

## Fred Clarke: It All Began in Iowa

by

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A belief in fate, a love for land and baseball, and the state of Iowa may sound like the answers that Ed McMahon would give to Johnny Carson when the popular comedian and talk show host was doing one of his skits as Carnac the Magnificent. But actually, they are three components that came together to launch the successful multiple careers of Winterset native Fred Clifford Clarke.<sup>1</sup>

For the casual baseball fan, the name Fred Clifford Clarke may mean nothing. But for the student of baseball history, Clarke's name conjures up visions of the fiery player-manager of the Louisville Colonels and Pittsburgh Pirates who guided his teams to numerous first-division finishes, four pennants, and one World Series championship out of two attempts while fashioning a Hall of Fame career for himself as a hard-hitting left fielder, an aggressive base runner, a daring defender, and a courageous competitor.

Indeed, "Fearless Fred" or "Cap," as he was known to his teammates, was one of those rare major leaguers who probably could have been inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame as both a manager and a player. As a manager, Clarke won 1,602 games, had a winning percentage of .576, and suffered through only five losing seasons out of 19. When he was just 24 years of age, he took over a struggling Louisville franchise that had come in dead last the previous year, and within less than three seasons, he had it playing nearly .500 ball. But Clarke's managerial skills were best displayed while he was at the helm of the Pittsburgh Pirates, a franchise that he piloted from his left

field position between 1900 and 1911 and then mostly from the bench between 1912 and 1915. During those glory years, his teams finished in the first division for 14 straight seasons (1900-1913), while capturing pennants in 1901, 1902, and 1903, and both the pennant and the World Series in 1909. Just as impressively, Clarke accomplished those feats while managing against the likes of Ned Hanlon, Frank Selee, John McGraw, Frank Chance, and George Stallings.

It appears that the secret to Clarke's managerial achievements was a combination of attributes. In a candid interview for an article published in the May 23, 1915, issue of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, Clarke said that "[t]he successful manager must, of course, know baseball."<sup>2</sup> Then, he must have "the shrewdness, cheek, information and money" to get good players.<sup>3</sup> And finally, he had to be able to mold the players "into a big, happy whole, both on and off the field."<sup>4</sup> These were the traits that Clarke consistently applied throughout his managerial career, with the money usually coming from Barney Dreyfuss. And it was because of the third trait that Clarke got rid of the talented but eccentric Rube Waddell in 1901. It was not that Clarke did not recognize Waddell's ability. When Clarke chose his major league all-time all-star team, he selected Waddell as his top left-handed pitcher.<sup>5</sup> But Waddell's antics disturbed the harmony of the Pittsburgh club and Clarke would not put up with such actions. For Clarke, a disruptive force had to go, "no matter how good a ball player he [was]."<sup>6</sup>

Added to these traits, Clarke had four others that helped push him into the upper echelon of managers. First, he believed in having a positive attitude. He felt that no matter how bleak things may seem, the manager had to display confidence to his players and keep smiling in the face of adversity. Second, he led by example. Clarke did not

want a team of rowdies, but he also did not want a team that would be pushed around by the opposition. As player-manager, he showed his players through his own actions that while off the field he expected them to be gentlemen, on the field he wanted them to be as combative as he was. Third, Clarke was not afraid to take chances with his managerial moves. Whether it was shifting Claude Ritchey from shortstop to second base, moving Honus Wagner to shortstop, or starting Babe Adams in the first game of the 1909 World Series, Clarke shrewdly gambled and succeeded. And fourth, like John McGraw, Clarke would not tolerate mental mistakes and was quick to castigate players who made them.

As a player, Clarke was a versatile performer. He finished in the National League's top 10 in positive offensive categories 162 times, leading the league 11 times and hitting for the cycle twice.<sup>7</sup> A fast runner, Clarke's speed helped him to get on base over 38 percent of the time, and once on base, he was the National League version of Ty Cobb, using his arms and legs to jar balls loose from fielders, breaking up double plays with reckless abandon, and holding his own in fights with Cupid Childs, Fred Tenney, and others. When patrolling left field, he was willing to take chances, devising a diving method of snagging the ball that often resulted in spectacular catches. In fact, Clarke created such a method of fielding to offset his one weakness as an outfielder: going back for a ball. To counter this weakness, Clarke would play a relatively deep left field and allow his speed and agility to make up the difference. And as a competitor, his desire to excel was unsurpassed. This desire was perhaps best attested to by veteran sportswriter Fred Lieb, who said in the obituary on Clarke that he wrote for the August 24, 1960, issue of *The Sporting News*, "With the possible exception of Cobb and John McGraw, baseball never knew a sturdier competitor than Clarke."<sup>8</sup>

