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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 America's civil war, 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 best team 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 National Association of Base Ball Players.

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 baseball scene in its label.

After the war, the "First Nine" 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 took hold, teams were formed in various places - 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 USS Maine (a battleship) defeated the team of the USS Marblehead (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, the entire team was aboard ship when the Maine exploded in the harbor at Havana, Cuba. Every team member died except for J.H. Bloomer.

When America's Supreme Court declared that "separate but equal" 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 separate baseball clubs.

"Negro Leagues" continued until Jackie Robinson and Branch Rickey (manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers) broke the color barrier 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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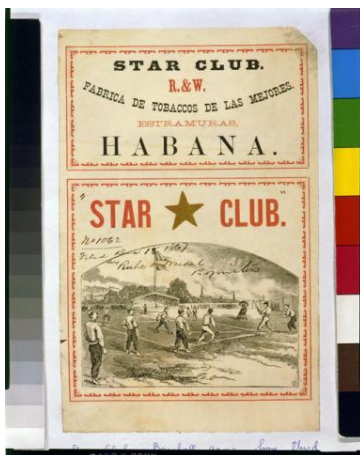


Brooklyn Atlantics - 1865 Champions of America

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

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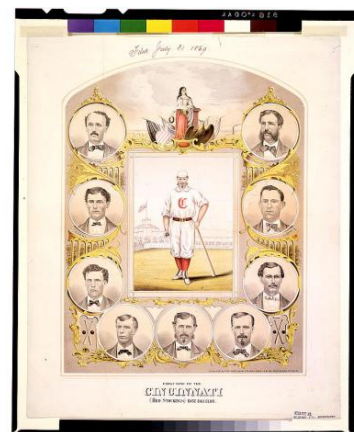


Baseball Scene for Product Advertising

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

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Cincinnati Red Stockings

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Early Baseball Poster

Image, Library of Congress

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Photo # NH 61674 USS Maine & Captain Sigsbee

### USS Maine

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

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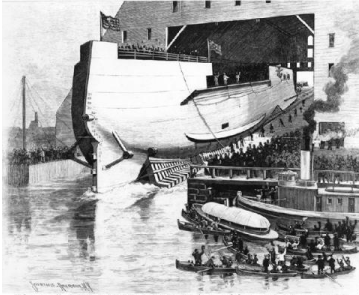


Photo # NH 46767 MAINE launching, 18 Nov. 1889

### Launching the USS Maine

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

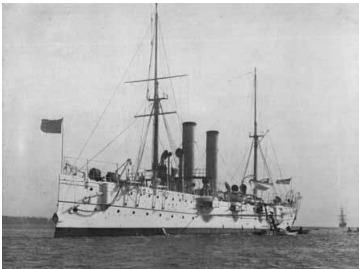
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### USS Maine Baseball Team

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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### USS Marblehead

Image, Library of Congress.

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Photo # NH 46765 MAINE funeral in Havana

### USS Maine Havana Funeral

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Navy Historical Center.

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Photo # NH 61236 USS Maine explodes

### USS Maine Explodes in Havana

Photograph, courtesy US Naval Historical Center.

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Photo # NH 46774 Diving on MAINE's wreck

## USS Maine Wreck

Photo, U.S. Naval Historical Center, #NH 46774.

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## Report on Jackie Robinson's Major-League Debut

Newspaper article, courtesy Library of Congress.

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