



National Baseball Hall of Fame Library MSB 14

Frederick E. Long. Papers, 1871-1905. 0.8 linear feet (2 archives boxes).

Abstract

Papers of Frederick E. Long, treasurer of both the Boston Base Ball Club (ca. 1871-1888) and the Boston Base Ball Players' League Club (1890). The collection is comprised of records and correspondence relating to the operation of the baseball clubs, with the bulk of the material consisting of financial and administrative records. Collection highlights include: letters from manager Harry Wright, which give first-hand accounts of many Boston games, and also highlight the problems confronting a nineteenth century baseball manager; a series of letters between Long and Albert Goodwill Spalding revealing Long's efforts to use Spalding as a proxy to obtain stock in the Boston club; and letters from Boston Players' League scouts John Morrill and Arthur Dixwell venting their frustration with Mike "King" Kelly's efforts to sign players for the team in competition with their efforts. The effort to obtain Mike Kelly for the Boston Players' League team at a salary of \$10,000 is also briefly documented. Other records document player contracts, player negotiations and hiring decisions, and stockholder relations. The records of the Players' League team focus on the issues involved in setting up a team including hiring players, constructing a stadium, and negotiating concessions contracts. A small number of news clippings describing Boston baseball games are also part of the collection.

Provenance: This collection was donated to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in 1983 by Herbert E. Carlson. Collection arranged and described by Anne McFarland in October 2001, with additional processing by Jonathan Nelson in January 2002.

Restrictions on Access: By appointment only Monday-Friday 9AM-4PM; staff assistance required.

Separations: Game passes and ticket books were transferred to the Collections Department of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in October 2001. These are not generally available to researchers.

Grants: CL-10021-01 (IMLS)

Historical Background

Frederick E. Long was the treasurer of the Boston Base Ball Club (ca. 1871-1888). It appears that Long's tenure with the Boston National League Club ended sometime in 1888, perhaps after he, Mr. Charles H. Porter and Mr. J.B. Hart petitioned the Board of Directors for season passes for stockholders. Long was awarded a lifetime pass to all Boston Base Ball Club games by J.B. Billings, the new treasurer, in 1888. By 1889, Long was the treasurer for the Boston Players' National League Base Ball Club.

Ivers W. Adams was the founder and first president of the Boston Base Ball Club but only remained in the position for a year. Adams' bringing baseball to Boston was contingent on signing Harry and George Wright from Cincinnati. Adams thought the Wright's were upstanding gentlemen, and therefore, the right men to represent Boston in baseball. John A. Conkey served as president for the second season; Charles H. Porter was president for the next two seasons.

Nicholas T. Apollonio served as president during 1875 and 1876 when Al Spalding, Jim White, Ross Barnes, and Cal McVey left Boston for Chicago in 1876 at the inception of the National League. Prior to 1876, the Boston Base Ball Club was part of the National Association, which at that time was a professional baseball league.

Arthur H. Soden was the final president, taking control in 1877. Soden, along with J.B. Billings and William H. Conant, formed a triumvirate, gaining a controlling stock interest in the club between 1874 and 1880. The Club was wrought with financial trouble from 1876-1883 and Nick Young, President of the National League, often called upon Soden to finance not only the Boston club, but also the entire National League. Between 1883 and 1889 the Club was financially sound after they won the championship in 1883. In 1887, the Club was able to purchase Mike "King" Kelly for \$10,000 from Chicago.

The Club had a number of nicknames during its existence. They include: Boston Red Stockings (1871-1875), Boston Braves (1876-1952) during this period, however, they were also known as the Boston Red Caps (1876-1882) and the Boston Beaneaters (1883-1906).

The team employed players such as Harry Wright, George Wright, Albert Spalding, Mike "King" Kelly, Dennis "Dan" Brouthers, Charles Radbourne, and Jimmy Collins.

By 1889, it was clear that the players were not satisfied with the National League in regard to salary and reserve clause dealings, and were pursuing the formation of their own league. The concept of this League was initially proposed in 1885, but did not take form until 1890, when the Players' National League organized eight teams, including one in Boston. Charles H. Porter, President; Frederick E. Long, Treasurer; and J.B. Hart, Secretary administered the Boston team. Mike "King" Kelly was lured away from the Boston National League team to captain the Players' League team. John Morrill and Arthur Dixwell scouted for the team.

