

"He's a pretty fresh guy."

Joe nodded.

"A pretty good ball player, John," he said. "A pretty good ball player."

"For a semi-pro, yes," McGraw said, grudgingly.

Gardner looked at him closely and grinned.

"He has the guts of a big leaguer, John," he said.

"He's a fresh guy. That's all. Just a fresh guy."

"He's more than that, John. It takes real guts for a kid just breaking in with a minor-league club to go after you and your ball club the way he did—and to play ball against you the way he did. . . . I'll tell you what you do: You have somebody watch him this year. I know you'll get a good report on him, because he's really got it. And when you get ready to buy him, I promise you you can have him."



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FRED MERKLE



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GEORGE BURNS

Now McGraw grinned.

"All right, Joe," he said. "You're on."

A three-cornered race among the Giants, Cubs, and Pirates that summer kept the fans in New York, Chicago, and Pittsburgh in an uproar.

McGraw, after a quiescent season in 1907, was himself again as he stormed about the circuit at the head of his team, rowing with opposing players and managers, umpires and fans. It was a knock-down-and-drag-out fight in which he was engaged and he gloried in it.

One of his sturdiest opponents was the comparatively new umpire, Bill Klem. Klem had come into the league as far back as 1905. He and McGraw had had many a skirmish, but now they were at each other in earnest. Curiously enough, they had a profound respect and even a liking for each other, although no one would have suspected it to see them arguing violently on the field.

The history of their relations had an odd beginning. The day that Klem first appeared at the Polo Grounds in 1905, a delegation of high school students from Lakewood, New Jersey, where Bill had made his home for a number of years, arrived, bearing an indicator as a gift for him, and asked McGraw to make the presentation at the plate. This McGraw did, smiling pleasantly at the new umpire, shaking his hand and wishing him well. Klem, flattered at this attention, replied in kind. In the third inning McGraw flew into a rage over a close decision against the Giants—and Klem ordered him from the field.

Now, in 1908, they fought bitterly almost every time Bill worked in a series involving the Giants. One day he roared at McGraw:

"I'll stop you—or you'll stop me!"

But he never did stop McGraw—nor did McGraw stop him. They battled through all the years that McGraw remained in baseball—and off the field were friends through all those years, too. McGraw would admit—though never in Klem's hearing—that Bill was the best umpire he ever saw. To Klem, McGraw was a "champion," the highest praise he ever could give to any man. And to this day he cherishes the indicator McGraw presented to him in 1905, having come to regard it as a gift not from the Lakewood High School boys but from his friend, the manager of the Giants.

It was in 1908 that McGraw bought Richard (Rube) Marquard from the Indianapolis club of the American Association, paying the hitherto unheard-of price of \$11,000 for a minor-league player.

The Rube had a great record in the Association. McGraw confidently expected him to be a winning pitcher for the Giants from the start, and so wasted no time preparing him for his debut but hurled him into action almost as soon as he joined the team. The Rube had a lot of stuff and all the courage in the world, as he was to prove later on. But the publicity that had been given to his purchase price weighed heavily on his mind. It was as though he felt he had to deliver \$11,000 worth of pitching the first time he entered the box for the Giants, and his start was miserable. Miserable, too, were his next few appearances. And when a thoughtless baseball writer, noting that someone else called him "the \$11,000 Beauty," tagged him "the \$11,000 Lemon," the poor Rube was so disconsolate that he was about to pack up and go home when McGraw went to his rescue.

"Never mind what they are saying about you," he said. "I bought you because I believed in you. I still do. You're a good pitcher and you'll prove it. Maybe I was wrong in starting you so soon, and I'm going to lay you off for the rest of the season. But you're going to stay with me—and I'm going to stick to you."

His faith in Marquard and his thoughtful handling of him were rewarded. It took the Rube nearly two years to come through, but at the end of that time he came through handsomely.

To the day he died McGraw insisted the Giants rightfully won the pennant that year and were robbed of it. There are many who disagreed with him on that point—and still do. But the basis of his charge was one of the most interesting plays in the long history of the game; and the controversy that grew out of it has not been settled yet, nor ever will be.

On September 23 the Giants and the Cubs, close locked in the pennant struggle, played at the Polo Grounds. They were tied at 1-1 when the Giants went to bat in the ninth inning. With two out, McCormick on third base and Merkle on first, Bridwell smashed the ball into center field. McCormick raced home with what appeared to be the winning run, and the crowd swarmed on the field as the players ran for the club house. But suddenly there was a

commotion at second base, where Johnny Evers was calling for the ball. Merkle, it seemed, had not touched the base but, seeing McCormick cross the plate and believing the game to be over, had stopped a few feet short of it and then joined in the rush for the club house.

The mix-up that followed never has been cleared up. Evers always claimed the ball was thrown back to him and that he stepped on second base, making a force play on Merkle which, of course—if it was made—nullified the run McCormick had scored. The Giants always maintained that Joe McGinnity had got the ball and thrown it into the crowd and that a fan had run off with it. In the press box the baseball writers on the evening papers had flashed the final score—Giants 2, Cubs 1—to their papers.

All this time Evers was screaming at Umpire Bob Emslie, working on the bases that day, to call Merkle out. But Emslie paid no attention to him and hurried toward the umpires' dressing room. Evers fought his way through the milling crowd to Hank O'Day, the plate umpire, still demanding that Merkle be called out.

Few of the ball players seemed to know what all the row was about. Nor did the baseball writers who tumbled down from the press box. One of the details which still hangs in the air concerns whether or not O'Day granted Evers's demand on the field. The Cubs who were in the thick of the jam around second base said he did; the Giants said he didn't. At any rate, at ten o'clock that night, O'Day announced that Evers was right—and that Merkle was out.

McGraw was furious.

"If Merkle was out," he roared, "then the ball game was a tie and O'Day should have ordered the field cleared and the game resumed. But he wasn't out and we won the game and they can't take it away from us!"

But they could. Moreover, they did. President Pulliam ruled that it was a tie game and, if necessary to decide the pennant race, it must be replayed. A protest by the Giants sent the case to the league's board of directors, who upheld Pulliam.

The teams battled on through the week or so that remained—and ended in a tie. New York had won the toss to decide the site for the play-off and the Cubs returned to the Polo Grounds. It was one of the greatest baseball days New York ever has known. The crowd overflowed the seating capacity of the stands, smashed down a part of the fence in right field and threatened to overrun the field until

driven back by powerful streams from a fire hose. The fans hurled cushions, bottles and other missiles at the Chicago players, and frantically tried to root the Giants home. But a three-base hit by Joe Tinker off Matty settled the game, and the Giants were beaten, 4 to 2.

Through all the bitterness, the wrangling, the ultimate defeat, McGraw never lost sight of one thing: the rehabilitation of Merkle. Denounced by some of the hot-headed fans, called "Bonehead" and generally ridiculed and derided in the newspapers, the unhappy young man lost fifteen pounds through sleepless nights. Knowing that he was unjustly blamed for what had happened, and fearful that the incident might wreck his career, McGraw was quick to rush to his defense.

"It is criminal to say that Merkle is stupid and to blame the loss of the pennant on him," he said. "In the first place, he is one of the smartest and best players on this ball club and, in not touching second base, he merely did as he had seen veteran players do ever since he has been in the league. In the second place, he didn't cost us the pennant. We lost a dozen games we should have won this year—yes, two dozen!—and any one of them could have saved the pennant for us. Besides," his rage returning, "we were robbed of it and you can't say Merkle did that!"

In public, in private—for he overlooked no opportunity, however slight, to praise Merkle before the other players—he pieced together the shattered spirit of the player. In consequence, Merkle, who might have been driven, embittered, from the major leagues, became one of the best first basemen of his time and helped the Giants to win pennants in 1911, 1912 and 1913.

A short time after the play-off whispers ran through the town that an attempt had been made by someone connected with the Giants to bribe Klem who, with Jim Johnstone, umpired the game. Klem denied this, but the whispers persisted and, finally, appeared in the newspapers in the form of unconfirmed rumors.

McGraw was indignant, even contemptuous.

"That's absurd!" he said, sharply. "Why is it that someone always seems ready to start a story like that?"

Reporters tried hard to run the rumors down. Who had tried to bribe Klem? McGraw? One—or more—of his players? Gamblers?



Apparently not. "Someone connected with the Giants," the rumors had it.

Pulliam, although obviously reluctant to air any scandal touching upon baseball, finally announced an investigation would be held. Whatever steps he took privately immediately following his announcement, the matter was not presented formally to the league until the annual meeting in December.

Klem and Johnstone were summoned and, under questioning by Pulliam and the club owners, Klem testified that Dr. William Creamer, the Giants' physician and a well-known figure in the night life of the town, was the culprit. His testimony was corroborated by Johnstone, and although Creamer tearfully denied the charge, the league believed the umpires. As a result, Creamer was barred from all ball parks, major and minor, for the rest of his life and the investigation was declared over and the incident closed.

## VII ⊗ BRESNAHAN FOR BUGS RAYMOND

**M**CGRAW WASN'T MERELY TRYING to make Merkle feel good when he insisted that Fred's failure to touch second base had not cost the Giants the pennant. He was speaking the truth. They had finished second because, still a young ball club, they lacked the balanced power of the Cubs and, perhaps, some of the Cubs' raw courage in the clutch. Throw out all the other games they lost and go right down to the last week of the season, when a young pitcher by the name of Harry Coveleskie stood them on their heads in Philadelphia as McGraw tried frantically, savagely, to get them back on their feet. If they had beaten Coveleskie, there would have been no play-off with the Cubs and the pennant would have been theirs.

So there was more work to be done that winter. Some of the veterans who had survived the shakeup in which McGinnity, Dahlen, McGann, Bowerman and Brown had departed after the 1906 season were tabbed for shipment now. Among them was Roger Bresnahan.

McGraw and Bresnahan had come a long way together. Bresnahan had jumped the Chicago club of the National League in 1901 to play for McGraw on the Baltimore American League club, and then had deserted the American League to follow McGraw to New

York. He was one of the great all-around ball players, and could—and did—pitch and play third base and the outfield. He was a good hitter and, at his peak, a fast man on the paths. He was one of the best friends McGraw ever had.

But now he was slowing down, and the Giants had to be strengthened. McGraw, who never allowed friendship or sentiment to stand in his way, was looking for a spot in which he might use Bresnahan in a trade.

The opportunity came during the league meeting at which Creamer's guilt had been established to the satisfaction of the club owners. The Cardinals had finished last for two years, the club was practically broke, and M. Stanley Robison, the president, was desperate. He had some of the best pitchers in the league, but little else. Repeated changes in the management of the team had not yielded any progress nor given promise of any to come.

"I'll give you a manager for your ball club," McGraw told Robison at the bar of the old Waldorf, where most of the trading was done during the meetings. "That is, I'll give him to you if you can help me swing a deal I have in mind that involves a couple of your ball players."

"Go ahead," Robison said. "I'm interested. Who's the manager?" "Bresnahan," McGraw said.

Robison was startled. Bresnahan! Why, with the possible exception of Johnny Kling of the Cubs, Bresnahan still was the best catcher in baseball.

"Do you mean that?" he asked.

"Certainly. You don't think I'm talking for fun, do you? Bresnahan will make a great man for you. He hasn't had a chance to manage a ball club yet, but he's capable of managing one. And he'll be a drawing card for you, too. With him out there, you'll get some fans in your park next year."

Robison nodded.

"I know it," he said. "What do you want for him?"

"I want Bugs Raymond and Jack Murray from you, and I want you to get George Schlei from Cincinnati for me to take Bresnahan's place."

The terms, Robison thought, were reasonable enough. Murray was a good ball player—one of the best outfielders in the league—but the Cardinals hadn't been able to win with him and certainly could

spare him to get a man like Bresnahan. Raymond, who had as much stuff as any pitcher that ever lived and knew how to use it, never had realized on his skill, and was a troublesome customer, besides, because he would drink anything he could lay his hands on. Robison thought he could arrange to get Schlei from the Reds and turn him over to the Giants.

So the deal was begun. In a few days it was completed. The great battery of Mathewson and Bresnahan had been broken up, and New York fans were regretful at the passing of the doughty catcher. McGraw was regretful, too. But he had made a move he figured would help his ball club, and at the same time had advanced his old friend to a managerial post.

Raymond, of course, presented a problem for McGraw, as he had for every other manager for whom he ever had played. But McGraw wasn't at all hesitant about attacking it. He knew that if he could keep Bugs in shape he would have another consistent winner on his staff to take some of the burden off Matty.

At Marlin in the spring of 1909 he had a long talk with Bugs. He had given the pitcher the best contract he'd ever had, and promised him added rewards in the form of bonuses if he would quit drinking for the season, or, at least, confine himself to a glass of beer now and then. Bugs, always willing to oblige, and probably meaning it at the moment, promised to behave himself. McGraw closed out the talk with a threat of what would happen if Bugs forgot the promise.

"I'll get rid of you so fast it will make your head swim," he said. "And you know that if I get rid of you, nobody else will give you a chance. You'll be through."

Bugs nodded.

"I know," he said. "You won't have to worry about me, Mac."

Bugs toiled in the sun to rid himself of the poundage he had picked up at numerous bars through the winter, and actually seemed to have reformed, although McGraw kept a skeptical eye on him and sternly warned the bartenders on Main Street not to sell him a drink. All was well until the Giants went to Dallas for the first time. Bugs got through Saturday night all right, but his downfall occurred on Sunday night.

In that happy time, when food and liquor were much cheaper than

they are today, the Oriental Hotel served a six-course dinner on Sunday night for a dollar—and tossed in a Manhattan or Martini cocktail for nothing. Naturally, it was popular with the residents of the town, especially the young married couples. When the ball players got back to the hotel after the game and headed for the dining room, they found all the tables taken. Raymond, among those standing outside the dining room waiting a chance to eat, saw a waiter come out a side door and, thinking only to sneak through that way on the chance that he might find a vacant chair somewhere, suddenly found himself confronted with a long table lined with cocktails. These had been poured for the convenience of the waiters, to be picked up as they passed through on their way from the kitchen.

The sight of all those glasses was too much for whatever good resolutions Bugs may have formed. He had already gulped six cocktails, and was reaching for the seventh, when a waiter spied him and gave the alarm. Poor Bugs was thrown out, but at least he was well oiled; and by the time he reached the train for Marlin late that night he had acquired a sizable package and McGraw was fit to be tied.

On another trip, this one to Beaumont, Bugs ambled into a bar and looked the situation over carefully before proceeding—since he had no money and McGraw had refused to advance him any on his season's salary. He lingered in the background until two men at the bar ordered drinks. Just as the bartender put the drinks on the mahogany, Bugs stepped between the men.

"Pardon me, gentlemen," he said.

Surprised at the intrusion, they stepped back, which was precisely what he wanted them to do. Before they recovered from their surprise, he quickly downed both drinks, then said with a smile:

"You wouldn't begrudge an old railroad man a drink, would you?"

One of them hit him in the eye and the bartender tossed him out on the sidewalk. But at that, he reckoned, he had made a good bargain. He had traded a black eye and a couple of minor bruises, suffered when he hit the sidewalk, for two drinks . . . and he was off again.

He had one more device, which he worked on McGraw for the first time that spring.

"Mac," he said one day, "my shirts are all worn out. Give me some money to buy some."

"No," McGraw said. "Go to a store and pick out a half dozen and I'll give somebody else the money to buy them for you."

Bugs was back in a little while.

"I picked 'em out, Mac," he said. "Six of 'em. Two dollars apiece."

McGraw called one of the other players.

"Here's twelve dollars," he said. "Go with Raymond and pay for six shirts he has picked out. And be sure you pay the man. Don't give the money to Raymond. Do you understand?"

The player understood. He went to the shop with Bugs and handed over the twelve dollars. Bugs stuck the shirts, already wrapped, under one arm and accompanied him back to the hotel. Ten minutes later he returned to the shop, where the clerk gave him six dollars—the shirts being only a dollar each. Bugs carefully had rigged the deal with the clerk and now had six dollars for drinking money. Shrewd as McGraw generally was in checking up on the occasional wayward player on his team, Bugs not only got away with the trick that time but many more times before McGraw caught on to it.

But between sprees Bugs could pitch, and he quickly became a favorite at the Polo Grounds. He was loose and limber and cool under fire, and never seemed to care how many were on the base or who was coming up—and the crowd liked him for that. McGraw liked him for it, too, and bore with him through many a bender. At his orders, Raymond's salary checks were sent direct to the pitcher's wife, only enough pocket money to keep Bugs going and pay his tips being deducted, and even this was doled out sparingly by McGraw.

Now and then Bugs would hoard his money for a week or so and then step out for a lively evening. One night McGraw had him trailed on his rounds of the saloons between the Polo Grounds and the Braddock Hotel at 126th Street and Eighth Avenue, where most of the players lived, and had a complete report ready for him when, slightly bleary, he showed up the next day.

"In the first place you stopped," McGraw said, reading from the report, "you had two beers and went to the lunch counter, where you ate three onions. In the second place, two ryes with beer chasers, some cheese and crackers and three onions. In the third place, one rye, two beers and an onion. In the fourth, two ryes, two onions and—"

"That's a lie!" Bugs roared. "I didn't have but two onions all evening!"

McGraw never had any trouble with Murray, a steady-going fellow, a smooth outfielder with a fine throwing arm, a good hitter and one of the best base runners in the league. But one day Red irritated him slightly. When he went up to hit, with a man on first base and nobody out, McGraw told him to hit the first pitch behind the runner. Instead, Murray slapped the ball straight at the short stop and was engulfed in a double play. As he came back to the bench McGraw snapped:

"Didn't I tell you to hit to right field?"

"Huh!" Red sneered. "On an outside pitch? I suppose you could have done it!"

McGraw's face flamed.

"I never saw the pitcher who could keep me from hitting behind the runner!" he said, tartly.

Murray stared at him for a moment, then shook his head and walked down the dugout.

Strangely, McGraw's anger died. He turned to Matty.

"I really believe," he said, "that he doesn't know I ever played ball."

The Giants figured but lightly in the pennant race that year. The reign of the Cubs had been checked, but the Giants were not yet ready to take over. They started uncertainly, never were higher than third, and finished in that position as the Pirates won the pennant.

But McGraw still was building. He had bought the "fresh busher," Fletcher, from Dallas after the 1908 season and was breaking him in at short stop. Merkle, at whom thoughtless fans now and then yelled "Bonehead!" was developing fast at first base, where the veteran Fred Tenney was holding on until the youngster was battle-hardened enough to take his place.

The season of 1910, even including the didoes of Bugs Raymond, was virtually a repetition of 1909. The Giants never were in the lead, although they were second for a short stretch early in the season. The Cubs, smashing back, drove the Pirates from the top of the

league and won the pennant for the fourth time in five years. The Giants, having dropped to third place, came on late to overtake the tired Pirates and finished second.

McGraw hired a companion—a keeper, the boys called him—for Bugs. But the companion quit one night when Bugs lost patience with him and threatened to beat him up. At one stage a doctor told McGraw that Bugs could stand a couple of weeks in a sanitarium. Whether or not he could never was demonstrated. He had been there only two days when the doctor who was running it called McGraw up.

“Get this man out of here!” he screamed. “My other patients were nutty enough when they came here, but he is making them nuttier!”

The Highlanders also having finished second, there was a demand, voiced mainly by the American League rooters in New York, for a post-season series between the teams. The Giants were willing, and the town was excited by the prospect of seeing Matty duelling with Russell Ford, the Highlanders’ sensational young pitcher. The series ended in a great personal triumph for Matty, as the Giants won, four games to two, a seventh game resulting in a tie. Matty, completely overwhelming Ford, won three games and saved another for Louis Drucke.

## VIII ⊕ IN RAGS AND TATTERS

**F**IVE SEASONS HAD ELAPSED since the Giants had won a pennant. Yet with the passing of the years McGraw’s prestige had increased tremendously. Giant fans idolized him. Elsewhere on the circuit the fans hated—and feared—him. It was in this period that Grantland Rice wrote of him:

“His very walk across the field in a hostile town is a challenge to the multitude.”

He had hustling, fighting ball clubs, and he fought, too—and not always with his mouth. He and his old first baseman, Dan McGann, tangled one day in Boston. He traded punches with Ad Brennan, a Philadelphia pitcher, on Brennan’s home ground. Easily roiled, especially when the Giants were losing, he got into a couple of fights

off the field. But none of his admirers thought any the less of him for these by-battles. They rather expected him to fight when he was taunted, for that was in keeping with the character he had become.

His fondness for racing had grown through the years. John E. Madden, Davy Johnson, Johnny Walters, Jack Doyle, Tod Sloan—these and many more colorful figures on the turf were his friends. So was Jim Corbett his friend. And George M. Cohan and Charles B. Dillingham and Louis Mann and all the Broadway-theatrical-sporting crowd. He was at the races on the Giants' off days—at Belmont and Aqueduct and Empire City and Jamaica and Latonia. He was in a ringside seat at all the big prize fights. He bet heavily on the races and the fights. But his judgment, sound in baseball, was somewhat less than that where the horses and the fighters were concerned. And while sometimes the tales that were told of his losses were exaggerated, basically they were true. He could take a licking around the bank roll better than he could on the ball field. And though he might burn inwardly when a horse he liked was shut off in the stretch, or a fighter he had backed was counted out, outwardly he would be calm, even philosophic.

Going about, having a good time between seasons—and often during a season, too—living high, spending his money almost as fast as he made it, glorying in the power he wielded not only in the dug-out but in the office, the boss of the Giants and undeniably the biggest figure in baseball, he still hadn't reached his peak.

Making new friends wherever he went, he didn't forget the old ones. There was, for instance, Henry Fabian. He had brought his old friend of the Cedar Rapids days to New York and had installed him as ground keeper at the Polo Grounds. Henry now was reaping a measure of fame on his own. He was the best ground keeper in the country, McGraw said; and that was enough for Henry. He worked tirelessly to uphold that reputation, and the diamond and the outfield at the Polo Grounds reflected his skill and that of the crew he had recruited in Harlem. And every spring, a few weeks before the Giants went to Marlin, Henry would go there and work the field into shape, so it would be ready for the players when they arrived.

Henry enjoyed one other distinction. He was the only one who had the temerity to advise McGraw on the management of the Giants, and to second-guess him when things went wrong. He had a curiously mixed slant on McGraw. On the one hand, McGraw



was as much of a hero to him as he was to any of the fans. On the other, he never could forget that this was Johnny McGraw, the kid who had come up from Gainesville, Fla., to join the Cedar Rapids club when he, Tex Fabian, was a veteran. As he had counseled McGraw then, so he counseled him now. And McGraw, who would have resented hotly an attempt by anyone else to tell him what to do, would listen quietly and nod sagely when Henry "picked" his pitchers for him or rebuked him for some bit of strategy that had gone awry.

There was, in New York in 1911, a telegraph operator who had a great yearning to become an umpire. Having got to know McGraw around the Polo Grounds, he confided his ambition to him one day when he called at the Giants' office just before the team was to report at Marlin. McGraw didn't take him seriously, but liked him and thought it wouldn't do any harm—and might prove fairly amusing—to take him to the training camp.

"How would you like to go to Marlin, Charlie?" he asked.

Charlie was almost incoherent.

"All right," McGraw said. "Meet me at the train on Tuesday morning. I'll take you down there and give you a chance to umpire in our exhibition games."

Poor Charlie hadn't been in camp long before he knew all the hardships that most umpires pack into an entire career. Try as he would to call the plays right, he failed miserably. The players were at him constantly. But he was game. He kept on trying.

His special tormentor was Chief Meyers, the Indian catcher. The climax was reached one day in Dallas as a result of some careful rigging by McGraw.

On the way out to the park that day Meyers said to McGraw:

"All this may be funny to you, Mac, but that clown is ruining our ball games. And for some reason he seems to pull his worst decisions on me. What are you going to do about it, anyway?"

"What am I going to do?" McGraw demanded. "What are you going to do?"

"What can I do?"

"Get rough with him."

"Can I?"

“Certainly, If you think he is picking on you, don’t stand for it any longer.”

The Chief’s eyes gleamed.

“Just wait!” he said. “Wait till that bum pulls another on me!”

Shortly before the game Charlie went to McGraw.

“Mr. McGraw,” he said, “I don’t like to complain about any of the players, but the things that Meyers has been saying to me are frightful.”

“Why, that’s terrible,” McGraw said. “But you can stop him.”

“How?”

“Put him out of the game the next time he opens his mouth.”

Charlie was dubious.

“But suppose he won’t go?”

McGraw shrugged.

“You know the rules,” he said. “The umpire is empowered to order any player from the field and, if he refuses to go, to call on the police to remove him. . . . Do you see that policeman in front of the stand back of third base?”

“Yes.”

“Well, if you have any trouble with Meyers and he won’t leave the field when you tell him to, just call that policeman.”

Charlie stuck his chest out.

“You watch me if that Indian gets fresh with me today!” he said.

He walked out to dust off the plate. McGraw beckoned to one of the players.

“Go down and tell that cop,” he said, “that if the umpire has any trouble with Meyers and calls on him for help, to walk away from him.”

It couldn’t have worked out better for McGraw if he had written the complete script. The first time Meyers went to bat he hammered a ball down the left-field line.

“Foul ball!” Charlie yelled.

Meyers, head down as he lumbered around first base and started for second, pulled up short when Charlie continued to bellow:

“Foul ball! Foul ball!”

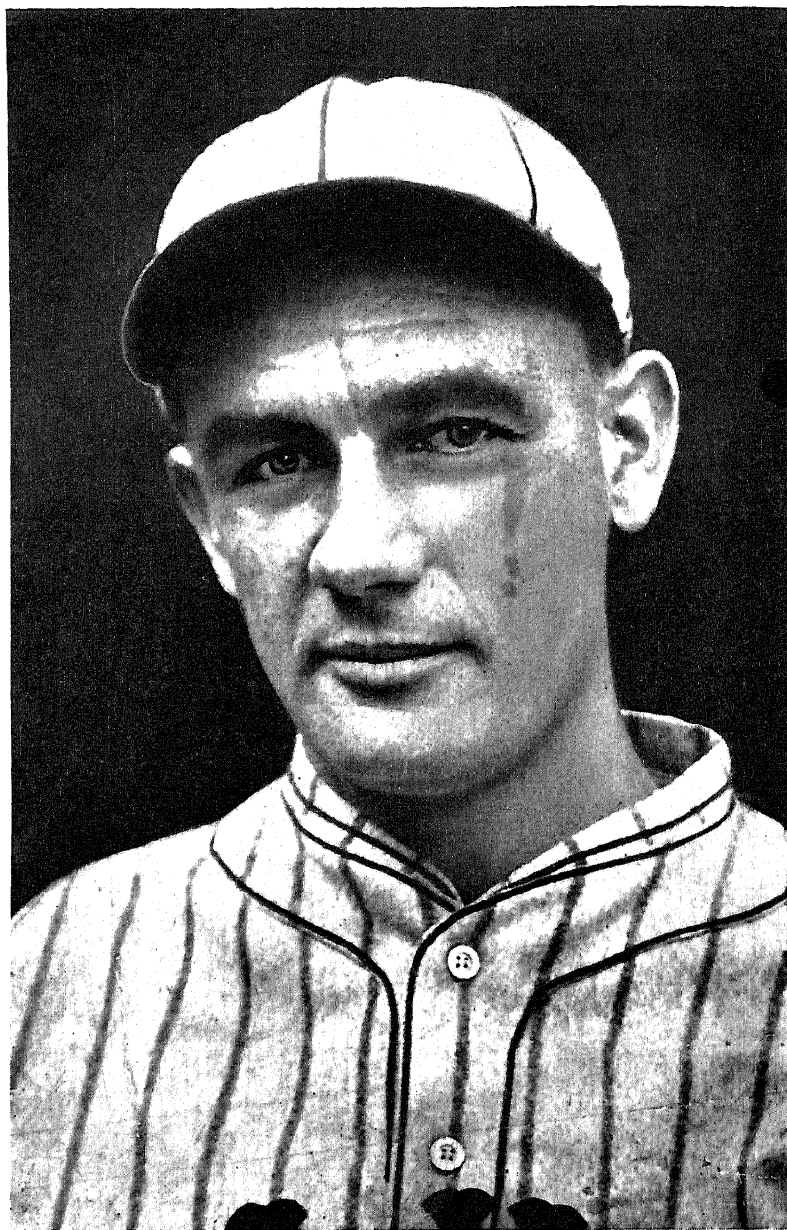
Meyers rushed at him; pushed him around, grabbed him by the throat and shook him.

The hapless Charlie, writhing in his grasp, wheezed:

“You’re out of the game! Get out! Get off the field!”



MCGRAW IN 1912



© Keystone View Co.

RUBE MARQUARD

“What!” Meyers roared. “Why, you — — —! I’ll kill you!”

Free of him now, Charlie screamed:

“Officer! Officer! Put this man out!”

The cop turned his back and sauntered toward left field. Still screaming, Charlie ran after him, closely pursued by Meyers. McGraw was convulsed with laughter. The players were rolling on the bench. The crowd was howling. Finally McGraw got control of himself and, joining in the chase, caught up with Charlie, the Chief and the cop just before they reached the left-field fence. After some difficulty he persuaded Meyers to leave the field and Charlie to go on with the game.

A day or so later Charlie left Marlin for New York. His ambition to become an umpire had been throttled by the angry Chief.

The Giants were ready that year. They had youth and fire and zing. They ran and slid themselves literally ragged on the base paths, so that their uniforms were in tatters most of the time. It was written of them they were decently garbed only with the aid of safety pins and adhesive tape. Merkle, Doyle, Fletcher and Herzog were in the infield. Snodgrass, Devore and Murray patrolled the outfield. Marquard, come into his own as a major-league pitcher at last, went swinging along with Matty in the van of the pitchers. Meyers was a tireless catcher and a hard hitter.

It was one of McGraw’s best teams—and, no matter what the fans thought or the headlines said, there were no stars on it. Not where McGraw was concerned, anyway. On one sleeper jump they were shy of space and some of the players, it developed, would have to go into uppers.

“What shall I do about that?” Eddie Brannick, by now assistant to the secretary, asked McGraw.

“Put the names of all the players in a hat and let them draw for the uppers,” McGraw said.

A little later Eddie went back to McGraw.

“Matty drew an upper,” he said in an awed voice.

“What of it?” McGraw demanded. “Let him sleep in one, then. There are no stars on this ball club and he’s no better than anybody else.”

It was during this season that Bugs Raymond reached the end of McGraw's patience—and, of course, the end of his stay with the Giants.

"We were playing the Pirates at the Polo Grounds," McGraw once said, telling of Bugs's finish, "and Marquard was pitching for us. He got into trouble along about the fifth inning and I tossed a ball to Bugs and said:

"'Run down to the bull pen and warm up. I may need you in a hurry.'

"That was in the days before the bull pen became, as you might say, a part of the ball game, with pitchers and catchers down there all the time and the pitchers ready to go to work at a sign from the bench. Bugs and a catcher hustled down there and I turned my attention back to the game. Marquard got out of the jam all right and didn't have any trouble in the next inning. But in the seventh, I believe it was, he was jammed up again. He had two out, but there were men on first and third and Hans Wagner was up. So I pulled him out and called Raymond in.

"Bugs threw a few warm-up pitches and then was ready. His first pitch to Wagner went over Hans' head to the grandstand, the runner on third scoring and the one on first moving to third. Well, of course, that could happen to anybody and, although I was burned up, I didn't suspect anything. But when Wagner hit the next pitch right back to Bugs, and Bugs, instead of throwing to first base for an easy out to end the inning, not only made the play at the plate but threw the ball over Meyers's head, I jumped out of the dugout and called him in.

"As he walked toward me I saw he was staggering slightly, and when he got right up to me I saw he was stiff. Do you know what he had done? When I sent him down to the bull pen, he kept right on going, out of the park and across Eighth Avenue to one of those ratty little gin mills that used to be there, and traded in the new ball for three quick shots of third-rail whisky.

"That was the finish. I told him to go to the club house, take off his uniform, get out—and never come back. He never did, either."

By September 1, after a long and furious battle with the Cubs and the Pirates, the Giants were in first place. They not only

held the lead but increased it, beating the Cubs to the wire by seven and a half games. The long wait was over for McGraw. He had won the pennant again, and he glowed as he read the critics' pronouncement that this was the fastest team of all time.

Disaster was in store for him in the World Series, however. The Athletics, who had won the pennant in 1910 and beaten the Cubs in the World Series—the Athletics of McInnis, Collins, Barry and Baker—won it again in 1911, and beat the Giants in the series, four games to two. It was in that series that Frank Baker earned the tag of "Home Run" Baker by hitting a homer off Marquard in the second game and another off Matty, in the third.

Bitterly disappointed though he was, McGraw could be generous in defeat this time. He told Connie Mack then—and he believed it then and ever after—that the 1911 Athletics were one of the greatest teams he had ever seen.

"They must be, Connie," he said. "I have a great team, too—but you beat us."

In November McGraw took the Giants to Cuba. It was his first visit since the winter of 1890. The years between had wrought many changes in him and, of course, in Havana. He, who had been there as an unknown kid ball player out of Wellsville, N. Y., tramping with a shabby lot of minor leaguers, returned now as the famous manager of the Giants, champions of the National League. In place of a dirty overrun city in which Spanish troops were garrisoned and Cuban patriots rotted in the dungeons of Morro Castle or died before firing squads, he found a bright, gay capital of a fledgling republic, in which baseball, not bull fighting, was the principal sport.

The two best teams on the island were the Havana Reds and the Almendares. Joy-riding American teams who had preceded the Giants had been easy picking for the Cubans, especially for the Almendares, when Mendez, the Black Matty, was pitching. Now the Giants, with the great Mathewson, had come to oppose them. There was wide excitement among the fans. This increased when the Giants lost the first two games to the Reds and a duel between Matty and Mendez loomed in the opening game of a series with the Almendares.

The loss of those two games to the Reds didn't mean much to

some of the Giants. This was their vacation, they reasoned, and their ball playing was merely a means of defraying their expenses. But it meant something to McGraw. Angry, humiliated, he gave the players a stormy going over.

"You've been beaten because you haven't taken these games seriously," he said, "and I'm not going to stand for it any longer! There will be morning practice until you pull yourselves together—and there will be less knocking around the bars at night."

Some of the players grumbled. They were in Havana for fun, and they resented having to get up early and work in the morning heat.

"You'll be out there," McGraw snapped, "or you won't play at all. That means you'll take the next boat home—or stay here at your own expense. Fun, eh? Well, I came down here for fun, too, and I'll get plenty of it and so will you. But when you're on that ball field, it's not for fun. You'll beat these clowns—or I'll know the reason why."

The prospect of having to go home or pay their own expenses had a chastening effect on the players who had dawdled. And if they needed any other incentive it was supplied by the Cubans' confidence in Mendez. Some of the native sportsmen having challenged the Giants to bet on themselves, the players and Sid Mercer, who had accompanied them, made up a pool of about \$800 and placed it in answer to the challenge.

The game was played on Thanksgiving Day. Both Matty and Mendez were in superb form. With Matty hurling a shutout, the Giants won, 2 to 0. That night McGraw gave a party for the players and then, at a late hour, set out on a tour of some of the more lurid night spots. His guide was Cy Rigler, the National League umpire, who was spending the winter in Havana in the dual role of ground keeper and umpire. In one place they got into an argument with some Cuban fans, and it quickly developed into a fight. McGraw and Rigler, although badly outnumbered, were giving an excellent account of themselves when the police arrived, rounded up all the combatants and lugged them off to the station. There they were booked and released, with orders to report in court the next morning. At that time they were reprimanded and warned against further fist fighting in the cafés. The warning did not make much of an impression.



"We were always winding up in the police station because of some misunderstanding or other," Mercer has said. "Eventually, we got to know the night lieutenant very well."

One day McGraw became involved in an argument with Rigler over a third strike that had been called on one of the Giants—the fact that Rigler was his friend would not, of course, deter McGraw from jumping on him during a ball game. It lasted so long a Cuban senator leaped from his seat in a box to take part in it. Since the Senator had a violent temper, Pepe Conte, a Havana sports writer who had seen enough of McGraw to know something of his temper, too, rushed out to intervene.

McGraw whirled as the Senator arrived at the plate.

"What the hell do you want?" he demanded.

"I want you to know," the Senator roared, in Spanish, "that you cannot make a farce of our baseball!"

McGraw turned to Conte.

"What did he say?"

"He says," Pepe tactfully lied, "that he quite understands your complaint because he thinks Rigler is a robber, too."

McGraw, mollified, turned to the Senator with a smile.

"Don't you laugh at me!" screamed the Senator. "You pig!"

McGraw could understand the tone, if not the words. His smile faded.

"Why, you —— ——!" he yelled. "Get back where you belong or I'll flatten you!"

The Senator looked at Pepe.

"He says that it is a great honor to have such a distinguished gentleman take so great an interest in the game," Pepe said.

The Senator bowed and smiled.

"So you think it's funny, eh?" McGraw said. "I'll show you how funny it is! If you don't take your seat, I'll slug you and take my team off the field!"

"He says," Pepe droned, "that he is sorry to have caused all this commotion, and if you will forgive him he will get right on with the game."

And so it went, for ten minutes. At the end of that time Pepe's deft interpretation had healed the breach. Each considered that he had scored a signal victory over the other. The affair ended with them shaking hands warmly and McGraw, who had forgotten all

about Rigler and the third strike, accompanying the Senator back to his box.

The Giants won all their remaining games. McGraw, liking Havana very much and in high good humor over the success of his team, vowed that he would return often. It was a vow that was kept. For the rest of his life, he allowed few winters to pass without spending anywhere from a couple of weeks to the entire season in the Cuban capital. There, he and Mrs. McGraw had almost as many friends as they had in New York and passed some of their most pleasant and memorable days.

## IX ☉ IN DEFENSE OF SNODGRASS

**T**HE ATHLETICS COULD BEAT the Giants, but no team in the National League could. Not in 1911—or in 1912, either. Rolling up from Marlin in great shape in the spring of 1912, they broke fast at the opening bell, beat off the contenders quickly, and by May 15 were in front to stay.

Merkle and Meyers were the only consistent power hitters on the team. But the others beat enemy pitchers down with a drum fire of singles. And, as in 1911, when they got on the bases they ran almost steadily. This wasn't a great team, although McGraw said it was. But it was as typical of him as any team he ever had, as it went swinging and hustling and fighting—and snarling, sometimes—on its way.

McGraw was bringing a young outfielder along that year. His name was George Burns. He had come up from the Utica Club of the New York State League late in 1911 and had played in a few games. McGraw had thought, for a while, of farming him out for a year in one of the larger minor leagues, but decided against it.

“You may not play much this year,” he told the boy in the spring, “but I want you with me. You sit next to me on the bench and I'll tell you all I can about the way they play ball up here. And I'll stick you in there now and then to give you some experience. I don't want you to get impatient. Understand?”

Burns nodded. He wasn't the nervous or impatient kind. He'd watch . . . and listen . . . and learn.

"Next year," McGraw said, "you'll be in there. And when you do get in, nobody's going to get you out for a long time."

That was prophetic. Starting with 1913, Burns reeled off nine years in left field at the Polo Grounds. But through most of 1912 he sat in the dugout next to McGraw, munching peanuts, learning all he could, heeding everything McGraw said, noting everything the Giants did.

At Stockholm that year Jim Thorpe led the American team to victory in the Olympic Games.

"Sir," the King of Sweden said to him at the conclusion of the games, "you are the greatest athlete in the world."

So he was, and the world wildly acclaimed him. On the return of the Olympic team to New York there was a parade up Fifth Avenue. The crowd, lining the sidewalks, roared its homage to the Indian. And then, a short time later, it became known that, while still a student at Carlisle, he had played a few games of professional baseball.

For this he was castigated by the indignant brass hats of the Amateur Athletic Union, stripped of the medals and trophies he had won, tossed out of the simon-pure ranks—and was picked up by John McGraw.

McGraw didn't know how well Thorpe could play ball. The chances are he didn't care particularly. He had all the good ball players he needed, and a few to spare. But Thorpe black-listed by the A.A.U., still was a hero to the public; and McGraw, always a showman, knew that if Jim only hit in batting practice he would be a drawing card wherever the Giants played.

The Giants, slashing, running, brawling now and then, went on to the pennant. In the American League the Boston Red Sox, with their great outfield of Tris Speaker, Harry Hooper and Duffy Lewis, and sparked by the great pitching of Joe Wood, wrested the championship from the Athletics.

Beaten in the series the year before, McGraw had been given another chance. He didn't mean to blow this one—but he did. It was no fault of his; but when the final count was made there it was:

The Red Sox won in eight games, the second game having ended in a tie.

The finish, from McGraw's standpoint, was heart-breaking—for just as victory seemed to be assured the Giants' defense cracked. The teams were tied at 1-1, with Matty pitching against Wood, at the end of the ninth. In the tenth the Giants scored a run; and that looked like the ball game. But when Clyde Engle, who batted for Wood, lifted a fly to center field, Snodgrass muffed the ball squarely and Engle raced to second. Snodgrass, a fine outfielder, then made a fine catch of a long drive by Hooper. But Matty couldn't get the ball over the plate for Steve Yerkes, who walked.

Now came the big break. Speaker raised a pop foul between the plate and first base, on which he should have been an easy out. But Merkle, Matty and Meyers became confused and allowed the ball to fall safely among them. Granted another chance to hit, Speaker singled, scoring Engle with the tying run, and Yerkes hustled around to third. Larry Gardner smashed a long fly to Devore, and Yerkes scored, winning the game and the series.

"Snodgrass's Muff Cost Giants Victory!" the headlines screamed. Someone in the press box quickly figured the defeat meant a loss of \$30,000 to the Giant players—the difference between the winners' and the losers' cut of the gate receipts.

"A \$30,000 Muff!" he yelled, as his story went crackling over the wires.

A rumor quickly spread that McGraw had given Snodgrass a verbal lashing in the club house and had ended it with a threat to release the player. Another, even more vicious, rumor got about that one of the other players had taken a punch at Snodgrass and that a free-for-all fight had narrowly been averted.

When McGraw heard these rumors, he was furious.

"Snodgrass!" he roared. "Snodgrass didn't lose the game. The game was lost when Speaker's foul wasn't caught. If he had been retired, the Red Sox wouldn't have scored. Quit blaming Snodgrass and put the blame where it really belongs—on Merkle and Matty. Meyers never had a chance to catch the ball. It was Merkle's ball and he should have started for it, and when he didn't Matty should have yelled at him to do so. We were all yelling at him from the bench, but the crowd made so much noise he couldn't hear us.

"So Snodgrass cost us the game, did he? And I'm going to trade

him, am I? Well, I'll tell you what I think of Snodgrass: I think he is the best outfielder I have and one of the best in baseball. And I'll tell you what I am going to do: I'm going to give him a better contract next year than he's ever had."

After the series McGraw went on a fifteen-week tour of one of the major vaudeville circuits, delivering a monologue written by Boze-man Bulger. He proved to be as good a drawing card in the theater as he was in a ball park. Although nervous and uncertain at first—the footlights had to be dimmed for him because he complained that they blinded him—he soon loosened up and gave a creditable performance.

The tour was not precisely a milestone in the history of vaudeville, but it served one notable purpose. After a show in Chicago one night McGraw met Comiskey for supper. Over the table a conversation began that literally was to lead the two of them around the world. They had been talking about the old days—Comiskey, unlike Johnson, never had felt any bitterness toward McGraw for not remaining with the American League—and, out of nowhere, Commy said:

"John, why don't you and I take our ball clubs around the world?"

"That's an idea," McGraw said. "When?"

Comiskey shrugged.

"Any time that's agreeable to you. How about after next season?"

"You're on," McGraw said.

As casually as that they decided to girdle the globe, as A. G. Spalding had done back in 1888.

In November, shortly after McGraw returned to New York from his vaudeville tour, Brush started for California. Brush had been a virtual invalid for the past few years, and it was his custom to seek a warm climate each winter. Now he was off again to rest in the sun until it was spring again in New York. But when his train reached St. Charles, Missouri, he became so ill he was taken from it and placed in a hospital. There, on November 26, he died.

McGraw was deeply saddened by the news of Brush's death. The years through which they had been associated had been extremely pleasant ones for him. Brush had given him his own way from the beginning, had spent money freely for the players he had wanted, and, whenever he had been involved in rows—as he was with Dreyfuss and Pulliam and, on numerous occasions, with the umpires—

had defended him staunchly. Brush never had resented McGraw's constant gains in power and influence in the club's offices; and if he realized that for at least five years he had been dominated by McGraw in every move he made, he gave no sign of it.

Now that Brush was dead McGraw had some grounds for uneasiness, whether he realized it or not. Controlling interest in the club passed to the owner's widow and daughters. When the transfer of the stock had been completed, Harry N. Hempstead, a son-in-law, was elected president.

Hempstead was as fine a man as baseball ever has known, but he knew nothing of baseball. He had spent most of his adult life in Brush's clothing business in Indianapolis. He and McGraw were practically strangers. A shy, sensitive man, he seemed uncomfortable in the bluff, brisk presence of his manager, and in all matters pertaining to the office he held looked for guidance not to McGraw but to John B. Foster, who became secretary of the club in 1913.

Foster, a veteran baseball writer and sports editor, had long been recognized as an authority on the game and the rules that governed the playing of it. He was editor of *Spalding's Guide*, and had a wide acquaintance among owners, managers and players in the major and minor leagues. He had had no experience in the business end of the sport. But, a close observer of club and league officials—and sometimes highly critical of them—he now found himself in a position of considerable influence in the most important club in the majors.

It dawned on McGraw, as the 1913 season got under way, that Foster and Hempstead were gently nudging him out of the dominance he had exercised for so long. There was little that was tangible about their opposition to him, but it was there and, in many small ways, he was made aware of it. Now and then, restive under the restraints that had been placed upon him, he let go with a blast at the president and the secretary. But these outbursts had no effect whatever. Foster and Hempstead had the support of Mrs. Brush and her daughters, and they went quietly on with their task of putting McGraw in his place and keeping him there.

With another pennant race under way, McGraw had little time to worry about the trend in the front office. His mind was occupied with the winning of another flag, and the plans that he and Comiskey had made for their world tour. Both projects proceeded smoothly. The Giants jockeyed for position through the month of May, then

started a drive in June that carried them into the lead by the first of July. That year their old rivals, the Cubs and the Pirates, couldn't quite hold to the pace. The Phillies, who had finished fifth in 1912, came with a rush to wind up in second place.

And so, once more, McGraw led his team into a World Series—and once more drew Connie Mack as his opponent. Eager—perhaps a trifle too eager—to shake the jinx that had ridden him in 1911 and 1912, his hopes were battered again. The fate of the Giants was presaged in the opening game, when Baker hit another home run off Marquard as the A's won, 6 to 4. Matty pitched a shut-out in the second game to even the count. But that was the last game the Giants won. The A's ripped off three in a row. McGraw was desolate in the club house after the final game.

There was also, at the end of that series, a circumstance disturbing to McGraw, but of which only those close to him were aware. His long friendship with Wilbert Robinson was ended. For the past few years Robbie had served as coach with the Giants, his principal—almost his only—duty having been that of having the pitchers in shape and ready when McGraw wanted them. He had done a good job, too, and had helped considerably in the development of Marquard.

But that year there had been small bickerings between them. These had led—as they so often will in the case of long-standing friendships—to open rows. They hadn't spoken to each other through the last month or two of the season. When the series was over, Robbie resigned.

Within a few weeks he was to be engaged as manager by the Brooklyn club, although this was no doing of McGraw's. Outwardly, however, they still were friendly, and there were many who assumed, not knowing any better, that McGraw unselfishly had released his old friend only that he might better himself. Actually, they had grown to hate each other and, when they met in public, it was difficult for them to act as though they still were friendly. The break between them never was cemented, although their friends tried for a long time to bring about a reconciliation.

## X ⊕ AROUND THE WORLD

**M**CGRAW'S DISAPPOINTMENT over the loss of the series, keen as it was on the night of the final game, was blunted by the prospect of adventure that lay just ahead—the tour of the world that he and Comiskey had plotted over a late supper in Chicago the year before. The details of the trip had been worked out, and a schedule arranged, by Dick Bunnell and A. P. Anderson, friends of Comiskey's, and all was in readiness for the tourists.

Curiously enough, not all the Giant and White Sox players—not even all those whom McGraw and Jimmy Callahan, the Sox manager, invited to make the trip—were interested in seeing Europe and the Orient and all the exciting places in between, preferring the sights and sounds of home to roaming the oceans and the far continents. Consequently, each manager had to fill in his team with players from other clubs.

McGraw had Merkle on first base, Doyle on second, Mike Doolan of the Phillies at short stop and Hans Lobert, also of the Phillies, on third base. Thorpe was in right field, Mike Donlin in center and Lee Magee of the Cardinals in left. Ivy Wingo of the Cardinals was his catcher. His pitchers were Wiltse, Bunny Hearne, a youngster on the Giant staff, and Urban (Red) Faber, borrowed from the White Sox.

Callahan marshaled only Joe Benz and Jim Scott, pitchers; Buck Weaver, short stop; Tommy Daly, a catcher pressed into service as a first baseman for the trip, and Andy Slight, also a catcher, from his own team. He had Germany Schaefer of the Senators on second base, Dick Egan of Brooklyn on third, Steve Evans of the Cardinals in left field, Tris Speaker of the Red Sox in center, and Sam Crawford of the Tigers in right. He added Walter Leverenz of the Browns to his pitchers. Jack Bliss of the Cardinals divided the catching with Slight. Bill Klem and Jack Sheridan went along as umpires. McGraw took his friend, Harry Sparrow, who had made a number of training trips with the Giants. Sparrow, who had learned about handling ball clubs by keeping his eyes open on those trips, wound up acting as secretary of the party. Two newspapermen, Gus Axelson of the *Chicago Record-Herald* and Joseph Farrell of the *Chicago Tribune*, plus three photographers, covered the jaunt.

Mrs. McGraw, Mrs. Comiskey, Mrs. Callahan, the wives of some



of the players and a small group of McGraw's and Commy's friends, including Dr. Finley, were in the party. To entertain them—and also to amuse them, although not in a manner he intended—was a well-known baseball character of the time, whose name was Ted Sullivan and who called himself an author and lecturer. At formal dinners it was Ted's custom to appear in an ill-fitting full dress suit, a bright red necktie and carpet slippers—and he didn't do it for laughs, either.

The teams assembled at Cincinnati. They opened a transcontinental series there with a game on October 18, which the Giants won by a score of 11 to 2. The next stop was Chicago. Now they really were on their way—through Illinois, into Iowa, then southwest by way of Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma into Texas, then west across Arizona into California; from there, up through Oregon to Seattle.

A final game in this country, scheduled for Seattle on November 19, was cancelled because of rain. That afternoon the party left for Vancouver, where the S.S. *Empress of Japan* awaited. By 11:30 that night, the log of the journey recites, all were aboard the great Canadian Pacific ship, cabins had been assigned and luggage stowed. The lines were cast off. Destination, Yokohama.

It was a rough voyage. The wind howled, the snow swirled, and heavy seas pounded the ship. But at last the rugged outline of Japan was sighted. On December 5 the landing was made.

Two games were played between the teams in Tokyo. Then they combined forces to wallop Keio University. From there they went to Hongkong, played one game, shoved off for Manila. There they played two, and then sailed for Australia. Brisbane saw them . . . and Melbourne and Sydney. Then Colombo, in Ceylon; and from there the long journey was begun to Cairo, where they played two games. From there they went to Rome, where it rained continually, so that there was no ball game, but where they were granted an audience with the Pope. There was a game at Nice, the first stop in France, but none in Paris, because of the weather, during a nine-day stay. A game was played in London on February 26. King George V was there, and Tommy Daley hit a home run for His Majesty. Two days later the party sailed for home on the ill-fated *Lusitania*.

