



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Abbott's Monthly Vol. II No. 1

Extracted on Apr-19-2024 03:45:55

The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website (transcription.si.edu), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the National Museum of African American History and Culture as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the National Museum of African American History and Culture website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact National Museum of African American History and Culture or transcribe@si.edu

For more information on this project and related material, contact the National Museum of African American History and Culture. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

[[Image]]

-Wide World Photo

[[caption]]

A busy day in the White Sox clubhouse. Doc William Buckner is keeping the boys in shape. He has the most modern equipment including four therapeutic lamps and some electrical machines. On the shelves are drugs, bandages and everything that a wholesale drug house has for sale. The players say that Buckner "knows his anatomy." Photo shows Buckner treating Cissell's wrist. In the read, left to right, are Clancy, Connelly, and Hoffman waiting their turn to be looked after. [[caption]]

work at the bath house in the Sherman hotel where there was a better class of trade. My customers kept talking about the Chicago White Sox and about going out south to see them play baseball.

"I had seen Charles Comiskey play first base in St. Louis before the American League had been formed. He was then manager of the St. Louis club. The old desire to see some one in action that I knew in the big city gripped me, so I went to 39th and Wentworth to the White Sox park, now the home of the Chicago American Giants, to see the Sox play and it was there and then that my desire to become trainer for the White Sox was born. I talked the proposition over with an old buddy of mine, a cab driver, who besides being an ardent Sox fan, talked so much about the Sox that one would have thought he was one of the owners of the club. But I got little from this friend. In fact, he talked the blamed idea out of my system that night but the idea was in my heart and wouldn't leave.

"My wife and I move to Los Angeles. I followed my old trade working in a turkish bath house but every day I would get the papers and read about the White Sox. This went on for five years.

"Then one day I quit.

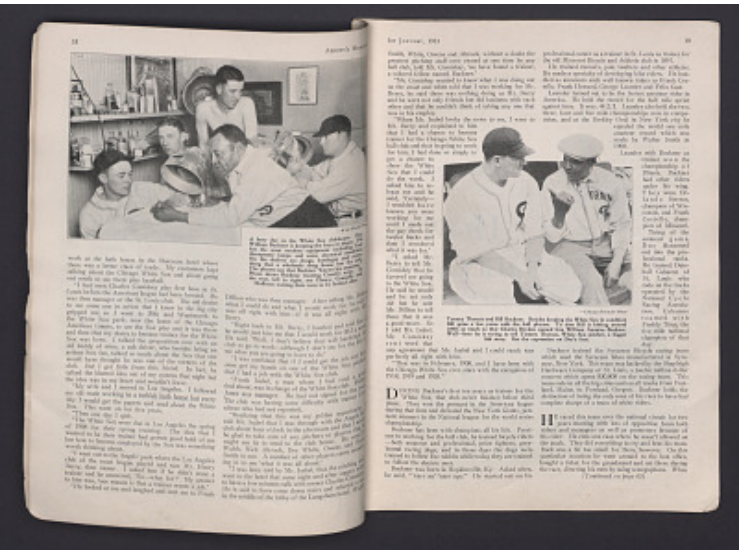
"The White Sox were due in Los Angeles the spring of 1908 for their spring training. The idea that I wanted to be their trained had gotten good hold of me but how to become employed by the Sox was something worth thinking about.

"I went out to the Angels' park where the Los Angeles club of the coast league played and saw Mr. Henry Berry, then owner. I asked him id he didn't want a trained and he answered, 'No- what for?' My answer to him was, 'one reason is that a trainer wants a job.'

"He looked at me and laughed and sent me to Frank Dillion who was then manager. After telling Mr. Dillion what I could do and what I would work for, he said it was all right with him- if it was all right with Mr. Berry.

"Right back to Mr. Berry, I hustled and told him if he would just hire me that I would work for \$12 a week. He said, 'Well, I don't believe that will bankrupt the club so go to work- although I don't see for the life of me what you are going to have to do.'

" I was confident that if I could get the job and then once get my hands on one of the White Sox pitchers that I had a job with the White Sox club.



"Frank Isabel, a man whom I had read a great deal about, was in charge of the White Sox club. Fielder Jones was manager. He had not signed for the year. The club was having some difficulty with trainer Connibear who had not reported.

"Realizing that this was my golden opportunity, I told Mr. Isabel that I was through with the Angels ball club about four o'clock in the afternoon and that I would be glad to take care of any pitchers or players that he might see fit to send to the club house. He sent Ed Walsh, Nick Altrock, Doc White, Owens, and Frank Smith to me. A number of other players came sauntering in to see 'what it was all about.'

