

The American Tobacco Company's

Rise of the 1909 T206

Cael McClanahan | May 22, 2020 | History Through Cards

For many collectors, “The Monster” represents one of the most historic and important card sets ever issued during the 20th Century. As much as we currently know about it, it is still surrounded by mystery and intrigue, always teaching us about American History and the early days of card production and Baseball. Countless books and even movies have been written and filmed about its contents and while some cards within it can cost thousands if not millions, others can be had for little more than Alexander Hamilton’s smiling face.



To look at one of these cards can easily evoke an era when Baseball was more of a game of strategy rather than a game of power – a game where fans would sit or stand in wooden bleachers overlooking expansive stadiums watching their favorite player hustle the bases sliding into third in a wool uniform or catching a loosely-wrapped, mushy ball in a glove that bore little resemblance to what we see today. The game as Josh Devore, Ty Cobb and Red Murray knew it bears little resemblance of today, which is why when I see and feel cards like this; it’s almost as if they’re taking me back in time.

T206 is the alphanumeric designation given to the set by Jefferson Burdick (1900-1963) sometime around 1946, though prior to that it was simply known as Set No. 521. A decade prior it was “Set Ss” (1936) and if you go back far enough to the time in which they were distributed, T206 were simply referred to as “picture cards” as the term “Baseball card” was still decades away. Through period newspaper accounts and collectors like John D. Wagner and Wirt Gammon who started their hobby careers with this set, it appears that the immense popularity of the T206 was something of a nuisance to the authorities

who saw these cards as a way to promote underage smoking.

Christopher Benjamin interviewed pioneer collector John D. Wagner in the early 1980’s about his first encounter and experiences with this set. He relates walking home from school with friends in the Spring of 1909 and finding an enormous stack on the side of the road in his hometown of Hegins, Pennsylvania - a Milltown which had a population of about 620 citizens at the time. Apparently, a ruckus ensued (and no, I cannot describe the ruckus!) in an attempt to grab as many cards off the ground as they

could, but for Wagner, his excitement soon turned to anguish as he spent the entire summer looking for Philadelphia A's Outfielder Roy "Topsy" Hartzel. He also recalled that most of these cards were thrown out in to the street or littered the sidewalks, which was how most of the kids he knew collected them. In actuality, children weren't just collecting these cards – they were in many cases working in the factories that were inserting them into cigarette packs. One has to wonder how many kids got hooked on smoking because of these cards or working in these factories and how much did their issuance go towards impacting future child labor laws in the United States? We may never know. However, since this is perhaps one of the most researched sets in all of the Hobby, I've decided to take you down a different path in regards to its history...The back alleys, the dimly lit corners and the grey cobblestone streets of the Gilded Age for of the more fascinating and untold stories in all of card collecting through...

A Reintroduction Through Legislation



Action shot



Portrait

Each set issued by Duke & Sons Co. and its successor, American Tobacco, have distinct characteristics associated with it in the time in which the cards were being collected. I dug deep to give you an outlined chronological history of the company and its cards that highlight their beginning through the 1888 N78 Civil War Heroes, 1888 N79 Duke "History of Poor Boys", 1888 Honest Long Cut Presidential Possibilities (Allen & Ginter, Thomas Hill, P.H. Mayo and Goodwin were completely separate companies until 1890 in case you're wondering why I didn't mention their sets) all the way through the demise of the American Tobacco Co. through the 1909-11 T206, 1911 T205 and 1912 T207. Along the way you'll find out how this company was at the forefront of inventing a hobby and

changed the business landscape through legislation and technology. Much of what I'm going to share with you about these sets isn't well publicized, or written if at all in most Hobby publications since the singular focus (almost myopic really) has been on the cards themselves. By doing that, I found that there are giant swaths of information that doesn't get published, so my main focus here is the behind the scenes, or the "making of" the set, though I will go into great detail on the players, brands and packaging in subsequent articles. Many sets are born through innovation which is true for Duke's early sets, but the more I dug, the more I realized that this set in particular was born through legislation.

Most legislation is like sausage but not nearly as tasty, and while researching certain sets, I noticed how little we often realize the part politics, laws and legislation played in the birth or demise of our vintage and sometimes modern cards. Now with politics having a death grip on seemingly every aspect of our daily life, I can see you shying away. Current politics is solely your business as I take a cue from Dolly Parton who says “I learned years ago to keep your mouth shut about these things”, and I certainly agree, so you’ll not hear a peep in any of these articles about any current political views. However this was a distinguishably different era, with people having different ideas, new inventions and new thoughts on how society should function and how they came to those ideas that still affects our daily lives today. The people who created and perhaps collected these sets have long since gone, so too are their everyday cares, worries and beliefs but we get to peer into their world by what they left behind. I wanted in on this world, and I found my way in through the cards that I collect and study.

American Tobacco, or more commonly referred to as “The Trust”, had the luxury of being the first to seek permission to include a player’s likeness in “The Neil Ball Letter”. This letter from New York sportswriter Bozeman Bulger (1877-1932) of *The Evening World* was sent to New York Highlanders Shortstop Neil Ball requesting his participation. The leading sportswriter for every city which had a club was responsible for signing players to contracts on behalf of the American Litho Company. Bulger wrote in January, 1909 –

*“I am getting up a scheme with the American Lithographic Company to get out a series of nicely colored pictures of “the star ball players of America” which will be put in cigarette boxes like they use to print the pictures of actors and actresses. I have all the photographs, but under a new law they have here, I will have to get your permission to use them. I am sending a slip which I want you to sign so I can go on and finish up the pictures”.*¹

Predicated on an earlier New York state Privacy Act of 1903, it looks more and more like the Copyright Act of 1909 quickly followed suit (well, as quick as a legislative body can be; most of those people could be covered in moss at their rate of speed). Copyright protection had been written into the Constitution by James Madison and Charles C. Pinckney while the similar Act of 1790 became the first to specifically deal with these protections. The Act was amended several times between 1831 and 1896 but it wouldn’t be until 1909 that it was found necessary to overhaul the entire law. It was said in National Magazine –

*“On questions of copyrights and patents Congressman Frank D. Currier of New Hampshire is a recognized authority, having, since his first day in Congress, made a careful and exhaustive study of the copyright and patent laws and all other countries having copyright acts. The Currier Copyright law of 1909 evolved after years of contentious labor, and since the time of its taking effect it has given a remarkably high degree of satisfaction to the many interests affected”.*²

The act was a landmark case as it delved into royalties for musicians featured on reproduced works on phonographs, film and piano rolls (then, a fixed one-time sum that came up later in *Herbert v. Shanley Co.*, 242 U.S. 591 (1917), where Victor Herbert’s case was overseen by Oliver Wendell Holmes, of Baseball’s Federal League fame) and its extension of the law in paragraph (c) stated in the press –

“The new copyright act, about which there has been so much agitation for the past two or three years, is now an accomplished fact, the provisions of the act having gone into effect on July 1st, 1909. The new measure cannot be said to be amendatory in any way, for it prescribes an entirely new form of procedure.

*For a long period of time, lawyers when advising their clients with reference to the requirements which should be followed to obtain copyright protection in the United States, have emphasized the necessity of complying with the provisions of the copyright act before the subject matter is published. The new act completely upsets this long-established practice, for it, provides unqualifiedly for the publication of a book or other such work, with the notice of copyright printed thereon, as the first step toward procuring the protection desired. After the publication of the work, with the notice of the copyright, an application for copyright registration must, be filed with two copies of the work, in cases where the work is not to be reproduced in copies for sale, the registration is secured by filing with the application of a manuscript or typewritten copy if the subject matter be an oral address, a dramatic composition, or a similar work, and should the subject matter be a drawing, sculpture, or a similar work, a photograph thereof should be filed with the application of the copyright itself, from 14 years to 28 years".*³



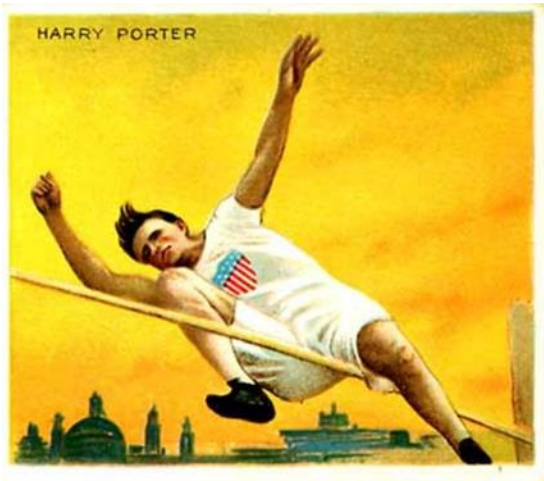
Straight out of the obscure solon archives comes - Frank D. Currier! The New Hampshire Rep wrote and introduced the Copyright Act of 1909 on February 15, 1909. The Act didn't go into effect until July 1st of that year.

Frank D. Currier was the main author of the bill and one of the country's leading authorities on copyright and patent law, but he was closely aligned with Senator Reed Smoot of Utah and Thorvald Solberg, the first Copyright Office Commissioner, who were instrumental in its passage. The Act was revised in 1912 and again in 1914 and has since been repealed by the Copyright Act of 1976. However its relevance in our discussion on tobacco cards, and in our Goudey and Play Ball sets can't be understated. One of the first mentions of the copyright act being applied to the courts in the T206 timeline was that of Gold Medal Olympian Harry Porter (1882-1965). Porter sued the American Lithograph Co. and ATC on July 5th, 1909, just days after it went into effect over his objection to having his name and likeness being used for advertising purposes without compensation or consent and after the company already printed his card. It was essentially the beginning of the Copyright and Right of Publicity laws which would be featured so prominently in the "Contract Wars" of the 1950's. Perhaps in part because of this, T206 houses some of card collecting's greatest rarities to date, such as those of Honus Wagner and Eddie Plank.

At the time the Copyright Act protected the individual from companies using their portrait or name without consent and American Litho was very well aware of this. However a few things come to thought. The first being that Harry Porter's 1910 T218 Mecca isn't rare, wasn't pulled from production and is quite affordable. So what happened? Porter's attorney argued valiantly that -

"The plaintiff brings this action to secure a perpetual injunction forbidding the defendant to make use of the plaintiff's name and picture for business purposes, and for damages for such use. The complainant alleges that the defendant "willfully, knowingly and without the written or oral consent of the plaintiff, used the name and picture or portrait of plaintiff, a living person, for advertising purposes and for the purposes of trade in the state of New York and elsewhere from the year 1909 to the present time, and still continues to so use plaintiff's name and picture".^{4a}

Though in the court's decision, the Judge ruled that - *"The action is statutory, and the plaintiff must, by pleading and proof bring the action within the terms and conditions of the statute (in this case the Copyright Act of 1909). He must therefore plead and prove that the defendant is making use name or picture for advertising or business purposes without having first procured the written consent of the plaintiff to make such use of the same. The Plaintiff has no cause of action whatever, unless he proves that the defendant is making use of his name or picture for advertising or trade purposes without his written consent. That is an essential part of his cause of action, and it may be questioned whether the alleged written consent of the plaintiff to the American Lithograph Company and its customers is "new matter", constituting a defense by way of avoidance."*^{4b}



Harry Porter won the Gold at the 1908 Olympics and became one of the first athletes to sue the American Lithograph Company on the grounds that the company used his likeness for advertising purposes without his consent. He lost his case while Honus Wagner did not.

Strangely in such a groundbreaking law, there was no requirement in which ATC or American Litho had to respond to the Olympian's request not to use his likeness as it was deemed "new matter" – in this case, a letter of request that Porter had either not provided to the lithographer or court or it went *missing* as the court used the word "alleged" though paid him ten dollars, the supposed amount the company offered the athletes. It begs the question if the lithograph company and ATC could ignore Harry Porter's request, then why couldn't they ignore Honus Wagner's?

Harry Porter won a Gold Medal at the 1908 Olympics in London, but he was no Honus Wagner. At the time Wagner was one of the highest paid players in the league, going from a mere \$5,000 in 1907 to \$12,000 in 1909 and \$18,000 the following year, but he was also in the top 10 statistically for sixteen of his twenty-one seasons proving he was worth every penny. Wagner was a big enough star that he could pick and choose which company he wanted

to endorse and probably didn't need the money that an American Litho contract would have provided, and there's ample evidence for this. I'll dig deeper into Wagner's finances in another article. Harry Porter on the other hand is a different story. Not long after the close of the 1908 Summer Games, Porter and five other Amateur Olympians were suspended for "professionalism" as the papers described - *"Chairman [Herman] Obertubessing of the registration committee said that he and his brother members had come to the conclusion that these athletes, and possibly more, had been demanding money beyond what might be termed legitimate expenses, characterizing the claims of some of them as exorbitant"*⁵

Harry Porter lost his case, but did end up walking away with ten dollars. It is my belief that in his case was all about unsatisfactory financial compensation. Wagner too may have followed suit but the truth may be more complicated than we think. It is entirely possible that the card of Honus Wagner was most likely not pulled solely because of his stance on smoking which was assumed in the October 24th 1912 issue of The

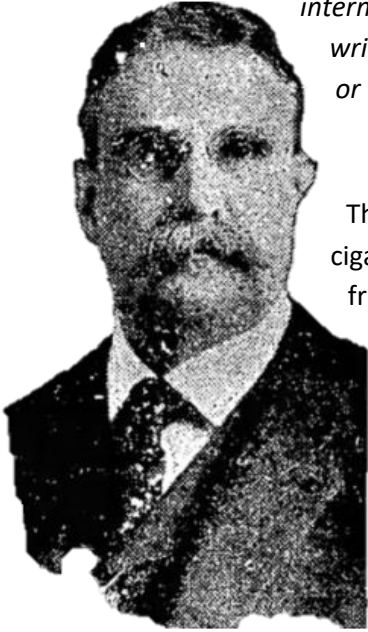
Sporting News. Apparently Wagner returned his contract to Pittsburgh Gazette sportswriter John H. Gruber (1853-1932), along with a check for \$10, writing somewhat ambiguously –

“I don’t want my picture in cigarettes, but I don’t want you to lose \$10, so I’m enclosing a check for that sum.”

Who now knows what lines have been blurred between fact or fiction with the passage of time? We have three different scenarios where each one of them could be correct. If Wagner read the newspaper like the majority of Americans did at the time, or walked around Pittsburgh and was an avid smoker himself, he most likely was aware that kids were smoking or employed by tobacco factories. Even without the heightened social awareness of the Progressive Era, he was a father of two daughters and like any father, would have objected to children picking up the habit as he told pioneer collector John D. Wagner in 1942j. There may have been at least on some level, an awareness or understanding that he could be a role model for the kids who watched him play. Wagner may not have had this card pulled solely over his stance over children using tobacco since he apparently had endorsed Pittsburgh’s Freeman Cigar Company “Honus Wagner 5 cent Cigars” around 1909, the same time his T206 would have been issued. Equally interesting is that he’s featured on the company’s 1913 Hassan Team card and a 1911 People’s Tobacco card – though in all fairness, he may not have ever known these cards existed during his lifetime. In fact, had it not been for American Litho sending him a sample panel, the likelihood of him ever knowing about his T206 would have been severely limited. A third and equal possibility is that this card could have been pulled because of a contractual dispute with another company issuing cards. It is said that many Philadelphia Athletics players including Eddie Plank refused inclusion because they already had obligations to the American Caramel Company and that could be the case with Pittsburgh players as well such as Charles “Babe” Adams, ace pitcher in the ’09 World Series who won 3 games and not included in “The Monster”. Another Mackmen ace, Jack Coombs had a league record of 31–9, and chalked up 53 consecutive scoreless innings streak while on his way to winning 3 games in the 1910 World Series against the Chicago Cubs, yet none of these players are in this set or following sets.

The T206 set has its roots going back over a decade prior to its issuance. Though issued intermittently from 1880 through 1886, the Duke & Sons Co. /American Tobacco Co. line of Tobacco cards was simply staggering in scope and subject matter for about three years (1887-90). Everything from Actors to Indian Chiefs, Sea Captains to Sporting figures were all represented on a card – a financial boon to a company that knew just how popular collecting these cards had become. Essentially, they set off a cardboard arms race between the Tobacco companies...then, just as quickly everything disappeared...Evidence for the reintroduction of tobacco cards in 1909 I believe overwhelmingly, wasn’t just by random coincidence. Their disappearance from the collecting mind may have taken two in the hat. W. Duke & Co had realized back in 1889 that the cost of advertising premiums (\$800,000 that year) had been eating into their profits to which the company then scaled back or dropped their promotionals. What made them disappear altogether however, was the introduction of The Dingley Tariff Act of 1897, which stated -

“None of the packages of smoking tobacco and fine-cut chewing tobacco and cigarettes prescribed by law shall be permitted to have packed in, or attached to, or connected with them, any article or thing whatsoever, other than the manufacturer’s wrappers and labels, the internal-revenue stamp, and the tobacco and cigarettes, respectively, put up therein, on which the tax is required to be paid under the



John W. Yerkes was the Commissioner of the Revenue Service just prior to the issuance of the 1909-T206, but he had a lot to say about why tobacco cards were banned in 1897.

internal-revenue laws; nor shall there be affixed to, or branded, stamped, marked, written, or printed upon, said packages, or their contents, any promise or offer of, or any order or certificate for, any gift, prize, premium, payment, or reward."

