Foreword

In *Native Sons,* Rich Westcott has written about all the local guys who can trace their baseball origins to the Philadelphia area. I can trace my own origins to the same place, which is probably why he asked me to write this foreword.

Most of these guys made it in one fashion or another. Here I am pushing 80 and still struggling to make it. But I have one happy qualification. I have enjoyed an enviable seat in the broadcasting booth, describing the joys and sorrows, the successes and failures of many of these competitors. It is a seat I occupied with much pride and one that I vacated reluctantly.

I have been asked many times to describe the makeup of a typical Philadelphia baseball fan. I can only tell you about how I became one.

A baseball writer from the old *Evening Bulletin* named John Nolan lived next door to my family when I was a mere child. Mr. and Mrs. Nolan had no children, and my father was a baseball fan

of the highest order. He and Mr. Nolan spent a lot of time at Shibe Park, and I gloried in listening to their tales of Jimmie Foxx and Lefty Grove and Jimmy Dykes and Al Simmons, and, of course, Connie Mack.

One October day in 1929 they took me to my first big league game. I was six years old—and going to a World Series game, yet! The Athletics versus the Chicago Cubs.

The A's, trailing, 8–0, going into the bottom of the seventh inning, scored 10 runs in that inning—something no team had done before or has done since. On that October day, at the age of six, I made a big decision about what I wanted to do with my life. And I've been doing it ever since. How could anyone ever wish to do anything else?

But even my longevity in the area has failed to prevent me from being constantly surprised by some of the things that Rich writes about in this book. Every successful book has to contain some surprises, and *Native Sons* is full of them.

First of all, I would never have believed that at least 350 Philadelphia-area players have reached the majors since 1900, or that many were among the greats of the game, including four Hall of Fame players, two Hall of Fame managers, four Most Valuable Players—one a three-time MVP—two four-time home run champions, and a three-time 20-game winner.

Remember Cal Abrams of the Brooklyn Dodgers, the guy Richie Ashburn threw out at home plate on the last day of the 1950 season to save the pennant for the Phillies? Did you know that Abrams was a local guy—a Philadelphia native? Maybe I knew that in 1950—I was at Ebbets Field when it happened—but I had forgotten his origin.

Because *Native Sons* brings back a lot of memories, it's great fun to read. It will remind you that "our guys" played the game with great effort, with much dignity, and with true affection. All the

superb research and the solid writing make this book very special. You don't even have to be from Philadelphia to enjoy it.

Reggie Jackson received much of his publicity as "Mr. October" with the New York Yankees, but he came from Wyncote. Roy Campanella of the Brooklyn Dodgers, Mike Piazza of the New York Mets, Mickey Vernon of the Washington Senators, and Tom Lasorda, Danny Murtaugh, and Joe McCarthy, who won 15 pennants and 11 World Series among them, all swung the bat and threw the ball for the first time somewhere around your neighborhood or mine.

This book will also inspire some Hall of Fame controversy, which is never a bad idea. I hope that some of the electors get to read it because I think that at least two of our local guys have been shortchanged—namely, Mickey Vernon from Marcus Hook and Del Ennis from Olney.

Mickey played his entire career in other places, while Del was here with the Phillies for almost his entire time. Vernon played for 20 years, won two American League batting titles—beating out Ted Williams for one of them—collected 2,495 hits, and was one of the most picturesque first baseman who ever played the game. Ennis was the National League Rookie of the Year in 1946 when he hit .313 with 17 home runs. He knocked in 126 runs and had 31 homers when the Phillies won their first pennant in 35 years in 1950. And for almost a decade, Del carried the Phillies on his broad back offensively to the tune of some horribly misguided booing. He was a three-time All-Star, and, like Vernon, deserves more Hall of Fame consideration than he has received.

