
NUGGETS OF HISTORY

VOLUME 47 SEPTEMBER 2009 NUMBER 3

THE EASTERN TOUR - THE 1870 SEASON OF THE FOREST CITY BASEBALL CLUB

By John Molyneaux

CLOTHING.
PATTERSON BROS.,
 309 West State Street,
 Having purchased an entirely new stock of
BOYS' CLOTHING
 Since the decline in Gold, we wish to call the attention of
 those wishing to purchase

Something New for the Boys,
 To our immense stock, which we have marked in plain
 figures, and sell to all alike. Our motto will be
ONE PRICE,
 And that as low as the lowest. We have also a full line of
Fine Clothing for Men,
 Including all the LATEST STYLES, bought at LOW
 PRICES, which will be sold accordingly. Also, the Celebrated
FOREST CITY BASE BALL COLLAR!
 We make Trade Lively with LOW PRICES.

This ad appeared in the April 30, 1870 edition of the Rockford Register. It is a nice example of the support for the team and the appreciation which the Rockford community felt.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This issue presents another article about the early years of the Forest City Base Ball Club by Dr. John Molyneaux. The Forest Cities were one of the finest base ball teams in the mid-west during the late 1860s. In 1870, under new management and with additional financing, the team took their first eastern tour. They faced many of the finest teams in the country. This is the story of that tour.

Many of you know Dr. Molyneaux from his position as the Local History Librarian at the Rockford Public Library, a position he recently retired from after 20 years. Originally from New York State, he received his Ph.D. in History from the University of Virginia. Dr. Molyneaux taught at Rockford College before taking the position with the library. He is also a past board member of the Rockford Historical Society and a frequent contributor to the *Nuggets of History*.

Dr. Molyneaux is an expert in mid 19th century Rockford history and baseball is one of his favorite topics. He has written several articles about the Rockford Forest Cities and their rivals and is currently working on the book about the team. His previously published book, *African Americans in Early Rockford, 1834 - 1871* carefully documents a little known but important part of our local history.

If you have a subject that you have researched, or an idea for an article that you would like to pursue, give me a call. I would like to encourage original research into some aspects of local history that have not been adequately pursued. I can be reached at 986-4867.

Thomas Powers, Editor

THE EASTERN TOUR

THE 1870 SEASON OF THE FOREST CITY BASE BALL CLUB

By John Molyneaux

1. Getting Organized

By 1870, Rockford's Forest City Base Ball Club had national recognition. East of the Allegheny Mountains, in the homeland of baseball, the reputation was shadowy and abbreviated. The New York *Clipper* (January 1870) recognized them as "the champion amateurs of the West," noted that they had lost but four games the past season, all to the "famous 'Red Stockings,'" and reported that "their average of runs to a game is the largest of any club in the country, not even excepting the Red Stockings." Certain other facts were known—they had defeated the Washington Nationals in 1867 and were still the only western team to defeat a strong eastern team. In April the *Clipper* observed "The Forest City played the Cincinnati club the closest game they had last season on their own grounds (14 to 15); they also made more runs against them than any other club...." Forest City (FC) never had the money to venture across the mountains, however, so baseball fans in the great eastern centers knew only stories and rumors.

West of the mountains it was different. FC had beaten teams from Cleveland to Dubuque, from Milwaukee to St. Louis. They had beaten all the Chicago teams and were hailed as the "State Invincibles" by the *Chicago Journal* (September 1869). The powerful Cincinnati Base Ball Club—composed of imported eastern players—had to strive with them to establish Western credentials, so they played FC twice in Rockford (the farthest west the Red Stockings had ventured at that time, once in Chicago and once in Cincinnati (where they came two outs away from a defeat). In the spring of 1870 promoters in Kansas were unable to persuade the Red Stockings to visit Topeka, but were pleased to get the Rockford club because "the Forest Cities...were the only club in the land that could compete in fairly even terms with the Cincinnati boys." And for the 1870 season strenuous efforts were being made to establish a team of eastern professionals in Chicago, which many believed was being done chiefly to defeat the FC. In April the Woodstock (IL) *Sentinel* observed, "If they [Chicago] should fail, a defeat is death to their professionals. We have perfect faith in the Forest Citys and believe the \$20,000 club will not survive a fair trial with them."

