

"Lub" Taft, Outfielder

By Harry Ellard

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A BASEBALL player's active career of usefulness upon the field is limited, at the most, to fifteen years. During this time all the distinction which he anticipates earning on the diamond must be accomplished, for after this period he finds himself classed as a "has been," and his services as a ball player are no longer sought after by any major or minor club magnate.

When he is retired from the baseball field of action he is launched out into a new life, and finds that he is obliged to settle upon another vocation by which to earn his livelihood.

We find ex-ball-players filling almost every kind of a position in life. Some have chosen a profession among the lawyers, physicians, preachers and school teachers, while others have landed as captains of finance in the business world of industry, but it has remained until the present time for one to attain a national fame by becoming a candidate for the presidential chair.

During the early baseball history of Cincinnati, in the late sixties and early seventies, everybody was alive with interest in the game, and enthusiasm was at its highest point, especially among the amateur class. Many clubs were formed in all parts of the city, both among the older and younger element, the latter being composed of boys ranging in age from fourteen to twenty, and these were known as junior clubs.

One of the most prominent junior clubs of Cincinnati was organized on Mt. Auburn, one of the city's aristocratic hill-top suburbs, and was called the "Mt. Auburn Baseball Club." It had adopted the same uniform as the original Cincinnati Red Stockings, and

the youthful members were desirous of obtaining as much fame as their elder brothers in the game. If they did not attain this high standard in baseball, still, by the election of William H. Taft as President of the United States, the Mt. Auburn club will stand alone in national renown.

It was in Mt. Auburn that William H. Taft resided with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alphonso Taft, and here he spent his boyhood days, receiving his elementary education in the public schools, graduating from Woodward High School.

As a boy, Mr. Taft was essentially a student. His close attention to his studies and books did not appeal to his less diligent companions, who believed that a high score in a baseball game was more meritorious than the best percentage that could be attained at school. Consequently, he was often lured away from his favorite books to indulge in a game of ball with the other members of the Mt. Auburn club, where he shone as a good batsman and excellent outfielder, for the Mt. Auburn boys scored more victories than any other junior organization in the city.

When a boy Taft was known among his youthful companions as "Lub" Taft, owing to the fact that he was stouter than the rest of the boys and on this account was not a swift runner of bases, but made up for this deficiency with his good playing in other positions.

The members of the old Mt. Auburn Baseball Club are the most prominent men in Cincinnati today, occupying the highest positions in both the professional and business world. They view with pride their old comrade on the ball field.