- Pg. 186 of the amended section 3394 of the Revised Statute

These internal revenue stamps or "Taxpays" found on the packages of cigarettes were issued from the Bureau of Engraving and printing, and printed from a specialized paper which was contracted out to the New York printing firm John J. Crooke Co. While revenue stamps were around prior to 1897, it was The Revenue Act of 1862 where we first see Uncle Sam form a system of "taxing the sins" such as tobacco and alcohol to pay for the Civil War. Not too surprisingly, these were met with disastrous results - a wide spread evasion of the taxes. For that reason, it wasn't until 1868 that they would become a permanent fixture. The card part was challenged in the Supreme Court by Emanuel Felsenheld (Felsenheld v. United States, 186 U.S. 126 (1902) who had over 1,400 packs of his "Merry World Tobacco" seized on the grounds that the coupons inside were being used to send the customer photos of women of the scantily clad variety as Commissioner of Internal Revenue John W. Yerkes (1854-1922) testified before Congress in 1908:

"Prior to the passage of the Dingley Bill of 1897, there was virtually no legislative and no departmental restriction upon what was placed or could be placed by manufacturers in these packages. As a result, you found, especially in cigarette packages, pictures of scantily clothed dancing girls,

and others believed to be immoral and improper...The result was that the condition had reached such a point that in 1897 the Congress absolutely prohibited the placing within these packages of anything except the tax-paid Tobacco itself"

Yerkes would have remained forgotten – an obscure foot note in some dusty old *Who's Who* book of Revenue Service agents had he not mentioned this stellar fact. He may not be as famous as Green Berry Raum, but he isn't someone's CliffsNotes either, not anymore anyway...However, he was around when these cards were first banned as the Collector of Revenue for the 8th District of Kentucky. Some years later in July, 1900 the affable and popular Kentuckian accepted the Republican nomination for a special election for Governor of that state. A highly unusual turn of events took place for a special election like this to occur, when on February 3rd, seemingly within hours after becoming Governor, William Justus Goebel was shot and died a few days later. Goebel himself, shot and killed a rival -John Stanford, in an 1895 duel outside of a bank. The future Governor was acquitted of murder in self-defense but this hurt him professionally and he gained a lot of enemies in the process. In a hotly contested 1899 election, Republican nominee William S. Taylor had won by a vote of 193,714 to the Democrat Goebel's 191,331. A 3-member board of elections handpicked by Geobel, surprisingly declared William S. Taylor the winner and he was sworn in on December 12th, 1899. Not long afterwards the Legislature convened to look into election fraud. However, meetings held in secret by Democrats in Frankfort invalidated enough votes to declare Goebel the legitimate governor of Kentucky and he was sworn-in as governor on January 31, but

died 3 days after he had been shot. Reports of the time suggested that a gun was fired from the window of the office of Caleb Powers, then the Secretary of State under Taylor. Taylor soon fled to Indiana and both he and Powers were convicted of the crime, but while Powers served 8 years, Indiana's Governor refused to extradite Taylor. Both men were pardoned in 1908 and '09 respectively despite to this day we don't know who actually killed William Goebel. This has to be one of the craziest stories I've come across in a long time, but it is why Yerkes was nominated in a special election following Goebel's assassination and though he lost by a narrow margin, he quickly found himself in the good graces of both William McKinley and Teddy Roosevelt who appointed him Commissioner of the Revenue Service.

In the 1910 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, the 1897 Dingley Tariff Act specifically states the banning of tobacco cards in packs, however in the Payne–Aldrich Tariff Act of 1909, this ban was completely stripped from the act. Not long after the passage of the Payne–Aldrich Tariff, there was a spike in tobacco sales. Could these cards have contributed to it? Anything is possible.

T206 And The Gilded Age

I had always thought that the “The Gilded Age” was a recent term used within my own lifetime to describe this era in American history of political chicanery and greed covered by unprecedented technological innovation and enlightenment. I was completely wrong. The term itself is fascinating:

“to coat with gold, gold leaf, or a gold-colored substance or to give a bright, pleasing, or specious aspect to”.

Long before The Navy gave Douglas Bryant shoes in WWII, and before Hollywood merged with Los Angeles came the Gilded Age. First coined from a little known Mark Twain book of the same name, many historians pinpoint the term first being used around the early to mid-1920's to describe the era beginning around 1866. I started noticing this term in the press around 1907 with passages in direct references to New York City's class hierarchy in 19th century America – Twain's 1873 book was now a hit play on Broadway – and quickly associated with corruption and class in the South in a growing materialistic tendency. Mark Twain and co-author Charles Dudley Warner got the name from Shakespeare's *King John (1595)*: "To gild refined gold, to paint the lily...is wasteful and ridiculous excess." Honestly, I'd rather eat Brussel sprouts any day of the week over Shakespeare...and somewhere my High School Literature teacher is frowning.

This Gilded Age timeline shifts a bit depending on the source information though in all cases it overlaps with the Victorian Era and the Progressive movement and it's where the American Tobacco Company formed the 1909-11 T206. In the aftermath of the Civil War, Baseball weaved its way in to the social, cultural and economic fabric of American society and a lot of this coincides with the vast numbers of immigrants coming from Ireland and Germany. Most Americans worked 10 hour days 6 days a week, earning wages barely enough to survive. A few states started enacting labor laws beginning in the 1890's but it was common place for children under 10 years old to work hours that kept them out of school. Men like Chris Von Der Ahe and Barney Dreyfuss, who started out with nothing and through hard work and

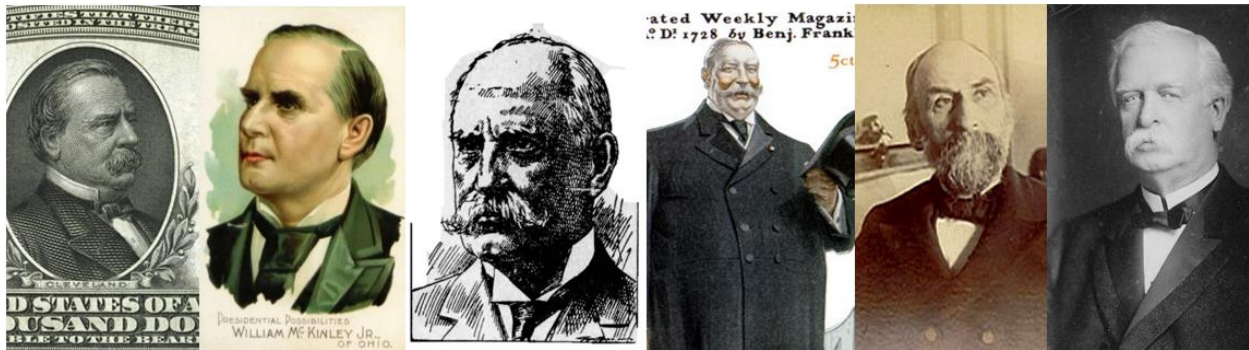
determination and a great sense of business skill became highly influential Baseball owners. With that, we tend to forget that Baseball was and is a business and at the time, the Gilded Age saw a very interesting power dynamic being played out in the club houses and ball fields across America that mirrored the everyday employment lives of the fans. For the most part, players had jobs aside from the ball park as late as the 1960s and their salaries depended on how well financed the club owners were. In many cases they were not, and often the owners reneged on their contracts forcing players to jump. Seeing what was happening across the country, players started to ask for fairer treatment from an ever increasing rule of iron-fisted ownership dictates, ever changing league rules and John Montgomery Ward - who quickly comes to mind being the first player to hold a law degree and form a union. With owners attempting to control their players through the Reserve Clause beginning around 1879, it was the first time that I've found an instance where an employee was bound to an employer through a contract forbidding him from other employment. It went so far as the player not playing at all if he didn't agree to the terms of the contract. Obviously, things didn't improve and on November 4, 1889, the National League issued contracts for the following season ignoring player concerns. Even with widespread protest, NL owners refused to work with the Brotherhood of Professional Baseball Players; in fact, in response to the unrest Ward caused, the owners established a salary cap and began to charge players a fee for uniform rental. Almost immediately St. Louis Browns owner Chris Von Der Ahe threatened to take legal action against Ward if he perused forming the union. The New York Herald wrote - *"How to legislate Base Ball" should be the title of John Montgomery Ward's next book. Just now there seems to be a pressing some such treatise, and coming from the band of such an eminent authority as Mr. Ward its success would be assured"*.

Even with the collapse of the Brotherhood following the 1890 season, it left its mark on Baseball and labor. Swirling in the background was the economy, and specifically to our story, The Dingley Act of 1897. Brought on by "The Panic of 1893", it was a response to remedy one of the worst economic disasters of the last half of the 19th Century and could be on par with The Great Depression year of 1932, lasting for Grover Cleveland's entire last term, deteriorating his legacy. There were several main reasons for this panic. The first being that Uncle Sam set the bi-metal ratio at 16-1 (or the Treasury paid out 16 ounces of Silver for every 1 ounce of Gold); after discontinuing the metal standards in the Civil War, it led to the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890. This resulted in a free market inflation rate of 30-1 and caused rampant inflation which lead to a run on the banks. Secondly, The Pullman Strike of 1893 prolonged the panic when the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad's collapsed in January, followed by the National Cordage Co. which couldn't acquire a \$50,000 loan on May 4th and became insolvent due to the reduction of the treasury's gold supply. A few days later on the 11th, the Pullman Strike occurred when 4,000 employees took a reduction of pay by 25%. More dominoes fell with a string of railroad failures throughout the year with the Erie Railroad going under in July, Northern Pacific in August, Union Pacific in October and finally the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroads in December.

No one is quite certain the full extent of the economic and human impact of the Panic of 1893 actually had, but when it ended some five years later, Progressive Era ideals were already taking shape in the form of financial and social reform Teddy Roosevelt later talked about in his "Square Deal" Platform as President. Progressive Era reforms were the direct result of Gilded Age problems of political corruption, industry, economics and immigration but their results were either mixed and often caused more problems than they solved...think Prohibition of tobacco and alcohol and for card collectors, the above referenced banning of cards in packages they perceived as immoral. As for accurate financial data for much of the

decade is as reliable as a witnesses in the 1947 Black Dahlia case and most of it wasn't compiled correctly until decades later. Financial data, employment and GDP (Gross Domestic Product is the monetary value of all finished goods and services made within a country during a specific period.) are used to estimate the economic health of the country but it's been pieced together and gives us an incomplete picture of what's really going on, but is probably the best we have. Here are the numbers:

From 1890 to 1901, unemployment never went below 3.97% and hit as high as 7.73% in 1894, though it's estimated that it went as high as 25% in Pennsylvania, 35% in New York, and 43% in Michigan - basically anywhere where one of those Rail Road companies went insolvent. The inflation rate (your purchasing power) increased for the most part except for gold backed by notes. A severe decrease in coin mintages from 1893 to 1896 tells us a little. It was evident that the Treasury issued so much silver that in 1918, Senator Key Pittman devised a plan to melt 350,000 of George T. Morgan's Silver Dollars, perhaps the most widely used currency for daily transactions. Minted between the years 1878 and 1904, the mintages are spot on and they tell us that there was a substantial decrease in their production between 1893 to 1895 which also occurs at the same time the Sherman Silver Purchase Act was repealed and the Panic.



Some of the behind the scenes players whose decisions indirectly or directly paved the way for the introduction of Tobacco cards like our T206 (from left to right): President Grover Cleveland, President William McKinley, Maine Senator and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Nelson Dingley, Jr., President William Howard Taft, New York Representative and House Majority Leader Sereno E. Payne, and Rhode Island Senator Nelson Aldrich.

What followed was that nearly 500 banks closed and over 15,000 businesses and farms ceased operations. At the same time, the rise of anarchy and unions started to appear more and more frequently throughout the country and both sides took to intimidation and violence when peaceful measures failed. Many Americans believed that a violent revolution would take place in the country and much of it has to do with the downturn in the economy which was tied in to civil unrest where most states bought out the National Guard to quell any violent uprisings. There certainly were, and quite a number of them. Perhaps the largest was the May Day Riots of 1894 in Cleveland and the Pullman Strike itself. However, there was another issue more directly tied to our tobacco cards...Where do you get the money to operate a government when you don't have a 16th Amendment and a coin shortage? On the backs of these cards you will find at the very bottom the factory number from which they were distributed from. It doesn't give the exact location of the distribution factories, but it does give us our first look at linking these cards with the economics of the time as mentioned above and this is one of the first sets to do so. The 1909-11 T206 set consists of 16 different brands issued from 7 different Factories listed below:

Factory No. 6 (Middleton, OH): Polar Bear Scrap Tobacco

Factory No. 17 (Richmond, VA): El Principe De Gales

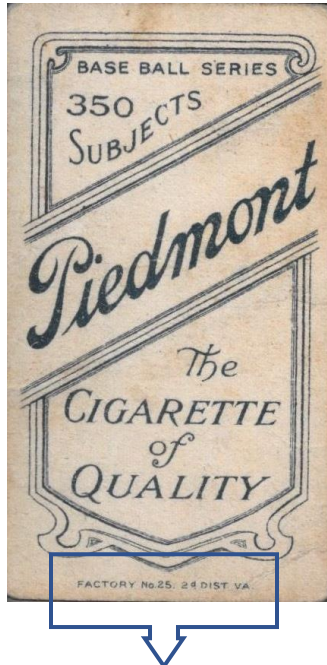
Factory No. 25 (Richmond, VA): American Beauty, Broadleaf, Carolina Brights, Cycle, Drum, Old Mill, Piedmont, Sovereign Cigarettes, Sweet Caporal

Factory No. 30 (New York City): Lenox Mouthpiece Cigarettes, Sweet Caporal, Tolstoi, Uzit

Factory No. 33 (Wilson, NC): Ty Cobb Granulated Cigarettes

Factory No. 42(Durham, NC): American Beauty, Sweet Caporal

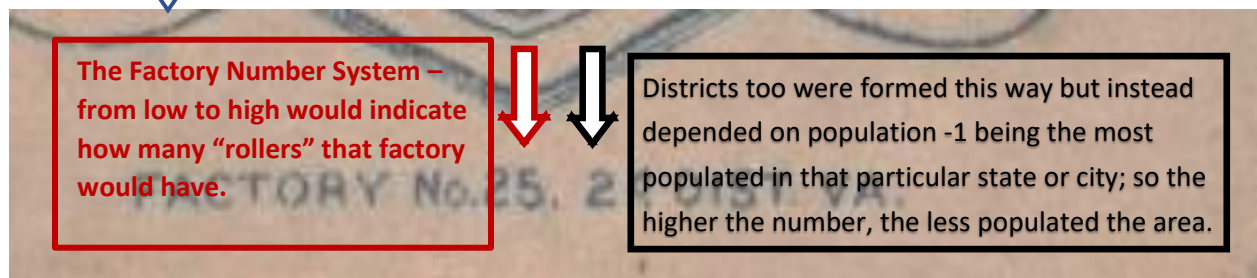
Factory 649 (Rochester, NY): Hindu Cork Tip Cigarettes, Sweet Caporal



These factory numbers and districts are not for mapping purposes, but rather a revenue code system used to help agents keep track of sales as it states in the 1908 Revenue Bureau 's Regulation No. 8: relating to Taxes on Tobacco, Snuff and Cigarettes -

"The Manufacturer's registered factory number, district, and State shall appear on each card, coupon or certificate which may be placed within a statutory package" -Section 135A

Each factory had to use the numbers shown here when making monthly sales or ordering Tobacco using "C" for Cigars and "T" for Tobacco and report their findings in a Revenue ledger called "Book 59". The revenue code system first appeared in 1868 and once again a decade later until 1896 when it was made permanent until after the ratification of the 16th Amendment. Enforcement ended around 1942 and the stamps themselves around 1959.



The Factory Number System – from low to high would indicate how many "rollers" that factory would have.

Districts too were formed this way but instead depended on population -1 being the most populated in that particular state or city; so the higher the number, the less populated the area.

John Sherman's Silver Purchase Act set off the motions for The Panic of 1893 which in turn ignited the conditions that we can actually see on the backs of our 1909-11 T206 cards nearly three decades later. Uncle Sam depended on two types of taxation prior to the ratification of the 16th Amendment in 1913; those being the Sin Taxes (Alcohol and Tobacco) and tariffs for income and protectionism after the panic, but it led to one of the highest and heavy-handed tariffs in American history at 57% thanks in part to our friend William McKinley. Today over the last five years, particularly in 2019-2020, tariffs remain a hot topic of debate, particularly when it comes to trade and China, yet few people realize how important they are or why they are needed. For that, we have to go back to the Revolutionary War when the Colonies were solely at the economic mercy of Britain, leaving France to come to the rescue for goods. After the war of

Independence, our Founding Fathers (James Madison and Alexander Hamilton specifically) didn't forget that manufacturing at home meant that they didn't have to depend on a foreign power, and enacted the country's first tariff in 1789. A little over a century later, McKinley, as President stated –

“Here we are one country, one language, one allegiance, one standard of citizenship, one flag, one Constitution, one nation, one destiny. It is otherwise with foreign nations, each a separate organism, a distinct and independent political society organized for its own, to protect its own, and work out its own destiny. We deny to those foreign nations free trade with us upon equal terms with our own producers. The foreign producer has no right or claim to equality with our own...He went on to say “He contributes nothing to the support, the progress, and glory of the nation. Why should he enjoy unrestrained equal privileges and profits in our markets with our producers, our labor and our taxpayers?” ⁶

The issue of Tariff's was so important to the public that it was a make or break issue for any candidate seeking the Presidency and in fact Benjamin Harrison, Steve Cleveland (aka, Grover) and William McKinley all won the highest office on its account. McKinley narrowly won the Presidency in a fascinating 1896 Presidential campaign over William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925) over these very issues because he understood that the tariff was a matter of national economic security. The Dingley Act had been written by Nelson Dingley, Jr. to replace Arthur P. Gorman (1839-1906) and Bill Wilson's Tariff Act of 1894, but while it lowered rates, it imposed a 2% income tax on people and business. In fact it was so unpopular that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the provision a year later on the grounds it violated the 10th Amendment. Gorman himself was a professional ball player and has a huge role in the game as the founder of the Washington Senators and member of the Mills Commission's study on the origin of the game. Nelson Aldrich rewrote Gorman's Tax provision and it was later passed as the 16th Amendment.

The economy could have been a lot worse had J.P. Morgan not intervened by informing President Cleveland that he could use a little known law from 1862 that authorized John G. Carlisle, the Secretary of the Treasury to issue bonds to buy gold and silver coins without having to get congressional approval. Cleveland had Morgan sign a contract promising that the reserves would not leave the country and Morgan in turn sold the bonds to buy back the metals from foreign investors. The trick worked and in 1907, he simply wrote the U.S. Government a check to bail them out of the Banker's Panic. And he was still the No. 1 fiend of the Progressive movement who saw him as one of the major reasons to change the economic policies of the country and restore a balance between the “have and have-nots”. The biggest problem Morgan faced was the press and the muckrakers at the time were showing more and more people that Morgan and several other businessman were directly responsible for the economic and social ills of the country. Right or wrong, Politicians picked up this sentiment and tied it successfully to Monopolies such as ATC and Standard Oil. As stated, they believed Morgan had a Money Monopoly which convinced enough solons and the public that a change needed to be made. At one time Morgan and other super-wealthy financiers and business owners may have been able to skate through the public eye more easily through political connections and the simple facts that there was no income tax (the income tax of 1861 was allowed to sunset in 1872) and the labor laws and unions were just forming.

