



The 1890 Lincoln Giants: Professional Baseball's Unlikely Return to Nebraska's Capital City

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Article Summary: Though it sounds unlikely, an all-black team, led by a black manager and owned largely by a consortium of black entrepreneurs, played a season in an otherwise all-white league which was itself formed under the influence of two enterprising young black men from Omaha.

Cataloging Information:

Names: William Lewis, William Pope, Harry Durfee, O. H. Gordon, W. H. Harrison, Frank H. Woods, Charlie Hoover, Ferdinand Barnett, George Castone, Dave Rowe, Solomon White

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Photographs / Images: Chicago Leland Giants; bird's eye view of Lincoln, 1889; Millard Hotel, Omaha, where William Lewis and William Pope served as waiters before founding the Lincoln Giants baseball team; inset advertisement for Millard Hotel; inset section of article about game between "the Lincolns" and the Omaha Reserves (*Nebraska State Journal*, May 7, 1890); Ferdinand Barnett; St. Paul (Minnesota) Colored Gophers; 1894 David City team; John W. Patterson as manager of the Columbia Giants (1899-1900) and later as a police officer in Battle Creek, Michigan; inset advertisement for Pope Bros., Caterers

The 1890 Lincoln Giants: Professional Baseball's Unlikely Return to Nebraska's Capital City

BY KENT MORGAN



Omaha, Nebraska, 1890

By any reasonable standard of their place and time, William Lewis and William Pope were top-notch waiters. The duo practiced their trade in the well-appointed dining room of the “Strictly First-Class” Millard Hotel, which graced the northeast corner of Douglas and Thirteenth streets in downtown Omaha. Their evolving friendship soon included a shared residence at 1612 Jackson Street, just half a mile from the hotel. The unassuming boarding house offered convenient and affordable lodging, as well as time together to ponder opportunities beyond their otherwise prosaic vocation. The pair shared a vision endured independent of their daily routine. Simply put, they longed to be proprietors of a professional baseball team.¹

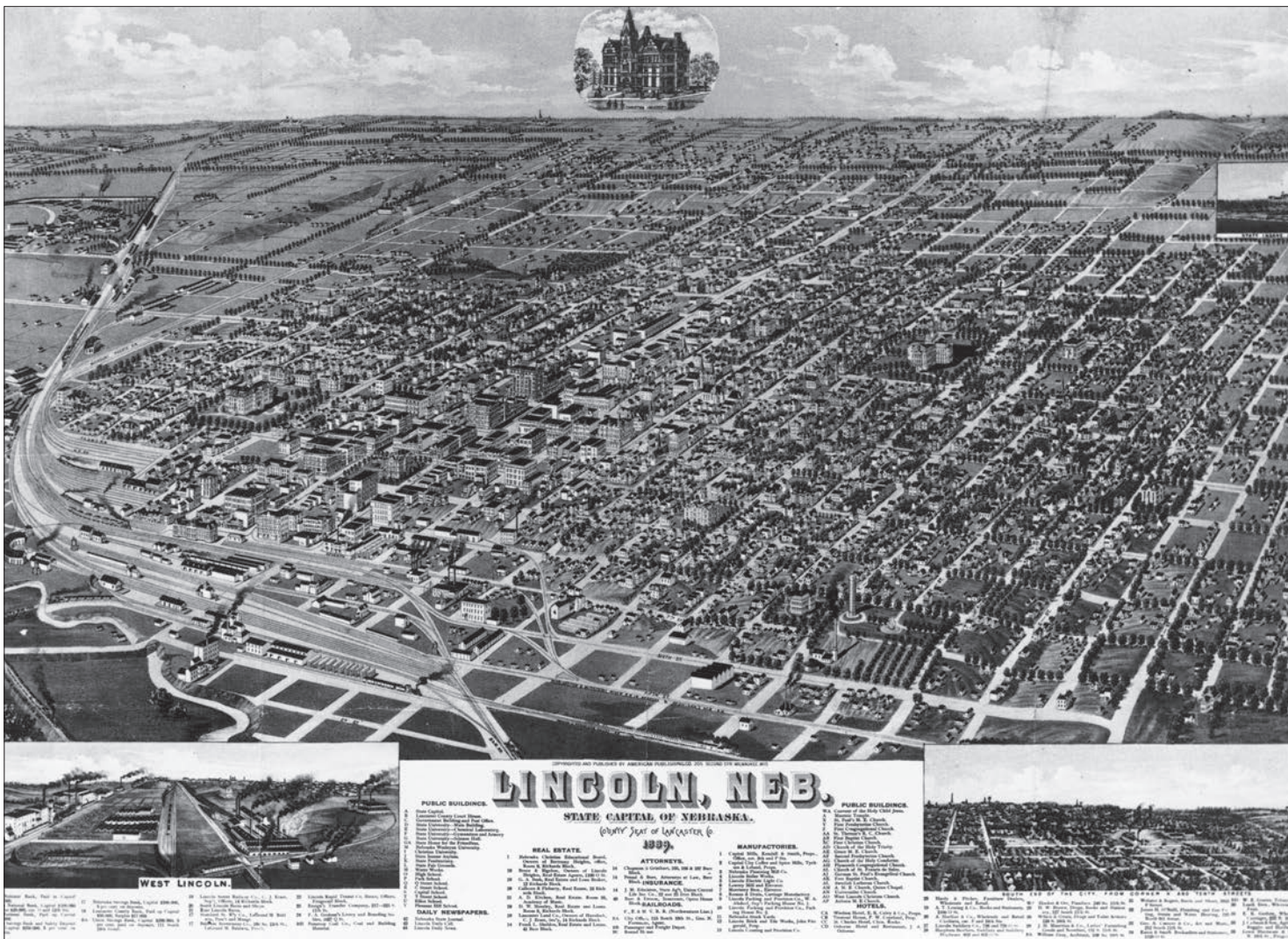
From a distance their vision seemed credible. William Lewis knew and enjoyed the game of baseball. Over the prior two years he’d performed admirably for the Lafayettes, a respected Omaha-area amateur baseball team. During the 1889 season, Lewis’s Lafayettes competed forcefully against town squads from across Nebraska, leading the *Omaha Daily Bee* to proclaim, “They now stand at the head of the amateur clubs of the state.”² William Pope complemented Lewis’s athletic abilities with his business acumen. Pope took well to commerce, owning a healthy aptitude for business creation and management. His people skills served him well in his present occupation as a waiter, but he harbored thoughts of other realities.³

Fulfilling their vision would not be easy. It demanded assembling a squad of talented baseball players, along with the requisite financial backing. They did not want a barnstorming squad of vagabonds, but rather a bona fide company of athletes who would compete within a league against the foremost teams in the region. When all was said and done, Lewis expressed their mutual intent to do all within the duo’s “power to make the club a success, both financially and artistically.”⁴ Should this yearning not present enough challenges, William Lewis and William Pope were beset with potentially an even greater trial. As providence would have it, both men were African Americans.⁵

Being African American as the nineteenth century drew to a close, the pair found themselves saddled with centuries of inherited racial enmity. Twenty-five years removed from a tumultuous civil war, America still faced a host of pernicious forces. Bigotry and intolerance already divided the nation, ushering in the era of discriminatory “Jim Crow” laws. Within six years, the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark

Left: No known photo exists of the 1890 Lincoln Giants. Here the Chicago Leland Giants include former Lincoln Giant George Taylor, labeled no. 4. *Spalding’s Chicago Amateur Base Ball Annual and Inter-City Association Year Book, 1905*





Bird's eye view of Lincoln, 1889. NSHS RG2158-3a

ruling in *Plessey v. Ferguson* would affirm the constitutionality of “separate but equal” facilities.