It had been a great trip, not only for baseball but for McGraw. He had crossed the seas and wandered in foreign lands. He had been

entertained by generals and admirals, by diplomats and nobles. He had seen the Pyramids and the Sphinx and the great sweep of the Sahara. In Rome, the Pope had greeted him and, in London, the King had shaken his hand.

All the while his fame had mounted. He had overshadowed all the others on the trip. Comiskey and Callahan and all the rest. Wherever he had been they would remember him for years to come, although they might forget those who had been with him. He had helped to spread the game of baseball across the face of the earth, and wherever it was played they would talk of him and follow his fortunes.

## XI ⊗ THE FEDERAL LEAGUE

HE RETURNED TO THIS COUNTRY to find the National and American Leagues seriously involved with the Federal League in a struggle for patronage. It had been brewing when he left and had increased in intensity in his absence. There had been peace in baseball since the American League had gained recognition from the National in 1903. But now war raged again, and hotly.

The Federal League, branded as an outlaw by the older circuits, had been inspired by the seeming ease with which money was to be made in baseball. Its club owners, for the most part, had had no experience in baseball. But they had money, and they were tough and tenacious fighters. They had raided the two major leagues of some "name" players—and pounced upon the returning travelers in the hope of getting some more. The bulk of their players had been induced to jump their contracts—or, more specifically, to break the reserve clause in their contracts—with minor league clubs. And they had further weakened the structure of the so-called Organized Baseball by invading not only Chicago, St. Louis, Pittsburgh and Brooklyn, but the minor-league strongholds of Baltimore, Buffalo, Indianapolis and Kansas City.

Now they wanted McGraw. They wanted a club in New York, too. If they succeeded in getting McGraw, a New York club headed by him was a possibility. But the main thing was to get him. With him on their side the invasion of New York could wait. They could

put him in Brooklyn—or Chicago or one of the other cities—because, wherever he was, he could deal powerful blows for them. He was the greatest manager and the most outstanding figure in baseball. He combined color and substance to a greater degree than all of their other heroes put together. And where he went, they were sure, the players that he wanted on his team would follow.

He had revived the National League as it tottered under the attack by the American when he signed with the Giants in 1902. He could beat it to its knees now—and the American League along with it—by joining the Federals. Some of his colleagues looked on fearfully as the outlaws descended upon him, even before he had stepped from the deck of the *Lusitania*. They remembered that he had jumped from the National League to the American and back to the National. They knew that he had little personal use, if any, for some of them, and that he had an active and abiding hatred for Ban Johnson, the stoutest and most relentless fighter in their cause. They were aware that the outlaws would bid high for him—higher than anybody ever had bid for a ball player or manager before.

They need not have worried. Whatever it was that motivated him—loyalty to the established order in baseball, a shrewd guess that the outlaws were doomed to failure and that even his presence among them could only prolong the war—he flatly rejected the offers that were made to him. No one knows precisely why, for he never talked much about it, except to boast once in a while—especially when his gorge rose at something Johnson had said or done—that he, not Ban, had saved organized baseball in 1914. It was rumored that he could have got \$250,000 in salary and bonuses on a five-year contract. But he refused to discuss that. And the Feds, chagrined at having missed him, likewise were silent.

The raiders were more successful in another drive on the tourists, and carried off Lee Magee, Mike Doolan and Steve Evans. Magee was young, and McGraw didn't care very much whether he jumped or not. But he was secretly pleased that Doolan and Evans, who were growing old as ball players, got generous bonuses for signing and better salaries than they had commanded in Philadelphia and St. Louis. However, as a service to his own side, he publicly denounced them, along with the rest of the Feds. Meanwhile, he secured his own team against the enemy's advances by having the salaries of all the players raised.

Having dismissed the Federal League emissaries, he turned angrily on Harry Hempstead and John Foster.

"Who's managing this ball club?" he demanded.

They looked at each other. Hempstead spoke.

"Why, you are, John."

"It doesn't look it, when trades are being made behind my back. Herzog and Hartley to Cincinnati for Bescher, eh? What was the idea?"

"Why, before you went away, you told me you'd like to get Bescher," Foster said. "You said you thought he was the best base stealer—"

"What if I did? I should have been consulted on any deal you made for him."

He pulled a clipping from a newspaper out of his pocket and brandished it in Hempstead's face.

"It says here that Herzog had your consent to talk to the Cincinnati club, before the deal was made, about the possibility of his being made manager of the Reds," he said, his voice and his temper rising. "So he had your consent, did he? Well, he didn't have my consent, and you didn't, either."

"But you didn't use him regularly last year," Foster said. "And here was a chance to put him in a spot where he could advance himself and, at the same time, for us to get a player you said you wanted in exchange for him and a second-string catcher."

"He could have advanced himself right here!" McGraw snapped. "How do you know what I was going to do with him this year? A fine thing! A fine ——— thing! So you're managing the ball club now, are you?"

He glared at Foster. The secretary—angry, too, by now—turned to Hempstead.

"Well," Hempstead began, "we thought—"

"You thought! You! The two of you! I don't care what you thought! The next time a deal is made on this ball club, I'm going to make it!"

He strode from the room. Things hadn't been like that when Brush was alive. He was the one who conceived the deals, and sometimes he didn't tell Brush about them until after they had been made. That was the way Brush had wanted it, being a smart, practical

baseball man and leaving the management of the team to him. Well, by God! that was the way it was going to be from now on, too.

It was true, as Foster had said, that he had talked of making a trade for Bescher, who was one of the great base stealers of all time. It was also true that Bob's acquisition by the Giants had been hailed by the New York baseball writers as a master stroke, and that he was prepared to take bows on it in public. But he felt he could have struck a shrewder bargain; and, above all, he resented the fact that Foster and Hempstead had taken it upon themselves to act in his absence.

He never forgot that, and never forgave Foster for it. He didn't blame Hempstead so much, believing that Harry, lacking in baseball experience, was dominated by Foster. But he overlooked no opportunity—especially when Herzog, who had become playing manager of the Reds, beat the Giants out of a ball game—to remind Foster who had sent Herzog to Cincinnati; and always his tone held a warning that such a thing never must happen again.

And now it was time—high time, indeed—that he was at Marlin, getting his team ready for another season. Having won three pennants in a row, he was taking dead aim on a fourth. He could see no very good reason why he shouldn't bring it down. His team had been toughened in the fire of those three winning campaigns. The players, liking the feel of World Series money in their jeans, wanted more of the same.

The training trip was uneventful. The season began with a great rush on the part of the Pirates. It took them to the top of the league. But by the middle of May the Giants were in second place, only two games behind them. By the first of June McGraw had everything under control. The Giants were in first place, and breezing. The Pirates already had demonstrated that they had been playing over their heads through the first five or six weeks. There no longer was any reason for McGraw to be worried about them. Now the Reds were challenging. But he knew they wouldn't stand up, either. The Cubs and the Cardinals were moving up. The race still was close. But they wielded no great threat.

Past performances indicated that the team in first place on the Fourth of July usually won the pennant. By the Fourth the Giants had increased their lead, the others stringing out behind them, right down to the Braves, in last place. The Giants began to feel their

victory would be a kick-in. McGraw began to feel the same way. And then, almost imperceptibly at first, the Braves began to move. They were seventh on July 15, fourth on August 1, and, swiftly gaining momentum, were in second place and breathing hard on the back of the Giants' necks on August 15.

Now, suddenly, the Giants began to stumble. Matty, who had started as though he was going to have his greatest year, went into a terrific decline and couldn't win. Marquard and Al Demaree were in-and-outers overnight. Bescher's base running fell off. Meyers, Merkle and Doyle couldn't hit.

The Braves were burning up the league. Crowds all over the circuit turned out to see them. Fans all over the country rooted for them. George Stallings, their manager—nervous, superstitious, hair-trigger tempered—was driving them savagely. Johnny Evers and Rabbit Maranville formed the best second-base combination in the league. Hank Gowdy was the best catcher, and was pounding the ball in the pinches. No one could check the pitching of Dick Rudolph, Bill James and Lefty Tyler.

McGraw turned on his players, on the umpires, on nearly everyone who crossed his path. He abused his players for their overconfidence, although he had shared in it. He ranted and raved at the umpires every time they called a close play against him, and was thrown out of ball games. Heckling fans drew from him language that curled their ears.

The fate of the Braves—and of the Giants—was decided in the morning game on Labor Day in Boston. Face to face now with the team that so violently threatened them, the Giants had a chance to bowl their foes back. For eight innings it looked as though victory for them was certain. But in the ninth they cracked, and the Braves won. After that, the Giants were not the same. They fought doggedly, but something had gone out of them. The lead changed hands a couple of times during the next few days. But on September 8 the Braves got a firm grasp on it, and couldn't be shaken loose from it again. And so the Giants, snarling, crashed to defeat, blaming everyone but themselves for the disaster that had overtaken them.

A post-season series between the Giants and the Yankees had been arranged when the Giants crashed. But, now that it was about to be played, no one seemed to have any heart for it. However, there it

was, and there didn't seem to be anything to do but go through with it.

It wasn't much of a series. McGraw left after the first game, to go to Philadelphia to watch the Braves and the Athletics. The Giants were gloomy and depressed. As they walked to and from their positions they kept their eyes on the ground so much that one young man back of their dugout was prompted to pipe:

"What are you bums looking for? The pennant?"

But, listless as they were, the Giants won, four games to one. It was not a glittering triumph. The Yankees had finished in a tie for sixth place—Frank Chance had left them after a row with Devery and Roger Peckinpaugh had been saddled with them for the balance of the season—and they didn't seem to care, one way or another, what happened to them.

Having fought the American League in New York strenuously for a decade, McGraw, in the winter of 1914-1915, rendered it an invaluable service. Out of that service came, directly, the greatness of the Yankees. Ironically enough, he was to know a time when he was the chief sufferer as a result of the Yankees' rise.

By 1914 Farrell and Devery had reached a point where they were quarreling violently, their friendship having been destroyed by the years of tribulations and disappointments they had known in baseball. They were eager to be rid of each other and to quit the game; and Farrell's eagerness was enhanced by a temporary shortage of money.

Two of McGraw's closest friends at that time were Colonel Jacob Ruppert, multi-millionaire brewer, financier and socialite, and Captain Tillinghast L'Hommedieu Huston, retired army engineer, who had made a fortune in public works in Cuba, where McGraw had met him in 1911. They were enthusiastic baseball fans, frequently attended the Giants' games, and, following Brush's death, had sounded McGraw out on their chances of buying the club. He told them that Mrs. Brush and her daughters had no wish to sell, but that, if they really wanted a ball club, they could get the Yankees. They were not keen about the Yankees at first. But McGraw persuaded them that it offered a great opportunity for them. They told him to go ahead and see Farrell, whom he had known for many years and with whom he was friendly again after a few unpleasant years that had followed the invasion of New York by the American League.

Johnson, still hating McGraw, nevertheless was delighted to hear from Farrell that the Giant manager had interested himself in the affairs of the Yankees to the extent that he had unearthed two solid citizens desirous of buying the club. Johnson had feared that, in his financial extremity, Farrell might sell his stock to anyone, regardless of the purchaser's fitness—as Ban might gauge it—for a place in baseball. It was with his blessing that the sale was consummated, and Ruppert and Huston became the owners of the Yankees.

McGraw contributed in one more way to the excellent beginning of the club under its new masters. It was at his suggestion that Ruppert and Huston engaged Harry Sparrow as business manager. Sparrow's only actual experience as a baseball official had been gained on the trip around the world. But he had managed that so expertly that McGraw knew he would be of great help to the Yankees. His judgment of Sparrow was sound. Harry not only was a capable man in the office or on the road with the team, but his great personal popularity with those he encountered in the performance of his duties—with special emphasis on the newspapermen who covered the Yankees—was a tremendous asset to his new employers.

McGraw was much less successful in handling the Giants in 1915 than he had been in creating a new set-up for the Yankees. That was, indeed, the worst year the Giants ever knew under his management. Curiously, he had learned nothing from the collapse of his team under the assaults by the Braves in 1914 and began in 1915 with virtually the same group of players that had folded in the previous September.

He did obtain Hans Lobert, one of the best third basemen in the league, from the Phillies; but Lobert was hurt early in the year. Burns and Doyle also lost some time because of injuries. There was no sparkle, no life, and no punch in the Giants. They never got out of the second division. When it became necessary for McGraw to switch Merkle to the outfield and post Fred Brainard, a youngster, on first base in an attempt to bolster the attack, McGraw made a daring move to strengthen his team and, at the same time, deal a blow to the Federal League, by practically kidnaping Benny Kauff, outfielder on the outlaws' Brooklyn club and hailed by its press agents as the "Ty Cobb of the Federal League."



McGraw produced Kauff unexpectedly at the Polo Grounds one day when the Giants were to play the Phillies, announcing he had signed the player to a contract. William F. Baker, president of the Phillies, who was in the park, refused to put his team on the field if the Giants used Kauff. A terrific row followed, holding up the game for nearly an hour until a decision in the matter could be obtained from John K. Tener, the president of the National League. Tener ruled Kauff ineligible—a stand in which he had the support of all the club owners, since they had been screaming to high heaven that the Feds had been stealing their ball players. So that night Benny went back to Brooklyn.

That was the last flash out of McGraw for the year. Early in September the Giants dropped into last place; and that's where they were as the season ended.

## XII ☉ A MOST REMARKABLE YEAR

**T**HE FEDERAL LEAGUE WAR was settled in the winter of 1915-1916—much to the relief of both sides, since the outlaws had grown weary of the struggle and organized baseball, although confident of ultimate victory, was groaning under the costs of the struggle. Under the terms of the peace pact, all Federal League players were declared eligible to play in organized baseball and were pooled for sale to the highest bidders.

McGraw entered the first bid for Kauff, and got him for \$30,000. He also bid in Bill Rariden, a catcher, and Fred Anderson, a pitcher, who had played with Newark. Those, he said, were the only players he wanted. His friend, Germany Schaefer, nudged him.

"Get Eddie Roush," he said.

"What for?" McGraw demanded.

"He was the best outfielder in the league."

"How about Kauff?"

"He's a better ball player than Kauff," Germany insisted. "He's not as colorful as Kauff, but he can play rings around him."

McGraw shook his head.

"I'll string with Kauff," he said. "I'll play him in center field, with

Burns in left and Robertson in right. What would I do with Roush if I had him?"

Schaefer shrugged.

"I don't know," he said. "All I know is that he's a better ball player than Kauff."

"But he won't draw the dough at the gate that Kauff will."

"No."

"All right, then. Let somebody else take him."

But nobody else wanted him. He was one of a small group left over after the sale. Another was Bill McKechnie, now the manager of the Cincinnati Reds, a third baseman who had been playing manager of the Newark club.

Schaefer was persistent.

"See what you can get Roush for," he urged. "I tell you he's the best buy in the lot and nobody knows it—not even Sinclair."

Harry Sinclair, multi-millionaire oil man and owner of a great racing stable, had been one of the latter-day angels of the league. He knew nothing of baseball, cared less and had thrown his money into the league solely because he had been deluded into thinking it would be a profitable investment. Now he was interested in the sale of the players, since it represented an opportunity for him to get back some of his money. Roush was among the players whose sale had been earmarked for his reimbursement.

McGraw, who knew him well, finally agreed to do as Schaefer urged.

"How much will you take for Roush?" he asked Sinclair.

"Ten thousand dollars."

"I'll give you \$7,500."

"He's yours," Sinclair said.

And so, at a bargain-counter price, the Giants obtained the best ball player in the Federal League—although they never were to realize fully on the bargain.

When the squad left for Marlin late in February, Kauff was missing.

"I'm a holdout," he told reporters in New York.

"What did McGraw try to do—give you less money than you got in the Federal League?"

"No. He offered me a swell contract. He's treated me fine."

"Then what's the squawk?"

"I want \$10,000 from Sinclair. He never done anything for me and he got \$30,000 for me. If I don't get a part of that dough, I won't sign with the Giants and Sinclair will have to give back the \$30,000 because he can't deliver me."

Sinclair said he wasn't interested. As far as he was concerned, the incident was closed. He had sold Kauff to the Giants under the terms of the peace treaty, and had no intention of giving Kauff \$10,000 or any part of it. Whether or not Kauff played with the Giants was immaterial to him. He could see no way in which he could be compelled to return the money.

In Marlin, McGraw also professed to be disinterested. That is, he did for a while. But he was very deeply interested, because he counted on Kauff's drawing power not only at the Polo Grounds but all over the National League circuit. He intended to build up the "Ty Cobb of the Federal League" into one of the top stars of the National. He also had a genuine regard for Benny's skill as a ball player, and thought that with him posted between Burns and Robertson he would have the league's best outfield.

"We don't need Kauff," he told the baseball writers at the camp, employing his customary technique on holdouts—the idea being that if he was quoted on that theme often enough Benny's ego would be affected to a degree where he would surrender.

When that failed, he took a new line.

"Kauff is treating us very unfairly," he said. "He admits that the terms we have offered him are completely satisfactory. Not," he was quick to add, "that we can't get along without him. But at least I promised him a chance to make a regular spot for himself, and I have been holding center field open for him. However, I warn him that I won't hold it open much longer. He may have forgotten it, but we have Roush."

Now Roush suddenly assumed a place of importance in McGraw's conversation that he had not held before—and was used as a club to beat Kauff into line. But that didn't work, either. And when McGraw saw it didn't, he gave up. He called Sinclair on the telephone.

"Let's get this thing settled," he said. "I want Kauff here, and if I don't get him I'm going to get that money back from you—or make a hell of a good try for it and, win or lose, you'll have a suit on your hands that will cost you money. I'll tell you what I'll do.

I'll give Kauff \$5,000 and you give him \$5,000. It will be worth it to both of us in the long run."

"All right," Sinclair said. "I'll do it."

John Foster, having remained in New York in an ineffectual attempt to convince Benny of the hopelessness of his cause, was notified of the decision. He collected \$5,000 from Sinclair, gave Benny the New York club's check for \$10,000 and left with him for Marlin immediately.

Benny's arrival in the camp excited even the ball players. He wore a loudly striped silk shirt, an expensive suit, patent leather shoes, a fur-collared overcoat and a derby hat. He had a huge diamond stick-pin, an equally huge diamond ring and a watch encrusted with diamonds. His luggage consisted of three bags and four trunks—and he had \$7,500 in cash in his pockets.

"Do you always carry that kind of money?" a reporter asked him.

"No," he said. "Not always. But I got the \$10,000 just before I left town. I had some debts to square and this is what's left."

"Why didn't you put it in a bank and draw checks against it as you need it?"

"I didn't have time. John Foster was in a hurry to get started. Besides, why bother with banks? I'd rather have the dough where I can put my hands on it."

He was contemptuous of National League pitching.

"I can hit .300 blindfolded in this league," he said.

McGraw laughed.

"Sure you can, Benny," he said. "Alexander and the rest of those fellows will be pushovers for you."

"Damned right," Benny said. "And don't you worry because I have missed a couple of weeks of training, Mac. I don't need any training to hit those bums."

McGraw was delighted with him. He didn't believe all the things Kauff said, of course. But he liked a player with that sort of spirit.

In the excitement, Roush was completely forgotten.

The stay at Marlin was uneventful. There were trips to Waco, to Waxahachie—where Hughie Jennings trained the Tigers—to Houston and Galveston, to Dallas and Fort Worth. At Galveston, McGraw's temper flared and he very nearly provoked a free-for-all.

The playing manager of the Galveston club was Paul Sentelle, whom McGraw remembered unpleasantly. Some years before, Paul

had been an infielder with the Phillies. He and McGraw had had a bitter row one day, probably brought on by McGraw—as was his custom—riding the young man from the sticks. Sentelle had threatened to slug him—had, indeed, been prevented from doing so only by the prompt intervention of other players. McGraw never had forgiven him. This day at Galveston there was no attempt on either side to bring about a rapprochement.

All went well, however, until the fourth inning, when Davy Robertson hit a ball over the right-field wall, close to the foul line. There was but one umpire, a young fellow who—according to press-box gossip—had been plucked from a near-by tavern when the regular umpire failed to show up (this being in the time before umpires were assigned by either the major or minor leagues to officiate in spring games). Lacking mask and body protector, he was calling balls and strikes from a point back of the pitcher. He signed that Robertson's hit was a fair ball.

Sentelle rushed at him.

"A fair ball?" he screamed. "A fair ball?"

"Yes," the young fellow said.

Sentelle whirled him about, yelling in his face. The boy was shaken, but dead game.

"Yes," he kept saying. "Yes. . . . Yes. . . . A fair ball."

"Get off the field!" Sentelle roared. "Get out! Do you hear me? You're through!"

Hired by Sentelle—and fired by him and with authority to sustain him—the boy started from the field. That was where McGraw rushed into action.

"You can't get away with that!" he said to Sentelle.

"I can't, hey? Well, I will! He's through and I'm going to put another umpire in here—and you'll take it and like it."

"You try it!" McGraw yelled, his face thrust into Sentelle's. "If that boy leaves this field, I'll take my team off!"

He meant it, and Sentelle knew he did. Sentelle raged and bel-lowed for a few minutes. But now he was only putting on a show. It ended with his ordering the umpire back to his post. McGraw, striding toward the Giants' dugout, couldn't resist one final shot. Almost as he reached the bench, he turned and yelled at Sentelle:

"I'll show you you can't run baseball to suit yourself, you ——!"

Sentelle, moving back to his position at short stop, didn't hear

him. But the fans in the front rows did, and they came up out of their seats howling.

"Did you hear what he called you, Paul?" one of them yelled. "He called you a ——!"

Sentelle spun around and charged at McGraw. McGraw, with the mob howling behind him, stood his ground. The Giants quickly formed a protective screen in front of him as Galveston players and policemen surrounded the fuming Sentelle. Order soon was restored on the field, but not in the stand.

"We'll get you!" the fans yelled. "We'll get you after the game!"

"We ought to lynch you, you ——!" one of them shouted.

McGraw thumbed his nose at them, then ducked into the dugout. When the game was over he walked calmly through them on the way to the car that was to take him to the hotel. They rumbled and muttered about him, but no one made a move to attack him.

On the way north, at Chattanooga, he had another brush with a crowd, and again came off triumphantly. It was a cold day, and a drizzling rain was falling. The Giants were being beaten by the Chattanooga club. McGraw was in a vile frame of mind. To make matters worse, the crowd was ridiculing him and his ball players. He made up his mind to stop that by directing his fire at the most conspicuous member of it. This was a police captain in uniform, seated in a box just back of the Giants' dugout.

Coming back from the coaching lines at the end of an inning, McGraw leaned his elbows on the roof of the dugout and said to the officer:

"You're a fine spectacle."

The officer's face flushed.

"Who? Me?" he demanded.

"Yes," McGraw said. "You. A fine spectacle."

His rage was mounting.

"You're a credit to the community, you are. A police captain in uniform sitting up there abusing ball players."

All about the captain the crowd stood up and pushed forward, the better to hear what McGraw said. He didn't disappoint them. He said everything he could think of, and all of it was profane. And now, suddenly, the crowd was on his side, because it isn't often a cop—and a captain of cops, at that—is bawled out in public. The crowd loved it. The scene, which by now had become hilarious as

McGraw hit the high spots, ended with the captain, his face as red as a four-alarm fire, beating a retreat. After that no one made fun of the Giants, and McGraw felt better—felt, indeed, about as well as he could with the Giants losing.

Now the Giants were in New York and the season was about to open. With the exception of Kauff, Roush, Anderson and Rariden, they were about the same team that had finished last in 1915. Merkle still was on first base, Doyle on second, Fletcher at short stop and Lobert on third base. Burns, Kauff and Robertson patrolled the outfield. Rariden was the first-string catcher, with a young fellow named Bradley Kocher, up from Louisville, to help out. Charlie (Red) Dooin, who had come to the Giants after some years as manager of the Phillies, spent most of his time in the bull pen. Matty, Jeff Tesreau, Rube Benton, Poll Perritt and Ralph Stroud would do most of the pitching, with Bill Ritter, Anderson and the Hall Room Boys, Ferdie Schupp and Rube Schauer, to fill in.

Kauff had added to the team's punch, being a line-drive power hitter. The return of Lobert, in good shape after the winter's rest, had perked up the infield. Rariden, although no ball of fire, was a steady man back of the plate and the best catcher the Giants had had since Meyers was new to the big leagues. The failure of the year before seemed to weigh on no one's mind, least of all on McGraw's. He believed that this year he would have his team up there again, perhaps at the top. His judgment in the spring of 1915 that the Braves were a one-year sensation, and wouldn't repeat, had been borne out. He had no fear of them. Nor was he convinced the Phillies were other than an ordinary team, blessed in 1915 with extraordinary luck. The Dodgers—or Robins, as the newspapers were beginning to call them now, in Robbie's second year as manager—did not impress him. And so he looked ahead hopefully.

There was, of course, no way in which he could know it, but he was moving toward one of the most remarkable seasons he ever had had—a season in which his hopes of winning the pennant were to be shattered, but in which his team would set two records as yet unbroken. And he was to give a demonstration of skill in managing a ball club that he seldom equaled and never surpassed. For in the face of disaster he was to make over his team as it alternately rolled and stumbled along.

The first break came the day before the season opened. As was their custom at the time, the Giants went to New Haven to play an exhibition game with Yale on Yale Field. In the third inning Lobert hit a long drive to right center and, to beat the relay as he tried for a triple, slid into third base. He reached the bag in safety—but the cartilage in his left knee popped again, as it had early in 1915, and he was carried from the field. It was obvious that he wouldn't play for a long time—actually, he never played again. And there the Giants were, without their regular third baseman on the eve of the season's opening.

Fred Brainard finished the game. But McGraw had no confidence in him as a regular, and sent out a hurry call for a replacement as the Giants went to Philadelphia to open the season. There was but one available. Bill McKechnie, still unclaimed by a major-league team in the wake of the Federal League's dissolution, had trained with the Browns, owned by Sinclair's friend, Phil Ball, and was in St. Louis. McGraw closed a deal for him with Sinclair on the telephone and ordered him to report at Philadelphia. Bill arrived on the second day of the season and took over at third base.

The team that McGraw had hoped to send off to a brisk start stalled and stumbled through the first three weeks of the season as it played the Phillies, the Robins, and the Braves. It won two games and lost thirteen. The night it won its second game, a newsboy outside a Broadway restaurant peddled his sporting finals in silence.

"Why don't you yell: 'Giants Win!'" Jimmy Sinnott of the *Evening Mail* asked him. "It might help you to sell your papers."

The kid shrugged.

"Who'd believe me?" he asked.

H. C. Witwer—later to become famous as a writer of light fiction, but then a copy reader on the *Evening Sun*—cracked one day:

"Boy, get me a copy of last night's 'Giants Lose' edition."

McGraw was in an angry, puzzled mood as the team left New York on the night of May 8 for its first western trip, opening in Pittsburgh the following day. His hitters weren't hitting, the infield was uncertain, and the pitchers were showing little. Matty had shown nothing.

He picked up when the Giants won their first game with the Pirates. His spirits mounted when they swept the series of four games. They moved on to Chicago and won three games there, a



fourth being postponed on account of rain. Rain stopped them for a day in St. Louis, but that was the only thing that did stop them. They won three games from the Cardinals, and, to make McGraw particularly happy, Matty stalked in from the bull pen to save one of them, giving as fine an exhibition of pinch pitching as he ever had given in his life. They moved on to Cincinnati, won three games, and were rained out of another.

They had won thirteen games in a row and were smashing up toward the top of the league. They were rolling—and so was McGraw. This was—well, not precisely what he had hoped for. No one, however optimistic, could have hoped for thirteen victories in a row. But he had believed he had a winning team—and now he was sure of it.

The schedule called for an unusual jump—from Cincinnati to Boston. The team made the long haul, with an open date allowed for traveling, crashed into Boston, and flattened the Braves four times. In New York, Giant fans were jubilant. In Boston, the Giants were swaggering.

“I’m even getting swell-headed myself, just writing about these fellows,” Bill McBeth of the *Tribune* said. “If this team keeps on winning, I’m going to be awful hard to live with.”

Philadelphia was the next stop. There the series opened on Memorial Day, with one game in the morning and another in the afternoon. It was in the morning game that the crash came—and in a particularly heart-breaking manner. It was a ding-dong game, first one team leading, then the other. In the eighth inning, with the Giants trailing by one run, two on and two out, Merkle hammered a line drive to deepest left field. It was, apparently, a home run. McGraw, on the third-base coaching line, already had hurled his cap in the air as the ball whistled toward the bleachers. But Claude Cooper, the Phillies’ left fielder, stretched across the low wall of the bleachers and caught the ball in his gloved hand. That was the ball game, for the Giants couldn’t score in the ninth. The winning streak was ended.

The Giants, feeling very badly about it because they had hoped to return unbeaten to New York, worked off some of their disappointment that afternoon by knocking the great Alexander out of the box and winning by a big score. That night they took time out to look back on their trip with considerable satisfaction.

"Seventeen in a row on the road!" Arthur Fletcher said. "Well, that isn't bad. It will be a long time before anybody does that again."

He was right. Up to now, no one has done it.

Two days later the Giants were back in New-York. There they suffered an almost immediate reaction. They lost games they should have won, stumbled when they should have rumbled smoothly on their way. Their showing on that home stand made the fans wonder how they had won on the road.

McGraw wondered, too—but not for long. He suddenly realized he had overestimated the strength of his team. He knew that, as it was composed, it couldn't go on—knew the winning streak that had begun in Pittsburgh and ended in Boston was the last flash it would give off unless some changes were made. As the team staggered out of the Polo Grounds and into the West for the second time, he was at work on the first of a series of deals designed to correct the weaknesses that, almost overnight, had become so obvious.

The first stop was Pittsburgh; the second, Cincinnati. The morning the Giants reached Cincinnati, McGraw called Sid Mercer aside.

"I want you to see your friend Herzog before the game today," he said.

Sid, aware that McGraw, while admiring Herzog as a player, disliked him personally, raised his eyebrows.

"It's all right," McGraw said. "Tell him I've already got Garry Herrmann's permission to talk to him. You know what that means. So will he. Tell him I just want to find out how he feels about it before I do anything."

He started away, then turned back.

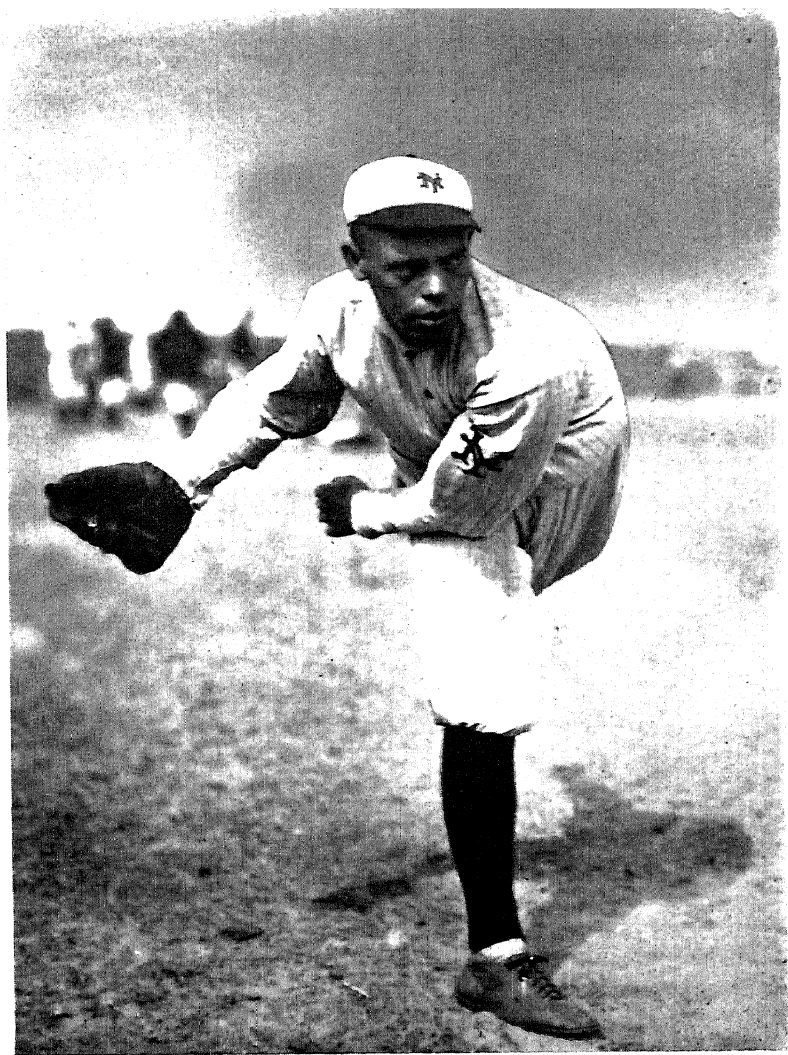
"Could we meet in your room?" he asked. "Just Herzog and I, I mean? I don't want to be seen talking to him and that will be as good a place as any to see him."

"Sure," Mercer said. "Just give me time to write my stuff after dinner and I'll leave the key in the box for you. Say at nine o'clock."

"Fine," McGraw said.

That night, in Mercer's room at the Hotel Havlin, McGraw and Herzog met.

"There is no use kidding ourselves," McGraw said. "I don't like you and you don't like me. But I want you for my ball club because I think you can help me. I have proposed a deal to Herrmann that is satisfactory to him. I'll give him Matty, McKechnie and Roush



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**BENNY KAUFF**

for you, with the understanding that Matty will succeed you as manager. All I want from you is your assurance that you are satisfied to come back to the Giants.”

Herzog nodded.

“I’ll be glad to,” he said. “There isn’t any need for us to be friends. But you like me as a ball player—and as far as I’m concerned, you’re the greatest manager in baseball. I don’t think I need to tell you that I’ll give the best I’ve got to your ball club.”

“No,” McGraw said. “I know you will.”

The meeting had lasted but a few minutes. The deal was announced the following day.

“It wasn’t easy for me to part with Matty,” McGraw told the newspapermen. “He not only was the greatest pitcher I ever saw but he is my friend. However, I’m convinced that his pitching days are over—and he agrees with me. He could stay with the Giants as long as he wanted to, of course. But he is ambitious to become a manager—and I have helped him to gratify that ambition.”

If ever a perfect deal—in the sense that it helped both clubs—was made, this was it. Herzog, posted at third base, immediately fired the Giants with a new zeal. Matty was a successful manager, McKechnie played the best ball of his career that summer, and Roush—who had had few opportunities, and those mainly as a pinch hitter, to demonstrate his worth as a Giant—became one of the greatest players ever to wear a Cincinnati uniform.

The Giants moved on to St. Louis—but not before McGraw had made another trade, this one by telephone. He sent Doyle and a young infielder named Herbert Hunter to the Cubs for Heinie Zimmerman.

Zimmerman—handsome, broad-shouldered, graceful—was a native New Yorker, and had learned to play ball on the sandlots of the Bronx. Charlie Dryden, dean of the Chicago baseball writing corps, had dubbed him “The Great Zim,” and Heinie took pride in the appellation. The night he joined the Giants in St. Louis he swaggered up to the desk.

“Any mail for The Great Zim?” he asked.

McGraw switched Herzog to second base and put Zimmerman on third. Fletcher, whose work had suffered because of Doyle’s slowing down at second, was himself again. He and Herzog made a great pair around the bag. The Giants began to make double plays again.

There was no better third baseman in the league than Zimmerman. Still, there remained a weakness in the infield: Merkle had begun to bog down.

McGraw had one more trade to make, and made it as soon as the Giants returned to the East. He traded Merkle to Brooklyn for Lew McCarty, young hard-hitting catcher, then pulled Walter Holke, a first baseman, in from Rochester, where he had been sent for schooling. To bolster his pitching staff he bought the veteran left-hander, Slim Sallee, from St. Louis, and to make room for him on the squad released Schauer to the minors.

The Giants swept toward the top of the league. It looked as though they might win the pennant.

"If they do," somebody said, "anybody who bet against them has a right to complain that this isn't the team he passed judgment on in the spring."

Nor was it. Only Fletcher survived of the infield that had come north from Marlin, while Sallee was a big help in the box and McCarty, though not the smooth workman back of the plate that Rariden was, added to the team's punch when he was in the starting line-up or was used as a pinch hitter.

The pennant was not to be won by the Giants that year, however. They had lost too much ground by their frequent slumps through June, July and August. As they swung into September they were in fourth place, ten games back of the third-place Phillies, as the Robins and the Braves fought for the lead. And then, on September 7, in a game with the Robins at the Polo Grounds, they launched the greatest winning stream a team ever has known.

As the excitement increased day by day, and the crowds swarmed to the park, they won twenty-six games in a row. Schupp, whose pitching never had been of any account up to that time and had remained with the team only because of McGraw's limitless patience with him, became a winning pitcher overnight, turning in that first victory over the Robins and then reeling off five more as the Giants rolled along. Perritt pitched the first game of a double header with the Phillies on September 9 and won it by a score of 3 to 1. Then he answered the taunts of the Philadelphia players by asking McGraw to let him pitch the second game. When McGraw consented he shut out the Phils with four hits. Tesreau, Sallee, and Benton moved in behind Schupp and Perritt. Columbia George Smith, a

rookie lost in the shuffle on the bench all season, emerged to beat the Reds. Bill Ritter, another youngster who hadn't been able to beat anybody, beat the Cardinals. There was a brief pause after the Giants had won twelve games. In the second game of a double header with the Pirates on September 18 rain halted a pitching duel between Perritt and Burleigh Grimes at the end of the eighth inning with the score tied at 1-1. But the next day the streak was resumed.

The pitching, superb as it was, was matched by the timely hitting and dazzling fielding on the part of the other players. Holke, Herzog, Fletcher and Zimmerman were hailed as the greatest infield in baseball; the Giants, although the pennant was beyond them, as the greatest team—even hailed by some of their more enthusiastic admirers as one of the greatest teams of all time.

"They remind me," Tad Dorgan wrote in the *Evening Journal*, "of a fighter who has just been knocked out going down the aisle licking everybody in the house."

The end came in the final game of the year on the Polo Grounds. The Giants were beaten by the Braves. McGraw—disappointed by his failure to win the pennant, but consoled by an achievement that in some ways was greater than that of finishing on top—was to know one last crowning bitterness. In Brooklyn on October 2 he left the bench before the game was over, intimating that the Giants had not tried to beat the Robins, who were then but two points ahead of the resurgent Phillies.

"I couldn't sit there and see what was going on without making a protest," he said. "I can't stand for stuff like that."

Excited reporters, pressing about him near the visiting players' club house under the stands, wanted to know what he had seen and demanded the names of the players who weren't trying.

He shook them off.

"That's all I have to say. I saw some things out there I didn't like and that I couldn't stand for," he said.

His action drew the hot resentment of his players, who denied that there had been anything wrong. They insisted that if they hadn't looked very good it was only to be expected that, with their winning streak over, they had gone into a tailspin, as they had following the snapping of their earlier streak in Philadelphia.

"McGraw Charges Players With Throwing Game to Robins!" the headlines screamed.

Pat Moran charged over from Philadelphia to demand an investigation. Baseball writers thundered at McGraw in their columns—berating him for casting aspersions on the honesty of baseball, supporting the players in their angry defense. McGraw, having made his charge, refused to amplify it.

Nothing ever came of it. The season ended three days later with the Robins as champions. The Giants disbanded for the year—growling, cursing, bewildered. McGraw went to Cuba, presumably to forget as best he could the dark climax of a feverish season.

### XIII ⊙ A KID NAMED YOUNGS

**N**OW IT WAS SPRING AGAIN—the spring of 1917—and they were all at Marlin. If any bitterness lingered from the episode in Brooklyn there was no sign of it. McGraw, with a winter in Havana behind him, was relaxed, cheerful and confident. The players shared his good spirits and his confidence. They felt, as he did, that this was to be their year. This time they were right.

It was to be one of the most exciting years of McGraw's life. It would follow an uneven course, as all his years seemed destined to do. It would end in defeat and chagrin . . . but there would be high spots along the way, and days of glory he never would forget.

He was forty-four years old. And although he had not yet reached his peak as a manager, he was the dominant figure in baseball. In the American League his old rival, Connie Mack, was in temporary eclipse. In the National, George Stallings, hailed as a miracle man in 1914, still was rightfully regarded as a competent manager, but he no longer was the lustrous figure he had been. McGraw, the Little Napoleon, was the manager all the ball players were eager to serve. He was the master strategist—the daring gambler on the field, who stirred the imagination of players and fans alike by the boldness of his thrusts. When his team was trailing he always played to win, never to tie. The hit-and-run was his forte, not the sacrifice.

He could be harsh with his players, upbraid them ruthlessly and fine them. But he gave them the same fierce loyalty he demanded from them; and they knew it. He could curdle their blood and make their hair stand on end after a losing game. But he would reward



them when they won, frequently with checks drawn against his personal account.

They liked him because he had been the first to raise their standard of pay, and their living accommodations when the team was on the road. When he bought or got in trade a player from another club, the first thing he did was to tear up the player's contract and give him a new one, calling for an increase of \$1,000.

"It will cost him that much more to live in New York," he explained.

Always wanting the best for himself, he saw that they had the best, too. The Giants rode the limited trains now, taking three cars so every player might have a lower berth. They stopped at the best hotels, had the best rooms and the best food. The old gag about the waiter calling to the chef: "A steak for a ball player!"—meaning an inferior steak—was a dead letter where the Giants were concerned. Their steaks were thick, juicy, and cooked to their order.

And now he was ready to roll again—whipping his players into shape at Marlin, pitching a few innings or playing first base in the practice games, rollicking sometimes at night with the newspapermen after the ball players had gone to bed, sensing clearly that he had the best team in the league and that this time there would be no fumbling and that he would win the pennant.

That spring there were few additions to the squad. George Gibson, who had been one of the great catchers in the league over a span of seven years in Pittsburgh, was released by the Pirates. McGraw signed him to help Rariden and McCarty behind the plate, and to coach the young pitchers. Jim Middleton, a veteran pitcher who had pounded the minor-league trails all his life, was purchased from Louisville. There was a rookie infielder named Pete Kilduff who survived the spring pruning. None of these, however, had a pronounced effect on the Giants that year. Gibson performed his duties capably, but was in the background most of the time. Middleton didn't possess major-league skill. Kilduff, although a player of considerable promise, was traded to the Cubs in mid-season for Al Demaree, McGraw wanting another experienced pitcher at that time and being willing to give up Kilduff for him.

There was, however, a boy in the camp that spring who was to become one of the greatest players ever to make a Polo Grounds crowd roar. He was a boy for whom McGraw was to have a tre-

mendous admiration—and for whom he was to show a degree of affection matched only by that he had shown for Matty.

The boy's name was Ross Youngs—or Young, as he was to be better known. A minor-league baseball writer had dropped the "s" from his name somewhere along the way, and the boy was content to have it that way, although he continued to sign his name "Youngs" on his contract or when he was giving his autograph to an admirer.

He was nineteen years old when he joined the Giants. He weighed only about 150 pounds, but he was powerfully built. Fast, aggressive, dead game, he was very much as McGraw had been at that age. Born in Shiner, Texas, he had attended the West Texas Military Academy, where he had attracted more attention as a track athlete and a halfback than he had as a ball player. In the backfield with him on the academy team was Joe Strauss, who later reaped fame on the gridiron at the University of Pennsylvania. Strauss once said of him:

"He was so much better than I was that if he had gone to Penn with me, you'd never have heard of me."

Football scouts from the colleges who had sought out Young got no encouragement from him. He wasn't interested in exchanging his football skill for a college education. His heart was set on a major-league baseball career. At sixteen he had gone direct from school to the Austin club of the Texas League. He wasn't ready for that kind of company, however, and from there he had drifted, in the next three years, through smaller minor leagues, finally catching on at Sherman in the Western Association. There, in 1916, he hit .362—and was purchased by the Giants.

He told McGraw that he had played second base and the outfield. McGraw tried him first in the infield. It soon became obvious that he didn't belong there. He fought the ball, fumbled it, threw wild to first base in his haste to get it away. No matter how desperately he tried, he lacked the smoothness that an infielder must have. But he could hit and run and throw, and he had a keen baseball sense.

At that time the Giants had a working agreement with the Rochester club of the International League, which was managed by Mickey Doolan. When Doolan dropped into the Giants' camp near the end of the stay in Marlin, McGraw said to him:

"I'm going to give you a kid who is going to be a great ball player



© New York Giants

ROSS YOUNG



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FRANK FRISCH

some day. Take good care of him, because if anything happens to him I'll hold you responsible. One thing more: Play him in the outfield."

So Young went to Rochester, where he hit .356. In the fall he was recalled by the Giants, with whom he was to know the greatness that McGraw had predicted for him.

That spring the Giants journeyed northward, up through Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, with the Tigers. It was one of the first spring tours ever made by two major-league clubs; and it undoubtedly was the most exciting, so that men who were on it still speak of it often.

It began in Dallas on a Saturday afternoon. The Giants always were a good drawing card in Dallas. There were perhaps 10,000 fans in the stands when the game got under way. Had anyone known what was about to happen, the park would not have been large enough to have held the crowd.

Ty Cobb then was at the very top of his amazing career, and had hit .371 the year before. With the exception of McGraw, he was the most colorful and turbulent figure in baseball. Popular with the crowds, he never had known popularity among the ball players. He had, of course, their admiration and respect—but not their liking. The Giants, hard-boiled, sharp-tongued, were waiting for him when he appeared on the field late—almost as the game was about to start.

"Who do you think you are, you bum?" Fletcher yelled at him. "Why didn't you stay back at the hotel? We could have got along without you."

"Why, Mr. Fletcher!" Herzog said. "Don't you know better than that? Don't you know all these people are out here today just to see the great Ty Cobb? And that, like the star of any show, he has to come on late to take his bows?"

Cobb flushed angrily, but said nothing. From the Giants' dugout McGraw was needling him. But he gave McGraw no more than a baleful glance. The first time he went to bat, Jeff Tesreau, pitching for the Giants, sought to drive him back from the plate with a high fast ball on the inside. Cobb moved quickly to avoid the pitch, but the ball struck him a glancing blow on the right shoulder. He threw his bat down and started for first base.

"If that's the way you want to play," he said to Tesreau, "I'll play with you. I'll take care of you the next time I go up there."

Tesreau knew what he meant—to drag a bunt down the first-base line, drawing Tesreau over to field the ball or cover the bag, and then step on him. The big fellow laughed.

"Not in this league," he said. "I didn't mean to hit you that time, but you try any funny business with me and I'll knock your brains out."

Now the Giants were on Cobb in earnest. Up and down the line of the dugout they were yelling insults at him. From second base Herzog dared him to try to steal.

Riding Cobb, whether the Giants knew it or not, was bad medicine. He was thoroughly game, and it put him immediately on the offensive. On the second pitch he darted for second. But McCarty and Tesreau had anticipated him. It was a pitch-out. McCarty's throw to Herzog was perfect. The ball beat Cobb to the bag by five feet. Then it happened. Cobb, seething with anger, leaped high at Herzog, his spikes ripping the inside of the Giant second baseman's right leg in two places and the impact of the blow knocking him down.

The pair rolled on the ground, punching and clawing at each other, as Fletcher, rushing to Herzog's aid, tried to kick Cobb in the head. Ball players, umpires and policemen swirled about them and pulled them apart. Helped to their feet, they tried to attack each other again. One cop who had a grip on Herzog almost tore his right arm off. In the stands the fans, their sympathies divided, shrieked wildly at the combatants and at each other. Some of them tried to get into the fight, but were herded back by the police.

Herzog and Cobb were banished from the field. Herzog went quietly. Cobb protested violently.

"If I have to leave this field," he said to Hughie Jennings, "I'll leave the series."

Jennings, believing that Cobb would carry out his threat, and having no real authority where his star player was concerned, pleaded with the umpire to allow Ty to remain.

"Get him out of here," the umpire said. "He started it. Get him off the field."

That evening, in the lobby of the Oriental Hotel, where both teams were quartered, McGraw encountered Cobb. At the sight of him,

McGraw's eyes flamed and his neck swelled. Thrusting his face close to Ty's, he called him every name he could think of—and there were few, if any, that he omitted. For once, as they were ringed quickly by the crowd in the lobby, Ty kept a check on his temper.

"That will be enough," he said, coldly. "If you were a younger man, I'd kill you."

"I'm young enough!" McGraw shouted. "Start killing, you yellow ——! You white-livered ——!"

Cobb, now shaking with rage, walked away from him.

"You tramp!" McGraw yelled after him. "You yellow ——! I wouldn't have you on my ball club if you were the last ball player in the world!"

At the edge of the crowd, one of the Giants smiled.

"No," he said. "No. I guess not!"

In the dining room a short time later, Herzog went to Cobb's table.

"What's the number of your room?" he asked.

Cobb told him.

"I'll be up there at ten o'clock," Herzog said. "I'll bring one player with me and you can have one of your players there. You can have Harry Tuttle"—the Tigers' trainer—"there, too, to act as referee."

At ten o'clock Herzog and Heinie Zimmerman entered Cobb's room. Tuttle was there—and, in addition to Cobb, eight other Detroit players.

"Take your coat and shirt off," Herzog said to Cobb.

They stripped to the waist and started punching. It wasn't much of a fight. Herzog knocked Cobb to his knees with the first punch. But Cobb got up and beat him unmercifully until Tuttle stepped in.

"They fought like a couple of washerwomen," Tuttle said later.

Both, however, were satisfied. Herzog considered that he had avenged himself for the spiking by knocking Cobb down. Cobb figured he had squared accounts by blacking Herzog's eyes, bloodying his nose and pounding him into a state of helplessness.

The following day the park was swamped by a crowd that, excited by the brawl of the day before and newspaper stories of the fight in the hotel room, hoped to sit in on the second round. It was grievously disappointed. Herzog was in no shape to play, and Cobb refused, as he had threatened.

On Monday, at Wichita Falls, Cobb not only was deaf to the pleas of Jennings and the townsfolk that he resume play, but left that night to join the Cincinnati club, having made arrangements with Matty to finish his training with the Reds. And so the teams moved on without him. But the spirit of hostility that he had helped to plant threw in his absence. At Wichita, Kansas, Fletcher and Bobby Jones, Tiger third baseman, had a fight on the field. At Manhattan, Willie Mitchell, Tiger pitcher, threw a bean ball at Zimmerman and Heinie threw his bat at him.

The teams went from Manhattan to Kansas City for two more games, then split up. After the last game the Giants sent a post card, bearing the signature of all the players, to Cobb. The message was: "It's safe to rejoin your club, We've left."

Cobb and McGraw didn't speak to each other for years after. It was not until the spring of 1928, when the Giants trained in Augusta, Ga., that they became friendly again. One night that spring McGraw gave a party at the Bon Air Vanderbilt. That was the night the ice was broken—and dropped into high balls that, at long last, drowned the angry memories of 1917.

The day the Giants and the Tigers were at Manhattan, there was posted on the window of the local newspaper office a bulletin that they read in awed silence, wondering not only what it meant in its relation to them but to all the world. For the date was April 6, and the bulletin read:

"President Wilson has asked the Congress to declare war on Germany."

McGraw, intensely patriotic, was deeply stirred.

"What do you think this means for baseball?" one of the reporters asked him.

"I haven't even begun to think about that," he said.

He was silent for a moment.

"There'll be a lot of players going," he said. "It may mean we won't have any baseball. But I think you'll find that, whatever they want us to do, we'll do it. I love baseball. I should. But it would be all right with me if all my ball players went overnight—and I'd like to go, myself, if there was any place for me."