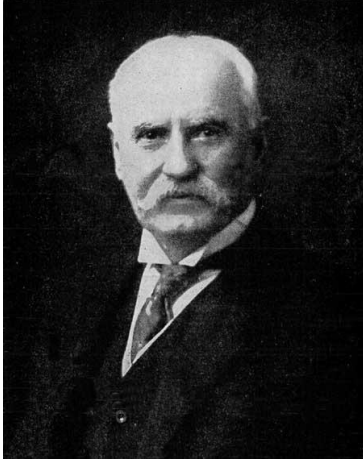
For the muckrakers and journalists at the time trying to delineate the difference between Morgan and the common working man was the easy part. Just how responsible were guys like J.P. Morgan and other employers like James Duke for the social ills of Americans? Historical perspective is often eschewed these days depending on one's own belief systems and outlook on wealth as it was back in the 1910's, but this country's founding wasn't beanbag - there was a lot of blood, sweat and tears shed to make it what it is today, even if that process was unacceptable to us today. It couldn't have been done any other way.

Progressive Era activists began to implement laws through their own handpicked legislators such as Joseph L. Bristow, Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, whose sentiments were espoused in the press by journalists like Herbert Croly (1869-1930), author of *The Promise of American Life* (1909) and *Progressive Democracy* (1914), successfully tied their beliefs to affect the outcomes of Monopolies. Croly in particular was highly influential in twisting the Framers ideals in opposition to our Constitutional foundation to one of complete government control. His books become the closest we get to understanding the thought processes of this movement and they went so far as shaping and molding both Roosevelt's and FDR's policies. While you mull over that one, think about this: the more money you earn, the more free you become and financially free. Everyone understands that, but it's completely up to the individual and this is where the solons and many in the press get it wrong today, that not everyone can or wants to be a business owner. It is a mindset that begins with being responsible with your money and making it for yourself instead of the other way around. Not everyone has the skillset or drive and not everyone understands that as an employee, you have a financial limit on the amount of money that your employer can give you. The one unavoidable thing about being human is that we all have our strengths and weaknesses and that no one is created equal despite equality under the law. There cannot be, nor ever should be, equality of outcome (which leads to communism and socialism through tyranny) but inequality can lead to people striving for greater things in life if they have opportunities available for them to succeed, which in turn can benefit others. It is that simple fact which stood J.P. Morgan apart but it's also what makes Americans great, is that we all come about the way we do things differently because we all have different ideas, and sometimes those ideas turn into businesses and products. It is a balancing act as to the amount of inequality one should accept in one's personal life and business and why Morgan took such a beating in the press and with the government - because he overextended his reach. This is human nature built in to the fabric of our DNA, and why we see tribalism, tyranny and sometimes war.

One of the first things President Taft did once in office was to repeal the Dingley Act and replace it with a less onerous one on April 9, 1909 with the help of House Ways and Means Chairman Sereno E. Payne of New York and Nelson Aldrich of Rhode Island, essentially paving the way for the reintroduction of cards into packs by slimming down the bill. In it, the provision for banning tobacco cards isn't there, though even with that, nearly twenty states up to this point and a few after could not issue these cards in packs since it was still illegal in many parts of the country and up to individual state legislatures to vote on or repeal Tobacco regulations. The last state to lift their ban was Kansas in 1927.

Replacing it with The Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act divided Howard Taft's Republican Party into two branches, the other branch being Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive or "Bull Moose" Party. Out of this fraction, Woodrow Wilson, who claimed to be "Endowed by God to become President" was able to win the nomination and become our 28th President.

Of course this Tariff would never have made it out of the Finance Committee's planning stages and we wouldn't have had a 16th Amendment for me to brag about if it wasn't for Nelson W. Aldrich. Aldrich became a Senator after the highly popular inventor of the sideburn, Ambrose Burnside passed on in 1881 though he didn't make his bones until the turn of the century when he became Chairman and as such, he was responsible for the nation's monetary policies including Tariffs. His influence was so gripping and widespread that we're still feeling it today. Here's what I mean: After the Banking Panic of 1907 he and several bankers got together during a secret meeting on Jekyll Island, Georgia to hash out a plan to restructure the country's banking system. A short time later the National Monetary Commission was formed where Aldrich stepped down as Senator to Chair the Commission in 1908. On November 29, 1909 he explains before the Economic Club of New York –



Nelson W. Aldrich

“The immediate occasion which led to the appointment of the commission was the financial crisis of 1907, whose disastrous results can never be measured, and whose destructive influences were felt throughout the world. The shrinkage in the value of property and securities which then took place, together with losses arising from a paralysis or suspension of business, amounted to thousands of millions of dollars. The country escaped by the narrowest possible margin from a total collapse of all credit and a wholesale destruction of all values. To the great majority of the people of the country the blow came without a warning. Most of our banking institutions were in excellent condition, business of every kind was prosperous, labor was fully employed at satisfactory wages, industries of every kind were flourishing. Our people were full of hope and confidence for the future. Suddenly the banks of the country suspended payment, and acknowledged their inability to meet their current

obligations on demand. The results of this suspension were felt at once; it became impossible in many cases to secure funds or credit to move crops or to carry on ordinary business operations; a complete disruption of domestic exchanges took place; disorganization and financial embarrassment affected seriously every industry; thousands of men were thrown out of employment, and the wages of the employed were reduced. The men engaged in legitimate business and the management of industrial enterprises and the wage-earners throughout the country, who were in no sense responsible for the crisis, were the greatest sufferers.

The crisis of 1907 was one of a series. I remember very well—although probably few of you do—the financial crash of 1873. I am sure you all remember that of 1893, from the effects of which the country did not recover for many years. Between 1900 and 1907 we had recurring periods of depression, of dangerous perturbations in the money market, when the Secretary of the Treasury was frantically called upon for assistance, and felt obliged to adopt the very questionable policy of making large deposits of public money in banks to relieve threatening situations...

Of course, until human nature is changed, it will not be possible to prevent, by legislation or otherwise, periods of over speculation, with undue inflation of values and overextension of credit. When we consider the characteristics of the American people, whose unrivaled energy and enterprise are not always confined by the limits of prudence, it is certain that we in the United States shall always have periods of speculative inflation, with the evil results which are sure to follow”.⁷

Nelson Aldrich is the primary reason why we have a 16th Amendment and a 17th Amendment (thanks to Joseph Bristow), and more importantly to our discussion of tobacco cards, as Senate Leader he’s also a major influence on which Progressivist reforms would go forward depending on his own business interests. And one has to wonder if those included the American Tobacco Company? I’ll put it to you this way, ATC was on the Justice Department radar as early as June 1897 and certainly by 1902 they were asking the question...Is American Tobacco a Monopoly? It was something vehemently denied since Steve Cleveland was President but had received more press prior to the release of the T206. Aldrich was said to be one of the most corrupt solon’s of his time and became quite wealthy due to his business and finance connections in insider deals. Lincoln Steffens (1866-1936) wrote about his activities extensively saying -

The political condition of Rhode Island is notorious, I acknowledged, and it is shameful. But Rhode Islanders are ashamed of it. There is the shining truth about this state. Not many American communities are so aware of their political degradation, none has a healthier body of conservative discontent; and the common sense of this good-will, unorganized and impotent though it is, makes the Rhode Islander resent the interest of his neighbors. "Our evils are our troubles," he says; "they don't concern the rest of you. Why should we be singled out? We are no worse than others. We are better than some; we want to set things right, but can't. Conditions are peculiar."

This is all wrong. The evils of Rhode Island concern every man, woman, and child in our land. For example :The United States Senate is coming more and more to be the actual head of the United States government. In the Senate there is a small ring (called the Steering Committee) which is coming more and more to be the head of the United States Senate. The head of this committee is Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, who has been described as "the boss of the United States," "the power behind the power behind the throne," "the general manager of the United States." The fitness of these titles is a question of national politics, and all I know to the point in that field is what everybody knows: that Senator Aldrich, a very rich man and father-in-law of young Mr. Rockefeller, is supposed to represent "Sugar," "Standard Oil," "New York," and, more broadly, "Wall Street"; our leading legislative authority on protective tariff, he speaks for privileged business; the chairman of the Senate finance committee, he stands for high finance. These facts and suppositions, taken together with the praises I have heard of him in Wall Street and the comfortable faith he seems to inspire in business men all over the country, suggest that we have in Senator Aldrich the commercial ideal of political character, and – if not the head – at least the political representative of the head of that System which is coming more and more to take the place of the passing paper government of the United States”⁸

When they drafted the 17th Amendment - the direct election of senators - in 1913, they had Nelson Aldrich in mind. Aldrich took the country in a different financial direction by implementing the Federal Reserve and as a direct result, the government no longer needed Tobacco as one of the primary sources of income. His legacy is very much still with us today and it had direct implications for cards issued by the American Tobacco Company as well as the cards issued during the Great Depression. And while his legacy appears to be indirect, William Howard Taft, who came in as President on March 4, 1909 was the very first President to have actual ties to the game - first as a 2nd Baseman for Cincinnati's Woodward High School, then starting a now time-honored tradition of throwing out the first pitch on opening day. However, it goes much further than that...

William Howard Taft was a Baseball man through and through. He was perhaps the first president to follow the game as religiously as the law, and the reason was twofold. First, Baseball had been declared the National Pastime by the Mills Commission in 1907 and had been growing steadily in popularity since the 1880's partly due to the advent of new transportation technology and beer sales on Sundays. Baseball was now in a second "Dead Ball Era" which was characterized as a slower-paced, methodical thinking man's game or as I like to describe it, as an opera played out on a field. Fans took to it because it was a game in an increasingly fast paced technological world. And everything that I talk about from economics of the country, to politics, to their professions could be forgotten about at least for a little while. Most importantly, if you haven't seen the movie or read the book *The Greatest Game Ever Played* (2005), the one thing that really stands out is that this was an era of class division. What Golfer Francis Ouimet was doing to Golf at the 1913 U.S. Open was what Baseball had been doing for quite some time in that it was bringing the classes together. Ouimet might not have been allowed to play in his own backyard, but the

common man can today because of him. I can only imagine what these cards were doing in the minds of those who collected them? Did they transport their owners to imagine a game when they couldn't be there, or was it the thrill of the hunt that every collector knows all too well? Perhaps a little bit of both and we do know that these cards inspired decades of collectors and even card manufacturers -specifically the Goudey and Play Ball sets had been designed with T206 in mind.

Secondly, William Howard Taft was a known regular at a game and his Baseball acumen was so great that at one point, Baseball owners started considering the man for a very specific role within Baseball. Taft may have received a crash-course in the Game by his brother Charles, who was the owner of several clubs including the Reds and Cubs and purchased the Philadelphia Phillies in December 1909 for \$250,000 from A.J. Reach and John Rogers essentially saving that club. Charles P. Taft was well known as the fancier of ball parks and did a lot of behind the scenes deals to get other owners the loans they needed to support their operations, though he may not have always been making the day to day decisions, instead leaving it up to either Charles W. Murphy or Horace Fogal. His purchase of the Phillies changed the course of history for that club, the Pirates and the Chicago Cubs. The one thing about Baseball is that it mirrors America at any given era and most of all, it has gotten America through some pretty tough times and has been there right with us...If you want to study this great country, study Baseball. It is a risk-reward system that's played out on several fronts: one that we can see on the field, one that we as fans can feel with every play, one behind the closed door of the front office and one that is played out in the court room. There is yet another part of Baseball that's played out, and that happens to be a newly acquired medium in 1909 that we would one day call -The Baseball Card.

The emergence of the T206 wasn't far off from the end of the Gilded Age and the Victorian Era which had a lot of influence in American culture. In fact there wasn't a whole lot of difference between them except the name as it turns out. Some will say it ended with the sinking of the Titanic and ushered in the era of Progressive thought, but the ideologies, technological advances and labor relations continued well into the 1910's. The artwork also helped to define the era and you might be able to pick up on it in certain T cards; most notably the 1909 Ramly, 1911 C55 Hockey set, 1911 T205 and 1912 T202 sets.

Printing the Monster

Now that the legal and financial hurdles were cleared, ATC and the American Lithograph Company (230 Park Ave. South) were free to begin their work...and the work they did was unlike anything that had been seen since 1890. Lithography was still the cheapest way to print a card but ATC/ALC still needed to transfer from a photograph.

Principal photography was done by the famed portrait photographer Carl Horner (1864-1926) whom I get into greater detail in another article, while Charles M. Conlon and Louis Van Oeyen (1865-1946) below to the right, took the action shots and Walter Washington Foster (1857-1935) bottom left, of Richmond, Virginia was responsible for the photographs of the Southern Leaguers. You may not be as familiar with them, if at all, but their photographs litter the T206 set. Sometime in the mid-1880's W.W. Foster set up his studio at 112 N. 9th St. where many of the Southern League players sat for their portraits. Foster moved

to Richmond in his early 30's and established one of the best known, if only studio in town. His studio only incorporated some 2 years before his passing and some of the photos of these Southern Leaguers may have been taken by his son-in-law Arthur Wellington Orpin who continued the family business until 1972 when the Studio closed. Over 30,000 of Foster's negatives were donated to The Virginia Historical Society where they remain today.

Horner and Conlon are nationally known, but Van Oeyen and Foster may not be familiar names to many collectors until now. Employed by Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc. (NEA), Van Oeyen was particularly adept at snapping on-field moments capturing minute in-action details such as the unorthodox swing of Al Simmons and "Tioga George" Burns or the powerful grip of Babe Ruth at the plate. He was the American League's official photographer and staff photographer for the *Cleveland Press* around 1908. Concentrating on Baseball as a field man (as was Conlon, Horner were portrait photographers for this set), Van Oeyen's photos used for this set were "action shots". He took some of the most memorable shots that are still striking today by using a stop-action lens. He set up shop in the early 1900's at League Park where he photographed baseball's greats, including Lajoie, Young, Cobb, Ruth, Johnson, and later such stars as Feller, Gehrig, Foxx, Greenberg and Averill. Van Oeyen was one of the first to capture a play in progress. His newspaper career officially began in 1901 with his coverage of President McKinley's assassination and lasted until the 1930's. He famously covered Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan in the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial.



It appears that all of The American Tobacco Company's card sets issued in the Eastern and Southern United States were designed from these photographer's prints and printed under the direction of Gustavus H. Buek who was the head of American Litho's art department, and I go into length about him in my assessment of the 1911 T205 article. Individual artists working for this company and these sets, unfortunately still largely remain a mystery as do any of the original pieces of artwork associated. The fact that none have ever surfaced, unlike say, original artwork of the National Chicle Company or Gum, Inc. may not have been unusual. Think of it this way, in an era when collecting Baseball cards as a solidified hobby was decades away and financial gain wasn't even a thought, very few people would have

had the foresight to keep any of it. Even those who you would think would or should have like Civil War photographer Matthew Brady or Baseball photographer Charles M. Conlan destroyed thousands of glass-plate negatives due to the lack of space (Conlon stored these plates at his house before there was a Baseball Hall of Fame to accept them).

When these photographers were behind the camera, most newspapers were abandoning wood engravings that look like pen and ink drawings for photographs and by the very early 1900's, the development of halftone techniques were becoming advanced enough that newspapers and magazines could print photographic images at scale. Here's how it works - Halftone printing exposes a photograph onto a sensitized metal plate through a screen of tiny dots. The plate is then chemically processed as acid

eats away areas which are “light” and leaves intact areas which are “dark.” The result is a relief plate whose raised areas can be inked and used to print a credible simulation of a photograph. There was one company on the East Coast that comes to mind which was well suited for such a large project like an American Tobacco’s 1909-11 T206.

In February of 1909 The American Tobacco Company (507 W. 22nd St, New York City) commissioned The American Lithograph Co. to produce sports cards for the first time since 1895 (N300 Mayo’s Cut Plug). The American Lithographic Co (19th St. & 230 Park Ave South) was founded in 1854 as Saroney & Major Lithographers of New York until Joseph F. Knapp (1832-1891) became a partner in the company and changed the name a decade later. His son Joseph P. was introduced to the company and it was he who transformed ALC into a trust incorporating in December of 1895 with a capitol of 12,000,000.

AMERICAN LITHOGRAPHIC Co.



