

= Fred Tenney =

Frederick Tenney ( November 26 , 1871 ? July 3 , 1952 ) was an American professional baseball player whose career spanned 20 seasons , 17 of which were spent with the Major League Baseball ( MLB ) Boston Beaneaters / Doves / Rustlers ( 1894 ? 1907 , 1911 ) and the New York Giants ( 1908 ? 1909 ) . Described as " one of the best defensive first basemen of all time " , Tenney is credited with originating the 3 @-@ 6 @-@ 3 double play and originating the style of playing off the first base foul line and deep , as modern first basemen do . Over his career , Tenney compiled a batting average of .294 , 1 @,@ 278 runs scored , 2 @,@ 231 hits , 22 home runs , and 688 runs batted in ( RBI ) in 1 @,@ 994 games played .

Born in Georgetown , Massachusetts , Tenney was one of the first players to enter the league after graduating college , where he served as a left @-@ handed catcher for Brown University . Signing with the Beaneaters , Tenney spent the next 14 seasons with the team , including a three @-@ year managerial stint from 1905 ? 1907 . In December 1907 Tenney was traded to the Giants as a part of an eight @-@ man deal ; after two years playing for New York , he re @-@ signed with the Boston club , where he played for and managed the team in 1911 . After retiring from baseball , Tenney worked for the Equitable Life Insurance Society before his death in Boston on July 3 , 1952 .

= = Early life = =

Tenney was born in Georgetown , Massachusetts , the third of five children to Charles William and Sarah Lambert ( née DeBacon ) Tenney . Charles Tenney attended Dummer Academy from 1850 to 1853 , and served for the 50th Massachusetts Regiment in the Civil War , where he nearly died due to " intense suffering " . Growing up , Fred led his class in drawing and sketching . He reportedly started playing baseball around 1880 .

= = Career = =

= = = Brown University = = =

In 1892 , Tenney played his first professional game for the Binghamton Bingos of the Eastern League , going 1 for 4 with a single . He played as Brown University 's catcher for the 1893 and 1894 seasons . In 1894 , the team had a 23 ? 8 record and were selected as national champions by Harper 's Weekly . The night of his senior dinner , Tenney received a telephone message from Frank Selee , the manager of the Beaneaters , asking him to play a game for the team at catcher , due to the injuries of other players .

= = = Boston = = =

In his MLB debut on June 16 , 1894 , Tenney had to be removed from the game in the fifth inning due to a fractured finger on his throwing hand from a foul tip . After Tenney had his finger addressed , James Billings , an owner of the Beaneaters , offered him a contract worth US \$ 300 a month from that day . Tenney , later writing about the day , stated :

I thought they were trying to have a little joke with me , and I concluded that I could do a little kidding myself . So I thought I would call their bluff by asking for some advance money . I screwed up my courage and asked Mr. Billings whether , if I signed the contract at once , I could get some advance money . He asked how much I wanted , and I thought I would mention a big sum in order to call their bluff good and strong . So I said \$ 150 . He consulted with Mr. Conant , another Director , and said that I could have the money all right , and asked me how I would like to have it ? cash or check . [ ... ] I replied that I would take half cash and then half in check , and immediately he wrote out a check for \$ 75 , counted out \$ 75 in cash , shoved the contract over to me to sign , laying the cash and check beside it .

He returned to the team a month later , and finished the year batting .395 in 27 games . The following season , Tenney moved to the outfield due to an erratic throwing arm behind the plate , according to manager Selee . For the season , he hit .272 in 49 games , while also playing minor league baseball for the New Bedford Whalers . In 1896 , Tenney again caught and played outfield ; offensively , however , Tenney hit .336 in nearly double the games from the previous year ( 88 ) despite playing in the minors for the Springfield Ponies .

In 1897 , Tenney moved to first base to replace the aging Tom Tucker . According to Alfred Henry Spink , within two weeks of the move it was evident that Tenney had become " one of the finest first sackers that the game [ had ] ever seen . " On June 14 , 1897 , in a game against the Cincinnati Reds , Tenney turned the first 3 @-@ 6 @-@ 3 double play in MLB history . Offensively , Tenney led MLB in plate appearances ( 646 ) and tied Duff Cooley , Gene DeMontreville , and George Van Haltren for the lead in at bats ( 566 ) as the Boston club became National League ( NL ) champions with a 93 ? 39 record .