Baseball was not immune to this national trajectory. Black baseball players were systematically marginalized from the game's mainstream. Baseball's formal racial divide first emerged in 1867 when an amateur African American baseball club's application to the National Association of Baseball Players was unanimously rejected. The association subsequently established a rule excluding “the admission of any club which may be composed of one or more colored persons.” Other discriminatory maneuvers followed, including outright bans on black players and on-field incidents meant to force African American players from the dawning professional game.⁶

If prejudicial racial attitudes were not disadvantageous enough, Nebraska's demographics presented additional hurdles for the two energetic waiters. The 1890 U.S. Census identified little more

than one million inhabitants in the Cornhusker State. Of these, less than one percent was “persons of negro descent.” Only 8,913 African Americans, of a nationwide aggregate of almost 7.5 million, claimed Nebraska as their home. And with few exceptions, the preponderance of black Nebraskans worked as domestic servants, barbers, hairdressers, and hotel workers.⁷

Were William Lewis and William Pope embarking upon a foolhardy undertaking or a compelling quest? Consider for a moment the prospects of a late nineteenth century professional baseball team located in eastern Nebraska that would be composed entirely of African American players, performing under an African American field captain, overseen by an African American business manager, owned largely by a consortium of African American entrepreneurs, with two young African American waiters leading the effort to form a previously nonexistent baseball league to be made up,

with the exception of their squad, of nothing but “white teams.” This improbable storyline forms the remarkable narrative of what would ultimately become the 1890 Lincoln Giants and the return of professional baseball to the Capital City.

Baseball's First Arrival

Although Nebraska enjoyed a time-honored interest in the sport, professional baseball did not come quickly or easily to Lincoln. The city's first professional team played its inaugural game on May 5, 1886, a 6-0 loss to the Reds of St. Joseph, Missouri. The team's sponsor was Harry Durfee, who had launched a streetcar service in the Capital City in November 1883. Within a few years, Durfee decided to pursue the national trend of marrying streetcar operations with baseball. In late 1885 he leased forty acres south of Seventeenth and South streets from the president of the Burlington & Missouri Railway. Within days of the lease's signing, the *Daily State Journal* reported, Durfee's company was “fitting up a base ball ground in connection with their park and skating rink enterprise in South Lincoln.” With construction of a playing field on the horizon, it was time to form a baseball club. In early 1886 the “Lincoln Base Ball Association” was established with Harry Durfee named as the manager and co-owner.⁸

The team found a home for the 1886 season in the six-team Western League. Internal team dissension, second-rate management, a deplorable playing field, and want of publicity plagued its performance. The squad finished the season dead last in the Western League, some twenty-three games behind league-leading Denver. Attendance at home games never met expectations even though Durfee eschewed Sunday games, offered fans in carriages free admission along the right field line, and provided a smoke-free section for women patrons.⁹

While the baseball venture may have stumbled, Durfee looked to cash-in on his successful streetcar franchise. In early November 1886 he sold the entire streetcar operation, including the baseball team, to a local syndicate for the handsome sum of \$65,000. The new owners reorganized the “Lincoln Base Ball Organization” in the spring of 1887 to enhance its financial viability. A refurbished squad led by the team's new manager Dave Rowe brought a renewed enthusiasm to the city's baseball followers. The team rebounded by finishing second in the restructured Western League, posting a 62-34 record. The success of Rowe's 1887 team spawned a local “baseball epidemic” of “unprecedented proportions.”¹⁰



The Millard Hotel in Omaha, where William Lewis and William Pope served as waiters before founding the Lincoln Giants baseball team. NSHS RG2341-822

Optimism ruled the start of the Lincoln's 1888 baseball season, although this optimism proved fleeting. Shifts by various franchises resulted in the creation of two separate baseball confederations—the five-team Western League, with Lincoln as a member, and the stronger eight-team Western Association. Following the city's “taste of first class base ball” the prior season, Lincoln's entry in the Western League paled in comparison and was panned by locals as the “low priced team which represents the city in the low priced Western league.” The Western League folded on June 6 and Lincoln's initial taste of professional baseball came to an abrupt end.¹¹

Despite efforts to field a team for the 1889 season, professional baseball in Lincoln was not to be enjoyed. Participation in a possible state league was pursued but was “abandoned by the cranks in this city” in April. Local businessmen and city officials concluded that the absence of a suitable venue was a major hurdle toward fielding a team. In the April 21 edition, the *Daily Nebraska State Journal* remarked, “Until good grounds are secured it is not likely that many good games of ball will be seen in the city.” Efforts to remedy the situation began in mid-May as work progressed on a new baseball field along “the Capital Heights street railway in the vicinity of Twenty-second and Randolph Streets.” Endeavors to salvage the 1889 season proved of little avail. One newspaper headline pronounced, “Deprived of Base Ball They Turn Their Attention to Lacrosse, Tennis and Bicycling.”¹²

From Alfred Sorenson,
*History of Omaha from the
 Pioneer Days to the Present
 Time* (Omaha: Gibson,
 Miller & Richardson, 1889),
 335.



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A League of Nebraska's Own

As 1890 began, prospects for professional baseball in Lincoln were lackluster, even though the city once again had “the baseball fever bad.” Rumors surfaced regarding a possible Nebraska “state base ball association” comprised of teams from Lincoln, Fremont, Beatrice, Grand Island, Kearney, Plattsmouth, and Hastings. Columbus, Seward, and York would also later be considered as potential league sites. A similar scheme had surfaced in advance of the 1889 season “with the exception that Lincoln was not included in the list.” Missouri’s *The Sporting News* observed how Kearney, Grand Island, and Hastings each fielded viable clubs in 1889 and had ready-to-use ball parks, while “Lincoln has a good park, that would be a great deal better if enlarged a little which, no doubt, will be done if this city enters a league.”¹³

Serious discussions about a new Nebraska “state base ball association” gained momentum. Nebraska’s newspapers reported “exceedingly good” prospects for the league’s creation, although a wrinkle had cropped up. A separate group led by Hastings businessman O. H. Gordon began championing the creation of a “tri-state league.” The league would include a north division representing

the Nebraska cities of Lincoln, Kearney, Grand Island, Beatrice, and Hastings, and a south division with Atchison, Topeka, Leavenworth, and Wichita, Kansas, and St. Joseph, Missouri. Gordon’s tri-state confederation, however, excluded the Nebraska cities of Fremont and Columbus, two stalwarts backing the state-only league. As discussions progressed, this proviso would prove fatal to the three-state league concept.¹⁴

Fremont appeared ready for professional baseball. The city’s newspaper, *The Tribune*, energetically promoted the town’s entry into the proposed Nebraska State League. Local support came principally from W. H. Harrison, a Fremont business executive, whose participation lent credibility and financing. To spearhead Fremont’s baseball interests, the town retained William Lewis and William Pope, the two young African American waiters from Omaha’s Millard Hotel with baseball ambitions. This arrangement meant the Fremont club would be an “all black team” playing in an otherwise “white league.” Both sides signed on to this accord.¹⁵