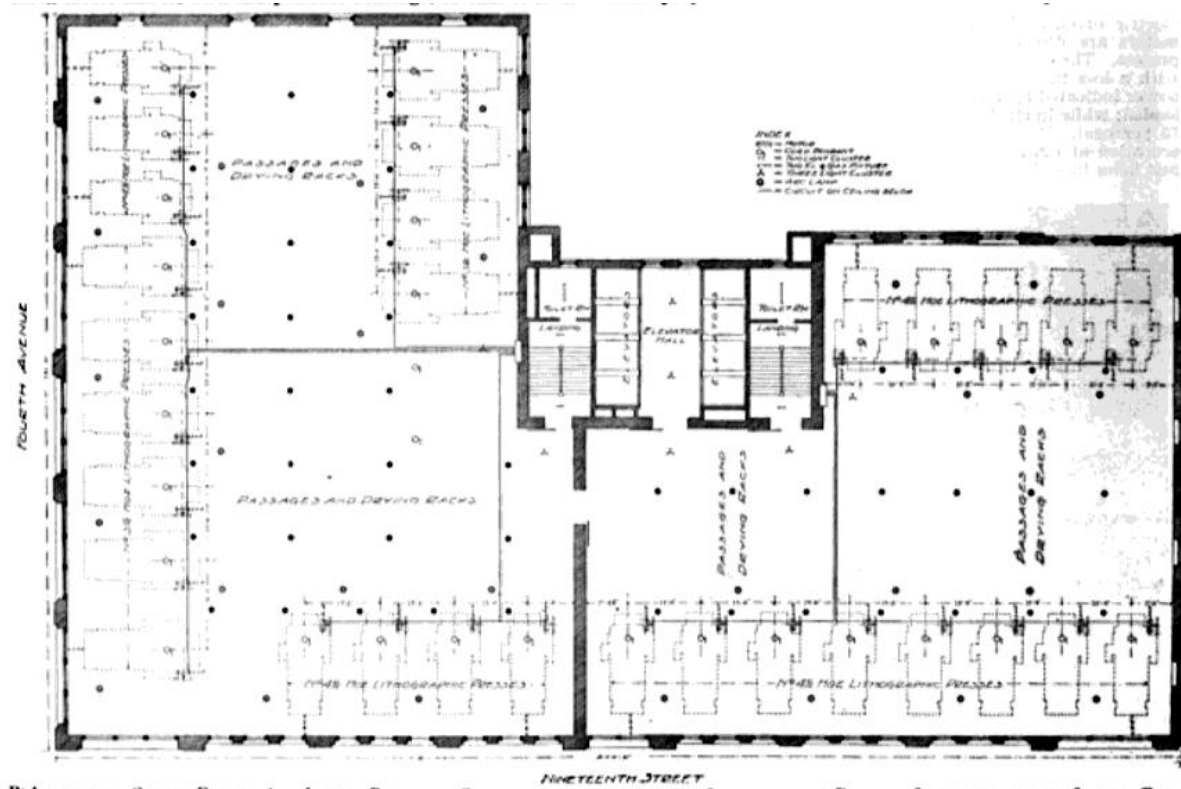
Joseph P. Knapp

There is no coincidence as to why ALC was chosen for this account, and that’s because James B. Duke and Joseph P. Knapp (1864-1951), owner of the printing firm were good friends. Knapp was known to be something of a workaholic -a kindred spirit to James Duke, who was really impressed by the printer’s abilities. Knapp’s other business venture was another little company you may have heard of called The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (or Met Life). The younger Knapp was able to purchase American Litho because he accepted stock options over commissions. Joseph P. Knapp stepped down in 1921 but retained control of his highly profitable magazine empire (which included Gravure, Collier’s Weekly, American Magazine and Women’s Home Companion) and sold American Litho in 1929 to The U.S. Printing & Litho Co. The U.S. Printing & Litho was responsible for printing our 1933 and 1934 Goudey sets.

Now it was never proven in a courtroom or with the Justice Department, but Knapp and Duke had a lot in common where monopolies were concerned. In 1892, when the American Lithographic Co. (ALC) was formed, they bought up several significant printing and lithographic companies associated with the early days of card manufacturing including Geo. Harris & Sons of Philadelphia and Schumacher & Ettlinger. Leopold C. Schumacher (1849-1914) and Louis Ettlinger (1845-1927) were both made directors of this new company. Both of these companies were the printers behind the Allen & Ginter’s Old Judge sets and Goodwin & Company’s cards and Albums of the late 1880’s. ALC purchased more than 200 companies by 1910 essentially controlling nearly 90% of the printing industry. One such company, a small New York firm named G. H. Buek & Co. (146-150 Centre St) worked extensively on at least the first two of the “Big 3” tobacco sets, and Gustavus H. Buek became the art director at American Litho and was responsible for overseeing this massive project. I wanted to find out more on American Lithographic, but found very little in the way of actual production processes.

Only one early source, found in an electrical magazine seems to give us a fairly good view to the building's contents, layout and most importantly, the printing presses used by the company:

"The roof house is occupied by the photographic department, and the top floor shelters artists and provers. On the twelfth floor are the stone planers and transfer presses. The tenth and eleventh floors containing cutting, folding, embossing and finishing machinery and the storage and shipping departments. On the ninth floor are the compositors and a huge number of type-presses. The three floors below are nearly all given up entirely to the mammoth lithographic presses, numbering about one hundred. The fifth and fourth floors house stock and printed material, such as labels, etc. A large part of the third floor carries tons of lithographic stones, with some of the offices, the main offices being on the second floor, with a superb art gallery of famous pictures reproduced by the company. There is a fine large street entrance with grand stairway opening into the art gallery. The first floor has a number of large stores rented to different firms, and finally comes the basement, with its store cellars, machine shop and power plant".⁹



The Lithographic Presses were located on the 6th floor of the building (shown here) housing up to 30 on the floor alone.

As you're already noticing, this was a very large company so I've been asking myself...Exactly how did the American Lithograph Company escape the prying eyes of Attorney's General William H. Moody, Charles J. Bonaparte, George Wickersham or Philander C. Knox during the height of the government's attack on monopolies in the Progressive Era? It was in fact brought up in a 1902 lawsuit by a stockholder of the company, Benjamin Hilton asking for dissolution but the Attorney General threw it out saying –

"The allegations and evidence of insolvency are mostly, if not wholly, based upon information and belief, and made and given by persons having little or no personal knowledge of the affairs or conditions of the company. In opposition to this application there has been presented to me the positive evidence of parties who are entirely familiar with the affairs, conditions, values and assets of the company to the effect that the company is not insolvent, and upon this question the great preponderance of evidence shows that the company is solvent. I therefore deny the application." ¹¹

Now it was stated as far back as 1895 that there were concerns that the company was headed in that direction. In November of that year, ALC grabbed up a Buffalo printing company Gies & Co. - it was the only one in the city at the time and to quell these fears, Gies president Henry G. Breed went on record to say that *"...the American Lithographic Company is in no sense a trust"* Though the Buffalo Evening News pointed out that *"It now comprises 10 of the largest concerns in the United States and is organized for the purpose of enabling the different companies in the association to get their goods at a lower rate. If it were a trust it would have to control a greater part of the lithographic concerns in the country in order to shut out competition"*.

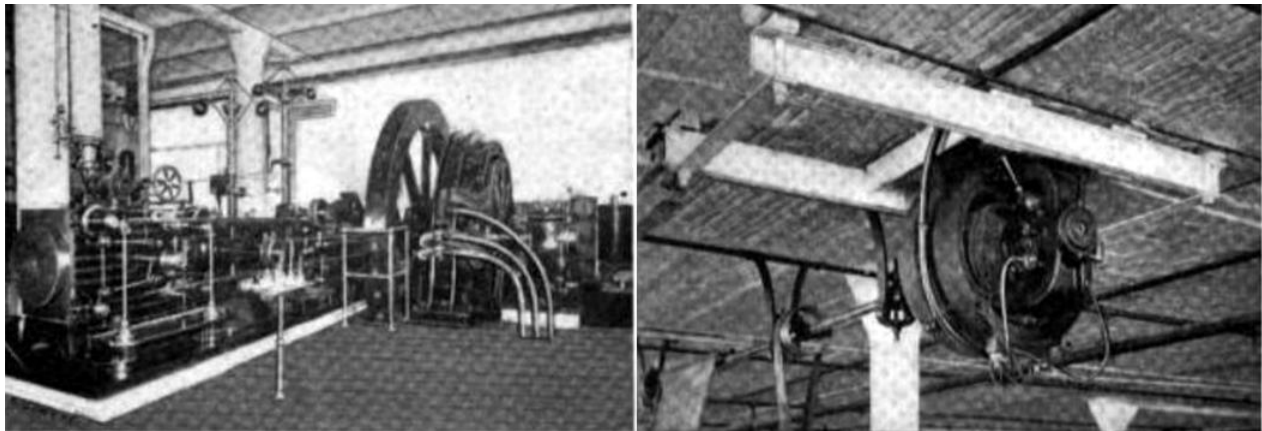
Not long afterwards, 53 artists of Gies & Co. went on strike when they refused to handle non-union work. Most other companies in the profession soon followed suit in 1906 where it was said, *"The hesitancy of the employers to grant the demand arose out of the fact that the shops were overwhelmed with work and that the restrictions placed on the shops by the unions in the small number of apprentices allowed us did not afford us enough men to work our shops on the time allowed to us. We could not get men to enlarge our forces and we could not do the work we had to do with our present forces in the 48-hour week."* President of the lithographers' organization, William F. Lang went on to say *"All the branches of the lithographic industry are out, with the exception of the engravers. There are 81 shops in New York, of which 38 have agreed to the 48-hour week."* ¹²

This would've been only down 5 hours from 53 hours a week so 6,000 employees in New York and over 30,000 across America went on strike, and this seems to be a common occurrence up to the printing of the T206 set. This directly alludes to the labor movement that I was talking about earlier in this article. ALC was not the only non-union company in New York City; the American Tobacco Co was non-union as well and that's what got the Justice Department's George Wickersham to open up an investigation shortly before the company went public with this set.



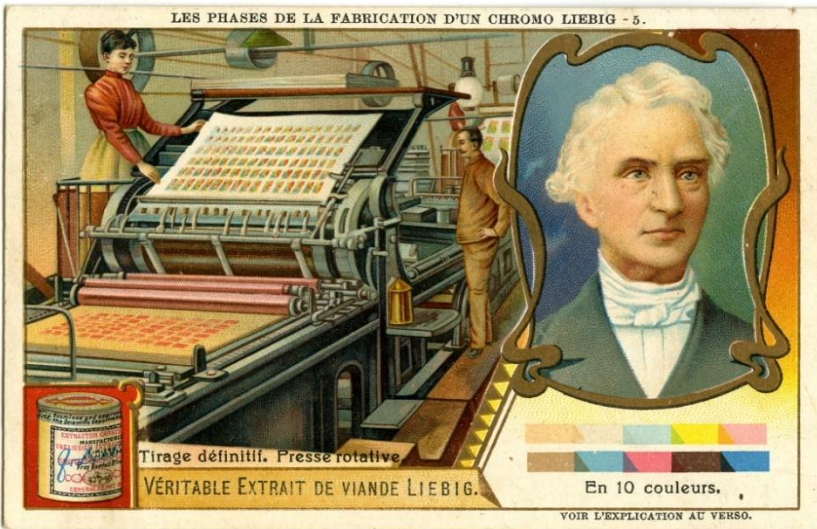
The American Lithographic Building is a 13 story steel-frame structure built by Ford, Bacon & Davis in 1895. American Lithographic Co. remained in this building until 1930 though the building itself still remains.

Printing at the time was a labor intensive and sometimes dangerous profession (Kerwan v. American Litho, 1910 involving the hiring of inexperienced children getting injured on the job) and I can't imagine printing without electricity. Prior to American Litho's construction of a new facility in 1895 (the very same 22nd St. local), printers were using steam powered presses. One of the disadvantages of steam power during the Industrial Revolution was that it was expensive to run machinery. Besides the expense comes the obvious that steam powered machinery was not very safe to use before the advent of electricity because the boiler can burst if excess steam pressure occurs. In order to get the maximum amount of energy from this, the steam has to be maintained at high temperature and a very high pressure in the boiler. If the steam pressure increases too much, the boiler can burst leading to loss of life and property.



The American Lithographic Company used a Watts-Campbell non-condensing Engine (left) using a General Electric generator. H. P. Watts Campbell Co was a Newark, New Jersey company specializing in building and refitting steam engines. George H. Corliss' engine was the driving force behind the Industrial Revolution and this one appears t be modified to include electricity when American Lithographic was issuing these cards. Corliss Steam Engines were still being made in the 1910's and today there are a few in museums such as the Henry Ford Museum and The Smithsonian. ALC used over 100 Sprague Electric Co. Lundell Motors attached to the ceilings of the building, and they had a total output of 115hp. They first made their appearance in 1892.

The boiler itself was the most dangerous part of the machinery used because not all boilers were made the same depending on the materials used. It was less than twenty years that Thomas Edison invented the light bulb in 1878 and eleven years before that when Michael Faraday's (1791-1867) Dynamo was put to everyday use - both of which revolutionized the printing industry - and America - when American Litho opened up the facility that issued many of ATC's sets. Technically the electrical age began in Cape Town, South Africa in 1881, but came to America officially when on September 4th, 1882, the Edison Illuminating Company flipped the switch at the power station at 255-257 Pearl Street in Manhattan, providing electricity to homes and business in the area. When the Station opened, it was the first of several commercial power plants in the country followed by one in Shamokin and another in Sunbury in Pennsylvania and one in the City of Champions (sometimes referred to as Brockton, Massachusetts). This technology was so new that the reporters covering the event were astounded, didn't know what to make of it, saying –



The CMY&K color model shown here on a 1906 Liebig Trade Card: Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and the key – Black.

“Yesterday for the first time the Times Building was illuminated by electricity. Mr. Edison had at least perfected his incandescent light, had put his machinery in order and had started up his engines, and last evening his company lighted up about one-third of the lower city district in which the Times Building stands. The light came on in sections. First there came in a series of holes in the floors and walls, then several miles of protected wires, then a transparent little egg-shaped glass globe, and last of all the

fixtures and ground glass shades that made everything complete”...And to operate this newfangled electrical doohickey, all they said was “To turn on the light nothing is required but to turn the thumbscrew; no matches are needed, no patent appliances. As soon as it is dark to artificial light, you turn the thumbscrew and the light is there, with no nauseous smell, no flicker and no glare”.¹³

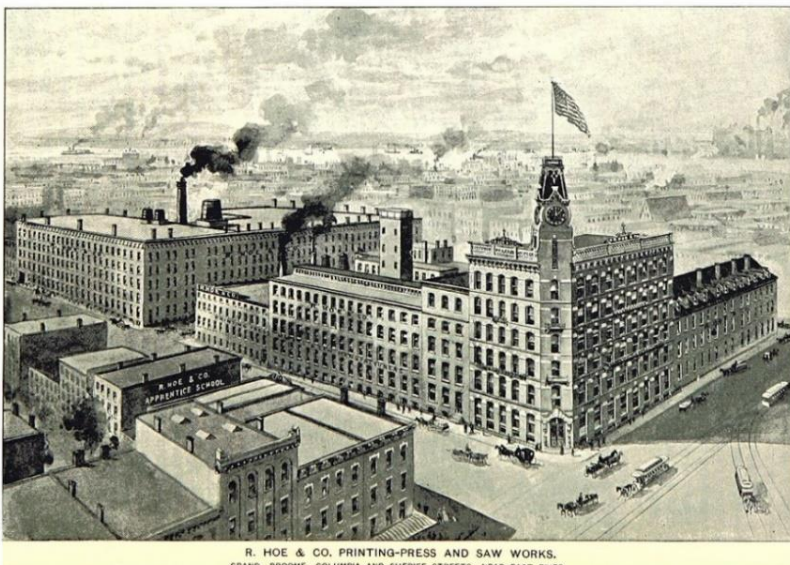
Using Porter-Allen high-speed steam engines, Edison was using Direct Current (enter George Westinghouse and Nicola Tesla’s Alternating Current via The War of Currents), which didn’t produce the energy needed and being dangerous enough, the Pearl Street Station burned down in 1890. Interestingly, an 1897 Electrical Engineer Magazine gives us a real fascinating glimpse of what this company and the era was like at the turn of the century as it stated –

“Few industries have been so vitally affected of late years by mechanical improvements as that of printing and its allied trades and branches. The modern perfecting web press and the latter lithographic color presses alone embody much of the best thought and invention of the times and they are but parts of a great whole, every detail of which has been lifted to a very high plane of achievement by the strenuous efforts required from men and machines alike when pitted against the exacting conditions of the “art preservative”.

When you get past the gilded word salad of the era and go directly to the meat; what starts to become clear is the fact that less than half of all homes and businesses in the United States had electric lighting as of 1925. Much of our modern life begins roughly around the same time that this set was issued, or roughly 110-120 years ago. If you think that’s crazy, in 1940 half of the country still lacked hot piped water, a bathtub or shower or a flush toilet, and refrigerators for home use were invented in 1913 but were unsafe to use and didn’t become a staple in homes until the 1940’s when freon replaced ice blocks and sulfur dioxide. Electric washing machines were another item that was a luxury. First making their appearance in 1904, they were made of wood and very expensive. Most had to be nailed down to the floor and were not enclosed, and some of them looking more like a bathtub with a toaster on top, so we didn’t see the

first laundromats until the mid-1930's and for home use later on in the decade. It was only in the 1950's that they resembled something that we know of today. The point being is that this was a really big deal for the American Lithographic Building to be operated by an electrical current from its very start. Modern amenities are something that we take for granted today and we put little thought into them, but at this time, they were new burgeoning technologies that would revolutionize our society. This is also true for the dead tree media. Before the days of radio, yet to be commercialized in the early 1920's, most Americans got their information through the newspapers, magazines and through advertising of products and it was the printing press that made it possible for us enjoy these cards today and for me to go back and research the era and aspects of what made this country and Baseball great. American Lithographic, owing to its success, went to one of the leading manufacturers of printing machinery in the country...

R. HOE & COMPANY



Simply stated, American Lithographic became one of the top printing firms in the nation because it had great people behind it. Their skill and quality of workmanship is unmatched because they were using some of the most advanced equipment at the time and they had Robert Hoe's New York company to thank for it.