For the new season FC was entirely remodeled. The administration of the club was in the hands of a joint stock company of local industrialists. John P. Manny, the reaper manufacturer, was president, and he was supported by five vice presidents (one from each city ward), including Jason Marsh, Selden Church, Alexander Forbes, and Levi Rhoades. They were charged with fund raising. It was going to be an expensive year: several tours were planned of various lengths; improvements were projected for the playing field at the Fairgrounds; and, for the first time, the first nine were to be issued contracts, just like the '69 Red Stockings.

The unfamiliar availability of money brought radical changes. FC would play more games in 1870 than they had in 1865 through 1869. They would play the strongest clubs more frequently and this required careful handling because FC was not as robust a club as reputation suggested. As the New York *Clipper* reported, their average of runs per game was the highest of any club in the country. Indeed, playing against Midwestern teams in 1868 (12 games), FC averaged 43 runs scored per game, while their pitching and fielding gave up 14 runs per game. In 1869 (20 games), the team averaged 54 runs per game and gave up 8 runs per game. In this period, however (1868-1869), they played 9 games with eastern clubs resulting in much different results. Two atypical games may be omitted from our figures: the June 18, 1868, game with the Philadelphia Athletics (lost 94-13), and the July 31, 1869 game with the Cincinnati Red Stockings (lost 52-32). The other 7 games saw FC average just 17 runs per game, while giving up 25. The reality was the club had not yet demonstrated it could win against the strongest clubs, despite everyone's high expectations, and the club was acutely aware of the problem.

Determination of the roster was delegated to a committee of three: Thomas Butterworth, James H. Manny, and Frank Dunshee, all avid baseball cranks. Butterworth had been first president of the club under the joint stock company organization; James Manny was a cousin of the current president and had been particularly active in club administration and as an umpire as well. Increasing the offensive power would not be easy. There were just three reliable heavy hitters on the roster, Bob Addy, Ross Barnes, and Scott Hastings. Compounding the problem, two regular outfielders from '69 left the club, Val Osborn and Lee Cheney. The club philosophy for several years had emphasized fielding and base running, to the point that the team was arguably the best defensive club in the country. The dilemma would be familiar to future management—how much defense can be sacrificed to increase the attack? Rockford's geographic isolation and limited money supply further limited choices: the tiny city near the ends of the earth had little appeal to most established or ambitious players. Only three new players could be induced to consider the club. They were Joe Simmons, who had played for the Chicago Excelsiors; Joe Doyle, formerly of the Buckeye Club of Cincinnati; and Will Barstow, a rookie from Morris, Illinois. The final roster, established about the first of May, was: 1b, Joe Doyle; 2b, Bob Addy; ss, Ross Barnes; 3b, Tom Foley; c, Scott Hastings; lf, Will Barstow; cf, Joe Simmons; rf, Gat Stires; p, Al Spalding; sub, Fred Cone. Al Barker, a mainstay of the first 9 since 1865, was bumped from the squad. Fred Cone, the regular first baseman for two seasons, lost his infield place to Joe Doyle, then was bumped from the outfield by Joe Simmons, but managed to land the substitute's place because of his superlative fielding ability.

At this time Al Spalding was named team captain, which may have been controversial. He was the youngest regular (age 19 years 8 months) and had been considered for the job in '69, but passed over in favor of newcomer Tom Foley. This year he would last only 2 months in the post—just why he was picked and just why he gave it up are not obvious.

