

GEMS OF PURPOSE

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A MASONIC NEWSLETTER

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Brother Herbert "Hub" Rodney Perdue

By Dr. David E. Stafford

Dates to Remember

- *January 11*—Nashville Scottish Rite, Study Club @ 5pm, Meeting @ 6pm.
- *January 19*—Bethpage Lodge Stated Meeting 7pm.
- *February 8*—Nashville Scottish Rite, Study Club @ 5pm, Meeting @ 6pm.
- *February 16*—Bethpage Lodge Stated Meeting 7pm.
- *March 5*—Tennessee Lodge of Research @ Paris Lodge #108, Dinner @ Noon, Presentation @ 1pm.
- *March 8*—Nashville Scottish Rite, Study Club @ 5pm, Meeting @ 6pm.

As I begin this issue of *Gems of Purpose*, I do so with a grin on my face. In a recent conversation with MW Bro. John Palmer, editor of *The Knight Templar Magazine*, I stated that I was so pleased to open that publication since his residency and not see another article about a hundred year old baseball player, and what am I doing . . . I am including an article about Hub Perdue in my own publication. That might fit the definition of hypocrisy on my part, but I have often been described as an oxymoron. So, to not let my critics down . . . here we go.

Herbert "Hub" Rodney Perdue was born June 7, 1882 in Bethpage, Tennessee to Marion Perdue and Zointha Durham Perdue. His early life was lived in a time when things were much simpler and definitely less complicated for a child. It was a time when life in the south was slow and baseball was still the all-American past time, and it was a past time that Hub Perdue loved. Perdue has been repeatedly described as a man who never took things too seriously, and he apparently had quite a sense of humor, always loving to laugh. Perdue married Mable Polk, from Oaktown, Indiana, on December 29, 1900. They had two children together, Katherine Ashley and Marion Polk born in 1901 and 1902 respectfully.



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Perdue's early baseball career centered around the Nashville Baseball Club. It was during his time in the Southern Association that Grantland Rice, a sportswriter in the day, dubbed Perdue the "Gallatin Squash" in reference to Gallatin, TN, the county seat of Sumner, and the hubbard squash, a squash popular at the time and having name sounding like "hub". During the 1908 championship season with Nashville, Perdue won 16 games. He went on to win 23 games in the 1909 season, leading the Southern Association in wins that year.

On April 19, 1911, Perdue debuted in the major leagues playing with the Boston Rustlers. He had a 4.98 ERA in 137.1 innings pitched during his rookie year with Boston. The Boston Rustlers were owned by William Hepburn Russell.

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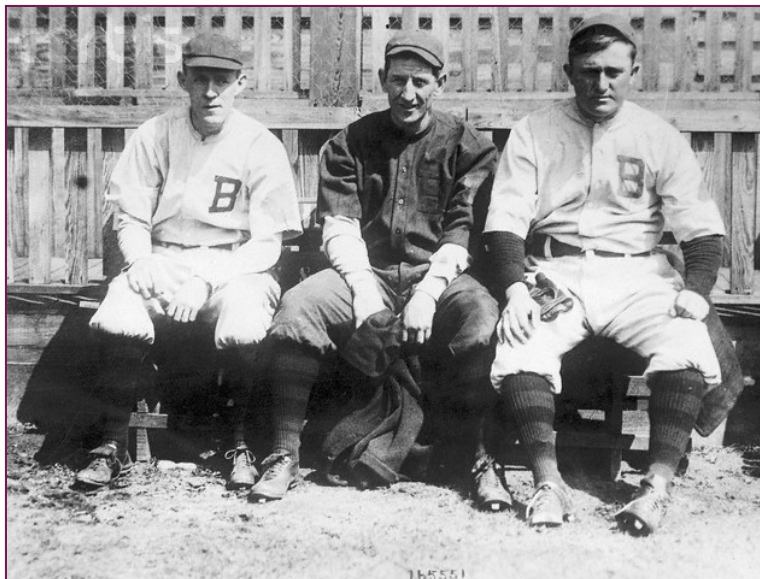
Brother Hub Perdue

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Russell had purchased the team following the 1910 season from John Dovey and John Harris. He changed the name of the team from the Boston Doves to the Rustlers, and he named Fred Tenney manager. Russell only survived one season as owner, dying after the 1911 season. The team was then purchased by James Gaffney and John Montgomery Ward, and the name of team was again changed becoming the Boston Braves. On April 15, 1912, Perdue pitched his best major league game against the New York Giants. His day's success was overshadowed however by a famous shipwreck. Newspapers the next day were filled with news concerning the sinking of the largest ship in the world on its maiden voyage, the Titanic.



The season of 1913 is often taunted as Perdue's best major league performance. He struck out 91 batters, won 16 games, and posted a 3.26 ERA. The Braves finished the year in fifth place with 69 wins and 82 losses.



Original caption: In the camp of the Boston players down here, the "Braves" as the boys are called are working like Trojans to get into shape for the trying season which is now almost upon us. playing ball may seem fun to the man who plays it on his afternoon off, but its no fun when you do it for a living as is evidenced by the practice games seen here. The photo shows three of the "Braves" on the "anxious seat" who are wondering what will be the result of the deal which is now in progress and involves these players: Left to right: Johnny Evers, Bill Sweeney and Hub Perdue.