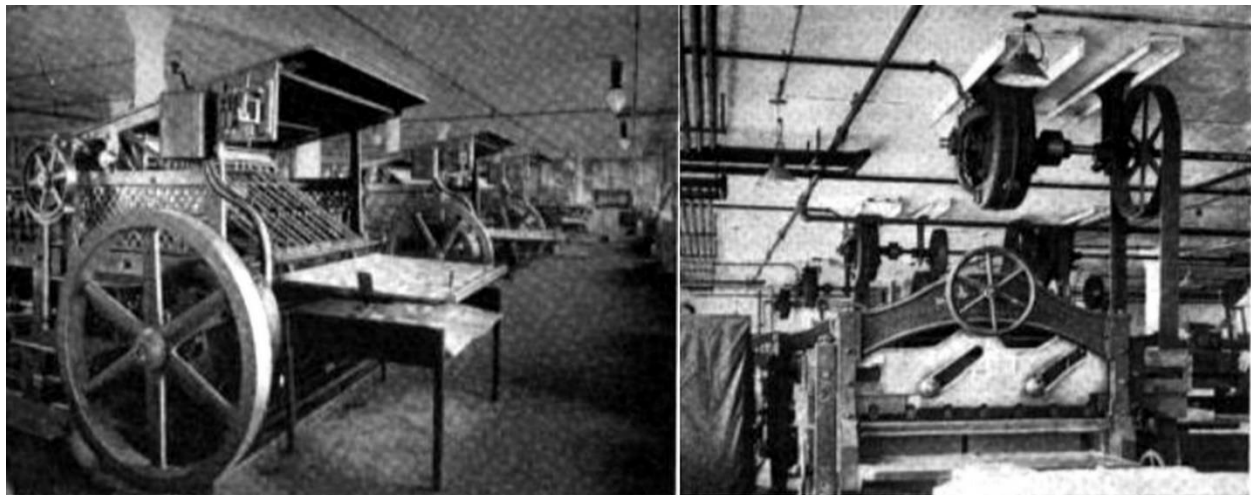
R. Hoe & Co was founded by Peter and Matthew Smith and Robert Hoe in 1805 manufacturing saw blades. In

1822 Hoe took over the company, changed the name to R. Hoe & Co and bought a patent for a printing press. By the time his sons Richard and Robert M. took over, the company began improving the machinery already in use or redesigned printing presses and associated equipment and techniques from scratch. Here's some of their firsts: a single and double cylinder hand-fed flatbed press, up to a massive 10 cylinder press for newspapers, and a continuous printing rotary press. These early inventions may not sound like it, but without them, we'd have no T206 or another vintage sports cards. What was also really important for the production of tobacco cards was the acquisition of patents of technology by which webs of paper could be turned over after being printed on one side and printed on the other and a curved stereotype plate at the same time. The company also founded a school for apprentices in the trade (second building in from the bottom right of the picture) which I think was a first.

When American Litho was printing these cards, they went through an R. Hoe & Co. No. 5 Press and a No. 4 Litho Press using a 6 layer color process (in order: yellow, black, brown, blue, green and red) though interestingly a May 29th, 1911 *Cincinnati Enquirer* article stated -

“The newly invented process of lithography controlled by the U.S. Lithograph Company transfers the design by photographic design directly onto zinc in a few hours; whereas the former process involving original drawings by skilled artists transfers by drawing to stones, occupied from a week to several weeks. The saving in time and skilled labor by the new process will result in a large increase in earnings...”

Now, the U.S. Printing company, known for printing our 1933 and 1934 Goudey sets, may have not been the only litho company to do this as artists' for The Schmidt Lithograph Co. also worked in this fashion printing the Obak sets, and you can tell that there is a difference in the artwork between them. After studying the team and name changes and where certain players were dropped from production such as Doc Powers who died in 1909; it wouldn't be at all surprising if The American Lithographic Co. was doing this type of transfer work as well.

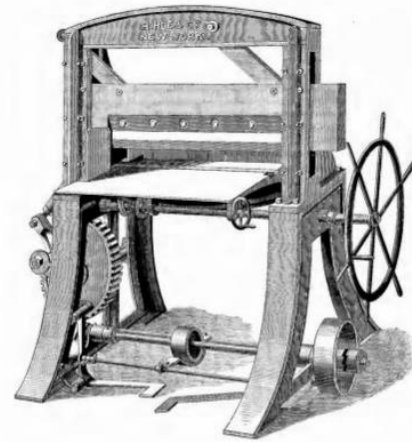


The R. Hoe & Co. No. 4 Litho Press was described as operating at five speeds that had an output 1,140 sheets per hour. On the right are the cutters American Litho used to cut the sheets.

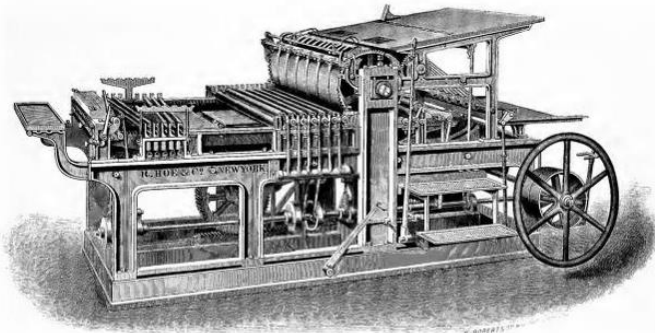
One of the few instances we have of how these cards were printed does come from the 1897 issue of *The Electrical Engineer Magazine* and while I don't believe that American Lithographic was using a 10 cylinder press for these cards (These were massive three story presses which makes it increasingly difficult to imagine they were used) However my own background in printing using a 1954 AB Dick press decades after it rolled off the assembly line tells me that the presses could have easily lasted for decades when maintained properly. Stephen D. Tucker was a longtime colleague of Richard M. Hoe and wrote an extensively detailed history of the company in 1885. Here are some of the excerpts from his book relevant to the manufacture of these sets -

- *The principal business office of R. Hoe & Co. had been in Gold Street for fifty years past, but business offices were now gradually going further up town, and printing offices were also beginning to move up, so it was decided to put a large building on the corner of Grand and Sheriff Streets, for offices, warerooms, drawing office and light manufacturing, and also to establish there the principal business office and eventually to move up the entire Gold Street works. Accordingly, during 1873 a building fifty feet by eighty-eight feet was erected, seven stories high with a wing connecting it to the factory, and the Gold Street office gradually settled in it.*

- A hand operated **Paper Cutting Machine** was built at this time. It had a guillotine knife that was worked vertically by a screw at each end driven through miter wheels by a hand wheel at one side of the machine. The clamp was worked through similar screws and wheels by a hand wheel at the opposite side. Quite a number were made but the knife worked hard and the machine was in a great measure superseded by the machine worked by power brought out directly after.



- **All lithographic printing** was formerly done on hand presses, the impression being taken from the stone by a scraper. Attempts had been made for several years, both in this country and in Europe, to build a suitable machine press for lithographic printing with more or less success. The older attempts generally retained the scraper for taking the impression, but in some of the later ones an impression cylinder was tried with promising result. Mr. R. M. Hoe, who was in Europe at that time, saw a machine of the latter description made by Mr. H. A. [sic] Marinoni, a press builder of Paris, and he was so pleased with its performance that he proposed to Mr. Marinoni that he, as the inventor, should make an application for a United States patent, and for a certain consideration, assign the application to him, Mr. R. M. Hoe. This proposal was accepted and carried out, and a patent was granted to R. M. Hoe, March 16th, 1869.



One of Marinoni's machines, and a set of drawings, were sent here for our guidance. It was a stop cylinder press and the bed ran on a six wheel truck and was driven the same as our 'Railway' press. As the stone became thinner from use the stone platform was raised by a screw near each corner until the stone came in proper contact with the impression cylinder. At one end of the

bed was an inking table, and at the opposite end a water table covered with felt, to which water was applied by hand from time to time, and this supplied the water rollers for the stone. The sheet was flown by a delivery cylinder with tapes leading to a sheet-flier. This press was put in operation here, but it soon became evident that it was entirely too lightly built for its work. In building our machines we adopted our latest stop cylinder style as far as possible. The bearings of the impression cylinder have a slightly elastic packing above them, so that by yielding a trifle it will prevent a stone from breaking in case its surface should be a little uneven. A water fountain and rollers automatically dampen the stone, and if desired, the bed can make two runs to each sheet printed. This machine was built in 1868 and put in operation early in 1869, and at once became a



great favorite with the trade and so remains to this day. Marinoni's sheet delivery arrangement was an improvement on any previously made and was adopted by the firm on both lithographic and typographic machines.

These cards were printed on full sheets and although there has been great speculation in Michael O'Keefe and Terri Thompson's book *The Card: Collectors, Con Men, and the True Story of History's Most Desired Baseball Card* (2007) that at least one T206 sheet was found and cut up in the 1980's, no known sheets of any of ATC's sets are known to exist today with the exception of a 1909 T212 Obak. This makes it particularly tough for researchers, historians and collectors alike to come up with an accurate accounting of how many players were on a sheet, who was on it, which players were added or taken out, and who could be a double or a triple print. However we do get a slight glimpse of what a T206 sheet may have looked like because there are enough cards that indicate one individual player



was printed per row shown here. After these cards were printed, they would be shipped to the factories for distribution as needed but here's where it gets complicated...

Collectors and researchers Steve Birmingham and Pat Romolo noticed the backs of some T206 Piedmont 150 Series had "Plate Scratches" on the backs. A Plate Scratch on a card looks like a print streak – or a buildup of ink on the plate. What they figured out after months of following ebay listings, was that these

scratches were a part of a pattern that they were able to follow card by card. As impressive as that is, a larger picture was starting to emerge.



Between the miscut cards shown above, and the plate scratches (shown here as blue lines), we get the clearest picture of what a sheet looked like – 24 players, 264 cards on an 11 x 24 inch sheet. It would also appear that there was one brand advertisement per sheet, but the question then becomes -what happens to a sheet when a player’s card like Honus Wagner or Eddie

Plank is taken out of circulation or updated? Are other players added to fill the void such as the case with many of the cards double printed in the 1953 Topps set? “Ghost Images” found on the backs of some of these cards are also a clue to their printing. A ghost image is a little like a ghost sign found on the sides of an old building but differs since the player image on most of these cards are the same found on the front of the card. Most times it is the same player’s image and occurs when the sheet hasn’t yet dried. I think it certainly supports Steve Birmingham and Pat Romolo’s great work, but it isn’t always the case with all T206 cards or sheets. For example, this same Gandil card had an upside down image of a Johnny Evers Portrait on the reverse.

DIMENSIONS AND PRICES.

	Size of Stone.	Size of Design.	No. of Inking Rollers passing over the Form.	Price, with Apparatus to Roll Once.	Price, with Apparatus to Roll Twice.	Price, with Apparatus to Roll Three Times.
No. 1, . . .	21 x 26 inches,	19 x 24 inches,	6,	\$	\$	\$
No. 2, . . .	24 x 32 “ . . .	22 x 30 “	7, .			
No. 3, . . .	28 x 40 “	26 x 38 “	7,			
No. 4, . . .	32 x 46 “	30 x 44 “	8, .			
No. 5, . . .	36 x 52 “	34 x 50 “	8,			
No. 6, . . .	40 x 60 “	38 x 58 “ .	9, .			

The first column is the size of the stone and the second is the size of the design (or sheet). These cards were printed on an R. Hoe & Co. No. 4 Lithographic Press. The above revered dimensions for this press, dated 1873, however it is unlikely that this model changed much between the time American Lithographic received it to the time these cards were being issued. By 1899, ALC was using aluminum plates and Hoe & Co. offered a Litho press of 37 x 52 inches which was well within the range of a 19 x 24 sheet plus room for the color key. According to this, it appears that ALC was using a No. 4 or even a No. 5 Lithographic Press for these cards based on the work by Ted Zanidakis.

According to the research of Scott Reader and Ted Zanidakis; they believe that the cards were printed on a 19 x 24 inch sheet in single vertical rows of a single player and to a certain extent they're more than likely correct. I believe that this was the set up for the majority of sheets within the T206 and T205 sets, but not all of the sheets have one player on each row. There's another theory based on rare instances in which 2 players have been seen on one card which raises the possibility that it's more likely that many sheets had 3 cards of the same player per diagonal row in the 1st series, or the "150 Subject" series. Now this could easily have changed where both theories are correct depending on certain factors of a player's trade, retirement or passing (as such as Philadelphia A's catcher Doc Powers who died on April 26, 1909).

A lot of the printing of this set is based on deduction from what researchers, dealers and collectors have gathered over the past 80 years but there's still a lot of gaps in the record. Mostly what we get are frustrating nibbles – crumbs of information but every once in a while someone hits paydirt, and several years ago two important finds were bought forth. First, several American Lithographic documents or "ledger notes" revealed the dates of issuance and end dates of each brand, such as Cycle, or Piedmont. A distribution route, how many cards were to be packed in each pack and what the card looked like.



American Litho/ATC Ledgers were used for packing and distributing the cards. The ones that we know of are just fragments now.

Courtesy of Steve Birmingham, net54.com

Only a few of these documents, or journals have been discovered and most are now fragments, but they give a valuable insight into how this set was issued. Along those same lines, the way tobacco brands were printed depended on how many orders the Jobber had to fill. This has a lot more to do with rarity of a brand back but not necessarily how they were printed. Some ledgers do have specific release dates for individual players (I will be getting more into the brands and players in a follow-up article) and this brings me to my second point.

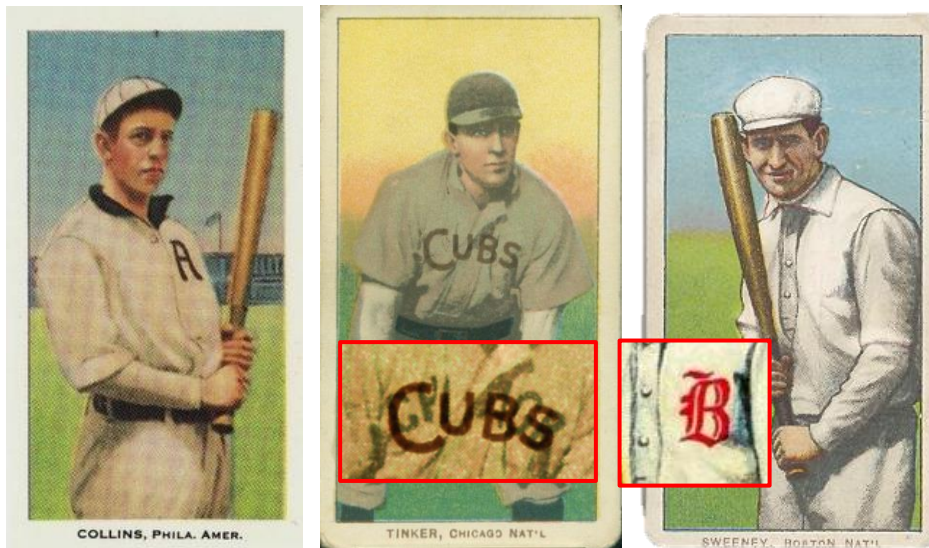
Up until the past few decades, it was always assumed that the set consisted of 524 cards and with the rarity of the Honus Wagner and Eddie Plank cards, it would be 522. We actually don't know how many cards were intended to be issued but in the early 1970's, as the story goes, the proofs of hundreds of T206 proofs were found in an attic of a former printer at American Litho including a unique action shot of Eddie Collins - the same image on his 1907 Novelty Cutlery, and eight minor Southern League players that were

never issued. These cards apparently first made their appearance at the 1973 New York District 65 Center Show and many of them were bought by future founder of REA Auctions, Rob Lifson.



Proofs that were never issued (from L to R): Herman Meek, Fleet Mayberry, Joe Pepe, Andy Roth, James Osteen, Tim Dwyer, John "Scotty" Alcock and John Lee.

It may be possible through population reports and understanding distribution to tell which players are more common than others for any one of ATC's sets. For instance, in ATC's 1911 T205 Gold Border set, we do know that Miller Huggins and John McGraw are some of the easiest cards to obtain in that set compared to say Bugs Raymond and George Suggs or Louis Lowdermilk and Irving Lewis in the 1912 T207 set -all are known short prints. However short prints (SP) are often tied into the printing process when or if one player retires or is traded. There are other ways a card could be rare due to the way it was printed within this set and here are a few:



From L to R: Eddie Collins w/bat Proof, Joe Tinker "Cubs over Chicago" Jersey and Boston Doves (the future Braves) 3rd Baseman Bill Sweeney missing "B".

The Chicago Cubs in the T206 are something of an anomaly where the "CUBS" across their road jerseys is not known to have ever existed at the time; however there are three known copies of Joe Tinker's "hands at knees" featuring two team names atop of the Shortstop's Road Jersey. If you look closely at the card, the name "Chicago" appears underneath though that style replaced the team's

previous jersey in 1907. As of this writing, there are only 3 examples of the Tinker print variation but it provides evidence that the photos used for players who do show the "CUBS" across their jersey were photographed prior to 1907 as the team had no nickname emblazoned on their jersey.

Because of its size, there are bound to be a few printing errors here and there...actually, who are we kidding – there are more errors in this set than you can shake a stick at! The key is knowing what's a true

printing error and what is printing scrap (or a color test). It also appears that every single card of the Boston Doves (The future Boston Rustlers and Braves) and Cincinnati Reds have this missing red variation, though these cards – including the after-mentioned 3rd Baseman Bill Sweeney has enough cards missing the “B” where only a faint image was seen. This particular card was seen as a legitimate error we think first discovered by John D. Wagner, and was added to the checklist in the 1940’s but stripped before Bill Heitman reintroduced collectors to this set in the late 1970’s. The fact remains that there are so many printing errors and variations that have been discovered and identified that my own personal feeling is that this set, when printed, was the biggest mad dash in the history of card collecting. One possibly due to an impending Supreme Court decision which I believe hinged on the fate of all of The American Tobacco Company’s “Big 3” sets. Eventually the Collins proof ended up going to Barry Halper, where it went for \$56,000 in a 1994 REA auction to Actor Charlie Sheen. The proof Southern League cards on the other hand made their way to Bill Mastro but there was a problem...nobody knew who these players were or why they were never issued? That would be left up to a collector, researcher and some believe Hobby Pioneer, Keith Olbermann who wrote about his findings in The December 2000 issue of *Vintage & Classic Baseball Collector Magazine* (VCBC) #23. I actually do put him in the category of Hobby Pioneer. Those cards are now in the collection of Keith Olbermann but what had occurred to me while researching these cards; when these proofs were found, Honus Wagner’s card was only known through just a handful of copies and the Slow Joe Doyle wasn’t yet known. There was a resurgence of interest in the T206 during the late 1970’s that happened just when one generation of collector’s - that of Buck Barker and Jefferson Burdick passed the torch of knowledge on to the Baby Boomers like Rob Lifson, Bill Mastro and Bill Heitman. It was this new generation who dusted off the long forgotten set and continued...