Lewis, the team’s presumptive field manager, wrestled with how best to assemble a talented squad. His logical starting point was the Lafayettes, Omaha’s “champion colored team” for whom he had played. However, the Lafayettes’ roster drew entirely from employees of the Millard Hotel, mostly waiters, porters, and cooks. To be competitive in a professional baseball environment meant Lewis’s talent search unavoidably extended beyond the Lafayettes and Omaha. Complementing Lewis’s role, Pope’s task required working closely with representatives from the other towns of the proposed league. From the start of the year, Pope crisscrossed the eastern half of the state by train, meeting with business and community interests to instill confidence in the league’s viability. Hailed as an “efficient agent,” Pope’s hard work and organizational acumen helped him gain the respect and trust of Fremont’s hoped-for baseball partners.¹⁶

Meanwhile in Lincoln, enthusiasm for a proposed state league trumped results. The first formal meeting about reviving baseball in the city was held on February 17. On that cold Monday evening, the local “real estate exchange” set aside space for the expressed purpose of “securing good base ball for Lincoln this coming season.” The meeting organizers sought to form “an association which will back a Lincoln club,” along with taking the steps necessary to organize the state league. Leading the city’s baseball offensive was Frank H. Woods, a University of Nebraska law student, who was “doing a great deal to bring this matter before

the people.” Regrettably, attendance at Monday’s meeting fell short of expectations. A three-member committee was established to solicit subscriptions for a new team, with another meeting slated for Friday, February 21, in hopes of larger attendance.¹⁷

Friday evening’s gathering brought a surprising twist. Charlie Hoover, a well-known member of Lincoln’s 1886 and 1887 squads, presented an unforeseen and, some might say, perplexing proposal. Hoover offered to secure the services of ten players who would become Lincoln’s 1890 entry into the proposed state league. Citing specific players, Hoover projected their salaries would range from \$65 to \$125 per month, with an aggregate player salary obligation of \$4,575 for a five-month season. Hoover promoted the concept by stating this amount ran well under the \$14,550 salary paid to the 1887 Lincoln team over their six-month season. The meeting participants referred Hoover’s proposal to its soliciting committee with a request for a future report.¹⁸

While Lincoln’s baseball proponents continued their work, William Pope continued his odyssey across the state. He scheduled a return trip to Lincoln on March 6 with hopes of furthering the Capital City’s struggling efforts. The March 6 discussions went well and faith in the coming season remained high among Lincoln’s baseball zealots. Optimism also reigned in Fremont, where Pope’s labors resulted in articles of incorporation for a “Fremont base ball club,” which were forwarded to Lincoln in mid-March. The articles provided for a “capital stock” of \$3,000, divided into ten-dollar shares with the subscriptions “contingent on the formulation of a state league.”¹⁹

Belief in the prospects for a new state league soared anew as Pope extended an invitation to nine Nebraska communities to attend a “base ball convention” to be held in Fremont on Tuesday, March 25. The town’s spacious Eno Hotel would serve as the venue. The agenda called for electing officers, adopting league rules and regulations, setting salary limits and club guarantees, and laying out ways for controlling team movements and actions.²⁰

The March 25 organizing session seemingly went off without a hitch, as the “Nebraska Base Ball League” came into existence. The cities represented included Kearney, Grand Island, Fremont, Plattsmouth, Seward-York, and Lincoln, with Hastings and Beatrice subsequently expressing interest. Fremont’s W. H. Harrison was elected president, Col. A. J. Shepard from Kearney was made secretary, and Dr. H. C. Miller of Grand Island would serve as treasurer. Each team’s salary cap was set at \$700 per month, with the visiting club receiving \$40 per game and the

READY FOR THE FRAY

PROFESSIONAL BALL AT THE PARK TO-DAY.

The Colored Team of Lincoln to Try Its Strength Against the Omaha Reserves.

Members of the Capital City Team Nearly All On Hand—Positions in To-Day’s Game.

Rain Interferes With Yesterday’s Contests in the Leading Leagues—Racing Events—A Fight at New Orleans—Notes.

Base Ball To-Day.

The exhibition season opens this afternoon at Association park, Twenty-second and Randolph streets, for a series of three games, with the Lincolns and the Omaha Reserves as contestants. The game will be called at 3 o’clock sharp. A good game is expected as the Reserves are composed of good material

Nebraska State Journal, May 7, 1890. Association Park was located at the present-day site of Lincoln High School.

balance of the gate receipts going to the home club. Play was slated to begin the first week of May and last for five months. The members agreed to a \$500 bond from each club to demonstrate good faith, with capitalization set at \$3,000 per team. A follow-up meeting was set for April 10 in Grand Island when the bonds would be due, the teams qualified, and a game schedule adopted.²¹

With the success of the March 25 meeting known, the prospects for a tri-state league faded away. This development allowed the Nebraska communities, including Fremont, to focus on securing financing and

Ferdinand Barnett,
founder of *The Progress*,
Omaha's first African
American newspaper,
served in the Nebraska
State Legislature in the
1920s. NSHS RG2141-0123



assembling a team roster. Grand Island quickly mobilized with the aid of the town's streetcar company, which agreed to build the club a "playing grounds" for use rent free. Farther west, Kearney called a stockholders meeting for the evening of March 31. Within days of the meeting, the club released a preliminary roster comprising players drawn from Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Michigan. Financing remained an issue as Kearney was already \$500 "in the hole" from improvements made to the playing field the prior year. Even with this hurdle, the organizers remained upbeat.²²

With the April 10 meeting looming, Lincoln's baseball enthusiasts scrambled to keep pace. Their dialogues with William Pope and March had gone well; well enough that Pope expressed an interest in bringing the Fremont team to Lincoln if the Fremont option fell through. In truth, Fremont's baseball ambitions dimmed with each passing day. Even though Fremont's W. H. Harrison had been elected league president at the March 25 meeting, the city's prospects appeared muted from the start. Its population of 6,715 rendered it the smallest of any city proposed for the new state league. Attempts to finance the club were stymied, with pledges reaching only \$1,600 and fundraising subsequently abandoned. Fremont's woes soon became Lincoln's salvation.²³

Pope had emerged as the league's de facto torchbearer following his multi-month odyssey visiting each prospective state league community. The

"communities" he touched were, however, not only geographic in character. As African Americans, Pope and Lewis took pride in their heritage and showed it by actively participating in Omaha's expanding black community; a community that over the prior decade had grown six-fold to nearly 4,700 people. Like so many similar enclaves across the nation, African Americans in Omaha were joining together in advancing the cause for broader economic, political and social justice.²⁴

Omaha's first African-American newspaper, *The Progress*, proved central to Pope and Lewis's community commitment. Founded in 1889 by Ferdinand L. Barnett, this weekly publication declared itself, "a bold and fearless champion of the Negro race." Barnett and his paper gave a voice to Omaha's black residents. *The Progress* sought to cultivate black fraternal organizations, call attention to local black businesses, encourage church membership, advance literary clubs, and endorse black-sponsored financing. In short, there seemed few things *The Progress* would not try in order to advance Omaha's, as well as Nebraska's, burgeoning African American citizenry.²⁵