The season opened five days later. No one could foresee whether it would be permitted to run its course. Some of the club owners



and league officials frankly were bewildered. But the public reaction was good. The crowds were large. The attitude of the government was favorable, although there was no definite statement on the game's status from Washington and no one in baseball had the courage to ask for one.

The Giants got off in front, fell back, came on again. The champion Robins, their spirits apparently impaired by their defeat by the Red Sox in the World Series in 1916, played small part in the struggle (they failed so badly that they finished the season in the second division). But the Giants drew the fire of the Phillies, the Cubs, and the Cardinals, as McGraw launched them on their way. Through the month of May they either were in first place or never very far from it.

McGraw was bristling. Exulting . . . or cursing . . . he had his team on the beam.

#### XIV ⊗ THE "GREAT REPUDIATION"

ON JUNE 8, at Cincinnati, the Giants and the Reds played a tumultuous game, during which players on both sides almost constantly were embroiled with the plate umpire, Bill Byron. Byron, known as the Singing Umpire because, usually of a cheerful disposition, he hummed snatches of songs while waiting for the pitcher to deliver a ball to the hitter, was in neither a singing nor a cheerful mood that day; and by the time the game was over his nerves were ragged.

As the teams were leaving the field after the game, Tom Clark, the Reds' catcher, still was snarling at Byron. At the edge of the stands they reached the entrance to a runway leading to the club houses. McGraw, bustling through the swarm of players and fans on the field, came up behind them.

"I don't know what you just said, Tom, but whatever it was, it goes double for me," he said.

Byron turned on him.

"I wouldn't say that if I were you," he said.

"I'll say anything I please!" McGraw said.

"You talk big," Byron said. "I guess you didn't use to be so tough. They say you were run out of Baltimore."

McGraw blazed at him.

"What did you say?"

"I said they say you were run out of Baltimore."

"'They say!'" McGraw roared. "'They say' I was run out of Baltimore! Would you say it?"

Byron hesitated for only a moment. And then:

"Yes. I'd say it."

McGraw smashed him in the face with a short right-hand punch, splitting his upper lip. As Byron reeled down the runway, McGraw was after him, trying to punch him again. Matty Schwab, the Red's ground keeper, flung both arms about the Giant manager. Bill Rariden cracked Schwab across the side of the head. Players of both teams piled in between the combatants as the crowd surged about them. Policemen dove through the crowd and, seizing McGraw and Byron, led them away—McGraw to the Giants' dressing room in a frame building back of the stands, Byron to the umpires' quarters in the rear of the grandstand.

Reporters, their attention caught by the running fans and the swift charge of the police, rushed down from the press box. Bulletins were flashed into the newspaper offices. The news rolled across the country. McGraw had struck an umpire.

McGraw, interviewed in his rooms at the Hotel Havlin later, told his side of the story freely. Byron deliberately had insulted him, had told an infamous lie. He never had been run out of Baltimore, and Byron knew it. He would have hit anyone who said a thing like that. The fact that Byron was an umpire made no difference to him. This, he made plain, was no ordinary row between a manager and an umpire. This had had nothing to do with a ball game. It wasn't as if he had been angered by a decision rendered by Byron in the course of a game, and had rushed out on the field and struck him. This was a purely personal row that had occurred at the edge of the stands after a game. He felt sure President John K. Tener would understand that, and would take no action against him.

Byron was "out" to all inquirers at his hotel. Later in the evening two reporters with the Giants met him in the Western Union office, and asked him for his version of the brawl.

"I'm sorry, boys," he said. "I'm not talking. I just wired my report to Gov. Tener. Any statement will have to come from him."

The Giants left that night for Chicago. There they were joined by Harry Hempstead.

"Fights!" Hempstead said. "Trouble! That's all I've had since I have been president of this club."

Deeply concerned over the possibility that McGraw would draw a severe penalty that might have a serious effect on the team's pennant chances, he had caught the first train out of New York on receipt of the news. He wanted to talk to McGraw and, if he could, make out an adequate defense for him. McGraw laughed at his fears.

"There's nothing to it, Harry," he said. "As I told the newspapermen in Cincinnati, this was strictly a personal quarrel. Tener won't do anything about it. How can he?"

Hempstead shook his head.

"I don't know," he said. "I wish you could take the same view of it that I do. I want to go over this matter carefully with you so that, if we are called upon for a statement, we can make out a strong case for you."

McGraw became impatient.

"Stop worrying!" he said. "Or keep out of it. This is my business, not yours."

There was an ominous silence in Tener's office during the Giants' four-day stay in Chicago. It was broken on June 13, as they opened a series in Pittsburgh. Tener, having given due thought to the case, had found McGraw guilty of assault on Byron and imposed a sixteen-day suspension and a fine of \$500 on the Giant manager.

First word of Tener's judgment was received in the Giant camp in the form of a telegram to one of the reporters shortly after dinner. The reporter to whom it was addressed was at a downtown telegraph office, writing his story. In keeping with an agreement between them governing such circumstances, it was opened by his roommate, Sid Mercer. Sid went with it at once to McGraw. McGraw, having read it, flew into a rage.

"Have you anything to say, Mac?" Sid asked.

"Yes!" McGraw roared. "I've got plenty to say!"

He berated Tener and the National League umpires in the same breath. He said that Tener was unfair to him and to the New York club. Warming to his subject, he said that Tener had been put in

power in the National League by the Philadelphia club and had run the club from Philadelphia.

"Do you want to be quoted on this?" Sid asked.

A veteran baseball writer, and noted for the calmness and soundness with which he wrote, he knew that McGraw's outburst, set in print, would be dynamite.

"On every word of it!" McGraw shouted. "Tell all the other newspapermen! I want this printed in every paper in New York!"

Mercer returned to his room, wrote the story, and then, thinking perhaps McGraw had calmed down and might regret publication of his blast, sought him out and offered to let him read what he had written. McGraw, still seething, glanced at it, handed it back.

"That's all right," he said. "Did you tell the other boys?"

"No. I wanted you to see this first. I'll get in touch with them now."

He called his roommate at the postal office and read the statement to him. Then he called Jimmy Sinnott of the *Evening Mail* at the Western Union office and repeated the performance. He found Sam Crane in the hotel, and read it to him.

Wired back to Pittsburgh by correspondents or news associations who had picked it up from the New York papers, it sent the Pittsburgh writers dashing to the Giants' dugout before the game the next day.

"I have nothing more to say," McGraw told them. "It's all in that story."

The Pittsburgh series was concluded on June 16, and the Giants, with an open date before the opening of an engagement in Boston, went to Wellsville for an exhibition game. This, remember, was where McGraw had played twenty-seven years before. He had not been back since, and the town turned out to greet the world-famous manager who once had dug his spikes into the turf of the local ball field.

Back in New York there was the devil to pay over his attack on Tener. But if he sensed it, he was outwardly calm—and as proud and happy as he ever had been, which was natural. Few had marked his passing that day back in 1890 when he had left Wellsville to go to Havana. Now he had returned at the head of the Giants, one of the mightiest teams in baseball. His fame, already great, steadily

was mounting as he drove toward another pennant—and nowhere were the fruits of victory sweeter than among those who had known him in the long ago.

He rode in the first car as a motorcade, bearing the team, rolled slowly through the principal streets of the town. At one point a man in overalls rushed out of a machine shop.

“Hey, Johnny McGraw!” he called.

McGraw asked the driver to stop.

“Remember when you stayed at the Wellsville House?” the man asked, wringing his hand.

“Indeed I do,” McGraw said, smiling. “I paid a dollar a day.”

“And had the best room in the house, too. And all the attention in the dining room. Remember that pretty red-haired girl that waited on you?”

“Yes.”

“You should! She never had eyes for any of us other young fellows when Johnny McGraw was around! But I beat you in the long run, Johnny McGraw! I married that girl!”

“That’s great!” McGraw said. “How is she?”

“She’s fine. And we’ve raised a fine family. They’ll all be at the ball game today. But I won’t let her get too near you, Johnny! She might want to run off with you! Haw! Haw!”

The car rolled on. McGraw visited the town hall . . . the firehouse . . . the church that he had attended as a boy . . . the school house. A half-holiday had been declared, and it seemed as if the whole town—including the red-haired girl and her brood—were at the ball game in the afternoon.

As the Giants boarded their train that night for the journey to Boston, John Foster said to the reporters:

“Mac isn’t going with us. He has been called to New York. It seems there’s a row going on over his statement about Tener.”

The news out of New York the following day was startling, especially to the newspapermen with the Giants: McGraw had repudiated the interview. None of them could believe it at first. But there it was. Called before the board of directors of the National League, McGraw had signed a statement denying he had said the things attributed to him. The newspapermen, queried by their offices, stuck to their stories. Privately, three of them admitted to their editors that they hadn’t actually heard McGraw utter the words quoted by

Mercer. But they added they had no doubt of Mercer's veracity and, furthermore, McGraw virtually had repeated the sentiments, if not the precise words, in conversation with them later that night or on the way to Wellsville. Angry, bewildered, they awaited McGraw's return to the team.

Two of them found him in the club house at Braves Field shortly before the game on the second day.

"What happened in New York?" one of them asked.

He laughed shortly.

"Oh," he said, "I had to sign that statement to quiet Hempstead and Sullivan."

Cornelius J. Sullivan was the Giants' counsel.

"Sullivan had the statement all prepared for me," he went on. "He and Hempstead were frightened to death. They kept at me to sign it and I finally did it. I thought that was the best way out for everybody. I made them make one change in it, though. It said that you fellows had written scurrilous stories. I made them strike out 'scurrilous.'"

He seemed to think that had made everything all right for the reporters.

"But you still called us a bunch of liars," one said.

"Don't take it so seriously," he said. "It will all be forgotten in a day or so."

"Not by me it won't."

"Well," he said, cunningly, "if it comes right down to it, I didn't tell you the things you wrote, did I?"

"You told them to Sid."

"But I didn't tell them to you. If you were put on the stand, you'd have to admit you didn't see me that night."

"I saw you later and you were talking the same way."

He shrugged.

"Well, the hell with it."

The interview had gone about as far as he wanted it to. He got down from the rubbing table on which he had been sitting and went out.

The Giants went from Boston to Philadelphia. The four reporters went with them. The New York Chapter of the Baseball Writers' Association was demanding an investigation by the league for the purpose of vindicating their colleagues whose integrity had been

assailed. Their colleagues, feeling they had passed the lie back to McGraw by reiterating their stories in the face of the repudiation, gave them neither encouragement nor assistance. This almost caused a breach in the chapter. Tad Dorgan drew a picture of four kids in bed watching a burglar steal their bank. The kids were the baseball writers, the burglar was McGraw and the bank was labeled: "Honor." The kids were saying:

"We see what you're doing but we won't tell anybody."

Mercer could see no humor in the cartoon, or reason in the demand for an investigation.

"Investigate what?" he snorted. "McGraw called me a liar and I called him one right back. I don't think anybody has any doubt about who is telling the truth."

He had refused to talk to McGraw, to listen to any explanation from him. But he felt that he had defended himself competently, and would put an end to the situation by leaving the Giants on their return to New York and joining the Yankees on the road.

The association, however, refused to take his view that the incident was closed. Its chapters, in all the major-league cities, clamored for a hearing in which the four correspondents would be arrayed against McGraw. Tener agreed to this, appointing John Conway Toole, counsel for the league, to take the testimony and advise him as to his findings.

The hearing took place in the league headquarters, then at Eight West Fortieth Street. Mercer, of course, was the star witness—although, still sturdily independent, he grumbled as he made his way to the stand. Under direct examination by Martin W. Littleton, who had volunteered his services as counsel for the writers, he gave a concise account of the interview and of McGraw's subsequent approval of the story when it was shown to him. Nor could he be shaken in any detail by John Montgomery Ward, McGraw's lawyer. The others had little to add, save the manner in which they had got the story from Mercer and their corroborative conversations with McGraw later. McGraw did not make a very good witness in his own behalf, admitting some of the things Mercer had said, stubbornly continuing to deny others.

A day or so later Tener, having accepted Toole's findings completely, announced he was convinced McGraw had not been misquoted and fined him \$1,000.

"It cost Mac \$500 for fighting and \$1,000 for talking about it," a baseball writer said.

Mercer immediately wired Tener, asking him to revoke the fine. He said he had needed no investigation to vindicate him and was not in favor of McGraw's having to pay \$1,000 for airing his opinion of the league president. However, he did not weaken in his attitude toward McGraw, and refused to speak to him or cover the Giants. Tener didn't weaken, either. The fine was paid, and he and McGraw remained hostile.

By the time the controversy was settled the Giants were in first place again. Three full months still stretched between them and the pennant, but any small doubts McGraw might have had about them through their early struggles had been dissipated. They had but one more challenge to fight off. This was hurled by the Phillies, who came lashing back after a three weeks' slump.

Out of the minor-league discard the Phils had picked up Chief Bender, who, as a member of the Athletics' pitching staff, had plagued the Giants as far back as 1905. The ancient redskin won six games in a row for them, and pitched the opening game of a double header that opened the last decisive series of the season at the Polo Grounds. When the Giants beat him the resistance of the Phils was shattered, and the Giants went on to the pennant.

The White Sox, under Clarence Rowland, had won the pennant in the American League—and in winning had shown so much stuff that they were favored to beat the Giants in the World Series. This was the team that, two years later, was to throw the World Series with the Cincinnati Reds, but this time it was trying: Chick Gandil . . . Eddie Collins, Swede Risberg, Joe Jackson . . . Happy Felsch . . . Buck Weaver . . . Shano Collins . . . Nemo Leibold . . . Ray Schalk . . . and with Eddie Cicotte, Red Faber and Lefty Williams to do most of the pitching.

It may have been that McGraw underestimated the strength of his opponents. Certainly the still somewhat obscure Pants Rowland, in his third year in the big leagues, didn't impress him as a worthy rival; and he made no bones about saying so. He, who had been tilting with Connie Mack, Bill Carrigan, Pat Moran, and the other famous managers over a fifteen-year span, was inclined to laugh at this comparative newcomer. Somewhere he had heard that Row-



land once had been a bartender in Peoria, and he harped on that constantly in his verbal fire from the dugout.

But Rowland was a good manager, and in that series the Sox established themselves as one of the great teams of all time—there are many who still think they were the greatest. The Giants were beaten, four games to two. It was a rough series. The Giants, sure of themselves in the beginning, and stunned by the Sox victories over Sallee and Schupp in the first two games, started the rough stuff—only to find that they had made a mistake, since the Sox liked to play that way, too. Insults were hurled back and forth, there were brushes on the base lines, and the constant threat of fist fights, with Fletcher once trying to slug Rowland.

The final game, played at the Polo Grounds, was the setting for a play that has come to be regarded as one of the top boners in baseball history: the pursuit of Eddie Collins by Heinie Zimmerman.

This occurred in the fourth inning. Collins led off with a grounder to Zimmerman, and raced all the way to second when Heinie threw wildly past Holke. Jackson raised a short fly to Robertson, but the Giant right fielder dropped it, Collins pulling up at third. Now Felsch hit a high bouncer to Rube Benton, who was pitching for the Giants. The Rube threw to Zimmerman, trapping Collins off third. Rariden came up the line to close in on Collins, who, quickly noting that neither Benton nor Holke had moved to cover the plate, made a sudden dash for it, flashing past the startled Rariden. Thus there was nothing for Zim to do but chase Collins, although he had no earthly chance of catching him. Gandil followed with a single, scoring Jackson and Felsch—and that, in effect, was the ball game, for the Giants never recovered from that inning.

The story of the game was, of course, the chase on the third-base line. Curiously, there were few who would accept McGraw's judgment of the play, and persisted—as they do to this day—in ridiculing Zimmerman.

"It wasn't Zimmerman's fault," McGraw said in the club house. "The man to blame for it was Holke, who stood at first base watching Heinie instead of covering the plate."

Heinie answered his critics with an unforgettable question:

"Who the hell was I going to throw the ball to? Klem?"

At any rate, the series was over, and the Giants were beaten. McGraw, furious as always in defeat, had paid his final respects to

Rowland as the teams rushed from the field. Rowland, running to meet him, had put out his hand, saying:

"Mr. McGraw, I'm glad we won, but I'm sorry you had to be the one to lose."

And McGraw had snarled:

"Get away from me, you ——— busher!"

## XV ⊕ A HALT IS CALLED

**I**N JANUARY OF 1918 McGraw made a surprising trade: Charlie Herzog for Larry Doyle. There was no reason to believe that Doyle was a better ball player than he had been two years before, when McGraw had sent him to Chicago for Zimmerman. He had hit only .254 for the Cubs in 1917, and they had traded him to the Braves. True, Herzog had hit only .235 in 1917; but he still was rated as one of the best defensive second basemen, and he and Fletcher formed the top keystone combination in the league.

McGraw, however, had lost faith in him—had seen, perhaps, that almost imperceptible slowing-up in a player that he so often could see, where others would overlook it. There had been a play in the World Series, that he called up in defense of this deal, when Herzog had been slow to break on a line drive to his right and, missing it, had cost the Giants the game—or so McGraw said. And Doyle?

"Well," he said, "I think Doyle has a couple of good years left in him, and I know I can use him."

With Larry he also got Jess Barnes, a right-handed pitcher. It was to be some time, because of the war, before Barnes could prove his worth to the Giants, for he was in the Army by June and overseas by September. But in the postwar years he was a consistent winner for the Giants, and a factor in the capture of three pennants.

Even the inclusion of Barnes in the deal could not remove the impression that, for perhaps the only time in his life, McGraw had been guided by sentiment in agreeing to give up Herzog for Doyle. Herzog, always a light hitter, was valuable for his fielding and base running. Doyle, always a poor fielder, had to hit to stay in the major leagues, and now his hitting had fallen off from thirty to fifty points. But McGraw, who always had disliked Herzog, had developed a

positive hatred for him, while easy-going, laughing Larry had been one of his favorites for years.

There had been no other changes of importance when the Giants assembled at Marlin. None of the players had been in a hurry to enlist. George Kelly, then a gangling substitute first baseman, had been drafted and now was in the ground force at Kelly Field, near San Antonio.

This, although no one knew it at the time, was the last spring for the Giants at Marlin. It passed pleasantly, as usual. There now were two Greek restaurants instead of one on Main Street. One advertised in the *Marlin Daily Democrat*:

“The New York Giants eat at this restaurant.”

The other:

“The New York newspapermen eat at this restaurant.”

Each told the truth. The ball players, tiring of the monotonous fare at the hotel, frequently had dinner at the newer establishment of the two. The newspapermen and McGraw stuck to the old one, gathering there usually after the ball players had gone to bed, eating chile con carne (with raw sliced onions), drinking coffee, and playing an old phonograph as the town slept all about them.

There was the usual fish fry given by the townsfolk on the Brazos River, the farewell dance given by the ball club at the hotel on the eve of departure. Meanwhile, the Giants had played games at all the near-by towns for the entertainment of the soldiers. On the way north, traveling most of the time with the Cleveland club, they played all the camps that lay along their route; and it was estimated that by the time they got back to New York they had appeared before a quarter of a million soldiers.

That had been McGraw's idea.

“It's the least we can do,” he said. “Some of these kids never saw a major-league team before. Some won't see one until the war is over—and some never will see one again.”

The Giants, as always, were in great shape when the season opened—no manager ever excelled McGraw in getting a team ready for a season. They stepped off in first place. There is no doubt that if they had gone intact through the season they would have won the pennant again. Young, a better ball player and an infinitely more aggressive one than Robertson, strengthened the outfield. Doyle, although noticeably slower in the field than Herzog, was carried by

Holke, Fletcher and Zimmerman. Schupp, alone among the pitchers, worried McGraw. He still had as much stuff as ever, but his control was erratic.

One day McGraw called him in.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked.

"I don't know," Schupp said.

"Did you hurt your arm?"

"No."

"Sure?"

"No, Mac. On the level," Ferdie said.

McGraw made him admit, finally, that his left shoulder pained him frequently when he was pitching. He sent the pitcher on the usual rounds of doctors, bonesetters and muscle twisters. None of them could effect a cure. McGraw always believed that Schupp, who had a predilection for horseplay, had injured the shoulder in a scuffle or wrestling match, but never could make him admit it. But whatever had happened, Schupp no longer was the pitcher he had been for two dazzling years. He started seldom, was very wild, and had difficulty going the nine-inning route.

The other pitchers were holding up as the team bowled along in front. Then the Army began to take over. First to go was Barnes, who had won six games while losing only one. Anderson, an extremely useful pitcher, especially for relief work, was next. Then Benton heard the bugle call, and, a short time later, Benny Kauff.

There was, of course, no word of complaint from McGraw. But he knew his team was crippled beyond repair. With minor leagues folding as Secretary of War Baker declared baseball nonessential and the players, regardless of their domestic status, liable to immediate induction under the work-or-fight order, he reached out for overage players who might be of some use to him. One was the fabulous Jay Kirke, whom he brought up from Louisville and posted at first base when Holke, with a wife and two children to support, left the team to take a job in a war plant. But even Kirke, who never had failed to hit .300 in any league he'd been in—and he'd been in most of them—couldn't help him.

The Cubs had rushed into first place on June 3 and stayed there. It was strictly a two-club race, with the Giants furnishing all the opposition. But strive as he would, McGraw could not get his team

to the front again. And so, when the season ended prematurely under pressure from Washington on September 2, it still trailed.

Meanwhile, another project had captured McGraw's imagination. Johnny Evers, whom he had fought bitterly on the field for so many years, but who now was his friend, was in France as an athletic director for the Knights of Columbus, and had conceived the idea of having two teams of draft-exempt major-league players go overseas to entertain the soldiers in the rest areas back of the lines. It was Evers' plan to have McGraw recruit the teams and take them over. Once they were there he would manage one team and McGraw the other.

McGraw was heartily in favor of the plan. Although it had not yet been approved by the War Department, he plunged with characteristic enthusiasm into the recruitment of the players. He did this very quietly, fearing that publicity would be harmful. He had two teams lined up when, to his great disappointment, he was informed that the War Department would not permit them to go.

The collapse of this enterprise threw his mind back to his troubles in the Giant office, which had been piling up slowly but surely since the death of John T. Brush. He liked Hempstead personally, but would have preferred a stronger, more aggressive figure in the president's chair. He had learned long ago that John Foster's influence on Hempstead and the Brush heirs had increased, and that his own had greatly diminished. There were times when he felt himself to be almost an outsider in the councils of the club, since he had no official voice in them and his advice on matters of policy so infrequently was sought.

Now, with the forced closing of the season, and the possibility that there would be no baseball for the duration of the war, the heirs were becoming panicky. He tried to reassure them, but in the attempt he got no help from Hempstead and very little from Foster. He was sure that the war would end soon and that baseball would rebound from it to an even greater popularity than it had known before. They shook their heads. It was plain they wanted to get out from under—to sell their holdings and invest their money in a sounder, if less exciting, quarter.

In the years that he had been in New York he had had opportunities to leave the Giants and, so, greatly enrich himself. The

Federal League had told him to write his own ticket. His old friend Charlie Comiskey had urged him to take command of the White Sox. He knew that Ruppert and Huston would have been delighted if he had gone over to the Yankees in 1915. But his faith in the Giants, always strong, never was stronger than now. Strong, too, was his faith in the early recovery of baseball from the depression into which it had been hurled by the war.

In the circumstances the obvious thing for him to do was to get someone to back him in the purchase of the Giants. He sounded out some of his wealthy friends, but failed to convince them that here was an opportunity for them to buy their way into a great proposition. They felt, as the Brush family did, that there were safer investments than a ball club.

He turned to Joe Vila, sports editor of the *Evening Sun*, for advice. Vila suggested George Loft, the candy manufacturer, racehorse owner, and member of the New York State Racing Commission.

"He likes all sports," Vila said, "and he has the money to buy the Giants, or, for that matter, any other ball club."

They went to see Loft and discovered that he was interested. However, if he was to buy the ball club, he wanted it in its entirety. Not only the Brush family, which held the controlling stock, would have to sell. The smaller stockholders must be brought into line, too. This, McGraw and Vila knew, wouldn't be easy. There were many stockholders whose faith in the Giants was as strong as McGraw's. But they went to work, hoping to put it over.

Word that the Giants were for sale got about the town, and there were other bidders for the stock. But none of them satisfied either McGraw or the Brush family. Loft, impatient over the delay, was blowing hot and cold. McGraw was fearful the owners would change their minds and refuse to sell when the war ended on November 11. His fears were groundless. They still looked with a jaundiced eye on the future of baseball. They were ready to sell to Loft or any other responsible person who wished to buy.

Early in January, McGraw and Vila were confident they had all but closed the sale. Vila, about to depart for Havana on his vacation, was so sure of it that he wrote the story, leaving it with his assistant, who was to release it as soon as he got the word from McGraw.

## XVI ⊕ PART OWNER OF THE GIANTS

ON THE MORNING of January 14, 1919, the newspapers and press associations in New York were notified that the Giants would make an important announcement at noon. Half an hour or more before the time set the offices, then in the Fifth Avenue Building at Twenty-third Street, were crowded with reporters and photographers, who milled about John Foster, badgering him for the news, whatever it was. John smilingly refused, until one of the reporters, called on the telephone by his office, was informed that the United Press had sent out a story that the Giants had been bought by one Charles A. Stoneman. The name of the purchaser had been garbled, of course; but the story, in its essence, had been cracked.

Foster dashed into an inner office and emerged in a few minutes accompanied by McGraw; Francis X. McQuade, a city magistrate, a friend of McGraw's, and an enthusiastic Giant rooter; and Charles A. Stoneham. Stoneham stood silently by as McGraw and McQuade greeted the newspapermen. Foster, once more at his desk, read a prepared statement:

"The New York club has been purchased from the Brush estate by Charles A. Stoneham, John J. McGraw and Francis X. McQuade. Mr. Stoneham will serve as president; Mr. McGraw as vice president and manager; and Mr. McQuade as treasurer."

"And you as secretary, John?" a reporter asked.

Foster smiled thinly.

"For the present," he said.

He knew that, whatever else might happen, his number was up. The sale of the club by the Brush family had stripped him of that measure of power McGraw so long had resented. Stoneham virtually was a stranger to him, but he knew that McQuade had no liking for him and that McGraw and McQuade would combine to oust him as quickly as possible.

Stoneham also was a stranger, even by reputation, to most, if not all, the baseball writers. They were to discover, on returning to their offices and consulting their morgues, or files of clippings on prominent persons, that he had been a broker on the curb market for many years, that he owned a small stable of good racehorses, and that, although he had lived most of his life in Jersey City, he

was politically powerful in New York because of his close personal relations with Al Smith, Tom Foley and other leading figures in Tammany Hall.

Asked why he had purchased the Giants, he said:

"I have been a Giant fan all my life and an admirer of Mr. McGraw. When I heard the club was for sale, I was interested in buying it."

He smiled.

"That's all," he said. "That's all there is to it. Except that I am very happy and feel sure that, with Mr. McGraw and Mr. McQuade on my side, I shall continue to give Giant fans the kind of baseball to which they have been accustomed."

"It's a great day for me," McGraw said, "but this is no place to celebrate it. Meet us at the Waldorf as soon as you've cleaned up your work and we'll put on a real party."

One of the reporters, rushing to his office to write the story, was summoned by his managing editor, who plainly was not partial to the new owner of the club.

"Who got Stoneham into baseball?" the managing editor asked.

"I don't know. McGraw, probably. He said he had admired McGraw for a long time."

"Find out definitely. Don't come back to the office until you do—if it takes you a week."

The reporter finished his story and hurried to the Waldorf—the old Waldorf, at Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fourth Street, where the Empire State Building now stands. The real party promised by McGraw was in full swing. Tables were laden with a buffet lunch. Cocktails and highballs were being passed around by a corps of waiters. Wine stewards were lugging in baskets of champagne.

McQuade, a highball glass in one hand, was standing near the door. The reporter, who had known him for a number of years, said to him:

"Judge, who got Mr. Stoneham into baseball?"

"I did," he said.

He said it very emphatically. And then:

"You may hear other stories about it, but I'm telling you the truth. I got Charles A. Stoneham into baseball. Your Uncle Dudley—and nobody else."

He laughed scornfully.



"McGraw was fooling around with dead ones. It took me to dig up a live guy."

"Thanks," the reporter said.

He went to a telephone and told his managing editor what McQuade had said. The matter seemed to be settled, but it wasn't. McQuade was right. There would be other stories, and out of one of them would grow a lawsuit. In another lawsuit, twelve years later, it was the subject of contradictory testimony.

At any rate, there they were—Stoneham, McGraw, and McQuade. No public mention was made of the manner in which the stock was apportioned, but it was said privately that the shares held by McGraw and McQuade were small; and this, later developments proved, was true. But McGraw had gratified a long-standing ambition, in part if not completely. Small as his holdings were, he was in a stronger position in the club than he ever had been before. He was an executive and must have felt that, in the light of his experience and his proven judgment as a manager, he could control his partners and have an absolutely free hand once more in the purchase and sale of players. He would install a secretary who would be subservient to him, and would have no restraining influence on him, as Foster had had since the passing of Brush. Stoneham might have control of the stock; but, in spite of that, he would be in every sense the master of the Giants.

It was a pleasant prospect.

His first move drew the sharp criticism of the press and of many of his colleagues in baseball: He traded Bill Rariden and Walter Holke to Cincinnati for Hal Chase.

Chase had been charged by Christy Mathewson with—a euphemistic phrase if there ever was one—not having given his best efforts to the Cincinnati club in 1918. What Matty really meant was that Hal had been tossing ball games in which he had bet on the opposing team. The charge having been made to the league, the player was tried in New York in the winter of 1918-19. It wasn't much of a trial, since Matty, as an officer in the Army, still was in France and had ignored cabled requests for a deposition, apparently feeling that, having thrown the case into the league's lap, he had done his part. The testimony offered by some of Chase's team mates was inconclusive and the accused was exonerated.

Nevertheless, it seemed that Hal was through as a major-league

ball player or, for that matter, as a player in any league. He had been quietly blacklisted by the American League four years earlier when he had jumped his contract with the White Sox to join the Federal League and ugly stories had followed him from that league into the National when Garry Herrmann had signed him in Cincinnati. Now, obviously, he couldn't return to the Reds, and it appeared no one wanted him. The club owners in both leagues were congratulating themselves on having got rid of so troublesome a figure when McGraw announced that he had obtained him.

In response to denunciations of the deal, McGraw shrugged.

"What's wrong with it?" he asked. "Chase was tried and acquitted. His standing in baseball is as good as anyone's. Why shouldn't I take him? I had made up my mind when Holke left the club last summer that I didn't want him back and I've got to have a first baseman. I think the fans are on my side, anyway. Chase will be very popular at the Polo Grounds."

So he was—right up to the end of his days with the Giants. But it was McGraw who put an end to those days before the season was over.

McGraw's next move was baffling. Matty returned from France and resigned as manager of the Reds and McGraw immediately engaged him as a coach. In ordinary circumstances this would have been the most natural thing for him to do, since Matty had been one of his greatest players and they were close friends. But it was a strange thing for him to do with Chase on his team—and strange, too, that Matty should have consented to it when he would have to be in everyday contact with a man he had tried to drive out of baseball. Chase grinned inscrutably when he heard of it. Maybe, although he hated Matty, he looked upon it as a vindication for him.

It was shortly after that that McGraw disposed of another player. He thought very little of it at the time. So did the newspapermen. Consequently, it got but a line or two in the papers the next day. It would have been a big story if any of them could have looked ahead even a year or so, for the player's name was Waite Hoyt.

Hoyt was a baseball prodigy. He was sixteen years old and a pupil in Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn when Charlie Dooin, then a Giant coach, had seen him working out with the Robins at Ebbets Field on a day the Giants were playing there in 1916. He

was a big, strong kid, and he was wheeling a fast ball into a catcher's mitt. Dooin, having watched him for a little while, moved up alongside him.

"Are you under contract to the Brooklyn club?" he asked, cautiously.

"No, sir," Hoyt said.

"Do you want to pitch in the big leagues some day?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well," Dooin said, "if you'll come to see me when we get back to the Polo Grounds, I'll see what I can do for you."

"I'll be there," Hoyt said. "Nobody has paid any attention to me around here."

He showed up almost as soon as the Giants returned to their home grounds. At Dooin's suggestion, McGraw looked at him, liked what he saw, and bound him with a contract that the boy's father, Ad Hoyt, one of the last of the minstrels, signed for him. Waite was farmed out to Mt. Carmel in the Pennsylvania League, and moved to Hartford in the Eastern League when the Pennsylvania circuit disbanded. In 1917 he was farmed out again—first to Memphis, then to Montreal. He believed that, by this time, he was ready for a shot at the majors, and was inclined to rebel when, that winter, McGraw told him he was going to Nashville for the season of 1918.

"Take it easy," McGraw said. "You're still only a boy and have a lot to learn before I could use you. Go down there and have a good season, and I promise you I won't send you out again. Just show me you can win in that league and you'll be with the Giants next year."

Hoyt was unhappy in Nashville and, although he looked very good in spots, couldn't win. McGraw brought him back, kept him around the Polo Grounds for a few days, and then sent him to Newark. Hoyt objected again.

"I can pitch as well as some of the fellows you have on this ball club!" he said.

"Next year," McGraw said. "Next year."

Hoyt pitched a few games in Newark and then quit baseball to enroll in an officers' training course. He was sent to Middlebury College. Discharged when the war ended, he waited until early February before going to see McGraw in the Giants' office.

McGraw greeted him pleasantly, and then said:

"Well, Waite, I'm going to send you out again. I owe some players to Rochester for this young catcher, Earl Smith, and I thought another year in the minors—"

Hoyt got up.

"No," he said.

McGraw's face reddened with anger.

"No, what?" he demanded.

"I'm not going to Rochester."

"You'll go where I send you!"

"No, I won't. You promised me last year that if I made a good showing in the minor leagues last year you'd keep me this year."

"A good record! Look at your record!" McGraw scoffed.

"You look at it," Hoyt said. "You know it doesn't mean anything. I couldn't pitch for those managers or for those lousy ball clubs, and you know it. You know I'm a better pitcher than the record shows—and I know it as well as you do. And I tell you I'm not going to Rochester or anywhere else."

"Is that so?" McGraw said. "So you're going to tell me what you'll do, are you? Well, let me tell you this, young man: I'm running this ball club, and I'm not going to let any swell-headed young punk like you tell me what I'm going to do. I'm sending you to Rochester, and you'll go there, or if you don't like that you can go back to the Parade Grounds in Prospect Park, where you belong."

He was on his feet now, too, pacing back and forth in short, angry strides.

"Who the hell do you think you are, coming in here and talking to me like that? You're going to Rochester, do you hear?"

Hoyt walked slowly to the door.

"No," he said again. "I'm not. I'm going home—and if you don't sell me to another major-league club, I'll stay there."

He went out. McGraw, still fuming, sat down at his desk.

"——— fresh kid!" he said. "He'll tell me what to do, will he?"

When he had cooled out he laughed to himself. It had been silly, he thought, to get excited about a kid like that. When the kid got home he would realize how headstrong he had been, and the next day would come back to see him, or call him on the telephone, and say he had thought the matter over and would go to Rochester, after all.

But he didn't know Hoyt as well as he thought. He was to know, one day, that he had chased a first-rate pitcher off his ball club. The next time he saw Hoyt the boy was pitching for the Yankees against the Giants in a World Series. He had not only refused to report to Rochester; when McGraw—having decided to get rid of him once and for all—had sold him to New Orleans, he had refused to report to New Orleans, too. He pitched, that summer of 1919, for an industrial plant team in Baltimore, beat all the major-league teams he opposed in exhibition games, and signed with the Boston Red Sox when they purchased him from New Orleans. He was on his way then to a dazzling career with the Yankees—and all McGraw had to remember him by was a stormy scene in his office.

McGraw rounded a cycle that spring: He took the Giants to Gainesville, Fla., to train—to Gainesville, where, twenty-nine years before, he had played with Al Lawson's All-Americans and had made the hits off Viau of the Cleveland club that had given him his first break on the way to a major-league job.

The leagues, unaccountably timorous over the renaissance of baseball following the war, had adopted a 140-game schedule and decreed an abbreviated training season. With only four weeks allotted for training, McGraw abandoned Marlin. On the advice of an old friend whom he had first known in Gainesville, and with whom he had kept in touch through the years, he settled on that town.

It was a happy choice. The weather was perfect. The squad had the use of the field and dressing rooms at the University of Florida. The townspeople were hospitable. The White House, where the players were quartered, undoubtedly was one of the best small-town hotels in the country. Curiously enough, if McGraw's return evoked any old memories in him, he kept them to himself.

He not only hoped to win a pennant in the first year of the triumvirate's ownership, but was confident he would. He had Chase, still the best fielding first baseman; Doyle at second, Fletcher at short stop, and Zimmerman at third. Kauff, back from the Army, was in center field, flanked by Burns and Young. Gonzales and McCarty were the catchers. The pitching staff was headed by Toney, Jess Barnes and Benton. Still believing he would have won in 1918 but for the war, he felt that this was the year in which he would regain the top of the league, Disillusionment . . . bitterness . . .

lay ahead of him. But, of course, he couldn't know it then.

He had his first taste of both when, opening their exhibition schedule with the Reds in Tampa, the Giants were beaten in two games. Later, because his disappointments were so many, he was to recall that ragged beginning. He was to recall, in particular, that in the first of those two games Babe Ruth hit the longest home run that ever flew from his bat.

The game was played in the infield of the race track on the Tampa Fair Grounds. Columbia George Smith was pitching for the Giants. With one man out and one on in the first inning, the Babe, playing his first game in his new post in right field, hit a ball far over Young's head in right center. It was a towering smash that would have gone out of any major-league ball park of the time. After the game, Young pointed out, as nearly as he could, where the ball had struck. As measured by Melvin E. Webb of the *Boston Globe*, the spot was 579 feet from the plate.

That was the only home run Ruth made off the Giant pitchers as the teams traveled northward together. At McGraw's orders his young men pitched low and outside to the Babe; and, for the most part, he struck out, popped out, or hit weakly to the infield.

## XVII ☉ THE NAME OF "MUGGSY"

IT WAS A CURIOUS schedule that John Foster had mapped out for the Giants that spring. It took them as far north as Baltimore, then back to Norfolk—where they were to pick up the Senators—and from there to Washington and on into New York.

When they reached Baltimore they were met by Stoneham, accompanied by Leo Bondy, his lawyer, who had been installed as counsel for the club and later was to be its treasurer; and by Brandon Tynan, an actor, and one or two other Broadway characters. The squad arrived in the evening and moved into the Belvedere Hotel. That night Stoneham had a party in a private dining room for McGraw and the newspapermen covering the trip.

The new owner, plainly thrilled by his first actual contact with the team, was a beaming host as he and his guests sat at a great round table. The food was the best that Baltimore's famous markets

could supply, and the liquor was plentiful. Everyone was having a good time until some idiot proclaimed himself toastmaster and began to call on the guests for after-dinner speeches. These were boring until John Sainpolis got up.

John Sainpolis, a first-rate actor who had appeared in support of many of the leading actresses of the time, was an old friend of McGraw's, and had made the trip as John's guest. He had spent most of the time at Gainesville with the newspapermen, with whom he lived in a wing of the home of Colonel Taylor, the proprietor of the White House—the hotel not being large enough to accommodate any but the ball players. He was distinguished among actors not only because of his skill, but because he hadn't even a trace of ham in his makeup. He had been an interested but unobtrusive observer of the training of the team. Nearly everyone else around the table was in a mellow mood when he was called upon. Almost alone, he had drunk little, if any, of the liquor that had been placed before him.

"This," he said, "has been my first opportunity to see a major-league ball club in training—a privilege granted to me by my friend, John. I found it not only exciting but interesting. I saw young players, recruited from the minor leagues, come into the camp as raw rookies. I saw them develop—and take on that spirit which always has characterized the Giants. I saw the veterans start slowly, then quicken their pace and play with the aggressiveness for which they are famous. I saw their manager whip them all into shape—the recruits and the regulars. I saw him stepping up the tempo of their work. I saw them, as we started north, molded into a hustling, fighting unit. The Giants—the greatest baseball team of our time!"

He paused. And then:

"And having seen all this, at last I can understand why they call John McGraw Muggsy!"

There was a moment of horrified silence—then, a quick, angry muttering around the table. Brandon Tynan, seated across from Sainpolis, leaped to his feet.

"You ——!" he shouted. "How dare you call my friend Muggsy?"

Wide as the table was, he tried to throw a punch across it. The guests on either side of him grabbed him. McGraw was on his feet. Stoneham was struggling out of his chair, his face distorted with rage.

Muggsy! It was a name McGraw hated—a name that, however innocently applied to him by those who didn't know it was repulsive to him, would cause him to snarl and want to fight. The table was in an uproar that boiled about the hapless Sainpolis, who, bewildered by the commotion, stood staring at Tynan, struggling in the grip of his neighbors. Now he turned to McGraw.

"John," he said, "forgive me. I had no thought of offending you. I assumed the name was one given to you in tribute to your qualities as a fighting leader of men. . . . I shall not further embarrass you by my presence. I shall go to New York in the morning."

He started from the table. But McGraw put a hand on his shoulder.

"Sit down, John," McGraw said. "It isn't necessary for me to forgive you. I know that you are my friend and that the last thing you'd want to do would be to offend me. And you're not going to New York tomorrow. You are going to Norfolk with us—and you'll always be welcome to travel with this ball club as long as I am connected with it."

He looked across the table.

"Thanks for defending me, Brandon," he said. "But please sit down."

Tynan sat down. So did Sainpolis. The other guests became quiet.

"Now," McGraw said, "I will tell you why I dislike the name of Muggsy. . . . When I first went to Baltimore, back in 1891, there was a roughneck ward politician in the town named McGraw, who was called Muggsy. In some way, it was rumored that I was his son, and one of the newspapermen called me Young Muggsy McGraw. And the name caught on. Soon the Young was dropped, and I was just Muggsy in the papers. At first, being too busy trying to make good in the big leagues, I paid no attention to this, not knowing who Muggsy McGraw was. As soon as I found out, I asked the newspapermen not to call me that any more; and they stopped doing so. But some of the fans in the other towns who didn't like me had picked up the name and, knowing I didn't like it, took delight in yelling it at me every time I appeared on the field. Since then, every ——— who doesn't like me has called me that."

His voice had grown angry.

"If the fellow who first called me Muggsy called me that now, I would have no objection to it!" he roared. "I can take anything



from an original guy! But I can't stand imitators! And I can't take Muggsy from those who hate me and know that by calling me that name they are insulting me!"

"Muggsy!" Sam Crane said. "I've called you that many a time, and I will do it again! I will call you Muggsy in the *Journal* tomorrow!"

McGraw howled across the table at him.

"You! You'll call me Muggsy! You're the one who was going to drive me out of New York ten years ago! Why, you ——!"

"I'll drive you out!" Sam yelled. "I'll drive you out tomorrow! Muggsy!"

The table rocked with laughter. McGraw and Sam Crane, devoted as brothers, were quarreling again, as they often did around a table. The tension was broken, and the situation was normal again.

The Giants started the season slowly, then began a rapid climb that took them into first place by the first of May. On May 4 they played their first Sunday game at home under the law that James J. Walker, then a state senator, had sponsored in the legislature, and which, in the long run, was to accelerate that popularity that ultimately resulted in his election as Mayor of New York.

The Phillies were the opposing team. The park was packed. It was a tight game. Along about the fifth inning, when the Phillies had been retired, Rube Benton, who was pitching, got into a dispute with Fletcher as the Giants left the field. Benton had forgotten that the sign for a pitch-out had been changed. With a man on first base, he had thought that the sign he got from the catcher still was for a curve ball. Fletcher had started to cover as the runner on first base darted for second on the pitch. The batter had hit a ground ball through the spot Fletcher had left. The argument continued as the players reached the dugout, and the crowd was startled to see Fletcher and Benton, punching and clawing at each other, roll on the bats that were laid out in an orderly row in front of the dugout. McGraw and the other players quickly separated them. The umpires ignored the struggle, and the game went on.

Later, Casey Stengel, then with the Phillies, said:

"What a ball club! Before the game, Fletcher comes over to our dugout and says:

"Mac says he don't want any trouble today. He has a tip that

agents from the Sabbath Society are in the stands, looking for something they can squawk about. So let's just have a nice, peaceful ball game.'

"So we say, all right, we will play that way if they will—and the first thing I see is Fletcher and Benton rolling on the bats!"

But nothing came of it. If the agents of the Sabbath Society—which had fought the bill stubbornly at a hearing in Albany—actually were present and reported the fight to their masters, there were no repercussions. Sunday baseball, long needed in the town, obviously was there to stay—and to enrich the Giants, the Yankees and the Dodgers.

Two weeks later McGraw was saddened by news of the death of Germany Schaefer in Chicago. Germany, following the world tour, had been with the Giants briefly as a coach and companion for McGraw, who was very fond of him.

"I had a letter from his sister," McGraw said, "in which she said she knew Germany was going to die. She was working in her kitchen and she heard a crash in the bedroom. When she went in to see what it was, she saw his picture had fallen to the floor."

He said it as though he believed it, too. Quite possibly he did; for in common with most baseball men he was not without some superstition. When the Giants visited Chicago on their first western trip that year, he made a pilgrimage to the cemetery where Schaefer was buried, and, kneeling at the grave, silently prayed for his friend.

It was in May of that year, too, that he first heard of one of the greatest players ever to wear a Giant uniform. He was in his office one rainy day when Arthur Devlin, at that time baseball coach at Fordham, came in.

"John," he said, "I have a ball player for you. You know I don't often talk about a kid this way . . . but this kid is a major-league ball player. Right now, I mean."

It was true that Devlin didn't talk that way often. McGraw was interested.

"What's his name?" he asked.

"Frisch," Devlin said. "Frank Frisch. He knows he's a ball player, too. I don't mean he's swell-headed. He isn't. But he knows he's a ball player and nobody is going to talk him out of it. I can bring

him down to the Polo Grounds and show him to you, but I'd rather you'd have somebody look at him in a regular game."

"When do you play again?"

"We don't play until next Wednesday, but he is playing with the New York A.C. at Travers Island on Sunday."

"I'll have Gibson look at him," McGraw said.

On Monday Gibson reported to McGraw:

"I saw that kid. Devlin's right. He's a big-league ball player. You won't have to send him out, Mac. He's ready right now."

Two days later Frisch signed a contract with the Giants. It was agreed that he should report at the end of the college season in June. He joined the team in Pittsburgh when it went west for the first time, and made his first appearance as a runner in a game in Chicago.

"What did you say his name was?" Charlie Dryden, famous baseball writer on the *Herald-Examiner*, asked his neighbor in the press box.

"Frisch."

"How do you spell it?"

"F-r-i-s-c-h."

"H'm," Dryden said, writing the name in his score book. "Sounds like something frying."

The Giants were leading the league . . . but McGraw was making changes as they rolled along. He asked for waivers on Jim Thorpe, and the Indian was claimed by Boston.

"He has heard so often that he can't hit a right-hander's curve ball that he believes it," McGraw said.

Later, a story was told that a friend of his had said to him, excitedly:

"Mac, I got a great ball player for you! He's an Indian and—"

And McGraw said:

"That's enough!"

Yet he had got a lot of mileage out of his Indians, Meyers and Thorpe. They hadn't been easy to handle, especially Thorpe. But, within their limitations, they had given him everything.

Late in July he traded Davy Robertson to the Cubs for Phil Douglas. Robertson, although brilliant in spots, never had been the ball player McGraw had hoped he would be. He had been of small service to the Giants for some time. Douglas, undoubtedly one of the greatest pitchers that ever lived, had been shunted about from the

Reds to the Dodgers to the Cubs because of his predilection for mixing too much rye—or gin or bourbon—with his baseball. He frequently would absent himself from his team for several days, or even a week or two. But when he was right he could pitch. He was six feet four inches tall and stoop-shouldered, and he walked with a gait that had caused someone—probably Dryden—to call him Shuffling Phil. A virtual illiterate from the hill country, he was a genius when he stepped in the box. He almost never made a mistake pitching to a hitter. He had a fast ball, a curve ball, a slow ball, a change-of-pace ball, and a spit ball.

“There should be a law against a fellow as big and smart as that having all that stuff,” Rabbit Maranville said.

Other managers shook their heads when they heard McGraw had acquired him.

“He should be the greatest pitcher in the world,” they said, “but he’ll fall down on McGraw just as he has fallen down on every other manager that’s had him.”

McGraw laughed.

“I’ve had hard-to-handle pitchers before,” he said.

He may have felt the day would come when he would have real trouble with Douglas, as he had had with the others. But he was willing to gamble that he could forestall the day—and meanwhile get more work out of the shuffling one than any other manager ever had.

At the time Douglas joined the Giants they were faltering before the charge of the Reds. The pennant-winning Cubs of the year before were stringing along in third place, offering no real challenge. But the Reds, with a pitching staff headed by Dutch Ruether, Hod Eller, Ray Fisher, and Jimmy Ring, and strengthened by Sallee, whom they had claimed from the Giants on waivers in the early spring, were smashing on. Pat Moran, in his first year as manager in Cincinnati, was promising to give the town its first pennant. It began to look as though he might make good on the promise.

So desperate had the plight of the Giants become that, when they entered Cincinnati on the morning of Friday, August 1, for a three-game series, they were but a half game in front. The town was aroused as few towns ever have been over a baseball series. McGraw and his players were hated there, anyway, and the minds of the

fans had been inflamed by stories from the brilliant if erratic pen of Bill Phelon, then Cincinnati's leading baseball writer.

As the players, coming out of the railroad station, headed for a line of cabs waiting to take them to the Hotel Havlin, the driver of a cab parked across the street yelled:

"You can take those dirty yellow dogs if you want them! I wouldn't touch 'em!"

All morning the lobby of the Havlin was crowded with fans who had come, some of them half fearfully, to look at the rowdies from New York. Not all of them were fearful, however. One, passing Doyle, hurled an insult at him. The usually placid Larry smacked him across the face with the back of his hand. Other players quickly got Larry to his room, thus preventing a free-for-all in which some of the Giants might have been arrested. At the ball park policemen were posted at each end of the Giants' dugout. Even the reporters accompanying the Giants were not unmolested. Fans seated behind them in the upper tier of the grandstand bombarded them with bottle caps, rolled-up newspapers and cushions as the game proceeded.

The Giants, reveling in the public clamor they had stirred, were thoroughly confident that right there on the Reds' home field they would assert themselves, take at least two of the three games and drive on to win the pennant. But the Reds won the first game. That night newsboys in Fountain Square shrilled:

"Reds in first place! Read all about it! Reds beat Giants and take first place!"

Back at the hotel Arthur Fletcher shrugged.

"Well," he said, "we've held the lead for a long time. Let them tussle with it for a while and see what they can do with it."

The other players nodded. The lead had been a burden through the last few weeks. Let the Reds have it for a while, as Fletcher said. When they got ready, they'd take it back.

McGraw knew they wouldn't—not the way they had been going. Barnes was holding up well among the pitchers. But the others were staggering. He needed help badly. That night he called George Washington Grant, president of the Braves, on the telephone and made a deal for Arthur Nehf, the best left-handed pitcher in the league. Nehf cost \$55,000, but McGraw felt he was worth it.

The Giants lost the second game. In the third game they pulled

themselves together sharply and walloped the Reds before one of the greatest crowds that ever had seen a game in Cincinnati. They were in good spirits when they left the town that night. They still were in second place, but they had just flattened and humiliated the Reds. They believed they were on their way again. Moreover, Nehf had reported that afternoon, and they felt very good about that, too.

But in the few days that followed there were bitter mumblings among them. They weren't gaining on the Reds. They didn't like the look of some of Chase's plays around first base. They were puzzled by a sudden slump by Zimmerman at third. McGraw was in an angry mood. The pennant was slipping from him, and he knew it. He felt, as some of his players did, that something was going on, and he couldn't quite put his finger on it.