The Boston Players' League Club's lineup included Hardie Richardson, Ad Gumbert, Dan Brouthers, Harry Stovey, Tom Brown, Arthur Irwin, Dick Johnston, Matt Kilroy, Morg Murphy, Billy Nash, Joe Quinn, Charles Radbourn, Bill Daley, Bill Swett, and Kid Madden. Kelly, Brouthers, Radbourn, Richardson, Brown, Johnston, Nash, Quinn, Daily and Madden all defected from the Boston National League team to join the Boston Players' League team.

The Players' League lasted only one year. After it disbanded, the American Association absorbed many of the teams and players; others returned to the Boston National League team. One exception was Mike "King" Kelly who went to Cincinnati.

Games held in Boston by the Players' League Club were played at the Congress Street Grounds from April 19-September 10, 1890. Subsequently, the American Association club used the grounds from April 18-October 3, 1891. The National League utilized the grounds from May 16-June 20 in 1894, after the South End Grounds II grandstand was destroyed by fire on May 14.

Scope and Content

The papers of Frederick E. Long are divided into four series, **Boston Base Ball Club (National Association 1871-1875; National League 1876-1889)**, **Boston Base Ball Club (Players' League 1890)**, **Frederick E. Long**, and **Miscellaneous**.

Boston Base Ball Club (National Association 1871-1875; National League 1876-1952) (1870-1888) consists of four sub-series: administrative, correspondence, financial, and newspaper clippings. The administrative sub-series includes a legal document relating to an 1876 contract dispute with George Wright, who had been paid by Boston, but wanted the option of playing for another team instead. Also of interest is an 1875 document entitled "Fair Field and No Favor," which is apparently the first draft of a handbill to be distributed at games, extolling the virtues of fair play towards the visiting team. This sub-series also includes a handwritten 1878 schedule, treasurer's reports, stockholder lists, and other administrative documents. Originally stockholders in the team were given season passes, but when the board decided to suspend this practice a number of stockholders, including Long, started a petition to protest this decision. Both the petition and the board's rejection of it are documented in the collection.

The correspondence sub-series includes general correspondence from Nick Apollonio, Arthur Soden, and others concerning finances, scheduling, accounts of baseball games,

and a variety of other topics. Correspondence of particular interest is that between Long and Harry Wright, the manager of the club, and Albert Goodwill Spalding, former Boston player and current sporting goods manufacturer. The Wright correspondence consists of a significant number of first hand accounts of games played by the Boston club, as well as other issues including scheduling, gate receipts, and relationships between the players. The Spalding correspondence concerns Long's efforts to purchase stock in the Boston club from Arthur Soden using Spalding as a proxy, and it provides an interesting inside look at the business side of baseball.

The financial records sub-series documents the financial operation of the team from 1873 to 1888. The documentation is not complete, however. These records include bank and check books, balance sheets, and a number of accounting documents detailing income and expenses, including information about club profits from championship games. The newspaper clippings sub-series includes photocopies of a number of articles documenting the business activities of the Boston club in the local papers of the time. Also included are a few photocopies of articles giving accounts of Boston games.

Boston Base Ball Club (Players' League 1890) (1889-1903) includes three sub-series, correspondence, financial, and newspaper clippings. The correspondence includes a small amount of general correspondence, including a request for employment; a dunning letter from the construction company contracted to build the Boston Players' League stadium; and a pre-season letter about changes to the league schedule. Of particular interest are several letters from Boston scouts John Morrill and Arthur Dixwell, including a fascinating letter from Dixwell about their frustration with Mike "King" Kelly, who was also out signing players, but at salaries higher than authorized by the club. The correspondence sub-series also features a number of telegrams including one from Dixwell stating that it will take \$10,000 to sign Mike Kelly, and another from player Dick Johnson to Long: "Broke, telegraph me three hundred dollars. Will start tonight."

