

# The Yankees' Chief Slugger

Walter Pipp, Who Robbed Frank Baker of His "Home Run" Title.

BY J. J. WARD



---

He isn't the greatest firstbaseman in the American League. So long as Stuffie McInnes and George Sisler are at large perhaps he never will be. But he is a grand good player just the same, and the way he wallops that baseball has the pitchers sitting up and taking notice. Yes, Pipp is the American League's New Home Run King.

---

Since that date when he joined the American League uplift movement on Manhattan, Pipp has arrived. Yes, indeed. He hasn't the grace of McInnes, nor the dazzling versatility of George Sisler. But he is a grand first baseman, and the tremendous force with which he wallops the ball stamps him as one of the battering ram sluggers of the old days.

Walter Pipp was born at Grand Rapids, Mich., in 1893. A kindly fortune endowed him with those valued assets of a first baseman—long legs and broad shoulders. Pipp measures six feet two inches overall as they say in shipbuilding circles, and pursuing the same plans and specifications his breadth of beam is great, but unknown. Very broad, in other words, are Pipp's shoulders, and when he swings that long heavy bat of his and gets his 180 pounds of rugged bone and muscle well behind the swing that little horsehide pellet usually describes a long, beautiful arc over the outfielders' heads. Pipp is a liberal patron of two baggers, three baggers and such, but his particular specialty is home runs.

**W**ALTER PIPP is a concrete evidence of that good business principle which should rule in baseball affairs, Messrs. Huston and Ruppert bought the New York Yankees with the assurance of aid from other club owners. They believed this assurance, but like many other expressions of good will it proved rather vague and shadowy. There was one club owner, however, who made good in the promised co-operation to establish a strong American League club in the Great City. This club owner was Frank Navin, of Detroit, and his co-operation took the tangible form of a long lanky first baseman who had showed much inherent ability but hadn't quite arrived as yet.

The National League, owing to the

---

---

### WALTER PIPP IN MINIATURE

His name is Walter Pipp.

He was born at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

He is 24 years old, 6 feet 2 inches tall and weighs 180 pounds.

He is a college man, having attended Georgetown University.

He was donated to the Yankees for the waiver price in an effort to build up a winning team at New York.

He is a good first baseman and one of the heaviest hitters in the American League.

He led the circuit this season in number of home runs.

---

---

limited size of some of its playing fields, far excels the rival circuit in number of four-ply wallops. For instance, Cactus Cravath startled the baseball world two years ago by piling up twenty-four home runs. But in accuracy it must be admitted that most of these runs were made in a park whose right field wall is the joke of the circuit. Not that Cactus isn't a direful slugger. He is. But Pipp's twelve home runs this season, while they look unimpressive compared with Cravath's grand record, are really a most substantial performance. For they were made under surroundings which were relatively unfavorable to circuit smashes.

Pipp started his baseball career in 1910 at Hastings, Mich., where he joined a semi-pro club, going later in the season to Grand Rapids of the Central League.

The next two years he spent at that great center of learning and refinement, Kalamazoo. From this town of the comic opera name Detroit rescued him in the fall of 1912. But the Tigers were well equipped with first base material, and farmed out Pipp to Providence and later to Scranton.

They recalled him in 1914, but only to send him to Rochester for further seasoning. And then as the Yankees changed hands they let the new owners secure Pipp at the waiver price, which was as near outright benevolence as a major league club owner ever gets.

With Rochester Pipp had hit well over .300. But amid more strenuous surroundings he slumped noticeably. However, he showed evidences of hitting with a punch when he did hit, and the long wallop is ever a prized possession of the first sacker.

This season Pipp has improved steadily, and now stands well up in the list of successful guardians of the initial corner. His great height and length of reach give him a decided advantage over such men as McInnes, who in spite of their flawless fielding are handicapped by lack of inches. Anything that is aimed in the general direction of Pipp is pretty sure to find a safe landing place in his spacious glove.

But hitting, not fielding, is the chief delight of the lanky first baseman. He hasn't shown evidences of .300 form in the majors as yet, but he makes up for the infrequency of his wallops by their length. Take his home runs and other lusty drives and divide them into their component parts of single bases and his average would swell out of sight.