Resurrecting The Monster

This Monster doesn’t refer to Marry Shelly’s 1818 novel *Frankenstein*, but in many ways it probably should because after a full century, we’re still scratching the surface and piecing together a complicated and detailed a set that it actually is. This set was immensely popular when it first came out and was pushed hard by the American Tobacco Co, though it wasn’t particularly popular with everyone; here’s a few examples of what was making the press rounds in the summer of 1909 –

Trust Makes Tempting Bait

“The papers are criticizing the American Tobacco Company for taking advantage of the interest boys take in base-ball to increase the sale of cigarettes. The Charlotte Chronicle recently had a vigorous article along that line. When the Trust first began its big sales of cigarettes it appealed to one element of the population by putting the nude or near-nude picture of a woman, sometimes an actress, in with every package with cigarettes. That made them popular with the lower type “sports” and hangers-on at pool rooms and barber-shops and saloons.

To-day the trust is turning its attention to trying to catch the little boys by putting the picture of some notable base-ball player in each package. Is any concern selling these coffin-tacts

warranted in making this tempting bait to the children? Commenting on this evil, the Statesville Landmark says:

Pictures, prize coupons and the like are put in packages of cigarettes to induce the small boy, and the light-headed youth [presumably, teenagers] who is old enough to know better, to buy. The pictures themselves may not only do harm, as pointed out by the Chronicle but they induce boys to buy cigarettes who might not otherwise buy them, and thus become cigarette smokers. The photos of actresses, most of them showing a woman in a semi-nude form, were not the proper thing for a to have; and while the picture of the baseball men are harmless of themselves, they are responsible for a craze which has many evils in its train. The inducement to learn to smoke cigarettes is the worst of these evils, but the gambling feature which seems to go along with the picture is not to be discounted. So great is the desire to possess these pictures that boys afflicted with the mania do not scruple at means to obtain them. It was published in the last issue in The Landmark that a drug store in Winston was robbed one night last week and it was evident that the robbery was committed by boys, for numerous cigarette packages had been opened and the pictures of the baseball men had been extracted. The only other things missed were some ice cream and chewing gum. Thus were boys induced to commit burglary as a result of this craze".¹⁴

Should be Stopped

"There is a craze among some of the small boys of this town, which doubtless extends to many other towns, to secure the pictures of baseball stars which the American Tobacco Company incloses in the packages of cigarettes it offers for sale. The Fort Mill Times says from a business standpoint, this was a happy thought on the part of the cigarette makers, whose sales have largely increased through the device, but it has meant resultant demoralization of a great number of small boys who, in their eagerness to secure the baseball pictures, have become cigarette smokers. There is a law on the statute books of this State against the sale of cigarettes to minors under 18 years of age, and it would be well for the officers of the law to keep an eye for violators of the law".¹⁵

These statements give us fascinating insights into how these cards were perceived in society when they were first issued and really point out a few underlying issues in which the Progressive Era movement attempted to pin the ills of what was considered abhorrent behavior on tobacco cards. They weren't completely incorrect in their assessment as sportswriter Wirt Gammon, Sr, pointed out in the 1970's when he asked the question "just how many children became lifelong smokers because of this set? The one thing the authorities seem to have ignored time and time again was human nature itself and this is where Isaac Newton's 3rd Law of Motion comes in so handy when he said –

"For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction"

Now, Newton may have been talking about Physics when he came up with it, but this can easily apply to many other fascists of society; I use it in Economics and understand that society is a series of equal and opposite reactions such as Prohibition against cigarettes in the 1910's, alcohol in the 1920's and comic books in the 1950's, expect to get a pushback. It gives more backing to John D. Wagner's recollections as he was perhaps one of the few Hobby Pioneers actively collecting this set during their

issuance and writing about these experiences decades later. Although these cards were being sporadically mentioned in the newspapers at the time of their release, any serious research into the company or the cards and players themselves didn't happen until Jefferson Burdick started writing in *Hobbies Magazine* in the late 1930's referring to them as "white borders" and a whole host of prefixes. Burdick was the first collector to do some pretty hardcore investigative journalism on the American Tobacco Company. As to what he was able to find out about the cards –



This advertisement for the first series of T206 - or the "150 Series" appeared in *Sporting Life Magazine* on September 18, 1909. The card of Honus Wagner is on the left middle.

"In attempting a brief outline, I must reply mostly on data gleaned from some of the cards themselves. No doubt much of it will be proved inaccurate and I'm sure most of it will be incomplete. But things have to start in some way and I trust readers will correct me promptly and furnish any other information possible".

The problem as he understood it was that through time - 25 years to be exact - that an entire generation had surpassed this set: *"It doesn't do much good to ask the boy or girl of today about these cards. Few have ever heard of them, much less collected them"*. Burdick and his fellow collectors and researchers wouldn't have even been teenagers when this set ended in 1911 or not yet born as was the case with Frank Nagy and Lionel Carter. By the time he was writing in *Hobbies Magazine*, Burdick had done enough research on the company to be one the most authoritative figures in the young hobby though he wasn't always correct in his assertions when describing a now phantom T206 brand "Hustler" in the 1939 and 1946 catalogs. No one really knew, not even Wirt Gammon, who picked up where Burdick left off - just how many cards were issued or who could be in the set? *"If anyone has the idea that a complete collection of cigarette cards is a small affair easily gotten together"* he said, *"he is in for a big surprise. No one, probably, as ever had a complete collection or even a nearly complete one. I know of no records or data regarding the number of sets issued and even the number of cards in some sets is unknown"*.

These details were left for future researchers like Burdick, Walter Corson and Lionel Carter who were the first collectors and primary researchers to publish a comprehensive checklist of individual cards starting in February of 1941 through June, 1942. The first actual documented cases of Wagner's card appearing in public was first mentioned in a 1930 *Newark Evening News* article by Fred J. Bendel (1891-1968) who wrote about his colleague, future Boxing Hall of Famer Willie Ratner's collection of "Baseball Cards", the

first instance I found published using that exact term. The second came in Burdick's *Card Collectors Bulletin* in 1941 however any new information or discoveries came at a slow trickle through most of the 1970's. That was about to change. Long before Keith Olbermann, Scott Reader and Ted Zanidakis, Bill Heitman dusted off the cobwebs of these cardboard gems in 1978 when he wrote what was then considered a groundbreaking and in-depth look at the set. We first see our future author in Gordon Taylor's *Card Collector Magazine* on June 15, 1961 when Taylor wrote "The hobby of card collecting is a joint enterprise on the part of Bill (age 11), Jim (age 15) and their father, Dr. Hubert Heitman, Professor of Animal Husbandry at the University of California, Davis Campus.

They save Baseball and Football cards, and have about 10,000 different ones, including 36 complete Baseball and 17 complete Football sets. Present collecting efforts are being directing towards tobacco insert cards (T205, T206 and Obak) and the Play Ball series."



Having never met Bill Heitman, I can only imagine him spending his formative years researching and collecting this set, because in 1978 he wrote a series of influential articles on the T206 where he exclaims "What if I were to tell you that there were somewhere between 5,000 and 7,500 different T206's? That's how many there are (the actual number isn't know[n], but may be even higher) if you

The Future of the Hobby: A young Bill Heitman (right) with his brother, Jim featured here in a 1961 *Card Collector Magazine*. Bill would go on to author "The Monster", one of the first comprehensive guides to the T206 Set. Heitman, shown here on the right as a 28 year old trial lawyer when he published his work on this set.

collect them by the various combinations of fronts, series, brands and factory numbers. At conventions, I often get snickers from the people behind the tables as I go through their T206's..." Those snickers came from dealers who didn't know much about the set, but Heitman was on to something here when he began checking backs and factory numbers. Before that, I don't think too many collectors understood or payed too much attention to the relevance of what he was doing or where it would take us in future research projects. Being that a basic set consists of 524 known cards; many have tried but few have managed to complete it (a "master set" could in theory consist of 8,760 cards, though no player to date has a back for every brand).

A further breakdown reveals 390 major leaguers, 134 minor leaguers and players representing all 16 Major League teams. There are also players representing 14 minor league teams of the American Association and Eastern League, and players encompassing 26 minor league teams from four other different Southern leagues. In 1957 Preston Orem (1894-1971) was able to add seven previously uncatalogued Southern League cards which goes to show that this checklist was far from complete.

Heitman went on to say "T206 is, in reality, three separate series of cards, but the series do not have particular runs of cards within them. Any one card (at least, the front) may appear in all three series or just in one. The 150 series was issued for three or four months in 1909. The 350 series was issued in the last months in 1909 and the early months of 1910. The 350-460 (460 on some cards) series was issued for a few months in 1910. The cards marked "Assorted", or the like, were issued by 8 brands who did not issue cards in the 150, 350 or 350-460 series. The "assorted" brands issued cards throughout 1909 and 1910. None of the brands identified the three series issued cards with the designation "assorted".

15.	"	"	"	30-2nd	"	"	N.Y.
16.	"	"	"	42-4th	"	"	N.C.
17.	"	"	"	42-4th	"	"	" (ovptd.)
18.	Piedmont, Factory	25-2nd	Dist of Va.				
19.	"	42-4th	"	"	"	"	N.C.
20.	Sovereign,	25-2nd	"	"	"	"	Va.
21.	Cycle,	"	"	"	"	"	"
22.	American Beauty,	"	"	"	"	"	"
Assorted Series issued by:							
23.	Old Mill, Fact.	25-2nd	Dist of Va.	-Large assortment			
24.	"	same,	but Texas, So. Atl., Va., & So. Leagues.				
25.	Polar Bear Tobacco, Fact.	6-1st	Dist Ohio	-Asst. Des.			
26.	Tolstoi, Fact.	30-2nd	Dist of N.Y.	-Asst. Subjects.			
27.	Hindu, Fact	649-1st	Dist of N.Y.	-Large asst. Red B			
28.	"	same,	Large assortment,	brown backs.			
29.	El Principe de Gales, Fact	17-2nd	of Va.	-Baseball			
30.	Carolina Brights, Fact.	25-2nd	of Va.	- BB Subjects			
31.	Uzit, Fact.	30-2nd	Dist of N.Y.	- BB Series, Lg. Asst.			
32.	Lenox,						
33.	Hustler,						

This is where much of the debate revolves around which player could be found on what brand, issuance and conclusion dates of the "T206 Brands" and ultimately I believe what collectors are looking for is a fountain of completeness. The debate still rages...

Heitman's articles proved so popular for the set that he noted as such stating later in November 1979 "There has been a tremendous increase in interest in T206 since I wrote my article in July, 1978. For a number of years now I have felt that collectors would eventually get around to finding out that the "T" and "E" cards are much more challenging than Topps and Bowmans. So it is with T206's."

409 Thielman Po	b x	421 Young Po(w)	b x
MILWAUKEE		ST. PAUL	
410 Barry Po	b x	422 Armbruster Po	b x
411 McGann Po	b x	423 O'Brien Po(h)	b x
412 McGlynn Po	b x	TOLEDO	
413 Randall Po	b x	424 Abbott Po	b x
MINNEAPOLIS		425 Freeman B(w)	b x
414 Collins Po	b x	426 Hinchman Po	b x
415 Cravath B(h)	b x	427 Lattimore F(k)	b x
416 Downs Po	b	428 Wright Po	b x
(Note-pairs, similar design: (242-404) (168-228)			
EASTERN LEAGUE		MONTREAL	
(now International L.)		453 Casey Po	b x
BALTIMORE		NEWARK	
429 Adkins Po	b x	454 McGinnity P(h)	b x
430 Cassidy Po	b x	455 Schlafly Po-	b x
431 Dessau Po	b x	456 Sharpe Po	b x
432 Dunn F(w) hb	b x	PROVIDENCE	
433 Hall Po	b	457 Anderson F(h)lb	b x
434 Jackson Po	b x	458 Arndt Po	b x
435 Poland Po	b	459 Blackburne F(k)	b x
436 Slagle F(w) hb	b x	460 Hoffman Po	b x
437 Strang Po(h)	b x	461 Lavender P(w)	b x
BUFFALO		462 Moran Po	b
438 Brain Po	b x	463 Phelan Po	b
439 Burchell F(h)	b x		
440 Glancy F(k) lb	b x		

Howard M. Meyers was probably the first collector to notice that not every player had been issued on every back and wrote about this, though briefly, in May of 1938. Meyer's and Burdick's work on this checklist is somewhat confusing to follow and until Buck Barker in 1962, did anyone even mentioned the significance that the different backs played in the set. At the time Barker noted these cards being issued in 1908 and 1909 where he mentions Cycle, Tolstoi and Hindu being fairly common incorrectly, but correctly points out that Carolina Brights, Lennox, Ty Cobb and Uzit were rare. Howard Meyers doesn't appear within the Hobby's History often, if only at a glance, but he was probably the first to recognize the importance linking players and brands to the different factory numbers. This was the first attempt as you can see at the bottom to discover what players appeared in each series and how many cards could be in each series—an ongoing project to this very day. Still in its infancy, these men did make a few mistakes (No. 33 indicates a "Hustler" back for

TABLE #1 - Series totals, as reported to date, but not including #347 error!

	Majors	Am. & East.	Southern	Totals
a-150 Ser.	153			153
b-350 Ser.	324	87	47	458
c-460 Ser.	111			111
x-Asst.	230	75	47	352

Note that 150 and 460 series are non duplicating and have approximately correct totals. They would be normally slightly larger due to errors, additions, and changes (always to be expected in long series) in both a checklist and in issuance.

The 1941-1942 Card Collector's Bulletins released the first published checklist for the set in four separate installments.

which one does not exist). It's safe to assume that we now know where Burdick's initial research came from because Meyer's trick allude to that phantom back which was published. Burdick did admit "No conclusions seem yet possible on the 350 and the Asst. Series".

With the assistance of Lionel Carter and Walt Corson, Jefferson Burdick and Howard M. Meyers started and completed the T206 checklist from 1938 through 1942. This checklist was so large that it needed to be released in The Card Collector's Bulletin in 4 installments. It was broken down by team and alphabetically by player, but then gets tricky with extensive use of a lettering system to describe if the player is shown either pitching (P), batting (B), fielding (F), portrait (Po) and the following w (waist), h (hips), k (knees) or f (feet) which indicated the position of the player in the card. On the right hand side you'll notice an "a", "b" or "c" and "x" which indicate the series: Series 150 is (a), Series 350 (b), Series 460 (c) and "Assorted" (x) that the player has been found in. This checklist proved so unwieldy that by 1946 it was abandoned or at least modified to what we see today.

If you're an astute enough observer, you can actually see information being played out on paper through a process of trial and error. Heitman picked up where Barker left off when it came to equating the rarity of different brands with an associated value, which at one time wasn't even considered. When Jefferson Burdick first wrote about these cards back in the 30's, little attention was payed to how much to pay or to their overall financial value. Barker was by this time in full agreement with his protégé when the venerable Burdick said at the time of printing a new American Card Catalog in 1960 –

"In the matter[n] of card values, it should be remembered that this catalog will probably be in use for most, or all of the 1960's and that fact should be kept in mind in setting values. Also remember the effects of inflation and the fact that supplies of many cards, both old and recent cannot be increased to adequately fill the growing demand. At the same time, the Catalog wants to show RIGHT valuations, which is not necessarily a so called "high" valuation. Even in this day of inflated incomes and high prices, there is a limit to purchasing power".

1960 was also a pivotal year as it turns out; it a complete revamping of the catalog, and one of its editors, Buck Barker saying "Value, that most necessary evil, has led to the re-examination of every single entry and changes in a tremendous number of instances" One of those being for the first time, individual card value.

By the late 1960's and 1970's a new breed of collector was taking over to address these very issues based on supply and demand. Heitman said "Some two and a half years ago, I decided to go "public" as a collector and began writing for *The Trader Speaks*. The hobby has literally exploded during this time. But with the growth in popularity has come just as rapid as the growth in politics and gagging". If you were an astute enough collector at the time, you could pick up the sight variances in the rising value of this set and many others. Back in 1962, Buck Barker said upon reviewing the yearly auction results for the set, he found that they were averaging 18 cents each, up from 1946 listings at 10 cents. "When we get away from the run-of-the mill cards, a very different picture is seen", saying further "I remember seeing a listing about 1940 of Wagner for \$2.50 and Plank for \$1.00. In 1946 these prices had risen to \$25 and \$10, and in 1960 the Catalog gives \$50 and \$10"...Knock me over with a feather, I'll take two! Commons and Southern Leaguers continued to be very affordable for even the average collector regardless of age –50 to 60 cents each and about an extra 10 cents for a Southern and Minor Leaguer through the mid 1970's. At the beginning of the Reagan Administration, you could purchase commons between \$1.80 to \$4.00,

Minor Leaguers at \$5.00, Southern Leaguers \$15.00, and amazingly Hall-of-Fame players between \$15.00 and \$35.00, Cobb could be had for under \$100.00. I actually purchased a few as a teenager for \$5.50 each in the 1990's. However, it wasn't until Lew Lipset published his three-volume *Encyclopedia of Baseball Cards* (1986) that we really started to see a spike in the prices paid for the majority of these cards being \$12.00 to \$20.00 for a common and Hall-of-Famers at \$25.00 and Ty Cobb between \$200-300. So what happened? Our 1970's card hawk was also the first one to assign a percentage to the backs based on what was being seen and sold in the marketplace –

"I've been asked a lot of questions about the backs, most of them centering on prices. Assuming that Piedmont and Sweet Caporal are the most common cards, I would value the cards at the following percentage increase over Piedmont and Sweet Caporal common cards: Polar Bear and Old Mill -10-15%; American Beauty and El Principe De Gales, Tolstoi, Sovereign and Cycle - 40-50%; Broadleaf and Carolina Brights -75-100%; Hindu, Drum and Lenox -150%; Uzit -200%; Ty Cobb \$100 or more. Hall of Famers and scarcer cards on tougher backs would also carry a premium, but at a lower percentage".

As it turns out, much of what Heitman is discussing has to do with the timeline of issuance and the way these brands were distributed through the Jobbers which made individual brands either common or rare but the individual cards are a different story. As I said earlier, Cleveland Indian's Shortstop Neil Ball's letter from Boseman Bulger looks like the beginning of the series and if we were to look at a few other players featured in this set, we might get a clearer picture on when these cards – or brands were issued: February 17, 1909 appears to be the earliest possible starting date for the 150 series while May 16, 1909 is the earliest possible starting date for the 350 series. December 16, 1909 is the earliest possible starting date for the 460 series while the 350 series was still being issued as late as April 16, 1910. The 460 Series end coincides with the Supreme Court's May 29, 1911 decision against The American Tobacco Company (I'll discuss this decision at length in my look into the 1911 T205 and 1912 T207 sets). Information on the following 8 players bears evidence to these dates:

Wid Conroy's card in the 150 series with Washington Senators was first mentioned by Walt Corson as the first starting point in confirming an initial release date for the T206 set. On February 17, 1909 he was traded from the New York Highlanders to the Washington Senators for \$5,000. This is the first evidence we have that the 150 player series was produced after February 17, 1909.