2. The First Tours

The season began on the road, FC traveling to Topeka, Kansas, for two games. On May 11, before a crowd of 1500, they defeated the Kaw Valley Club,

of Lawrence, 41-6. The following day a picked nine from the state of Kansas was downed 97-13, the game mercifully ending after 7 innings. A young banker from Topeka, Sam Lakin, was instrumental in bringing FC to Kansas. He had played infield for the Rockford team in 1865 and 1866 before he migrated westward, and he umpired the Kaw Valley game. While the team was in Kansas, their eastern tour was announced, consisting 20 games between May 18 and June 16.

The bustle preliminary to departure on the long-desired eastern tour reminds us just how small Rockford was and how uneasy were the team's economics. On May 16 FC played a fund raising game at the Fairgrounds in Rockford, beating a picked nine composed of local baseball luminaries 28-7. Eight of this team had played regularly for FC at different times in the past. The pitcher, Charles Works, had been the pitcher for the Sinnissippi Club. He was the only good Rockford ballplayer of the 1860s who had never played for FC. This was the only time he and Spalding faced each other. Works served as Winnebago County States Attorney for a dozen years beginning in 1880. The game netted \$70, which was added to the FC travel fund.

Community expectations were clearly stated by the Rockford *Register*: "Remember, they are to advertise Rockford from Chicago to New York, and from Boston to Washington, by their presence at these and intermediate points." There was also a feeling the city was sending a David to meet the giants of baseball: "Let it be understood," said the *Register*, "that this is the first *bona fide* western club that ever had the courage to face the strong professional nines of the east." The *Winnebago County Chief* said "Nearly every club they will play against this season are known professionals, that is, clubs composed of men whose profession is to play base ball at so much per month or season," and added that the Chicago White Stockings "are hirelings assembled at a cost of \$20,000 to thrash the Forest City." The Rockford newspapers, especially the *Chief*, regularly asserted that the FC team was all local amateurs, regardless of information to the contrary reported on their very pages. This year only Spalding, Barnes, Cone, and Addy lived locally, and Addy had just moved permanently to Rockford from Rochelle. Only Fred Cone was actually born in Rockford.

The 10 man team departed Rockford May 17, accompanied by George Haskell as business manager (or traveling secretary); James Manny, Will Barbour, and C. M. Utter, all helping out rather than merely along for the ride. Also with the team was a reporter for the Rockford *Register* who signed himself only as "N." The first games were easy and overwhelming victories over the Hamilton Maple Leafs (Ontario, Canada), the Buffalo Niagaras, and the Syracuse Eckfords. In Hamilton the locals discovered Bob Addy was Canadian-born "and he was the object of special pride on the part of the Canucks, they claimed him from the start as one of *them*," which immediately made the star the target of jibes from his teammates: "I don't care nothing for 'em," he exclaimed, "I tell you I don't care nothing about 'em." On May 21 FC beat the Oswego Ontarios 17-2 in a game rained out after just three innings, the first of many rain problems that would plague the team. It was a noteworthy game, however, because in the 3rd inning FC made "one of the finest triple plays ever made on a ball field." (No more details available, however.)

The first major test for FC came in May 23, against the Troy Haymakers (aka Lansingburgh Unions), regarded as one of the top eight clubs in the

country. The Haymakers had tied the Red Stockings 17-17 in '69, when the game was stopped over allegations of fixing by gamblers. In '70 their most notable players were Dickie Flowers and Steve Bellan (born in Cuba, Bellan is regarded as the first Latino professional baseball player). The pitcher was Cherokee Fisher, who had beaten FC in '68 when he played for the Cincinnati Buckeyes. It was a decisive game, FC winning 21-3 before a crowd of 1500, allegedly the "worst score ever presented by the Haymakers." There was a 10 run 8th inning, with home runs by Barstow and Simmons; Addy stole 4 bases, including home in the 5th; and in the 7th inning there was a Barnes to Doyle to Addy triple play. One triple play is unusual, but triple plays in consecutive games is astonishing. This was Al Spalding's best game yet, holding the Haymakers to just 9 hits. This was the first FC victory over a major team since July 1867.