The 1914 season for the Boston Braves is definitely a historic one. It is also a season that is historic for Perdue. The season started disappointingly for the club. By July, Boston was ranking dead last in the National League. The manager of the team was George Stallings. Several accounts state the Perdue could not stand Stallings sharp tongue lashings of the losing team, so Perdue asked to be traded. Stallings arranged a trade with the St. Louis Cardinals. In return for Perdue, Boston gained two outfielders, Ted Cather and Possum Whitted. Before being traded, Perdue managed to pitch in 9 games, 51 innings, with 2 wins, 5 losses, 13 strikeouts, and a 5.82 ERA. The Boston Braves went on to have one of the greatest come back seasons in the history of major league baseball.

Within two months, the Braves went from being in last place to first, taking the rank of number one for good on September 8, 1914. Boston won the pennant, being the first team to do so after being

dead last the first week of July. The "Miracle" Braves, as they came to be known, won the 1914 World Series in a game sweep against the Philadelphia Athletics. Perdue was mad as hell that he had missed the opportunity to be in World Series, and he was even more mad that he missed out on the money (\$2,812 per winning

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Scriptures for a Studying Mason

Psalms 10:2-7

- Psa 10:2** The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.
- Psa 10:3** For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, *whom* the LORD abhorreth.
- Psa 10:4** The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God*: God *is* not in all his thoughts.
- Psa 10:5** His ways are always grievous; thy judgments *are* far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, he puffeth at them.
- Psa 10:6** He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for *I shall* never *be* in adversity.
- Psa 10:7** His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue *is* mischief and vanity.

Bro. Hub Perdue

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player)! Ralph McGill, a reporter for the *Nashville Banner*, related that following the 1914 World Series, Perdue's friends would tease him by asking, "What did you get out of the World Series, Hub?". To which he would skillfully reply, "I got smart."

Hub Perdue finished his professional baseball career at the close of the 1915 season with the St. Louis Cardinals. The team closed with 72 wins and 81 losses and finished 6th in the National League. Perdue pitched 31 games, 115.1 innings with 6 wins, 12 losses, 29 strikeouts, and a 4.21 ERA. His last major league game was September 30, 1915. Perdue left the game with a respectable record leaving behind tales of his droll humor, stories, and carefree state of mind. The October 1960 *Baseball Digest* recorded an excellent example of his wit, "One of the tales which he loved to tell concerned his boyhood days before he journeyed north from his home in Tennessee. Hub declared, in the course of a fanning bee, that when he went to Bowling Green, Tenn., to pitch, he carried with him only a suitcase, a mandolin and a pair of pants. 'What did you carry in your suitcase?' he would be asked. 'Mandolin,' said Perdue. 'But where were the pants?' 'Ah had them on,' he would reply.

It was this humor and light-heartedness that led John McGraw, a close friend of Perdue, to describe him as being an easy-going man "with a liking for the sound of fox hounds on the chase; for bird dogs and guns, and for companionship. Life was never serious to him. If it has been . . . He would have been one of

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Fenway Park on October 12, 1914, for the third game of the 1914 World Series.

Bro. Hub Perdue

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baseball's greatest pitchers" (Baseball Digest, August 1952, p. 68).

Another classic story of Perdue involves his father. Perdue would leave every spring to travel to Gallatin, TN to catch the train to travel to spring training. He would usually return home each year in October with little money to show from his absence. Perdue's father, who was apparently a very tight man, was repeatedly disappointed that his son had not saved enough money to get through the winters. Finally Perdue's father made a deal with his wayward son. The father offered to match dollar per dollar the money Perdue returned home with after the close of the season. When October came, Perdue departed the train in Gallatin broke, but before heading home to his father, the witty Hub stopped by the bank and barrowed \$2,000. When he arrived home, his father inquired as to how much money Perdue had saved. He calmly began to count the \$2,000 out on the table. His father, impressed by his son's efforts, raises from the table to collect an equal amount from a tin hidden in the house. Perdue eventually confessed his antics to his father and returned the money.



Perdue returned back to Sumner County and worked as a salesman for various businesses. He petitioned Bethpage Lodge on March 28, 1924. His Masonic record records him being elected on June 21, 1924, Initiated June 21, 1924, Passed July 19, 1924, and Raised August 25, 1924. There is little wonder that Perdue's fame as a major leaguer and his quick wit lead to a career in politics. Perdue served several terms as Sumner County Clerk.



Bettie Page

On February 15, 1943, Hub Perdue the county clerk added his name to a thread of history with no relation to baseball nor politics. It was on that day that he performed the wedding ceremony of Billy Neal and Bettie Page. Sumner County had a new beautiful court house built under President Roosevelt's WPA, and it was a popular wedding spot. Billy and Bettie lived in Nashville and wanted to run off to get married. Gallatin was the farthest distance they could afford a ticket to and back, and they both had heard of the beautiful setting. Perdue was glad to perform the ceremony, and he and Billy discussed baseball while Perdue completed the application. Sounds like an ordinary day in the life of a county clerk, but the dark headed, blue eyed Bettie went on to make quite a name for herself. Bettie Page soon became known as the "Queen of Pinups"! She was "Miss January 1955" in *Playboy* magazine. Although no records are easily found, one can only imagine the jokes and quick witted remarks Perdue had to share after Bettie made it big.