The link between black baseball clubs and the nation's swelling African American urban population was not accidental. Discriminatory practices notwithstanding, baseball as a business enterprise offered African American entrepreneurs an entrée to America's mainstream. The proprietors of *The Progress* realized this opportunity and welcomed Pope and Lewis into their fold. The paper began reporting on the duo's baseball exploits and in the process, lent encouragement and media exposure. As early as March 22 *The Progress* reported on Pope's departure to Beatrice in advancing the state league and on the success of "Manager Lewis" in "having signed all of his baseball players" with expectations for practice beginning in mid-April.²⁶

The role assumed by *The Progress* became even more pronounced as the April 10 date approached for the league's second organizing meeting in Grand Island. While the meeting took place as scheduled, it failed to produce the desired results. Poor attendance marred the gathering with only Lincoln, Kearney, and Grand Island being represented. Hastings sent a letter stating "they were fully organized and secured a club." Delegates attending the session "expressed a warm determination" to continue the task, and asserted that a four-team league remained feasible "although six would make a much stronger and desirable organization." The delegations from Lincoln, Kearney, and Grand Island each submitted the requisite \$500 bond and expressed confidence

in the sale of their team's stock. William Pope and A. J. Shepherd were asked to continue discussions with Fremont, Hastings, Beatrice, Nebraska City, and Plattsmouth about their participation in the league.²⁷

Lincoln's baseball prospects appeared heightened when Pope reportedly represented their interests at the April 10 Grand Island meeting. By this point, Fremont's struggles in organizing a viable team were being widely reported, as was the maturing bond between Lincoln's baseball enthusiasts and the Pope-Lewis tandem. Speculation became reality on April 12 when incorporation of the "Lincoln baseball club" was formally announced. Capitalized with \$3,000 in stock, the club's incorporation took place under the names of William Pope, James S. Bryant, and A. S. Barnett. This trio reasonably completed the circle between Pope, *The Progress*, and the Lincoln's team financing. Bryant was the manager-editor of *The Progress*, and Barnett was the brother of the newspaper's owner, F. L. Barnett.²⁸ As referenced in *The Progress*, A. S. Barnett and James S. Bryant were Omaha board members of the National Building, Loan, and Protective Union, with Barnett as secretary-treasurer, and Bryant as the group's attorney. The NBL&PU offered Omaha residents locally available financing, with A. S. Barnett serving as one of two local agents. Additional financing for Lincoln's team came from Lt. Dick H. Townley and "Police Judge Houston," two Capital City baseball backers who signed a bond for \$500.²⁹

Professional Baseball Returns

In its Sunday May 4 edition, the *Daily Nebraska State Journal* proclaimed Lincoln's newest professional baseball franchise "Ready to Play Ball." As the players assembled in Lincoln that day, they had a mere two days of practice before their first game. Stylish brown uniforms had been ordered from the A.G. Spaulding Company, the nation's embryonic sports equipment purveyor. Association Park, the community's ball field at Twenty-second and Randolph streets, appeared in "excellent condition, with the exception of a few minor defects which will be remedied." The club had even "engaged rooms and a cook" to "keep their players at a moderate cost" while in Lincoln.³⁰

Manager William Lewis deserved credit for assembling a quality squad comprised solely of African American players. The roster's core came from his prior team, the Lafayettes. In addition to himself, the Lafayettes contributed Joseph "Kid" Miller, Ed Carr, and the brother combination of Hugh and George Hughbanks. Lewis also tabbed

eighteen-year-old Omaha-born John W. Patterson to play third base. Soliciting black players in nearby states, the Lincoln manager found Frank Maupin and James Hightower in Missouri, William Castone and George Taylor in Colorado, and William Newman in Kansas. The team's reach even went as far as Washington, D.C., with the signing of the outstanding infielder Jesse Brown. All in all, Lewis had a strong and talented collection of baseball men. Lincoln's team stood ready to play.

Regrettably, prospects for the "state base ball association" remained less sanguine. Among the cities seeking participation in the new circuit, only Kearney had found success. By the start of May that city's baseball enthusiasts had committed the necessary financing and assembled a ten-player roster. But try as they might, a two team "league" simply would not be viable. William Pope, however, persisted in his optimism declaring "that by the 1st of June the state league will be in shape to begin playing ball." Grand Island seemed near to having the pieces in place to start play. Pope planned to continue working with Beatrice, Nebraska City, and York to get their clubs in shape. He admitted that Fremont had fallen out of consideration because the city's baseball boosters had set their "mark too high and shot low."³¹

With a team in hand but no league, Pope and Lewis needed find another team to play. The duo arranged for a three-game series in Lincoln against the all-white, semi-pro Omaha Reserves. With a start time set for three in the afternoon on Wednesday, May 7, professional baseball marked its return to the Capital City.

The game began on time with "a fair crowd of well pleased spectators" witnessing "an exciting struggle" between the two clubs. Lincoln struck first with three runs in the second, thanks to a hit batter, a base-on-balls, and a two-run scoring double by Castone, who would later score ahead of Hughbanks as the latter was thrown out at the plate on an attempted inside-the-park home run. The Lincoln squad did not let up, scoring a dozen more runs over the remaining innings to outpace the Reserves 15 to 2. Castone pitched the entire game allowing the Omaha squad a miserly two hits. Lincoln's opening-day performance so impressed the editor of the *Kearney Daily Hub* that he asserted, "No team in Nebraska ever played a better game than Lincoln played last Wednesday."³²

Braving "a stiff Nebraska zephyr," Thursday's game witnessed a marked increase in attendance, with the Omaha Reserves bent on redemption. Former Lafayettes' pitcher Kid Miller started on the mound for Lincoln, but after surrendering ten runs

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— *Kearney Hub*

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he was pulled in the fourth inning. The Lincoln Nine fought back, managing a 12 to 11 win in ten innings. Intermittent rain postponed the series' third contest from Friday to Saturday, a game in which John Reeves, a newly signed pitcher from Kansas City, led Lincoln to a 5 to 3 win. Lincoln's "base ball cranks" judged the professional game back on track, while the *Lincoln Daily Call* asserted the team "is far superior to the team which represented this city in 1888." And in its May 11 edition, the *Daily Nebraska State Journal* christened Lincoln's new team the "Giants." The name stuck.³³

Without a ready slate of teams to schedule, Pope and Lewis turned again toward the Missouri River for a team the Giants could play on Monday, May 12. Council Bluffs willingly put forward its aspiring squad, nicknamed the Nonpareils, for an afternoon matchup in Lincoln. But fate once more dealt the Giants an inauspicious hand. Persistent rains canceled the Nonpareils trip to Lincoln. Pope hastily scheduled a Tuesday afternoon game against the University of Nebraska's baseball club. Added interest in the game centered around the university's starting pitcher, Frank Woods, who had been instrumental in bringing professional baseball back to Lincoln. While the collegians made every effort to keep pace, the university squad fell to the Giants by a final score of 7 to 3. The game's unquestioned highlight was a triple play started by Giants' shortstop Jesse Brown, who paired with George Hughbanks to complete the maneuver.³⁴