For historical reasons, the year 1863 has always stood out for me for an event never connected with baseball. That year, Abraham Lincoln gave his famous address at Gettysburg, which is not all that far from Philadelphia. But it wasn't until I read *Native Sons* that I realized that a team called the Athletics signed baseball's first pro-

fessional player in that same year. He was a lefthanded second baseman, yet (how many of those have you seen?), who later became a sporting goods tycoon, and still later wound up as the first owner of the Phillies—without the concerns of revenue sharing, a payroll tax, a minimum wage, a disabled list, and discussions of drug testing at league meetings. (Of course, there was no formal league then.)

But having a lefthanded second baseman as an original owner could account for a lot of the Phillies' problems over the years. I have no doubt, however, that Rich Westcott will dig up a lefthanded second baseman somewhere who will be the subject of his next book.

If it turns out to be as good a read as *Native Sons*, it will be worth the wait.

Bill Campbell

Introduction

The Philadelphia area is the birthplace of the United States flag as well as America's first modern bank, theater, public school, zoo, electronic computer, locomotive, volunteer fire company, farmers' market, trade union, magazine, stock exchange, and professional surgery. It is the home of the Declaration of Independence, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Fairmount Park, and the Mummers Parade. Soft pretzels, cheese steaks, scrapple, and carbonated water originated in the region. Andrew Wyeth, Bill Cosby, Louisa May Alcott, Mario Lanza, Stephen Decatur, John Bartram, Will Smith, Ethel Barrymore, George McClellan, Thomas Eakins, Grace Kelly, W. C. Fields, Kim Delaney, and Benjamin Rush were all born in the area.

So, too, were a considerable number of major league baseball players.

When it comes to baseball, the phrase "local boy makes good" is one that has a special meaning in the Philadelphia area. Through-

out the history of the game, the region has supplied players of every stripe to major league diamonds, in the process stamping itself as one of the nation's major reservoirs of baseball talent.

The region, of course, has no corner on the market. All big cities and their surrounding environs have made contributions to the national pastime. The Philadelphia metropolitan area has just done it bigger and better than most.

During the 20th century and into the 21st century, the number of the Philadelphia area's homegrown major leaguers has reached some 350. The list is restricted to players born—not just raised—in Philadelphia, the four surrounding counties (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery), the nearby counties of South Jersey (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem), and New Castle County in northern Delaware. And that figure doesn't include pre-20th-century players, the many Negro League players from the area who were denied the chance to play major league baseball, or the large group of local minor leaguers who never made it to the top.

Of those who did make it to the majors, including 188 Philadelphians, some stayed for only a short time. Others spent many years in the big leagues. Some were good hitters, some were good fielders, some were good pitchers. And some were just plain good for nothing.

Many ranked among the greats of the game. The Philadelphia area can take pride as being the home of four Hall of Fame players and two Hall of Fame managers. The region has produced four Most Valuable Players, including one three-time winner. Two four-time home run kings come from the area. So do a two-time batting champion, a one-time batting leader, five league RBI leaders, and a three-time 20-game winner.

Philadelphia-area natives also were connected with many significant events in baseball. In World Series. In All-Star Games. In pennant clinchers. Three players from the region pitched no-hitters. Another player made an unassisted triple play. Several had

connections with all-time records. And who would've thought that localites played key roles in the 1919 Black Sox scandal?

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. Numerous players compiled average statistical records but were integral components of their teams. More than a few played major roles on pennant-winning clubs. Many of them excelled in performing the finer points of the game.

The list of the region's big leaguers includes brothers, sons of big leaguers, and other relatives. There are multiple graduates of the same high school or college, notables in basketball, and players related to notables in other sports. The list includes players who most of us would have no idea were natives of the area. It also includes players who were born in the region and soon thereafter moved to another area.

The operative word here is "born." If a player was born in the Philadelphia area, he qualifies as a native and hence is listed in this book, even if he was raised elsewhere. (In a number of cases, players were born in hospitals in communities close to but not necessarily the same as the ones in which they grew up.) Conversely, several notable players grew up in the Philadelphia area but were born some other place. Thus they are not regarded as natives and are not featured in this volume.