However, even the student of baseball history may not know that Clarke was a multifaceted individual who was just as successful off the field as he was on it. Blessed with mechanical as well as athletic talent, Clarke created and held patents for flip-down sunglasses, sliding pads, an additional rubber strip placed in front of the official pitching rubber to prevent pitchers from catching their spikes when they pivoted, a small equipment bag, and an early mechanical way of handling the tarpaulin;<sup>9</sup> he was an avid hunter and fisherman, a Kansas state champion amateur trap shooter, and an outstanding horseman who could do riding tricks;<sup>10</sup> and he became a prosperous rancher whose wealth was estimated at \$1,000,000 in 1917—the equivalent of \$81,100,000 in 2010<sup>11</sup>—after oil was discovered on his property the previous year.<sup>12</sup>

Clarke was also a family man. On July 5, 1898, he married the spunky Annette Gray of Chicago, by whom he had two daughters, Helen and Muriel, and with whom he lived for over 62 years,<sup>13</sup> mostly on his Little Pirate Ranch, which he established approximately 12 miles north of Winfield, Kansas, and which ultimately comprised 1,320 acres.<sup>14</sup> And it is interesting to note that among Clarke's brothers-in-law was the major league pitcher Charles "Chick" Fraser, who had married one of Annette Gray's sisters.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, Clarke was involved in both community and national service. As a resident of the Winfield area, he was a member of the chamber of commerce, a charter member of the Rotary club, a supporter of sandlot baseball, and one of the founders of the town's country club.<sup>16</sup> On the national level, he held leadership positions with the National Baseball Congress,<sup>17</sup> and he experimented with growing soapberry trees to see if the wood could be used to make stronger bats for the sporting goods company Hillerich & Bradsby.<sup>18</sup>

Nor would the student of baseball history necessarily know that Clarke was a believer in fate, but he was. In an interview with a reporter from the *New York Herald* in 1911, Clarke admitted, “I attribute my success to fate. . . . Life is a funny game, and a little thing, almost a trifle, may make a splash in your affairs so big that the ripples from it will be felt as long as you live.”<sup>19</sup> In saying what he did, Clarke was specifically referring to some advice that Barney Dreyfuss gave him during his Louisville days, but it appears that fate continued to intervene throughout Clarke’s life in various forms, though each form was attached in some way to one of Clarke’s two greatest loves: land and baseball.

Sometimes those loves competed with each other for Clarke’s attention in the same way that two jealous mistresses would fight for the attention of a shared paramour. For example, in June of 1909, Clarke’s wife said:

Yes, this season Fred surely will retire. That is positive. It is not generally known, but Fred did not decide to play this year until some time after he arrived at Hot Springs [the spring training site]. He gave the matter no end of thought and finally agreed to try for one more flag.

We have become deeply attached to the Smoky City [Pittsburgh], but there is a big ranch in Kansas that requires Fred’s attention[,] and according to the program[,] it will be the simple life for us in the future.<sup>20</sup>

And when Clarke not only captured “one more flag,” but also the World Series championship later that year, he had achieved everything that he had wanted as a player and a manager and seemed ready to leave the sport that had given him so much fame.<sup>21</sup> But in January of 1910, he did an about face, auctioned off some of his farm equipment and animals, temporarily turned his land over to renters, and vowed “that he would for

the next two years do nothing but try to win two more pennants for the Pittsburg[h] team.”<sup>22</sup>

The baseball mistress had won for the time being, but when the pennants did not come, despite Clarke prolonging his stay until the end of the 1915 season, the land mistress regained the upper hand and Clarke retired, claiming “I want to go to my farm in Winfield, Kan., for the remainder of my days.”<sup>23</sup> And so, the tug of war between the two mistresses continued intermittently throughout the rest of Clarke’s life.

