

= Danny Shay =

Daniel Charles Shay (born Daniel Shea , November 8 , 1876 ? December 1 , 1927) was a professional baseball player . He played all or part of four seasons in Major League Baseball (MLB) , for the Cleveland Blues in 1901 , the St. Louis Cardinals from 1904 to 1905 , and the New York Giants in 1907 , primarily as a shortstop . Even during his playing days , Shay owned a cigar shop , several race horses and a minor league baseball team . One of Shay 's fingers had to be amputated after a 1905 injury . His playing career made a brief comeback two seasons later .

After retiring as a player , Shay served as a manager in minor league baseball . By 1917 , Shay was managing the Milwaukee Brewers of the American Association . On May 3 , 1917 , Shay shot a black waiter at a hotel cafe in an argument stemming from a request for sugar ; he claimed self @-@ defense and was acquitted of murder charges . In subsequent media coverage , the verdict was criticized as an injustice . Shay worked as a scout in his last role in baseball . Late in his life , he suffered a stroke and lost the use of his right arm and hand . Ten years after he was acquitted in the murder trial , he was found dead in a hotel room with a gunshot wound to the head . Authorities could not definitively rule out either suicide or murder .

= = Early life and career = =

Shay was born in Springfield , Ohio , on November 8 , 1876 to Irish immigrants . Around the time of Shay 's birth , Springfield was a town characterized by tense race relations . Large numbers of black settlers arrived in the city from Kentucky in the wake of the Civil War . Black residents soon outnumbered whites , and they competed for jobs with working class white citizens like Shay 's parents . Schools were integrated in Springfield when Shay was nine years old . He left Springfield by 1895 to begin his career in minor league baseball .

Shay 's first recorded minor league appearances came in 1897 with three teams in the Interstate League and the Ohio @-@ West Virginia League . Statistics are sparse until 1899 , when he hit for a .288 batting average in 100 total games for four minor league teams . While playing minor league baseball for the 1900 Youngstown Little Giants , Shay was fined for leaving the team and for using improper language with the team 's manager .

Shay made a brief appearance in the major leagues with the Cleveland Blues in 1901 . During the 1902 season , he hit a combined .239 in 167 minor league games . He was arrested in June 1902 after leaving the St. Paul Saints for another team in San Francisco . He was charged with running up an unpaid bill with St. Paul ; he was assessed a \$ 25 fine and agreed to repay \$ 138 . Shay played in 193 games for the 1903 San Francisco Seals , registering 721 at @-@ bats and a .243 batting average .

= = MLB career = =

In late 1903 , a baseball column suggested that the Detroit Tigers were interested in Shay , but he was said to be happy playing in California . During Shay 's tenure in San Francisco , he got married . Shay went to spring training with the St. Louis Cardinals before the 1904 season . He impressed the team , prompting speculation that shortstop Dave Brain would move to third base and third baseman Jimmy Burke would serve as a utility infielder . Shay played 99 games for the Cardinals in 1904 .

Shay sustained an injury to his pinky finger during the 1905 season . The finger did not heal properly and it required amputation . He sat out of major league baseball in 1906 , refusing to play in St. Louis . Shay was a successful businessman during his early career ; he owned a cigar shop in Stockton , California , purchased an outlaw baseball team and owned several race horses . As Shay prepared to return to baseball after a year away , an article in The Pittsburgh Press said , " There have been many ball players who have quit the game and became wealthy on the turf , but Shay is the only specimen living who was wealthy on the turf and quit the game to play professional baseball . "

In December 1906 , Shay announced that he was excited about the possibility of playing for the

New York Giants . He was making plans to leave the tobacco business so that he could be available to join the team for 1907 . Giants manager John McGraw secured Shay 's release from St. Louis in January 1907 , but he was unable to sign Shay during initial negotiations with him . Shay signed with the team the next month . Reporting on the signing , The New York Times described Shay as " a trustworthy batsman , and a good fielder ... a splendid baserunner , cool at all times , and a player of considerable judgment . " The article said that Shay was one of three candidates to play second base . He appeared in 35 games for the Giants that season .

= = Post @-@ MLB career = =

In January 1908 , newspaper reports held that Shay would not return to the Giants and that McGraw would meet with him to begin arranging a trade that would send him to another team . That year he played for the Stockton Millers of the California League , an independent minor league . Stockton won the 1908 league championship . During the 1909 season , he became a player @-@ manager for the Kansas City Blues of the American Association .

While Shay was managing at Kansas City in early 1910 , American Association president Thomas Chivington imposed new conduct rules for the league . The new system emphasized fines for players and managers rather than simply ejecting them when they behaved poorly . After Shay was ejected from three games in a four @-@ game span , a Minnesota newspaper article questioned whether his behavior would be subject to additional disciplinary action . The next month , Shay released 48 @-@ year @-@ old Jake Beckley , prompting his retirement after one of the longest careers in professional baseball history . The first baseman had tried to make the Kansas City team after 20 years in the National League .