The players to whom we do make claim, however, form an imposing list. There are Reggie Jackson and Goose Goslin. Herb Pennock and Bucky Walters. Roy Campanella and Del Ennis. Mickey Vernon and Eddie Stanky. Mike Piazza and Mike Scioscia. Bobby Shantz and Jamie Moyer, Jimmy Dykes and Harry Davis, Ray Narleski and Eddie Miksis. And among the region's 17 managers are skippers such as Tom Lasorda, Danny Murtaugh, and Joe McCarthy, who combined to win 15 pennants and 11 World Series.

Did you know that Cal Abrams came from the Philadelphia area? So did Buck Weaver. And Walt Masterson, Bill Dietrich, Jon Matlack, and Mark Gubicza, as well as Joe McEwing and Joe Ker-

rigan. There was also Sig Jakucki and Brook Jacoby. Socks Seibold and Rick Schu. Highball Wilson and Jack Daniels. Steve Frey and Joe Burns. Curtis King and John Knight. Harry Pearce and Bud Sharpe. Wid Conroy and Kid Gleason. And Pat Kelly and Pat Kelly.

Over the years, these people and many more have given major league baseball a decidedly Philadelphia flavor. Obviously, that flavor has been strongest on Philadelphia's own teams—the Phillies and the long-departed Athletics. But it extends virtually to all teams, each one in some way or another having been touched by native sons of the Philadelphia region. In fact, no less than 22 players from the region appeared in the major leagues during the 2001, 2002, or 2003 seasons.

So *Native Sons* is a book that celebrates the legions of local boys who reached the pinnacle of athletic achievement—the level to which all decent players aspire—by making good as major league baseball players. The group gives the area that made so many other significant contributions to the nation another special reason to be proud.

I would like to extend a special thanks to my friend Bill Campbell for writing the foreword for *Native Sons.* In the world of broadcasting, Bill, also a native son, is one of the all-time greats. He has been a fixture on local radio and television for more than 50 years, making him the dean of Philadelphia-area broadcasters. Over the years, Bill's majestic voice has been heard calling the games of the Phillies, Eagles, 76ers, and many more teams in the area. It is a special honor to me that he has written this foreword. I also want to express my gratitude to Doug Frambes, Sam Carchidi, Bob Bloss, and Jack Scheuer for their help in compiling information for this book.

1 Philly's Finest

An All-Star Team from the Philadelphia Area

There is no shortage of outstanding baseball players who have come from the Philadelphia area. Among the legions of players produced in the region, excellent players are in abundance. Many rank among the top echelons of the baseball profession.

A list of the top players—imposing as it is—includes all-time greats of the game, many near greats, and some others who were very, very good. They came from different areas of the region, from different backgrounds, and from different circumstances, and they played with a variety of teams, some good, some not so good.

Subjective though it may be, here's what a Philadelphia-area all-star team would look like (players' birthplaces noted alongside their names):

OF	Reggie Jackson (Wyncote)
OF	Goose Goslin (Salem, NJ)

OF	Del Ennis (Philadelphia)
1B	Mickey Vernon (Marcus Hook)
2B	Eddie Stanky (Philadelphia)
3B	Jimmy Dykes (Philadelphia)
SS	Buck Weaver (Pottstown)
C	Roy Campanella (Philadelphia)
RHP	Bucky Walters (Philadelphia)
LHP	Herb Pennock (Kennett Square)
RP	Ray Narleski (Camden)
UTL	Eddie Miksis (Burlington, NJ)

The group includes four members of the Baseball Hall of Fame (Jackson, Goslin, Campanella, and Pennock). Campanella is a three-time Most Valuable Player, and Jackson and Walters each won the award once. Jackson is a four-time home run champion, and Goslin won a batting title. Also on the list are a two-time batting champion (Vernon), a three-time 20-game winner (Walters), a two-time 20-game winner (Pennock), and RBI champions Ennis, Campanella, Jackson, and Goslin. Dykes was a solid third baseman, Stanky was one of the scrappiest and best leadoff batters of his day, Weaver was an outstanding all-around player, Narleski was a strong pioneering reliever, and Miksis was a masterful utility man.