This conflict was most dramatically shown in 1925 and 1926. During the former season, Clarke returned to the majors as assistant to the president, head of scouting, and assistant to the manager of the Pirates<sup>24</sup> and helped to lead the Bucs to a pennant and World Series championship. But after the latter season, he departed for his ranch when several players accused him of causing dissension on the Pirate team.

Other times, his loves worked in tandem and provided Clarke with the balance in life that he desired. The land gave Clarke financial security for himself and his family, and it indirectly led to his passion for hunting and fishing, as well as to his skills as a marksman and a rider. Baseball gave him a stage upon which he could exhibit his playing and managerial talents and served as the means for his election to the Kansas Baseball Hall of Fame (1939), the National Baseball Hall of Fame (1945), the Iowa Sports Hall of Fame (1951), and the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame (1963). It also offered him an opportunity to apply his mechanical ability to producing a variety of inventions to benefit his sport. And in the bigger picture, it was Clarke’s love for baseball that was partially responsible for developing the Pittsburgh Pirates into a first-rate major league franchise.

Thus, Clarke's epitaph could have been written as "Security and fame brought about by accomplishments stemming from his love for the land and the sport of baseball." But fate had to plant the seeds for those two loves somewhere, and that chosen place was the state of Iowa, specifically the areas of Winterset and Des Moines.

Born on a farm near Winterset on October 3, 1872, Clarke was exposed to the land at an early age, and once the real estate bug had entered his system, there was no getting it out. Perhaps it was the genes that he had inherited from his father, William, a blacksmith and a farmer,<sup>25</sup> or perhaps it was experiencing farm life from the time of his birth, or maybe both, but whatever the reason or reasons, Clarke was destined to be attached to the soil for most of the rest of his life.

In 1874 or 1875,<sup>26</sup> Clarke's father moved his family by covered wagon to a farm in Cowley County, Kansas, about four miles north of Winfield, an area with which Clarke became enamored and not far from where he would later establish his Little Pirate Ranch.<sup>27</sup> Fate had already begun to shape Clarke's future, but it was not through yet. If William had stayed on his farm in Cowley County, the second part of young Fred's destiny may have remained unfulfilled. However, such was not to be the case. For some unknown reason, five or six years after the move, William Clarke uprooted his family again and returned to Iowa, settling near Des Moines.<sup>28</sup> And the timing could not have been better.

As Ralph Christian has shown in his unpublished paper on Ed Barrow's days in Des Moines:

Baseball fever hit the city with a vengeance in 1887 when the Des Moines Hawkeyes, the city's entry in the Northwestern League and first avowedly professional team, took the field, causing one commentator to note: 'Base ball

is all the rage at present. All other sport is laid in the shade.<sup>29</sup>

One of the many infected by this fever was an impressionable 14-year-old by the name of Fred Clifford Clarke, who became enthralled with the game by watching the stars of the Des Moines teams.<sup>30</sup>

During his youth and adolescence in Iowa's capital, Clarke held a variety of jobs: he was a bellboy at the Savery Hotel; he worked at the Foster Opera House; he delivered papers for the *Des Moines Leader*, whose city circulator was Ed Barrow, the future major league baseball executive and Hall of Famer; and based on differing newspaper accounts, he drove a delivery wagon for at least two grocery stores.<sup>31</sup> But what really appealed to him was playing baseball, though early on it seemed that his love for what was gradually becoming the national pastime would hinder his attempts at gainful employment.

According to an article on Clarke and three other Iowa-born standouts found in a 1951 issue of the *Des Moines Register*, Clarke lost his job driving a wagon for a north Des Moines grocer by the name of C. C. Loomis, when, as Clarke told the story, “. . . I used to climb down off the wagon, tie my horses to a tree and play an inning or two in a sandlot game at Sixteenth and Woodland or some other diamond. . . .”<sup>32</sup>

However, here again, it looks like fate stepped in to lend a hand. It just so happened that Ed Barrow was also a baseball enthusiast and one who began to organize and promote Des Moines amateur baseball teams. Because of his connection with Barrow, Clarke became the second baseman and substitute catcher for the Des Moines Mascots, a team made up of boys under the age of 18 who participated in the Des Moines City League.<sup>33</sup> This was Clarke's first taste of organized amateur baseball and he liked what he experienced.