The team, having finished its swing through the west, returned to the Polo Grounds. The Reds came in for a series of six games to be played in three double headers. The Reds won the first double header, the Giants the second, and the Reds the third. That was the clincher. Everyone knew now, including McGraw and his players, that the Reds had won the pennant.

There had been only one bright spot for McGraw in the series. Doyle, aging as a ball player and wearied by the grind, had been benched for a rest in the second double header, and Frisch had been posted at second base. Morris Rath, leading off for the Reds in the first game, had smashed a ball at Frisch. It had taken a bad hop and struck Frank in the chest. But Frank had pounced on the ball and thrown Rath out.

"That was all I had to see," McGraw said. "The average youngster, nervous anyway, starting his first game in a spot like that, would have lost the ball. Frisch proved to me right there that he is going to be a great ball player."

The Giants trailed, the mutterings of the players continued. One day Chase failed to appear at the Polo Grounds.

"He's sick," McGraw said. "He hasn't been feeling well for a long time. I doubt if he will play again this year."

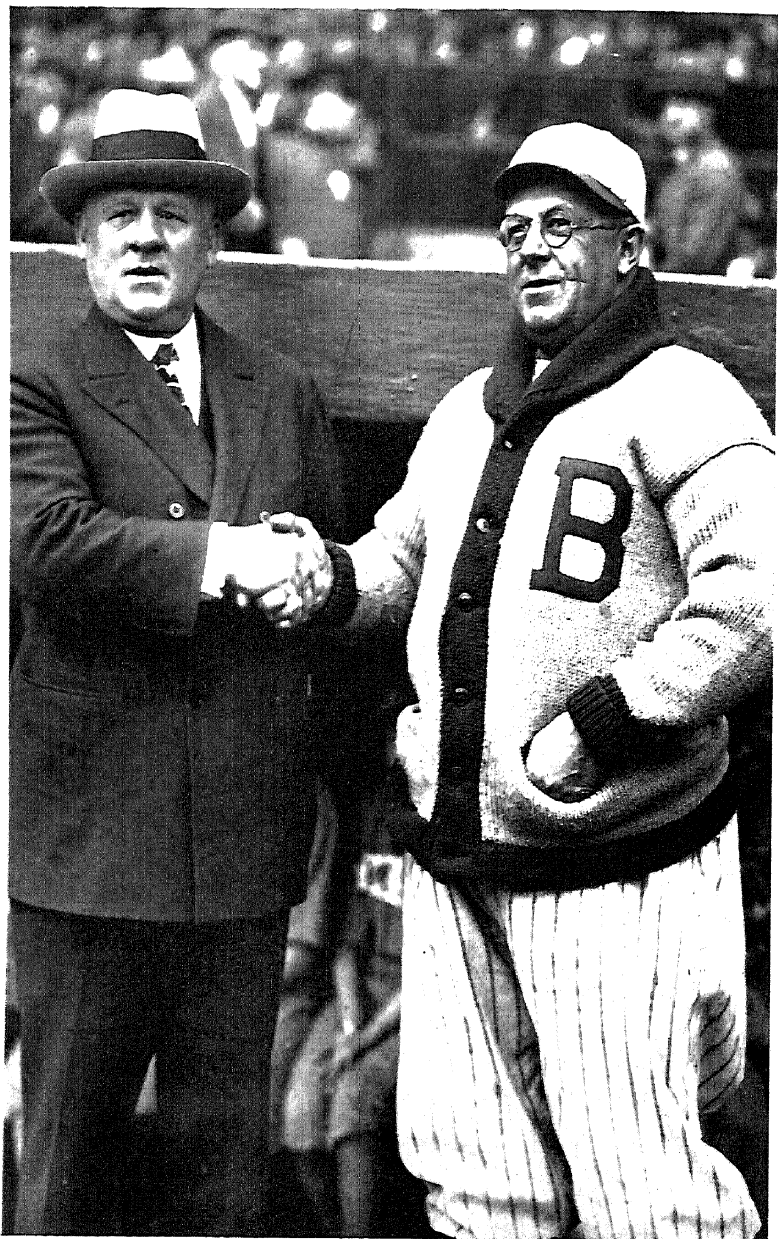
A few days later Zimmerman was gone.

"He's tired," McGraw said. "His eyes have been bothering him. He's been complaining that he can't judge the hops on a ground



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MCGRAW WITH CHARLES A. STONEHAM



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MCGRAW AND WILBERT ROBINSON



ball as it comes down to him. I told him to knock off for the rest of the season.”

Neither Chase nor Zimmerman ever wore a Giant uniform again. A year later McGraw was to say, during the investigation following the exposure of the White Sox perfidy in the 1919 World Series, that he had dropped the players because they had thrown ball games and attempted to bribe Toney and Kauff to do likewise. This brought an angry denial from Zimmerman in New York. Chase, playing in an outlaw league along the Mexican border, remained silent.

Something else had happened that year. It was but a one-day story in the newspapers, but it meant a lot to McGraw: John Foster, with a wry smile, had told the newspapermen one afternoon that he had resigned . . . McGraw had got even with him at last.

## XVIII ⊗ THE RACE TRACK IN HAVANA

**T**HE 1919 SEASON—with all its disappointments—behind him, McGraw left for Havana. The era of Cuban prosperity that had begun when the price of sugar rocketed in the first years of the World War had been continued as Americans, stock market profits swelling their pockets, sought relaxation in a land where Prohibition was unknown. New hotels had been reared in Havana to accommodate them. New clubs for sport or gambling had been opened. Sloppy Joe's was becoming a national institution and gaining an international reputation.

At Oriental Park the horses ran round and round as the old-fashioned mutuel machine stamped out tickets and bookmakers called their prices. The silks of some of the best known stables in the United States flashed in the sun as the horses whirled about the track. Wealthy Americans occupied club house boxes, strolled on the lawns, danced to the strains of famous orchestras between races, played the wheel . . . or the bird cage or faro . . . in the Casino when the races were over.

The proprietor of this track and the founder of the Cuban-American Jockey Club was hard-headed, hard-fisted Curly Brown, who had built tracks in many parts of the United States and had sensed a bonanza in Havana. He hadn't succeeded there without opposition.

But he was tough and fearless, and he knew how to deal with the politicians who opposed him. Intimidating some, bribing others, he had built his track and set up in business. As owner of 80 per cent of the stock—or all he could hold under the Cuban law, which stipulated that at least 20 per cent of any business enterprise must be in the hands of natives—he had reaped a rich haul. But he was restless, and other fields beckoned. One night that winter he said to his friend McGraw:

“John, you’ve been coming down here for years. You know about everybody in Havana, and they all like you. Why don’t you and Stoneham buy this race track? It’s a big thing now. It can be made into a much bigger one. I’d stay here and go on with it, but, hell, I’ve been here long enough. I’d like a change.”

It is doubtful if McGraw, much as he loved racing, ever before had thought of being in on the ownership of a track. But he was interested immediately in what Brown had said. After all, he spent most of his days in Havana at the race track. It would be fun . . . and profitable, too . . . to have a piece of it.

Brown waited quietly as McGraw thought it over for a minute or two.

“Well?” Curly asked.

“I’ll call Stoneham tonight,” McGraw said. “I’d like to have him come down here and look it over. I have an idea he might go for it.”

Stoneham, whose horses campaigned on most of the major tracks in the United States, listened with interest when McGraw called him.

“I’ll be down there as soon as I can,” he said. “I’m pretty well jammed up right now, but I’ll be down in a couple of weeks.”

Within a week or two he arrived, accompanied by his brother Horace and Leo Bondy. They surveyed the situation, went over the books with Brown, and were entertained by President Menocal. Stoneham was duly impressed and quickly came to terms with Brown, taking over all his stock and declaring McGraw in as his partner.

And so McGraw entered upon another field. Vice president of the Giants, he now was vice president of the Cuban-American Jockey Club. It was an experience that was to enliven his winters, to add to his prestige in Havana, to see him take part quietly in Cuban politics—he had a hand in the defeat of Menocal and the election of

Dr. Alfredo Zayas to the presidency a year later—and to cost him a fortune. Trainers and owners, eager to see him win, tipped him to long shots they felt sure would come rolling down in front. But all his life he was what is known on the race track as a chalk eater. That is, he leaned to favorites, and couldn't be induced to bet on a horse when the odds were greater than 8 to 5. Consequently, when many of the long shots won he was on the favorites that finished up the stretch. No man in a position to get inside information, much of it sound, ever made less use of that position.

And yet, no matter how much they cost him, the years in which he was a part owner of the track were among the happiest of his life.

## XIX ☉ YEAR OF TROUBLE

**T**HE YEAR 1920 was to be an unhappy one for McGraw, but there was no hint of this in the spring.

The leagues having decided to return to a 154-game schedule and the customary long training season, he announced that the Giants would not train in Florida again, but would go back to Texas—not, however, to Marlin, but to San Antonio.

He always had liked Marlin, and liked it still. But times had changed, and it no longer was practical to shut a ball club off in a small town. Training trips were becoming increasingly expensive. There was a chance for a ball club to get some of its money back if it trained in a town where its exhibition games would draw crowds. So long as the Giants trained in Marlin they had to go to one of the cities to take in any money at the gate—to Dallas . . . Fort Worth . . . Houston . . . Galveston . . . Waco . . . San Antonio. The sensible thing now was for them to pitch their camp in one of those cities. San Antonio was the one that had the greatest appeal.

He was so pleased with his choice that after a week or so he could say in all truth that this was the best town in which the Giants ever had trained. They were quartered in the old Menger Hotel on the Alamo Plaza.

"This is a nice, homelike place," one of the reporters said over his breakfast in the sunlit dining room.

“Homelike?” Bugs Baer said. “Yes . . . except that it’s brighter and cleaner and the food is better and there’s no fighting.”

Everyone in the party was happy. For the ball players, there was a good minor-league ball park, with ample club-house room, just a brisk walk or a short ride from the hotel. There was—as Bugs had said—good food on the table. There were movie shows just down the street. And there was plenty of warm sunshine, and no wind such as that which blew, sometimes, in Marlin. For the newspapermen there were many attractions. The old Casa del Rio . . . the Teatro Nacional in the Mexican quarter . . . the little parties arranged by Jack O’Brien of the *News* and Harold Sherwitz of the *Light* . . . trips around the Mission Loop or to Lake Medina . . . visits to Fort Sam Houston for cocktails with the officers . . . golf at the country club.

For McGraw there were old friends, remembered from the years he tramped through there in his youth . . . and parties in his great, high-ceilinged suite. There were laughs and small practical jokes. There were crowds at the workouts every day through the first couple of weeks, and bigger crowds at the exhibition games later on. There was—most important of all—a feeling that he was going to head north with a team good enough to win the pennant.

One of his friends returned from a hunting trip to Mexico, on which he had shot a female wildcat and captured its three cubs. One of the cubs was presented to McGraw at the plate before a game one day.

“He’ll bring you luck, I’m sure, John,” the hunter said.

The cat, promptly christened Bill Pennant, was a handsome thing. It was no bigger than a house cat, but it was spotted like a leopard and had big feet. When it walked you knew that it knew it was a wildcat. It developed a great fondness for McGraw—and a predilection for scaring the wits out of his friends when they came upon it unexpectedly. It also scared the wits out of Ed Mackall, the Negro trainer whom McGraw had brought from Baltimore years before, and Larry Doyle, who wanted nothing to do with it whatever and would run at the sight of it.

There were trips to Austin to play the University of Texas . . . to Dallas . . . to Fort Worth . . . and then the trip north. Here, for the first time, McGraw’s pleasure was dimmed. He had arranged a tour with the Red Sox, seeking to capitalize on the drawing power of

Babe Ruth, whose home-run hitting in 1919 had made him the most widely publicized player in baseball. But that winter the Babe had been sold to the Yankees. And now, ironically enough, the Giants and the Red Sox were trailing the Yankees and the Dodgers, or Robins, as they were called in that period, up through the South. The Yanks and the Robins were mopping up, so that there was very little left for the Giants and the Red Sox when they came along a day or so later.

But there were laughs, too, along the way. When other sources of merriment failed, there was always Bill Pennant. It hadn't taken Bill long to discover that he could frighten trainmen, bellhops, waiters, hotel clerks—almost all who crossed his path. And he took a perverse delight in doing just that. McGraw had a collar and chain for him, and carried him in a ventilated Gladstone bag such as generally is used for small dogs. But, of course, Bill couldn't be kept forever in the bag. One night, as McGraw let him out in the deserted lobby of a small-town hotel, he stalked menacingly toward a group of Negro boys mopping the floor. One look at him, and they were sure he had just come down from the hills. They ran up the stairs, under the stairs, into the broom closet. One rushed into the elevator and slammed the door behind him.

In Ashville, McGraw was in the writing room, just off the lobby, talking to a reporter. The cat, having hopped on a table, was browsing among the inkwells and pens when a soldier came in. The soldier didn't see him until he was about to sit down at the table. When he did, he darted back, his eyes popping, as Bill fixed him with a baleful glare. Hugging the wall, the soldier started for the door, where McGraw stood smiling.

"Does that belong to you?" the soldier asked.

"Yes," McGraw said.

"Wh—what is it?"

"It's a wildcat."

"I thought so! . . . Is that a pet?"

"Yes."

The soldier looked at the cat, then back to McGraw.

"Are you an animal trainer, brother?" he asked.

"Yes," McGraw said. "My name is Hagenback. Did you ever hear of me?"

"Yes, Mr. Hagenback. Sure, I heard of you. I guess everybody has heard of you."

Now he was at the door.

"Jesus!" he said. "A wildcat for a pet!"

Suddenly he fled. He had forgotten all about writing his letter.

Now the Giants were in New York. The disappointments of the tour with the Red Sox were behind McGraw. With the opening of the season just ahead, he was in a pleasantly expectant frame of mind. His team was in good shape and it was good enough, he thought, to win the pennant. His mood would have been far different had he known the trials that were to beset him. Not only was he to fail again as he clutched at the pennant, but he was to become involved in personal difficulties of a grave nature.

Sharing the unhappiness that enveloped him almost as soon as the season began was George Kelly, who had taken Chase's place at first base. Although George had been with the Giants most of the time for nearly five years, he still hadn't learned to make proper use of his height and reach, which in time were to be great assets to him. His awkwardness was in sharp contrast to the grace of his predecessor. As he struggled uncertainly about the bag, he was hooted by the fans and mocked by some of the baseball writers. Taciturn and apparently indifferent to the things that were said to him or written about him, he actually was extremely sensitive. The harsh reception he received at first depressed him and then embittered him.

McGraw, knowing better than anyone else how keenly Kelly felt the goading of the fans, called the boy into his office after one particularly unhappy afternoon.

"I think you know this," he said. "I just wanted to remind you of it: I'm the only one you have to care about around here. I'm running this ball club, not the fans back of first base—nor the gamblers back of third—nor the reporters in the press box."

He had said the same thing to Rube Marquard and Fred Snodgrass and Fred Merkle. He would say it again to other young players as the years rolled along. But he always meant it; and the players to whom he was talking knew he meant it. It gave them the courage to go on, even on days when they hated to go to the ball park, dreading the scorn of the fans.

And so Kelly went on, improving gradually. But the Giants, who

had got off to a bad start, continued to falter. Then Frisch fell ill suddenly one night and was rushed off to a hospital for an emergency appendectomy. His place at third base was taken by Fred Lear, a good ball player but not an adequate replacement for him.

With Frisch out of action there was no speed left in the Giant infield. Doyle, at second base, and Fletcher, at short stop, had grown old as the ages of ball players are reckoned. Kelly hadn't hit his stride. Lear had been around long enough to have pounded some of the spring out of his legs. Something had to be done, McGraw knew. On June 7 he concluded a deal with the Philadelphia club whereby he got Dave Bancroft for Fletcher and an undisclosed amount of money, popularly believed at the time to be \$100,000.

Parting with Fletcher was no pleasure for McGraw. The boy he had admired at Dallas back in 1908 had been not only one of the best short stops in the majors for a long time, but to a greater degree than any other player had typified the spirit for which the Giants were famous. He had played the game hard and conscientiously. He had put the team before everything else, had spared himself not at all, had been part and parcel of McGraw's constant growth as a manager. And in times of trouble, when McGraw—by his own actions or by circumstances forced upon him—had been in danger of bodily harm from an angry opponent or a hostile crowd, Fletcher always had been the first at his side—thrusting himself in front of McGraw, willing to take the punches aimed at him, more than willing to throw some punches in his behalf.

But he had been in New York for eleven years, and those years had taken their toll of him. Now McGraw needed someone younger and faster as the key man of his infield. So Fletcher went to Philadelphia, and Bancroft checked in at the Polo Grounds. Looking back on that vexing year, McGraw was to regard the acquisition of Bancroft as almost its only bright spot.

Bancroft was twenty-eight years old and in his sixth season as a big-league ball player. But he was one whom the years rode lightly. In his first year, which was 1915, he had been the spark plug of the team that Pat Moran—also in his first year in Philadelphia—had driven to the pennant—the only pennant the Phillies ever had won. He was fast, smart, a dead-game competitor. He was, indeed, one of the greatest short stops baseball ever has known. Almost as soon as he joined the Giants they began to pick up.

There was a period right after that when the Giants were winning so regularly that Lee King, utility outfielder from the hills of West Virginia, was moved to say:

"If we keep going like this for a few weeks, we'll be so far in front the rest of the league won't be able to see us with a megascope."

But they couldn't keep going like that. There continued to be days when they couldn't put more than a couple of runs together—although they needed five or six, because their pitching was rocky—or days when tight pitching and timely hitting were nullified by a boot in the field or lack of speed on the bases.

In July Benny Kauff—who never had been the ball player he had promised to be when he came over from the Federal League, and who, moreover, was having troubles of his own that weighed on his mind and affected his playing—was released on option to Toronto, McGraw taking a young outfielder by the name of Vernon Spencer to fill his place.

Matty, whose health had been poor since he had come back from France the year before, left the club and went to Saranac for a rest. This further depressed McGraw, who was deeply concerned about his friend.

There were shocking headlines in the newspapers on the morning of August 9, which fell on a Monday. Said the *Sun*:

## McGRAW BEATEN UP; HIS FRIEND IS NEAR DEATH

And then the story:

"A telephone call from St. Luke's Hospital received at the West 100th Street police station soon after noon yesterday informed the officer on the desk that a man had been brought into the place suffering from a probable fracture of the skull and concussion of the brain and that the persons who had conveyed him to the hospital were apparently unable to account for his injuries.

"Hurrying to the place, Detectives Love and Fitzgerald found that the injured man was John C. Slavin, a veteran of the musical comedy stage, and that he had been taken to the hospital by Winfield Liggett, a resident of the Lambs Club, aided by a taxicab chauffeur. They were told he had received his injuries in some unaccountable manner in front of the apartment home of John J. McGraw, manager and part owner



of the New York National League Baseball Club, who had been his companion at a rather boisterous session at the Lambs Club.

"Detective Love immediately went to McGraw's home, which is on the fifth floor of a large apartment house on the northwest corner of Broadway and 109th Street, and he was obliged to ring the bell vigorously before the baseball man could be awakened from his slumbers. When he was admitted to the apartment the detective perceived that the Giants' manager had a battered and swollen nose and a blackened eye."

It was a hazy story that McGraw, Liggett and the chauffeur, one William Meagan, told the police. McGraw and Liggett, who described himself as a retired naval officer, said they had spent a convivial evening with Slavin and, early in the morning, had gone to the Lambs Club, where McGraw became involved in a fight with a stranger. McGraw then left the club in the company of Liggett and Slavin, and hailed a cab for the ride uptown. When they arrived in front of McGraw's house, the driver said, his fares alighted, and after a friendly argument as to who should pay the fare, McGraw bade the others good-by and went into the house.

Liggett, who corroborated the driver, said that he turned to speak to Slavin at this point and found the actor lying on the sidewalk. He said he had not seen or heard Slavin fall. Neither, Meagan insisted, had he. They lifted Slavin into the cab, intending to take him home; but, concluding that he was badly injured, took him to the hospital instead. McGraw could say only that the last time he saw Slavin, the actor was standing with Liggett and the chauffeur.

Not until the next day was it learned that McGraw's opponent in the Lambs Club bout was William Boyd, an actor well known to the Broadway stage as leading man for Ethel Barrymore and Maude Adams. Questioned by the police, he said McGraw had attacked him when he objected to the use of strong language on McGraw's part in the presence of some women cleaners who were at work in the club, and that he had had to punish John badly in order to subdue him.

District Attorney Swann ordered an investigation by his office. So—this being during Prohibition—did James S. Shevlin, supervising enforcement agent in New York, when McGraw admitted having been drinking in the grill room of the club.

Gradually the story took on somewhat clearer outlines. The chauffeur

feur remembered McGraw's having pushed Liggett to the ground in front of the house, although he clung to his earlier statement that he had not seen Slavin fall and had no notion as to how he had been injured. McGraw said that in the fight at the club Boyd had despaired of knocking him out with his fists and had hit him over the head with a water carafe. He could recollect nothing that happened after that, he said, including his departure from the club and the ride home.

Swann talked of indictments and arrests. He talked so much that William J. Fallon, famed criminal lawyer and a friend of McGraw's, called on the District Attorney to go before the Grand Jury and seek an indictment in order that McGraw might be vindicated as quickly as possible. Or, Fallon said, if the District Attorney was unable to do this, "an investigation might be had before any city magistrate, openly and publicly, so that the whole truth of this occurrence may be known."

The District Attorney delayed taking action, possibly because, for a time, Slavin was in no condition to give evidence. But the prohibition agents and the Lambs moved swiftly. The agents, first having arrested an employee of the club whom they discovered trying to dispose of some liquor on the premises, got an indictment from a Federal Grand Jury against McGraw, charging him with "unlawfully, wilfully and knowingly possessing a bottle of whisky" in violation of the Volstead Law. The Lambs, in high dudgeon, expelled McGraw. He pleaded not guilty to the indictment and retaliated against the club by having some of the members' passes taken up at the Polo Grounds press gate the next time they were presented.

Meanwhile, some of the newspapers gleefully had printed McGraw's "ring record." The readers still were chuckling over that when McGraw added to it. On the night of September 18 Wilton Lackaye, actor and member of the Lambs, went to McGraw's home to "give him some friendly advice" and emerged with a broken ankle, suffered, he said, when McGraw hit him and knocked him down. That was one accusation McGraw didn't deny.

Slavin, recovering from his injuries, was prepared, according to his lawyer, Nathan Burkan, to tell his story to the District Attorney. But by that time Swann had lost interest in the case. Slavin then filed suit against McGraw for \$25,000 damages. This subsequently

was settled out of court. And so the exact story of what happened that Sunday morning never has been told.

The final chapters were happy ones for McGraw. He went to trial the following May before Justice Learned Hand in the United States District Court on the liquor charge and was acquitted by a jury that required only three minutes in which to reach its verdict. Three years later he was reinstated by the Lambs as a result of a petition signed by more than three hundred members.

Having resumed his place in the dugout as soon as his wounds had healed—he never again appeared on the coaching lines—McGraw sent the Giants into a late-season drive that so seriously threatened the league-leading Robins that it looked for a time as though the other clubs might yet have some use for Lee King's "megascopé." But they couldn't quite get up there, and when they lost a double header on September 27 the Robins, who were idle that day, eased themselves into the pennant.

Shortly after the end of the season McGraw and Jennings, whose friendship had flourished through the years, were reunited in baseball. On October 15 Hughie resigned as manager of the Tigers. Five days later McGraw announced that his old side kick had agreed to join the Giants as a coach. While everybody was wondering how McGraw was going to make room for him, with Evers and Cozy Dolan on the roster, the answer was given by the Cubs, who revealed that they had engaged Evers as their manager.

## XX ☉ THE BRIGHTEST ERA OPENS

**T**HE GIANTS HAD FINISHED second three years in a row . . . and at San Antonio in the spring of 1921 McGraw was driving his players hard, determined that this year they would win. Had he a feeling then that he was entering upon the brightest years of his career? That all the triumphs he had known before would be dwarfed by those that lay ahead of him? Possibly. Certainly, 1920 had been a bad year for him in many respects; and it is likely that, with characteristic optimism, he was looking forward to a brighter

time, feeling that a span of ill fortune had been passed over, however painfully.

There was a new man at third base that spring—Goldie Rapp, a veteran of the minor-league trails, up from St. Paul for his first fling in the major leagues. Goldie had left most of his speed in the minor-league towns. But he was a fair hitter and a sound workman-like ball player. McGraw was confident that he could work smoothly with Kelly, Frisch and Bancroft. The rest of the team was unchanged.

At Jackson, Tennessee, on the way north that spring, there was an incident that proved once more that McGraw never forgot an old grievance or forgave an old enemy—even if he had to drag him into a situation by the heels.

The Giants were playing the Senators on a diamond laid out within the infield of a county-fair race track, so that ground rules covering overthrows were agreed upon before the game. In the third inning Frisch scored from second base on a wild pitch. George McBride, managing the Senators, protested that he should be sent back to third. Bill Brennan, who, so far as anyone knew, still was chief of staff of the Southern League umpires, was working the Giants' spring games that year, as he had worked them the year before. He ruled that Frisch was entitled to score.

Clark Griffith, seated on the Senators' bench, rushed up to add his voice to that of his manager. McGraw hustled out to join in the argument.

"I'm not going to let any bush-league umpire working for McGraw put anything like that over on me," Griffith said, just as McGraw came up. "I'll take my team off the field first."

"Bush league!" McGraw yelled, thrusting his face almost into Griffith's. "Why the hell don't you find out what's going on before you start popping off? He was appointed a National League umpire last week."

"I don't care if he was," Griff said. "He's working for you now and I'm not going to stand for a raw decision like that. If he sticks to it, we'll leave the field and I'll call the series off."

"Leave the field! Why, you ——! You're lucky to be on the same field with the Giants! We're the drawing card in this series and you know it!"

Griff laughed mirthlessly.

"That's a hot one," he said. "Why, we'll outdraw you, and you know it."

"Where? In Washington?"

"Anywhere!"

Brennan... Frisch... McBride... the ball game... had been forgotten as they bellowed at each other.

"I always thought you were crazy," McGraw snapped. "Now I know it. You and Ban Johnson."

Griff reddened.

"You leave Ban Johnson out of this!" he said.

"I won't leave him out of it!" McGraw yelled. "He's a fat-headed ——! And you can tell him I said so!"

Griff turned to Brennan.

"Are you going to send Frisch back to third base?" he demanded. "No."

"All right," Griff said. "Then the game is over."

He strode from the field, his players at his heels, as the crowd hooted and McGraw and the Giants hurled taunts at them.

"I'll fix him," McGraw said.

He did. He wired to Judge Landis as soon as he reached the hotel, informing him of Griff's action and the forfeiture of the game to the Giants, adding that Griff had said he would abandon the remainder of the series, scheduled to take the teams into Washington. Landis promptly wired to Griff, fining him \$1,000 for forfeiting the game and ordering him to continue the series. Griff obeyed the order, of course.

Two weeks later, in New York, Joe Vila, an old friend of Johnson's, said to a reporter who had been with the Giants:

"Did you ever hear McGraw call Ban a ——?"

"Yes," the reporter said. "At Jackson, Tennessee, during an argument with Griffith the day Griff forfeited the game. To be precise, he called Ban a fat-headed —— and told Griff he could tell Ban."

"Well," Joe said, "Griff told him."

The Giants stepped off in front, dropped back to fourth, then moved up to second to challenge the Pirates, who had taken the lead. It soon became obvious that if McGraw was going to win the pennant he sought so eagerly, the Pirates were the ones he would have to beat. The champion Robins weren't good enough to repeat,

and none of the five other clubs had enough stuff to get them to the top. And so, as early as May, the Giants and the Pirates were straightened out for the long run to October 2.

McGraw was disappointed in Rapp. Goldie knew how to play third base, all right, since he had been doing it for years. The trouble was he had been doing it for too many years. And so McGraw began to look around.

In Cincinnati, Heinie Groh was holding out. McGraw had Heinie back in 1913 and had traded him to the Reds when he needed an experienced pitcher. In the years since then Groh had developed into the best third baseman in the league. Now McGraw wanted him back. This seemed to be a chance to get him, with Groh and Garry Herrmann at odds over the player's contract. McGraw made an offer for him—or, at least, sounded Herrmann out as to possibilities for a deal.

Herrmann, good friend of McGraw's though he was, was determined that Groh should play for the Reds, and wasn't going to let friendship stand in his way. He refused to talk business. Groh, learning of McGraw's designs on him, grew even more stubborn—and then, by way of crabbing the deal completely, announced that he didn't want to play in Cincinnati any longer and would be much obliged to Herrmann if he would trade or sell him to some other club. This touched off a lively row as the Cincinnati fans and newspapers joined in putting Heinie on the pan, and Herrmann screamed to high heaven that McGraw was tampering with his ball player.

McGraw promptly backed off. Groh, seeing that the jig was up, decided to play with the Reds after all, and applied for release from the suspension imposed upon him automatically when he had continued to hold out after the opening of the season. Landis reinstated him; but, taking official cognizance of the situation created by McGraw's overtures to Herrmann, ruled that Heinie must play out the season with the Reds.

Balked in that direction, McGraw turned to Philadelphia, where he encountered no difficulty unloading Rapp, Lee King and Lance Richbourg, a young first baseman he had found at the University of Florida two years before, for Johnny Rawlings and Casey Stengel. Rawlings was a second baseman, so McGraw posted him at that bag and switched Frisch to third. That—and one other transaction, also with the Philadelphia club—made the Giants. To

strengthen his outfield, McGraw sent Curtis Walker, who had been struggling in center field; Butch Henline, his third-string catcher, and a bundle of dough to the Phillies for Emil (Irish) Meusel. He put Meusel in left field, shunted Burns to center, and, with Young in right, had the best outfield on the circuit. For relief duty on the picket line he had Stengel and Bill Cunningham, whom he bought from Seattle.

Naturally, it took a little time to work the newcomers into the line-up. In consequence, the Giants were losing ground as they fought their way into August. The Pirates were taking a commanding lead in the race. McGraw, straining by day and fretting by night, saw the team that he believed was the best in the league falter and stumble. On the fifteenth of the month the Cardinals arrived for a four-game series—and took three of the four games.

That seemed to settle it. The Pirates, now seven and a half games in front, were moving into the Polo Grounds for a five-game series, opening in a double header on the nineteenth. Everyone took it for granted that they would virtually clinch the pennant in this series—everyone, that is, save McGraw.

After the last game with the Cardinals, McGraw kept the players in the club house long after they had dressed. He lashed them viciously. He pleaded with them. In one breath he called them a gutless crew. In the next he begged them to believe him when he said that the Pirates were overconfident and ready to be taken, and that the Giants had but to pull themselves together to win the pennant. He scored them for their mistakes and their doubts. He reminded them that the Yankees were going to win the American League pennant and that an all-New York series would be the richest prize ever offered in baseball. The moon was rising over the Harlem when, at last, he found that he had no more to say, and let the players go.

The Pirates were in a jubilant, carefree mood when they rolled into the Polo Grounds the next day. In their dugout before the game Charlie Grimm strummed a ukulele and Maranville and Cotton Tierney joined their voices with his in song or taunted the Giants—who, on their side of the field, listened grimly. Since that would be the last visit of the Pirates that year, the newspaper photographers were out in force, making pictures of them for use just before the

World Series. No players ever were more obliging. They posed individually and in groups. They did everything but stand on their heads—and they undoubtedly would have done that if the photographers had asked them to.

“Look at them!” McGraw snarled to his players. “Look at the clowns! Nobody ever had a softer touch than you fellows have today.”

Whether or not the players had believed him in the club house the night before, they believed him now. Suddenly they knew they could win—that, although they trailed by seven and a half games, six weeks of the season remained. If they could knock the Pirates off in this series, that World Series gold McGraw had been taking about would be theirs.

Nehf pitched the first game and won it. Douglas, at the top of his form, won the second. The next day there was no singing in the Pirates' dugout. The players were shaken, bewildered. George Gibson, their worried manager, tried to jolt them out of the fog into which they had been blasted. But it was no use. The Giants won again. Now they were hot. Nothing could stop them, and they knew it—and so did the Pirates. Douglas, quite overwhelmed by his success on the opening day, had disappeared, but his teammates scarcely missed him. They won the fourth game as the crowd, which had drifted off in recent weeks, believing they were lost, came rushing back. Nehf, pitching the fifth game before packed stands, won again. The Giants had swept the series. The Pirates, their confidence shattered, staggered over to Brooklyn. They lost a series to the Dodgers as the Giants swept on to capture the lead.

The Giants still had to go west to clinch the pennant on hostile ground. But that didn't bother them in the least. By this time it was as certain as anything could be that they were going to win the pennant. When they reached Pittsburgh the newspaper photographers wanted them to pose—for pictures to be used just before the World Series, of course.

“Get away!” the Giants said.

The photographers pleaded with them.

“Get away,” the Giants said, “before we start throwing bats at you.”

The photographers went to McGraw.

“Will you tell your players to pose for us?” they asked.



He shook his head, smiling.

"No," he said. "I appreciate what you're up against, and I could tell them to pose and they would. But look at it from my standpoint. They've got in into their heads that one of the reasons the Pirates blew up in New York is that they posed for the World Series pictures—and they are taking no chances. I know it's foolish, and so do you. But do you want me to upset them? For what? For a handful of pictures?"

"Well—"

"No," McGraw said. "Of course you don't."

The photographers left the field.

The Giants swung on their way, clinched the pennant and looked ahead to the World Series with the Yankees. Never before had New York been so stirred over a series. Never before had one meant so much to McGraw.

Mind, he had won only one, and that sixteen years before. This in itself was a challenge to him. And it was pointed up when one New York baseball writer, favoring the Yankees' chances in the series, wrote:

"So far as the Giants' strategy in the series is concerned, the Yankees should have no worries. John McGraw has won only one autumn classic in five tries and his first lieutenant, Hughie Jennings, was knocked off three times in a row (in 1907, 1908 and 1909) when he managed the Tigers. The only thing the Yankees apparently have to fear is that the law of averages will operate in the Giants' favor. Certainly the record of the Giants up to now isn't calculated to cause any alarm on the part of Miller Huggins."

That was but half of it. This was the other half:

For years—for as many years as there had been major-league baseball in New York—the Giants had dominated the town. This never had been more so than since the coming of McGraw. The Yankees had struggled along, neglected, at times almost forgotten, as the crowds had poured into the Polo Grounds, yelling for McGraw and for Matty and all the other heroes McGraw had put into Giant uniforms. And then, as Babe Ruth came on the scene, there had been a change. In two seasons New York had become an American League stronghold.

Fans who never had seen the Yankees play before flocked to see the Babe. New fans—new Yankee fans—were made every time the Babe

hit a ball into the stands. Even as the Giants rushed up from the rear to smash the Pirates, wrest the lead from them, and win the pennant, the Yankees continued to get the big play at the turnstile and in the newspapers. The older fans were faithful to the Giants. But they were outnumbered by those whose imagination had been fired by the Babe and who swore allegiance to the Yankees. This was reflected in the newspapers, most of the first-string baseball writers being assigned to the Yankees.

It is understandable that this should have set badly with McGraw. For the first time since his rise to greatness as a baseball figure he was overshadowed—and in New York, at that. It galled him to hear the crowds yell for Ruth, where once they had yelled so loudly for him. It was plain that, in his mind, the impending series would be a struggle not between him and Huggins but between him and Ruth. It was so plain that the baseball writers seized upon it and played it up. What, they wondered, under appropriate headlines, would happen when the master mind of the Giants had to deal with the Babe in a pinch?

One of them—Arthur Robinson of the *American*—who regularly covered the Yankees, but had made the last western trip with the Giants to discover, in his own words, how the other half lived, put the question to McGraw directly on the eve of the series.

“How will you pitch to the Babe, Mac?” he asked.

McGraw bristled.

“Why don’t you ask Ruth?” he countered. “He can tell you as well as I can. The way we did in exhibition games when he was with the Red Sox. But don’t ask him how he hit against us. He might not like it.”

Robinson was persistent.

“But he does worry you, doesn’t he?” he asked.

“Why should he worry me?” McGraw demanded. “Why all the excitement about Ruth? We’ve been pitching all along to a better hitter than Ruth ever will be.”

“You mean ——?”

“Hornsby,” McGraw snapped. “He’s a 3-to-1 better hitter than Ruth.”

McGraw didn’t mean that, of course—for, as great a hitter as Hornsby was, no one ever was three times as good as Ruth. But it was McGraw’s way of seeming to brush Ruth off at a time when

everyone knew that the Babe was very much on his mind. And yet it was so that, of all the managers with whom he had to contend, the Babe had most to fear from McGraw, who had learned in the spring of 1919 that he could be held in check by soft stuff built around a low curve ball on the inside.

The series got under way with Douglas pitching against Carl Mays. Shuffling Phil was good that day, but Mays was superb, shutting the Giants out with five hits as the Yankees won, 3 to 0. In the second game Nehf was hooked up with Waite Hoyt. They put on a thrilling duel, Nehf yielding three hits and Hoyt two. But three Giant errors decided the game, and again the Yankees won by a score of 3 to 0.

Now, in the Giants' club house, after the reporters had left and McGraw had the players to himself, there was a repetition of the scene that had taken place the night he had browbeaten the Giants into believing they could whip the Pirates. He told them that, although no team that lost the first two games of a World Series ever had come on to win, they could do it. He berated them for having lost a well-pitched game by Nehf that afternoon. He stressed the fact that the new rule, inaugurated the year before—the series to be decided by five victories in nine games, instead of four in seven—was to their advantage, since it gave them added time in which to recover from the slump into which they had fallen. That's what he called it, a slump. Giving no credit to Mays and Hoyt for their splendid pitching, he hammered at the Giants for their weakness at the plate.

It was a grimly determined Giant team that the Yankees faced in the third game. Toney started against Bob Shawkey. In the third inning the Yankees tore into Toney, battered him out of the box, and scored four runs. It looked for a moment like the finish as the Giants reeled under the blows of Murderers' Row. But, seemingly hopelessly beaten, they lashed back at Shawkey in their half of the inning, drove him to cover, and counted four times to tie the score. Jack Quinn, who had relieved Shawkey, got along famously until the seventh inning. Then the Giants piled into him, kept right on against Rip Collins, his successor, and rang up eight runs. Jess Barnes, who had taken over the Giants' pitching when Toney was toppled, was scored upon only in the eighth inning—and then only

once. The Giants also scored a run in that inning. The final count was 13 to 5.

The Giants, rallying late behind Douglas in the fourth game, beat Mays to even the series. Then they carried on to win in eight games. Nehf outpointed Hoyt, 1 to 0, in the final game. An error by Roger Peckinpaugh, the Yankee short stop, permitted the Giants to score the only run of the game in the first inning. A dazzling double play, Rawlings to Kelly to Frisch, put the crusher on a Yankee attack in the ninth.

That night, in the Giants' suite in the Waldorf, McGraw and Stoneham were hosts at a celebration that never will be forgotten by those who attended it—including one Giant player who never had been known to take a drink before, but was carried out, stiff as a board, along about five o'clock of the morning after. It was one of the great nights of McGraw's life. He hadn't completely conquered Ruth. The Babe, forced out by an arm injury in the fifth game and appearing thereafter only as a pinch hitter in the eighth, had led the Yankees in batting with an average of .313. But McGraw had seen the big guy go down on strikes eight times as the Giant pitchers held him to a single home run, made off Douglas in the fourth game. And he had conquered the Yankees after spotting them the first two games—and once more the Giants ruled the town.

And so there were hams and chickens and turkeys for the guests that night—or steaks for those who wanted them. And rye and Scotch and gin and champagne. Little Jimmy Flynn, a tenor much fancied by the baseball and prize-fight mob, and a great favorite with McGraw, sang. So did Frank Belcher, once a basso with the famed San Francisco Minstrels and a regular companion of McGraw's, who was partial to "Asleep In the Deep" and "I'm Off to Philadelphia In The Morning." So, too, did Lieutenant Gitz-Rice, whose "Dear Old Pal Of Mine," composed by him in the trenches during the World War and first sung there to other soldiers, was sung now by him to his own accompaniment on the piano.

Someone had clipped the headlines telling of the Giants' victories from the evening newspapers and pasted them across the mirrors in all the rooms of the suite. Endless toasts were drunk to McGraw. The sun was high over Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fourth Street as the last of the guests emerged and tottered homeward.

New laurels were being tossed at McGraw in the wake of that

stirring victory. His personal sense of satisfaction was great. But he was moving too briskly then to allow either added glory or personal pride to slow him down. He was looking ahead to another year—and the years beyond that. And so, at the league meetings in New York in December, he grabbed most of the headlines with two deals.

Although Frisch had played brilliantly at third base and Rawlings was steady at second base and had been a hero in the World Series, McGraw knew his infield would be stronger with Frisch at second and Groh at third. Compelled to cancel his negotiations for Groh in June, he had been biding his time. Now, with the heat off Heinie, he got him in exchange for Burns and Mike Gonzales.

Parting with Burns wasn't easy for him. George was one of the few players for whom he ever had indicated a warm personal regard. He had taken him as a raw busher and guided him in his development into what Bill McGeehan had called the almost perfect outfielder. But George was slipping now, however slightly, and since McGraw needed Groh and Cincinnati wanted Burns, the veteran had to go.

Gonzales had caught few games that year, having done most of his chores in batting practice or in the bull pen. McGraw felt that he could afford to give him up easily. Yet there was a curious twist to that deal. When the Reds asked for waivers on Mike and, having got them, sent him to St. Paul, McGraw said:

"I was surprised that Gonzales got out of the league, since there isn't a better receiver on any club, and I was willing to let him go only because I had Snyder and Smith. When I saw the request for waivers, I was going to put in a claim for him, but I was afraid everybody would say there was something phoney about the whole business."

The other transaction that created wide interest was the purchase of Jimmy O'Connell from the San Francisco club for \$75,000, at that time the highest price ever paid for a minor-league ball player. O'Connell, born in Sacramento and a graduate of Santa Clara College, was twenty-one years old and the most popular player in the Coast League. Playing first base and the outfield for the Seals that year, he had hit .337. Since it was only his second year in the league, McGraw was of the opinion he needed more schooling, and arranged

to leave him in San Francisco through 1922, giving instructions to have him played in the outfield exclusively.

Those details having been attended to, McGraw was ready to take a rest. He and Mrs. McGraw sailed for Cuba a few days later.

## XXI ⊗ A CROWDED YEAR

**M**CGRAW WAS A COMPLETELY happy man at San Antonio in the spring of 1922. Behind him lay a pleasant winter in Havana: watching the horses run . . . and having a good bet on many a winner; hearing the pleasant whir of the wheels spinning and the dice clicking in the Casino; strolling in the sun on the beach at La Playa; giving . . . or attending . . . parties at the Biltmore or the Nacional or the Country Club. Ahead of him lay another season . . . and in that camp at San Antonio he had the champions of the world.

Years later he was to say that the greatest team he ever managed was that which had won in 1905. Perhaps it was. But there were many who would disagree with him, and say that he only thought so because he was young in 1905 and never before had known the thrill of managing a world championship team. They would say that this team of 1922 was the greatest he ever had. He would shake his head at that and say no, that the team of 1905, with Matty and McGinnity and Bresnahan and the others, topped any team he had known. But that spring of 1922 at San Antonio he knew he had something.

It was, in his judgment, an even stronger team than it had been the year before, when it had overhauled the Pirates and gone on to beat the Yankees in the series. The acquisition of Groh made it possible for him to move Frisch back to second. That—with no disrespect to Rawlings—gave the Giants a tighter inner defense. Burns, long the wheel horse of the outfield, might be missed, but he didn't think so. He had young Ralph Shinnery, up from Milwaukee, to take over that spot, and, to support Shinnery if necessary, he had Stengel and Cunningham. There wasn't a catcher in baseball better than Snyder—and Snyder wasn't much better than Smith. And there wasn't anything wrong with a pitching staff that included Nehf, Douglas, Ryan, Jess and Virgil Barnes, Toney, and Claude Jonnard.

The players felt that way about it, too. They had the feel of

champions. They got in shape early, hammered their way up through the South in a series of exhibition games, mostly with the Red Sox, and moved into Memphis for the usual week-end stand.

Kid Elberfeld, who managed the Little Rock club of the Southern League, called on McGraw.

"I got a young fellow on my ball club you might be interested in, Mac," the Kid said.

McGraw was interested. He knew the Tobasco Kid didn't tout stiff.

"Who is he?" he asked.

"A boy named Jackson. Comes from right over here in Arkansas—town called Waldo, across the river. I had him last year. He didn't hit much, but he'll hit better as he goes along. He has a lot of power for a skinny kid. And he can hound the ball around short stop—and you never saw a better arm, Mac."

"He sounds all right."

"He's better than that," the Kid said. "Have somebody watch him this year. If he goes good and you want him, you got first call on him."

They had a couple of drinks, and then the Kid, restless as always, started out.

"Don't forget the name," he said, at the door. "Jackson."

"I won't, Kid," McGraw said. "Much obliged."

A little later Tom Watkins, owner of the Memphis club, McGraw's friend for many years, and his host at the Tennessee Club whenever the Giants were in town, came in. He poured himself a drink.

"There's a fellow in this town you ought to get, Mac," he said.

McGraw's personal scouting system was at work again.

"Yes?" McGraw asked. "Who's that?"

"Fellow by the name of Terry. A big left-handed pitcher, a good hitter and a good all-round ball player. He used to pitch for Shreveport. He was one of the best pitchers in this league till he quit."

"What did he quit for?"

"Oh," Watkins said, "he was married and had a kid or a couple of kids, I forget which. Anyway, he wanted to stay home. So he got a year-round job with the Standard Oil Company and he pitches for their ball club, the Polarines. When he isn't pitching he plays first

base. He's the best hitter on the ball club. Big, swell-looking fellow. You might be able to use him."

"Where?"

Watkins shrugged.

"You can't tell," he said. "You might be able to do a lot with a fellow like that—if you can get him."

"Is he hard to get?"

"He might be," Watkins said. "He's a hard-headed young man. Anyway, if you'd like to talk to him, I'll have him come up to see you."

"Fine. Have him come up tomorrow."

McGraw was in his room the next morning when there was a knock at his door.

"Come in," he said.

A young fellow walked in—big, broad-shouldered, round-faced, dark-haired, serious-looking.

"I'm Bill Terry," he said.

"Oh, yes," McGraw said.

He noted the easy grace with which Terry moved, the size of his hands, the strength of his grip.

"They tell me you're quite a ball player," he said.

"They tell me the same thing," Terry said. "I don't know whether to believe them or not."

McGraw smiled.

"How'd you like to come to New York with me?" he asked.

"What for?"

"Well, to play with the Giants, maybe."

"For how much?"

McGraw's smile faded. He looked at Terry sharply.

"Do you understand what I'm offering you?" he asked. "I'm offering you a chance to play with the Giants—if you're good enough."

Terry took a cigar out of the breast pocket of his coat and lighted it.

"Excuse me if I don't fall all over myself," he said. "But the Giants don't mean anything to me unless you can make it worth my while. I've got to have a contract with the Giants and for more dough—much more dough—than I'm making around here."

McGraw burned a little. No busher ever had talked that way to him before.



"Well," he said, "if that's the way you feel about it—"

"I'll tell you just how I feel about it, Mr. McGraw," Terry said, "because I don't want you to misunderstand me and think I'm just a swell-headed clown. I'm not. But I'm doing all right here. I quit the Southern League because I got tired of tramping around the country with a minor-league ball club, and I was married and had a baby and wanted to settle down some place. I came here and I got a job. I have a nice home and I'm in no hurry to leave either my job or my home. If I can make much more money going to New York, I'll go. But you can't get me excited just by talking to me about the Giants. As I told you before, the Giants don't mean anything to me."

"Well—"

"And remember this: I didn't come up here looking for a job. I came only because Tom Watkins said you wanted to talk to me."

McGraw, strictly on the defensive, fell into a figurative clinch.

"Well," he said, "there's no hurry about it. I'll think it over and let you know later."

Terry got up and, smiling, extended his hand.

"It was nice to have met you, Mr. McGraw," he said. "If you want to make me an offer, you can reach me in care of the Standard Oil Company."

"All right," McGraw said. "Good-by."

In spite of himself, he was bound to admire Terry for his forthrightness. For a split second he was tempted to call him back, but he decided against it. He would wait until he reached New York.

The Giants hit the road for New York, opened the season, lost a few games, then picked up speed and smashed into the lead on April 23. Now the team was clicking. Shiners, quickly achieving a major-league stride, was hitting over .300. The infield already was tagged as the best in baseball.

Then a blow fell upon the team. In a game in Philadelphia, Shiners was hit in the head by a ball pitched by Columbia George Smith. Rushed to a hospital, he was found to be suffering from a severe injury—so severe the doctors feared his sight would be permanently impaired. McGraw, raging, accused Smith of having deliberately beamed the youngster, whereupon Smith laughed in his face.

Stengel and Cunningham, alternating in center field, closed the gap caused by the felling of Shinners. The Giants moved on.

One day in New York, McGraw wired to Terry, offering him a contract for \$5,000 and stipulating that, if he were sent to a minor-league club, the Giants would hold an option on him. Terry accepted, and a few days later reported at the Polo Grounds.

"Work out for a few days," McGraw said, "and then I'll look at you."

After a few days of pitching to the hitters in batting practice, Terry was ready for a trial. McGraw watched him as he wheeled fast balls and curves at Snyder. Now it was his turn—his chance to square things for that interview in Memphis.

"Is that all you've got?" he asked.

"Yes," Bill admitted.

McGraw nodded.

"Well," he said, "you can hit, anyway. I was watching you from the club house window this morning. . . . I'll tell you what you do: You buy yourself a first baseman's mitt and work out there for a few days. If you don't spike yourself too badly, I'll send you out to George Whitted in Toledo and we'll see if he can make a first baseman out of you."

He walked away. Terry stood there, discomfited, for a moment, then walked slowly to the club house. He never was to forget that moment—never, even when he was rated as the top first baseman in the National League and one of the great hitters of the game, to feel other than that McGraw hadn't given him a fair trial as a pitcher. . . . A few days later he was on his way to Toledo.

Shinners, apparently having recovered from his head injury, returned to the Giants. But he hadn't recovered completely—nor would he, ever. He couldn't hit, and he was uncertain in the outfield. He complained of pains in his head now and then, or would brush his hands across his eyes. McGraw had to take him out of the line-up.

The Phillies came to the Polo Grounds. Smith was pitching, and Shinners watched him from the bull pen. Smith was knocked out of the box. As he trudged toward the club house, Shinners got up from the bull pen bench and walked slowly to meet him. McGraw, sensing what was coming, rushed out of the dugout, through the exit leading

under the stand, and emerged, breathless but belligerent, through the gate in right field that a startled cop had opened for him at his command. He arrived just as the players met.

"Some of the fellows on your ball club tell me you bragged about hitting me in the head," Shinners said.

Smith, never lacking for courage, sneered at him.

"What about it?" he asked.

"Did you hit me on purpose?"

Whether he did or not, George wasn't going to evade a challenge like that.

"Yes," he said. "I did."

"Why, you dirty ——!" McGraw yelled, rushing at him.

But Shinners beat him to it. He spun Smith with a smash on the jaw. Smith struck back at him, but he closed in and landed again. Smith went down. Shinners hurled himself on top of him, and they hammered at each other on the ground. Players, umpires, policemen, and fans streamed across the field to break up the fight. McGraw, trying to kick Smith but not making a very good job of it because of the danger of kicking Shinners instead, was dragged away from the struggling pair. The combatants finally separated, were hauled off to the club house. McGraw, still seething, returned to the dugout.