Here are some brief sketches of their careers:

Reggie Jackson

Sometimes, nicknames can be grossly exaggerated. But there was no hyperbole connected with the nickname of Reggie Jackson.

He was called "Mr. October." The moniker might have been a little vain. It might even have been somewhat haughty. But there was never anything overblown about it. Reggie was indeed Mr. October.

Reggie Jackson

That was Jackson's time of the year. He played in 11 League Championship Series. He played in six World Series. Reggie's teams won five of them, and he played a major role in most of them.

Here's just a sampling: He slammed two RBI doubles and scored after singling to give the Oakland Athletics a 3–1 win over

the New York Mets in the sixth game of the 1973 World Series. Then he stroked a two-run homer to give the A's a 5–2 win in Game Seven. His home run led the A's to a 3–2 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers in the first game of the 1974 Series, which was won in five games by Oakland. And in the greatest home run barrage in World Series history, Jackson clouted three successive homers, each on the first pitch, each against a different pitcher, to give the New York Yankees an 8–4 win in the sixth and clinching game of the 1977 Fall Classic.

Overall, the lefthanded Jackson, who hit a memorable 529-foot home run in the 1971 All-Star Game at Tiger Stadium, batted .357 with 10 home runs and 24 RBI in 27 World Series games. His .755 slugging average is the all-time high.

Flamboyant, controversial, and egotistical, Jackson was one of baseball's greatest clutch hitters. He described himself as "the straw that stirs the drink." During his 21 years in the big leagues, he stirred a lot of drinks—and also had a lot of scuffles, most notably with teammate Bill North in the clubhouse and with manager Billy Martin in the dugout before a national television audience. He even had a candy bar named after him.

Jackson grew up in Wyncote and attended Cheltenham High School, where he not only played baseball but was also a fine running back in football. He moved on to Arizona State University, then was a first-round draft choice of the Athletics in 1966. He spent the rest of that year and part of the next in the minors before the A's—then playing in Kansas City—brought him up late in the 1967 season.

The following year the A's moved to Oakland, where Jackson resided until 1975, when as a free agent he moved to the Baltimore Orioles for one season. He then spent five years with the Yankees, five more with the California Angels, then finished his career back in Oakland in 1987.

During his storied career, Jackson, who was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1993, won four home run crowns while hitting a career total of 563, the eighth-highest number in baseball history. He hit more than 30 home runs in seven seasons and had double figures in every season (except 1967) in which he played. His high was 47 in 1969.

He also won three slugging titles and led the league twice in runs scored and once in RBI. Although prone to strikeouts—Reggie holds a number of records in that category—he finished with a .262 batting average. His highest average was in 1980 when he hit .300.

Jackson was the AL's unanimous choice as Most Valuable Player in 1973 when he hit .293 with 32 home runs, 117 RBI, and 99 runs scored, the last three figures being league highs that season. A 14-time member of the AL All-Star team, he was also the MVP in the 1973 and 1977 World Series.

Goose Goslin

When Leon (Goose) Goslin was a youth growing up on a farm just outside of Salem, New Jersey, he and his friends were called "wharf rats." With school not an important part of their lives, the kids did little else but hang around the wharves of Salem. The rest of the time they played baseball.