In the spring of 1911 , Shay was riding in a taxi that collided with a dray and he sustained severe cuts to his face . Shay was suspended indefinitely in late June 1911 after a fight with an umpire . In October 1911 , Shay abruptly resigned as the manager in Kansas City . He declined to say what prompted his resignation and said that he might not be permanently finished with baseball , but he said that he was finished with the Kansas City club . When asked about the possibility of a major league managing job , Shay responded , " There is nothing to be said now , but there may be something later . "

When the Columbian Baseball League was forming in 1912 , The New York Times named Shay as one of two candidates to manage the league 's Kansas City team . The president of the new league , John T. Powers , said that the league would not serve as a third major league , but he noted that many players were eager to sign with the league after their contracts had expired in 1911 . The league never materialized . One of its main investors , brewer Otto Stifel , withdrew his support of the league before play began .

Shay managed the 1913 Helena Senators in a minor league known as the Union Association . His wife was killed in a car accident in 1914 , and their two children were sent to live with relatives . Shay sat out of baseball that year . In 1915 , Kansas City manager Bill Armour was promoted to vice president , and the team rehired Shay as its manager . Late in the 1916 season , Shay was dismissed as manager . He had not been on the bench recently , and his absence was attributed to poor health . Art Phelan had been managing the team on an interim basis and was named as Shay 's replacement for the rest of the season .

Shay was signed to manage the Milwaukee Brewers of the American Association in 1917 . His contract included a clause prohibiting him from drinking alcohol , though he was still known to visit bars and order Dubonnet , a liquor that Shay said was " soft as a milk shake . " Shay 's predecessor in Milwaukee , Harry " Pep " Clark , resigned in the middle of the 1916 season . Clark had led the team to league championships in 1913 and 1914 , but he experienced difficulty by the next year when the club 's ownership refused to sign new players to replace aging veterans .

= = Shooting and trial = =

On May 3 , 1917 , the Brewers traveled to Indianapolis and defeated the team there to improve

their win @-@ loss record to 7 ? 8 . Shay visited a local tavern that night and had some drinks . The tavern owner took Shay to a beauty parlor and introduced him to its owner , Gertrude Anderson . Anderson gave Shay a manicure and accompanied him to the Hotel English . Shay complained to busboy Eugene Jones about the placement of sugar bowls at his table . Clarence Euell , a black waiter at the cafe , came to address Shay 's concern . An argument ensued during which Shay pulled out a gun and shot Euell in the abdomen . Euell wrestled Shay to the ground , pressing his foot down on Shay 's head .

Euell was taken to a hospital and died about an hour after the shooting . He was never able to formally identify Shay as the shooter . When Shay was arrested in his hotel room that night , police officers said that he appeared to be intoxicated . He refused to make any statements . He was held without bail and charged with second @-@ degree murder . A conviction carried the possibility of life imprisonment . A few days after the shooting , American Association owners were collecting funds to assist in Shay 's criminal defense . As the case was about to go to trial , one of the attorneys became ill , so the proceedings were delayed for several weeks . The trial was reset for November 12 , 1917 .

At a coroner 's inquest , several witnesses had testified that they saw Shay shoot Euell after an argument over a sugar bowl . Anderson said that she did not see much after the initial verbal exchange because she fled the dining area as soon as the argument escalated . At trial , Anderson said that Shay had two drinks at the cafe . She said that Euell had been staring at her , was rude to them and lunged toward Shay before the shooting . The cafe 's manager said that Euell had not been rude to Shay . Two waiters denied that Euell had lunged at Shay . A cashier testified that when Shay asked for sugar , Euell pointed out that there was already some on his table , but he brought two more bowls . She said that Shay called Euell " smarty " and confronted Euell with the gun while the waiter was walking away . Shay denied being drunk and said that Euell hit him and threatened to kill him before the shooting .

At 11 p.m. on November 21 , the case was sent to the jury . At 9 : 20 a.m. the next day , a not guilty verdict was announced . There was applause in the courtroom when Shay was cleared . An editorial in the local newspaper denounced the verdict the next day . Regarding Shay 's self @-@ defense assertion , the editorial said , " The only testimony that even tends to sustain that theory was his own . " Black newspapers also criticized the outcome of the case .

= = Later life = =

From the time of Shay 's arrest through the end of the 1918 season , the Brewers went through four more managers . Clark returned to the team in 1922 , spending several more years as manager . Shay ended his baseball career as a scout for Columbus of the American Association .

Shay was found dead in a Kansas City hotel room on December 1 , 1927 . He was found with a gunshot wound to the head . Police officials initially said that the manner of death could have been either suicide or murder . Shay stayed in his room on the day that he died . A porter went to check on him that evening and found him on the floor with a pistol a few inches from his right hand . When physicians examined Shay 's body , they found that a bullet had entered the right ear and exited the back of the head . Shay had lost the use of his right arm and hand after a stroke . Police said that if Shay were holding the gun in his left hand , it would not have been easy for him to shoot himself in the right side of the head .

After his death , sportswriter Manning Vaughan described Shay as a " fire eating , umpire hating player and just as hard when he became a manager . " He said that Shay was a " polished gentleman ? with his friends . But he was everything else with people he did not like . He would fight at the least provocation , and as it was generally known he packed a gun the gentlemen involved never stuck around very long to argue . "