After the Troy game, rain washed out a scheduled match with the Pittsford Old Elms, but let up enough for a 36-4 victory over the Springfield Mutuals. Then it was on to New York to begin the hardest part of the tour. Rain continued to torment them. The game with the Morrisania Unions (located in a suburb of New York) on May 27 was tied 4-4 when it was rained out after 3 innings. The Unions had beaten FC in '68 and was one of the principal eastern clubs. Rain continued the following day and washed out a game with the Brooklyn Eckfords, another renowned club. The last weekend in May saw FC with a won 10 tied 1 record, but of their last six scheduled games two had been rain shortened and two completely rained out.

While in Buffalo, FC had inadvertently connected with a baseball crank called "Mr. D." (no other name reported). Mr. D. had a theory that excellence in baseball depended mainly upon running, and that players having only average batting ability "must invariably win if superior in short quick dashes." Mr. D spoke directly to the principal operating concern of the team—their batting was not strong enough. He gained converts, after some resistance, and "had the boys engaged in short, quick dashes at all hours." When FC arrived in New York, even George Haskell, the business manager, was drawn into participation. Mr. D. was regarded as the unofficial trainer for the club and traveled with them for over three weeks. Accidental though it was, FC was certainly early in having a trainer in its entourage (*Winnebago County Chief*, June 25, 1870).

On Monday, May 30, the weather cleared enough to allow FC to meet the powerful New York Mutuals and experience their first defeat. For 6 innings it was a close game, with the Mutes leading 7-5; then Hastings injured his thumb, bringing on several passed balls and throwing errors; Addy and Barnes made costly errors; and Spalding suddenly became ineffective, giving up 12 hits (including 2 triples and 2 home runs) plus 3 wild pitches. The final score was 21-13, Mutuals. N. the Reporter thought four days layoff due to rain hurt FC. That may be so, but careful review of the game suggests other factors. Rockford fielding lapses (Barstow and Doyle also made errors) and Hastings' injuries contributed, but ineffective hitting was the real culprit. Addy, Barnes, Simmons, and Hastings combined for 13 hits but managed only 4 RBI. Stires hit two tremendous triples in the 7th and 8th innings, which produced just 2 RBI. Addy had 4 hits and 3 runs, but just 1 RBI. FC couldn't get runners across the plate, while the Mutuals could.

The game was also a demonstration of the aggressive play of FC. N. the Reporter observed that "there were too many chances taken and considerable

carelessness displayed by the Rockford boys." This was not the first time a reporter remarked on this quality—in July 1867 the Rockford *Register* commented "If the Forest City boys had had more coolness and played some of the points with a little more caution, the game would undoubtedly have been theirs." (*Register* July 6, 1867, after the 28-25 loss to the Chicago Excelsiors.) In a losing game, all aggressive play can appear careless to those not involved. In the Mutuals game, N. was recalling several situations that turned bad: Spalding out trying to go from 1st to 3rd on a hit to short left in the 2nd; Barnes out trying to steal 3rd in the 6th; Foley out trying to steal home in the 7th; Hastings hit an RBI triple with 2 out in the 9th and then was thrown out at home, challenging centerfielder Dave Egler by trying to stretch it to a home run, ending the game. This was the way FC played the game. The veteran Mutuals didn't get rattled, but who knows what might have happened if the FC had more batting punch? Possibly in these instances we see unsuccessful applications of Mr. D.'s dictum that "short, quick dashes" improve the winning potential of average hitting teams.