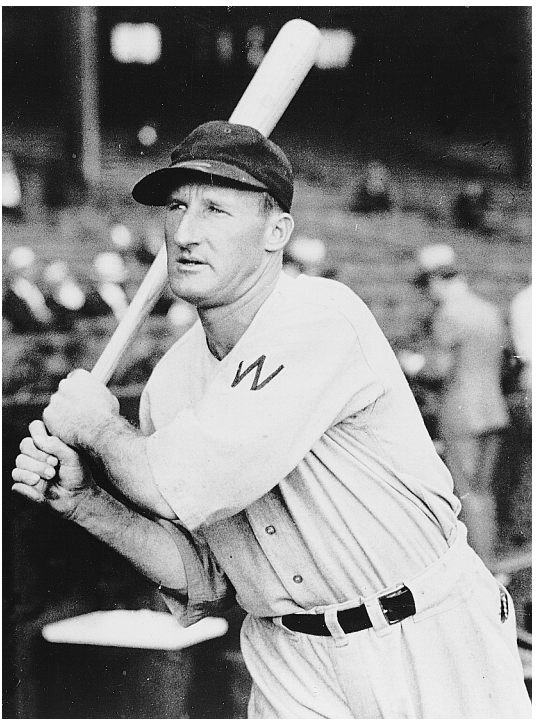
Eventually, Goslin played with local sandlot teams while holding a job as a glassblower and later as an elevator mechanic. Goslin was primarily a pitcher in those days, and in 1919 he was signed to his first pro contract on the recommendation of Bill McGowan, a future American League umpire and Wilmington, Del. native.

Ineffective as a minor league pitcher, Goose was quickly converted to an outfielder. In 1921 he won the batting title in the South Atlantic League. Late that season, a few months before his 21st

birthday, he was purchased by the Washington Senators. In his first game Goslin delivered a victory to the Senators with a bases-loaded triple.

A lefthanded hitter, Goslin crowded the plate and sometimes had to be told by the umpire to move back. Noted as a superb clutch hitter, he also swung extremely hard. In fact, sometimes he took such a vicious swing that he wound up on his derriere.

Neither habit, however, deterred Goslin from becoming one of the premier hitters of his era. Goose hit .324 in his first full season, and after that hit above .300 10 other times, including seven in a row between 1922 and 1928. He drove in 100 or more runs 11 times. In 1934 he hit safely in 30 straight games, which ties for the



Goose Goslin

13th-longest streak in American League history. The compact 5-foot, 11½-inch, 185 pounder finished his 18-year career in 1938 with a lifetime .316 batting average. He collected 2,735 hits, including 500 doubles, 173 triples, and 248 home runs.

Although he hit .344 in 1924 and .354 in 1926 and led the American League in doubles twice and in RBI once (with 129 in 1924), Goslin's finest season was in 1928. That year, he won the batting championship with a sparkling .379 average. Goose, who led in the race throughout the season, singled in his last at-bat in the ninth inning of the final game of the season to win the title by one point over Heinie Manush of the St. Louis Browns.

A left fielder who was not very adept on defense, Goslin spent his first 10 years with the Senators. He led Washington to its first pennant and World Series victory in 1924, slugging a two-run homer in the second game and four hits including another homer in Game Four, and driving in seven runs overall as the Senators defeated the New York Giants in seven games. Although Washington lost in seven games the following year to the Pittsburgh Pirates, Goslin homered twice, winning the fourth game for Walter Johnson with a two-run blast.

Altogether, Goslin played in five World Series. His Senators bowed to the Giants in five games in 1933. Traded after that season to the Detroit Tigers, he played in the 1934 Series, which the American Leaguers lost in seven games to the St. Louis Cardinals, even though his ninth-inning single won the second game in 12 innings, 3–2. Detroit won its first Series in 1935, defeating the Chicago Cubs in six games with Goslin singling home the winning run in the ninth inning of the final game. Overall, Goose greased opposing pitchers for a .287 average with seven home runs and 18 RBI in 32 World Series games.

Goslin, who once hit into four doubleplays in one game, played five seasons with the Tigers and two with the Browns before finishing his career with his third stint in Washington. He was elected to

the Hall of Fame in 1968. For a one-time pitcher, he did pretty well for himself as a slugging outfielder.