Shinners never regained major-league form, and some weeks later McGraw regretfully released him to Toledo.

The pitching lagged as July came on. It picked up again in a week or so. But McGraw had seen enough to know that it wasn't as sound as he had thought. The Cardinals, managed by Branch Rickey, were pressing the Giants for the lead, and might win unless something was done to strengthen the Giants' pitching.

There was a fellow in Boston that McGraw wanted. His name was Hughie McQuillan. McGraw knew he was a better pitcher than the averages indicated. The Braves had been dropping steadily through the league in the last six or seven years. Now they were bumping along on the bottom, or close to it—and that wasn't the sort of ball club for which McQuillan could pitch. He wasn't gaited that way, being easy-going. He could pitch with the best in the league when the chips were down, but he also could lose interest when his club wasn't going anywhere. Good-looking, extremely likable, and a native of New York, he would be a popular figure at the Polo Grounds.

"I hear he's no early-to-bed, early-to-rise fellow," McGraw told

Stoneham. "But I'll be able to handle him. He can win for us, Charlie. He could be the difference between the pennant and second place."

"Get him," Stoneham said.

It was reported the Giants paid \$100,000 for him. The deal was severely criticized. In St. Louis, McGraw was charged with buying the pennant. In Boston, both he and his friend, George Washington Grant, who owned the Braves, were roundly panned for further wrecking the Boston club to strengthen New York. Even in New York one writer commented:

"The Giants have taken an unfair advantage of the Cardinals, who are in no position financially to compete with them. Up to now, the pennant race was a sporting affair but McGraw has attempted to swing it his way with a check for \$100,000. If, with the help of McQuillan's pitching, the Giants win the pennant, there will be a blot on it."

McGraw was as impervious to criticism as he generally was. Let them holler. He had McQuillan. Now he had no doubt he would win the pennant. He knew, too, that by that time the excitement over the purchase of McQuillan would have died down, and there would be no talk about an unfair advantage or a blot on the pennant.

Meanwhile, Douglas had become a problem. McGraw hired detectives to trail him, but gave that up because Doug always was shrewd enough to know when he was being followed. One morning in Philadelphia he purposely led his shadow on a long walk that started and ended at the hotel. Having entered the hotel on his return, he peered out the door and saw the detective wearily seat himself on the steps of a house across the street. He walked over to him, seized him roughly by the lapels of his coat, and dragged him to his feet.

"I was just having fun with you this morning," he said, sternly, "but if I ever catch you dogging me around again, I'll stomp you right through the sidewalk—and you can tell McGraw what I said. Now git the hell out of here!"

He aimed a kick at the frightened detective, cursed when he missed, and then stalked back into the hotel.

McGraw decided, after that, there was only one thing to do—to hire a keeper for Doug as, some years ago, he had hired one for

Bugs Raymond. Doug was inclined to rebel at first. But when he met his keeper, he was mollified. The keeper's name was O'Brien, and Doug liked him immediately. When the Giants were in New York, and Doug's wife and two small daughters were in town, O'Brien would pick him up at his apartment in the morning, take him to the Polo Grounds, and deliver him to his wife after the game. If Doug's family wasn't in town, O'Brien lived with him at a hotel. On the road they were inseparable, rooming together, eating together, going together for walks at night or, perhaps, to a movie. Doug developed such a fondness for O'Brien that he remained on his good behavior simply because he didn't want to do anything to embarrass him. His struggle to keep from imbibing overmuch was lightened by the thoughtfulness of his keeper. O'Brien, who had been around considerably, knew the better speakeasies in every town and, of an evening, he would take Doug in for a couple of beers on the way back from a walk or a picture show.

One night in Pittsburgh they somehow became separated in the crowd coming out of a theater. O'Brien was greatly upset, fearing that Doug, finding himself alone, would go on a bender. But he needn't have been. Doug met Will Wedge of the *Sun* a block from the hotel.

"Have you seen that feller that goes around with me?" he asked, anxiously.

"No," Will said.

"Well, I don't want to go back without him because Mac might see me and then he'd get in trouble. You go and look in the lobby, and if he's there, tell him I'll wait here for him."

Wedge found O'Brien nervously scanning the lobby.

"Looking for Doug?" he asked.

"Yes, have you seen him?"

"He's waiting for you on the other side of Forbes Street a block below here," Will said.

O'Brien thanked him and hurried out. A few minutes later he and Doug sauntered into the hotel together, got their key, and went up to their room.

It was a good arrangement. Doug, in better shape than he'd known in a long time, was winning consistently and shoving the Giants steadily closer to the pennant. It was, indeed, too good to last. McGraw, always suspicious of Doug, noting the friendliness

between him and O'Brien, and interpreting it as evidence that O'Brien was being too lenient with Doug and therefore wasn't to be trusted either, dismissed O'Brien and engaged Jess Burkett as the pitcher's keeper.

Burkett, once a great hitter and, for many years after that, a manager in the Eastern League, had done considerable scouting for the Giants, and had McGraw's implicit confidence. Moreover, he had known Doug for a long time. Doug liked him and McGraw believed he had made a sound move. But he hadn't. Doug, resenting the discharge of his pal O'Brien, brooded over it until he reached the breaking point. When that happened, he slipped out of Burkett's sight in New York one night.

Four days later he appeared, shaken and disheveled, in the club house at the Polo Grounds. McGraw pounced on him, shoved him into his office, slammed the door behind him, and gave him a twenty-minute tongue lashing that, in spite of the closed door, could be heard by the players dressing for the game. At last the door opened. Douglas shuffled through it toward the locker room.

"Don't bother to dress!" McGraw stormed. "Go home and sleep it off, you big bum! But you be here tomorrow or I'll fix you so you'll never pitch again!"

Weary, beaten, in the grip of a dreadful hangover, Doug slumped on a bench in the locker room. McGraw and the players left him there when they went out to the field. Shortly afterward, when Ed Mackall, the Negro trainer, returned to the club house, Doug was gone.

He was there on time the next morning, however, looking refreshed after a night's sleep. He pitched a few days later, was in good spirits again, and submitted cheerfully to the guardianship of Burkett—who, having been subjected to a terrific verbal licking by McGraw for having allowed Doug to get away from him, was determined that nothing of the sort should happen again. There seemed to be—indeed, there was—no danger that it would.

When the Giants left for Pittsburgh a few nights after Doug's return—it was, to be exact, on August 15—Doug walked through the Pennsylvania Station with one of the baseball writers, Burkett trailing at his heels.

"I been a sucker," Doug said, "but not any more. That vacation I took last week was the last one. You wait and see. I been doing

pretty good this year, taking care of myself most of the time and saving my money. I got a house now down in Birmingham. I bought a lot of things for my wife and kids. And look what I bought for Doug.”

He held out his left hand. A diamond ring sparkled on the middle finger.

“I had diamonds before,” he said, “but I always was buying ’em on time and had to give ’em back because something would happen and I couldn’t keep up the payments. This is the first one I ever owned. No, sir, you don’t have to worry about Doug no more.”

Shortly before noon the next day, in the Schenley Hotel, Jim Tierney, the secretary, called all the newspapermen to McGraw’s suite. There they found McGraw staring glumly out a window. At the desk in the living room was the grim figure of Judge Landis.

“Gentlemen,” the Judge said solemnly, “I have just placed the name of Phil Douglas on the permanent ineligible list.”

The newspapermen stared at him, unbelieving, for a moment, then broke into a torrent of questions.

“Why? What happened? What did he do?”

They turned, bewildered, to McGraw.

“Ask the Judge,” he said.

The Judge picked up a letter from the desk and held it out to them.

“I called Douglas in and asked him if he had written this,” he said. “He confessed that he had. . . . There was nothing else for me to do.”

The letter was on a single sheet of the New York club’s stationery. It was in Doug’s unmistakable ragged handwriting. It had been written that day in the club house when McGraw and the players had left him alone in the locker room. It was addressed to Leslie Mann, an outfielder with the Cardinals, who then were pressing the Giants for the lead. It informed Mann that if the Cardinal players would make it worth his while, he would go fishing for the rest of the year, thus clearing their way to the pennant.

The loss of Douglas came as a shock, of course. No team, however strong, could lose a pitcher of his caliber and not feel it. But McGraw, wasting no time in regrets, plunged ahead. His players, taking the cue from him, did the same. And then, almost as if to

make up to them for the passing of Douglas, Jack Scott showed up at the Polo Grounds.

Scott was a tobacco farmer from Ridgeway, North Carolina. A big right-handed pitcher, he had been with the Braves for four years and had a fair record with a poor ball club. In the fall of 1921 he had been traded to the Reds. Then he was assailed by misfortune. The barns in which he had stored his crops burned—and his crops had not been insured. His pitching arm was injured in some fashion, and the Reds released him in May. He went home to try to recoup his fortunes in the fields. But there was a tobacco price war on, and by this time most of his neighbors were as badly off as himself.

Big, slow-moving, slow-thinking, he refused to give up hope. Two months out of baseball—two months in which, at least, he hadn't put any strain on his injured arm by trying desperately to pitch—had helped him, he believed. He was sure that if he could get a trial with another big-league club he could make a job for himself.

"McGraw was the one I thought of, right from the beginning," he said. "I didn't know him to speak to, but I knew that, of all the managers, he was the one who would be most likely to give me a chance. I had heard how much he had done for other ball players, and I knew he would gamble on a fellow like me, where the other managers wouldn't."

With almost the last money he had in the world, he paid his fare from Ridgeway to New York and walked in on McGraw in the club house one day.

"I believe I can pitch again, Mr. McGraw," he said. "I ain't asking much. I'd just like to stay around here and work out for a while."

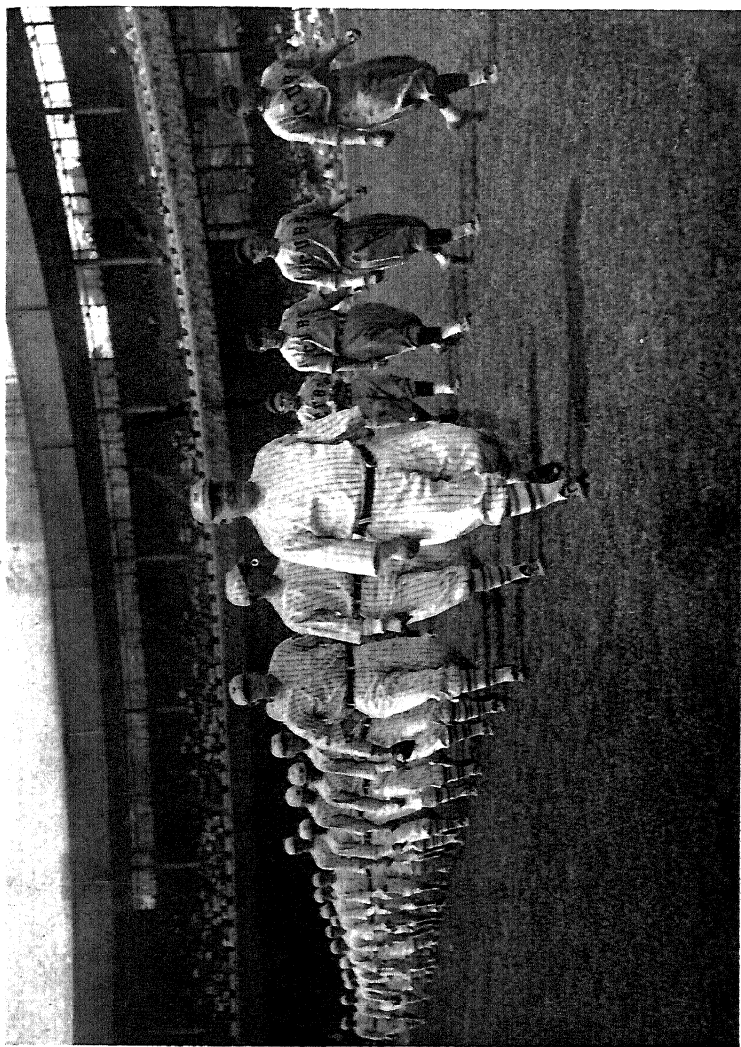
"But we're going on the road tomorrow," McGraw said.

"I know you are. But you just let me stay here and I'll get somebody to work with me. By the time you come back, I'll show you something. And, if you're satisfied, I'll sign with you for whatever you want to give me."

McGraw looked at the big fellow seated across the desk from him. He was impressed by his earnestness.

"All right," he said. "You're on. Tell Mackall to give you a uniform. Just don't get in the Yankees' way when they move in tomorrow. And"—smiling—"if your arm comes back, don't sign with the Yanks. I may want you to pitch against them when we get into the series, because it looks as though they're going to win, too."





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AN OPENING DAY AT THE POLO GROUNDS



© International Newsreel

MCCRAW WITH DAVE BANCROFT (*left*) AND HUGH JENNINGS (*right*)

"I won't sign with anybody but you," Scott said. "I'm much obliged to you, Mr. McGraw."

He got up and started for the door.

"Wait a minute," McGraw said. "Do you need any money?"

"Well—" The big fellow hesitated.

"Here," McGraw said. "Here's enough to keep you going until we get back."

"I won't forget this," Scott said, putting the money in his pocket. "I'll pay you back—and I'll pay you back in that pitching box, too. You wait and see."

Running around the park every morning to get his legs in shape, pitching to anyone he could get to catch him—including the club house boys or Stevens' hustlers—he worked tirelessly. The Yankees, sharing the Polo Grounds with the Giants, used to see him toiling along the fringes of the field, but paid little or no attention to him. So far as they were concerned, he was just another sore-arm pitcher engaged in the hopeless task of trying to rehabilitate himself. Had they known the part he was to play in their immediate future they wouldn't have felt so sorry for him. They would have felt sorry, indeed, for themselves.

By the time the Giants returned, Scott was ready. McGraw looked at him, believed in him . . . and signed him. He used him as a relief pitcher a few times, and was privately delighted with what he saw. Cagily, he said nothing about this to anyone—not even to Scott. Perhaps even then he had a plan.

He might have felt—he had good reason to—that his troubles were over. The team was winning, knocking off the Cardinals, the Pirates, and the Reds, who were their leading challengers. Douglas had failed him, but he had McQuillan, who, as he had predicted, was a winning pitcher and a new hero with Polo Grounds fans. Nehf was the best left-hander in the league and a sure money pitcher, starting practically every important series—and sometimes finishing it, too. His infield was the best. In right field, Young was terrific. Meusel continued to follow a brisk pace in left. Cunningham and Stengel were alternating in center. Moreover, he was storing up strength for the future. In Toledo, Terry was hitting well over .300, and George Whitted reported that he was making steady progress as a first baseman. In Little Rock the boy Jackson was the talk of the Southern League at short stop and was hitting .280.

He had few problems, none of them serious. McQuillan and Jess Barnes had teamed up and were going places by candlelight, and he knew it and would ride them in the club house once in a while. Gallagher and Shean, he called them, after the famous vaudeville team of the time.

"Look at them!" he would snarl, if the Giants had lost. "Look at them! Gallagher and Shean!"

It may have been that they hadn't been in the ball game that day, but the sight of them, hurrying through their showers, hurrying to dress, would infuriate him, and he would vent his anger on them. Or on Earl Smith.

"He's an anarchist!" McGraw would say. "A ——— anarchist, with no respect for law and order!"

He would add that Smith was the dumbest catcher he ever saw—and go on from there. This would amuse the hard-boiled Smith, who would grin at him or, like as not, needle him into a greater rage. One day when McGraw was in the middle of his Gallagher and Shean routine, holding McQuillan and Barnes up to the scorn of the other players, Smith, who had dressed and was waiting for Virgil Barnes, chirped:

"Come on, Little Shean, hurry up."

McGraw forgot all about McQuillan and the elder Barnes. He turned his fire on Smith.

"Why, you lousy ———!" he yelled. "You ———!"

Smith wagged his head.

"Tst, tst, tst," he said, mildly.

The other players put their heads in their lockers so McGraw wouldn't see them laughing. Purple with anger, he reviled Smith for twenty minutes, during which none of the players dared to leave. Finally running out of ideas, he yelled:

"I never saw a ——— from Arkansas that was any good yet!"

And he stamped off to his office.

But those—the peccadillos of McQuillan and Barnes, the impudence of Smith—were minor irritations, forgotten by him almost as soon as he left the club house. The Giants were winning, another pennant was in sight—almost within his grasp. And he probably was as near to contentment as he ever would be in his life. When the Giants were in New York he spent most of his evenings at his

new home in Pelham with Mrs. McGraw and a few guests, or at the New York Athletic Club's place at Travers Island, nearby. On the road there were friends in every town and pleasant places to visit when the ball game was over.

One of his favorite spots was Cincinnati. There was the Peruvian Club or Curly's place, out on the Delhi Turnpike, or, best of all, the Laughrey Club. He would get the newspapermen traveling with the team together when they had finished their stories and take them out there, where Garry Herrmann would be waiting for him. There would be dinner in the club house and, later, beer at an outdoor bar in a grove at the edge of the Ohio River. And along about midnight there would be a charcoal fire burning in a grill, and waiters would serve broiled sausages and Limburger cheese and rye bread, and everybody would be singing or telling stories. And, although he was not much of a singer, there were nights when he would join in, raising his voice loudly, but slurring over the words because he didn't know them.

Always a soft touch for anyone in the need of money—with special emphasis on broken-down ball players, actors, prize fighters, jockeys and newspapermen—he never was a softer touch than he was that summer. They lay in wait for him wherever he went, and none of them was disappointed.

Hans Lobert, who had come back to the Giants that year, presumably as a coach but actually as a companion for McGraw, said one night:

"No one would believe me if I told them how much money he gives away. But, on the level, it's nothing for him to hand out \$200 and \$300 a day. I try to keep a lot of these fellows away from him, but it looks to me as if he goes out of his way to meet them."

The Giants clinched the pennant on September 25. The Yankees had won again, and, having been defeated by the Giants in the World Series the year before, were primed for vengeance as the crowds stormed the Polo Grounds for the second series on the subway. But they met a cocky, confident Giant crew, who believed—because McGraw had told them so—that this time the Yankees would be easier than before.

Nehf started the first game against Joe Bush, and was trailing, 2 to 0, when he was removed for a pinch hitter in the eighth inning.

But in that inning the Giants made three runs and won the game. The second game was called on account of darkness by Umpire George Hildebrand with the score tied at 3-3 at the end of the tenth inning, with Jess Barnes pitching for the Giants and Bob Shawkey for the Yankees. With the third game coming up, McGraw was ready to gamble.

"Scott is my pitcher," he told reporters in the club house after the second game.

They scarcely could believe him. Scott? The cast-off? The fellow who couldn't pitch up an alley when the Reds let him go? They didn't say anything like that to McGraw, but he knew what was in their minds.

"Scott," he said again, as a tardy reporter came in, asking who would pitch the next day.

It is possible that no triumph he ever achieved gave him greater satisfaction than the victory that Scott hung up the following day. Throwing nothing but fast balls and keeping them high—even to Ruth, who could murder fast balls and to whom the other Giant pitchers had been feeding curve balls low and on the inside—Jack shut the Yankees out with four hits. The Giants, pegging away at Waite Hoyt and Sam Jones, won by a score of 3 to 0.

If there was an extra high note of revelry at McGraw's party in the old Waldorf that night—and there was—it was understandable. He could sing and chortle and slap his friends on the back and tell the waiters to lug in another case of bootleg champagne that night. He had picked a pitcher off the scrap heap and given him another chance—had staked him . . . and watched over him and been patient with him . . . and had started him in a World Series game and seen him hang up a shut-out against the Yankees.

The Yankees weren't through yet. They hammered back at McQuillan in the first inning the next day and made two runs—and would have made more if Cunningham hadn't gone to the club house steps to pull down a towering smash by Ruth. But McQuillan hung in there gamely and got better as he went along. The Giants won, and now the Yankees were reeling. And then Nehf beat Bush in the fifth game—and the Giants were champions of the world again.

This time McGraw's triumph had been complete, as the Giant pitchers not only subdued the Babe but humiliated him. In seventeen

times at bat, Ruth made only two hits for an average of .118, and didn't come even close to making a home run.

## XXII ⊗ THREE PENNANTS IN A ROW

**J**IMMY O'CONNELL REPORTED at San Antonio in the spring of 1923 after another rousing season in the Coast League, when he had hit .335 and been schooled for an outfield berth with the Giants. He was a smiling, affable kid who quickly became a great favorite with the other ball players and the newspapermen. McGraw had little to say to him on his arrival. That little consisted of sound advice and reassurances concerning his status.

"I want you to keep this in mind," he said. "I paid \$75,000 for you, but I don't expect you to give it back to me in base hits in your first week, your first month, or even your first year. I believe you will be with us for a long while, and that we will get our money's worth out of you. So just relax, go up there and take your normal cut at the ball, and if you get off to a slow start, don't worry."

O'Connell, lashing the ball about the field, looked like a great ball player in the making. The shadows that were to engulf him were a long way off then. He was very happy, and those who watched him were happy for him.

Meanwhile, McGraw rather impatiently awaited the appearance of colorful Jack Bentley, hard-hitting pitcher, first baseman and outfielder, home-run king, and best all-around ball player in the International League for the past two years, whom he had purchased from Baltimore for \$65,000. As Kauff had done seven years before, Bentley was holding out for a part of his purchase price, demanding that Jack Dunn, owner of the Baltimore club, pay him \$5,000. Dunn indignantly refused, and Bentley remained at his home in Maryland, deaf to McGraw's pleas that he report and work himself into shape pending the settlement of his dispute with Dunn.

"The sooner you get here," he wired Bentley, "the better it will be for you. A place on our pitching staff is waiting for you, but you must be in condition by the opening of the season."

"Tell that to Dunn," Bentley wired back.

McGraw fumed. He felt a real need for another left-handed

pitcher, since Nehf was carrying the southpaw burden alone. Skilled as Arthur was, there were times when he could have used a little more rest than he had been getting, for he not only was the only left-hander on the staff but was the prop on whom all the other pitchers—and all the rest of the players—leaned when they came up to a critical series. McGraw didn't intimate that in his wires to Bentley, of course, but it was true or he would not have paid so large a sum for the pitcher.

The newspapermen also were eager to have Bentley report for reasons of their own. He would be a story for them, this big, good-looking minor-league Paul Bunyan moving into the Giant camp. And, because of his controversy with Dunn, he was hot news, and they wanted to know the instant he came into town. So every morning and every evening they asked McGraw or Jim Tierney, or both:

"Bentley here yet?"

The answer would be "No," and a shake of the head; and after a few days it gave McGraw an idea for a mild practical joke. Having tipped off the newspapermen and enlisted the aid of the manager of the St. Anthony Hotel, he had Bentley "registered" and "assigned" to a room after practice one day—and then went up to his own room to await developments. He didn't have to wait long. Tierney, on his return from the park, scanned the register, as had become his habit—and seeing thereon "John N. Bentley, Sandy Springs, Md.," rushed to a house telephone and called McGraw.

"Bentley's here!" he yelled.

"How do you know?" McGraw asked. "Have you seen him?"

"No," Jim said. "But he's registered. He's in Room 802."

"Well," McGraw said, "get hold of him and tell him I want to see him right away."

Tierney called Room 802—but, of course, there was no answer. He searched the lobby, peered into the dining room, and had Bentley paged. He made another call to McGraw's room.

"He's not in the hotel," he said.

"All right. But I want you to watch out for him, and as soon as he comes in, no matter what time it is, I want to see him."

Jim took up his post in front of the desk, and sat there for two hours waiting for Bentley. Then he went in to dinner, leaving word that he was to be informed immediately if Bentley came in. Hurrying through his dinner, he resumed his vigil. Word got about among



the players that Bentley was in town. They, too, were curious to see him. Then the newspapermen tipped them off it was a gag, and they joined in the game. Some of them invited Jim to go to the movies with them, but he refused, saying he had to wait for Bentley. Others sat around with him, awaiting the denouement.

Newspapermen came by, asking if Bentley had returned, sympathizing with Jim in his tedious wait. At eleven o'clock the ball players had to withdraw. At twelve, Jim still was sitting there... at one... at two. Now he was steaming. And then, at two-thirty, there was a call from the desk:

"You're wanted on the telephone, Mr. Tierney."

He rushed to the telephone.

"Hello!" he yelled.

The voice on the other end was McGraw's, but so cleverly disguised that Jim didn't recognize it. It sounded rather far off.

"Hello, Mr. Tierney?"

"Yes!"

"This is Jack Bentley."

"Well, this is a fine time for you to be calling me. Where are you?"

"I'm over in New Braunfels."

"In New Braunfels? What are you doing there?"

"I'm in jail."

"What? In jail?"

"Yes. I came over here to see some friends of mine and we were speeding and a cop pulled us up. Then he found a couple of quarts of liquor on the floor of the car, and when he went to take it I slugged him and ——"

By that time poor Jim was almost hysterical.

"Wait till I tell Mr. McGraw!" he was shrieking. "Wait till I tell ——"

"Bentley" interrupted him.

"Hey! Hey! Don't hang up! I want you to come over here and get me. The bail is \$500 and I haven't got that much with me, and I don't want to stay in a —— —— cell all night. So come right over."

"You'll stay there!" Jim bellowed. "You'll stay there until you rot, for all of me! You wait till I tell Mr. McGraw!"

He hung up and raced for McGraw's room. There he found Mc-

Graw, Bozeman Bulger and one or two other newspapermen. They had intended to go along with the gag for awhile, but at the sight of Jim they howled.

A few days later, when Jim told the newspapermen Bentley had arrived, they thought it was another gag and walked away from him. But this time it was true. Here he was in the flesh—and plenty of it. Weighing 200 pounds when in condition, he was at least twenty pounds overweight, and McGraw was furious. He ordered Bentley to run miles around the park every day, swathed in heavy flannels, a rubber shirt and a sweat shirt under his uniform. Huffing and puffing, Bentley plunged into his training, and by the time the team reached New York he was in shape.

By that time, too, McGraw had his team set for the opening of the season. He decided that Bill Terry needed another year in the minors, and farmed him out again to Toledo. But Jackson, he knew, was ready. And so the youngster from Waldo, Arkansas, via Little Rock, was kept as understudy for Dave Bancroft—and was to prove his worth in nearly a hundred games that year when Banny fell gravely ill of pneumonia and was a long time regaining his strength.

With the start of this season the rivalry between the Giants and the Yankees was at a greater height than it had ever known or has known since. This was reflected not only in lusty arguments on the part of the fans but in the relations between the officials of the two clubs. McGraw and his quondam friends, Jake Ruppert and Cap Huston, had drifted far apart, and McGraw, of course, had the staunch support of Stoneham, while McQuade, who dearly loved a fight, kept egging McGraw and Stoneham on and was enjoying himself thoroughly. He accused the Yankees of trying to recoup the loss of prestige they had suffered in the two World Series by working too diligently for a favorable press, and once accosted a newspaperman who had reported there had been only 3,500 at a Giant game in Philadelphia with a snarling:

“What was that—more American League propaganda?”

McGraw, Stoneham and McQuade had driven the Yankees from the Polo Grounds and compelled them to build a park of their own, which was completed in the late fall of 1922. And although they were to realize one day that this had been a sorry mistake, they were smugly content now with having the Polo Grounds to themselves

again. Across the Harlem River the Yankee Stadium was opened in that spring of 1923, and in the roaring crowd that welcomed Babe Ruth to his new home the Giant owners might have seen the shape of things to come. But now they were blinded to everything save their own seeming advantage in the struggle, and lightly brushed off the revenue they had lost when the Yankees stopped paying rent on Eighth Avenue.

In spite of the mounting popularity of Ruth and the rest of the Yankees, it was a pleasant summer for McGraw. Although challenged seriously now and then by the Reds and the Pirates, the Giants were out in front most of the way, and he could take out time for laughs here and there as he swung around the circuit. At the top of their stride as the season waned, the Giants crashed through to another flag.

Once more McGraw had won three pennants in a row. Now an even greater prize lay just before him—three World Series victories in a row. No one ever had achieved that. No one ever had had a shot at it, not Chance or Mack or Jennings or anyone else. But now he had.

There was—although he didn't need it—an added incentive. This was the chance not only to succeed where all other managers had failed, but to do so at the expense of the Yankees, and partly in their own ball park, at that—in the new stadium of which Ruppert and Huston were so proud and at which he privately had scoffed. The Yankee Stadium! It was built to fit Ruth and Ruth alone, he said, with its short right-field stand that gaped almost in the Babe's face every time he went to bat.

He never wanted to beat anyone quite as much as he wanted to beat the Yankees in that series. It seared him to know that while conquering the world he had lost New York—that while the Giants were the champions, the Yankees had taken over the town his club had ruled so long. The Giants still were drawing crowds, of course. But the Yankees were drawing bigger crowds. He believed that if the Giants could win again they would recapture the town.

Characteristically, he made no attempt to conceal his feelings. His old friendship for Ruppert and Huston was dead. He hated the Yankees and he made no bones about it. He wouldn't even permit

the Giants to dress at the stadium. They used the visiting players' club house as a sort of field headquarters for meetings before the games played there and as a place in which to change their shirts. But they dressed at the Polo Grounds and made the trip back and forth over Central Bridge in a fleet of taxis. It would have been more convenient for them to have dressed in the stadium, naturally. But this way gave him a chance to show how he felt about the Yankees, and he gloried in it.

It was a rough and acrimonious series, as the others had been. The Giants moved off in front as Watson, with Ryan's help, hurled the Yankees back in the first game, a home run by Stengel being the blow that decided it in favor of the Giants. Herb Pennock, new to the Yankees that year, beat Bentley in the second game. But in the third game Nehf pitched a shut-out and Stengel again hit a home run, so that the Giants won, 1 to 0. The Yankees avenged their 1922 defeat by Scott when they knocked the big right-hander out and won the fourth game—and followed that by beating Bentley in the fifth.

Trailing, three games to two, McGraw threw Nehf in against the Yanks in the sixth game, which was played at the Polo Grounds. The Yanks tagged him for a run in the first inning. But the Giants evened the count in their half and Nehf settled down to pitch magnificently against Pennock. The Giants picked up a run in the fourth, another in the fifth, still another in the sixth. And so the Giants were leading, 4 to 1, as they reached the eighth inning. The way Nehf was going it looked as though they couldn't lose. They would tie up the series right there, and in the seventh game, McGraw felt, they would—

But, even as he was making his plans for the seventh game, Nehf cracked. The strain under which he had worked all season caught up with him and clutched at his arm, and all of a sudden he lost his stuff. With a swiftness that stunned McGraw, the Yankees scored three runs and had the bases filled.

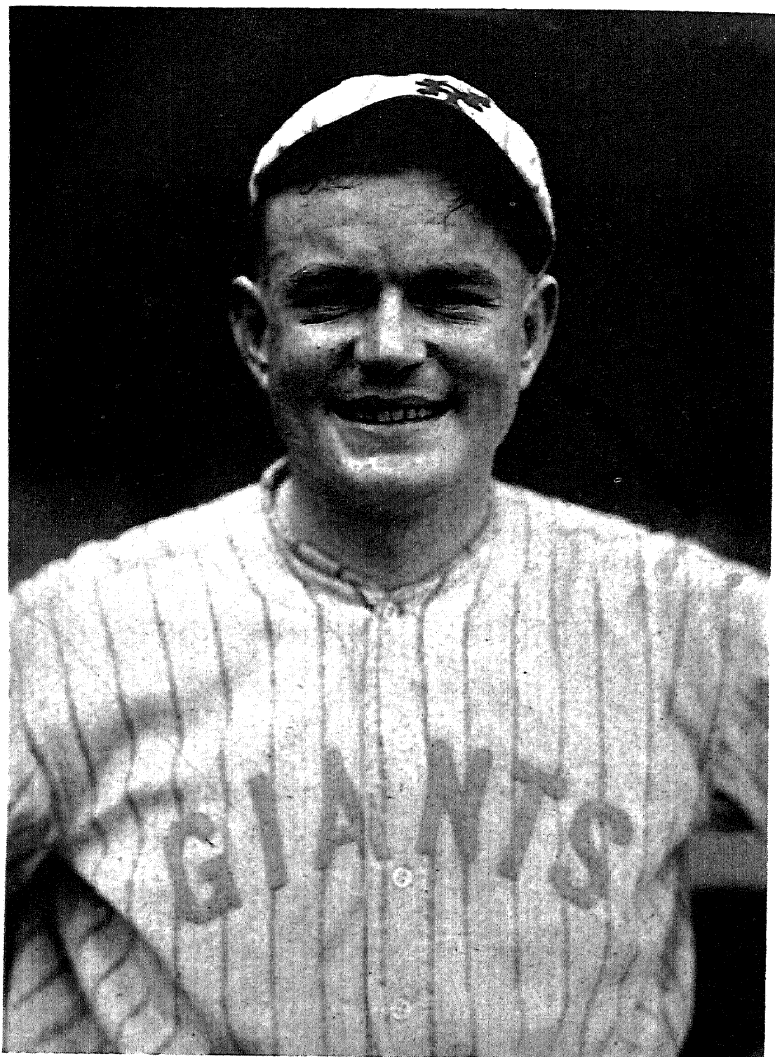
In the dugout, McGraw was storming. He hauled Nehf out and sent Ryan, who had warmed up hurriedly, into the box. Ruth was the next hitter. Ryan got two strikes on him. McGraw held up the game and sent Cozy Dolan racing out to Snyder with a message. Snyder listened to him, then walked slowly out to Ryan.

"The Old Man says to throw the next one into the dirt," he said.



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BILL TERRY



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JIMMY O'CONNELL

Ryan stared at him.

"Into the dirt?"

"Yes," Snyder said. "Throw it at his feet. The Old Man says he will swing at it no matter where you throw it. Put everything you have on it, but throw it right at his spikes."

The roar of the crowd, which had been stilled by the interruption, rose again as Snyder trudged back to his position, put on his mask, and crouched for the pitch. The Babe, tense as he never had been before, scarcely could wait for Ryan to pitch. Bill fired a fast ball at his feet—and the Babe swung and missed!

The Old Man had been right. Now the Babe was out of the way, there were two out, and the Giants still were in front. Meusel was dangerous, of course. But Ryan was a good pitcher and dead game, and some of the pressure was off him now. With two out he could take his time pitching to Meusel. He pitched perfectly to him. Meusel hit the ball back at him. In the Giants' dugout the players came up off the bench, because they thought the inning was over. But the ball went through Ryan and over second base, and two more runners scored. That was the ball game.

McGraw knew—and so did everybody else in the ball park—that Meusel had won the game with that poke through the box. And that was the way it worked out, as Sam Jones, who had relieved Pennock, turned the Giants back in the eighth and ninth innings.

The series was over, and as the crowd boiled about the new champions the Giants trooped glumly into the club house. Nehf, still in his uniform, was seated in front of his locker. He was crying. McGraw walked straight to him and put an arm about his shoulder.

"Never mind, Art," he said. "Don't take it so hard. It wasn't your fault. You couldn't go on winning forever, and you did your share getting us into the series and then pitching that shut-out. . . . I wish I had left you in there."

Nehf looked up at him, wonderingly.

"I was gone, Mac," he said. "I couldn't pitch any more."

"You could have struck Ruth out," McGraw said "He was so crazy to hit I could have struck him out myself. And you would have stuck that ball Meusel hit into your hip pocket."

He glared at the unhappy Ryan.

"That's what cost us the ball game," he said. "A lousy cheap hit through the box."

It was true. Nehf was the best fielding pitcher in the league and Ryan perhaps the worst.

"But the hell with it!" McGraw said. "I would have given anything to have won this series, but I guess it wasn't in the cards."

His brightest hope had been smashed at a moment when he thought victory was certain. The Yankees were champions of the world, and no defeat he ever had suffered had hurt him worse than that. Inwardly he would fume and rage and curse the fates that had thwarted him. But now, for perhaps the first time in his life, he could make a show of accepting defeat philosophically. This was because of Nehf, whom he liked and admired so very much.

That night one of the newspapermen said to another:

"We'll have to look in on McGraw tonight. We had a great time at his parties when he was celebrating his victories. The least we can do is to drop in at the Waldorf and sit up with the body."

There must have been a lot of his friends who felt that way, for the suite never was so crowded. Yet there was no air of mourning. He was proving that, publicly at least, he could take it when his hopes had been shattered and defeat had overwhelmed him. The party topped any that he had had in 1921 or 1922—starting earlier, rising to greater heights, and lasting longer, so that it was reported stragglers from it were discovered sleeping it off in nooks and crannies of the old hotel for days afterwards.

Among the early arrivals were two Yankees, Joe Dugan and Wally Pipp, who stopped in to tell McGraw that while they naturally were glad they had won the series, they regretted that he had to be the one to lose it. That made a great hit with McGraw—and sealed their fate for the night. Although they explained they were due elsewhere, and could remain long enough to take only one drink, they saw the dawn coming up over the town when they left.

John and Mrs. McGraw and Hughie and Mrs. Jennings had booked passage for Europe. But there was one item of business that required McGraw's attention before he could depart for scenes last visited ten years before. His friend, Emil Fuchs, new owner of the Boston Braves, wanted Dave Bancroft as his manager. It is unlikely that McGraw had even thought of replacing Banny. But Fuchs's eagerness to get him caused him to think of it very seriously.



Bancroft had been—indeed, still was—one of the greatest players McGraw ever had known. The infield that had been a tremendous factor in the winning of three pennants had been built and rebuilt around him. His amazing fielding and quick thinking had won or saved many a game. He was thirty-one years old, but had shown no marked signs of slipping and had hit .304 that year.

But McGraw, sounding him out on Fuchs's wish to install him as manager in Boston, found that he would like to make the move. That settled it, so far as McGraw was concerned. He never willingly impeded the advancement of any of his players. And now he could allow Banny to move up, because he had Jackson ready to take over at short stop. And so a trade was agreed upon: Bancroft, Stengel, and Cunningham for Billy Southworth and Joe Oeschger.

That done, the McGraws and the Jennings' sailed for Cherbourg and Paris. Mrs. McGraw had hoped that they could lose themselves in Paris and wander freely about the city, as they had been unable to do nearly ten years before, when she and John were there with the world-touring Giant and White Sox teams. But she was disappointed. The American colony was waiting for them. And so, it seemed, was every newspaperman in Paris. After they had been there a few days they were recognized by almost as many people on the streets as they would have been had they remained in New York. Their suite at the Continental was filled every night and dinners and parties were arranged for them elsewhere, so that they had very little rest and practically no quiet.

After a week or so the Jennings' departed for a few days in Rome, and Mrs. McGraw firmly decided there must be a lull in the excitement. She managed to get John away from the Continental for a few hours a day to wander about the gardens of the Luxembourg or the Tuileries, to run down to Versailles, or to go through the Louvre. But that wasn't much of a success, for McGraw was a poor sight-seer and said the only way he could enjoy doing the Louvre was on roller skates. And always, on their return to their hotel, there would be someone waiting for them—Americans, English, French.

McGraw knew only one word of French. The word was "toujours," meaning "always," and it was remarkable how well he did with it, considering he didn't know what it meant.

Did one of his French friends drop in on him at the Continental? His greeting was a hearty:

"Toujours! Toujours!"

Did the friend tell a funny story? His reward was:

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Toujours!"

Or was it sad? There would be a shake of the head and solemn:

"Toujours. Toujours."

And when he was departing, McGraw would speed him on his way with:

"Well, toujours, old boy! Toujours!"

His expression, his inflection, always were such that none had the slightest trouble catching his meaning—until one night in the Palais de Glace, on the Champs Elysées. He and Mrs. McGraw and a baseball writer from New York and his wife had dined at Josef's, near the Etoile. It was a mild night, and someone suggested they walk down the Champs. As they approached the Palais, Mrs. McGraw said:

"I've always wanted to go in there, but John never would. I'm sure you'd like to see it, wouldn't you? Of course! You see, John? They'd like to drop in for a little while."

So there was nothing for John to do but to go in. There was a small rink, encircled by tiers of tables. The head waiter, recognizing McGraw, led the party to a table on the first tier, just a few feet above the ice. It was then about eleven o'clock and there were few skaters. One of them was a young man with a small mustache, who obviously was eager to impress the new arrivals with his skill. But, unfortunately, just as he skimmed past their table his feet flew from under him and he sat down very violently. He looked up pathetically. McGraw, in an attempt to put him at his ease, said, his voice laden with sympathy:

"Toujours, my friend."

The young man's face flushed. Still seated on the ice, he held up two fingers and screamed:

"Non, non, Monsieur! Deux!"

The Jennings' returned from Rome and the party went to London. There, at the Carlton, the scenes at the Continental were repeated. Americans—actors, newspapermen, businessmen resident in London or there in connection with their business or on pleasure, two New

York detectives who had been sent over to relieve the Metropolitan Police of a jewel thief they had obligingly picked up, sundry sporting characters known on both sides of the Atlantic—gathered about McGraw. One of his guests one night was the young Marquis of Clydesdale, now the Duke of Hamilton, on whose estate Rudolf Hess landed on his flight from Germany. The Marquis, a shy youngster, then a student at Oxford and the middleweight boxing champion of the University, was brought to meet McGraw by his friend, Eddie Egan, Rhodes scholar at Oxford and amateur heavyweight champion of the world.

One night at the Carlton a London sports writer asked him when he was going to visit Europe with a baseball team again.

“You know,” he said, “I’ve been thinking about that.... I may do it next year.”

It is possible he hadn’t been thinking of it at all, and merely made that answer out of politeness. At any rate, he had to think about it after that. The sports writer carried a story the next day that McGraw probably would be back with his team in 1924... and then McGraw began to talk about it, and the upshot of it was that he made the story stand up by persuading his old friend Comiskey to join him in leading the Giants and the White Sox into London a year later.

There was a last and memorable party at the Carlton... and then a ship for home that docked in time for Christmas in New York. It had been a good winter. A winter that he and Mrs. McGraw were to talk about many times in the years that followed.

## XXIII ⊗ THE DOLAN-O’CONNELL CASE

**I**T WAS JOHN RINGLING who persuaded McGraw to go to Sarasota, Florida, to train in the spring of 1924. The circus king had not precisely taken over the town, but he had a firm grip on it. One of its more magnificent winter homes was his. One of his gifts was an art gallery, housing part of his staggering collection of paintings. His yacht frequently was tied up at the municipal pier or lay at anchor in the bay. He had helped materially to launch the local version of the state-wide real estate boom, in which prices for even

celery patches were booming and property on the main street was worth—at least on paper—more than it was on Broadway.

He didn't know anything about baseball and wasn't particularly interested in it. (Later—although he still knew nothing about baseball—he was to be frequently reported as about to buy the Giants, so that Stoneham's son, Horace, once gagged to a reporter who asked him what was new: "Haven't you heard? Pop's going to buy the circus.") But, as a showman, he knew that the presence of the ball club in the town would mean publicity. He hoped, naturally, it would be the sort of publicity that would spur the sale of land in which he had sunk some of his money. He was wrong... but that was only partly his fault.

As a rule, McGraw either was familiar with a town he selected as a training site or made his selection only after careful investigation. This time he depended on Ringling's judgment and left all the arrangements to him—with the result that when he arrived he discovered the hotel Ringling had chosen as the Giants' headquarters wasn't nearly large enough to accommodate the party of sixty ball players and newspapermen, plus a score of wives and children, who accompanied him. Ringling, who was genuinely dismayed at the size of the force that descended upon the town, quickly felt the wrath of his friend.

"What did you expect me to bring?" McGraw blazed. "Nine men?"

There was a hurried scouting about the town, which revealed that no one hotel could take in the entire party. McGraw, still wrathful, partially solved the problem, however unsatisfactorily, by billeting the regulars and the newspapermen and their families in the Mira Mar, the high-hat hostelry facing the bay, and herding the rookies in the Watrous, a modest frame establishment down the street.

The stories wired to New York that night, telling of the confusion on the arrival of the squad, were uncomplimentary to Ringling and the townsfolk in general, who, for some reason, did not seem especially pleased at having the Giants in their midst. When the New York papers reached Sarasota a day or so later, the reaction was as might be expected. The local newspaper invited the Giants and the correspondents to leave the town if they didn't like it. There were angry mutterings on the part of the citizenry, particularly the real estate agents. On top of that came gray skies and a chilling wind that hampered the players in their training. The weather conditions

having been duly reported, clippings of the offending stories were posted on a bulletin board in front of a Main Street store under the legend:

"If you don't like our weather, keep your damned mouths shut!"

W. O. McGeehan, Bugs Baer, Bozeman Bulger, George (Monitor) Daley, Fred Lieb and the other correspondents had a wonderful time needling Ringling and the lesser brass hats in their dispatches. Ringling and some of the real estate vendors went to McGraw and asked him to call the reporters off. He shook his head.

"How can I stop them?" he demanded, "I can't tell them what to write."

That was true. Besides, he undoubtedly was getting a secret joy out of the stories, sympathetic as he pretended to be. Then, he had troubles of his own. The numerous entrances to the Mira Mar and the presence of the rookies at the Watrous made it difficult for him to keep a check on his players after dark. The result was that he spent most of his nights darting from one door to another in the Mira Mar, and running down the street to see what was going on at the Watrous.

Something drastic had to be done, some of the townspeople decided, to quiet the newspapermen. Remember, this was the spring of 1924 and the Ku Klux Klan wielded a dreaded threat throughout the South. And so, one night, the lights on the main street were extinguished, there was a thin, eerie bugle call in the distance, and hooded Klansmen marched through the town. They marched in silence, and in silence were watched by the crowd that lined the sidewalks. It was, for a split second, faintly frightening to most of the watchers. Then the silence was broken.

"Give me a fungo stick," Cozy Dolan said, very loudly, "and I will lick all these bums by myself."

The ball players and the newspapermen howled. The rest of the crowd, taking courage, giggled. The spell was broken. So was the spirit of the marching Klansmen. There was nothing even faintly frightening about them now. They were just a lot of fellows in ridiculous garb tramping along a darkened street. The newspapermen and the ball players jeered at them. At last they were gone, and the lights were turned on, and the normal life of the town was resumed.

After that no one said anything to the writers, who, having reported the parade with suitable comment, were willing to let the

matter drop. So, it seemed, was everyone else. Even the weather changed for the better, as the skies cleared and the sun came out bright and warm. Soon it became a routine training trip. Only McGraw remained disturbed. He still was prowling the doorways of the Mira Mar late at night, or popping in at the Watrous to discover what mischief was brewing among the rookies.

Now and then he snared a culprit. Principally, there was Pat Malone, young right-handed pitcher up from Altoona. There was no real harm in Pat. But, unfortunately for him, if there was anything going on at the Watrous he was certain to be in the middle of it when McGraw barged in. Or if he chanced to stay out late, he was sure to find McGraw in the lobby on his return. McGraw, concluding that while Pat undoubtedly had a lot of stuff he wasn't gaited for the serious business of pitching in the major leagues, released him outright to Toledo when the Giants got back to New York. That, it developed, was a mistake. Pat came up with the Cubs a year later, and for four or five years thereafter was one of the best pitchers in the National League. McGraw could have used him very well in those years, especially in 1929, when Malone pitched the Cubs to the pennant.

There was a lot of work to be done that spring. Jackson, having worked his way in gradually at short stop, didn't need much attention from McGraw. But Terry was back from Toledo, and John worked him around first base considerably to see how close he was to major-league form. There was a wide-shouldered, stumpy kid named Lewis Wilson, in from the Portsmouth club of the Virginia League, who had hit .388 the year before and had spent a couple of weeks near the end of the season unnoticed at the Polo Grounds. McGraw wanted to take a good look at him. The players had a good look at him first, and the sight of him called up in their minds a picture of Hack Miller, an outfielder with the Cubs a few years before. Miller, son of Sebastian, a strong man in vaudeville, was taller than Wilson, but no wider through the shoulders.

"This kid looked like a sawed off Hack Miller," one of the players said.

And so the kid was known from then on as Hack. A good ball player, too, in those days. He wasn't too quick on the trigger when there was some sharp thinking to be done, but he could slug the

ball and he loved to play. McGraw liked him and, after he had watched him closely for a week, decided to keep him.

There was another kid in the camp that spring who appealed to McGraw. His name was Freddy Lindstrom, and he was from the South Side of Chicago. He was only eighteen years old, but he had been with Roger Bresnahan in Toledo for two years. He was a rangy kid and very fast, and he had a great arm. He had played second base and third in Toledo. Now McGraw worked him out at third. There was no telling how long Groh would stand up. Heinie had shown no signs of slipping the year before. But he had a trick knee, and McGraw knew how that could take a man out. He wanted to have someone handy to stick in there if Heinie suddenly couldn't go on—and he had found someone, he knew, in this smiling kid.

And, of course, there was Southworth—a good hitter, a smart, seasoned ball player. McGraw worked him in center field between Young and Meusel, pulled him out and tried Wilson, pulled Wilson out and put Southworth back.

With Kelly still doing well at first base, Terry was restless. He knew there was no chance for him to take over at first base. But he believed he was ready, and he didn't like the prospect of spending the season on the bench.

"Try me in the outfield," he said to McGraw one day.

McGraw snorted.

"Think I want you to get hit on the head and killed?" he asked.

Terry flushed.

"I played the outfield in Shreveport," he said.

"This isn't Shreveport," McGraw said. And then, seeing Bill's feelings had been bruised, he added:

"Take it easy. Stick to first base. Learn all you can about it. And keep swinging in batting practice. You'll be a big-league first baseman some day. Forget about the outfield."

The pitchers—Nehf, Ryan, Bentley, McQuillan, Oeschger and the rest—rounded into shape quickly. As the stay in Sarasota ended, McGraw was in excellent spirits. No one ever had won four pennants in a row. But as camp was broken and the team headed for the North, it began to look as though the Giants might. At his final interview he passed out drinks and answered questions cheerfully.

"Who's going to pitch the opening game of the World Series, Mac?" one of them asked.

"Nehf, I suppose," he said, laughing. "He generally does."

It was the nearest he ever had come since 1906 to predicting a flag for his team.

There was a comedy touch to a ball game the Giants played with the White Sox at Nashville on the way up—although McGraw couldn't see anything funny in it. Neither McGraw nor Johnny Evers, who managed the Sox, was at the park that day, both being confined to their rooms by spring colds. It is entirely possible that had both been there the game would have ended as it did, of course, but neither ever would admit that.

At any rate, here's what happened: The Sox made eight runs in an early inning. But the boy tending the scoreboard, then on the fence in center field, hung up nine. No one noticed it except the newspapermen in the press box on the roof of the grandstand. As there was no means of communication between the press box and the score board, they were unable to have it corrected. Thus, when the Giants, picking up a run here and there, and rallying for a cluster of runs in the ninth, tied the score, everyone assumed the Sox still were one run ahead when the last Giant had been retired. There was a rush for the gates, in which the players joined. The frantic shouts of the reporters in their rooftop coop went unheeded. It was not until the New York and Chicago correspondents reached the hotel that the players knew they had run out on a tie game.

When McGraw and Evers heard it they were furious. McGraw especially.

"A fine thing!" he stormed. "Two coaches and twenty-five ball players out there, and they don't know what the score is!"

There were, of course, two Sox coaches and twenty-five Sox ball players out there, too. And they didn't know what the score was, either. But McGraw wasn't concerned with them.

"Well," one of the newspapermen said, "after all, it was only an exhibition game. What difference does it make?"

He was a very young newspaperman, or he would have known better. McGraw turned a deep purple, and it looked for a moment as though he was going to devour the young man.

"What difference does it make?" he roared. "I don't care whether it was an exhibition game or not! That makes it even worse! These people down here look up to the major-league ball clubs. What do you think they are going to say when they read the papers tomorrow



morning and see what a lot of stupid —— I have traveling around with me?"