Clarke's good fortune increased when his connection with one of the other Mascot players not only got him his second job of driving a grocery wagon but also led to him getting Saturday afternoons off so that he could continue to excel as a member of the Mascots. As Clarke recalled:

I went to the store of O. H. Thomas in Des Moines and applied for a job. Old man Thomas had a son named Orville, who was a pitcher for the Mascots. The minute the old gentleman discovered that I was a second baseman and a good hitter[,] he gave me the job driving the delivery wagon for \$30 a month. I hit .300 from the start in the grocery business, because I was anxious to get the stuff delivered so that I could go out and practice. Orville Thomas and I became great friends, and at his solicitation[,] the old man agreed to let me off on Saturday afternoons[,] provided Orville would help me get the groceries delivered in the morning. Black Diamond, the old horse [that pulled the delivery wagon], must have been a fan also, for when Saturday morning came[,] the old black steed would prick up her ears and hustle around to the homes of the customers. I shall never forget one Friday night when we were trying to get through that Black Diamond and myself ran into a freight train and wrecked the wagon. Neither of us was hurt, and I made three hits the next afternoon.<sup>34</sup>

It was Clarke's performances with the Mascots during the 1889 and 1890 seasons that launched his baseball career. What followed was a series of interlocking sequential events which appear almost scripted and which possibly started Clarke on his road to being a believer in fate. Because of his play with the Mascots, Clarke, along with his friend Orville Thomas, received an invitation to participate in a semiprofessional game in Carroll, Iowa, in 1891.<sup>35</sup> And it was an invitation that Clarke made the most of, impressing the Carroll management so much so that he was offered a contract to stay with the team for \$30 a month, something which he did.<sup>36</sup>

What happened next depends on which of four stories is to be believed, though each has its own twist of fate. The earliest version of the tale was told by Fred Lieb in an article written about Clarke for *Baseball Magazine* in 1910.<sup>37</sup> In this account, during the spring of 1892, the Hastings club of the Nebraska State League had sent railroad tickets for two Des Moines players—Ducky Holmes and Herm McFarland—but neither man was “in a position to take the trip, [so Clarke] volunteered to go . . .” and thus he joined the professional ranks.<sup>38</sup>

Clarke, however, had several of his own versions of how he became a pro. The first can be found in a lengthy piece on Clarke published in the *New York Herald* in 1911, the same article in which Clarke discusses his belief in fate.<sup>39</sup> In it, Clarke says that he was inspired to play professional ball when, at the age of 17, he and a friend went to watch a minor league game in Omaha. Seeing the players get paid for “having a good time” was enough to make him want to do the same.<sup>40</sup>

But a few months after this, in a story that was printed in the *Washington Post*, Clarke stated that while he was playing for the Carroll team, a man named Letts said that the Hastings club needed a catcher. Clarke, though not perceiving himself as a catcher despite doing some catching for the Mascots, jumped at the chance, wrote to the Hastings manager, and received his first professional contract.<sup>41</sup>

Then, 35 years later, in an article written by Fred Lieb for *The Sporting News*, Clarke put a new spin on the tale when he told Lieb that he had placed an ad in that publication offering his services as a ballplayer and someone on the Hastings club saw the ad and hired him<sup>42</sup> for either \$40 or \$50 a month, depending on the source.<sup>43</sup>

The real cause of Clarke's entrance into professional ball may have to remain an unsolved mystery, but it can be verified that Clarke did report to the Hastings club in 1892, and once there, he proved that he was an offensive threat, hitting .302 with 25 runs scored and 14 stolen bases in only 41 games.<sup>44</sup>

As for his defensive play, Clarke described it best when he said:

They put me in the outfield, and I was lucky to catch half of the drives hit to me. . . . An old-timer told me I could improve by practice, so I went out to the field at 8 o'clock in the morning and practiced until game time in the afternoon. After a while, I got so I could catch fly balls pretty well.<sup>45</sup>

During the next two years, two seemingly unsuccessful and unrelated events in Clarke's life resulted in pushing him into the National League and may have reinforced Clarke's belief in fate. The first event occurred at the close of the 1893 season—a season that saw Clarke splitting his ball-playing time with St. Joseph of the Western Association and Montgomery of the Southern League. Perhaps out of frustration because the three teams that he had played for were each put out of business when their leagues either collapsed (Hastings and St. Joseph) or were suspended because of a yellow fever outbreak (Montgomery), and/or perhaps because Clarke's other love—the land—began calling to him to return to it, Clarke attempted to stake a claim in the Cherokee Strip<sup>46</sup> and get out of professional baseball. However, fortunately for the baseball world, he failed, prompting him to take another chance at trying to make a living playing ball and thus pushing him into the second event.