Frank Baker, long known as Home Run Baker, this season found a foeman worthy of his steel in young Pipp. The race between the two was carried merrily to a finish in October, and resulted in the complete triumph of the younger man. However, it is but due to Frank to admit that he was out of the game for a long time owing to injuries and might have continued in possession of the home run championship had he remained in good health.

But Pipp deserves all the credit in the world. He had other notable rivals besides Frank Baker. There were Joe Jackson and Sam Crawford and Ty Cobb and Tris Speaker, not to mention a dozen other redoubtable sluggers. Pipp mastered them all by a wide margin.

The great Speaker showed a proper respect for Pipp's prowess. "I usually play a short field," said he, "because I believe it is a decided advantage to do

## WALTER PIPP'S RECORD

Year	B. P., Club	Grand Rapids, Mich. Lea.	Date, 1893. Pos.	H, 6—2 ins. G.	W., 180 lbs. A.B.	R.	H.	S.B.	Avg.
1911-12	Georgetown Univ.			...	...	...	...	...	...
1910	Hastings, Mich. a ...	Semi-Pro. ....		...	...	...	...	...	...
1910	Grand Rapids b .....	Central .....		...	...	...	...	...	...
1911	Kalamazoo b .....	So. Mich .....		...	...	...	...	...	...
1912	Kalamazoo c .....	So. Mich .....	1B	68	248	28	67	6	.270
1912	Detroit a .....	A. L. ....		...	...	...	...	...	...
1913	Detroit .....	A. L. ....		10	...	...	...	...	...
1913	Providence d .....	E. L. ....	1B	14	24	4	16	2	.444
1913	Scranton e .....	N. Y. State ....	1B	50	173	17	38	7	.220
1914	Detroit f .....	A. L. ....		...	...	...	...	...	...
1914	Rochester g. ....	L L. ....	1B	154	551	98	173	26	.312
1915	New York h .....	A. L. ....	1B	136	479	59	118	18	.246
1916	New York .....	A. L. ....	1B	154	542	71	142	13	.262

a No average issued

c Sold Aug. 2-9 Detroit.

d Released July 20 Provd., released  
Aug. 14 Scranton.

e Recalled close of season.

f Optional Apr. 21 Rochester.

g Recalled Aug. 20.

h Sold Jan. 7 to N. Y. for waiver  
price to assist N. Y. team in  
playing strength.

so. But of course in the case of such a batter as Pipp it would be foolish to play in. You have to go away back for those sluggers."

Pipp believes that he is just beginning to find his batting eye. "I think I am better this year than I was last," he says, "and I ought to improve right along. If experience is worth anything, and they say it is, I don't think I have seen my best season yet. At least I hope not."

Pipp still resides in winter at Grand Rapids, the city of his birth, where he

is known as a young man of exemplary habits and fine prospects. Like many other baseball players of the younger generation, Pipp is a college man, having attended Georgetown University. Whether or not he will make direct use of his education is unknown. But at present he is bringing whatever mathematical abilities he may possess to the problem of meeting a moving spherical object with the greatest possible force in a given direction. In other words, he is trying to sting the ball on the nose and sting it hard.

## AN AGED FALLACY

ONCE and for all time, let's end this oft-repeated guff about Radbourne's pitching arm having been ruined by the tremendous amount of work he did in 1884. That paragraph crops up as regularly as clockwork, as monotonously as American League victories over National clubs, and seems to find belief among many of the younger fans—fans who don't remember the actual records of the long ago.

So far from Rad's arm having been ruined by the work of 1884, he kept right on pitching topnotch ball in the big league year after year. In 1890, he bore a conspicuous part in the winning of the Players' League pennant for the Boston team. When the Players' League died, Rad went to Cincinnati, and his arm finally gave way, not in 1884 at Providence, but seven years later, at Cincinnati in 1891. According to veterans of that time, Rad might have gone on for many more seasons if he hadn't been a joyous good fellow, burning the candle at both ends—the 1884 campaign didn't even weaken his arm of steel.