Outfielder **George Browne** appears in the 150 series with the Chicago Cubs and in the 350 series with the Washington Senators. After 12 games with the Cubs, his contract was purchased on May 12, 1909 to the Senators. This establishes the end of the 150 series to May 12, 1909. This also provides evidence that *the 350 series was issued after May 12, 1909.*

The Cleveland Naps **Neal Ball** has two different cards – first appearing in the 150 Series and 350 series shown with New York Americans. In the 460 Series he's shown with Cleveland. On May 17, 1909 Ball was traded from New York



Highlanders to Cleveland for \$5,000. Strong evidence places a change from 150 to the 350 Series being made before May 17, 1909.

Future 1919 World Series Fixer **“Sleepy Bill” Burns** is shown with Chicago White Sox only in the 350 Series. On May 16, 1909, he was traded by the Washington Senators for Nick Altrock, Jiggs Donahue and Gavy Cravath. This provides evidence that the 350 series was not produced before May 16, 1909.

Bill Dahlen is shown with Boston Rustlers in the 150 Series but the 350 Series shows him with Brooklyn Superbas. He was traded from Boston to the Brooklyn Superbas on October 27, 1909. This tells us that the 350 series was still being produced as of this date.

Ray Demmitt appears in the 350 Series with New York Highlanders though he later appears in the 460 series with the St. Louis Browns when he was traded on December 16, 1909 to the Browns. This provides evidence that the earliest production date for the 460 series was December 16, 1909.

Pitcher **Joe Lake’s** 150-350 Series card shows him with the New York Highlanders but appears in the 350- 460 Series with the St. Louis Browns. On December 16, 1909 he traded with Ray Dimmitt St. Louis Browns for Lou Criger. This provides evidence that the 350 Series was still being produced on December 16, 1909. This is also evidence that the 460 Series was being produced by December 16, 1909.



Harry McIntyre 150 series shown with Brooklyn. 350-460 series shown with Brooklyn & Chicago. April 16, 1910 traded from Brooklyn to Chicago. This provides evidence that The series end date appears to be February of 1911, however new information suggests that Uzit backs were printed and distributed as late as March 18th and maybe lasting only a few weeks since the “Series 460” was printed in the fall of 1910 and ended in February 1911.



Through the 1980’s and into the present there have been some pretty major finds from researchers, collectors and dealers such as Lew Lipset, Larry Fritsch, Bill Mastro and Keith Olbermann. The recent discoveries of the 2016 “Lucky 7” Ty Cobb Brand backs have done a lot to reignite the series ever since Larry Fritsch first found the fourth major rarity, “Slow Joe” Doyle some 38 years ago. These discoveries and those of Keith Olbermann’s research and identifying 8 unissued proofs found at the 1973 New York Collector’s Convention proves that there are other cards still to be found. Nearly all of these cards have one thing in common and that is that the only thing identifying them is last name; many players are unmistakable just by their face alone like Ty Cobb or Christy Mathewson, but for many others it took painstaking research to put a name to a face and then match that information to the dates of the player’s career. Much of this was done by SABR co-founder Bill Haber and Buck Barker, the latter who was one of the very few

to have complete and unfettered access to The Sporting News files. With that said, it is unlikely that he or anyone else knew who all these players were when they were found. Five of the player proofs were known

through pencil notations, but the rest were virtually unknown, but were Southern Leaguers. What also isn't known is why they were never printed? Research today is a far cry from what it used to be with the advent of the internet, though it can still be quite challenging. It begs the question –If these cards first appeared nearly 65 years after the set was first issued, then what else is out there and most importantly –Just how many of these cards exist today?

This is always a hot topic of conversation between collectors and parallels the prices that these cards have been commanding over the past 60 or so years. According to the *1915 Federal Government Report on the Tobacco Industry's Costs and Profits, Vol. III*, suggests 70 million of these cards could have been issued between 1909 and 1911 with at least 50% being inserted into packages of Piedmont and 40% in Sweet Caporal. The rest of the brands made up 5% to less than 1% depending on sale strength. In some cases, 2 or more cards have been known to have been issued per pack up to 5. Through those collectors who were around at the time these cards were issued, their memories elude to this being a correct assessment.

In its first year of card production, ATC Ad profits in 1909 including cards were \$2,478,103.20 making this series an unheralded success. Actual print runs are speculative at best and only a handful of American Litho's records are known to exist today, and only pertain to actual brand issuance and cutoff dates with sample cards attached. Population reports only tell us a fraction of how many actually survive - 215,558 graded cards (PSA only) of the estimated 1.2 million that are still with us today. Whatever the true number is, it's gargantuan which should be reflected in the values. If you sit down and think about it for a moment, a card's survival of this age depends on many factors –age being one of the greatest, but at a full century old, these cards went through two World Wars, recessions, a Great Depression and several weather related catastrophes not to mention Mothers and their dreaded rubber bands (which is a lot like a catastrophe – well, at least has caused me several restless nights in a nightmare filled sweat).

The biggest piece of advice I can give you is that when collecting these cards, be prepared to make mistakes, but then document your mistakes so in time you'll know what to look for. Obviously, this is perhaps the number one set that you'll find trimmed. Here are some tips on what to look for with this series –

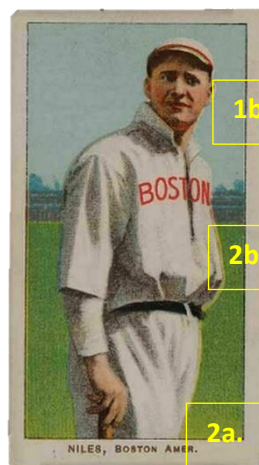
Detecting an Altered T206

Yogi Berra use to say “You can observe a lot by watching”. Ah, he was a smart man, that Yogi. I do miss him and he was spot on. As to observing the 1909-11 T206, it is by far one of the most heavily doctored pre-war series in the Hobby whereas 1933 Goudey comes in at a distant second. But unlike the 1933 Goudey set, T206 doctoring is probably the biggest challenge collector's face because standard measurement can vary slightly. They should be $1 \frac{7}{16} \times 2 \frac{5}{8}$ and weigh 0.8 grams but it's understandable if not all collectors on pre-war or tobacco cards get into the weeds or know what to look for when inspecting a potential purchase. Fortunately I've done much of this work for you and will help guide you through the process. The topic of altering a card isn't just a concern for novices but even with experts since they can be fooled as well. Supposedly collectors would trim these cards in the 1970's and 80's to fit them into

holders, though I don't know just how true that is but here's a few things to consider: First, T206 were the original 1987 Topps cards of the Progressive Era - or as common as seagulls at a beach and just as annoying too. Since they were just as common, their value was always low and affordable up until quite recently. Simply for this reason I don't think the reason for trimming these cards was done for monetary gain because the real money wasn't there. That's not to say it didn't happen (que the Gretsky-McNall Wagner) but it changed when we see a demand go up as well as the value.

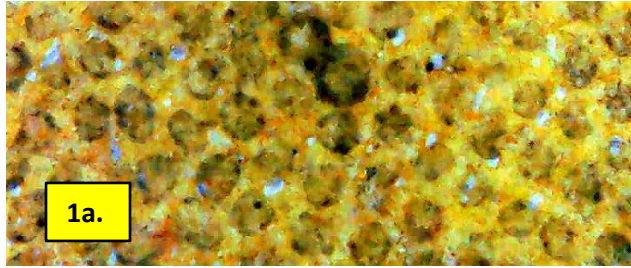
Looking at ebay, PSA and SGC, I would say that the majority of T206's are found in grades between a 2 (g) to 5 (ex) being the most common ranges of condition. PSA alone states similar findings as of this writing; just shy of 250,000 graded cards and you can probably add 2x as many ungraded to that number. Broken down, 14,620 cards specific to PSA grading are in a 2 (g), 47,050 in a 3 (vg), 62,913 in a 4 (vg/ex) and 34,805 are in a 5 (ex). It drops off from there after that from roughly 16,316 in ex/mt) to 2,590 in nmt. As you can see most surviving cards today are in the vg/ex range which might be somewhat unusual for any other set but perhaps not for the T206 considering the circumstances of heavy use of the collectors beyond age factor (ie: how the card was stored and geographic location of that card). Population reports should be held somewhat in the same regard as a grain of salt, since collectors are known to pop cards out of their cases for reissuance so keep this in mind. Since higher grades are rare and seldom seen, it gives card doctors more of an opportunity to card-doctor. I took a card or two from my own collection - in this case, the Pirates Tommy Leach and Boston Red Sox Harry Niles to show you two different cards under magnification and the different details in what to look for. I've given several different cases and here's what you should be looking for with each...

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE



Digital microscopes have come a long way in the past decade and can be a useful tool for collectors wanting to study their cards, detecting the differences in printing, finding alterations and even forgeries. A digital microscope is ideal for documentation and is a variation on the traditional optical microscope where an eye piece is not required. Instead, it uses optics and a digital camera to transfer the image to a monitor by software running on your computer, though you will still need to transfer the data stored on a micro SD card. Since the image is focused on the digital circuit, the entire system is designed for the monitor image which

means that you'll be lacking a depth perception normally found in a 3-D image. However, this should not pose a problem since what we're studying is a card and not a baseball. Most are affordable and look for one that contains 30 frames-per-second in HD.



1. Images 1a. and 1b. show you what skin tones and lighter colors should look like under magnification specifically. Image 1a shows yellow underneath black splotches, which in this case, is the gradient effect in the background of Leach's card. With image 1b., you'll notice the stippling patterns in black that the American Tobacco Co's "Big 3" lithograph process was so famous for, meaning that you aren't going to see a clean and crisp ink pattern unlike say the Post-War Bowman issues or even the Goudey sets of the 30's. I believe the stippling was very different for most future card issues. The pattern is going to be blotchy and appear irregular especially if the printer didn't align the plates correctly (known as registration).



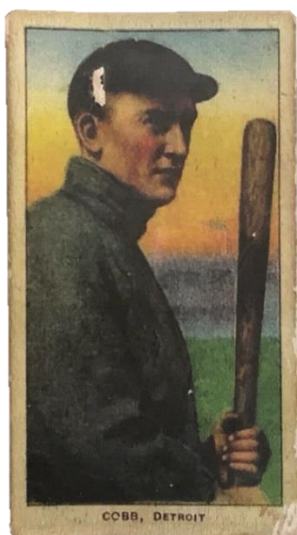
2. Chromolithography is the process of multi-color printing which was first introduced by Godefrey Engelmann in 1837 when he separated color into a series of printing plates. This is why printers use the color key and in both cases we can see that the 6-color layering process – yellow, black, brown, blue, green and red, was used for the printing of this set. Yellow is the first color used, or the foundation color, which you can see in both 1a. and 2b. The color process is followed by a color key found somewhere on the sheet. Each color is individually printed and sometimes a color run can be missed. Black is supposed to be the second color used, however picture 2a. puts that theory to the test because the stipple dots are clearly visible on top of the red "Boston" lettering, and overlaps the color on 2b. Technically, red should be the last color used, but it is also the first color in the T206 set to fade in light.



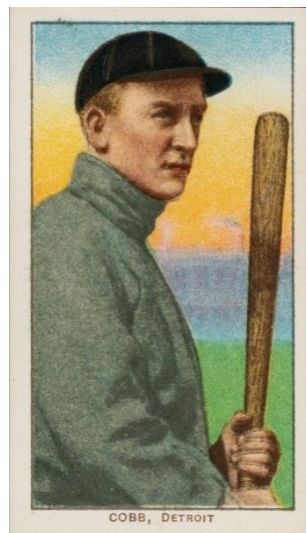
- In some cases, we see that two different stocks were being used – a light, paper-thin stock, say 59lbs. which has the easiest transfer of inks. In picture 3b. we see an example of how a lightweight stock was used in the production of the T206 set, followed by a thicker card stock. In 3a. you can clearly see the fibers protruding through the corners of many of these cards. This is something that occurs though age and is difficult to reproduce. It also appears to be another indication of a different stock being used on top of a heavier stock. The corner of the card allows us to see both layers of it including the fibers. You'll notice the bottom of the card is medium stock (65 to 80 lbs.), also called cover weight or cover stock, which is typically what we see in our postcard issues.



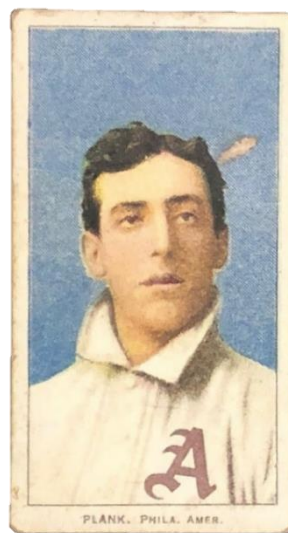
- The ink in the lettering to be uneven and somewhat splotchy. With the lettering, there is a dark outline surrounding it, though it's not going to be as prominent as the lettering found in the 1933 Tattoo Orbit set. All front lettering on the front should be a dark mahogany brown, not black. You'll also notice that the player's name is slightly larger than the name of the city and league. The printing on the backs of these cards appears to be traditionally much more grainy than the front side. I believe this is due to the simple fact that the thicker the stock, the more difficulty you'll have printing text. In this case, the back text is pockmarked with uneven ink flow due to the porous nature of that stock. This is typical with all of the ATC's Big 3 sets. You'll also notice that while there is an uneven toning throughout the back of the card, it does not appear to be from tobacco staining which is what we see in our 1911 T205 Polar Bear back. In fact, that type of staining is something I've never encountered with this particular set. In all cases, there should be no gloss on these cards except the Cobb back.



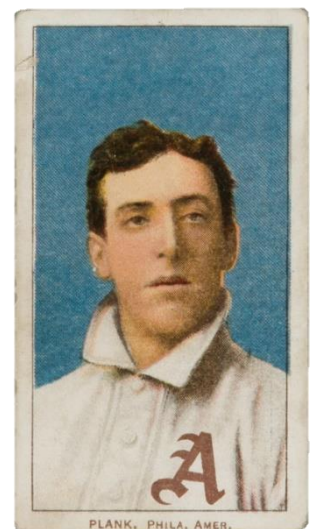
Reprint



Original



Reprint



Original

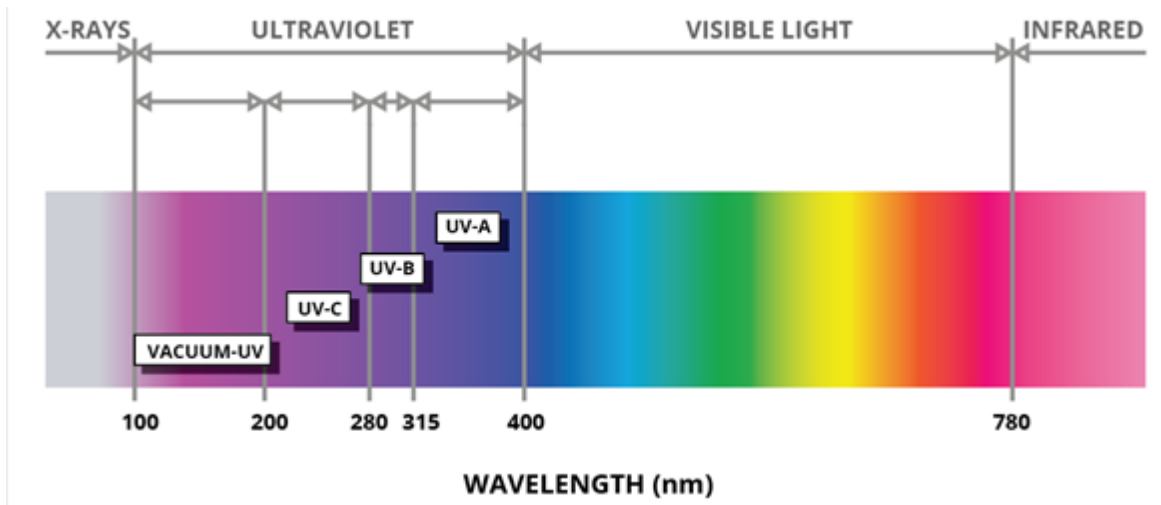


What you shouldn't see in any one of American Tobacco's Big 3 sets is what we see in this 1951 Bowman Yogi Berra. We start seeing this in the 1933 Goudey sets onwards. This dot matrix pattern found in Halftone printing did not occur when T206 were issued and will only be found on a reproduction. T206's should not appear dark, nor should the printing be blurry. Here are a few examples of reprints. One thing to remember is that if you do come across a card you're unsure of, always get a second opinion before making a purchase or simply walk away.

DOCTORING & TRIMMING



Two quick ways to check if you're looking at an original T206: One, under magnification, the fibers (shown in photo 3a.) will be directed diagonally where any disturbances will show up and secondly, the corners will have a natural curve which will not occur if trimmed. Some collectors have also reported rare backs being pasted on but one quick way to check is to shine a light. The reason? Well, glue will allow less light to show through. During the 1970's some cards were reprinted without any mention but can be spotted by weight, stock and variations in ink. One of the best ways to check is by using a handheld black light - easy, portable and cheap. Now, you might not be able to take a digital microscope with you to a card show or convention a 30x jeweler's loupe might do the trick, but I highly recommend that you do employ a blacklight whenever possible. I can't stress this enough how important one is for detecting counterfeits. There are several kinds of blacklights that are out there, but the one shown here is what you'll need. In order to know what to look for, having a basic knowledge of how it works should be had. A blacklight works from two separate sources: the bulb, which is coated with UV-reactive phosphors, and the source of that light whether it's an incandescent, fluorescent, CFL, or LED -all work on the same principals.