This event happened the following season when the Southern League's Savannah club, on which Clarke was the starting left fielder, disbanded on June 27. This time, fate took the form of John McCloskey, Clarke's manager at Savannah and Montgomery and a

man who Clarke would later manage against in the big leagues. McCloskey recognized Clarke's potential and, depending on the source, promptly sold his unemployed outfielder to the Louisville Colonels of the National League or encouraged Clarke to accept the offer that Louisville had proposed.<sup>47</sup>

Once in Louisville, Clarke proved that McCloskey's assessment was indeed an astute one by having one of the most impressive debuts in major league history. Using a small, light bat and facing the veteran Gus Weyhing of the Philadelphia Phillies, Clarke proceeded to hit four singles and a triple in five at bats. The rest of the season was not as outstanding, but still, the rookie averaged .274 with 55 runs scored and 48 RBI in 76 games with a last-place team.<sup>48</sup>

And, of course, it was in Louisville where Clarke established his reputation as a top-notch major league player and then learned how to be a top-notch major league manager. However, Clarke's major league career as both a player and a manager might not have blossomed if fate had not entered the picture three more times—each in the form of Barney Dreyfuss.

The first instance was when Clarke joined Louisville. At that time, he was only 21 years of age and got caught up trying to imitate the lifestyles of the veteran players, lifestyles that involved a lot of drinking and the chasing of women. Clarke pursued these dissolute ways, even though doing so hurt his ability to perform, until one day, Dreyfuss, who was one of the stockholders and the secretary of the Colonels, intervened and, according to Clarke, asked the younger man:

Are you fair with yourself?

. . . You will live in the major league a few years only if you continue to dim your batting eye and weaken your

physical self by carousing around. Then you will go back to the minors and be swallowed up, and you never will have been any one. It's up to you. Think it over.<sup>49</sup>

Clarke did think it over, cleaned up his act, and dedicated himself to his profession.

The second instance was when Dreyfuss recognized Clarke's potential as a leader and had him named the Louisville manager in June of 1897.<sup>50</sup> Although Clarke was just 24 years old at the time of his promotion, he responded well to the challenge and began to change Louisville from a perennial doormat to a competitive franchise. Also, Clarke's new position led to his receiving the nickname of "Cap," because managers in the 1890s were often referred to as captains.

And the third instance occurred in late 1899 when Dreyfuss, by then the owner-president of the soon-to-be-extinct Colonels, arranged to become partial owner and president of the Pittsburgh Pirates and engineered a trade that sent Clarke and the other good Louisville players to the Steel City franchise. What followed was a 16-year period that would catapult Clarke to the heights of baseball greatness.

Shortly after Dreyfuss made his trade, Clarke purchased his first piece of real estate in Kansas<sup>51</sup>—160 acres of good bottomland in the Walnut River valley, north of Winfield—and according to one Winfield resident, he would buy an additional one-quarter section after each baseball season.<sup>52</sup> By the time that Clarence Miller wrote an article on Clarke for the November 1909 issue of *Kansas Magazine*, Clarke's Little Pirate Ranch had already expanded to take in 880 acres, upon which Clarke grew corn, alfalfa, oats, wheat, and English blue grass, while leaving 125 acres for pasture.<sup>53</sup> In addition, Clarke raised mules and hogs and cultivated walnut, oak, elm, and pecan trees, among others.<sup>54</sup> By 1915, it was reported that he owned 1,000 acres and that he was co-

proprietor of one of the largest flour mills in the state,<sup>55</sup> and by summer of the next year, his wealth was estimated to be close to \$250,000.<sup>56</sup> And then, in that same year, oil was discovered on his land and Clarke became a millionaire.<sup>57</sup>

So, was it fate that guided Clarke's life or merely Clarke's belief in fate that gave him the confidence and optimism to make the most of the innate talents that he had? No one knows for sure, but what is known is that the combination of Clarke's belief in fate and his dual loves of land and baseball was instrumental in helping him to become one of the most successful major leaguers both on and off the field. And it all began in Iowa.