The young newspaperman was abashed. Jennings and Dolan glared at all the newspapermen, blaming them for the mix-up. But within a day or so the matter was forgotten. New York was just ahead—New York and the opening of another season.

For three years McGraw had been at his peak. He had won three pennants in a row and two World Series—and had failed to win the third series only after a heart-breaking struggle from which he had emerged with his prestige enhanced rather than impaired. Now bad luck was crowding him . . . bad luck and scandal and disappointment. He was to win his fourth consecutive pennant. But the triumph would be dulled for him by the events of the days leading up to it, and victory in the World Series would be torn from his grasp. From there on the curve would be downward, and he would not win a pennant again.

There was, of course, no hint of this as, the season under way, the Giants rushed to the top of the league. Nearly everyone had picked them to win the pennant, and for a time it appeared as though they would win it easily. Then, perhaps because they grew overconfident, perhaps because they were wearing out in spots, the going became rougher. Groh's trick knee was bothering him, and the boy Lindstrom was at third base frequently. A general weakness against some right-handed pitchers caused him to jam Terry into the line-up, switching Kelly to center field to make room for him. The Robins were rushing up, challenging the Giants for the lead.

The Robins had won in 1916 and again in 1920. Someone hit on the theme that they were deadly in presidential years. Curious as that was, it caught on rapidly. Even the Brooklyn players began to believe it. As the season waned they were closing in fast. Excitement was great in Flatbush. McGraw, jolted out of the high good humor that, closely akin to complacency, had marked him through most of the season, was troubled, and his rages were frequent. There was one series in Philadelphia that drove him almost frantic. The Giant pitchers were staggering, and the Phillies' pitchers couldn't get anybody out, anyway, without great difficulty. That series was a nightmare to him as both teams hammered the ball against the short fences of Baker Bowl. The Giants' lead on the Robins had shrunk

to slightly more than one full game. When the Giants won—the Robins seemed to win all the time—there was always that cushion of one game and two points. But when they lost there were those bare two points between them and disaster. The series lasted four days and included two double headers. When it was over the Giants still were in front—by one game and two points—but they were limp. The players kept as far from McGraw as possible. Even in the dugout he had one end of the bench almost to himself.

They were back in New York; and now, as they spurted briefly and the Robins faltered, the tension was eased. Then came the crackup that, for a day or so, threatened to tear baseball wide open as it had been torn by the revelation of the White Sox perfidy in 1920: Heinie Sand, short stop of the Philadelphia club, told his manager, Arthur Fletcher, that Jimmy O'Connell had offered him \$500 not to bear down against the Giants in a series at the Polo Grounds. O'Connell, readily admitting his guilt when charged by Judge Landis, accused Cozy Dolan, Frank Frisch, George Kelly and Ross Young of having induced him to make the offer.

Once more, public faith in baseball was shaken. Shaken, too, were the Giants. O'Connell told his story so plausibly they knew that suspicion pointed not only at the players named by him but at all of them and their manager as well, since Dolan was McGraw's trusted lieutenant. If O'Connell's story was accepted by the public, there were many—as the players knew—who would find it difficult to believe the job could have been rigged without McGraw's knowledge and at least his tacit consent.

The attempt to bribe Sand took place on a Saturday. Late that night Fletcher was awakened by the telephone ringing in his room at the Ansonia.

"This is Sand," the voice on the other end of the wire said. "Can I come up to see you?"

"Can't you wait until morning?" Fletcher asked.

"No," the player said. "This is important—so important I can't sleep until I talk to you."

"Then come on up."

Sand's story startled his manager.

"Jimmy O'Connell came to me before the game today," he said. "He asked me:

“How do you fellows feel about us?”

“What do you mean?” I asked him. And he said: ‘About us winning the pennant. Who would you rather see win—us or the Robins?’

“I told him we didn’t care who won, it was all the same to us. And then he said:

“Well, if you don’t bear down too hard against us this afternoon, it will be worth \$500 to us.’”

“What did you say?” Fletcher asked.

“I said: ‘You ought to be ashamed of yourself to say anything like that to me. What’s the matter with you? Are you crazy? Get away from me and don’t ever say anything like that to me or to anyone else.’”

“What did he say?”

“He didn’t say anything. He just walked away. . . . I didn’t mean to tell you about this. I like Jimmy and I don’t want to see him get into trouble. But I didn’t know whether or not he had spoken to anybody else. I didn’t know how many of the Giants knew about it. I’ve been thinking all night about Buck Weaver and how he swore he didn’t have anything to do with throwing those games in the World Series in 1919, but they put him out of baseball because he admitted he knew what was going on and didn’t want to squeal. . . . I’m no squealer, either, Fletcher. But I felt I had to tell you about it and ask you what to do.”

“You’re right,” Fletcher said. “I don’t know what’s behind this, but now that I know something is up, I can protect you. And I’ll find out what’s behind it.”

He called John Heydler.

“I want to see you the first thing in the morning,” he said to the league president. “I’ve got something to tell you that I can’t talk about over the phone. Where can I see you?”

Roused by the anxiety in his voice, Heydler said:

“I’ll come to your hotel. I’ll join you there for breakfast at nine o’clock.”

“All right. Thanks, Mr. Heydler,” Fletcher said.

He turned to Sand.

“Go to bed,” he said, “and stop worrying. Get a good night’s sleep, and we’ll have breakfast with Mr. Heydler in the morning and tell him about this. You’ve got nothing to worry about.”

The tale that John Heydler heard at breakfast that Sunday morn-

ing sent him flying to a telephone to call Landis in Philadelphia. Returning to the table, he said:

"The Commissioner is leaving immediately. Don't say anything to anybody."

Landis arrived on Monday and questioned Sand sharply. Precisely what had O'Connell said? Had any of the other Giant players spoken to him? Had any of the other Philadelphia players been approached, so far as he knew?

"No," Heinie said. He had nothing to add to his report of the conversation between him and O'Connell.

"Have you any idea why O'Connell should have picked you—as he apparently did—as the only Philadelphia player he might safely approach with a proposition such as this?" the Judge asked.

"No."

"Is he a friend of yours?"

"Not particularly. I've known him quite a while and I've always liked him."

The Judge nodded.

"All right," he said. "That will be all for now."

He turned to his secretary, Leslie O'Connell.

"Get Stoneham and McGraw down here immediately," he said.

Neither Stoneham nor McGraw had known Landis was in town. Surprised at the summons, bewildered by what they heard on their arrival, their bewilderment quickly turned to anger which they directed at Heydler.

"Why weren't we notified of this before now?" McGraw demanded of the league president.

"I considered it to be a matter for the Commissioner," Heydler said.

"But whose ball player is it that's being accused? It's our ball player and we have a right to know about these things before they go this far. This is the first I've heard about this—about any of it."

He swung around to Landis, still fuming.

"How do you know Sand isn't lying?"

"I don't know," the Judge said. "But I propose to find out. Get hold of O'Connell and tell him I want to see him. . . . I want to see him alone, by the way, gentlemen."

On his arrival, O'Connell made no attempt to deny the charge Sand had laid against him. Yes, he had offered him \$500. Dolan had

told him to do so. Did he have the \$500? No. Who was going to put it up. He didn't know. But Kelly had spoken to him at the batting cage, asking him what Sand had said, and he had told Kelly. Frisch and Young also spoke to him. None of them had said anything to him before that but it was plain to him that they were aware of the plot.

Landis, questioning him slowly, making note of his answers, said to him:

"Do you understand that, as a result of what you are saying, you will be expelled from baseball?"

"Yes, sir."

Landis dismissed him, summoned Frisch, Kelly, Young, and Dolan, and questioned them separately. The players made complete denials of O'Connell's testimony. Dolan was a poor witness in his own behalf.

"I don't remember," he kept repeating. "I don't recall."

Confronted by O'Connell and questioned by Landis in their accuser's presence, Frisch, Kelly, and Young stuck to their stories. So, unfortunately for him, did Dolan. Landis was patient with him, tried to make him realize that no one would believe him if he continued to say he couldn't remember whether or not a conversation of such importance to him had taken place two days before. But all he could get out of Cozy was:

"I don't remember."

The season had ended. The World Series was to open in a day or so. Landis made his decision swiftly: O'Connell, having confessed his guilt, was banished from baseball forever—placed on the ineligible list, technically. So was Dolan, whose clumsy fencing had failed to convince the Judge of his innocence. Frisch, Kelly, and Young were cleared. Sand was commended for his action in reporting the incident.

The story, released to the newspapers—so carefully had the investigation been guarded that even the more alert reporters were unaware Landis was in town—stunned readers all over the country. In Chicago, Ban Johnson, hating the Giants because of McGraw, demanded that, in the fair name of baseball, the World Series be called off—and then denounced Landis, whom he also hated, for failing to heed his demand.

The reporters, having questioned the principals in the case, turned

to McGraw. What did he know about it? What did he have to say?

"I don't know anything about it," he said. "I have nothing to say. See Landis. He has all the evidence."

He made no secret of the fact that he resented not having been apprised of the matter until Landis reached New York and sent for him.

The fans buzzed, the newspapers bubbled. Four years after the exposure of the White Sox, scandal was rife in baseball again, some of them declared, and either joined Johnson in his clamor for cancellation of the World Series or called for a fuller investigation than, as they saw it, Landis had made. Dolan was denounced while sympathy for O'Connell was general.

Landis, having advised Johnson to keep his shirt on, was pressed for a definite statement on his stand in regard to the series.

"The series will be played," he said.

That settled it. The Giants went to Washington to oppose the Senators, who, under Stanley Harris, the boy manager, had won the American League pennant for the first time in their history.

That afternoon, shortly before the departure of the team, Dolan went to the offices of the Giants to see McGraw, whom he had not seen since the case was broken. At McGraw's orders, Jim Tierney turned him away. Visibly aged by the fate that had overtaken him, he was crying as he left.

The scandal was forgotten—or at least put out of mind—once the series got under way. The presence of Walter Johnson in the big tussle, after so many years of striving with a second-division team, exerted a terrific pull on the fans all over the country. From a sentimental standpoint the Senators were top-heavy favorites, although hard-headed bettors gave the edge to the Giants. The odds against the Senators mounted when Nehf beat Johnson in a twelve-inning thriller to open the series. But the Senators fought back, and the teams battled up and down between New York and Washington, reaching the seventh game at Griffith Stadium on October 10.

There had been some shrewd juggling of pitchers in the series, some deft switches in the line-ups, some swift clashes of wits between McGraw and his youthful adversary, the twenty-eight-year-old Harris. Now, with everything hinging on this one ball game, with a fortune riding on every pitch and every hit, there was a real test

of skill between them. And, much to his chagrin, McGraw was outmaneuvered. Harris started Jack Ogden, a right-hander, then switched to the veteran George Mogridge, a southpaw. McGraw fell into the snare set for him, pulling his left-handed hitters out and throwing right-handers into their places—whereupon Harris yanked Mogridge, called in Firpo Marberry, his big right-handed relief pitcher, and followed him with Walter Johnson.

McGraw had been playing put-and-take with his pitchers, too, starting with Virgil Barnes and following with Nehf, and Bentley. In the ninth inning, with the score tied at 3-3, the Senators had men on first and third with one out and Ralph Miller at bat. McGraw, gambling as he always did in a clutch, played his infield back for a double play, where a more cautious manager would have pulled his defenses in to concentrate on the man on third base, who represented the winning run. As a reward for his courage he got the double play—Miller hitting sharply to Jackson, who flipped the ball to Frisch, who rifled it to Kelly.

The teams struggled on to the twelfth, with Bentley pitching magnificently against Johnson and the tension mounting on the field, in the dugouts and the stands. Miller, leading off in the Senators' half, was thrown out by Frisch. The next hitter was Muddy Ruel, who had made only one hit in the series. He raised a high foul between the plate and third base. Gowdy, tearing off his mask, started for the ball—and what happened immediately thereafter probably never happened before or since to a major-league catcher.

Instead of tossing his mask behind him. Hank tossed it directly in his path. With his eyes on the ball, he stepped in the mask, stumbled, kicked it off—and then stepped in it again. Now his spikes were caught in the wire. He stumbled once more as he tried frantically to get under way. The ball fell a few feet in front of him as he lunged at it. Ruel, who should have been an easy out, had another chance to hit and doubled to left. Johnson was safe on a fumble by Jackson. Now Earl McNeely hit an easy grounder to Lindstrom—but the ball struck a stone and bounded over Lindstrom's head, Ruel racing home with the winning run.

Dazed, growling, cursing their luck, the Giants pushed their way through the hysterically happy fans who tumbled out of the stands. They still seemed dazed as, leaving the howling, celebrating city

behind them, they climbed on a train for New York. They sat there in sullen silence until Bentley, with a long sigh, said:

“Cheer up, boys. It just looks as though the Good Lord couldn’t stand seeing Walter Johnson get beat again.”

In his drawing room McGraw sat quiet and disconsolate for perhaps an hour. It had been one of the most disappointing defeats ever thrust upon him. He believed that he had the better team in the series (Harris, even in his moment of triumph, agreed with him) and it galled him to see it beaten by the workings of a crazy fortune. Moreover, he had wanted desperately to win because of the shadow thrown across his team by the Dolan-O’Connell affair.

Well, in any event, it was over and done with. He got to his feet and went out into the cars where the players, the spell cast over them by the defeat broken by Bentley’s observation, were reading magazines or books—none of them wanted to read a newspaper that evening—or talking.

“All you fellows whose wives are in New York—” he said.

The players looked up.

“Send wires to them asking them to meet you at the Commodore. We’re having a party.”

There was a hurried call for telegraph blanks. The gloom had been completely dispelled, regrets temporarily forgotten. The Old Man was giving a party.

That night at the Commodore was in the pattern of World Series parties given by McGraw. Jimmy Flynn was there, singing in his thin but melodious tenor voice. Gitz-Rice played and sang—by request—“Dear Old Pal of Mine.” Art Nehf played “On the Banks of the Wabash,” as his wife and father led the company in singing it. The song caught on. The candlelight still shone through the sycamores at five o’clock in the morning, Eastern Standard Time.

The European tour on which the Giants and the White Sox embarked two days later was a fiasco. Casually conceived, it was carelessly planned, and all it amounted to was this: everyone had a good time and saw the King of England. McGraw and Comiskey, who underwrote it out of their own pockets, took a terrific beating, since the gleanings were dreadfully slim. But they shared in the pleasures of the trip—were, indeed, responsible for most of them—and had no complaints to make on their return.



Bad weather followed the teams about. By way of further complicating the journey and keeping down the gate receipts, they arrived in Dublin a month sooner than they were expected. They stayed there in comparative secrecy for a few days, put on one game largely for their own amusement, and for the sake of saying that they had played in Ireland, and then went back to London. They also played in Manchester and Paris.

The big game was at Stamford Bridge, which drew King George V, having his second look at baseball after a lapse of eleven years; the present King, then the Duke of York; Frank Kellogg, the American Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, and George Bernard Shaw, whose account of the game in one of the London papers convinced the ball players, unfamiliar with his other works, that he was over-rated. The players were presented to the King and the Duke by Kellogg. The Duke sat behind the press benches, talked with Harry Cross and the late Robert Boyd, the two New York baseball writers who accompanied the teams, and made a valiant attempt to score the game according to their instructions.

The 20,000 lesser souls at the game appreciated the fielding more than they did the hitting, and derived their greatest thrill when Johnny Mostil, White Sox outfielder, made a running one-hand catch in deep center.

In Dublin, McGraw, for whom the tour was largely a personal social triumph, had a long chat with William Edward Cosgrove, then President of the Republic. Cosgrove was more curious about American industries than he was about baseball, and some of the others present—including the ball players—were amazed at the ease with which McGraw answered his questions.

For all the attention the teams received in the newspapers in this country, they might just as well have sailed from here into a fog bank and remained there for six weeks.

There was one last appearance of Cozy Dolan on the New York scene. Some months after the series he was reported to be in town, although newspapermen who went in quest of him were unable to find him or to confirm reports that he had conferred with McGraw. About that time William J. Fallon announced that he was interested in Dolan's case and intended to see that justice was done—by bringing suit in Dolan's behalf against Judge Landis, if necessary.

Since Dolan was believed to be virtually penniless and Fallon was the highest priced criminal lawyer in New York, this prompted Joe Vila to ask, in his column in the *Sun*:

"Who sent Cozy Dolan to William J. Fallon?"

No answer having been received, he asked the question again. Silence still being the only reward for his inquisitiveness, he sent a reporter to see Fallon. The lawyer, who was pleading a case in the Criminal Courts building, invited the reporter to lunch at a little Italian restaurant on Mulberry Bend, and, his eyes twinkling, said:

"If you will promise me that Joe Vila will quit asking who sent Cozy Dolan to see William J. Fallon, I will promise to answer any question you put to me."

"All right," the reporter said. "I can give you that promise. Now: Who sent Cozy Dolan to see William J. Fallon?"

"You win," Fallon said, laughing. "John McGraw sent Cozy Dolan to see William J. Fallon."

"Why?"

"Why not?" he countered. "If you had a man working for you for a long time and you believed he was faithful to you and he got into trouble, wouldn't you do what you could to help him?"

"Yes."

"Well, that answers your question. You know Dolan. You know that he is a clown, an ignorant slob. He thinks he got a bad deal from Landis. So do I. He went crying to McGraw and McGraw sent him to me and he told me his story. I told him that if he wanted me to, I would bring suit against Landis and beat him in the courts. Which, of course, I would be glad to do. I don't care anything about the laws of baseball, or the laws that Landis makes up as he goes along. I do know that in a court of law, Landis couldn't make the evidence on which he convicted Dolan stand up for a minute."

"And you are going to bring suit?"

He shrugged.

"I'm afraid not," he said. "I have drawn up the papers and am ready to go ahead, but Dolan is stalling. Somehow, he has the impression that Landis is going to reinstate him. He says Landis told him so. You and I know Landis never said anything of the sort, but Dolan has it in his mind that the old man is going to relent and, after pleading with me to help him, he has become afraid that if he

brings suit, Landis will turn against him and he never will get back into baseball. . . . I'm very sorry."

"Why?"

His eyes twinkled again.

"I'd like to get Landis on the witness stand and have some fun with him," he said. "I was in his court room one day and heard him sentence a bootlegger to two years in the penitentiary . . . and I've never forgiven him for it."

## XXIV ⊗ OTT ARRIVES AND MATTY DIES

**H**OME FROM EUROPE, McGraw soon was off again, this time to Havana. He hadn't seen much sunshine in London, Paris, or Dublin, nor had he seen the horses run; and he was eager for a sight of both. There were days, too, when he complained of feeling tired, although he had done nothing, and his sinuses were bothering him. He thought a few weeks in the sun at the race track or at La Playa—he was no great hand for surf bathing, but he liked to sit on the beach once in a while—would make him feel better.

They apparently did, for he looked rested when he arrived at Sarasota to get the Giants ready for another season—another long whirl with, perhaps, a fifth pennant at the end of it. He thought he might have some trouble with Brooklyn again that year, as he had in 1924. He would have liked to have seen the Robins up there every year, realizing the value—as expressed in gate receipts—of a tight rivalry between the Giants and their interborough foes. He had done his best to keep that rivalry alive, sometimes by openly needling Charles H. Ebbets, the president of the Brooklyn club. But it hadn't always been easy. The Robins, although winning the pennant in 1916 and 1920, had been in the second division most of the time for the past eight or nine years. And it had become a trifle difficult for the Brooklyn fans to hate him as they had in days gone by, when Brooklyn had been as tough a battle ground for him as any of the western towns.

The late spurt by the Robins in 1924 had come as a shot in the arm. Maybe they would be that good again. He hoped so. He gloried in the abuse that was hurled at him at Ebbets Field when the fans

really were aroused—and gloried in knocking off Robbie, for whom his dislike increased constantly.

The Indianapolis club was training at Plant City that spring. When the Giants went over there for an exhibition game Donie Bush, the Indianapolis manager, started a broad-shouldered, powerfully built right-hander who, as one of the Giants remarked, “looked like a guy swinging Indian clubs” as he went into his wind-up. He twisted his body so that, for a split second, he almost turned his back on the hitter, then whirled about and fired suddenly. The deceptive motion, the speed with which he threw the ball, and the way it sometimes fluttered as it reached the plate baffled the Giants, who had been at work for only a couple of weeks and hadn’t seen any pitching as good as that.

For five innings the Giants failed to make a hit. McGraw, who hadn’t gone to the dugout, but sat in a box almost directly back of the plate, never took his eyes off the Indianapolis pitcher. For once he was undisturbed as he watched his players strike out, roll out, or pop up. The deep tan on the pitcher’s face, the freedom with which he worked, and the stuff he put on the ball all indicated that he had been working somewhere all winter; and it was natural he should have a decided edge on any hitters he faced. When, at the end of five innings, the pitcher was removed, McGraw called Bush over to his box.

“Where was that fellow pitching this winter?” he asked.

Bush laughed.

“You should know, Mac,” he said. “He was in Havana.”

“He was, eh? Well, I missed him. I didn’t see many games last winter in the short time I was there. . . . What’s his name? Fitzsimmons?”

“Yes. Fred Fitzsimmons. He’s a pretty good pitcher, Mac. We’ve had him for three years. He’s your kind of pitcher, too. He’s got plenty of guts.”

“What are you trying to do, sell him to me?” McGraw asked, laughing.

“That’s just what I may do some day,” Bush said seriously. “This was no fair test today, because he’s in shape and away ahead of your hitters. But he can pitch, Mac. You watch him this year and see if he can’t.”

Bush was right on all three counts. Fitzsimmons could pitch, he

was McGraw's kind of pitcher—and the day would come when he would be sold to the Giants. The Giant players had been as deeply impressed with him as McGraw was. Some of them had hit against him in the American Association—and they knew that, regardless of the edge in condition he held over them that day, his effectiveness was no flash in the pan.

A motion picture company, eager to capitalize on the real estate boom and the number of major- and minor-league ball clubs training in Florida, whipped up a scenario to cover both phases of the lively state-wide panorama. They shot some scenes about Sarasota and then, with McGraw's permission, arranged to shoot one during a game between the Giants and the St. Louis Browns.

No one, except the director, seemed to know precisely what the plot was or where the big baseball scene figured in it. Perhaps the hero, by hitting a home run, won the game and saved a valuable piece of property—or an option on some property, options being bought and sold at fantastic prices that spring. At any rate, with the Browns in the field in the last half of the eighth inning, the game was held up. One camera was planted back of the pitcher's box to catch the hitter as he swung. Others were back of first and third bases to catch him on his way around. The hero, wearing a Giant uniform, took up his position at the plate.

At a word from the director, the pitcher wound up and went through the motion of delivering a ball to the hitter—although, for safety's sake, no ball was used. The hero, who didn't look as though he'd ever worn a baseball uniform or held a bat in his hand before, swung awkwardly. Had there been a ball and had he, by some miracle, hit it, it would have struck the dirt in front of the plate, the way he swung. He started on his round of the bases. Huffing and puffing, he crossed the plate as the crowd cheered.

The director hadn't been satisfied with his performance.

"Do it again!" he shouted.

The weary actor picked up his bat and, still puffing, took his stance at the plate again.

The press box merely was a continuation of the Giants' bench, a beaver board partition separating the newspapermen from the athletes. McGraw, who sat next the partition, leaned around it and said to the nearest reporter:

"If he has to run around the bases again, he will either fall down or get sick."

The pitcher went through his motion, the hero chopped at the phantom ball—and was off. He began to stagger as he rounded first base. His legs buckled as he neared second, and he fell across the bag as the crowd howled. Gamely getting to his feet, he went his reeling, lunging way. He fell again as he got to the plate, dragged himself up, and, a look of panic on his face, lurched past the end of the bench. Mercifully hidden from the view of the laughing spectators, he was sick.

The reporter to whom McGraw had spoken leaned around the partition.

"How did you know that would happen?" he asked.

"That was a cinch," McGraw said. "I never saw a well trained ball player who could run around the bases at top speed twice without a rest in between. So what chance did that poor ham have to do it?"

It seemed unlikely, when the season opened, that the Giants could win five pennants in a row. But, the way they set out, the experts who had picked the Robins or the Pirates to succeed them were more than a little dubious. Even an amazing string of injuries on their first western trip failed to check them, although the more superstitious players began to look around to see if they had picked up a jinx.

Sam Crane was sure they had when he became ill in Cincinnati, the last stop in the Middle West.

"It looks as though you've worn him out and he's picking on the newspapermen now," he joked.

Sam was so weak on the train to New York that McGraw, who spent much of his time with his old friend, was concerned.

"We should wire ahead and have an ambulance meet him at the Pennsylvania Station," McGraw said.

Everyone agreed it was a good idea, yet shrank from even suggesting it to Sam. McGraw was nominated for that task. He went to Sam's berth.

"Sam," he said, "it's a hot day and I wouldn't be surprised if you wouldn't be better off if we had an ambulance to meet you—"

The roar that emanated from the berth belied the veteran reporter's condition.

"I never rode in an ambulance in my life, and I'm not going to start now!" he bellowed. "Ada Frisch is going to be at the station to meet Frank, and she'll drive me home."

The Cranes and the Frisches were neighbors in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx, and, as he so emphatically preferred, Sam was driven home by Mrs. Frisch. He never left his house again, for he had pneumonia and four days later he died.

His death shocked and saddened McGraw. They had been friends for many years, going back to the days when McGraw was a young fellow in Baltimore and Sam, who had been a ball player, too, had turned to baseball writing in New York. They had traveled thousands of miles together, taken many a drink together, laughed and frolicked together. Sometimes they had quarreled. But their quarrels never were serious and always were patched up in a few days—or even a few hours.

Shortly after that McGraw also became ill. For the first time since he had been the manager of the Giants, he was away from the dugout for a couple of weeks. One of the New York newspapers printed a story that he was in such poor health he was about to resign, and, in any event, would not be seen in the dugout again. It chanced that the very day on which the story was printed was the day he returned. Meeting one of the reporters in the Stevens commissary under the grandstand, he asked:

"Did you see that story about me going to resign?"

"Yes," the reporter said, "but I didn't believe it."

"Why, it's ridiculous!" he said. "Resign? What would I do if I resigned? Play the horses every day? Why, it's a joke!"

"I always figured," the reporter said, "that the day you didn't manage the Giants would be the day you couldn't get out of bed."

McGraw nodded.

"That's right," he said. "That's just the way I feel about it. If you're interested enough to write a story about it, you can quote me as having said that."

Rain fell in the third inning that day as the Giants were leading by a score of 4 to 0. Bill Klem, umpiring back of the plate, called a halt. After a half hour's wait he inspected the field, and, deciding it was too muddy for further play, declared the game off. A little later the same reporter who had seen McGraw before the game met him

again under the stands. Accompanied by Kelly and Young, he was coming from the direction of the umpires' dressing room—and he was in a boiling rage.

“That —— —— dummy!” he shouted.

“Who?” the reporter asked.

“Who? Klem, of course! Calling a game off because of a little rain like that! I told him, the —— ——! I'll see Heydler about this! I'll find out if his umpires are going to be allowed to ruin baseball! How about all these fans that paid to see this game and are being sent home after three innings? You heard them yell, didn't you? They wanted the game to go on. But no! That —— has to call it off!”

He stormed on toward the club house.

“McGraw,” the reporter wrote that night, “is himself again. Those who doubt the statement are referred to Bill Klem.”

But he wasn't himself—nor were the Giants. After their fine beginning they faltered badly. Although they had nothing to fear from the Robins, who had flattened out badly and were tussling with the Phillies for sixth place, the Pirates had come with a rush. There was a series in September that sealed the Giants' fate. Even Fitzsimmons, purchased from Indianapolis in midseason, hadn't been able to keep the Giants in front, although he had pitched well.

The season was drawing to a close. The Giants were hopelessly beaten. One day a boy showed up at the Polo Grounds, asking for McGraw. He was sixteen years old and didn't look any older. He carried a straw suitcase in one hand, and it was obvious to Willis, guardian of the pass gate, that he was quite frightened.

“What do you want of Mr. McGraw?” Willis asked.

“I'm a ball player,” the boy said. “I was sent to him.”

Willis smiled.

“Who sent you?”

“A friend of Mr. McGraw's down in Louisiana. He wrote to Mr. McGraw about me, and Mr. McGraw said for me to come up here.”

“All right,” Willis said, opening the little gate beside the turnstile. “You'll find him in the club house. Go through that way to the field, and you'll see the steps from there.”

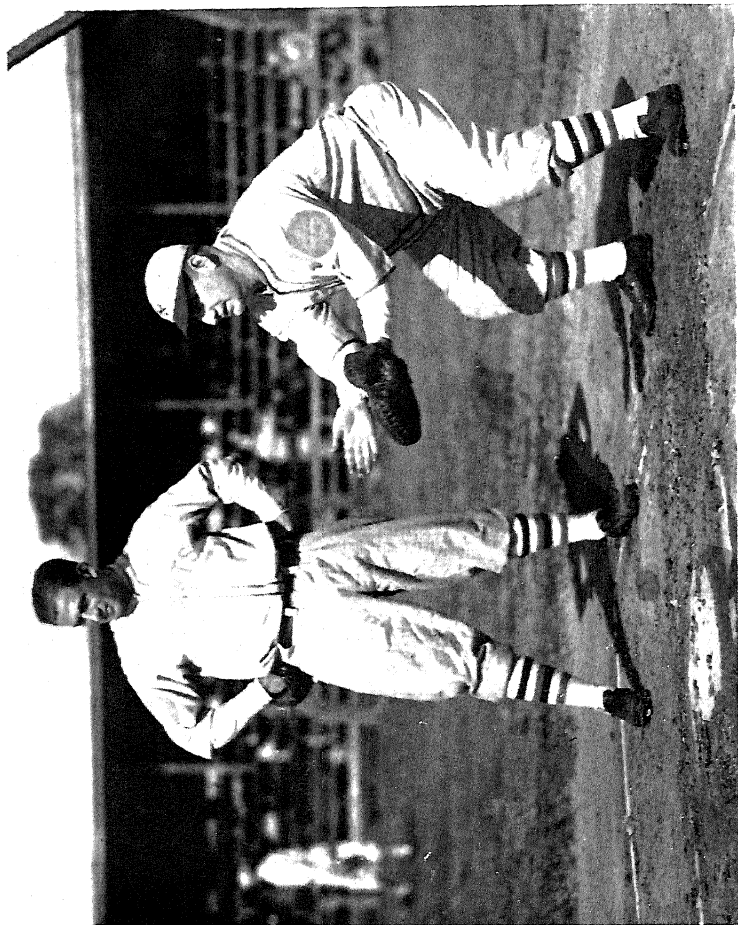
McGraw was in his office, going over his mail, when the boy, still clutching his straw suitcase, walked in. He looked up from his desk.





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MEL OTT



© Bronx Bros.

ART NEHF AND ROGER BRESNAHAN

"Yes?" he said.

The boy gulped.

"I'm Melvin Ott," he said.

McGraw's personal scouting system had paid off again. Melvin Thomas Ott had been the catcher on the high school team in Gretna, Louisiana, near New Orleans. He and the pitcher had tried out that summer with the New Orleans club. The New Orleans manager had signed the pitcher to a contract and farmed him out to the Cotton States League. To Ott he had said:

"Go home. Come back in a few years and I'll give you another trial."

But Ott had got a job catching for a team that Harry Williams, lumber baron and baseball enthusiast, maintained for his own entertainment and that of his friends on his plantation just above New Orleans. After Williams had seen Mel hit a few times, he believed he was a major-league star in the making. So what more natural than that he should write to his friend, John McGraw, about the boy? McGraw had wired to him to send the boy along for inspection—and now the boy stood there, his straw suitcase in one hand and his heart in his mouth.

It was a fateful moment for Ott and for the Giants. It is too bad a photographer wasn't there to record the scene. But, of course, if one had been there, it never would have occurred to him to take a picture of McGraw talking to a sixteen-year-old boy who, fantastically enough, was about to get a trial with the Giants.

McGraw asked Mel some questions about himself, talked to him for a few minutes about their mutual friend, Williams—then called in the trainer and told him to give the boy a uniform. The chances are that, having seemingly more important matters on his mind, he forgot about Ott immediately. But the first time he saw him hit, which was in batting practice early the next day, he knew that Williams hadn't exaggerated. He knew that, whatever else this boy could do, he could crash the ball. And he made up his mind then that no minor-league manager was going to tamper with the boy's style at the plate and, however well meaning, hinder his development. He would keep Mel with him as he had kept Burns and Frisch and Schupp, for here was a natural hitter if he ever saw one.

He didn't know about the boy's skill as a catcher. Time enough to judge that the next spring at Sarasota. After all, suppose the boy

couldn't catch? He was heavy-legged and probably not too fast, but something could be done with him, some place found for him in the Giant line-up at some future date. A boy who could hit like that. . . .

McGraw was in Pittsburgh on October 7, attending the opening game of the World Series between the Pirates and the Senators, when he received word that Christy Mathewson had died at his home at Saranac Lake, New York. He left at once for New York, where he was met by Mrs. McGraw, who went with him to Saranac.

Having been compelled by the state of his health to leave the Giants in 1921, Matty had spent two years at Saranac and then, feeling sufficiently strong to return to baseball, had accepted the presidency of the Braves. He held this position until the spring of 1925, when his health failed so badly that he had to retire.

McGraw had known, all through that summer, that Matty could not live out the year. Yet Matty's death had come as a stunning blow to him. No player ever had been as close to him, not even Jennings. Matty's rise to greatness at the Polo Grounds had paralleled his own. Although he never had yielded any favors to Matty that he had withheld from the other players, the bond of friendship between them had been cemented by the passing years. Mrs. McGraw shared his grief, for she not only looked upon Matty—as he did—as though he were a younger brother, but she and Mrs. Mathewson were like sisters.

Matty was buried three days later at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. McGraw, standing at the side of his grave, knew a greater sadness than he had known since that day, back in Truxton when he was twelve years old, his mother had died.

## XXV ⊕ "FOLLOW ME IN REAL ESTATE"

**I**N JANUARY OF 1926 a rather startling full-page advertisement appeared in each of the New York morning newspapers one Sunday. It was a clarion call to the public to invest in a real estate development in Sarasota, and in the center of it was a picture of McGraw with the slogan:

“You’ve followed me in baseball, now follow me in real estate!”

Designed to catch the eye and capture the imagination of baseball fans, the development was called Pennant Park. The streets, avenues and boulevards—at the time they existed only on blueprints, although some of them actually were laid out later—were named for famous ball players, principally Giants. It was suggested that any fan should be thrilled by purchasing a lot on the corner of—well, say, Mathewson Boulevard and Bresnahan Street. Or, if his enthusiasm ran to the latter-day ball players, a site on Frisch Street, just a stone’s throw from Nehf Square.

McGraw was fronting for someone, of course. An old friend, deft at promoting anything from a square meal to the sale of the Brooklyn Bridge, had sought his aid in promoting what he described as a sure-fire deal. Wasn’t Florida real estate bringing astonishing prices? Wasn’t Sarasota, with the prestige of the Ringlings behind it, one of the liveliest boom towns on the West Coast? How about Sapphire Shores and the other incredibly named tracts down there? Hadn’t those who had dealt in them profited handsomely? Well, there was more gold to be taken from the sands that were washed by picturesque Sarasota Bay. All he—McGraw—had to do was to stick his name up there and the suckers—pardon, the fans—would rush to buy. And when it came to cutting up the profits, there would be a generous slice for him.

It is difficult to understand—as difficult now as it was then—why he agreed to pin the whole business on his back, as he very definitely did the day the advertisement appeared in the newspapers. To help out his friend, believing that his friend had turned square and wouldn’t put him in on anything that would hurt him? That’s what his other friends—the real ones—still insist. Because he looked with avarice on the easy money that was rolling out of the pockets of the gullible and into those of the crafty—and wanted to divert some of it his way? That’s what his enemies said when the inevitable crash came.

Whatever actuated him, it is certain that he liked Sarasota and intended to spend part of each winter there. To that end, he had bought property—not in, or even near, Pennant Park, however—and built a home, although he had not lived in it a day or, for that matter, even furnished it.

Now, whether his faith in Sarasota extended as far north as Pen-

nant Park or whether he realized it or not, he was seriously involved in a scheme to sell land, mostly by blueprint and promise of great things to come. Blueprints and architects' drawings that glowingly depicted the delights of Pennant Park littered his desk in the Giants' office. He talked glibly of sewers, sidewalks, and street lights that soon were to be dug, laid, or put up. His mail was clogged with letters from prospective customers that he promptly forwarded to his friend the promoter.

Offices had been opened in Sarasota and a former circus press agent—appropriately enough—had been engaged to hammer out copy calculated to lure those who might like to live on Mathewson Boulevard. One of his stories, widely reprinted about the country, covered the cycle of John McGraw from Truxton to Sarasota—the story of the small-town boy who, having wandered through the great cities of the world, had come at last to a small town again.

There was no lack of customers. McGraw's name, the lively colored booklets setting forth the beauties and advantages of Pennant Park that were so promptly mailed to all seekers of information—these brought checks and money orders as down payments on lots. Few of the purchasers bothered to go to Sarasota to inspect the property before investing, so great was their confidence in McGraw. Those who did were so beguiled—and bewildered—by the salesmen who met them that they would have been better off if they had remained at home. That way, at any rate, they would have saved their carfare and hotel bills.

But by now the Giants were reporting, and McGraw had no time for real estate. Beaten off by the Pirates in 1925, he may have consoled himself with the thought that he couldn't go on winning the pennant forever and that, with four flags in a row, he had achieved more than any other manager in the game's history. But such thoughts could not linger long with him; and this, with another season coming up, was no time to be looking back. Now he was looking ahead again, fitting out his team for another drive through the field.

His early appraisal of Ott as a hitter was borne out at Sarasota as the boy pounded the ball to the edges of the palmetto-fringed field. But, watching him in the mornings, as he caught in batting practice, McGraw knew he never would be a major-league catcher. One day he said to him:

"Did you ever play in the outfield?"

"Yes," Mel said seriously. "When I was a kid."

Repressing a smile, McGraw said:

"Well, I'll tell you what you do. Just throw that mitt away and get yourself a glove, and get out there and start shagging flies. Because from now on you are an outfielder."

There was something else that had to be done for the boy to fit him for the big leagues. He had to be taught to run. His legs were thick, but, as he had not yet matured, the muscles and tendons hadn't toughened. As he pounded flat-footed or on his heels around the outfield or along the base paths, he soon developed a Charley-horse, or knotting of the muscles, in each leg.

"Take the next few days off," McGraw said. "If you don't—and if you keep on running that way—you'll be ruined even before you've had a real chance."

That night he called Bernie Wefers, famous track coach and an old friend of his.

"I want you to come down here and help me," he said. "I've got a kid down here who looks great, but he's tearing his legs to pieces because he doesn't know how to run. If you take charge of him now, you can correct his faults in a few days. If somebody doesn't do it for him, he'll run himself right out of the league."

"O. K., John," Wefers said. "I'm on my way."

When, after a rest of three or four days, Ott was ready to resume training, Wefers was there. The coach put him through a series of exercises designed to get him up on his toes, then had him practice quick starts from a standing position; finally had him running back and forth across the outfield, down to first base, or around the bases. It wasn't easy for Mel to run as Wefers wanted him to. It meant a complete change in his style, and there were nights when his legs were as sore as they had been from the way he used to hammer and plow his way about. But Wefers was exacting—and Mel was serious, ambitious, and willing to work hard to get the form Wefers demanded. Consequently, before the Giants left Sarasota, Mel was running smoothly and his legs no longer were bothering him. He was on his way not only to a regular berth with the Giants, but to one of the greatest careers that any ball player ever has had.

There were two other problems that offered no such prompt and reasonably easy solutions.

One morning, after the regulars had been at work for a week or so, Arthur Nehf said to McGraw in the club house:

"Mac, I'm afraid I have some bad news—bad for you and worse for me."

Startled, McGraw asked:

"Why, what's the matter, Art?"

"I have neuritis. I can't pitch."

Suddenly his eyes filled with tears.

"Like all of us," he said, "there have been times when I have been sick of baseball and thought how nice it would be to quit, so that I could spend the summer with my family. But now . . . now I know I can't go on and I feel . . ."

"Nonsense!" McGraw said brusquely. "Neuritis! What's neuritis? I've had it myself. So have lots of other ball players."

Nehf shook his head.

"I've got it in my feet—and in the thumb and first two fingers of my left hand. My arm is strong enough, but it's hard for me to stay on the rubber when I'm pitching, and I can't grip the ball tight enough to control it."

"Take it easy," McGraw said. "You haven't been training long enough to know what you can do—and you're overanxious, that's all. Go see a doctor here and start treatment. Work only when he tells you to or when you feel like it. A couple of weeks in the sun will do wonders for you."

Nehf, still shaking his head, walked away. McGraw looked after him thoughtfully. Nehf had been a great pitcher for him—one of the greatest. He had won many a critical game for the Giants, and his pitching in World Series games had been magnificent until that day in 1923 when his arm suddenly had gone dead in the final game with the Yankees. Had that, unknown to both of them, been the beginning of his trouble? And was this the end? He hoped not. He had a great admiration for Nehf, for one thing. For another, the loss of his services would be a severe blow to the Giants.

Maybe Art, a sensitive fellow who was inclined to worry, might be imagining things. McGraw remembered one time, two or three years before, when Art had told him he couldn't pitch in his turn because he had severe pains in his stomach and hadn't been able to



sleep the night before. He had told Art then that the best thing he could do would be to pitch—that he'd feel much better than if he just lay around the hotel all afternoon. And Art had pitched and won, and that night he had laughed and said his stomach was all right. It might be something like that now. And yet, as he looked after the retreating figure of the pitcher, he was uneasy.

He glanced across to where Ross Young was dressing. Ross hadn't looked well lately. He had been quite ill on his return from Europe in the winter of 1924. Although he hadn't said anything about it, perhaps that loss of nearly a hundred points in his batting average in 1925 had been due to the effects of that illness.

"How do you feel, Ross?" he asked.

Ross, who had been lacing on his shoes, looked up.

"Pretty good," he said. "My stomach bothers me a little, and I haven't had much pep so far. I guess," he said, laughing, "I'm getting old. It takes me more time to get started in the spring than it did when I was a young fellow."

"You'd better go to a doctor and have a check-up," McGraw said.

"If I don't feel better in a few days, I will," he said.

The doctor whom Nehf had consulted soon had another patient. One night he sought out McGraw.

"I think I should tell you this," he said. "Young's not a well man."

"Is it anything serious?" McGraw asked anxiously.

"It could be, unless he is very careful. I have put him on strict diet. When he gets to New York I want him to put himself in care of a physician. If he plays this year—"

"If he plays this year! Is it as serious as all that?"

"It could be," the doctor said again.

"What's the matter with him?"

"That's something I'm not at liberty to tell you," the doctor said. "That would have to come from him. But I wanted you to know that if he doesn't take the very best care of himself and do precisely as he is told, he may not be able to finish this season."

On the field the next day McGraw said to Young, casually:

"What does the doctor say about you?"

"Oh," Ross said, "he says I've got to watch my diet. Well, that will help. I won't put on weight that way."

"What did he say was wrong with you?"

"He didn't say."

McGraw looked at him closely.

"Don't give me that," he said.

Young laughed.

"You know how these doctors are," he said. "You just don't feel well, and you go to one of them and he finds out a lot of things wrong with you."

And then, shrewdly:

"Has he been talking to you?"

"To me? No. Why should he talk to me? I'm not sick."

"I just thought he might have said something to you about me. If he does, don't let him scare you. He hasn't scared me."

He picked up a bat and walked toward the plate. McGraw was genuinely disturbed. First Nehf . . . now Young. Two of his favorite ball players. And Young's case appeared, if anything, to be the more serious of the two.

Otherwise, things seemed to be all right. McGraw, who never believed that the team—any team—that had beaten him the year before could beat him again, had some reason to believe the Giants would do well this year. Fitzsimmons, backed by part of a season in the majors, looked like a sure winner. His infield, with Lindstrom constantly improving at third base, was up to standard. The illness of Nehf and Young might hurt him badly . . . but he wasn't prepared to say so as yet. Maybe somebody would move up to replace them. And, as always, his team was in fine shape as it started north.

There were laughs along the way. At Memphis, for instance—although, since the joke was on him in this case, he couldn't laugh very heartily. In common with most men who like to play jokes on others, he wasn't quick to respond when the laugh was aimed in his direction. Anyway:

He and four or five of the newspapermen were seated in front of the desk in the Hotel Peabody in Memphis when a very distinguished looking old gentleman—square-cut derby, frock coat, striped pants, stick—approached them and, looking directly at McGraw, asked:

"Are you with the Giants?"

McGraw stiffened slightly in his chair.

"Yes," he said. "Yes. I'm with the Giants."

"Have you seen Hughie Jennings about?"

"Why, no. Not lately. I saw him about an hour or so ago. Have you tried his room?"

"Yes. But he doesn't answer."

McGraw craned his neck, looking about the spacious lobby.

"Oh," the old gentleman said, "don't bother. He doesn't know me. But I used to live in Baltimore years ago and I saw him play with the Orioles. This morning I read in the newspaper that he was in town, and I just thought I'd drop around and see what he looked like."

At mention of Baltimore and the Orioles McGraw beamed.

"Is that so?" he said. "I used to play with the Orioles myself."

"You did, eh? What's your name?"

The blood crept slowly up the back of McGraw's neck and flooded his face.

"McGraw," he said testily.

The old gentleman shook his head.

"McGraw? That's funny," he said, "I don't remember you."

"Well," McGraw snapped, the words coming fast now, "I was in Baltimore before Jennings came there, and I was there after he left!"

The old gentleman shook his head.

"That may be," he said, "but I don't remember you."

He walked away. The newspapermen, almost strangling with suppressed laughter, looked at McGraw. He was purple with rage.

"——— old fool!" he snarled.

Then it dawned on him that he had been tricked. He leaped to his feet.

"Where is that —— Jennings!" he yelled.

And, laughing . . . but his laugh was hollow . . . started on a search for the culprit.

That night Tom Watkins gave one of his best parties for McGraw. It was McGraw's birthday. Tom persuaded the newspapermen, who were going to give their customary party in a private dining room at the hotel, to allow him to take over. So the party was given at the Tennessee Club instead. It was a party that none of the guests ever forgot. Especially unforgettable was the Negro boy who sang: "Look down, look down that lonesome road." Up to that time there

had been sporadic singing on the part of the guests. But when the Negro boy got through, nobody dared sing any more.

The Giants were off to a jolting start. The quick break from the barrier that McGraw had visioned had failed to materialize. Worse, the players—or some of them—seemed to be in the grip of lethargy. He heckled and needled and stormed and ranted. But no matter what he said or did, he couldn't shake them out of the rut into which they had fallen.

At the end of a month or so of play he decided that something had to be done to wake them up. Something that would show them there was no one on the team, however great his reputation or regardless of any handicap under which he might be suffering, who could remain with the club unless he was delivering.

On the night of May 11, in St. Louis, McGraw announced the release of Nehf and Groh. Waivers had been asked on both, and the Reds had claimed Nehf. No one had put in a claim for Groh, and the third baseman had received his outright release. (He was to sign, a few days later, with Toledo.) Once more McGraw had had to stifle sentiment in the interests of his team. He had a great personal fondness for Art and Heinie, yet realized they no longer could help the Giants.

Nehf had been one of his great pitchers—his mainstay in the box when he was winning four pennants in a row. Groh, sent away in his youth, had developed into one of the top third basemen of his time, and on his return to the Giants had been a factor in the winning of three of those four pennants. Each was McGraw's type of ball player. They lived cleanly, played hard, never complained, never gave him the slightest cause for worry. He was plainly moved that night when he called the newspapermen together to give them the story.

Regrettably, considerable unpleasantness followed in Nehf's case. When Arthur reported to Jack Hendricks, then managing the Reds, Hendricks said to him:

"I'm glad to have you with us, Art. Take it easy for a few days. I'm going to give you a chance to get settled, and I won't call on you to pitch until the end of the week."

Nehf stared at him in amazement.

"The end of the week!" he said. "Why, Jack, I can't pitch then."

"You can't? Well, when can you pitch?"

Art shook his head.

"I wish I knew," he said.

Hendricks was startled.

"What!" he exclaimed. "What are you talking about?"

Now Nehf was startled.

"Don't you know?" he asked.

"Don't I know what?"

"What's the matter with me. Why did you think the Giants asked for waivers on me?"

"I don't know. To tell you the truth, I was surprised. Why? What's wrong?"

Art's surprise turned to anger.

"Do you mean to tell me nobody told you that I have neuritis so bad I can't control the ball? That I can't pitch up an alley and don't know whether I'll ever be able to pitch again?"

"Certainly not!" Hendricks said. "If I had known that, I certainly wouldn't have claimed you."

Hendricks and the Cincinnati club went into action, demanding the Giants take Nehf back and return the waiver price Cincinnati had paid for him. The Giants promptly refused on the ground that Hendricks should have known what he was doing and, since he hadn't, must pay for his ignorance. The matter was referred to Heydler.

Nehf, thoroughly aroused, felt that McGraw not only had treated the Cincinnati club unfairly, but had been unfair to him, too, by using him as the instrument in the deception. When the Giants moved into Cincinnati a few days later, he met McGraw in front of the Sinton Hotel.

"Hello, Art," McGraw said, extending his hand.

"Don't you talk to me!" Nehf blazed.

McGraw, who had no notion that Nehf felt that way toward him, was nonplused.

"What's the matter with you?" he demanded.

"You know very well what's the matter with me. That was a fine thing you did to me, after the years I pitched for you. A fine thing!"

McGraw still didn't understand. When at last he realized what Nehf was talking about, he said:

"Why, it's ridiculous for you to feel that way! If you think I

put something over on Hendricks, you had nothing to do with it and it certainly is no reflection on you. I don't want you to feel that way toward me. Come on. Shake hands."

There was no appeasing Nehf.

"Not with you," he said. "And don't you ever try to talk to me again."

He stalked away. McGraw, hurt, angry, strode into the hotel.

Heydler lost no time deciding the case in the Giants' favor, giving it as his opinion that a ball club before putting in a claim for a player, should know all the facts concerning that player's condition, and that, therefore, the Cincinnati club had no redress.

Two weeks later, when the Reds were at the Polo Grounds, Irish Meusel waited for Nehf to come out of the club house before the opening game of the series, and said:

"The Old Man wants to see you after the game."

"Tell him to go to hell," Nehf said.

"Aw," Irish said, "be reasonable. He thinks a lot of you, and he feels bad because you're sore at him. He wants to make up with you."

"Tell him to go jump in the river. What I said to him in Cincinnati still goes. I never want him to speak to me again."

Irish reported to McGraw that Nehf had rejected his overtures.

McGraw shrugged.

"Well," he said, "I still think he's a damned fool for feeling that way, but there isn't anything I can do about it."

Meanwhile, Young's condition not only failed to improve, but obviously was not being held in check, in spite of the close surveillance to which he had grudgingly surrendered himself. When he was in New York his physician saw him almost every day. When he went on the road with the team a male nurse accompanied him. They roomed together and ate together. Young would be sitting around with some of the other players of an evening and about 10 o'clock his nurse would nod to him and get up. Young would get up and follow him to their room. Once he said:

"I used to laugh at Phil Douglas with his keeper. Now I've got one."

He played most of the time, but now and then there were days when the nurse would say:

“Mr. McGraw, I don’t think Mr. Young should play today.”

And McGraw would say:

“All right. Take good care of him.”

Nothing that had happened to McGraw in a long time affected him as deeply. He had liked Young from the day he saw him, at Marlin, nine years before, trying to stop ground balls at third base, trying desperately, gamely, fighting as hard as he could to get a foothold in the majors. Only two pictures hung over his desk in his office at the club house. One was of Mathewson, the other of Young. Matty was gone . . . and now, Young?

