

East Falls Past--Baseball-playing Gotwol Brothers

The Fallser, September 2011, by Wendy Moody

One of the readers of this column contacted us to share the memory of her three baseball-playing relatives, who were quite unique in East Falls' sports history.

Carol Conway Dougherty wrote: *"The Phillies season prompted me to write about the baseball days of the three Gotwols' brothers from East Falls. There was Earl – my beloved stepfather, George ("Web"), and Harold ("Reds")."*

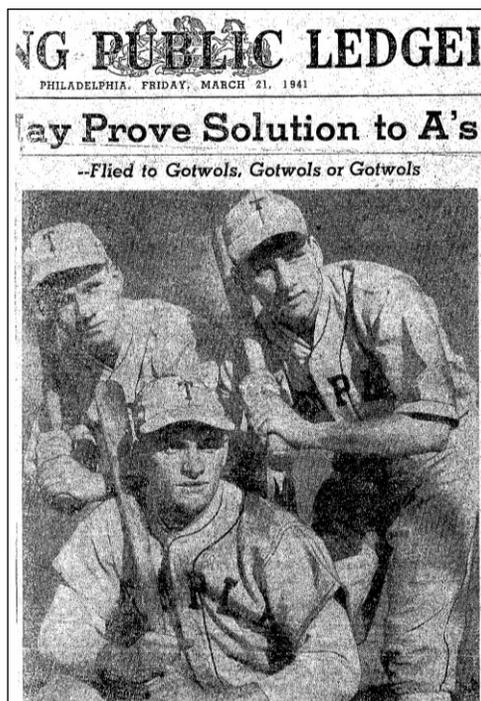
The East Falls Ball Club played Tuesday and Friday nights on Dobson Field. They were coached by Mike Cummings. Earl played third base, Reds played shortstop, and Web played center field. The team was organized by Cummings from a group of kids who had been playing together for seven years. They were known as the East Falls Trojans.

When Dobson Textile Mill closed, the team disbanded and the East Falls Church League was launched. It functioned from 1926-1929 and was said to be the strongest of its kind in the city. The brothers went on to play for the Temple Owls Baseball Squad.

The **Public Ledger** (6/29/40) wrote about the Gotwols, who were now playing in the Greater Philadelphia League: *"Moving over to shortstop we find Reds Gotwols, former Northeast High star and erstwhile Temple athlete, the team's powerhouse and run producer. He is one of three brothers on the team. The hot corner is guarded by Earl Gotwols, regarded as one of the best in his position to ever play on Dobson Field. He is not only strong on the defense, but is the club's second best hitter. Red Gotwols, with an average of 489, is the leading hitter."*

Ironically, on the same team were the three Dugan brothers. Bill Dallas of the **Philadelphia Bulletin**, wrote: *"Brothers in sport on the same team is quite a common occurrence. Brothers on rival teams are frequent, but **two** sets of **three** brothers on one team is quite rare and that is the set-up with Clearfield, a member of the Philadelphia League, which features, as two-thirds of its lineup, the Gotwols and Dugans. Clearfield is a newcomer to the league and it looks sure of winning one title this year and that will be loss of the most games by a single marker, as the team continues to lose by that margin, having lost to Mayfair 4-3 and to Kensington 2-1, after outplaying its opponents in each instance.*

The Dugan boys started the season with Clearfield, but recently the Gotwols, who played for East Falls, a keen territorial rival, joined Clearfield. For the time being, the East Falls-Clearfield feud is forgotten and every one around the old Dobson Field is pulling 100% for Clearfield. The three Gotwols boys are all products of Northeast High.



Web is a center fielder, who can go either side, backward or forward, with great speed. He is hitting the apple at a .348 clip and is a dangerous man in the clutch. Reds plays the infield and can really dig them up from any spot. He is a hard hitter and is leading the team for individual batting honors. Earl plays third base and is very dependable in this position. He is speedy and known for his ability in beating out ground balls."

Thank you, Carol, for sharing this interesting bit of East Falls sports history.