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<sup>1</sup>Portions of this article were taken from Angelo Louisa's "Fred Clarke," which can be found on the SABR Baseball Biography Project website, [www.sabr.org/bioproject](http://www.sabr.org/bioproject). For more information about the SABR Baseball Biography Project, contact Mark Armour at [markarmour04@gmail.com](mailto:markarmour04@gmail.com).

<sup>2</sup>H. Perry Lewis, "'Smile! Smile! No Matter How Things Break,' Clarke's Motto," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, May 23, 1915, 6, Fred Clarke File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

<sup>3</sup>Lewis, 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Clarke's complete all-time all-star team, which was sent to Nicholas Acocella at some undisclosed date, consisted of Hal Chase at first base, Eddie Collins at second, Honus Wagner at shortstop, Jimmy Collins at third, Tris Speaker, Ty Cobb, and Babe Ruth in the outfield, Johnny Kling behind the plate, and Christy Mathewson (his right-hander) and Rube Waddell on the mound. Clarke also sent a letter to Ernest J. Lanigan on January 14, 1947, in which he included an all-star team of only men he played with or against. The members of this team were Frank Chance at first base, Nap Lajoie at second, Honus Wagner at shortstop, Jimmy Collins at third, Ed Delahanty in left field, Ty Cobb in center field, Hugh Duffy in right field, Johnny Kling and Roger Bresnahan as catchers, Tommy Leach as the utility man, and a pitching staff of Grover Cleveland Alexander, Christy Mathewson, Mordecai Brown, and Rube Waddell. Nick Acocella and Donald Dewey, *The "All-Stars" All-Star Baseball Book* (New York: Avon, 1986), 38, and a letter from Fred C. Clarke to Ernest J. Lanigan, January 14, 1947, Fred Clarke File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

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<sup>6</sup>Lewis, 6.

<sup>7</sup>Not including games played, plate appearances, and at bats, in which he was in the top 10 three, four, and three times respectively. [www.baseball-reference.com](http://www.baseball-reference.com), and Joseph L. Reichler, *The Great All-Time Baseball Record Book* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), 112.

<sup>8</sup>Frederick G. Lieb, "Pittsburgh Mourns Early-Star Fred Clarke," *The Sporting News*, August 24, 1960, 13.

<sup>9</sup>"Sun Glasses," *Sporting Life*, February 10, 1912, 14; Ed A. Goewey, "The Old Fan Says," *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper*, August 6, 1914, 134; F. C. Clarke, Sliding Pad for Base Ball Players, etc., U.S. Patent 1,044,494, filed May 24, 1911, issued November 19, 1912; "Ball Game of To-Day Postponed," *Pittsburgh Sun*, April 21, 1911, 13; F. C. Clarke, Diamond Cover, U.S. Patent 983,857, filed June 7, 1909, issued February 7, 1911; Judy Welch, "Cowley County's Fred Clarke Brought Fame, Glory to Pittsburgh Pirates," *Arkansas City (Kan.) Traveler*, November 8, 1976, 10; and Dennis DeValeria and Jeanne Burke DeValeria, *Honus Wagner: A Biography* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), 200-201.

<sup>10</sup>Bill Bryson, "Fred Clark [*sic*], Indestructible," *Baseball Digest*, March 1948, 45; Welch, 10; "Fred Clarke: The Baseball Capitalist," *New York Herald*, March 5, 1911, Magazine Section, 7; and DeValeria and DeValeria, 174.

<sup>11</sup>Based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. [www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com).

<sup>12</sup>A. R. Cratty, "Fred Clarke, the Ex-Manager, Believed to Be Worth One Million Dollars as the Result of Lucky Discoveries in Oil," *Sporting Life*, January 13, 1917, 4, and Alan Gould, "Young and Handley 2 Reasons for Bucs' Rise," *Washington Post*, July 14, 1938, 19.