Tuesday the 31st FC returned to the Union Ballgrounds to play the Brooklyn Atlantics before a crowd of 3000. In 1868 the Atlantics had been the first major team to visit Rockford, where they had defeated FC 31-29. Pregame betting favored the Atlantics, and after 6 innings they led 14-4, behind the pitching of George Zettlein. Suddenly the Rockford team solved Zettlein's pitching and Spalding figured out how to pitch to the Atlantic batters. FC outscored their opponents 13-2 in the last 3 innings and won 17-16. The New York *Herald* remarked "The Green Stockings from the West deserved well the victory they achieved. They are not to be trifled with by any means." The New York *Democrat* called them "the best amateur club in the United States." (Cited in *Rockford Register*, June 4, 1870).

The morning of June 1 FC left for Philadelphia and an afternoon game with the Philadelphia Athletics. Once again rain cancelled the game. A game with the Keystone Club was slated for June 2, but FC wanted—indeed, needed—to play the Athletics. "They were determined," said N. the Reporter, "that if the Keystone BBC would give way to the Athletics (which latter were endeavoring to persuade them to do) there would be no more 94-13 games played." This was a reference to the Athletics' June 1868 victory over the FC. Under pressure from both clubs, the Keystones relinquished their match to the Athletics.

It still rained on June 2, but "cleared off beautifully" in the early afternoon, allowing the game. Al Spalding pitched against Dick McBride. The crowd, estimated at 4000, saw a good game—the Athletics got an early lead, but at the end of 8 were ahead just 10-9. Barstow had hit a bases empty homer in the 8th to close the gap to a single run, but the Athletics rallied for 6 runs in the 9th, paced by Wes Fislser's three-run homer, and FC ended up on the losing end, 16-10. This was a loss, but one against a strong team in a well-played game. FC made two errors (Barstow, Simmons), but balanced this with two double plays (Spalding-Addy-Doyle and Foley-Addy). The Athletics managed to keep the lid on the FC running game, although one opportunity arose in the 7th. With 2 out, Barnes singled to right, then stole 2nd. Addy hit to deep third and beat the throw, while Barnes raced to 3rd on the play. Third baseman Tom Pratt's throw, however, went into right field; Barnes scored and Addy made it to 2nd then (apparently not slowing down) headed for 3rd. Surprised, Shaffer, the right fielder threw high over Pratt's head and Addy scored. FC created two runs from

a single and an infield hit. Spalding and Hastings followed with singles, but Doyle ended the rally by striking out with men on first and third. The Athletics were a good team, but this series of plays clearly indicates they had not learned to back each other up, now standard FC practice. Then, according to N. the Reporter, "we had no sooner finished the game than the rain came down in torrents, and continued all night."

Friday morning FC left for Baltimore to meet the Maryland BBC that afternoon. It rained on and off. When the game started at 3 o'clock the grounds were muddy and sloppy. With 2 out in the top of the 3rd, heavy rain began again and the game was ended, FC leading 1-0. In the first inning FC made a typical play. With 2 outs Bobby Mathews hit a ball past Doyle at 1st, a single against most other teams. Addy, backing up Doyle, fielded the ball, and threw to Spalding, who covered 1st, ending the inning. In 1870 this was standard defensive doctrine for FC, but rare or accidental elsewhere (had the Athletics done this in yesterday's game, they would have prevented two runs). Following this game, on June 4 FC was able to play the Baltimore Pastimes, drawing only about 200 spectators. "They are not over gentlemanly on the field, or off either," said N. The score was FC 21-Pastimes 11. That evening FC entrained for the hour-long trip to Washington.

In the capital, rain problems continued. A scheduled game with the Washington Nationals on Monday June 6 was cancelled because the National's grounds were unfit for use. Fearful that the enforced inactivity would hurt the team's competitiveness, Haskell and Spalding arranged a practice game with the Olympics, the opponents for the Tuesday match. The lineup for this game is not known, but Spalding the pitcher and Hastings the catcher did not play. The best guess is that Barnes pitched, Fred Cone, the substitute got to play, and a local player was co-opted to make up a full nine. FC lost this practice game 19-10. The following day, June 7, FC beat the Olympics 8-7, but only by scoring 4 runs in the top of the 9th. For some unspecified reason, Addy and Barnes switched positions for this game. The next day, there was a double header (brought about by the rain problems). In the morning there was a game with the Washington Nationals, 5 innings, FC winning 10-4. In the afternoon, FC played the Jefferson BBC, 5 innings, winning 15-6.