It was a sweltering night in St. Louis, and in the Hotel Chase McGraw paced the floor of his suite, wondering how he was going to pull his team out of its slump . . . what pitcher he could start on the morrow . . . and what the devil had got in Frank Frisch, who had been so silent and sullen under an upbraiding in the club house after the game that day.

Alone in his own room, Frisch cursed McGraw, the Giants, and the day he had taken up baseball as a profession. He knew, of course, that as a matter of tradition the Giant captain was the manager’s whipping boy. That when things were going wrong, McGraw would single out his captain and say things to him in the club house that were meant not for him, but for the other members of the team. He remembered Larry Doyle’s telling him how McGraw would point to him and yell:

“Look at him! Just look at him, the miserable, yellow ——! The captain of my ball club! The —— —— idiot!”

Larry had laughed, telling those stories, and Frisch had laughed with him. And Frisch had taken a lot of punishment as the Giants had been beaten off by the Pirates in 1925 and faltered through 1926, and never talked back and sometimes he could laugh later on, as he told his friends how McGraw had ridden him in an effort to spur the other players on.

But there had been too much of it. He was past laughing at it now, or any part of it. He had done nothing wrong that day. But McGraw had torn into him in the club house and humiliated him again before the other players. He had taken it—as he had taken it so many times before. But he was through taking it.

He sat by a window looking out over Forest Park. Sat there until

the night faded and the city lay hot and quiet in the first light of the new day. And then, his mind no longer in a tumult, he went to bed. He fell asleep quickly, because he had reached a decision.

He was up at eight o'clock. He dressed and packed his bag, and went downstairs and had his breakfast. And then he took his bag and walked out of the hotel to where a taxicab stood at the curb. On the side veranda, facing the fountain, where, later, the players would be sitting about, talking and killing time until they must start for the ball park, an early-rising reporter sat smoking a cigarette and reading the morning paper. He looked up in surprise as Frisch passed him on the way to the lab, wondered vaguely where the player was going with his bag at that hour of the morning. Then he returned to the sporting page of his paper. He found there no story to compare with the one he had just missed: Frisch was quitting the Giants.

Frank's absence wasn't discovered by McGraw or the other players until he failed to appear in the club house at Sportsman's Park.

"Call the hotel," McGraw said. "Maybe he's sick."

One of the players called.

"Mr. Frisch has checked out," the operator said.

The player turned to McGraw.

"They say he's checked out."

McGraw took the receiver from him.

"When did he check out?"

"I don't know," the operator said. "I'll connect you with the desk."

The clerk was surprised.

"Why, Mr. McGraw," he said, "I thought you knew. When Mr. Frisch came down to breakfast this morning, he asked me when he could get a train to New York. I told him at 9:30, and he asked me to have the porter call the station and order a ticket for him. He left here about 9 o'clock and..."

McGraw hung up the receiver and began to walk up and down the room, the players watching him in silence. He paused and looked at George Kelly.

"You're playing second base today," he said. "Terry, you play first base."

He didn't take much interest in the ball game that day. Something had happened to him that never had happened before. One of his ball players had walked out on him. Players had turned on him before...



poor Bugs Raymond and Chase and Zimmerman and a few others . . . and he had got rid of them. But this was the first time one had walked out. Not an ordinary player, either, but one for whom he had a great admiration and on whom, everyone believed, he had built high hopes.

He never had said to Frisch, or to anyone else, that when the day came that he no longer wanted to manage the Giants, Frank would be his choice as his successor. But those who were close to him believed—and still believed—that was in his mind. For Frisch, even as a young man, was very like McGraw. He had the same burning competitive spirit and the same intense love of baseball. He was ambitious, and he had the gift of leadership. It was easy to predict, even then, that some day he would be a manager. Where else, then, but in New York? And of all the prospective heirs to McGraw's authority, where was one better fitted, by temperament and training?

When the newspapermen, startled by word of Frisch's desertion, interviewed McGraw after the game, he shrugged off their questions—or answered them briefly.

"What can I say? . . . I don't know any more about it than you do. . . . He went to New York, that's all I know. . . . No, he didn't say anything to me . . . I didn't see him last night or this morning. . . . The last time I saw him was in the club house after the game. . . . Dispute? . . . No. . . . I don't have disputes with my ball players."

And then, with a hard laugh:

"Maybe the heat got him."

But he was saddened and embittered, for he knew there was only one way for him to meet the challenge Frisch had hurled at him. This was to sell or trade him at the first opportunity. Only by doing that could he maintain his grip on the other players.

In New York, Frisch had little to say: McGraw had ridden him too much; had hounded him in the dugout, on the field, and in the club house. That was all. Would he play with the Giants again? He didn't know. It was obvious to those who interviewed him that he regretted having left the team, and that only his fierce pride prevented him from saying so.

On the Giants' return to the Polo Grounds, McGraw sent for Frisch. Manager and player were together for only a short time in McGraw's office in the club house. Neither would discuss, later, what

had passed between them. But it was plain that McGraw had been unforgiving—and that Frisch's days with the Giants were numbered and he would not start another season at the Polo Grounds.

The Giants finished fifth that year. It was the first time in ten years that they had fallen below second place.

Late in December it was reported the Giants were going to get Rogers Hornsby from the Cardinals. It seemed unlikely that Sam Breadon, the Cardinal owner, would part with the man who, that year, had led his club to its first National League pennant and a triumph over the Yankees in the World Series, and whose popularity in St. Louis was unbounded. But the report persisted. On the afternoon of December 21 a reporter saw McGraw in the Giants' office on Forty-second Street and asked him about it. He shook his head.

"It isn't true," he said.

"Have you made an offer for him?"

"Not for publication—yes," he said. "We have made a couple of offers for him. We offered a lot of money for him once."

"Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, wasn't it?"

He shrugged.

"Name your own figure," he said. "I will say that we offered more for him than anybody ever offered for a ball player before—or since. But Breadon refused to sell him."

That night the reporter was in Newark, covering a fight between Jack Delaney, then one of the front-rank heavyweights, and Bud Gorman. Just before the principals in the main bout entered the ring, a telegraph operator at his elbow copied a message from his office and handed it to him.

"The Giants have traded Frank Frisch and Jimmy Ring to the Cardinals for Rogers Hornsby," it read.

Unable to reach McGraw on the telephone that night, the reporter confronted him in the office the next day.

"That was a fine steer you gave me yesterday afternoon," he said bitterly.

McGraw was genuinely disturbed.

"I called you at your office last night," he said, "but they told me you were on your way to Newark. I wanted to explain to you what happened. As sure as I am sitting here, when you asked me yesterday if we were going to get Hornsby and I told you no, I

was telling you the truth, as I knew it then. About eight o'clock Stoneham and I went to dinner, but got word to come back to the office, as Breadon was trying to get us on the phone. We rushed back and called him, and he said:

"'Do you still want Hornsby?'"

"'Yes,' we said.

"He asked us what we would give for him, and before we could tell him he wanted to know if we would let him have Frisch. We said yes, and he said:

"'Well, you've got Hornsby.'"

"So help me, that's just the way it happened. If you doubt me, ask Breadon."

That, in all truth, was the way it had happened. Breadon had offered Hornsby a one-year contract calling for \$50,000. But Rog, who had just completed a three-year term at \$30,000—he had signed the contract as a player and had received no increase on assuming the management of the team in midseason of 1925—wanted another three-year agreement. Breadon refused, and they argued hotly. Old grievances between them were dug up and hurled back and forth. And when they parted on the evening of the twenty-first, Breadon knew they could not be reconciled. He also knew that Frisch was through in New York.

Thus, the deal was pointed for him. There would be a terrific howl from the fans, of course, when they learned their idol had been sent away. The thing to do, then, was to acquire, in exchange for him, a man who could play second base in a fashion to still the uproar. Obviously, Frisch was that man. And so Sam had grabbed a telephone and called Stoneham and McGraw and arranged the trade—the inclusion of Ring being an afterthought.

Breadon's worst fears about the reaction in St. Louis were realized, if not exceeded. By mail, by telephone and telegram, he was assailed by the seething fans, who derided his choice of Bob O'Farrell as manager, were openly contemptuous of Frisch, and suggested that Sam leave town before they rode him out on a rail. He was denounced in protest meetings hurriedly called all over town, in the newspapers, and in resolutions adopted by the Chamber of Commerce. A number of organizations threatened to boycott the ball club.

New York fans regretted the passing of Frisch—but, aware that

it was inevitable, agreed they couldn't have asked for a better replacement than Hornsby, whose hitting they had admired—and feared—for nearly ten years.

In the excitement no one paid much attention to the fact that Hornsby was a stockholder in the Cardinals. Since he couldn't own stock in one club and play with another, it was assumed that he would sell his shares within a very short time, and so cut the last of the ties that bound him to St. Louis.

## XXVI ⊗ NEW CAPTAIN OF THE GIANTS

**T**HE SPRING OF 1927, with the Giants at Sarasota again, was a troublous one for McGraw. The Florida land boom had collapsed, Pennant Park was being reclaimed by the jungle, and some of those he had so blithely advised to follow him in real estate were beginning to catch up with him. The organizers of the project, for whom he so obligingly had fronted, but of whose workings he knew little or nothing, had overplayed their hands and, according to some of the complainants, oversold their lots. Now some of the investors wanted their money back—and they were looking squarely at McGraw.

There were open threats of lawsuits against him, veiled threats of prosecution. Thus, at a time when his mind should have been on his ball players, he was dashing about Florida, squaring an investor here, placating another there. Probably no one knows to this day how much money it cost him to clear the claims that were lodged against him. Among his assets that went into the pool was his home in Sarasota, which he had planned to occupy that year.

Nor was all serene at the training camp. Eddie Roush, who had returned to the Giants, was holding out. Although McGraw scornfully declared he didn't need Roush, but could get along very well with De Witt (Bevo) LeBourveau in center field, it was obvious that he did. His pitching staff was shaky, too. He made a trip to Orlando on an attempt to persuade the Cincinnati club to sell Adolfo Luque to him, but returned empty-handed. When, a few days later, the club went to Tampa for a week-end of exhibition games, Rube Marquard was there, looking for a job. He had been around since

McGraw had sent him to Brooklyn, thirteen years or so before. Brooklyn . . . Cincinnati . . . Boston. Now he was a free agent.

"I wish you'd give me a chance, Mac," he said. "I haven't got much stuff left, as you know. But I know more about pitching than I ever did. I might be able to save a few games for you—or even win one once in a while."

McGraw, partly for old times' sake, partly because he had a faint hope that the Rube might be able to help him, gave him a trial. That was meat on the plate for the baseball writers. Rube Marquard, hero of Giant campaigns in the long ago, comes back to McGraw. Boze Bulger and the other veterans hopped to it, and gave the Rube a great build-up. To everybody's regret, the Rube just couldn't make it. The trial, begun in Tampa and continued in Sarasota, petered out. The Rube picked up his stuff and went his way—and McGraw went on worrying about his pitchers and, although he wouldn't admit it, about Roush and the loose state of the outfield with Eddie on his farm in Indiana.

There was another complication, of which McGraw was not at first aware because it was brought about by his frequent excursions out of the camp. This was occasioned by the presence of Hornsby.

In the first place, Rog was in a position that, in some respects, was unenviable. Just a few months before, he had been the manager of the world champion Cardinals, the absolute boss in the club house, the dugout, and on the field. Now he was a player in the ranks again, subject to McGraw's orders and bound by the restrictions that are placed on a player and from which a manager is free. There was, in the beginning, no inclination on anyone's part to impress him with the change in his status. McGraw, who greatly admired him as a ball player and as a rugged, positive personality, had gone so far as to intimate that one day he might be the manager of the Giants. He didn't say that precisely. What he did say was:

"You just go your own way around here, watch yourself carefully, and keep your mouth shut. You never can tell what might happen. I'm not going to go on managing this ball club forever, you know."

All might have been well if McGraw had remained in camp all the time. The complications set in when, forced to leave every so often, he appointed Hornsby captain of the team and announced that, in

his absence, Rog would be in command. That would have been all right, too, if Hornsby had pursued the line of least resistance, as his predecessors as captain—Frisch . . . Bancroft . . . Fletcher . . . Doyle—had done when McGraw was not present. But Rog, being a very literal person, took the captaincy very literally. Being, also, a very positive person, he wanted things done his way when he was in command. And being a very outspoken person, he didn't hesitate to give voice to criticisms when he felt it was necessary.

One day, when McGraw was away, he spoke brusquely to Lindstrom about the manner in which Freddy had made a play at third base during a practice game.

"That's the way the Old Man wants us to make it," Lindstrom said.

"Then when he's here, make it that way," Hornsby said coldly. "When I'm here, make it the way I tell you to."

"So you know more than the Old Man, eh?" Lindstrom flared.

"I didn't say anything about that," Hornsby said. "It just happens that he wants it one way and I want it another, and as long as I'm in charge I'm going to have it my way."

Lindstrom was scornful.

"Who the hell do you think you are?" he said. "When you put that bat down, you're no bargain."

The other players were silent.

"I'm not going to argue with you," Hornsby said. "You do as I tell you to and keep your mouth shut."

He looked about him, his gaze taking in all the others.

"That goes for the rest of you," he said, and walked back to his position at second base.

None of the players had known Hornsby well. Even as a player in St. Louis, before succeeding Branch Rickey as manager, he had been known as a loner. Someone had asked Ferdie Schupp, soon after he had joined the Cardinals, what sort of fellow Hornsby was, and he had said:

"I don't know. You never see him except on the ball field, and he never talks to anybody. After a game he comes in the club house, takes his shower, dresses, and walks out without a word, and nobody knows where he goes."

Among the few who ever had penetrated Hornsby's reserve were the baseball writers—Bulger, Ken Smith, George Phair and a few

others—who traveled regularly with the Giants. They had liked him from their first contact with him as a manager because he answered their questions readily and truthfully, and talked freely with them about his own team or, for that matter, any other about which they asked him.

Now, at Sarasota, they became his only companions, apart from his wife and little boy, who spent a couple of weeks with him at the camp. When Mrs. Hornsby and the boy left, Hornsby ate alone, while all about him the other players ate in groups at tables for four or six. The players respected him, but he had drawn a line between them and himself which few had a desire to cross.

McGraw, noting this, said nothing about it. If he felt that he unwittingly had placed Hornsby in a difficult position, he did nothing to ease it, undoubtedly believing that Rog was capable of taking care of himself—which he was. Certainly, Hornsby gave no sign that he cared whether the players liked him or not. When McGraw was in camp he kept his mouth shut, even when he saw or heard something he didn't like. When McGraw was absent he ran things to suit himself.

One night, when the team was in Tampa, Hornsby was walking in the gardens of the Tampa Bay Hotel with a reporter, and the reporter said:

“Not for publication, Rog, but what do you think of the outfield situation with Roush missing?”

“Before I tell you,” Rog said, “I want to say this: I don't talk ‘not for publication.’ Anything I say you can put in the paper, and if anybody don't like it, he can lump it. Now I'll tell you what I think of the outfield. I think it stinks. They got to get Roush in there to keep those clowns from knocking their heads together under fly balls, and if they don't go and get him, no matter how much they have to pay him, they're crazy. McGraw hasn't asked me for advice, but if he does I'll tell him what I just told you.”

The reporter, who had been writing the same thing—to McGraw's obvious displeasure—for several days, forebore quoting Hornsby in the interests of the good relations existing between McGraw and his captain.

The team left Sarasota at the end of a month and moved as far as St. Augustine, where it was scheduled to remain for twelve days, working out and playing exhibition games. Near the end of the stay

Jim Tierney called the newspapermen about him after dinner one night and said:

"McGraw has gone to New York."

Everyone knew McGraw hadn't been at the ball park that afternoon, of course, but since he had been away so much that spring no one had given any heed to his absence. The news that he was on his way to New York, however, was startling.

"When did he leave?" one of the reporters asked.

"Last night."

"Why weren't we told before this?"

Tierney shrugged.

"Those were his orders," he said.

The newspapermen, having filed their reports of McGraw's presence in New York, were sitting about on the veranda of their hotel, and some of them were denouncing Tierney.

"You can leave Jim out of it," one of them said. "He's not responsible. He did only what he was told to do. I'm saving my squawk for McGraw."

At that point Hornsby joined the group.

"What's everybody mad about?" he asked, settling himself in an armchair.

"McGraw's gone to New York," one of them said. "He left last night, but Tierney didn't tell us about it until just now."

Hornsby laughed.

"Well?" he asked "What difference does it make? Who the hell cares where he is?"

"I do, for one," a reporter said. "I'm responsible for the news out of this camp and I like to know where the manager is. And as for you, my friend, you'd better quit popping off like that. Somebody who hears you may run to McGraw and tell him about it."

"Nuts!" Hornsby said. "I never said anything behind his back I wouldn't say to his face, so they can run and tell him all they want. What did he go to New York for—to get Stoneham to sign Roush?"

"That's what we've been thinking."

"You can go bet on it."

He got up.

"But the hell with it," he said. "Who wants to go for a walk?"



When the squad reached Chattanooga a few days later McGraw was there to meet them. He asked the newspapermen to come to his room. They found him in an excellent frame of mind. After he had greeted them, he said:

"Well, Roush has signed. That's what I went to New York for. I wanted to discuss the matter with Mr. Stoneham. We called Roush on the telephone and came to terms with him, and he will join us in a day or so."

No one said anything for a moment. Then the reporter who had been saving his squawk for McGraw asked:

"Why didn't you tell us you were going to New York?"

"Oh," he said, "I didn't think it made any difference."

"You must have. You told Jim Tierney not to let us know until twenty-four hours later."

He flushed at that.

"Well, all right, then. I didn't want it known. What of it?"

"This much: You put every man covering this ball club in a bad spot and might have cost somebody his job."

"How?"

"By walking out without letting us know. We're supposed to know what's going on around here, and we're responsible for the news. Suppose somebody, seeing you in New York, had tipped off the papers. We'd be a fine-looking lot of stiffs, wouldn't we? Every one of our editors would have been justified in believing we were negligent; and, as I said before, some of us might have been fired."

"Oh, come, come!" he said, forcing a laugh. "It wasn't as serious as all that. I just wanted to get out without any publicity, and if anything had happened I would have squared you with your editors."

"Don't you think," the reporter asked, "that if you had told us you were going, but asked us not to print anything about it, we would have done as you asked? Don't you think you could have trusted us?"

A reporter in the rear of the room got up and, without a word, went out.

McGraw, who had looked after his retreating figure, turned to his inquisitor.

"I don't know whether I could have or not," he said sharply.

"You should know," the reporter snapped. "I don't know of a man covering this ball club who has ever betrayed your confidence."

"Well," McGraw said, "this time I had to be sure. . . . Anyway, let's forget it. I didn't look at it the way you do. If I had, I would have told you."

The reporters got up to leave and write their stories. The one who had taken McGraw to task, still angry, was near the door when McGraw took him by the arm.

"Come here a minute; I want to tell you something," he said.

As the others left the room he said:

"I just wanted to give you a tip: You were giving me hell a moment ago for not trusting the newspapermen. It might be a good idea for them to find out if they can trust each other. You know what that bird who went out a little while ago is doing, don't you? He's in his room calling his office on the telephone so he can beat the rest of you on the Roush story."

The reporter's temperature rose even higher.

"If I thought you were right—"

McGraw shrugged.

"Go up to his room and find out," he said. "If he isn't on the telephone talking to his office, I'll buy you the best suit of clothes in New York."

The reporter darted out of the room—then, a little way down the hall, checked his steps. He wouldn't go to his colleague's room. He was afraid he'd discover McGraw was right.

Now, as the Giants moved steadily toward New York and the opening of the season loomed, a matter that nearly everyone seemed to have forgotten suddenly bobbed up: Hornsby's ownership of stock in the Cardinals.

"How about that, Mac?" a reporter asked McGraw.

"Oh," he said, "that will be taken care of. He won't have any trouble disposing of his stock."

Hornsby had said nothing, nor made a move to sell. He was waiting for an offer from Breadon. When it came—when Breadon asked him how much he wanted for it—he replied:

"One hundred and sixteen dollars per share."

The screams that came out of St. Louis were blood-curdling.

"A hundred and sixteen dollars a share!" Sam shrieked, when he could find words to express his horror and indignation. "Why, you paid only forty-five dollars a share."

"That was before I won the pennant and the world championship for you," Hornsby countered. "I have had the stock appraised, and I am told it is worth \$116 a share now. So that's what I'll take."

Breadon was obdurate. Hornsby seemed unconcerned. So did McGraw. But he wasn't. He knew Breadon and Hornsby, knew how firm each could stand—and knew the ill feeling that had grown up between them. If neither was willing to compromise, Hornsby would not be permitted to play with the Giants, of course.

The tension increased. Pressed for a statement on the situation which, so far as anyone knew, was without parallel in baseball history, John Heydler said:

"Unless Hornsby disposes of his stock, he cannot play with the Giants."

McGraw rushed in at that point to protect himself and his ball club. The New York fans were waiting for Hornsby, and McGraw knew that if, for any reason, he couldn't deliver him, there would be the devil to pay. The object of his attack was not Hornsby or Breadon, but Heydler.

"There is no rule in the league's constitution or by-laws to keep Hornsby from playing with the Giants," he declared. "Heydler can't invent new rules. It takes a unanimous vote to change the by-laws, and you can bet the Giants won't vote for any such change."

"The deal with St. Louis was made in good faith. We delivered two players in return. We got Hornsby and we are going to play Hornsby. We're obliged to go through with our contract with him. This isn't a question of baseball, but of property rights. The trouble is that Heydler spoke too soon."

"I think and hope the matter will be adjusted smoothly by Hornsby selling his stock at a satisfactory price, but the New York club is not going to take any steps to hurry this along. We intend to play Hornsby on April 12 at Philadelphia."

"If necessary, we will go over Heydler's head to the league's board of directors. If that is done and we fail to get satisfaction there, we are prepared to go into the courts."

Heydler retorted that his decision had not been based on any rule in the book, but on the unwritten law of baseball, and predicted that the board of directors, composed of Garry Herrmann of Cincinnati, William F. Baker of Philadelphia, Wilbert Robinson of

Brooklyn, and Breadon, would support him—adding that, of course, if the case reached the board, Breadon would disqualify himself.

The baseball writers with the Giants had a song of endless verses that, sung to the tune of "Abdullah Bulbul Ameer," was a saga of the outstanding events in baseball during the past six or seven years. Now they added a verse:

"My friend," said John J., "Rogers Hornsby will play  
Second base for the Giants as sich.  
By no rule in the book  
Can you give him the hook. . . ."

The last line was unprintable.

McGraw, having put a bold front on his case, quietly went to work on Hornsby in an endeavor to appease him—but failed dismally, and turned this phase of his campaign over to Leo Bondy. Hornsby stared coldly at Bondy and virtually told him to mind his own business.

The board of directors, minus Breadon, met in an attempt to find a solution. Their first suggestion was that the New York club make up the difference between the price offered by Breadon and that demanded by Hornsby. This was rejected promptly by Stoneham and McGraw, and, thinking the directors might uphold Heydler and bar Hornsby from the Polo Grounds, they ordered Bondy to draw up an application for an injunction restraining the league president and hold it in readiness for quick action, as the teams were almost on the eve of the opening of the season.

To the Giants' relief—to the relief of everyone, for that matter—the directors passed the case on to the league as a whole with a recommendation that, since any decision that would keep Hornsby from playing with the Giants would affect every other club, each club contribute equally to a fund to meet the player's price. Some of the owners balked at this. But their objections soon were overcome by the others, who took a realistic view of the situation.

It was this way, the realists said: They couldn't compel Hornsby to sell his stock at Breadon's figure. They could only refuse to permit him to play. This might involve them in court action, as McGraw had threatened, and, at best, would cost them money at the gate, for Hornsby was a drawing card in all the towns. It was outrageous that they should have to give in to him, they added. But it would be

cheaper and less troublesome in the long run. So they all chipped in, and Hornsby got his money and was in the Giants' line-up at Philadelphia on opening day.

Hornsby was in the line-up, but Young was missing. Ross had declined so rapidly since the end of the last season that he had had to take to his bed. No longer did his doctors give McGraw any hope that he would be able to play again. They were fighting now to save his life.

It was a season in which, despite the presence of Hornsby, the Giants were not destined to win. They started well, but before the month of April was out they had dropped to fourth place. There they hung through May and June. As they were about to go west for the second time, McGraw did a strange thing. He delegated command of the team to Hornsby and remained in New York. He wasn't feeling too well, he said. Maybe, he added, he needed a change—and maybe the ball players did, too.

Hornsby could not improve the position of the team on that trip. But when, in September, they headed west for the last time, and he again was in command while McGraw went on a scouting trip, he shook them up, fired them with his own tenacity, and got them up to second place. He couldn't keep them there, however. They slipped back to third as the season rolled to a close.

It had been a sorry year for McGraw. His troubles in the spring had been followed by spells of ill health and a lowering of his spirits such as he never had known before. This condition was brought on, perhaps, by a straining of relations between him and Stoneham and an added aggravation caused by friction between himself and Jim Tierney.

He had known Tierney for many years—away back around 1912 when Jim, then a teacher of mathematics, had shared an apartment with some of the Giant players. Subsequently, Jim had given up teaching to enter the Secret Service and had risen to a captaincy. It was while he occupied this post that McGraw persuaded him to resign and become secretary of the Giants. For some time—or until quarrels between McGraw and Stoneham had become frequent and, sometimes, intense—Jim and McGraw had continued to be friends.

But lately it had seemed to McGraw that Tierney, although never openly taking part in the arguments that raged in the office, quietly

had taken Stoneham's side. McGraw, accusing him of disloyalty, formed an intense dislike for him, which he never was at any pains to conceal. Tierney, for his part, always was scrupulously polite to McGraw, and never, even to his closest friends, had a word to say against him. But he was almost constantly in Stoneham's company, and when some of Stoneham's other companions, who didn't like Jim, were moved to disparage him, C. A. would say, angrily:

"Jim is my friend—the best friend I have on this ball club. I don't care whether you like it or McGraw likes it or anybody else."

He said that to McGraw more than once, too, and McGraw brooded over it.

The sorriest blow of the year for McGraw, however, was reserved for October. On the twenty-second of that month, Ross Young died in San Antonio.

## XXVII ☉ A GUY NAMED HUBBELL

**T**HE ARRIVAL OF Rogers Hornsby in New York had been startling. Equally startling was his departure. Out of a clear sky, the Giants announced on January 10, 1928, that he had been traded to Boston for Frank Hogan, a catcher, and Jimmy Welsh, an outfielder. The announcement concluded with the information that Andy Cohen would play second base.

The newspapers hammered the ball club with questions. Why had Hornsby been given in exchange for a catcher with only one season of major-league play behind him? Why, when the only replacement for him was a youngster who had yet to prove he was of big-league caliber? Why, when he had hit .361 and been a great favorite with the fans at the Polo Grounds? Why?

In reply they got shrugs and bland phrases that explained nothing. Charlie Stoneham and Jim Tierney insisted that the deal was exactly as it appeared on the surface. That no story was being withheld. That . . .

They were ridiculed by an impatient and suspicious press. Stoneham and Tierney—where was McGraw?

Well, McGraw had fled the town. He had gone to Havana without seeing the reporters who had flocked to his office. Reached in his flight by the news associations or special correspondents, he had shaken off their questions. He had no comment, he said. See Stoneham. See Tierney.

From his attitude it was inferred that, whatever had led to the decision to get rid of Hornsby, he had had no part in the making of it. If he had, he would have remained in New York to defend it and attempt to justify it. The newspapers concluded that Stoneham had ordered the dismissal of the player. This seemed plausible enough, since Stoneham never had appeared to like Hornsby—which wasn't at all strange, since Hornsby, who either didn't like him or simply had no interest in him, repeatedly snubbed him.

"He called Stoneham a ——," one reporter said. "I heard him. Stoneham had gone out to Pittsburgh for that series last September, and he met Hornsby in the lobby of the Schenley after one of the games and asked him why he didn't use Cummings as a pinch hitter. Hornsby just looked at him and said:

"'Are you trying to tell me how to run this ball club?'

"That kind of took Charlie back, and he said:

"'Why, no. I just thought...'

"And before he could say any more, Hornsby said:

"'I don't care what you thought, you ——. If you don't like the way I'm running the club, get somebody else to do it.'

"He walked away from him, and the chances are that right there Charlie made up his mind Hornsby never would play another game with the Giants."

Apocryphal? Perhaps. Yet it gained wide circulation as Stoneham and Tierney, in New York, and McGraw, in Havana, refused to amplify the original announcement and, in St. Louis, Hornsby simply shook his head and said that he was as much surprised as anybody and wanted to know what a fellow had to do to stay with the Giants. It was taken for granted that he didn't know why he had been traded, since it would have been out of character for him to have kept quiet if he did.

At any rate, he was gone. At their annual dinner three weeks later the baseball writers sang:

"All your Welshes, Cohens and Hogans  
"Won't begin to fill the brogans  
"That Hornsby wore so well at second base."

On February 1, while McGraw still was in Havana, Hughie Jennings died at his home in Scanton, Pennsylvania. Ill health had compelled his retirement from baseball, and McGraw had been aware for some time that his old friend could not live very long. The news of Hughie's passing greatly depressed him, for they had been devoted friends for thirty-five years.

On February 11 McGraw, in a sudden return to New York, put through another trade: Grimes for Vic Aldridge of the Pirates. Grimes, who had not had a particularly good season in 1927, was holding out for a big raise in salary. Aldridge, whose season had been no better than Burleigh's, was doing the same. McGraw proposed to Barney Dreyfuss that they swap their discontented hurlers even up, and Barney agreed.

Now McGraw set out for Hot Springs, Arkansas, where he had ordered his pitchers and catchers to report for two weeks of light training, roadwork over the hills, and—for those who needed reducing—the mineral baths. On his arrival he called a press conference in his rooms. This was the first time he had seen the newspapermen since his hurried departure for Cuba.

"There is only one condition I have to insist upon," he said firmly, "and I want to make that plain before we start. I will not discuss the Hornsby trade."

He looked about him, smiling now.

"What would you like to know?" he asked.

Pat Robinson of the *World-Telegram* spoke up.

"I'd like to know why you traded Hornsby," he said.

That broke up the conference.

On March 1 the entire squad assembled at Augusta, which McGraw had picked as the training site that year. He was in better spirits than he had been most of the time through 1927. All his attention was given now to the training of his players. Larry Benton, obtained from Cincinnati, would add considerably to the strength of his pitching staff, he believed; and Hogan, although big and slow-moving, was a good enough catcher for a young fellow and could pound the ball. Welsh, although no shining star, was a competent



outfielder. McGraw's main concern was with Cohen. But he soon ceased to worry about the young man, who seemed to feel no concern himself.

Indeed, if Andy ever felt that, following Hornsby, he was in a difficult spot, he gave no sign of it. He wasn't fast and he couldn't hit with Hornsby or throw with him, either. But he was steady, and he had Jackson on one side of him and Terry on the other. McGraw thought he would do all right and never, by word or sign, indicated regret at the passing of Hornsby.

There was an incident that spring that was typical of McGraw. One day, shortly after the training had begun, a husky kid of about twenty showed up at the field and asked McGraw if he might get a uniform and work out with the squad.

"I guess so," McGraw said. "Are you a local boy?"

"No, sir," the kid said. "I live up in Pennsylvania. I work in the coal mines, but I always wanted to be a ball player."

He hesitated.

"Well?"

"I always wanted to play with the Giants," he blurted. "So I saved enough money to come down here and stay for a couple of weeks. I just want a trial, Mr. McGraw. I know I ain't good enough to make the big leagues yet, but I thought maybe if I showed something you might help me to get a job in the minor leagues."

"Let me look at your hands," McGraw said.

The kid held them out. They were big, thick-fingered, calloused. McGraw was satisfied the kid was telling the truth. Those hands had wielded a pick in the mines.

"Where are you living?" he asked.

"I got a room."

"Where do you eat?"

A shrug.

"Different places."

"How is your money holding out?"

"Pretty good. It don't cost me much to live."

"What's your name?"

"Andy Tokas."

McGraw called Jim Tierney.

"This is Andy Tokas," he said. "I'm going to give him a two

weeks' trial. See that he gets a uniform. And put him up at the hotel."

The kid tried, stammering, to thank him, but he walked away.

If that had been in the movies, the kid would have made good and one day would have heard a Polo Grounds crowd roaring for him. But that wasn't in the movies. That was in real life at Augusta, and the kid wasn't a ball player of even minor-league quality and never would be. But he had two weeks in the Giant camp; and when McGraw saw that his case was hopeless, he was sent home at McGraw's—not the club's—expense.

As the team moved north, playing exhibition games, it was inevitable that some of the fans should remind Cohen—and McGraw—of the change at second base. Cohen answered the taunts hurled at him with amiable smiles. But McGraw returned them in kind. Generally he did very well, but there was one fan who stopped him cold.

In Charlotte there was a fan known as Georgia Boy, who sat in a box just back of the home club's dugout every day during the season and whose voice could be heard all over the ball park. He never was ugly and never profane. But he drove the visiting players to distraction. There were some pitchers in the league who were in such dread of him that they refused to pitch there. Now, as the Giants came through with the Senators, Georgia Boy was in his accustomed place and, as might be expected, centered most of his fire on Cohen.

The first time Andy went to bat, he stood up as though to get a better look at him.

"Well, well, young man," he asked. "Who are you?"

Andy grinned at him.

"That's Andy Cohen!" a fan back of the boxes yelled.

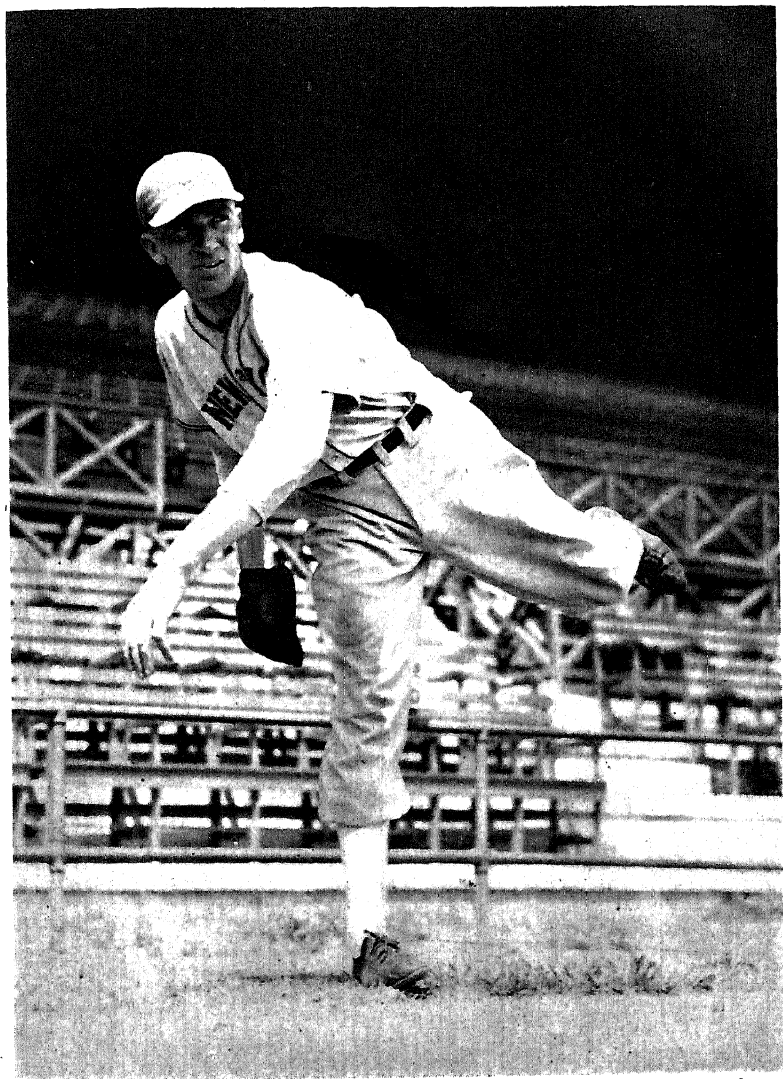
"Cohen? Cohen? Why, where's Rogers Hornsby?"

The crowd laughed. In the dugout McGraw shifted restlessly in his seat.

"Oh, yes!" Georgia Boy said. "Now I remember. You're the fellow who's taking Hornsby's place. Well, well."

He sat down, smiling.

"You'd better be good, Mr. Cohen," he said. "I forgot about you and came out here expecting to see Hornsby."



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CARL HUBBELL



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ROGERS HORNSBY

Andy swung on the first pitch and rifled the ball to left field. It struck about a foot from the top of the fence for a triple. That was all McGraw needed. He was up out of his seat, his eyes blazing.

"Well, you —— —— loudmouth!" he yelled. "How do you like that?"

Georgia Boy shrugged.

"That was nothing," he said. "Hornsby would have hit the ball over the fence."

The crowd howled. McGraw sat down. He didn't always know when he was licked, but he knew it then.

On the opening day of the season, Cohen played brilliantly and won the game with his timely hitting. Excited fans carried him from the field on their shoulders. He got a couple of hits the next day, a couple the day after that. Hornsby, off to a slow start with the Braves, trailed him badly. The *World* began printing a box on its main sport page every day, showing how Cohen was making Hornsby look bad. McGraw, who must have known Andy couldn't keep it up, said nothing. Hornsby, coming into the Polo Grounds with the Braves, said very seriously—and very truly:

"That's a lousy trick to play on the kid. I ain't hitting now, but when I start I'll lose him."

Which, of course, he did.

Meanwhile, the Giants, having broken fast, went into a sharp decline, dropped to fifth place, then came on again—but slowly. They were in Chicago on May 14, and had just lost a close ball game. McGraw, worried, angry, darted across the street outside the park to get a taxi and was struck by one coming from the opposite direction.

Apparently having suffered nothing worse than a bruise of the left leg, he picked himself up, snarled at the driver who had hit him, got into the cab for which he had been headed, and was driven to the hotel. That night the Giants left for Pittsburgh. Now his leg had stiffened and pained him considerably. He was confined to his bed in the Schenley.

"The Old Orioles ain't what they used to be," one of the players cracked. "The way I hear it, they used to play with broken legs. Now the Old Man gets a bump and has to lay up."

The next morning Jim Tierney told the newspapermen McGraw

had fined Virgil Barnes \$100, suspended him, and sent him back to New York.

"What for?" they asked.

"You'd better see Mr. McGraw," Jim said.

They went up to McGraw's room. He was propped up in bed.

"Well," he said, "the trainer told me this morning that Barnes couldn't pitch this afternoon because he had slipped in his bathtub and sprained his ankle. I know that some of the ball players' rooms in this hotel don't have bathtubs, and I was suspicious of Barnes, anyway. So I called the desk and asked them if Barnes had a bathtub, and they said no. I sent for Barnes and he finally admitted to me that he was sneaking into the hotel at one o'clock this morning and fell on the front steps."

He moved his injured leg gingerly.

"Fellows like that insult your intelligence," he said. "I can lie up here and not see them and still outthink them, the ——— ——— dummies!"

When McGraw got back to New York, it was discovered his leg was broken. But he was one Oriole who hadn't softened up. Within a couple of days he was hobbling about—and a couple of days after that he was in the dugout again. The rapidity with which he was recovering did not temper his resentment against Barnes, however. He had lost patience with Virgil, and on June 15 traded him to Boston for Joe Genewich, throwing in Al Spohrer, a catcher, and Bill Clarkson and Ben Cantwell, young pitchers. He probably threw in a sizable check, too, for Genewich was one of the best pitchers in the league that year.

In June of that year the Democratic National Convention was being held in Houston. Among the delegates from Illinois was Dick Kinsella. One day the business of sorting, counting, and tagging the delegates lagged. Kinsella was restless—so what more natural than that he should go to the ball park to see the Houston team of the Texas League play Beaumont? And what—once he had settled himself in a grandstand seat—more natural than that he should regard the athletes with a professional eye?

It wasn't long before his gaze was fastened on the Beaumont pitcher, a slim left-hander who threw a screw ball. Dick consulted his score card and saw that the pitcher's name was Hubbell. Hub-

bell? That would be Carl Hubbell. Although Dick never had seen him before, he knew of him, just as he knew of most ball players in the minors. Hubbell had been up with the Detroit Tigers a couple of times, but they had turned him back, Beaumont being their farm club.

Hubbell won, pitching a splendid game. When it was over, Kinsella strolled into the office of the Houston club.

"Do the Tigers still own Hubbell?" he asked.

"No," the secretary of the club said. "They released him outright to Beaumont this spring."

"He looked pretty good today. But I guess I just happened to catch him when he was lucky."

Dick was feinting. He didn't want the word to get around that he was interested in Hubbell.

"No," the secretary said. "He's looked good in almost every game he's pitched, even when he was beaten."

"Then why did Ty Cobb let him go? Cobb knows ball players."

The secretary shrugged.

"Cobb said he'd throw his arm out with that screw ball."

Dick laughed.

"It sounds to me as though he was letting the young man down easy," he said. "What he really meant, I guess, was that he isn't a major-league pitcher."

That night he called McGraw on the telephone.

"I saw a pitcher today, Mac," he said.

"Yes? Who?"

"A fellow named Hubbell with Beaumont."

"Didn't Detroit have him?"

"Yes."

"They let him go, didn't they?"

"Yes. But he looks good to me. There is only one thing against him, maybe."

"What's that?"

"They tell me the reason Cobb got rid of him is that he thinks the boy will throw his arm out with his screw ball."

McGraw snorted.

"That's a joke," he said. "Screw ball! When Matty was pitching it, they called it a fadeaway—and it never hurt his arm. If there

isn't anything else wrong with him, I'd like to hear more about him."

"Well," Kinsella said. "I'll follow him around for awhile."

He had forgotten all about the Democratic convention. He had seen a pitcher he liked. McGraw was interested. That was all that mattered. He trailed Hubbell through the Texas League towns for a week or so, saw him pitch a couple of times, and called McGraw again.

"He's got it, John," he said. "You better take him."

"All right," McGraw said. "Buy him. I'll take your word for it. I should. I've been taking it for years."

And so, while Al Smith was nominated without any help from Kinsella, because of Kinsella the Giants got one of the greatest pitchers that ever lived.

The Giants were coming back, winning steadily, heading up through the league. Aldridge was a complete flop, but Benton and Fitzsimmons were winning regularly. The addition of Hubbell, Genevich, and the veteran Jack Scott, brought back from the minors, bolstered the staff. Hubbell was a revelation. He had the poise of an old stager.

"Do you find it much harder pitching in the big leagues than in the minors?" a reporter asked him one day.

"No," he said. "It's easier in one way."

"Easier? How's that?"

"Well," he said, "you're pitching to better hitters, of course, but on the other hand, you get better support. Many a ball hit off me since I came up would have been a base hit in the Texas League, but up here it's been just a put-out."

The drive carried on through July and into August. On August 19 the Giants smashed past the Cardinals, and into first place. McGraw urged them on with redoubled energy. When the team had been trailing, the critics pointed out gleefully that Rogers Hornsby, whom he had sent to Boston, was leading the league in hitting, and that Burleigh Grimes, whom he had dispatched to Pittsburgh, was having one of his greatest years, keeping the Pirates in the first division as he swept along from victory to victory.

"If," the critics had pointed out, "McGraw had kept Hornsby and Grimes, the Giants would be in first place. His errors in judgment undoubtedly cost his ball club a pennant this year."



He had raged as he read these taunts, hurling the papers from him. The Giants would be in first place but for him, eh? Well, they'd be in first place soon enough. Moreover, they'd win the pennant. He'd show those wise guys where they got off.

Now they were leading the league. Lindstrom, Terry, Ott, O'Doul, and Hogan were slamming the ball. Benton was the best pitcher in the league. McGraw was jubilant. His jubilation was short-lived. Three days later the Giants dropped back to second place.

The sudden reverse threw them off their stride and they went into a terrific spin. McGraw stormed at them, threatened them, carried on so in the club house that some of them became panicky and lost their usefulness to the team. In his wrath he turned on Aldridge and released the pitcher to Newark, which had not yet been taken over as a farm club by the Yankees.

In September his mood suddenly changed. He realized he had gone too far in his abuse of some of the players—that, for instance, he actually had worked so on the nerves of one of his pitchers that the young man couldn't pitch if McGraw was in the dugout. So he remained in the club house when this pitcher was working and, in other ways, eased his grip somewhat on the entire team. The result was a new spurt. This ended in a hotly disputed play in a game with the Cubs at the Polo Grounds that brought McGraw once more into violent conflict with Bill Klem.

On September 27 the Giants, only a half game back of the Cardinals, engaged the Cubs in a double header. As the Giants went to bat in the sixth inning of the first game, the score was 3 to 2 in favor of the Cubs, with Hubbell against Arthur Nehf, now with Chicago. Reese singled to center and Mann doubled down the right-field line, Reese pulling up at third. Lindstrom fouled out. Then came the play that provoked the row:

Hogan drove the ball straight back to Nehf on the first hop, and Reese was hung up off third base. Nehf threw to Beck, the Cubs' third baseman, and Reese darted for the plate. Hartnett had rushed up the line to block Reese, and the runner smashed into him. Gabby, hurled back by the impact, threw his arms around Reese—to keep from falling, he explained later. While Reese wrestled frantically with him in an effort to break loose, Beck ran down and tagged the runner. Klem, umpiring back of the plate, waved Reese out—and the storm broke.

McGraw, standing on the steps of the dugout, was almost apoplectic as his players swarmed about Klem, screaming that Hartnett had interfered with Reese and the runner must be allowed to score. Klem waved them back, shook them off, bellowed at McGraw—and ordered that play be resumed. The Cubs got out of the inning without being scored upon and won the game. McGraw announced he would protest it.

In the second game Genewich shut the Cubs out. But the Cardinals won in Boston and thus gained a full game on the Giants.

Since there was no time to be lost, President Heydler heard the protest the next morning. He had been present at the game but, unwilling to trust his own view of the play, he called for pictures taken of it by news photographers. Having carefully examined these, he reached the conclusion that Hartnett had not interfered with Reese, and disallowed the protest. This so enraged McGraw that it is doubtful if he ever forgave Heydler. He obtained a copy of the picture on which Heydler had based his decision, and had it framed and hung in the Giants' office as evidence that the Giants had been robbed.

The Giants lost to the Cubs that afternoon, and again on the following day. This last defeat, coupled with a victory for the Cardinals over the Braves, decided the race. The Cardinals had won by two games. In the *New York Times* on September 30 James R. Harrison wrote:

“You can look back and see where the Giants might have won but retrospection is a futile thing. The Giants simply gave all they had and it wasn't quite enough. And so it was that John McGraw, eager to get back to the war of a World Series, sat on the bench yesterday and saw another season pass on with that ambition unfulfilled. It was the sort of day on which hopes are destroyed—a grim day, gray and gloomy.”

The hostile critics returned to the attack. Hornsby's hitting and Grimes's pitching—Burleigh had won twenty-five games for the Pirates—would have landed the Giants in the World Series.... At their show that winter, the baseball writers guyed McGraw about his trades in a song that ended:

“Vic Aldridge went to Joisey.”

## XXVIII ☉ HOGAN AT THE TABLE

ONE SPRING AT AUGUSTA had been enough. McGraw had praised the climate—the cool nights, the brisk mornings, the bracing air—but the ball players complained they couldn't get up a sweat. They complained, too, of the jolting railroad rides they'd had to take to St. Augustine to get in week-end games, and of the lack of recreational facilities once night had settled over the town. Everyone sensed there would be no return to Georgia when another spring rolled around. And no one was surprised when, in the late fall of 1928, McGraw announced the Giants would go back to their old stamping grounds in San Antonio.

This time they trained in the new ball park out at the other side of the town. The players who had been to San Antonio before were happy to go back. The newcomers liked their surroundings equally as well.

As always, there was an atmosphere of hopefulness in the camp. Since the Giants nearly always had been in the thick of the pennant fight, winning or being beaten off only in the last couple of weeks, each spring the flag seemed to wave invitingly just before them—within clutching distance of their eager hands. In 1928 they had missed by only two games. Now they were about to make a fresh start, and the mental attitude of the players, shaped by their joy at being in San Antonio again, was excellent.

McGraw had made only one important trade since the close of the last season, sending Frank O'Doul to Philadelphia for Fred Leach. It had not been, at the time of its making, an appealing deal. O'Doul, a colorful, smiling athlete who had been popular in New York in the days when he was with the Yankees, had been equally popular on his return as a Giant. He had hit .319 in 1928, his first year back in the majors after his wanderings through Boston, Chicago, and the Coast League, and he was looked upon as a winning player. Leach, on the other hand, was a negligible figure. It was admitted that he was a good enough ball player—he had hit .300 or better in each of his four years with the Phillies, and he was a steady fielder—but there was nothing about him that caused him to stand out even in the drab company with which he had been surrounded.

"McGraw has pulled a boner," a Philadelphia baseball writer confided to a friend of his on one of the New York papers. "Leach isn't

his type and will be a failure at the Polo Grounds. Keep this to yourself, because he is a friend of mine and I wouldn't want to be quoted, even indirectly, on anything that might be harmful or embarrassing to him. I'm telling you this only so you can protect yourself and not go overboard on him. He has only one speed. That was enough to make him a standout with the Phillies, but it is not enough to enable him to keep up with the faster pace he will find at the Polo Grounds."

McGraw, deceived by Leach's Philadelphia form, thought he had no worries in the outfield, with Fred in left, Roush in center, and Ott in right. His infield seemed strong, with Cohen the better for the year of experience he had had as a regular. His pitching staff loomed as the best he had had in a long time. He had Hogan and Bob O'Farrell, acquired from the Cardinals the year before, to handle his catching.

Hogan, a big, laughing, somewhat boisterous Irish lad from Somerville, Mass., was one of the best-liked men in the squad, not only with the fans but—and this always is the real test—with the other players. McGraw had a great fondness for him and predicted a great career for him, with but one reservation.

"If I seem harsh with him sometimes," he once said, "it is for his own good. Left to himself, he would eat himself out of the league in a year—or less. So I have to keep after him to cut down on his eating and to lay off beer."

This was no easy matter. Hogan had one of the most prodigious appetites ever known in baseball, where big eaters are the rule. Good-natured, never resentful of the occasional ridings he had to take from McGraw, he constantly swore he would stick to a rigid diet. But the sight of a menu never failed to rouse great yearnings within him, and a bottle—or six bottles—of beer had a tremendous lure for him.

McGraw, thinking to curb him at the table, took to calling for his dinner checks. This worked for a while, since it was a simple matter for him to send for Hogan and say, for instance:

"Well, after all the talking I've done to you, what did you have for dinner tonight? Soup . . . a steak . . . potatoes . . . two pieces of pie—and two helpings of ice cream, and four glasses of milk. How do you expect to keep your weight down on a diet like that? Soup, meat and potatoes, and milk, sure. They're all right—but cut the milk down

from four glasses to two. And you've got to quit eating pie and ice cream. Do you hear?"

And Hogan would hang his head and say, "Yes, sir," and promise to renege on sweets, and for a time he seemed to have reformed, as his dinner checks showed he was eating salads and an assortment of vegetables and having no desserts whatever. But he continued, much to McGraw's bafflement, to gain weight. It was a long time before McGraw discovered that he had gained the collusion of his waiters so that the "salads" and "vegetables" on his checks really were ice cream, cakes, and pies.

Once the season got under way, it wasn't long before McGraw realized the pennant he had sighted at San Antonio was but a mirage. Cohen was hurt and was out of the line-up much of the time; and even when he was in it, he lacked the zing of the year before. His replacement, Andy Reese, was erratic, and so a sudden weakness had developed at second base. Roush suffered an injury that later was diagnosed as a tearing of his abdominal muscles, and, naturally, his playing fell off. Welsh, used as an occasional replacement, failed to hit and was sent back to Boston. Leach was a disappointment. Ott was having one of his best years, and sometimes seemed to be carrying the team on his back. But the burden was too much for one man as the Giants, after a fast start, fell back.