The financial sub-series includes much detailed information about the general operation of the short-lived Players' League club in Boston, including contracts with the players, contracts for grading the grounds and constructing the grandstand, and concession contracts covering scorecard and refreshments sales at the stadium. Players salaries are documented by cancelled checks made out to the following players: Mike Kelly, Dan Brouthers, Charles "Hoss" Radbourn, Kid Nichols, Hardie Richardson, Harry Stovey, Bill Daley, Pop Swett, Tom Brown, Arthur Irwin, Dick Johnston, Matt Kilroy, Billy Nash, Joe Quinn, and Ad Gumbert. Also included are player contracts for the following players: Tom Brown, Bill Daley, Arthur Irwin, Dick Johnston, Matt Kilroy, Kid Madden, Morg Murphy, Billy Nash, Joe Quinn, Hardie Richardson, and Pop Swett. Construction of the Players' League stadium is detailed by construction contracts and detailed bills for labor and materials. Concession contracts include those for vending, scorecards, and advertising signage at the stadium. There is also extensive correspondence with attorney Charles Prince and others about stock issues and the sale of the club. The newspaper clippings sub-series includes a small number of photocopied articles from Boston papers about the origins of the Players' League.

Frederick E. Long (1871-1902) consists of a small number of documents relating to Long personally, including an undated employment contract for \$20,000, a contract and correspondence about lifetime passes to Boston Base Ball club games, and a number of season ticket books and passes, which have been separated to the Collections Department of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

Miscellaneous (1881-1895) consists of several envelopes, including one from the Boston Base Ball Association, and a sheet of Boston Base Ball Club (Players' League) letterhead. Also included is a rare 1890 pocket schedule showing the Boston Players' League games, and an 1895 advertising card for the Official Spalding League Ball.

Container List

Box **Folder**

**Boston Base Ball Club (National Association 1871-1875;
National League 1876-1889)**

- Administrative
- 1 1 Contract dispute with George Wright, 1876
 2 "Fair Field and No Favor" handbill draft, 1875
 3 Schedule, 1878
 4 Stockholder information, 1876-1887
 5 Stockholder list, 1873-1875
 Tickets
 6 Complimentary ticket holders, 1874-1879, n.d.
 7 Season tickets petition, 1880-1881
 8 Season tickets petition, board reaction, [ca. 1881]
 9 Treasurer's records, 1875-1881, n.d.
- Correspondence
- 10 General, 1870-1879, n.d.
 11 Albert Goodwill Spalding, 1884-1885
 12 Harry Wright, 1873-1884
- Financial
- Account books
 13 Ticket sales, 1876
 14 Ticket sales, n.d.
 15-19 Accounting information, 1873-1888, n.d.
 20 Balance sheets, 1873-1879
 21-23 Bank book, 1873-1876
- 2 1 Bank book, 1880
 2 Check book, 1880
 3 Deposits, 1875-1880
- Newspaper clippings
- 4 Baseball game accounts, 1871-1875, n.d.
 5 Business matters, 1883-1887, n.d.

Boston Base Ball Club (Players' League 1890)

- Correspondence
- 6 General, 1890-1903
7 Player signings, 1889, n.d.
8 Player signings, telegrams, 1889-1890
9 Scheduling, 1890
- Financial
- 10 Accounting information, 1890
11 Bank slips, 1890-1895
12 Cancelled checks, 1889-1890

Container List

Box

Folder

Boston Base Ball Club (Players' League 1890), continued

Financial, continued

Contracts

- | | | |
|---|----|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | 13 | Concessions, 1889-1890 |
| | 14 | Construction, |
| | 15 | Players, 1889-1890 |
| | 16 | Stock issues, sale of club, 1889-1893 |
| | 17 | Newspaper clippings, 1889 |

Frederick E. Long

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| | 18 | Employment contract, n.d. |
| | 19 | Lifetime pass, 1888-1905 |
| | 20 | Season ticket books and passes, 1871-1902 |

Miscellaneous

Ephemera

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| | 21 | Envelopes |
| | 22 | Letterhead |
| | 23 | Schedules, 1881-1895 |