Boston again won the NL in 1898 while Tenney hit .328 with 62 RBIs . In 1899 he collected 209 hits , fifth most in MLB , and recorded 17 triples , good for fourth best in MLB . In 1900 Tenney , at age 28 , batted .279 over 112 games played . He began a streak of seven consecutive seasons where he led the NL in assists in 1901 ; he holds the record for most seasons leading a league in assists , with eight , including one in 1899 . He was suspended for ten games for fighting Pittsburgh Pirates manager Fred Clarke in May 1902 , and finished the 1902 season with the second most sacrifice hits ( 29 ) in the majors , to go along with a .315 average . Throughout the 1901 ? 1902 seasons , Tenney received contract offers worth up to \$ 7 @,@ 000 ( \$ 193 @,@ 172 in 2012 ) from St. Louis , Cleveland , and Detroit ; Tenney , however , decided to remain in Boston , and was named captain of the club in 1903 . For the season , he hit .313 , with 41 RBIs and three home runs , as he led his team in walks ( 70 ) and had the best on @-@ base percentage mark ( .415 ) on the squad . In 1904 , Tenney again led his team in walks and on @-@ base percentage , as he tied for the team lead in runs with Ed Abbaticchio .

He was named manager of the team in 1905 , but did not receive additional pay ; he was , however , offered a bonus if the team didn 't lose money . In 1905 , Tenney tried to sign William Clarence Matthews , an African @-@ American middle infielder from Harvard University , to a contract . Tenney later retracted his offer due to pressure from MLB players . Defensively , he led the majors in errors committed by a first baseman and finished second in most putouts for any position . Tenney led the 1906 Beaneaters to a 49 ? 102 record . For the second straight year , the Boston team lost more than 100 games .

After a 158 ? 295 record as manager , on December 3 , 1907 , Tenney was traded to the Giants , along with Al Bridwell and Tom Needham , for Frank Bowerman , George Browne , Bill Dahlen , Cecil Ferguson and Dan McGann ; the trade was called " one of the biggest deals in the history of National League baseball " .

= = = New York Giants = = =

In his first season with the Giants , Tenney led MLB with 684 plate appearances and finished third in runs scored , with 101 . In a game against the Chicago Cubs on September 23 , Tenney could not play due to an attack of lumbago ; it was the only game he did not play in during the season . Rookie Fred Merkle took his spot at first base . The game was at a 1 ? 1 tie in the bottom of the ninth . Merkle , after hitting a single , was at first , and Moose McCormick was at third , with two outs . Al Bridwell singled to center field , but Hank O 'Day called Merkle out because Merkle had not touched second base . O 'Day ruled the game a 1 ? 1 tie due to darkness . With both teams finishing the season at a 98 ? 55 record , a replay game had to be played to determine who would win the National League pennant . The game was held on October 8 , with the Cubs winning , 4 ? 2 .

After batting a career low .235 in 1909 , Tenney was released by the Giants . He spent the 1910 season as a player ? manager for the minor league Lowell Tigers , leading the team to a 65 ? 57 record , good for fourth ( out of eight teams ) in the New England League .

== Return to Boston ==

On December 19 , 1910 , Tenney signed a two @-@ year contract with the Boston Rustlers . For the 1911 season , Tenney hit .263 over 102 games . He was released by the Braves on March 20 , 1912 , after 44 ? 107 record in one season ; Tenney was paid not to manage for the second year on his contract .

In 1916 , he bought the Newark Indians of the International League with James R. Price for \$ 25 @,@ 000 ( \$ 527 @,@ 450 in 2012 ) . Mayor Thomas Lynch Raymond declared April 27 a " half @-@ holiday " for the city of Newark for the Indians ' Opening Day . Tenney played in 16 games for the Indians , hitting .318 with seven hits over 22 at @-@ bats , and managed the team to a 52 ? 87 record .

== Personal life and death ==

Tenney married Bessie Farnham Berry on October 21 , 1895 . The couple had two children together ; Barbra , born July 4 , 1899 , and Ruth , born December 8 , 1901 . Early in his career , he refused to play baseball on Sundays due to his religion , although he later changed his mind . Tenney was known as the " Soiled Collegian " at the major league level because it was unpopular for college players to become professional . Tenney served as a journalist for The Boston Post , Baseball Magazine , and The New York Times . He painted and sketched during the winter .

After retiring from baseball , Tenney worked for the Equitable Life Insurance Society and continued writing for The New York Times . In 1912 , he was vice @-@ president of the Usher ? Stoughton shoe manufacturing company in Lynn , Massachusetts ; later , he formed the Tenney ? Spinney Shoe Company in partnership with Henry Spinney . He was balloted for the National Baseball Hall of Fame from 1936 ? 1942 and again in 1946 , but never received more than eight votes , receiving eight ( 3 @. @ 1 % of total ballots cast ) during the Baseball Hall of Fame balloting in 1938 . Tenney died on July 3 , 1952 at Massachusetts General Hospital after a long illness . He was interred at Harmony Chapel and Cemetery in Georgetown .