Del Ennis

In the world of big league baseball, the word "slugger" usually means one thing. It describes a guy who frequently hits the ball out of the park.

On that basis, it is completely within reason to call Del Ennis a slugger. Not only could Ennis hit the ball out of the park, but he did it often. Sometimes the ball was known to fly incredibly long distances.

Ennis hit 288 home runs in a relatively short career of 14 years. While playing with the Philadelphia Phillies for 11 years, he reached double figures every season, blasting 25 or more home runs six times. Del was one of the few players who hit balls onto the roof atop the upper deck in left field at Philadelphia's Shibe Park, later called Connie Mack Stadium. No ordinary slugger ever did that.

As a matter of fact, it was Ennis's power that got him his first pro contract. Phillies scout Jocko Collins watched Ennis wallop two shots completely out of the park and across the tennis courts beyond left field while Del was playing at Olney High School. Initially, Ennis rejected Collins's offers, saying he wasn't good enough to play in the pros. But the veteran scout persevered, and eventually Ennis signed. As a raw 18-year-old, he hit .346 with 18 home runs and 93 RBI at Class B Trenton.

Two years of military service interrupted Del's pro career, but shortly after getting discharged in April 1946, he joined the Phillies. At the end of the year, he had hit .313 and 17 home runs, and was named National League Rookie of the Year by *The Sporting News.*

Ennis was off to the races. By 1949 he had become one of the NL's top sluggers, hitting .302 that year and blasting 25 homers

to go along with 110 RBI. But his best was just around the corner. In 1950, Ennis was the key slugger as the Phillies won their first pennant in 35 years. Del led the league with 126 RBI while setting a career high in home runs (31) and batting .311. He drove in seven runs in one game, and three days later drove in seven more, hitting a grand-slam homer in each game. He also went 5-for-10 in a 19-inning Phillies victory over the Cincinnati Reds. Del was a leading candidate for Most Valuable Player, but lost out to Phils relief pitcher Jim Konstanty.

Del Ennis

By the time Ennis was traded by the Phillies to the St. Louis Cardinals after the 1956 season, he was the team's all-time leader in home runs. Even today, he ranks second to Mike Schmidt in that category, is third on the club's list for RBI and total bases, and ranks among the top 10 in virtually all the Phils' other career batting categories.

Philadelphia fans were unjustifiably hard on Ennis, making him a frequent target of their misguided boos. Nevertheless, between 1949 and 1957 Ennis drove in no less than 105 runs in each year but one. He hit .289 in 1952, .285 the following year, and .296 in 1955. He started in two of the three All-Star Games for which he was selected.

Ennis had a good year (.286–24–105) in his first season at St. Louis. But he slowed down after that. He played the final year of his

career in 1959 with the Cincinnati Reds and Chicago White Sox. At the relatively young age of 34, saying he was tired of the game, Ennis retired. With him went a slugger who had been one of the league's best for more than a decade.

Mickey Vernon

It is not unusual for people to come early to the ballpark to watch a particular player take batting practice. In this era of big hitters, it happens all the time. But arriving early to see a guy take fielding practice? No way.

Unless, of course, it was somebody like Mickey Vernon. And if it was, an early arrival was a special treat. With his grace and style, the ultrasmooth first baseman was a sight to behold. Mickey fielded his position with a velvet touch, gliding around the bag as though engaged in a form of outdoor ballet.

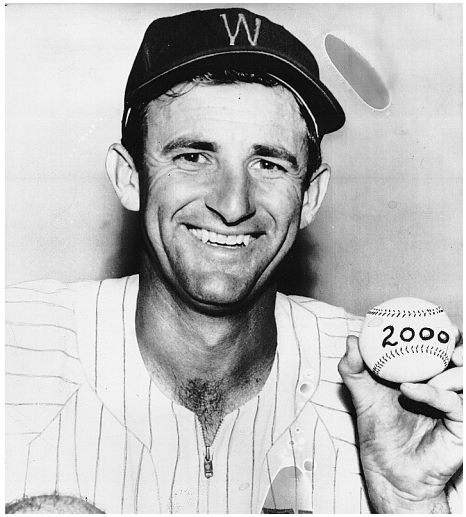
Not only was James Barton Vernon one of the most graceful first baseman in history, but he still holds American League career records at that position for games, chances, putouts, and assists and the major league mark for participating in the most doubleplays. He was also a consummate hitter with a textbook swing. Overall, the Marcus Hook native is probably the best first baseman not seated in the Hall of Fame.

