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BASEBALL and the CIVIL WAR



Otto Boetticher, an artist, was serving as a captain in the Sixty-Eighth New York Volunteer Regiment of Infantry when he was captured by Confederate soldiers. At the military prison in Salisbury (North Carolina), other Union prisoners-of-war were allowed to play baseball. Sometime in 1862, Boetticher created a drawing of Union prisoners playing baseball. Sarony, Major & Knapp turned that drawing into a lithograph, seen here, during 1863. Online via the Library of Congress.

Before <u>America's civil war</u>, baseball was mostly known - and played - in the north. Confederate soldiers, watching their Union counterparts playing baseball in southern prison camps, were thus introduced to a new sport.

When Union and Confederate soldiers returned home, factory workers and rural farmers alike knew how the game was played.

Baseball clubs, whose members were not soldiers, also played ball during the war. The Brooklyn Atlantics were not only the <u>best team</u> for most of the war years - they often crushed their opponents with lopsided scores.

Players, however, were still amateurs since wages were forbidden by the rules of the <u>National Association of</u> <u>Base Ball Players</u>.

Even though crowd-drawing teams could not be paid a salary, corporate leaders quickly recognized baseball's marketing potential. In 1867, a tobacco company sold its "Star Club" brand by using a generic <u>baseball scene</u> in its label.

After the war, the "<u>First Nine</u>" players of the "Cincinnati Red Stockings" Base Ball Club were paid a salary in 1869. They became baseball's first professional team.

As the sport <u>took hold</u>, teams were formed in <u>various places</u> - including onboard military ships. The U.S. Navy even sponsored a championship. During those early times, African-Americans were also members of such teams.

In December of 1897, the squad of the <u>USS Maine</u> (<u>a battleship</u>) defeated the team of the <u>USS Marblehead</u> (a cruiser) to win the Navy's championship. The star of the *Maine* team was William Lambert, a black man from Hampton, Virginia. His job on the ship was engine stoker. His job on the team was pitcher.

A shipmate said that Lambert was "a master of speed, curves, and control."

Two months after they won the championship, <u>the entire team</u> was aboard ship when the <u>Maine exploded in</u> <u>the harbor</u> at Havana, Cuba. Every team member <u>died</u> except for J.H. <u>Bloomer</u>.

When America's Supreme Court declared that "<u>separate but equal</u>" was an acceptable way to treat African-Americans, things changed for black baseball players. "Jim Crow Laws," interfering with newly enacted constitutional rights for former slaves, caused blacks to form <u>separate</u> baseball clubs.

"<u>Negro Leagues</u>" continued until Jackie Robinson and <u>Branch Rickey</u> (manager of the <u>Brooklyn Dodgers</u>) broke the <u>color barrier</u> in 1947. Twelve more years would pass before all major-league baseball teams were integrated.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BASEBALL-and-the-CIVIL-WAR-Baseball-Cards

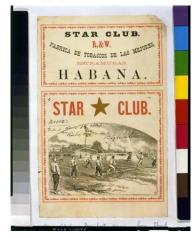
See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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Media Stream

Base Ball Club









Brooklyn Atlantics - 1865 Champions of America Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

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Baseball Scene for Product Advertising Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Baseball-Scene-for-Product-Advertising

<u>Cincinnati Red Stockings</u> Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Cincinnati-Red-Stockings</u>

Early Baseball Poster Image, Library of Congress View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Early-Baseball-Poster</u>



USS Maine

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Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

Launching the USS Maine

USS Maine Baseball Team

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Photo # NH 46767 MAINE launching, 18 Nov. 1889







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USS Marblehead Image, Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/USS-Marblehead

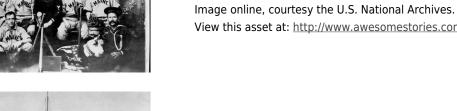




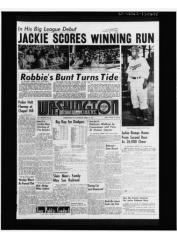
hoto # NH 61236 USS Maine explodes

USS Maine Havana Funeral Image online, courtesy the U.S. Navy Historical Center. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/USS-Maine-Havana-Funeral

USS Maine Explodes in Havana Photograph, courtesy US Naval Historical Center. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/USS-Maine-Explodes-in-Havana







<u>USS Maine Wreck</u> Photo, U.S. Naval Historical Center, #NH 46774. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/USS-Maine-Wreck</u>

Report on Jackie Robinson's Major-League Debut

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