<sup>13</sup>C. W. Miller, "Fred Clarke; Ball Player, Ranchman, Kansan," *Kansas Magazine*, November 1909, 49; "Mrs. Clarke Dies at Newkirk," an undated article from an unknown source, Fred Clarke File, Cowley County Historical Society Museum, Winfield, Kansas; David L. Porter, "Fred Clifford 'Cap' Clarke," in *Biographical Dictionary of American Sports: Baseball*, edited by David L. Porter (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1987), 94, though Porter incorrectly states that Clarke was married in October; and Frank V. Phelps, "Fred Clifford Clarke" in *Baseball's First Stars*, edited by Frederick Ivor-Campbell, Robert L. Tiemann, and Mark Rucker (Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1996), 30. Annette Gray was born on February 10, 1879, in Chicago and died on November 14, 1961, at the home of her daughter, Muriel, in Newkirk, Oklahoma.

<sup>14</sup>"Fred C. Clarke Claimed by Death," *Winfield Daily Courier*, August 15, 1960, 2.

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<sup>15</sup>DeValeria and DeValeria, 58, and [www.baseballlibrary.com](http://www.baseballlibrary.com). Fraser pitched in the majors for 14 seasons, including two and most of a third with Louisville when Clarke played there.

<sup>16</sup>“Fred C. Clarke Claimed by Death,” 1, 2.

<sup>17</sup>See “Clarke in Baseball Post,” *New York Times*, January 5, 1937, 26; “Clarke Heads Board of Semi-Pro Congress,” an undated article from an unknown source, Fred Clarke File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York; “Six Countries to Compete in Semi-Pro Meet,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 30, 1939, 15; “Fred Clarke to Head New Baseball Veterans’ Group,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 17, 1944, A2; “Fred Clarke Stays as Sandlot Leagues’ Head,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 27, 1955, A7; “Fred Clarke to Be Feted At Non-Pro Baseball Meet,” an article dated August 3, 1959, from an unknown source, Fred Clarke File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York; and “Bucs to Honor Clarke, 86,” an undated article from an unknown source, Fred Clarke File, National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, New York.

<sup>18</sup>Beverly Reiter, telephone interview with Angelo Louisa on December 5, 2006.

<sup>19</sup>“Fred Clarke: The Baseball Capitalist,” Magazine Section, 7.

<sup>20</sup>“Fred Clarke to Quit Game?” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 21, 1909, 10.

<sup>21</sup>R. W. Lardner, “Clarke to Quit Baseball?” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 11, 1909, 10.

<sup>22</sup>“Clarke Quits Farm Life,” *Washington Post*, January 4, 1910, 8.

<sup>23</sup>“Clarke Longs for His Kansas Farm,” *New York Times*, September 19, 1915, S3.

<sup>24</sup>Although Clarke was referred to by different titles by various authors, these were his official positions. “Fred Clarke Returns to Corsairs in Official Capacity,” *Pittsburgh Post*, June 13, 1925, 9. Then, in December of 1925, Clarke became vice president of the Pittsburgh club, while remaining head of scouting and assistant to the manager.

<sup>25</sup>Most sources that refer to William Clarke say that he was a farmer, but in the 1870 and 1880 United States Federal Census reports, Clarke listed his occupation as a blacksmith. 1870 United States Federal Census and 1880 United States Federal Census. Also, no deed in William Clarke’s name can be found for owning land in the Winterset area, suggesting that he may have been a tenant farmer, a renter, or a sharecropper.

<sup>26</sup>Miller and Porter have the family moving to Kansas when Fred was two, which would have been sometime between October 3, 1874, and October 3, 1875. Phelps and John Pletchette have the date set as 1874, but William Clarke bought approximately 160 acres



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of land in Cowley County, Kansas, on May 13, 1874, and in all likelihood, moved his family during the spring and/or summer of 1874—prior to Fred turning two—or during the spring and/or summer of 1875. Cf. Miller, 46; Porter, 94; Phelps, 29; John Pletchette, “Fred Clifford Clarke, Major League Baseball Hall of Famer,” a time line, Fred Clarke File, Madison County Historical Complex, Winterset, Iowa; and Registrar of Deeds, Cowley County Courthouse, Winfield, Kansas, Book E, 356.

<sup>27</sup>Miller, 46; Phelps, 29; and Pletchette, 1.

<sup>28</sup>Miller has the Clarke family returning to Iowa in 1880. Porter says that the family went back to Iowa five years after Fred was two, implying either 1879 or 1880. And Phelps and Pletchette have the date set as 1879. But the 1880 United States Federal Census report has the Clarkes living in Kansas as of June 21, 1880. Cf. Miller, 46; Porter, 94; Phelps, 29; Pletchette, 1; and 1880 United States Federal Census.

