



"In Good Style"

The History of Baseball in Peabody

"The playing for the first hour was very closely contested; neither club making ten tallies, but soon the Benicia Club began to lead in good style. . ."

From the September 12, 1860 *South Danvers Wizard*

"In Friendly Strife"

Early variations of the game of Baseball were played in South Danvers from the days of the Revolution. So when Massachusetts formed the statewide Association of Base Ball Players in 1858, South Danvers didn't hesitate to formalize its own local team soon after—the South Danvers Benicia Club.

The *Benicias* played a number of area teams, including those from Salem and Lynn. Their games were loosely organized around rules which seemed to foster good will between towns rather than promote competition. According to an article printed in the *South Danvers Wizard* which reported on a game played between South Danvers and Lynn, there were 45 innings played in just a little over 4 hours. The *Benicias* scored 76 runs against the Lynn *Outalanchet's* 31 runs.

When the Civil War began, however, 8 out of the 12 members joined the Army. Five of the men were eventually discharged due to injuries from the war and one member, Charles B. Warner, was killed at the Battle of Fair Oakes in Virginia.

Samuel Warren King (1852-1922)

After the war, Baseball once again flourished in South Danvers. There were many fine players from the town over the years, including John Atkinson Leighton (1861-1956) who played a few

games for the Syracuse *Stars* in 1890.

But one of the best during the 1870s and 1880s was Samuel Warren King.

He started his career in the early 1870s and it was then that Harry Wright, the manager for the Boston Red Stockings (later the Red Sox), called Sam King to play for his team. Just what King could have done for Boston, we'll never know. His parents' objections prevented him from joining the team.

Despite that, King continued to play. During the 1870s, he played for the Lynn *Live Oaks*, a member of the International Association of Professional Base Ball Players. And in 1884, King was once more called to play first base for a major league team, this time the Washington *Nationals*. He played one year for them before retiring from the sport entirely.

He lived on Lowell Street for the remainder of his life, operating a real estate business from his home.

Chick Davies (1892-1972)

"Chemist by Profession, but a Baseball Player by Choice"

Baseball fever continued to grow through the 1880s and 1890s. Not only were there a number of town leagues in the area, including one in Peabody, but the High School also had its own team. And in the early 1900s, Baseball grew to a frenzied pitch in Peabody. The cause?

Lloyd Garrison "Chick" Davies.

Davies led the Peabody High Baseball Team onto a championship in the North Shore League in 1910, the year he graduated. He then attended Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst (now the University of Massachusetts). While there, Davies continued to demonstrate his prowess, both as a left-handed pitcher and batter.

In 1912, two years before he graduated from college with a degree in chemistry, he was recruited by Connie Mack of the Philadelphia *Athletics*. He made his debut with the Athletics in Boston on September 3, 1914. Hundreds of Peabody fans poured into Fenway Park for "*Chick Davies Day*."

Although Mack offered Davies another contract for the following year, Davies refused to sign in 1916, due to a disagreement over salary. Davies returned to Peabody and became a chemist for the Danvers Bleachery, but his career with baseball did not end. In 1917, he agreed to coach the Peabody High School baseball team. And from 1917 to 1925, he also

played for the original Eastern League which was begun in 1892 and was later known as the International League. He pitched for the Springfield Ponies and the New Haven Profs. And once again, Davies was recruited by a major league team, the New York Giants. He played for them from 1925 to 1926, helping the team win the World Series in 1926. During that year, he led the National League with 6 saves and 29 games finished.