Hubbell pitched a no-hit game against the Pirates in May, and he and Fitzsimmons were consistent winners. But the rest of the pitchers went into a decline. Benton had lost much of his stuff—or couldn't get it over in the pinches, which amounted to the same thing—and Genewich, who had begun the season well, lost his effectiveness overnight.

Joe's case puzzled McGraw. Here was a good pitcher and an earnest competitor. He had been a winner for him the year before and had won for him in the early weeks of this season. Now he had reached a point where he not only couldn't win, but couldn't survive more than a few innings. Knowing Genewich as he did, it seemed unlikely to him that the pitcher's sudden form reversal was due to dissipation; but, taking no chances on that score, he had Joe trailed by detectives. Their report confirmed his faith in the pitcher's behavior between games, but increased his confusion. Joe was taking excellent care of himself, going straight to his hotel from the ball park, seldom leaving it except to go to a movie or a show occasion-

ally, didn't take a drink, and sought no wild companionship. And yet, suddenly, he had been converted from a winner into a chronic loser. Why?

McGraw sent for him in his office in the club house one day and closed the door behind him.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked.

"Nothing," Genewich said.

"Nothing!" McGraw's ire rose. "Nothing! A few weeks ago you were winning, and now you can't get anybody out. I know that every time I send you out there, the chances are you'll be knocked out—and I'm never disappointed. You haven't been dissipating. I know that, so I'm not going to waste time asking you any questions on that score."

His tone softened.

"Have you any personal troubles? Is there anything wrong at home?"

"No," the pitcher said.

"If there is, don't hesitate to tell me. I know when a ball player has family troubles on his mind, he can't play ball. So if there is anything I can do to help you, I want you to tell me. I've helped many a fellow before you, you know."

"I don't doubt it," Joe said. "But I have no troubles like that."

"Any financial troubles?"

"No."

Now McGraw became impatient.

"Well, then, ——— it! What is the matter?"

Genewich was silent.

"Don't stand there and look at me! I brought you in here to find out what was wrong with you and, by God, I'm going to do it!"

Genewich shifted his feet uneasily.

"All right," he said, finally. "Here's what's the matter with me: Do you remember, a couple of weeks ago, when I covered first base on a close play and got tangled up with the runner and was knocked down?"

"Yes."

"Well, that was it. I fell on my right shoulder. It didn't hurt me so much then, but the next morning it was stiff and sore, and it hasn't been right since. It feels as though there is something jammed

up in there. It hurts like hell every time I pitch, and I can't get any stuff on the ball."

"Why didn't you tell me about this?" McGraw demanded.

Genewich shrugged.

"The team was going bad—and I was going worst of all—and I didn't want you to think I was alibiing. Every day I thought it would be all right the next day and I'd start winning again. When that happened, I was going to tell you about it. But I felt I couldn't squawk when I was losing."

McGraw walked to the window looking out on the playing field and stood there for a moment, then came back.

"So you're a game guy?" he said quietly.

Genewich shrugged.

"A game guy!" McGraw said.

His voice rose.

"A game guy! You're too game for your own good—and for mine! You're so ——— game that you've cost me six ball games I might have won! You didn't want me to think you were a quitter, but you didn't have courage enough to come in and tell me what was the matter with you, speaking the truth and not giving a damn whether I believed you or not."

He sat down heavily at his desk.

"Go see the doctor," he said. "Tell him I said I want you taken to a hospital for an x-ray and that I want a report on the pictures as soon as possible."

The pictures showed the shoulder muscles to be badly bruised by the accident and inflamed as a result of the strain placed upon them by Genewich's subsequent starts. It was several weeks before he could pitch again, and he did not regain his effectiveness that year.

However, that didn't matter greatly. The Giants, after some ups and downs, levelled off in third place and stayed there. That's what they were—a third-place ball club, as the Cubs rushed to the pennant and the Pirates finished second.

McGraw's bitterness over the fate of his team was deepened by the fact that O'Doul led the league in batting with an average of .398, while Leach, an uninspired—and uninspiring—figure at the Polo Grounds, fell below the .300 mark for the first time, hitting only .290. His attention—as if he hadn't known it only too well!—was called to that in some of the newspapers. There also was a re-

minder that Hornsby, who had been traded by the Braves to the Cubs in November of the year before, had hit .380 to lead the pennant-winning assault of the Cubs and to earn the award as the National League's most valuable player.

## XXIX ⊗ A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR

**N**INETEEN-THIRTY was a humdrum year for McGraw, with the Giants, who trained in San Antonio again, being neither very good nor very bad. He got them up as high as third place, but could get them no higher—and they were too good to fall any lower of their own accord. Hubbell and Fitzsimmons were in top form that year. Terry, who had reached his peak as a first baseman, led the league in hitting with an average of .401. But there wasn't much life in the team, and it never seriously threatened the Cardinals, who won the pennant, and only for a little while threatened the Cubs, who finished second.

A play that cost the Giants their last game of the year in Chicago, when they seemingly had a chance to grab off second place, was almost symbolic of their season: Danny Taylor of the Cubs stole home with the winning run as Joe Heving, who was pitching for the Giants, held the ball. Almost everybody in the ball park sensed that Taylor was going to make a dash for the plate, and the rest of the Giants screamed at Heving to watch himself. But when the runner dashed from the bag he threw poor Joe into such a state of confusion that he couldn't seem to let the ball go until it was too late.

The Giants were leaving for New York immediately after the game, and when they reached the railroad station they still were glaring at the hapless pitcher. Even the newspapermen were upset by what they had seen. Dan Daniel of the *World-Telegram* was muttering and shaking his head as he climbed aboard the train. When one of the other reporters asked him what was the matter, he sighed and said:

“All I can see is Heving, holding the ball!”

Near the end of the season McGraw revealed he had purchased Johnny Vergez, a third baseman, from the Oakland Club of the Pacific Coast League.



"What are you going to do with him, Mac?" the reporters asked.

"Play him on third base."

"What about Lindstrom?"

"I'll play him in the outfield. That's where he belongs, anyway. With his speed and his throwing arm, he'll do better out there than he ever has on third base."

Some of the writers challenged his judgment of Lindstrom as a third baseman, questioned the wisdom of removing Freddy from the bag to make room for a youngster untried in the major leagues, and suggested that if it was an outfielder McGraw wanted, it might be a good idea for him to buy one. This so nettled him that he was openly and caustically critical of Lindstrom as a third baseman.

Time was to prove he was right about Lindstrom's being a good outfielder, but wrong about Vergez as an adequate replacement at third base. Meanwhile, his public defense of the deal provoked a smoldering resentment in Lindstrom.

Again in 1931, the Giants were not quite good enough. That was their last spring in San Antonio. McGraw and the players still favored the town as a training base, but it had seen too much exhibition baseball over a span of too many years, and the gate receipts had fallen away to a point where they were almost negligible. McGraw knew he would have to go somewhere else in 1932 and was listening to offers from the Pacific Coast. Before the season ended, he would announce that he had decided to go to Los Angeles.

The Cardinals, stronger in 1931 than they had been when they had won the pennant the year before, were just too much for the Giants, and shook them off in a driving finish as the teams neared the wire.

McGraw's health was poor that year and, in consequence, his nerves were ragged. He jumped all over an umpire in St. Louis, when the Giants were there in July, and was ordered from the bench. The following day he flew into such a violent rage that those who were close to him actually feared he would have an apoplectic stroke.

Three of the New York reporters with the team reached the ball park a half hour before game time that day—a Sunday, by the way—to find him angrily pacing up and down just inside the press gate, oblivious to the stares and pointings of the fans who streamed past him on their way to their seats.

"Look at this!" he shouted as he saw the reporters.

He thrust a telegram in front of them. It was from John Heydler, notifying him that he had been fined \$150 for his row with the umpire the day before. They looked at him wonderingly. Surely, they thought, he had been fined so often it was strange he should be so greatly upset.

"Fine stuff!" he said. "Do you see where that telegram is from? Right here in St. Louis! Heydler got in this morning and is at the Jefferson, and we are at the Chase. Wouldn't you think he'd call me up and ask me for my side of the case? Don't you think I merit that consideration after all the years I have been in this league and all I've done for it?"

They thought he did.

"You're ——— right I do! I got this telegram when I got out here a little while ago, and I tried to get Heydler on the telephone to tell him what I think of him but he wasn't in. But I'll tell him! I'll tell him right here! He won't get in that gate without me seeing him!"

He was almost shouting again. Some of the fans stopped and looked at him, and then stood there, waiting developments. So, of course, did the reporters. They didn't have long to wait. Heydler came through the gate a few minutes later and, seeing McGraw, started toward him. McGraw saw him at the same instant and met him halfway.

"Hello, John," Heydler said, smiling and extending his hand.

McGraw, ignoring the hand, yelled at him:

"Don't you say 'hello' to me! You have a nerve even to speak to me, you ———, you!"

Heydler, bewildered by McGraw's manner and embarrassed as the crowd edged forward, the better to hear what the row was about, stepped back.

"Why, John . . ." he began.

"Don't you 'why, John' me!" McGraw roared. "That's a fine thing you did to me! You didn't even have the common decency to call me up when you are in the same town and find out what I have to say about what happened yesterday, did you? You're still standing behind those lousy, rotten umpires of yours, just as you stood behind Klem!"

"Klem?" Heydler asked dazedly. "When?"

McGraw's face was purple and he was almost gasping for breath. "When? When? You know —— —— well when! In 1928, that's when!"

A rankling fury over the Harnett-Reese play seemed to stick in his throat, almost strangling him.

For the first time he noticed the crowd that had gathered about him.

"Get out!" he roared, "Get the hell out of here and mind your business!"

The crowd fell back.

He whirled on Heydler again, reviling him and the umpires. Heydler tried vainly to quiet him, to get away from him; but there was no escaping his wrath. At last he could go on no longer. He turned to one of the reporters.

"Tell Bancroft to take the club," he said. "I'm going back to the hotel."

He went out the gate, climbed into a cab, and was driven away.

Heydler, shaken by his experience, looked after him.

"I'm afraid," he said, "that McGraw is a sick man."

On his return to the hotel that evening, Bancroft went to McGraw's room. It still was broad daylight, but the shades were drawn and McGraw was sitting alone in the gloom. His rage had left him, but so had much of his strength. The sight of him, sitting there listlessly in the half-light, frightened Bancroft.

Back in New York a short time later, he obviously was ill, but said nothing about it to anyone, not even to his wife. But Mrs. McGraw knew something was seriously wrong with him. When she suggested he see their doctor—on the pretext that she thought anyone at his age should have his blood pressure checked once in a while—he laughed.

"My blood pressure is all right," he said. "I don't need a doctor to tell me that—or anything else."

But she was insistent, and one morning he said, laughing again:

"All right! Anything to keep peace in the family. We have a double header today, but I'll leave early and stop by and see the doctor just to satisfy you."

Mrs. McGraw didn't go to the Polo Grounds that day. About six o'clock, when she was waiting for him to come home, he tele-

phoned that he was sending the car to Pelham for her, as some friends had invited them to dinner in town and he thought they ought to go.

"He never was gayer than he was that night," Mrs. McGraw has said. "He laughed a lot and told jokes and had everyone else laughing. He kept saying he was celebrating winning the double header, and at first I believed him. But he said it so often I was suspicious. He had won too many double headers in his life to be so happy about this one. Our doctor was at the party and, when I got a chance to talk to him privately, I asked him about John. He looked at me gravely for a moment and then he said:

"Mrs. McGraw, your husband is ——"

"He stopped.

"Yes?" I said. "Go on. Tell me. Whatever it is, I want to know."

"And he said: 'Mr. McGraw is a very sick man.'"

"John had left the room, but he came back just at that moment. Some of the other men were with him and he was telling a story and laughing, and they were laughing with him . . . and I knew, now, that this was an act that he was putting on to deceive me."

### XXX ⊕ JUSTICE McCOOK HEARS A CASE

IT HAD BEEN rather generally known for some time that harmony no longer existed among Stoneham, McGraw, and McQuade, but it was taken for granted they were securely bound together by their common interest in the Giants and a stubborn loyalty that would survive their almost constant bickerings. John Heydler, speaking ruefully in the light of his own experience with them, had seemed to sum up the relationship one day when he said:

"They fight among themselves all the time, but if you make a move at one of them, they stand shoulder to shoulder against you and abuse you terribly."

Privately, they would criticize or denounce each other on occasion, with McQuade being more outspoken than the others in this respect, but they usually managed to preserve an outward semblance of amity. Thus, when the board of directors had voted McQuade out of office as treasurer in 1928 and installed Leo Bondy in his

place, there was some surprise, yet no one took it too seriously, believing the breach would be healed in no time and the customary quarreling be resumed in the privacy of the club's office. But the final break had come, and McQuade, slow to realize it, finally brought suit against Stoneham and McGraw in 1930.

In his complaint, he alleged that his removal had been voted by a dummy board of directors at Stoneham's direction and that this was a direct violation of the contract entered into in 1919, under the terms of which each was bound to exert his utmost efforts to retain the two others in office as long as they owned the club. He also sought back pay at the rate of \$10,000 per year since his expulsion. Even this failed to get more than a few lines in the newspapers, the general impression still being that the men were at each other's throats again but would be in each other's arms before the ink was dry on the papers. Now, however, in December of 1931, the case went to trial before Justice McCook in the Supreme Court in New York and, for the first time, the veil was lifted on the fighting that had taken place.

McQuade testified that his troubles with Stoneham had sprung from his insistence, as the treasurer whose first duty was to the minority stockholders, that Stoneham repay loans he had made from the club. Stoneham denied this, and he and McGraw both alleged that McQuade was a disorderly and disturbing figure in the office and around the ball park and that, for their own protection as well as that of the minority stockholders, they were compelled to get rid of him. There was testimony concerning brawls in New York and Havana, of threats made by McQuade against Stoneham and by Stoneham against McGraw. There was a sharp denial by Stoneham of McQuade's charge that he had influenced the directors in voting against McQuade. Two of the directors, Ross F. Robertson and Dr. Harry A. Ferguson, took the stand and supported Stoneham, swearing they had voted only according to the dictates of their own minds.

Some of the testimony concerned the manner in which Stoneham had become interested in the purchase of the Giants. It may be recalled that on the day the transaction was announced, McQuade told a reporter that he—and he alone—had persuaded Stoneham to buy the club. Controverting this version at the trial, McGraw testified that McQuade had played a very minor part in lining up Stoneham

and that the one who really accomplished this was his friend, E. Phocian Howard, publisher of the *New York Press*, a sporting publication devoted largely to racing, whom he and McQuade, he said, had met by chance in the lobby of the old Waldorf one day late in the fall of 1918.

"McQuade and I had been discussing the purchase of the club for some time," he said. "I had pointed out to him that the heirs of John T. Brush, alarmed by the state of affairs growing out of the war, were more than willing to sell their interest and suggested to him that it would be a good idea if we could get a buyer. He agreed with me and we had several conferences with George Loft, whom McQuade had interested, but Loft ultimately decided that he had better continue to give his attention to his other business affairs.

"On the occasion of which I speak, McQuade and I walked up Fifth Avenue and into the Waldorf, where we met Howard. He asked me what we were doing and I told him we were looking for a purchaser for the club and he said he had just the man we wanted and would call me up the following morning at 10 o'clock. Right to the minute he called me and the man he had was Stoneham. McQuade and I went down to the Hotel Astor, where we met Howard and Stoneham and negotiations were begun that led to the buying of the club."

On cross-examination by Isaac N. Jacobson, McQuade's counsel, McGraw flatly denied that, as Jacobson suggested, it was a former police captain named Peabody who had introduced McQuade to Stoneham, and that later McQuade had invited McGraw to meet Stoneham. McGraw admitted, however, that he and McQuade had been sued by Peabody in an attempt to get a bonus for bringing about this meeting and that Stoneham had paid the costs of settling the case out of court.

When all the testimony had been taken, there was a violent summing up for the defense by Arthur Garfield Hays, who called McQuade a liar, a perjurer and a disloyal associate, while Jacobson answered with equal violence.

"The defendants have sought to make facts fit the case, not the case fit the facts!" he shouted. "They have gathered up everything that has happened in these last nine years and blamed it all on McQuade. All of these men are of a type—all greedy, all fighting men—and a rough element was in control of the club."

Justice McCook, having reserved decision at the time, finally issued one that gave McQuade what is known in sports as a form of Mexican stand-off, in which he lost his job but saved his money; McCook refused to reinstate him as treasurer, taking the view that this would serve only to bring on a resumption of the fighting, which would impair the investments of the minority stockholders, but ordered the club to pay him more than three years' back salary.

As Marshall Hunt, then a baseball writer on *The News*, phrase it:

"The Judge gave McQuade a divorce and \$30,000 alimony."

The club protested the payment of this sum to McQuade and subsequently was upheld by the Court of Appeals. Thus the triumvirate had been broken and McQuade was out, with no balm for his wounded feelings.

## XXXI ☉ BRIGHT DAYS IN CALIFORNIA

**I**N JANUARY OF 1932 McGraw and Stoneham were confronted with a problem posed by Bill Terry. The first baseman, having wound up with Chick Hafey and Jim Bottomley of the Cardinals in a triple tie for the batting championship of the league, not only returned his contract, but let go with a terrific blast aimed at Stoneham.

This obviously was not a routine holdout. Terry, always financially independent of baseball because of a winter job with the Standard Oil Company—even as he had been back in the spring of 1922, when McGraw first had offered him a chance to join the Giant—never had been easy to deal with. Now, really aroused by what he judged to be shabby treatment on the part of his employers, he said that he was "thoroughly disgusted" when, after a promise had been made to him that he "would be taken care of," the terms offered to him represented a slash of 40 per cent of his salary. He made a vigorous demand to be sold or traded.

Coming from any other ball player, this would not have been taken too seriously in the office on Forty-second Street. Coming from Terry, it brought forth a sharp reply from Stoneham. Usually content to remain in the background and allow McGraw to speak

for the club, Stoneham was so incensed by Terry's attitude that he made a vigorous reply.

"In reference to Terry's statement at Memphis," he said, "it is true that he has returned his contract. It will be necessary for Terry to sign with the New York club on fair terms, or what the Giants believe to be fair terms.

"Terry has been treated better by the New York club as to salary than any other player who ever wore a Giant uniform. He has made trouble about signing every year since he was a rookie. Terry received in 1931 within \$1,500 of what Bottomley and Hafey received together, notwithstanding that all three finished in a tie for the batting championship of the league. He received thousands more than other great National League players.

"Since 1925, his first regular season with the Giants, in which year he received a liberal salary, his increase has been more than 200 per cent. Further, because of holding out every spring, he has been a detriment to the club.

"We tried to trade him last year and no one wanted him because of the high salary he was commanding. Now he will not be traded or sold."

This counter blast failed to move Terry. McGraw, who could denounce a holdout roundly when it seemed to be to his advantage to do so, knew that, in this instance, further pounding would serve only to stiffen the player's resistance. The minor leagues were about to hold a meeting in New Orleans. McGraw, who had planned to attend it, as major-league club owners and managers generally do, called Terry and asked him to meet him there. Possibly to his surprise—since Terry had indicated he was of no mind to leave Memphis for any reason unless he got what he wanted from the Giants—Bill agreed to do so.

Whatever persuasive means McGraw used when he met his first baseman, his purpose was accomplished. Terry came out of the conference to announce that he not only had signed his contract, but had no wish to play with any club other than the Giants. One report, never convincingly denied, was that the last \$1,000 needed to satisfy Terry had been paid out of McGraw's pocket.

The bitterness that had marked the controversy in its early stages, the acerbity with which Stoneham had met Terry's challenge, these



were to be recalled, by the sports writers—with raised eyebrows—five months later.

McGraw had looked forward with some eagerness to the training trip to Los Angeles. It was the first time he had been there to train since 1907, and he had many friends there, in sports or in the film colony. The Giants trained in the Pacific Coast League ball park and lived at the Biltmore, and the dugout at the park or his suite at the hotel was the scene of many reunions for him.

Chief Meyers, who lived at Riverside, dropped in frequently. So did Tilly Shafer, who lived in Hollywood, or Fred Snodgrass, whose home was in Oxnard. Mike Donlin, still looking as though he could walk up to the plate and hit one in a pinch, was around much of the time. One day, in the dugout, he looked at his watch and said:

“You boys will have to excuse me. I have a date to hit a guy over the head and rob his store at 1:30.”

The rookies, who hadn't caught his name and probably wouldn't have recognized it if they had, looked at him in amazement. McGraw and the older players laughed. Mike was very much in demand as a character actor in the then popular gangster pictures and was due on the set at 1:30.

There was a knock on McGraw's door in the Biltmore one morning, just as he was about to start for the park.

“Come in,” he said.

The door opened and Arthur Nehf walked in, followed by a big, broad-shouldered, good-looking blond kid of about twenty-two. Nehf was smiling, and he put out his hand and said:

“Remember me, Mac? I used to pitch for you.”

McGraw wrung his hand.

“Arthur,” he said, “I'm glad to see you. I've always been sorry we parted the way we did.”

“So have I,” Art confessed. “Looking back, I guess maybe I was wrong. I'd like to be friends with you again.”

McGraw laughed.

“That's easy,” he said. “Even when you were mad at me, I never was mad at you. How are Mrs. Nehf and the children?”

“Fine, thanks. . . . And Mac, I want you to meet Hank Leiber.”

The blond young man stepped forward and shook hands with McGraw.

"Mac," Art said, "Hank is a ball player. He's a pretty good first baseman and he can play the outfield, too. He isn't ready for the big leagues yet, but I am sure that some day he will be, because anybody who can hit like he can is sure to get up there some day."

McGraw looked Leiber over appraisingly.

"He looks as though he might hit," he said. "Where did you find him?"

"He played for me last summer. As you know, I'm in the insurance business in Phoenix, and they asked me to manage one of the teams in our city league, so I did and got a lot of fun out of it. Hank, who had played at the University of Arizona, was my first baseman and the league's leading hitter. He's the only ball player I ever have recommended to anybody, Mac. I've always refrained from that out of—well, call it pride, I guess. I wouldn't recommend one until I was sure he could make good—and I'm sure about this boy."

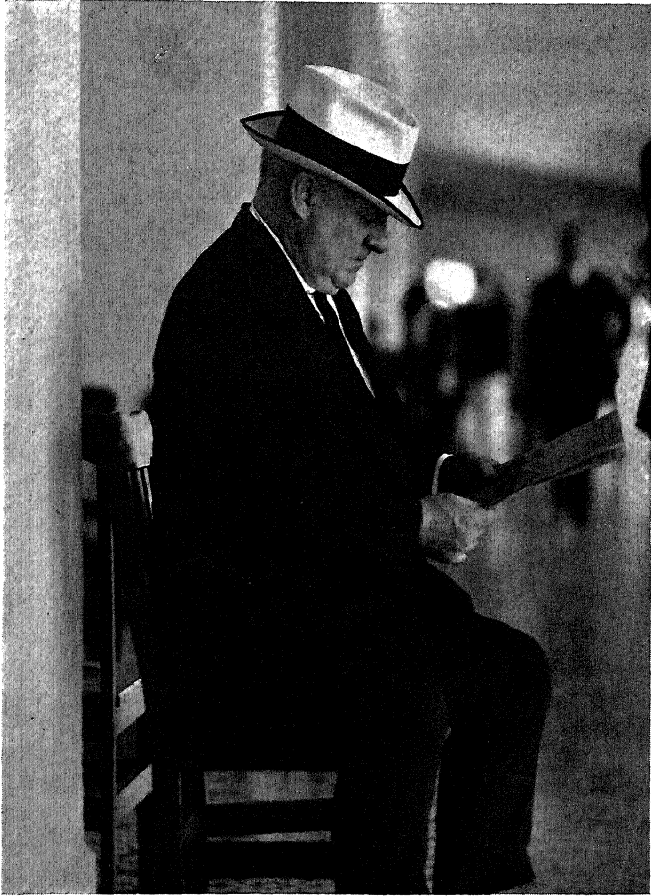
"Well, that's fine!" McGraw said. "I'm going out to the park now. Will you go along with me?"

They would. At the park Nehf, sitting back of the Giants' dugout watching the practice with some of his old friends among the baseball writers, said:

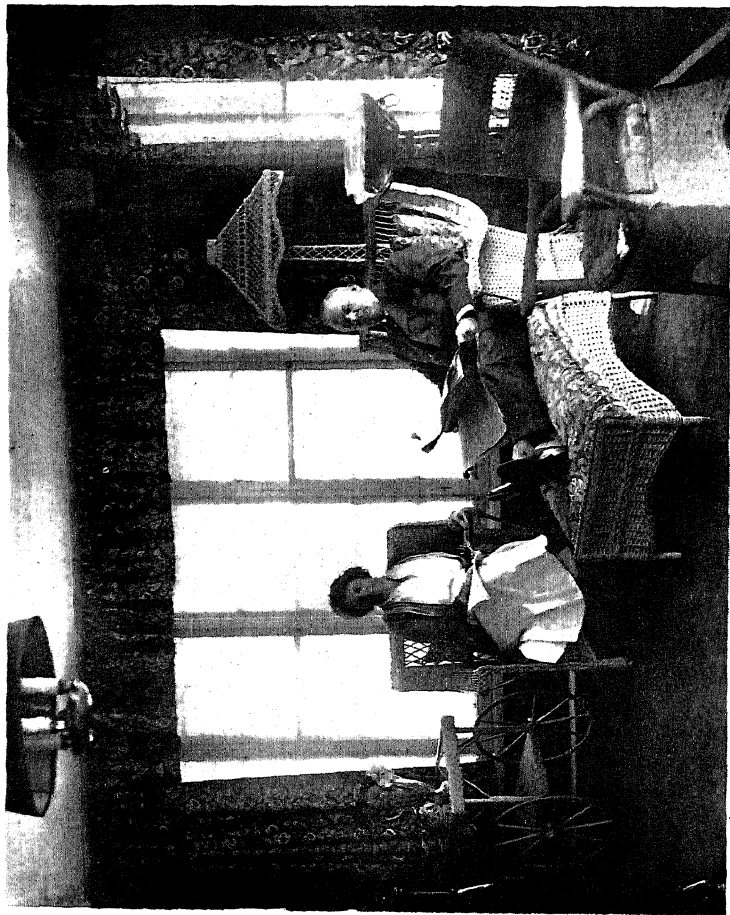
"It's curious, the grip that McGraw gets on you. No one could have been nicer to me than Jack Hendricks was when I was with the Reds, nor than Joe McCarthy was when I was with the Cubs. But when I had a ball player that I knew could make the big leagues, I had to give him to McGraw—although I hadn't spoken to Mac for six years."

McGraw soon discovered that Nehf was right about Leiber. Hank wasn't ready for the big leagues. He was at least a year or two away. But, as they say in the dugouts, he could powder the ball. McGraw would send him out and he would come back, and some day he would be wearing a Giant uniform at the Polo Grounds and the crowd would roar as he walked up to the plate.

Nehf stayed a few days, just long enough to see that Leiber was comfortably settled. When he went to McGraw to say good-by, McGraw wanted to pay him for delivering such a fine prospect. But he laughed.



MCGRAW IN HAVANA



JOHN AND MRS. MCGRAW AT HOME IN PELHAM

"Pay me!" he said. "No, thanks, Mac. I don't want any money from you."

"But we always pay for ball players," McGraw said.

"Forget it," Art said. "If he does as well as I think he will, I'll be very happy. And I certainly wouldn't want anybody to have him but you."

"Well," McGraw said, "at least let me take care of your hotel bill."

Nehf laughed again.

"I've already taken care of it myself," he said. "There isn't anything you can—or should—do for me, Mac. Bringing Leiber to you was an act of friendship on my part. Please accept it as such. . . . And now I've got to run for my plane. Good-by, Mac. Take care of yourself. And win the pennant this year."

"Good-by, Art," McGraw said. "I guess I can't even tell you how swell I feel about all this."

The weather was good and the conditions under which the Giants trained were perfect. As they rounded into shape, they beat the Los Angeles club . . . the Cubs, who were training at Catalina Island . . . the Pirates, whose base was at Paso Robles. No Giant team had looked as good in years. Len Koenecke, up from Indianapolis, was in the outfield with Lindstrom and Ott. Jackson, starting his eleventh season with the Giants, never looked better. He and Critz were a smoothly working combination around second base. Terry, reporting early and swinging into his stride quickly, never before had hit as well in the spring. The pitching was effective.

The newspapermen . . . the New York actors in the movie crowd . . . looked on with delight. The stories wired back to New York breathed defiance to the rest of the league and boldly predicted the Giants would overthrow the Cardinals, pennant winners for two years and now champions of the world.

The schedule kept the Giants busy, but took them into pleasant places. They went to Catalina for Saturday and Sunday games with the Cubs, and after the Saturday game there was a barbecue at William Wrigley's Center Ranch and, later, a dance at the Casino in Avalon. They went to San Diego for two games. The first was a night game, so that afternoon the whole party crossed the border to Agua Caliente, where, before the races, there was a luncheon for

them in the club house at which pretty Mexican girls danced to the music of a string orchestra.

A few nights before the stay in Los Angeles ended, McGraw gave a dinner in a private dining room at the Biltmore which was notable because, among other things, the group on the dais might have been cut out of an old sports picture book—for flanking the Giant manager were Donlin, Meyers, Snodgrass, Shafer, Jim Jeffries, Tom Sharkey, and Tod Sloan.

Also on the dais, but unnoticed until he got up to speak, was a local brewer who had been a friend of McGraw's for years. When he arose, following speakers who had lauded McGraw and all his works, he made one of the most popular after-dinner speeches ever heard.

"Mr. Toastmaster and gentlemen," he said. "It is nice to be with John McGraw and his friends. It is always nice to be with John McGraw and his friends. And now I want you all to come out to my house and drink beer."

The room was cleared of its perhaps one hundred guests in no time. Without waiting for the elevators, they rushed down the stairs, threw themselves into private cars or taxis, and went whirling off to the brewer's house, with the brewer's car in the van to lead the way. There, in a rathskeller furnished with chairs and tables cut from redwood trees, were great copper pitchers of beer, and sandwiches and cheese and crackers. It was one of the best parties of the trip.

Leaving Los Angeles, the Giants went to San Francisco for a nine-day stand against the Seals and the Missions.

One morning an emissary from Santa Cruz called on McGraw and asked him if he wouldn't take the Giants there for a game with the Hollywood club. McGraw said he would be glad to, except that there was no room for such a game on the schedule, which had been made up months before.

"If you'll just send a second team," the man said, "we'd be delighted."

McGraw considered that for a moment. Then he said:

"All right. On one consideration: That you advertise it plainly as the second team. I don't want the people to think that Ott and Terry and Jackson and fellows like that will be there and then find themselves looking at a lot of youngsters they never heard of."

"I promise you," the man said, "that we will advertise it as the second team."

McGraw nodded.

"When do you want us?" he asked.

"Thursday. That will give us three days to get our publicity out."

"All right. We'll be there."

The man hesitated for a moment. And then:

"There's one more thing I'd like to ask, Mr. McGraw."

"What's that?"

"Will you come?"

McGraw was in a good mood that morning.

"Yes," he said. "I'll come, too."

The Giant party, reaching Santa Cruz at noon, found the Mayor had declared a half-holiday, so that all who cared to might see the game. Schools, banks, and stores were shut tight. There was a crowd at the hotel to see the players arrive. True to his word, the promoter had stressed, in bold type on his posters and handbills, that it was the Giants' second team. But top billing, of course, had been given to McGraw—and McGraw, with or without his regulars, was the one the town wanted to see.

There was a luncheon at the hotel, then a visit to a nearby grove of redwoods, at the size and beauty of which the visitors marveled. And then the ball park, overflowing with—or so it seemed—almost the entire population of the town. McGraw, halted at the gate by some old friends he had encountered, stopped to talk with them so long that by the time he started for the dugout the game was under way, with Roy Parmelee pitching for the Giants. Notoriously wild, Parmelee was passing the Hollywood hitters as fast as they went to the plate, a fact which didn't escape McGraw as he hurried through the stand to the field and made for the dugout, a few yards away. The announcer on the public-address system, who had been introducing the players to the crowd, caught sight of him and said excitedly:

"There he is, ladies and gentlemen! There he is! The man we've all been waiting for! The famous Muggsy McGraw!"

McGraw, his face flaming with rage, plumped into a seat in the dugout.

"Get that —— out of there!" he said to Tom Clarke, the coach.

"What?" Clark asked, cupping his ear to hear him over the roar and stamping of the crowd.

"——— you!" McGraw yelled. "Get that —— Parmelee out of there before I kill him!"

All the pleasure had gone out of the trip, so far as he was concerned. He sat there fuming through nine innings and, when he was leaving the park, snapped at those who spoke to him or reached for him to slap him on the back.

By the time he got back to San Francisco, his good humor had been restored. The fledgling Giants had won and had taken in more money at the gate than the regulars had drawn playing the Seals that afternoon.

"The next time we come out here," he said, "I'll make up the schedule and there will be more towns like that on it. It's a joke, fiddling around the big towns when you can make that kind of money in the small ones."

On Saturday the Giants went to Oakland, crossing the bay on the ferry. McGraw, instead of sitting on the bench, sunned himself in the center-field bleachers while Dave Bancroft ran the team. Mrs. McGraw, seated in a box near the dugout, was uncertain whether John was going to stay for the full game, so at the end of one inning she called to Lindstrom, wishing to have him ask her husband what he intended to do. Lindstrom didn't hear her and one of the reporters, seated near by, yelled to him and, as he turned, indicated that Mrs. McGraw wanted to speak to him. He came over to the box and she said, in mock severity:

"Freddy! Why don't you pay attention?"

His eyes widened.

"Good God!" he exclaimed. "Are you giving signs, too?"

He spoke in jest . . . and yet, beneath the jest there was a deep, slow current of exasperation on the part of all the players at the increasing tightness of McGraw's grip upon them. It had got so that they couldn't make a move without looking to him for a sign, as though their manager was convinced they had no brains of their own and must be guided in the simplest situations on the field. . . . A deep, slow current now . . . yet one that was to run swift as the days passed.



There was but one more day in California, one last game in San Francisco with the Seals, and then the Giants were headed for the East by way of Denver and Kansas City.

McGraw celebrated his birthday in Kansas City and, as had become the custom down the years, the newspapermen gave a party for him. He was in high humor that night. The trip to California seemingly had done him a lot of good, for he was happier than he had been in a long time and he must have thought, as his hosts did that night, that he was on his way to another pennant.

Prophetic, however, were two sentences in a brief interview he gave to a Kansas City newspaperman that day, although they passed unnoticed at the time. Having reviewed his career in a handful of words, he said:

"I don't know how much longer I'll stay in baseball. I'm not so active physically as I was a few years ago."

## XXXII ☉ A REVOLT IS CHECKED

**W**ITH THE OPENING of the season, the team that had swept through its games in California and had been widely picked to win the pennant stalled badly. Almost at the same time, McGraw's health turned poor again and his mood changed.

He was irritable, jumpy, surly. Raging or glum in the club house, dourly silent or snarling in the dugout, he terrorized the younger players and angered the veterans. For some reason, he picked on Lindstrom almost incessantly. Lindstrom, the boldest spirit on the club, talked back to him which, of course, made matters worse.

Still resentful at having been moved from third base to make room for Vergez, he now was openly critical of McGraw for having made the move.

"I'm not conceited," he would say, "but I'm not stupid, either. I wasn't as good a third baseman as Pie Traynor, but I was better than any other third baseman in the league. I've got nothing against Johnny Vergez. He's a swell kid and I want to see him make good. But he isn't good enough right now to take that job away from me on the level and nobody can make me believe he is—not even the Old Man."

One day, at the Polo Grounds, McGraw flared at him for something or other.

"That's right!" Lindstrom said. "Yell at me."

His voice rose.

"Yell at me! I'm lousy! I don't know anything! You're the only one that knows anything!"

He laughed shrilly.

"You're the only one that knows anything! The rest of us are a lot of dummies! We know it! You've told us often enough! You're the king—and the king can do no wrong!"

McGraw, startled by his outburst, looked at him strangely. So did the other players. There was a heavy silence along the bench. The players expected McGraw to tear him apart verbally, but nothing happened. . . . Lindstrom walked over to the cooler and got a drink of water and sat down.

The Giants went to Boston, floundered through three games, were rained out of a fourth, and started for Philadelphia. They left shortly after noon and McGraw, getting off at Stamford, went to his home in Pelham for the night. The players went on to the Grand Central, scattered for dinner at midtown restaurants, and left from the Pennsylvania Station at nine o'clock.

Revolt on the ball club was close that night. The old loyalty that McGraw once had inspired in his players was gone. His grip on them, tightened through the years, had been loosened. Only Lindstrom dared to defy him in his presence, but now that he was away from them they rumbled and muttered among themselves. He couldn't kick them around like that. Who did he think he was—or think they were?

The trainer, whom they hated, sank into a seat behind four of them. Lindstrom, catching sight of him out of the corner of his eye, raised his voice.

"There's a snitch with the ball club, too," he said. "A copper. A lousy stool pigeon. Well, I guess he's getting an earful tonight. He'll have a fine story to tell the Old Man in the morning."

The trainer got up and walked down to the other end of the car.

The next day, in Philadelphia, Lindstrom slid into third base as he raced to stretch a double into a triple. His left foot was twisted

and a bone in the instep was broken. Fitzsimmons picked him up in his arms as though he had been a child and carried him from the field (the gamblers in the right-field corner of the stand were laying 18 to 5 Fitz would drop him and, when he heard that, Fitz said he'd like to have had a piece of it).

Lindstrom was taken to a hospital...and the spirit of revolt seeped out of the other players. He hadn't intended to be their leader, but he was. Seeking only to declare himself and fight back against what he thought was an injustice on McGraw's part, he unwittingly had become the spokesmen for the others, who also felt McGraw was treating them badly but lacked the courage to say so. With Lindstrom gone, they merely were sullen. It was plain to the reporters traveling with the team that a change would have to be made—that if the Giants were to start moving they would have to have a new manager—or McGraw would have to get some new ball players.

Yet, with trouble boiling all about him, he showed no evidence of wanting to get out. But when the Giants went west in May, the state of his health was aggravated by an attack of ptomaine poisoning in Pittsburgh, and on top of that came a recurrence of his sinus trouble. Several times on the trip, although he went to the ball park, he was too ill to remain for the entire game. He kept to himself in the hotels and even Bancroft, acting in charge when he was absent, discussed the team with him only over the telephone.

### XXXIII ⊗ A REPORTER GETS A BEAT

**O**N JUNE 3 the Giants were at the Polo Grounds. They had not played for two days, although there had been only a light, spattering rain along about noon each day. Nor had McGraw been near the park. This day, which was a Friday, there was a double header scheduled with the Phillies. A small crowd had gathered early, but once more the "No Game" sign was hung out and the crowd began to disperse, although a few of the fans hung about, hoping to see the players as they departed. Most of the baseball writers, reaching the park and seeing the sign, turned back. One—Tom Meany of the

*World-Telegram*—went in, thinking to get a rainy-day story—and walked into the biggest beat a baseball writer had got in years.

McGraw had resigned!

As Meany neared the club house steps, one of Stevens's hot-dog vendors said to him:

"Did you know McGraw is out?"

"Out?"

"Yeah. He quit and Terry is the manager."

Meany kept going—but faster. As he went up the club house steps, Tom Clarke came out of the door.

"Is that right?" Meany asked. "Have you got a new boss?"

Clarke nodded, then jerked his thumb toward the door.

"Go on in," he said. "It's on a bulletin on the wall."

Tom read the bulletin at a glance: McGraw had resigned. Terry was the manager. He raced for a telephone and got the flash into his office ahead of the release sent out by the club to the newspapers and press associations.

The headlines screamed in the evening papers. In Philadelphia, Lou Gehrig hit four home runs to tie a record set by Bobby Lowe of the Boston Nationals away back in 1894, but that story was buried under the photographs of McGraw and the columns of type that were hurled into the forms.

McGraw had prepared a full statement, which read:

"For over two years, due to ill health, I have been contemplating the necessity of turning over the management of the Giants to someone else. My doctor advises me, because of my sinus condition, that it would be inadvisable for me to attempt another road trip with the club this season. So I suggested to Mr. Stoneham that another manager be appointed, inasmuch as it is impossible for me to manage the club unless I accompany it, to which Mr. Stoneham agreed.

"It was my desire that a man be appointed who was thoroughly familiar with my methods and who has learned baseball under me. We therefore agreed on Bill Terry who, I think, has every qualification to make a successful manager.

"While my illness may be but temporary, I want it fully understood that Terry will have full and complete charge of the team and will have to assume entire responsibility therefor.

"I do not intend to retire from baseball but will continue with the Giants, not only retaining my same stock holdings but also as

vice president and as general adviser and counselor, in business as well as in baseball matters.

"I am turning over a good team to Terry who, I believe, will capably handle it. If at any time he wants my help he has only to call for it. I shall be on hand at all times when needed, my health permitting.

"During my thirty years with the Giants, the fans have been extremely loyal to me, for which they have my heartfelt thanks and I hope they will give to Terry the same loyalty and support."

McGraw was not to be found by the reporters that afternoon. He had gone direct to his home in Pelham. Mrs. McGraw, unaware that he had resigned, was surprised when he walked into the house.

"What are you doing home so early?" she asked. "Was the game called off again?"

"Yes," he said. "But that isn't the only reason I came home. I quit."

"You quit?" she asked, startled. "You quit what?"

"I quit my job," he said, laughing.

For a moment she was unbelieving. Then she realized he was speaking the truth.

"You mean you're no longer managing the ball club?" she asked.

"That's right. I resigned today."

He laughed again.

"But don't worry, I'm not completely out of work," he said. "I'm still the vice president and I'll be a sort of—well, general manager, I guess."

And now his face was grave.

"I just didn't feel up to going on as manager," he said. "I'm not well enough."

"I know," she said. "I'm glad you quit, John. Without the team on your mind constantly, you'll get well sooner."

He didn't say anything, but walked into the living room and took the evening papers off a table and sat down to read them. It was too early for any of them to have the story of his resignation. The big story on the front pages in those editions was a statement from Samuel Seabury that he was about to forward to Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt a report and analysis of the testimony taken in the case of Mayor James J. Walker which would be a demand for the

Mayor's removal. McGraw, a close friend of Jimmy's, was reading the story when the telephone rang.

"If that's for me," he said, "I'm not here."

The telephone rang all afternoon . . . and far into the night.

Terry had gone from the Polo Grounds to the residential hotel in the West Seventies where he lived when in New York and was trailed there by reporters and photographers. Newsreel cameras with sound tracks were set up and lights blazed.

Bill seemed a little dazed by his elevation to the management and the excitement it created.

"I can't get over that Schumacher," he said, laughing.

He and Hal Schumacher shared the suite.

"He acted as though he was scared at finding he was living with the manager. He took one look at the bulletin in the club house and tore right out. I haven't seen him since."

As the reporters and photographers elbowed each other in the crowded living room, he said that he was surprised at his appointment but, naturally, was very pleased. He added that he hoped to succeed as manager and felt that he could count on the support of the baseball writers.

Later, when the lamps set up by the newsreel photographers had been turned off, the cables coiled and taken away, and the crowd gone, he said:

"I was in the club house yesterday and Mac came in. He went into his office and was there for a while and then he came to the door and called me. I went in and he closed the door behind me. I stood there looking at him and he walked toward his desk and said:

"'Turn this way. I don't want you to be facing the door when you talk because your words might be heard outside.'

"And then he said:

"'How'd you like to be the manager of the Giants?'

"That nearly floored me. When my head stopped spinning, I said:

"'Why? Are you going to quit?'

"And he said:

"'Yes, and I'd like to have you succeed me. How do you feel about it?'

"'It would be great, on one condition,' I said. 'That is that I shall be the real manager and not just a front for you. You know how I

feel about you and how highly I regard you as a manager, but I wouldn't take the job if you were going to sit in the background and be the real boss. I must be the boss or I don't want it.'

" 'That's the way it will be,' he said. 'I mean, you'll be the real boss. I promise you that.'

" 'Then it's all right with me,' I said.

" 'All right,' he said, 'but don't say anything about it to anybody. Just hold still until you hear from me.'

" 'Today, after the game had been called off, I was going up the steps into the club house when I heard somebody calling me. I looked up and it was the Old Man. He was in the window of Mr. Stoneham's office.

" 'Come up here,' he said.

" 'I went up and there were Mac and Mr. Stoneham and Jim Tierney and Leo Bondy. Mr. Stoneham did all the talking. He offered me the job and I told him, like I had told Mac, that I would take it if there were no strings attached to it. Mr. Stoneham assured me there wouldn't be and Mac nodded in agreement.

" 'If I take the job,' I said to Mac, 'I may make some changes on the club and do things differently than you did.'

" 'That's your business,' he said. 'You do exactly as you want to. If you take the job, you'll be the boss and all the responsibility will rest with you. I never will interfere with you. I want you to know, however, that if you take the job it will please me greatly and I will always be willing to help you with any advice I can give you. But you'll have to come to me and ask for it.'

" 'That's fine, Mac,' I said, 'and I am very grateful to you.'

" 'So then I turned to Mr. Stoneham and I said:

" 'I am honored by your offer and I accept it.'

" 'Then we shook hands all around.'

" 'How do you think Mac really felt about all this?' a reporter asked.

" 'He acted like a man who was glad to get a great weight off his back,' Terry said.

McGraw's decision to resign had been one of the most carefully guarded secrets in the history of baseball. As Terry had said, not even he was aware of it until McGraw told him of it. All over town they were talking of it. They said—those who professed to know

the inside story—that he had not resigned willingly. That pressure had been put upon him, presumably by Stoneham and Tierney, and that, after resisting it for some time, he had succumbed to it because he was ill and tired. Those who had been close to him through the last few weeks of his command guessed that no pressure had been necessary to cause him to resign. It was—and remains to this day—their notion that he knew the state of mind of his ball players, knew that he would have to make many changes before he could get anywhere and, with his health ragged and his nerves frayed, he had no heart for such a task.

One of the baseball writers observed, at the time:

“He said it all when he said: ‘I am turning over a good team to Terry.’ It is a good team but he couldn’t manage it any more. A few years ago, he would have ripped that team apart and built a new one. But he’s sick now and I guess he’s had enough of it.”

Only one player had known that McGraw was stepping down. That was Freddy Lindstrom, and he was talking, too. He was talking bitterly to his friends because, he said, the job had been promised to him and that you could have knocked him down with a feather when he read on the bulletin board of Terry’s appointment.

Terry had said he might make some changes. He made one that night. He fired the trainer who, the players said, was McGraw’s stool pigeon.

## XXXIV ⊗ END OF THE LONG ROAD

**A** FEW DAYS LATER, McGraw was at his desk in the club offices. “Will you be here often, Mac?” a caller wanted to know.

“Oh, sure,” he said. He added, laughing, “I’m strictly an executive now, you know.”

In the statement explaining his resignation, he had said:

“I do not intend to retire from baseball but will continue with the Giants, not only retaining my same stock holdings but also as vice president and as general adviser and counselor, in business as well as in baseball matters.”



But he was a lonely figure in his office. No one appeared to seek his counsel, in business matters or anything else. His desk was clear and he would sit there, looking out across Bryant Park, watching the hurrying crowds on Forty-second Street, listening to the rumble of the elevated trains beneath his windows. When he went to the Polo Grounds, he saw the games from the offices above the club house, never appearing in the grandstand or the press box. When the Giants were on the road, he was at the race track frequently—still playing 3 to 5 shots.

The season dragged on. Terry had managed to get the Giants out of last place, but could get them no higher than sixth, and they finished in a tie with the Cardinals for that position.

McGraw went to Havana that winter. He and Stoneham had pulled out of the race track a few years before, and Stoneham didn't go to Cuba any more. But McGraw never lost his fondness for the old city and the pleasant atmosphere of the track. He returned to New York in the early spring, looking better than he had in some time.

The season of 1933 was an exciting one for the Giants. At last they were paying off on the promise they had given in 1932. This was the team with which McGraw had believed he would win the year before. But now he sat somewhere in the background as that team drove on toward a pennant and the crowd roared for Terry.

In July, the first All Star game was played in Chicago in conjunction with the World's Fair, and for one day, as the manager of the National League team, chosen by vote of the fans around the country, he sat in a dugout again. Connie Mack had been elected to manage the American League team, and memories of the great battles they had fought with one another must have danced before the eyes of these veterans that afternoon at Comiskey Park. But the adventure was to lead only to frustration for McGraw: In the third inning, Babe Ruth hit a home run with Charlie Gehringer on base to win the game for the American League. In their final clash, McGraw had been defeated by the Babe.

The Giants won the pennant and beat the Senators in the World Series. The final game was played in Washington, and McGraw could have no part in it save that of an onlooker. But he could celebrate it, as he had celebrated his own triumphs in years gone by.

The Giants, rushing back to New York, were his guests at a party at the New Yorker that was as gay—and that lasted as long—as any he ever had given.

That winter, he and Mrs. McGraw didn't go to Havana, but remained at their home in Pelham—not the one they had bought back in 1922, but a new one, which they had taken some years later. He loved this house and was content now, as his health failed rapidly, to sit before the fireplace, reading or listening to the radio. Frequent invitations to dinner or theater in New York were refused by him. There was only one he accepted.

This was a birthday dinner given for Joe Leone at his restaurant on Forty-eight Street on January 15, 1934. Mark the date, for it is the last on which McGraw ever appeared in public. Leone's had been a favorite rendezvous for him and his friends—for him and Jimmy Walker and Sid Mercer and Bozeman Bulger and many of those who had been close to him—and that night his thoughts must have gone back to those days and he must have missed Boze, who had died suddenly after a golf match a few months before. Especially in later years, no one had been closer to him than Boze.

But Sid was there that night—for some years now they had been friends again. And Joe Williams and Dan Daniel and Ken Smith and George Phair and many other reporters who traveled with him. And Mother Leone and Gene and Celestine and, of course, Joe. The diners stuffed themselves on antipasto, spaghetti, speckled brook trout, chicken, salad, cheese, fruit, and spumoni. They drank Chianti and champagne and sang "Happy Birthday to You!" and no one had a better time than McGraw. He didn't look like a sick man that night.

But he was. He was desperately sick, and he wasn't going to get well and he knew it—and it was as if he had made up his mind he would have one last fling before he reached the end of the long road that had led from Truxton.

On February 16 he was so ill that he was removed from his home to the New Rochelle Hospital. And there, on February 25, with Mrs. McGraw at his side, he died.

The Giants were at Miami Beach. They weren't his Giants any more. They were Terry's Giants, and under Terry they had won the

pennant and the World Series. Some of the regulars at work down there that spring never had played for McGraw, and the rookies in the camp never had seen him.

On a terrace beyond the windows of his suite at the Flamingo Hotel that afternoon, Terry talked of him and of the day he had resigned:

“‘I will never come into this club house again,’ he said to me that day. He never did, either. But one day, coming back from a trip, I noticed that the pictures of Matty and Ross Young that had been on the wall of his office were missing, and when I saw him again I kidded him about being there in my absence, and he shook his head and said:

“‘No. But I thought you wouldn’t mind if I had those pictures brought down here.’

“He had them hung over his desk. . . . I think he wanted to have them where he could always see them.”

They talked of him at Miami Beach . . . and in New York . . . and in London and Paris and Melbourne . . . and in all the other places he’d known in the long years since Truxton. Whether they loved or hated him, they knew in their hearts that a man had died. And that his memory would live as long as baseball is played.









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