Afterwards the Giants hopped on a train to make the 130-mile trek to Kearney. A pair of games had been slated between the only other team that had managed to fulfill the ambition of forming a state league. *The Kearney Daily Hub* did its best to whip up interest declaring, "Nearly every person you meet says he is going to witness the game." The next two days validated the Giant's on-field prowess. Lincoln's squad outlasted Kearney in Wednesday's match by the score of 10 to 9. The game's highlight was a towering home run by the Giants' left fielder George Taylor. The blast so impressed the locals that it "was greeted with applause and a shower of silver dollars." On Thursday, Lincoln's crew fell behind early, but home runs by Taylor and Patterson brought the Giants back as they captured the 21 to 15 victory.³⁵

Before heading back to Lincoln, the Giants detoured to the diminutive Nebraska town of Ulysses, forty miles northwest of the Capital City. With a population touching six hundred residents, the people of Ulysses had organized a "base ball association" in hopes of attracting quality amateur

baseball to their community. In grave need of opponents, Pope scheduled a two-game series against the novice Ulysses squad. Friday's game went eleven innings with the Giants pulling out an 8 to 7 win, as Lincoln's John Patterson demonstrated his offensive abilities. The Giants posted a "complete walk-away" on Saturday with a 20 to 3 victory over the outmanned Ulysses team. Unbeaten and riding a six-game winning streak, the Giants departed Ulysses at 7:25 p.m. on the last train to Lincoln, having four days off before beginning a three-game rematch against Kearney at Association Park.³⁶

With the season just beginning, finances and scheduling issues already plagued William Pope and the Giants. The fledgling state league's success, and perhaps ultimately that of the Giants, hung on Beatrice, Nebraska City, York, and Grand Island fielding teams. The deadline for entry into the league slid to July 1. "The trouble from the start," Pope admitted, "was that too much money was asked as a guarantee." His statement came on the heels of a published allegation that the high team entry price resulted because Fremont's W. H. Harrison wanted to keep Lincoln out of the proposed league. Pope's solution called for each team to submit a \$500 bond guaranteeing they would play through the season, a lower monthly salary cap set at \$650, and a revised formula for allocation of game receipts. With these amended guidelines on the table, Pope kept his optimism alive for survival of the team and the league. About all he could do now was wait.³⁷

Lincoln's baseball patrons remained hopeful as well. Thursday's upcoming rematch with Kearney foretold of a large crowd. The ball field sported a new well that had been dug to "furnish water for sprinkling the diamond." New team uniforms—"blue with maroon stockings, belts, and caps"—had just arrived, along with a new supply of bats. Even a band was to be on hand. Everything was in place, or so it seemed.³⁸

Thursday's misfortunes started with the ball park's streetcar service breaking down, followed by an hour's delay owing to the absence of a score book, and concluded with an umpiring dispute. When all was said and done, the Giants suffered their first loss of the season, falling to Kearney 12 to 10. The Giants rebounded the next day with a 10 to 5 win. Jesse Brown's fielding highlighted the affair, along with a home run by George Taylor. Saturday's series finale went to Kearney by a 6 to 5 score, thanks in large part to partisan umpiring, a chronic headache in baseball of this period. The



situation was so egregious that after the game, Kearney Manager Beardsley and Lincoln Manager Lewis agreed to retain the presumed impartial Joseph McCullough to umpire future series between the teams.³⁹

Because Omaha permitted Sunday baseball games, Pope again engaged that city's Reserves for a game on Sunday May 25. Held at Omaha Park, Lincoln suffered from poor hitting and came away losers by a 2 to 1 score. During the final week of May the Giants managed to play just two games—the first a brisk contest against the University of Nebraska's team, which the Giants took 6 to 5 in five innings, and the second a shutout of the Omaha Reserves on Friday afternoon before an affable crowd of eighteen hundred at Association Park. The Giants then closed the month with "hard practice work" on Saturday.

Following a disappointing week, Pope sought reassurance for his team by signing a talented young infielder from Missouri named William Lincoln,

announcing a potential series against the Golden Eagles of Kansas City, and hinting at possible Sunday games to be played at Cushman Park, as the venue was located outside the Lincoln city limits.⁴⁰

June Swoon

Pope's optimism again proved short lived. The Giants' troubles began June 2 with the unexplained resignation of the team's originating manager William Lewis. George Castone took over from Lewis, who agreed to stay with the team to play the outfield. The early June reorganization also included releasing three players—Hugh Hughbanks, Kid Miller, and William Newman. Newspaper reports suggested the reshuffled roster made the Giants "one of the strongest clubs in the west," but the changes hinted at other underlying issues. Then on the heels of these moves, the Giants' four scheduled games for the week quickly became two. The Giants won both against the Nonpareils, though they knew playing just two

The St. Paul (Minnesota) Colored Gophers. Former Lincoln Giant George Taylor is second from the left in the middle row. He was the Gophers' first baseman and captain. *St. Paul Appeal*, Aug. 31, 1907

The *Lincoln Evening News* warned, “The Lincoln Giants, our crack ball team, is trembling on the verge of the soup tureen.”

games per week spelled doom in the long haul.⁴¹

These squalls ultimately would pale in comparison to the week’s greater storm. On June 7, the proposed Nebraska state league was pronounced dead. The Kearney team disbanded, citing the high cost of travel and hotel rooms. Beatrice, Nebraska City, and Grand Island called it quits as well, having failed to raise the necessary funds. Taken together these developments were devastating for the Giants’ prospects. News of the state league’s demise was followed by a report in the *Lincoln Daily Call* concerning the financial difficulties of the Western Association’s St. Paul, Minnesota, club. Buried in the story lay the statement, “Lincoln, Nebraska, is anxious to purchase the [St. Paul] franchise and has money deposited.” Omaha’s professional team played in the higher profile Western Association and Lincoln’s baseball enthusiasts coveted a place in that eight-team league. Might the Giants be St. Paul’s replacement team? Or were the Giants’ days merely numbered?⁴²

Pope recognized the situation and knew not to stand idle. “The Giants are anxious to get a date with any of the Western Association teams,” he said, and offered “extra inducements in the way of financial support.” While awaiting an answer, the Giants held a “benefit game” on June 9 against “a strong picked club composed of the best material in the city.” That same day Pope received welcome news as the Omaha Western Association team agreed to engage the Giants in Lincoln on Wednesday, June 11. Local media dubbed the match “The Game of the Season,” with extra ticket booths to be set up “to accommodate the rush.” An assemblage of twelve hundred fans swarmed Association Park when the two teams met. The Giants fell to Omaha by a score of 11 to 5, even though the home team played well and demonstrated they were competitive equals. Riding this encouraging crest, Pope calendared eight games over the next ten days—five with the Ulysses team, two with the Genoa Indians, and a Sunday game in Fremont against the recently assembled “town team.” While the games were not with renowned squads, the contests produced revenue and kept the Giants on the field.⁴³

Pope, however, eyed an even great prize. Among the Western Association’s teams, none offered greater attraction to Lincoln fans than Denver’s. Dave Rowe, the Denver manager, had served as the player-manager for Lincoln’s successful 1887 entry in the Western League. He remained hugely popular within Lincoln’s baseball community. Rowe fulfilled Pope’s wishes

by agreeing to a game in Lincoln on Monday, June 23. A large and enthusiastic crowd turned out for the late afternoon match. Lincoln’s play was “brilliant” at times, while “at other critical times it was not so brilliant.” Illness prevented John Patterson, Lincoln’s best player, from taking the field, resulting in three Giants playing out of position. Patterson’s absence and untimely errors culminated in a 12 to 3 Lincoln loss. While in town, Rowe “expressed himself emphatically in favor of Lincoln trying to secure a place in the Western association.” The die seemed cast. But in whose favor?⁴⁴

