



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center

Grace F. Thorpe collection - Newspaper Clippings: Jim Thorpe Legacy, 1971-1972

Extracted on Aug-08-2022 10:05:21

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 the American Indian Archives Center 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 the American Indian Archives Center website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center or transcribe@si.edu

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

[[newspaper article]]

4 THE GUIDE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1972

Reflections
COPYRIGHT, HENSEL STUDIO

[[photo of a man in starting position of a footrace]]
[[caption]]

JAMES THORPE (Indian)
FROM THE CARLISLE INDIAN SCHOOL
THE WORLD'S CHAMPION ATHLETE [[/caption]]

Jim Thorpe...
Will They Ever
Right the Wrong?

by JAMES M. BRYANT

On Jan. 8, 1971, the Carlisle Jaycees held a committee meeting and decided to conclude their efforts to have the trophies won in the 1912 Olympic Games by Jim Thorpe returned to the United States and be used as a nucleus for a museum in Carlisle.

Reuben Smitley, a leader in the Jaycees and the Borough's recreational director, admits frankly today there appears to be little hope of ever getting the International Olympic Committee to do this.

"All we asked for is this," Smitley said, "was to have Thorpe's name put back in the Olympic records books and return his medals and trophies to be placed in a track and field Hall of Fame. We have enough Jim Thorpe material now for a museum, but the trophies would mean a lot."

There is a man who was among those stripping Thorpe of his 1912 Olympic honors who still sits in judgment. He is Avery Brundage. "That again!" are Brundage's thoughts on this subject. As long as he remains in power the possibility of the Jaycee success is slight.

They fought a long and hard battle. It began on Jan. 26, 1969; continued into 1970; and was finally stopped as mentioned Jan. 8, 1971.

The Thorpe story has been told and retold, but the amazing thing about the athlete is there was so little information actually gathered into one source. Wilbur J. Gobrecht, the head football coach at Dickinson College became interested and spent hours of research on a sabbatical leave.

"The big thing I found about Thorpe was most of his fame was gained in the Cumberland Valley and little information was lumped together on his stay here," Gobrecht said.

In 1969, he read a paper to the Cumberland County Historical Society and the Hamilton Library Association entitled "Jim Thorpe, Carlisle Indian." Later this was published and the booklet is offered for sale at



the library; several local stores; and the Football Hall of Fame.

The tragedy of what is generally believed to be the greatest all-around athlete the world has ever seen is well known. He was the only one to ever win both the Olympic Pentathlon and the Decathlon in a single year, 1912. There were in those days a total of 15 events involved. He took four first places; five third; and two fourth place spots.

In 1913, after it was discovered he had played baseball for the North Carolina Rocky Mount Club for about \$60 a month expense money, they stripped him of all honors, and removed his name from the record books.

Thorpe was really so naive he did not know he was breaking the rules, and played under his right name. Many other colleges athletes played in the summer months, but under assumed names.

His impressive track record, and never duplicated Olympic victories alone cannot earn the "Greatest All-Around Athlete" name.

Thorpe was equally famous for his football ability. He was coached by the late Glenn "Pop" Warner, and Thorpe of the little Carlisle Indian School made the Walter Camp All-Americans in 1911 and 1912 as first team halfback; and in 1908, as a third team halfback.

Both Camp and Grantland Rice named him as the player of the decade.

The school was tiny and was located on the site of the Carlisle Barracks. In 1907 it won 10 and lost 1. Warner considered this the best Indian team, and Thorpe was very young and only a substitute. In 1911 the record was 11-1; and the next year was 12-1-1 for a two year total of 23-2-1.

Thorpe later went into professional football and is considered along with Red Grange as the best there ever was. He made his greatest success for the Canton (Ohio) Bulldogs. Later in his fading years, he played for a number of teams.

He also played professional baseball and was with the New York Giants from 1913 to 1919 when he was traded to the Boston Braves. His weak hitting and troubles with his manager, John J. McGraw, caused the end of his professional career.

It is interesting to note that in the 1912 Olympic, a classmate, Tewanima, a Hopi Indian, won two first places. He is remembered for his short, "Me, too," speech following Thorpe's long oration on returning to Carlisle.

Thorpe's football records, certainly his greatest sport, are just too many to list. The Indians played and defeated the best including Harvard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Army, Brown, and others. They all were great football names in those years.

One most unusual event should be recorded. In the great 1912 Army-Carlisle game he ran almost 200 yards to score one touchdown. The

original run had been called back because of a penalty.

He was married the first time in St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Carlisle; but this marriage, plus one other, ended in divorce. His third wife stuck with him.

Gobrecht wonders to this day how he was buried with full Catholic rites in view of his marriage record.

Thorpe was Sac and Fox Indian born on May 22, 1888, in the then, Oklahoma Territory. He died March 28, 1952. His body was moved to Jim Thorpe, Pa., formerly Mauch Chunk. This town had great plans, but they were never realized. Today many residents there seek to have the name changed back to Mauch Chunk.

Thorpe's life was filled with tragedy. His thirst is well known, and he drank more and more as he aged. His first born son, Jim Jr., died in 1917 of infantile paralysis. Then too, he had two divorces, and all this, coupled with the Olympic incident made him go down and down.

It is strange, his wives did remain friendly. Today his widow, the former Patricia Askew of Louisville, Ky., whom he married in June 1945, handles his affairs.

They made a movie with Burt Lancaster in the title role of "Jim Thorpe-All-American." Gobrecht says this was "fairly accurate."

The Jaycees, as stated, fought a good battle. They made every effort to right something which almost everyone believes to be a wrong...

....that is except Avery Brundage.

Now the Jaycees are waiting, and they know while they may have lost a battle, the war is truly far from over.

[[advertisement]]

JOIN THE MANY SATISFIED PEOPLE
WHO KNOW THE CONVENIENCE AND
EASE OF DOING BUSINESS AT C.V.S.L.

[[illustration of men at bank counter]]

Look over the MANY SERVICES we offer:

SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS
MORTGAGE (Open end) to buy or build homes.
CHRISTMAS AND VACATION CLUBS.

AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVELERS CHECKS

SAVE OR PAY BY MAIL.

MONEY ORDERS FOR SALE

POSTAGE STAMPS FOR SALE BY VENDING MACHINE.

TIME AND TEMPERATURE--Phone 243-1313.

FOR CUSTOMER'S USE. Elec. Adding Machine, Telephone, Home
Planning Center, etc.

[[stamp]]

FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN INSURANCE CORPORATION

INSURED

[[?]] up to \$20,000

[[/stamp]]

[[stamp]]
FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK SYSTEM
MEMBER
[[/stamp]]
OPEN DAILY 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.
Wednesday - 9 A.M. to Noon
Friday - 9 A.M. to 8 P.M.
No Saturday Hours:
Cumberland Valley Savings and Loan Association
FOUNDED 1906
3216 Trindle Road - Camp Hill, Pa.
Also: York, Carlisle and Shippensburg
[[/advertisement]]

Grace F. Thorpe collection - Newspaper Clippings: Jim Thorpe Legacy,
1971-1972
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers
Extracted Aug-08-2022 10:05:21



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center

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)