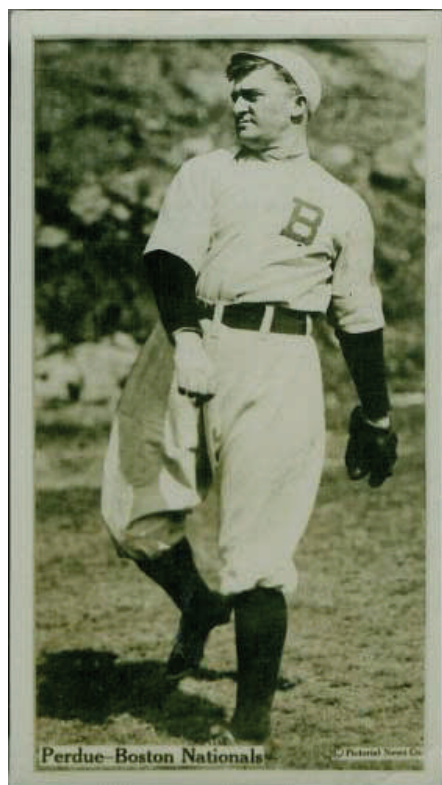
Hub Perdue died on October 31, 1968 and is buried in the Lower Bethpage Cemetery in Bethpage, TN. He may not have been the greatest name in baseball, but he definitely enjoyed the game and lived life fully. A quick wit, a droll sense of humor, laughter and light-heartedness are all qualities that we could all probably add into our busy lives today. ∞

References on Page 5.

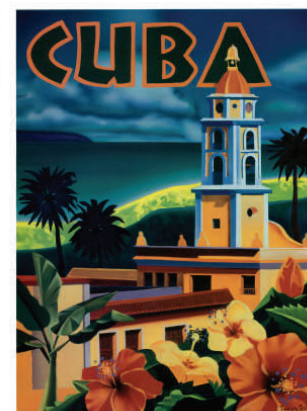


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"Well, they (Braves) broke all the records, all right, but not the kind o' records Hub was talkin bout. Poor Hub! He got traded off o' the club before Stallin's had 'em roused. It must have been nice for him to read about the team coppin' the World's Serious dough w'ile he was buyin' a new set o' shoe laces with his share out o' the St. Louis Serious." —Ring W. Landner



Herbert "Hub" Rodney Perdue

Height: 5' 10"
Birth: June 7, 1882
Primary Position: Pitcher
Bats: Right
Last Game: September 30, 1915
Died: October 31, 1968
Buried: Lower Bethpage Cemetery, Bethpage, TN

Weight: 192 lbs.
Place: Bethpage, TN
1st Game: April 19, 1911
Throws: Right
Place: Gallatin, TN

Hub Goes to Cuba!

In November of 1912, Hub Perdue and players from various clubs went to Cuba to play baseball for the off season. "The island had the advantage of mild temperatures, cheap prices, and a three-game-a-week schedule. It was in effect, a trip to the tropics that you were paid to go on."

Baseball, Brainstorming, and Exhibition Games, 1901-1962, Thomas Barthel

About Us

Bethpage Lodge No. 521, Free and Accepted Masons was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Free and



Accepted Masons of Tennessee on January 27, 1885. It is named for the small community in which the lodge hall sits. Bethpage, Tennessee is an unincorporated town in northern Sumner County, just north of Nashville. In its 125 years, the lodge has flourished and been the Masonic home to many traveling brethren. It is a country lodge with many traditions. It currently has an active membership of around 90 members. Bethpage Lodge meets on the Third Thursday of each month at 7 pm, and its meetings are open to all Master Masons from Masonic Jurisdictions recognized by the Grand Lodge of Tennessee.∞



Gems of Purpose is the electronic newsletter published by David E. Stafford. Its primary mission is to assist in the spreading of Masonic light brothers wherever this publication might land. It is edited and compiled by Brother David E. Stafford, Past Master. Brother Stafford began publishing *Gems of Purpose* in 2006 as a service to the Lodge and has continued to do so. The views and opinions contained in *Gems of Purpose* do not necessarily reflect those of any lodge, the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, or Freemasonry. If you have questions or comments, please direct those to Brother Stafford via e-mail at david.stafford@sumnerschools.org. ∞

Submission - Although *Gems of Purpose* is the official educational voice of Bethpage Lodge, the lodge encourages anyone who has an interest in Masonic Education to submit possible material for inclusion in the newsletter. Items on Masonic history, philosophy, ideology, figures, and symbolism will be considered. Of course due credit will be given to the writer and if the writer is not a member of Bethpage Lodge, his lodge will be identified. *Gems of Purpose* reserves the right to edit all submissions. ∞

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