<sup>29</sup>Ralph Christian, “Edward Grant Barrow: The Des Moines Years” (paper presented at the Society for American Baseball Research National Convention, Scottsdale, Arizona, 1999), 2.

<sup>30</sup>Pletchette, 1.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. Bert McGrane, “Anson, Clarke, Faber, Feller,” *Des Moines Register*, April 15, 1951, as taken from [www.desmoinesregister.com](http://www.desmoinesregister.com) on January 30, 2007, and “Once Grocery Clerk,” *Washington Post*, July 30, 1911, S4.

<sup>32</sup>McGrane.

<sup>33</sup>“Once Grocery Clerk,” S4; Christian, 4; and Ralph Christian to Angelo Louisa, e-mail message of September 22, 2001. Ed Barrow later claimed that Clarke played for the Des Moines Stars, but Ralph Christian has found no newspaper evidence to corroborate Barrow’s claim. The biggest difficulty, according to Christian, is “the lack of published box scores for both [the Mascots and the Stars].” Cf. Edward Grant Barrow with James M. Kahn, *My Fifty Years in Baseball* (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1951), 16, and Ralph Christian to Angelo Louisa, e-mail message of September 22, 2001.

<sup>34</sup>“Once Grocery Clerk,” S4.

<sup>35</sup>Phelps, 29, and Pletchette, 1.

<sup>36</sup>“Once Grocery Clerk,” S4.

<sup>37</sup>Frederick G. Lieb, “Fred Clarke,” *Baseball Magazine*, February 1910, 47.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.* In a modified form of this account, Clarke told Bill Bryson in the 1940s that the Hastings club wanted Byron McKibbin, a Des Moines semipro star, and had sent

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McKibbon a railroad ticket to come to Hastings for a tryout. But McKibbon, who was friends with Clarke, decided not to go and gave the ticket to Clarke. Bryson, 46.

<sup>39</sup>“Fred Clarke: The Baseball Capitalist,” Magazine Section, 7.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>“Once Grocery Clerk,” S4.

<sup>42</sup>Frederick G. Lieb, “Oilman Clarke Drills into Diamond Memories,” *The Sporting News*, January 17, 1946, 13.

<sup>43</sup>Cf. *ibid.* and “Once Grocery Clerk,” S4.

<sup>44</sup>Bob Hoie and Carlos Bauer, comps., *The Historical Register: The Complete Major & Minor League Record of Baseball’s Greatest Players* (San Diego: Baseball Press Books, 1998), 56.

<sup>45</sup>Lieb, “Oilman Clarke Drills into Diamond Memories,” 13.

<sup>46</sup>The official name of the Cherokee Strip is the Cherokee Outlet, an area in northern Oklahoma that was made available for white settlement via a land rush on September 16, 1893.

<sup>47</sup>There are different versions of how Louisville acquired Clarke. For two of them, cf. Lieb, “Oilman Clarke Drills into Diamond Memories,” 13, and Phelps, 29.

<sup>48</sup>[www.baseball-reference.com](http://www.baseball-reference.com).

<sup>49</sup>“Fred Clarke: The Baseball Capitalist,” Magazine Section, 7.

<sup>50</sup>The Louisville directors, of which Dreyfuss was a member, made the official decision, but it appears that Dreyfuss was the driving force behind that decision.

<sup>51</sup>December 14, 1899. Registrar of Deeds, Cowley County Courthouse, Winfield, Kansas, Book 63, 438.

<sup>52</sup>Beverly Reiter, telephone interview with Angelo Louisa on December 5, 2006.

<sup>53</sup>Miller, 50.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Chandler D. Richter, “Side-Lights on Base Ball,” *Sporting Life*, February 20, 1915, 15.

<sup>56</sup>Cratty, 4.

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid.; “Clarke’s Well 200 Barrel,” identified to be from the *Evening Free Press and the Winfield Tribune* and dated June 15, 1916, by an unknown archivist, Fred Clarke File, Cowley County Historical Society Museum, Winfield, Kansas; and “Clarke Well Spouts the Oil over Derrick,” identified to be from the *Evening Free Press and the Winfield Tribune* and dated June 16, 1916, by an unknown archivist, Fred Clarke File, Cowley County Historical Society Museum, Winfield, Kansas.