"I was late told by Mr. Isabel, that the pitching staff went to the hotel that same night and after supper asked to have a few minutes talk with owner Charles Comiskey. He is said to have come down stairs and selected a seat in the middle of the lobby of the Langsham hotel. Walsh

for January, 1931 19

[[Image]]

-Chicago Defender Photo

[[caption]]

Tommy Thomas and Bill Buckner. Besides Keeping the White Sox in condition Bill spins a few yarns with the ball players. To date Bill is hitting around 1000, so much so that Charles Dryden named him William Ananias Buckner. Well-here he is trying to tell Tommy Thomas, White Sox pitcher, a bigger fish story. Get the expression on Doc's face. [/caption]]

Smith, White, Owens, and Altrock, without a doubt the greatest pitching staff ever owned at one time by any ball club, told Mr. Comiskey, 'we have found a trainer, a colored fellow named Buckner.'

"Mr. Comiskey wanted to know what I was doing out on the coast and when told that I was working for Mr. Berry, he said there was nothing doing as Mr. Berry and he were not only friends but did business with each other and that he couldn't think of taking any one that was in his employ.

"When Mr. Isabel broke the news to me, I went to Mr. Berry and explained to him that I had a chance to become trainer for the Chicago White Sox ball club and that in going to work for him, I had done so simply to get a chance to show the White Sox that I could do the work. I asked him to release me and he said, 'Certainly- I wouldn't have known you were working for me until I made out the pay check for twelve bucks and then I wondered what I was for.'

"I asked Mr. Berry to tell Mr. Comiskey that he favored me going to the White Sox. He said he would and he not only did but he sent Mr. Dillion to tell them that it was a good move. So I told Mr. Isabel. Mr. Comiskey sent word that any agreement that Mr. Isabel and I could reach was perfectly all right with him.

"That was in February, 1908, and I have been with the Chicago White Sox ever since with the exception of 1918, 1919, and 1920."

DURING Buckner's first ten years as trainer for the White Sox, that club never finished below third place. They won the pennant in the American League during that time and defeated the New York Giants, pennant

winners in the National league for the world series championship.

Buckner has been with the champions all his life. Previous to working for the ball club, he trained bicycle riders- both amateur and professional, prize fighters, greyhound racing dogs, and in those days the dogs were trained to follow live rabbits while today they are trained to follow the electric ones.

Buckner was born in Hopkinsville, Ky. Asked when, he said, "ears an' ears ago." He started out on his professional career as a trainer in St. Louis as trainer for the old Missouri Bicycle and Athletic club in 1891. He trained runners, pole vaulters and other athletes. He made a specialty of developing bike riders. He handled as amateurs such well known riders as Frank Costello, Frank Howard, George Leander and Felix Gast. Leander turned out to be the fastest amateur rider in America. He held the record for the half mile sprint against time. It was .44 2/5. Leander also held the two, three, four and five mile championships won in competition, and at the Berkley Oval in New York city he equaled the world one mile amateur record which was made by Walter Smith in 1900.

Leander with Buckner as trainer won the championship of Illinois. Buckner had other riders under his wing. They were Orlando Stevens, champion of Wisconsin, and Frank Costello, champion of Missouri.

Tiring of the amateur game, Doc blossomed out into the professional ranks. He trained Dutehall Cabanne of St. Louis who rode on the tracks operated by the National Cycle Racing Association. Cabanne teamed with Freddy Titus, the five mile national champion of that day.

Buckner trained the Syracuse Bicycle racing team which used the Syracuse bikes manufactured in Syracuse, New York. This team was backed by the Shapleigh Hardware Company of St. Louis, a twelve million dollar concern which spent \$30,000 on the racing team. This team rode in all the big cities and on all tracks from Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon. Buckner holds the distinction of being the only man of his race to have had complete charge of a team of white riders.

HE raced this team over the national circuit for two years meeting with lots of opposition from both riders and managers as well as promoters because of his color. he cites one case where he wasn't allowed on the track. They did everything to try and beat his team. Buck was a bit too smart for them, however. On this particular occasion he went around to the box office, bought a ticket for the grandstand and sat there during the race, directing his men by using a megaphone. When
(Continued on page 65)

Abbott's Monthly Vol. II No. 1
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers
Extracted Apr-19-2024 03:45:55



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)