Thursday, June 9, FC returned to Baltimore, hoping for another game with the Maryland BBC, but rain came again and the game was cancelled. Tired and short of money, the team began its homeward trek at 9:30 that evening on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, where they were to play the Baltic BBC of that city on June 11, but the weather continued foul. On game day, it rained until noon, "when there came a tremendous hail storm, the like of which we never saw before." The game was rained and stoned out. In Wheeling Mr. D., the trainer, finally left the club and returned to Buffalo. He planned to connect with the Chicago White Stockings and continue promoting his quick dash theory with them. George Haskell put the team on the 2:10 train to arrive in Cleveland that evening, two days earlier than planned, which threw the schedule off even farther.

The sojourn in Cleveland was an uneasy time. (Just to confuse matters, the Cleveland team was also known as the Forest City Base Ball Club.) "This has been a long trip, too long in fact," remarked N. the Reporter. "However, if we could have played all our games, it would have been different, for the boys have had too much lying around in hotels to do." A hard game was expected. "The

present Forest City BBC, of Cleveland, is the best that money, in generous amounts, could buy." The team included such stars as Ezra Smith and Deacon White. A little embarrassment occurred when the hotel manager asked N. for the team banner or pennant to fly while FC was in residence, apparently standard practice for all the strong clubs of the east. FC not only did not have a banner, it had never heard of such a thing, suggesting they weren't quite metropolitan in their practices. Morale improved Monday morning with the arrival of a delegation from Rockford headed by FC official H. W. Price, who brought news from home and money. "We all needed the services of barbers, bootblacks, &c", reported N. That afternoon, a practice game with the Cleveland team was arranged. The Rockford team lost 21-12.

The game of June 14 began under poor, but familiar, circumstances: "it had rained part of the night, continued until 2 PM," but when it stopped raining "it was blowing a perfect hurricane and kept it up during the whole of the game [and] all long hits were cut short by the wind. The team also made a major batting order change, aimed at improving run production. Simmons was moved to 4th from 1st, and Spalding, Doyle, and Stires, heretofore batting 4th, 6th, and 7th, were assigned to 7th, 8th, and 9th. It was a gritty game, but Rockford led 24-7 going into the 9th inning—then the wind grew from bad to "fearful", Spalding collapsed and Cleveland scored 11 before being retired. FC won 24-18, but it was not pretty. Hastings was hurting—his hands were so bad that he switched positions with Foley at 3rd in the 7th inning. Barstow made 4 errors in left, not all caused by the wind—he in fact made a fine game-ending catch in deep left despite the wind. Leading the play for Rockford were Barnes, who initiated a double play in the 2nd, made two spectacular catches in the 6th, and contributed 3 hits, 3 runs, and drew 3 bases on balls; Addy, who had 5 hits (including a double) 2 RBI, 4 stolen bases (including a steal of home in the 5th); and Hastings, with 3 hits (including a double), and 2 stolen bases. The next day FC headed for Chicago and the tour's last stop.

