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Lou Lucier, 96, oldest living Red Sox, dies

Lou Lucier, who had been the oldest living former Red Sox player, passed away Saturday afternoon at the Millbury Health Care Center, according to family members.

He was 96.

Born in Northbridge and raised in Grafton, Lucier pitched parts of three seasons in the wartime major leagues from 1943-1945, winning three games for Joe Cronin's Boston Red Sox in 1943.

A 5-foot-8, 160-pound right-hander, Lucier made his major league debut in relief on April 23, 1943, against Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics at Shibe Park. But his first major league win came in the second game of a doubleheader at old Comiskey Park in Chicago on May 16, 1943.

In an era long before for the designated hitter, the 25-year-old Lucier got two hits and drove in two runs in the Red Sox's 4-2 win.

"The two runs I drove in were actually the winning runs," Lucier said in a 2010 interview with the Telegram & Gazette.

Lucier, whose teammates during that 1943 included Hall of Famers Bobby Doerr and Al Simmons, also went the distance on the mound, allowing nine hits, striking out four and walking two. Only one of the runs he allowed was earned, by the way, and the game, watched by 9,874, took just 1 hour and 43 minutes to play.

Lucier's second victory came against the Tigers on May 30, 1943. He allowed only seven hits in that 5-1 win, the only Detroit run scoring on Rip Radcliff's hit in the first inning. The Red Sox, who finished eighth in the American League in '43, scored two runs in the sixth and three in the seventh.

"They hit me a little bit harder then than the first time," Lucier recalled.

His third victory came against Detroit in the first game of a doubleheader, also at Fenway, on Sept. 26, 1943. Lucier, who pitched all 10 innings of the 3-2 win.

Lucier finished the 1943 season with a 3-4 record and 3.89 ERA, pitching in 16 games, nine of them starts.

He went onto pitch three more games for the Red Sox in 1944 and another game for Philadelphia that season before ending his career with the Phillies at the age of 27, pitching for the final time on June 13, 1945.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

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