During the last week of June, the Giants scheduled just three games, all in Lincoln against the Omaha Reserves. After winning the first game in the series on Thursday, June 26, Manager Castone implored more fans to attend. The public needed “to understand that if they wish the club to exist better support must be given.” Attendance at the next two games remained disappointing, even as the Giants took both contests easily. But on-field performance and lack of fan support were not the Giants’ main focus on those days.⁴⁵

The *Lincoln Evening News* warned, “The Lincoln Giants, our crack ball team, is trembling on the verge of the soup tureen.” Financial adversity consumed the team as Pope became increasingly unable to meet the payroll. James Hightower, the Giants’ first baseman who last played a game on June 11, obtained an “attachment” from Judge Cochran for Constable Hunger to confiscate the gate receipts, some forty dollars, at the June 27 game. Ex-Giant Hightower denounced Pope and Manager Castone for “feathering their nests at the expense of the players.” Castone denied this was true, with the remaining players generally siding with their field manager. Pope responded by revealing that he had arranged a thirty-day tour through Iowa for the team, but the players “announced their intention of staying home until their claims were liquidated.”⁴⁶

After the June 28 game, Castone unilaterally “disbanded” the team, although he let it be known that his decision “does not necessarily mean there will be no more ball playing in Lincoln.” Rather, he was working toward a new club that would be “immediately organized, composed of the same material.” Lincoln newspapers expressed hope the team could survive saying, “The Giants are too good to be dropped.”⁴⁷

Trials or Tribulations?

Lincoln’s baseball proponents met on the evening of July 1 to bolster the chances for the team’s survival. The next day brought news of Pope’s

complete divestment from the club, with the Giants being restructured under “the co-operative plan,” placing the club under ownership in common by the players. Castone became “both pitcher and business manager.” Now having “more than enough to do,” he invited “some enthusiastic capitalist” who “wants to make a mint of money” to take over management of the team. Hopes emerged for “an extended eastern tour . . . through Iowa, Illinois, Michigan and possibly New York,” with such a trip serving to “advertise the city of Lincoln far and near.”⁴⁸

Before the re-formed Giants might head east, arrangements were made for the team to take on the Kansas City Haverlys, “the acknowledged amateur champions of Kansas City.” The three-game series in Lincoln consisted of a July 4 double header and a single game the next day. The teams split the Independence Day twosome, as the Giants squandered a ninth inning lead to lose 10 to 3, but came back in the second game with a strong performance and a 10 to 2 victory. The Giants claimed the July 5 game by a score of 9 to 8.⁴⁹

The team sought to dispel persistent rumors of player disharmony and of the club’s demise. Discounting the rumors proved difficult as no games were scheduled and the prospects were few. Reports surfaced that “several prominent lovers of the game have rendered substantial aid,” and that “a subscription list” was being circulated. After a week without games, the Giants headed to Kansas City to play the Haverlys on Sunday, July 13. Before “the largest [crowd] ever to witness an amateur game in the city,” the Giants fell 7 to 4, as four ninth-inning runs sealed Lincoln’s fate. Solemnly the team stayed in Missouri looking for other clubs to play.⁵⁰

Lincoln’s baseball future soon resided not in Missouri, but in Iowa. On July 15 the Western Association’s Des Moines franchise folded as “financial difficulties” left the team unable to pay player salaries. Nebraska’s Capital City seemed destined to be the club’s new home, although not without a fight. Skirmishes over the Des Moines team’s carcass came not from Lincoln, but from the association’s Kansas City franchise, which wanted to raid the Des Moines club’s roster. Kansas City Manager Jimmy Manning blamed long time Lincoln



crusader Dave Rowe for the “imbroglio.” The battle was engaged.⁵¹

During the next two weeks the Giants played just five games. Before leaving Missouri the team won two games from the Kansas City Maroons and lost two games, one to the Haverlys and one to a team from Missouri Valley. Two discouraged loyalists, George Taylor and Frank Maupin, left the team. The Giants limped back to Lincoln with more hopes than prospects.

The Castone-led 1890 Lincoln Giants played their last game July 25 at Association Park against a contingent of “ten strapping young men” from Nebraska City. Only five of the initial Giants players, including William Lewis, participated in the 7 to 5 win. Manager Castone placed the Giants’ overall 1890 record at 39 wins to just 6 losses, including two against Western Association teams. The players soon left town, some signing with other teams and the others returning to civilian lives. The university’s baseball team held a benefit game on August 1 to raise money for the Giants’ talented infielder Jesse Brown, so he might return to Washington, D.C., to be with his seriously ill mother. Five former Giants players, including Brown and Castone, played on the university’s squad to mark the occasion.⁵²

The 1894 David City team. Former Lincoln Giant Will Lincoln is at right in the back row. NSHS RG3064-26



John W. Patterson as manager of the Columbia Giants (1899-1900). *Sol White's Official Base Ball Guide (1907), 97*

Lincoln's pursuit of the Western Association's Des Moines team continued, thanks largely to the efforts of Dave Rowe. Following a meeting in early August, the association selected Lincoln over Grand Rapids, Michigan, as the new home for the failed franchise. Following "a parade of both teams headed by a band," the new, now all-white, Lincoln team's first game took place at Association Park in front of fifteen hundred fans on the afternoon of August 12 against the Western Association's Milwaukee Brewers. Lincoln's latest entry into the world of professional baseball lost the game by a score of 15 to 6.⁵³

The Tenth Inning

Solomon White, the acknowledged father of black baseball historians, crowned Nebraska's 1890 Lincoln Giants "the first colored professional team in the West," which in those days meant the windswept plains well west of the Mississippi River. Writing in his 1907 groundbreaking book, *Sol. White's Official Base Ball Guide*, White

declared this Cornhusker State team "strong in batteries, hard hitters and fast runners. They were hard to beat unless a strong pitcher was against them." He believed their on-field performance deserved recognition in black baseball's emergence.⁵⁴

White used his *Official Base Ball Guide* to chronicle the exploits of black baseball's pathfinders, which were the scattering of professional teams during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries comprised entirely of African Americans. These teams were the foundation for what later became the business of black professional baseball. To those conversant with this period, the teams have familiar names and attendant legendary narratives. They include the Cuban Giants (New York City), Philadelphia Orions, Page Fence Giants (Adrian, Michigan), Chicago Unions, Big Gothams (New York City), Boston Monarchs, Philadelphia Giants, and Brooklyn Royal Giants. While these teams remain legendary, the 1890 Lincoln Giants endure today as little more than a faint, if not completely forgotten, footnote in the annals of baseball history. Something about this team, however, impressed the game's most revered early historian and prompted him to include them in his pioneering work.

The 1890 Lincoln Giants' deserving, though admittedly modest, place in baseball lore speaks to the events and tenor of the times. The tenacity and graceful performance of the team's players and founders contributed positively to the ebb and flow of a still evolving professional sport. The Lincoln Giants story sketches a microcosm of the trials facing African American baseball players and teams during the late nineteenth century. At the same time, their story exposed a vein of communal goodness in the Cornhusker State that should not be lost in the haze of history.