The game with the Chicago White Stockings on June 16 was a difficult way to end the long road trip. This new Chicago team featured players like Jimmy Woods, Ned Cuthbert, Levi Meyerle and pitcher Ed Pinkham. This first contest between the two Illinois teams was enthusiastically anticipated, and a crowd estimated at 10,000 to 15,000 showed up at Dexter Park, the largest crowd by far FC had ever drawn. Betting was heavy: "Thousands of dollars were wagered even that the Forest City would win the game," reported the Rockford *Register*. The game was a disaster. The White Stockings scored 15 runs in the 1st inning and won 28-14. "Much as we respect and love the Forest City nine," said the newspaper, "we find it difficult to pardon them for this." Upon returning to Rockford on the 17th Captain Spalding was asked by the editor of the *Gazette* "to account for the run of fifteen in the first inning." The reply: "It was accomplished by terrific batting," and the White Stockings were given credit for good play—in other words, a classic non-answer: they just beat us. The tour, however, especially with its difficult weather, had worn down the Rockford team. The Cincinnati *Semi Weekly Gazette*, in commenting on the FC-Cleveland game, had remarked that "Both clubs are used up with hard play of late, but when in good condition would be splendidly matched for a tough game." The game with the White Stockings showed FC was indeed "used up." But the tour had been successful. Not counting the two practice game losses, they had won 13, lost 3

and tied 1, and had taken Midwestern baseball into the heartland of the great eastern teams.

3. Life on the road

Professional baseball needed railroads. Strong clubs needed strong competition, and strong competition was only accessible by rail. Touring began in 1867, when the Washington Nationals came into the Midwest as far as St. Louis and Chicago. In 1868 other eastern clubs penetrated the region: the Philadelphia Athletics reached Chicago, while the Brooklyn Atlantics and the Morrisania Unions reached Rockford, drawn by the FC. The Buckeye Club, eastern professionals based in Cincinnati, also came to Rockford. In 1869 the FC began touring themselves. The first prominent club with Midwestern players, their range was limited by lack of funds, but they reached Cincinnati and Detroit to the east and St. Louis to the south. This year the Cincinnati Red Stockings, eastern professionals, maximized use of the railroads by touring the entire country, from Boston to San Francisco and as far south as New Orleans; their first trip west of Ohio was to Rockford to meet FC. In 1870 the FC toured as far east as Springfield, Massachusetts and New York, and as far west as Omaha, Nebraska, while the newly organized Chicago White Stockings (another Midwest-based club of eastern professionals) became the first team to train in the south (New Orleans) and then come north for their regular season. Professional ballplayers spent much of their time on the road. In 1869 FC played just 1/3 of their games at home, and in 1870 only 1/4. Gat Stires, the FC outfielder, later calculated he had traveled 15,000 miles in the 1871 season alone.

While on tour, the housekeeping and business details were handled by a business manager (later called the traveling secretary). For FC in May, 1870, this was George Haskell, an officer of the club (recording secretary). He was in business (a seedsman) and could give time to club matters. He was experienced, having been manager on the '69 tour. Haskell's job was to manage the team's baggage, transportation details, hotel bookings, and see that the team's obligations were properly met. He was expected to deal with any unexpected business—on this trip he had to deal with rescheduling rained out games, arranging practice games to keep playing skills sharp, and accommodating Mr. D's "short, quick dash" conditioning ideas that had captured the squad's interest.

Haskell was not a tour guide, chaperone, or psychologist, but his work incorporated elements of all three professions. According to N. the reporter he "aimed to make the boys comfortable and happy," and he hoped to "keep up that harmony in the minds and good feeling that the boys have for one another," watching out for "little points" to maintain morale and focus. Sightseeing activities were fitted into the schedule. Haskell took the team to view the suspension bridge over the Niagara River (then the longest in the world), then to see Niagara Falls, with visits to the tourist trap museums in the area. In Massachusetts a tour of the federal armory was arranged at Springfield. The rail journey through western Massachusetts provided another sort of tourist experience. Between Pittsfield and Springfield the young men from flat Illinois "enjoyed the sight of mountains, valleys, and trout streams, which experience was entirely new to most of them."