Ultraviolet (UV) is a form of electromagnetic radiation which has a wavelength from 10 nanometers (nm) (with a corresponding frequency of approximately 30 petahertz (PHz) from 400 nm to 750 terahertz (THz), which is the visible light spectrum of human beings but is shorter than that of visible light but longer than X-rays. The lower wavelength limit of human vision is conventionally taken as 400 nm, so ultraviolet rays are invisible to humans.

You can find phosphors—a loose grouping referring to special compounds and minerals—in and on all kinds of things: Highlighters, soap, rocks, glow-in-the-dark toys, and even your teeth. When ultraviolet light hits a phosphor, the phosphor glows in a phenomenon called luminescence.

The human eye is capable of seeing light that falls within a narrowly defined spectrum of wavelengths, from about 380 nanometers to about 750 nanometers, with blue and violet light being in the 380-495 range. Beyond violet light is ultraviolet light – which is invisible to the human eye but not to certain insects such as bees and butterflies and even birds. Prior to 1940 paper stock did not have “optical brighteners”, or artificial whiteners to make the paper look whiter which under a black light will fluoresce brighter. Brighteners are also used in bleaches which will also be picked up by a black light. While Kodak states they first started experimenting with them in 1956, I don’t think you’ll see brighteners used in our cards until the mid-1960’s. When present, brightening agents are fairly easy to detect, even in a rebuilt corner since those compounds will be ground into the material being used and will produce a distinct blueish-white fluorescence when exposed to ultraviolet radiation. This is made possible by the introduction of dyes based on the compound stilbene in the early 1940s.



No matter how good a blacklight is, you'll still need to know what you're looking at and what to look for and to check to see if what you're seeing is correct. And most times that only comes with experience. The easiest way to view your cards under a black light is, not surprisingly, a dark room. Carefully remove the card from a top loader or screw down, otherwise you may get a false positive as you can see with the 1941 W711 St. Louis Cardinals Team Issue Bob Swift. The Black light will also pick up and magnify staining and chemicals like bleach and rebuilt corners.



1. Trimmed and altered cards are worth 10 to 15% of their value. Unfortunately there's a lot of misinformation regarding this topic and many dealers are used to saying that there were no standards when they were cut at the factory. Even if there isn't a sheet to go by, we now can make a reasonable guess based on the dimensions of the Hoe & Co. lithographic press used by ALC, that any card of ATC's "Big 3" sets -T206, T205 and T207 are a standard 1 7/16 by 2 5/8 inches (3.7 cm x 6.7 cm).

2. T206's can vary in size, but the key is determining whether or not it was done at the factory or by a card doctor? The only brand that was trimmed at the factory in this series was American Beauty at 1/16th of an inch shorter than the standard width. However they can also be seen 16th of an inch oversized as well, and this can make detection difficult.

3. Even though grading standards for the reverse differ slightly, there are several ways to tell if the card has been altered or trimmed. First the back of the card can tell you a lot about a trimmed card. Specifically, the distance between the Revenue Code information and the bottom edge of the card will be a prime indicator of a trim if there is a tilt. Sometimes a tilt in the card can come from the way it was cut by the printer and that's called a diamond cut. The difference being that the entire photo is tilted instead of the border.

is a tilt. Sometimes a tilt in the card can come from the way it was cut by the printer and that's called a diamond cut. The difference being that the entire photo is tilted instead of the border.



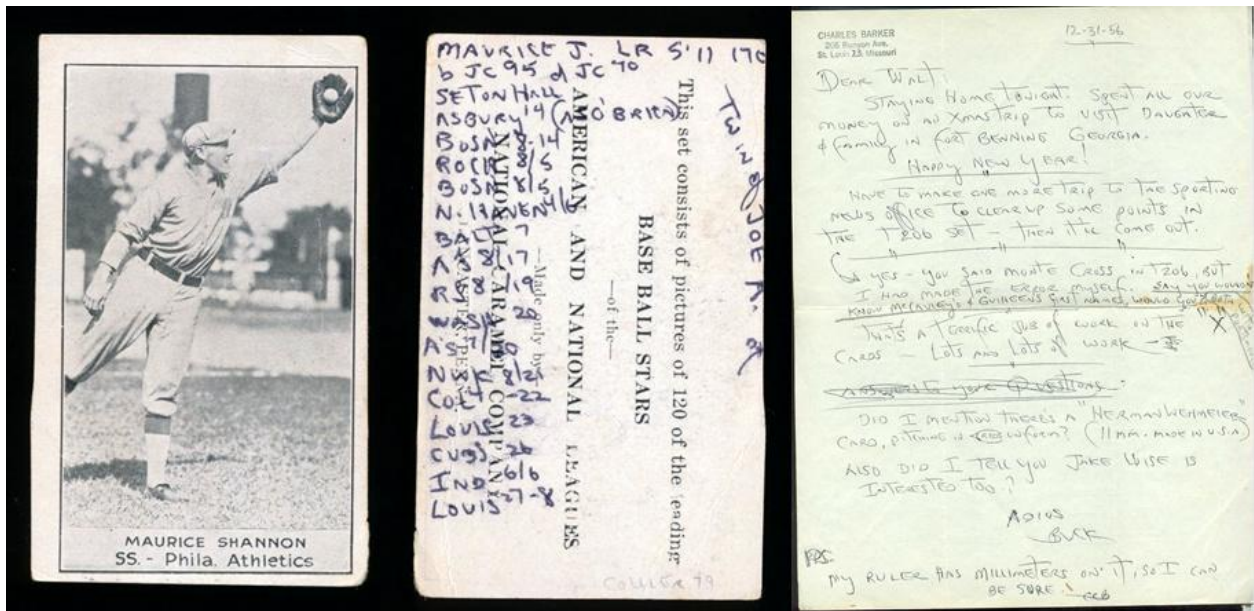
4. Sometimes it can be tricky to spot what's amiss on the front of the card, so turning it over you might be able to spot a tilt or wavy line if you start by inspecting the corners to the

sides and -in this case, the bottom of the card where the Factory and District numbers are; that distance appears to be off. When I see this on a card, it appears to have been made by a wire. Generally a wire will leave a smooth surface to the touch if you gently run your finger across the edge of the card. If it was cut by an exact-o knife, you'll see the jagged and uneven stop-and-start motion.

THE FORGED T206 AUTOGRAPHS

This hobby is filled with outlandish personalities and Amazing Stories and this is perhaps a bit of both. In the immortal words of Maxwell Smart...Would you believe...that hundreds of players from the Dead Ball Era came back from the Field of Dreams to sign autographs on their T206's?

In 2018 I bought a card off ebay of a 1921-23 National Caramel "Spike" Shannon once owned by Hobby Pioneer Charles "Buck" Barker (1911-1982) and the one thing you should know about Buck was that while he was doing research on the players, he would write down notes on the backs of his cards. To some this might be horrifying, however I took a chance on it because it wasn't really about the card as it was about the man who owned it. And that goes to the heart of what an autographed is. A signature is in many ways, a part of the person who signed it, and it can tell us a lot about that person if you know what to look for. Mostly, it is something that is often personal and sometimes a unique memory. I did all my research, found correspondence between him and fellow scribe and Hobby Pioneer Walter Corson (1899-1966) and compared his handwriting to several other like cards. After which, I went to Boston's GBBCS at the Shriner's Auditorium to have it authenticated by SGC. Here's where it got really interesting...



I asked if it could be authenticated as once belonging to Barker, and was told that wouldn't be a problem if I came back when the authenticator arrived. Once I did, he asked me what I thought this card was Barker's? I showed him the corroborating evidence placing the lettering, or certain letters appearing to be a match such as "T", "A", "J" and "R" and the way he wrote these letters - and was surprised to hear him say "we don't do handwriting analysis"...Wait What? As my mind tried to assess why SGC would, or could authenticate a signature without performing some kind of forensic handwriting analysis on the autographed cards they authenticate, I handed him a card they graded with a flip (the paper insert at the top with information about the card, including the bar code) which read -

"1916 The Globe Stores #44 Charles Deal (Lionel Carter Collection)"

I then asked him why was this card authenticated, or acknowledged as being from the collection of Lionel Carter (1918-2009) when the card of Barker's could not? He told me that the evidence, or provenance had to come from a different source which on its face seems legitimate until you start asking who that source was? When I did that, I was met with "I can't give you that information". However I already knew who sent in the card on February 15, 2007 along with 66 others that day - and that was Doug Allen of Mastro.net. In fact it was Bill Mastro who publicly handled Carter's collection a decade earlier but why be so evasive if it were already on youtube?

One of the more interesting aspects of this encounter that I posted on the net54 message board was a question if the grading companies were favoring dealers or auction houses over collectors? It was a question SGC refused to answer when I asked. I wondered how much money is going in to these grading companies from the auction houses in order to receive preferential treatment? If I was at an auction house, would they have graded my card? Not long after posting these same questions, a collector posted a T206 card of Fred Parent autographed in which it appears to have been forged and then authenticated by SGC.

One of the ways that the Justice Department was able to go after Bill Mastro when he stole a collector's cards and put them up for auction was that those cards were photographed. Just like your fingerprint, a card too has distinguishing and unique features associated with it. It would be a one in a million chance that there would be identical marks on the same issue? Well, that's what was happening here and it was happening with dozens of T206 cards.



Today players sign autographs at shows and conventions as a business, most are willing and it's often another way for the player to collect a few bucks on the side and meet and greet fans. This wasn't the case when Fred Parent or Paddy Livingston were playing and it certainly wasn't the case long after their retirement either. Livingston was the last player to have passed on featured in this set in September 1977. Autographs come in two categories -after a player retires and during his career and for the most part a Dead Ball Era player's

This card of Fred Parent was first sold unautographed on ebay on July 28, 2015 and then sold at the September 2016 REA auction for \$2,700. This time an autograph appeared on it. It was the first of many forgeries to make their way to the auction block.



signature on a T206 while he was still on the roster is exceedingly rare. These early signatures would've been signed by a fountain pen and over time, the ink starts fading differently than the ink of a ball point pen would depending on certain factors such as environment, sunlight, type of ink used and paper. This generation of ball players simply didn't sign and if they did, it was well after their career. Most fans too did not pursue an autograph either - this

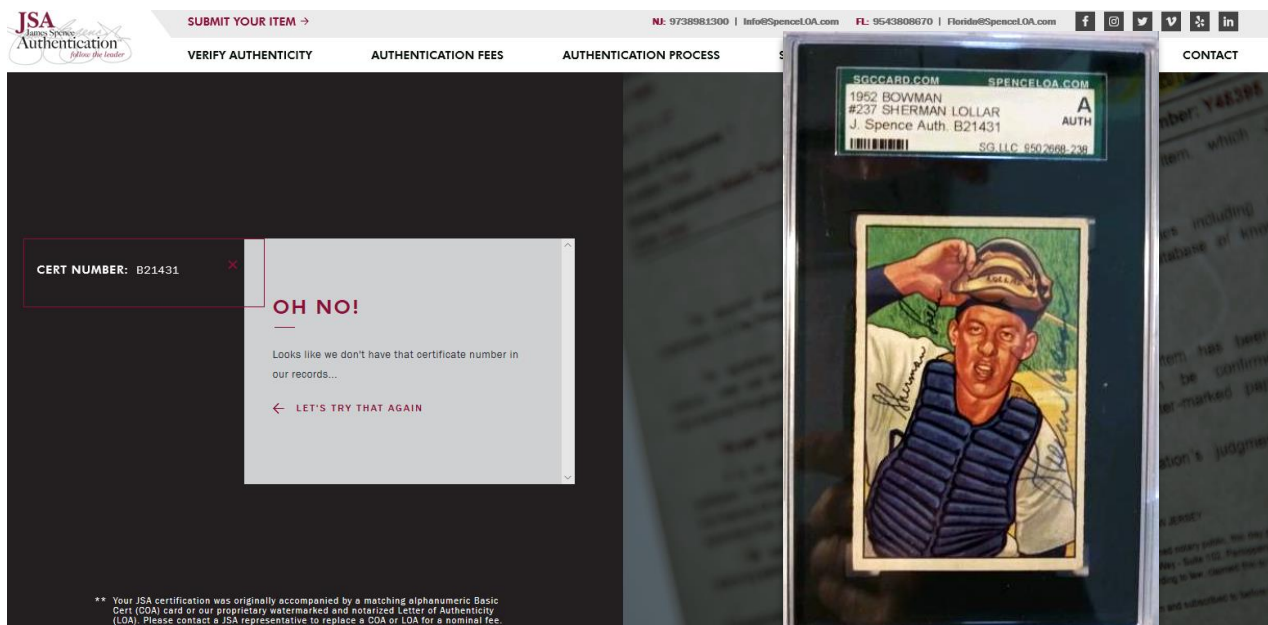
wouldn't be common practice until the late 1970's to mid-1980's with the emergence of card shops and shows. A few players like Rube Marquardt (whose forgery went through

Clean Sweep Auctions) were consistent signers throughout their lives, and then there are players like Highlanders Pitcher Jack Warhop (1884-1960), who was not known to have signed any cards during his lifetime. In fact, an autograph from him is nearly impossible to authenticate because there are so few known signatures available (possibly up to three), yet both of these players and dozens of others apparently signed multiple copies of the same exact card. Within 24 hours, approximately 8 cards were uncovered by collectors who were not autograph experts.

Using the same photographic side-by-side method, keen collectors started noticing patterns of other players in the series that were targeted as well: Billy Sullivan, Bob Rhoades, Wid Conroy, Frank "Home Run" Baker, Elmer Flick, Jap Barbeau, Red Murray, Heinie Zimmerman Eddie Cicotte, Nap Rucker, Jesse Tannehill, Larry Doyle, and Rube Marquard. A trend was starting to become apparent where –

1. Unautographed cards were being purchased by the forger through ebay or another auction house between \$30 to \$50 dollars. At this point, the selected players are mostly common cards. This under the radar approach wouldn't raise much suspicion unless you were an understudy of a specific field, such as the Dead Ball Era or a specific player to an Era to know a) his signing habits and, b) what his signature actually looked like.
2. He would then crack the cards out of their "slab" or grading holders if they were in one and sometimes add to the damage already in place or attempt to create new damage in order to cover a trace of the card's purchase history. The damage he did do, for the most part, seems to have only increased in the damaged areas already.
3. After signing the card, he then submitted them through James Spence Authenticators (JSA), one of the premiere autograph authentication services in the Hobby and SGC's go-to source. J. Spence

issues either a Letter of Authenticity (LOA) or Certificate of Authenticity (COA). Here's the difference and it's important to this case. The LOA provides a picture of the autographed card and a description of it, while the COA is a generic COA that lists the sticker number. On the COA, you would have to look up the number on the JSA website to verify what the autographed item is. I could not find any LOA for these cards and in some cases, cards in my own collection through their website. JSA was founded in 1999 as a branch out of PSA/DNA and went on their own in 2005. These authentications aren't cheap either, costing between \$125 to \$200.00 each or more. After the letter of authenticity, the card would go back to SGC for a grade and encapsulated.



Now up to this point you would think that the graders over at SGC would know what a forgery looks like, especially if they were trained forensic document examiners or in Handwriting analysis and this doesn't appear to have been the case. In order to verify a signature, autograph or any other type of handwriting, there has to be samples on file. We know that various players like Jackie Robinson and Goose Goslin drastically changed their writing style as they aged and many times it will change depending on health factors such as arthritis or the mood of the person signing at the time. We don't know if these grading companies have a database of each player (or celebrity, hobby pioneer, etc.) on file or to what extent, and this could be why the grader for SGC wouldn't, or couldn't authenticate Buck Barker's card – in part. We also don't know how much time, and with what equipment is being used to examine each card? We can take a guess through what we've seen in this case so far. JSA on the other hand uses a Video Spectral Comparator, which is an imaging device that allows the examiner to analyze inks, reveal hidden features and alterations on the item through various visual wavelengths of light. JSA is also said to have over 2,000 signatures of Jackie Robinson alone in chronological order on file.¹⁶ That is most likely not the case for every player but for the most forged players in sports and with celebrities.

4. Once the forger received the card back from JSA and SGC, it then went back on eBay, but in most cases, were being sold at major auctions and many times, with the same auction house that the card was originally sold from.

JSA has maintained that they know of instances where their COA's and LOA's have been, in their words - poorly forged - but the question still remains -how did these autographs manage to fool the experts and make it all the way to auction?

Well, the company is on record saying in their early days, they were being pressured to authenticate autographs they knew to be fake by auction houses. This wasn't limited to T206 or SGC as once thought but to PSA as well. There are now dozens of 1930's Goudey and perhaps Play Ball cards that were also forged and since outed on net54. We actually don't know how many cards were affected or how many are out there? So far the cost to collectors is roughly a few hundred thousand dollars, but it's a figure we just don't know, because we don't know the size and scope of this operation or how long it went on for? As of this date, no one has been caught but it was thought that it's from a forgery ring out of Michigan. This case coincided with another major case at the time with PWCC/Gary Moser Card Trimming Scandal which quickly diluted any further investigation into it and soon afterwards quietly disappeared.

There are several questions you're probably asking yourself as do I about the role grading companies have as their influence seems to have unraveled over the PWCC scandal. SGC, who began authenticating autographs in 2013, issued a statement on April 1, 2019 that they would be shutting down services for autograph authentication.

There are a few takeaways from this and to collecting this set and they are this:

You now can see why Bill Heitman coined the T206, "The Monster", and at 50 pages, I've only scratched the surface of what's going on with this set without mentioning the brand Advertisements, rarities and players within it and yet there's still a lot to chew on here.

I wrote an article called *Determining Value, Economics and the Laws of Supply & Demand* in which I use Economist Roger Babson's (1875-1967) **10 Commandments of Investing** to guide collectors through the Hobby. Those 10 Commandments are going to help you with this set and in particular, the 1909-11 T206 is the reason why you need to do research on what you're going to collect before you make a purchase and keep current on news articles and finds within the Hobby.

In all sincerity, this is not my favorite set in the world, despite my odd fascination with its encompassing factors, it's perhaps the single greatest challenge in all aspects of the word. Good luck, Godspeed and don't forget that -



This has been the first article on the T206 set.
Make sure to look for:

1909-11 T206: Packaging, Brands and Players

- *James B. Duke*, Pres. American Tobacco

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