During their buoyant but often tumultuous existence, the Lincoln Giants fell short of their architects' dream. Money, facilities, scheduling, and prejudice conspired to undermine their ambitions. Even so, there was merit in what they accomplished as a group of men and as individuals. Several Giants players went on to enjoy careers in professional baseball, playing for both integrated and segregated teams, while others returned to their prior lives outside the game.⁵⁵

Ferdinand L. Barnett, the team's principal financier, was instrumental in furthering the interests of Nebraska's African American community. Also in 1890, he played a key role in organizing a convention in Omaha to establish a "permanent state league" to address the needs of "the colored citizens of Nebraska."⁵⁶ Decades later, Barnett was



After his baseball career ended, John W. Patterson became a police officer in Battle Creek, Michigan. In 2006 he was nominated, though not selected, for entry into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown as part of the Negro Leagues Committee HOF election held that year. Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan

elected to the Nebraska Legislature, where he was instrumental in getting an anti-lynching bill passed and signed into law in 1927.⁵⁷

The two most conspicuous actors in this drama, William Pope and William Lewis, quietly removed themselves from the game that had first drawn them together. Pope, the team's entrepreneurial spirit, returned to Omaha to open a restaurant and catering business with his brothers at 315 South Thirteenth Street. They advertised their establishment in *The Progress* newspaper, promoting their specialty, "Oysters in Every Style." Lewis, Pope's stalwart associate, also reclaimed Omaha as his home. Available records show he resumed working as a waiter for various downtown hotels and the Union Pacific Railroad.⁵⁸ 

NOTES

¹ Alfred Sorenson, *History of Omaha from the Pioneer Days to the Present Time* (Omaha: Gibson, Miller & Richardson Printers, 1889), n. p.; *Omaha City and Douglas County Directory* (Omaha: J. M. Wolfe & Co., 1889).

² "Amateur Games," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Aug. 13, 1889, 7.

³ "We Need Them Here," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 1, 1890, 2.

⁴ "Flashes from the Diamond," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 30, 1890, 15.

⁵ Dr. Gregory Bond mentions the 1890 Lincoln Giants in his article, "Too Much Dirty Work: Race Manliness, and Baseball in Gilded Age Nebraska," *Nebraska History* 85 (2004), 172-85. On page 174, Dr. Bond states that William M. Pope was "a white businessman from Lincoln." Further research into the racial identity of William Pope indicates he was in fact an African American waiter residing in Omaha. This is documented in large part by the *Omaha City and Douglas County Directory*. As with similar "street directories," the Directory included a "(c)" to indicate persons defined at that time as being "colored." Between the late 1880s and the mid-1890s, Pope and Lewis had the "(c)" designation next to their names.

⁶ Dean A. Sullivan, ed., *Early Innings: A Documentary History of Baseball, 1825-1908* (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 68-69, 80-81, 117-18, 152-53.

⁷ Robert Porter, Henry Gannett, and William Hunt, "Progress of the Nation," *Report of Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1895), xciii, xcvi; Lisa M. Frehill, "Occupational Segmentation in Kansas and Nebraska, 1890-1900," *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences* 6 (Fall 1996): 234-35.

⁸ Daniel J. J. Ross, "Baseball is All the Rage: Lincoln Joins the National Pastime," *Heritage of the Great Plains* 37 (Fall/Winter 2004): 6-14; Harold Seymour, *Baseball: The Early Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 203.

⁹ Bruce Esser, "Nebraska Minor League Baseball," <http://www.nebaseballhistory.com/before1900.html> (accessed Jan. 20, 2014); Ross, "Baseball is All the Rage," 18, 22, 23.

¹⁰ "A Streetcar Deal," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Nov. 11, 1885, 5; "A New Organization," *Omaha Daily Bee*, May 28, 1887, 5; Esser, "Nebraska Minor League Baseball."

¹¹ "Lincoln Wants the Whites," *Omaha Daily Bee*, May 26, 1888, 2; Esser, "Nebraska Minor League Baseball."

¹² "A Little Base Ball," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Apr. 14, 1889, 5; "Base Ball," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Apr. 14, 1889, 6; "Season for Sport," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Apr. 7, 1889, 3.

¹³ "The Western League," *The Sporting News*, Jan. 18, 1890, 1; "Miscellaneous Local Sports," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Jan. 26, 1890, 16; "Nebraska State News," *Red Cloud Chief*, Oct. 25, 1889, 2; "A Proposed League," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Feb. 2, 1890, 9.

¹⁴ "A Prospective State League," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 9, 1890, 18; "Sporting Notes," *Lincoln Weekly Herald*, Mar. 15, 1890, 5.

¹⁵ "Sporting Notes," *Lincoln Weekly Herald*, Mar. 22, 1890, 8.

¹⁶ "Minor Mention," *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 19, 1888, 6; "A State League Assured," *Omaha Daily Bee*, Mar. 11, 1890, 2. It was common practice for black baseball teams to be made up entirely of players drawn from local hotels and resorts. See Robert Peterson, *Only the Ball Was White: A History of Legendary Black Players and All-Black Professional Teams* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

¹⁷ "Shall We Have Base Ball?" *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Feb. 16, 1890, 5; "The Base Ball Meeting," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Feb. 18, 1890, 6.

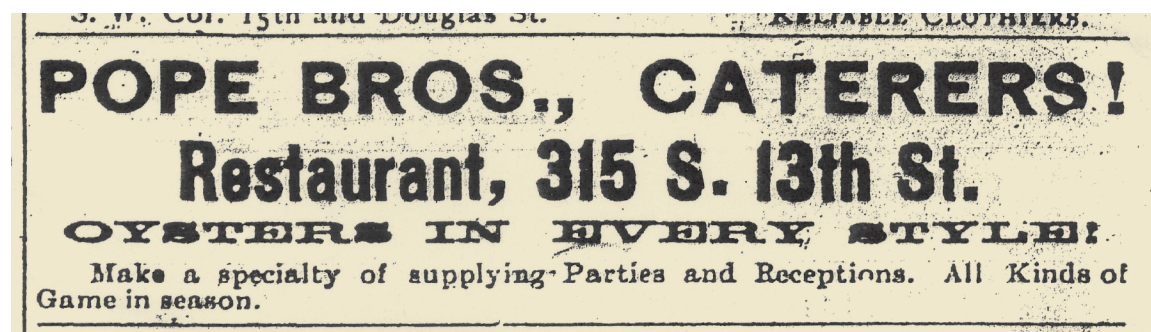
¹⁸ "In The Interest of Base Ball," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Feb. 21, 1890, 6.

¹⁹ "Base Ball for Nebraska," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Mar. 6, 1890, 1; "Fremont's Base Ball Team," *Lincoln Evening News*, Mar. 21, 1890, 1.

²⁰ "Sporting Notes: Talking Base Ball," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Mar. 21, 1890, 2; "State Leagues," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Mar. 24, 1890, 6.

²¹ "Bound to Have Ball," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Mar. 26, 1890, 2; "A State League Formed at Fremont Meeting," *Lincoln Weekly Herald*, Mar. 29, 1890, 8; "Base Ball Racket," *Kearney Daily Hub*, Mar. 26, 1890, 4.

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The Progress (Omaha), Nov. 29, 1890.