In New York city one evening the team was entertained by a glee club from the Alpha Base Ball Club and another evening attended a musical comedy play at the Olympic Theater on Broadway, where they saw "The Fair One in a Blonde Wig," starring Mrs. James Oates. In Washington the team toured the Treasury building, visited both houses of congress while they were in session, and then climbed the cupola of the Capitol building. On June 7 they were invited to visit fellow Illinoisan Ulysses S. Grant briefly at the White House, then made quick trips to the Smithsonian Institution and the Navy Yard before playing a game with the Washington Olympics later in the afternoon. In Chicago, on the last night of the tour, the team attended McVicker's Theater and saw the performance of the Emerson Minstrels. Despite Haskell's unrelenting efforts, much time was spent on interminable train rides, or sitting around hotels during equally interminable rain storms. By the end of the trip no one had money to spend, and by the time they reached Cleveland everyone was exhausted.

Whether President Grant attended a Forest City game is not known, but some other politicians did. Rockford's Congressman John Farnsworth the Olympics game, as did Illinois congressman at large (later Senator) John A. Logan. Another prominent official in the audience was Circuit Judge Benjamin Sheldon, who would be appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court two months later. Perhaps the most interesting faces in the crowd belonged to members of the Lakota delegation, in the capital to confer with President Grant, headed by Red Cloud and Spotted Tail. The Lakotas were "exceedingly interested" in the game according to N. the reporter, even when one of their number, Swift Bear, found himself briefly a part of the action: "Mr. Bear quit his position when a lightning-like foul from Spalding's bat came for him."

It is said 19th century baseball players were generally regarded as at least mildly disreputable, a reputation similar to that of other itinerant workers (railroaders, actors, circus artists, salesmen). They were often associated with various types of misbehavior, like drunkenness, gambling, or rowdiness; it is stated they were often unwelcome in good hotels. Appropriate anecdotes can be found of individual players or even teams to warrant such suspicions. These strictures do not apply to the FC teams. Perhaps they were more sedate by nature; perhaps they were consciously on their best behavior, for after all they had been publicly charged with representing Rockford to the larger world. N. the reporter stated in a letter dated June 13 (Register, June 18, 1870): "The reputation of Rockford has been enhanced very much more than many at home would believe, by the ball club during its Eastern trip." They stayed at good hotels with no problems, the reports of their demeanor on and off the field were uniformly good, and they attended church every Sunday. Possibly the reputation of ballplayers was based less on their actual behavior, and more upon the behavior of fans and spectators who were often unruly and boisterous, having what they considered a good time. The players were just trying to earn a living. Another factor was probably a kind of social jealousy—they players were after all young, mostly unmarried men, traveling far from home, being paid for playing a game. Some parts of American society would regard ballplayers with suspicion and expect the worst from them, at the same time they envied their perceived freedom. Whatever the situation, the FC did not mirror these popular beliefs.

ROCKFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
6799 Guilford Rd.
Rockford, IL 61107

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ROCKFORD, IL
PERMIT NO. 320

RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED

NUGGETS OF HISTORY is published quarterly by the Rockford Historical Society, 6799 Guilford Rd., Rockford, Illinois 61107. Society members receive NUGGETS upon payment of annual dues. New rates, effective January 1, 2007: Family @ \$20, Individual @ \$15, Contributing member @ \$25, Life member @ \$150. Mail check to: Membership Chairman, Rockford Historical Society, 6799 Guilford Rd., Rockford, IL 61107.

Statement of Purpose: To enlighten and to educate people about their place of residence, to entertain with stories and fact, and to enrich lives regarding what is available to enjoy, to treasure and to honor.

2008-2009 Officers

President	Bruce Steder
Vice-President	Jean Lythgoe
Editor/Publisher	Thomas Powers
Treasurer	Linda Robertson
Secretary	Gail Zahm

We welcome manuscripts and photos to area historical events and personalities, for publication consideration. We reserve the right to edit and to condense. For return, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Send to NUGGETS EDITOR, ROCKFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 654 CASTLE WYND DR, LOVES PARK, IL 61111.