During a masterful 20-year career that in going from 1939 to 1960 made Vernon one of the few players to perform in four different decades, Mickey won two batting championships. He led the league in doubles three times. And he laced 2,495 hits while batting .290 or above nine times. He finished with a batting average of .286 with 172 home runs and 1,311 RBI in 2,409 games. Although not a power hitter, he reached a high in home runs with 20 in 1954.

On defense, he led the league in fielding percent-age three times. He had a career mark of .990, three times fielding that same

percentage during the season. And with 19,819 chances, Vernon made just 212 errors in his entire career.

Vernon played mostly with the lowly Washington Senators. He got a brief reprieve when he spent one and one-half years with the Cleveland Indians and two seasons with the Boston Red Sox before suiting up for Washington again, the Milwaukee Braves, and the Pittsburgh Pirates at the end of his career.



Mickey Vernon

A graduate of Eddystone High School, Mickey attended Villanova University for one year, after which he and his hometown buddy Danny Murtaugh signed in 1937 with a Class D team in Easton, Maryland, that was affiliated with the St. Louis Browns.

After his first minor league season, Vernon was signed by the Senators. He spent another one and one-half seasons in the minors before getting summoned to the Senators in 1939. Mickey became the club's regular first baseman in 1941.

In 1946, after two years of military service, Vernon ran away with the AL batting crown, hitting a lofty .353, 11 points ahead of second-place Ted Williams. Then, after hitting .306 in 1950, the seven-time All-Star team member won his second batting title in 1953 when he went down to the wire to edge the Indians' Al Rosen, who was bidding for a Triple Crown, by one point with a .337 average.

Vernon was the favorite player of President Dwight Eisenhower and one of the most popular players in Washington history. In his

native Delaware County, he is virtually treated as a deity. Whether it was with the glove or with the bat, the gentlemanly Vernon was equal to the popularity his performance commanded.

Eddie Stanky

Although he stood just 5 feet, 8 inches, it was never good policy to underestimate Eddie Stanky. He was a guy who could beat an opponent in a variety of ways, and if he didn't do it with his playing, he'd do it with his head.

Stanky was the kind of player who drove opponents crazy. He was a scrapper. He was brash, aggressive, intelligent. He clawed and he hustled, and when he had to do it, he was not averse to a little fisticuffs. He wasn't nicknamed "The Brat" for his mild manner.

Eddie was a respectable fielder, and as a leadoff man he was no pushover at the plate. He had a career batting average of .268, twice hitting .300 or more, and he fielded to a .978 tune, not too shabby for a second baseman. In a moment of hyperbole, Leo Durocher once said of Stanky: "He can't hit, he can't run, and he can't field. But I wouldn't trade him for any second baseman in the National League."

If there was one thing that was Stanky's strong point, though, it was his ability to get on base. An extremely skilled manipulator of his bat, "Muggsy," as he was also called, could draw a base on balls as easily as riding a bicycle to the corner candy store. The tough little second baseman led the league in walks three times, reaching a high of 148 in 1945, then a major league record. In his six seasons as a regular, he always walked more than 100 times. In 1950 he walked seven straight times, tying a major league record.

Eddie suited up with the Chicago Cubs, Brooklyn Dodgers, Boston Braves, New York Giants, and St. Louis Cardinals. He played with three pennant winners—the Dodgers in 1947, Braves in 1948,