²² “Stockholders Meeting,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, Mar. 31, 1890, 4; “Who Will Play Ball for Kearney This Season,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, Apr. 4, 1890, 4; “The Base Ball Team,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, Apr. 12, 1890, 4; “State Sporting News,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Mar. 31, 1890, 1.

²³ “Base Ball News,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, Mar. 4, 1890, 4; “Base Ball Racket,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, Apr. 22, 1890, 4.

²⁴ Porter, “Progress of the Nation,” 420.

²⁵ *The Progress*, Mar. 22, 1890, 2.

²⁶ Michael E. Lomax, *Black Baseball Entrepreneurs, 1860-1901: Operating by Any Means Necessary* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 118-22; “Society,” *The Progress*, Mar. 22, 1890, 1.

²⁷ “A Four Town League,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Apr. 11, 1890, 5.

²⁸ “Sporting Notes,” *Lincoln Weekly Herald*, Apr. 12, 1890, 8; “Sporting,” *Capital City Courier*, Apr. 12, 1890, 1. On April 30, 1890, F. L. Barnett and A. S. Barnett spearheaded the effort to establish a Nebraska branch of the National Afro-American League. “Colored Men’s Convention,” *Omaha Daily Bee*, May 1, 1890, 5.

²⁹ *The Progress*, Mar. 22, 1890, 2-4. The president of the Omaha board of the NBL&PU was G. F. Franklin. In 1893 he would begin publishing a newspaper entitled *The Enterprise*, which was also designed to serve Omaha’s African American community; “Bye the Bye,” *Capital City Courier*, May 17, 1890, 1.

³⁰ “Ready to Play Ball,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 4, 1890, 3; “Bye the Bye,” *Capital City Courier*, May 17, 1890, 1.

³¹ “Manager Pope Interview,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 19, 1890, 1.

³² “They Show Up Well,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 8, 1890, 3; “That Game of Ball,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, May 9, 1890, 4.

³³ “And Giants They Are,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 11, 1890, 3; “Base Ball Notes,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 14, 1890, 2.

³⁴ “The Council Bluffs Nonpareils to Arrive To-Day to Battle with Lincoln Team,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 12, 1890, 1; “The Sporting World,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 13, 1890, 2; “Very Seldom Happens,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 14, 1890, 2.

³⁵ “Keeping Up the Lick,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 15, 1890, 1; “Lincoln Wins the First Game From the Kearneys,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 15, 1890, 2; “The Base Ball Game,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, May 15, 1890, 4; “Sporting Notes,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 16, 1890, 2; “A Tour of Triumph,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 16, 1890, 2; “The Kearney Pets Suffer Defeat in the Second Game of the Season,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 16, 1890, 1; “A Rocky Ball Game,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, May 16, 1890, 4.

³⁶ “Notes,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 16, 1890, 1; “Nearly Met A Match,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 17, 1890, 2.

³⁷ “Base Ball Notes,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 14, 1890, 2; “A State League Sure: Such Is The Opinion of Manager Pope,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 20, 1890, 2.

³⁸ “Sporting Notes,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 21 and 22, 1890, 2.

³⁹ “First Dose of Defeat,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 23, 1890, 2; “They Lost,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 23, 1890, 7; “They All Play Ball,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 24, 1890, 2; “Kearney Gets a Gift,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 25, 1890; “Kearney Robs Lincoln of the Last Game of the Series,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 25, 1890, 7.

⁴⁰ “The Field of Sport,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 29, 1890, 2; “Sporting Notes,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 30, 1890, 2; “The First Shut Out,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, May 31, 1890, 2.

⁴¹ “Some Changes in the Lincoln Team,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 3, 1890, 2; *Lincoln Evening News*, June 3, 1890, 4.

⁴² “Sporting News,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 7, 1890, 3; “Some Diamond Dust,” *Kearney Daily Hub*, June 7, 1890, 6; “Club Bankrupt,” *Lincoln Daily Call*, May 6, 1890, 5.

⁴³ “Sporting Notes,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 7, 1890, 3; “The Sporting World,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 10, 1890, 2.

⁴⁴ “The Fifth Was Fatal,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 24, 1890, 2; “Sporting News,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 25, 1890, 2.

⁴⁵ “Merit Better Support,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 27, 1890, 3.

⁴⁶ “Trouble in the Camp,” *Lincoln Evening News*, June 28, 1890, 4.

⁴⁷ “Three Times and Out,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, June 29, 1890, 3; “We Need Them Here,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 1, 1890, 4.

⁴⁸ “Little Locals,” *Lincoln Evening News*, July 1, 1890, 4; “Better Than Before,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 2, 1890, 2.

⁴⁹ “Both Can Play Ball,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 4, 1890, 3; “The Base Ball Games,” *Lincoln Evening News*, July 5, 1890, 4; “Battled Out Victories,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 5, 1890, 2; “Two of the Three,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 6, 1890, 6.

⁵⁰ “Pretty Sure to Remain,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 10, 1890, 2; “Turn About Fair Play,” *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 14, 1890, 2.

⁵¹ "The Road Too Rocky," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 16, 1890, 3; "Manager Manning's Tale of Woe," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 20, 1890, 2.

⁵² "The Giants Are No More," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, July 27, 1890, 3; "A Benefit for Brown," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Aug. 1, 1890, 2. Accumulated newspaper accounts reported 30 wins to 9 losses for the Giants between May 7 and July 25, 1890.

⁵³ "Lincoln in the Western Association," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Aug. 12, 1890, 2; "No Test of Strength," *Daily Nebraska State Journal*, Aug. 13, 1890, 2.

⁵⁴ Solomon White stands as one of black baseball's greatest figures, serving as player, manager, and executive for over four decades. Born in Bellaire, Ohio, in 1868, White began his professional baseball career in 1887 as a member of the Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania) Keystones of the short-lived League of Colored Baseball Clubs. During the late 1880s and into the mid-1890s, White spent all or portions of five seasons playing on integrated teams in the minor leagues. Until his on-field career ended in 1911, he played on over a dozen celebrated all-black professional baseball teams throughout the Northeast. White later managed several clubs, as well as serving as a pioneering executive for the Negro Leagues. Solomon White was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006 as part of the Negro Leagues Committee HOF selection process. He is credited with authoring the most authoritative account of the earliest days of black baseball in the United States, which was published in 1907. Source: Lawrence D. Hogan, *Shades of Glory: The Negro Leagues and the Story of African-American Baseball* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2006); Sol. White, *Sol. White's Official Base Ball Guide* (Philadelphia: H. Walter Schlichter, 1907, rpt., Columbia, S. Car.: Camden House Library of Baseball Classics, 1984), 23.

⁵⁵ Most notable were John Patterson, George Castone, and George Taylor. Patterson was nominated for entry into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown as part of the Negro Leagues Committee HOF election held in 2006. However, he was not among those ultimately selected.

⁵⁶ "To The Colored Citizens of Nebraska," *The Progress*, Mar. 22, 1890, 2.

⁵⁷ *The Nebraska Blue Book* (Lincoln: Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, December 1928), n. p.

⁵⁸ *The Progress*, Nov. 29, 1890, 8; *Omaha City and South Omaha City Directory for 1891* (Omaha: J. M. Wolfe & Company Publisher), 519, 710-711; (1892), 389; (1893), 507; (1894), 493.

