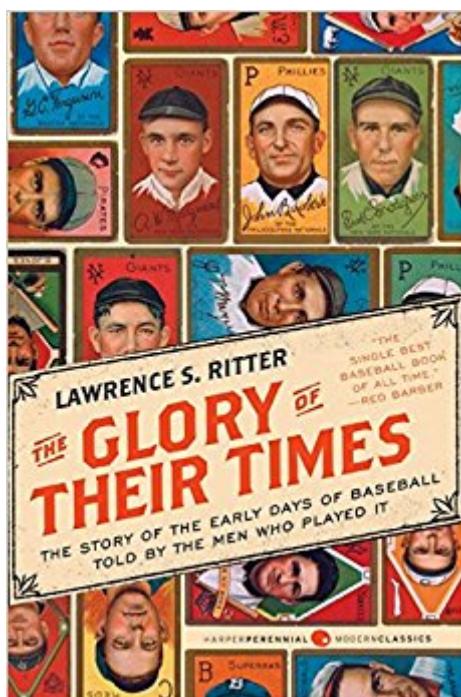


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The Glory Of Their Times: The Story Of The Early Days Of Baseball Told By The Men Who Played It (Harper Perennial Modern Classics)



Synopsis

Baseball was different in earlier daysâ "tougher, rawer, more intimateâ "when giants like Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb ran the bases. In the monumental classic *The Glory of Their Times*, the golden era of our national pastime comes alive through the vibrant words of those who played and lived the game.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a book that is near and dear to the hearts of most baseball fans, frequently cropping up on lists of the best baseball books of all time. Inspired by the example of Alan Lomax, who recorded old blues singers down South in the 1930's, and motivated by the recent death of Ty Cobb, Lawrence S. Ritter, an economist and New York University professor by trade, spent several years (1961-66) tracking down and interviewing old ballplayers, recording their memories of the game for posterity before they too passed away. The book presents these sessions as extended monologues, alternately amusing, proud, defensive, and wistful recollections of their own careers, of the times they played in, and of the characters they knew. But now, as if the book weren't enough, the tape recordings of the actual interviews are available in audiobook form. Each is introduced by Ritter, who came to know many of the players quite well. And in his introduction, Ritter reveals that it was only years after the project that it occurred to him that one of the things driving him was the death of his own father. Recapturing the memories of the players his father had loved served as a final filial connection. The interviews include those with : "Wahoo" Sam Crawford, "Rube" Marquard, "Chief" Meyers, Hans Lobert, "Smokey" Joe Wood, Davy Jones, Ed Roush, and Fred Snodgrass. The stories they tell range from Hans Lobert racing a horse around the bases while barnstorming

through Oxnard, California, to Fred Snodgrass defending his infamous muff; to a first hand account of the beaning death of Ray Chapman at the hands of Carl Mays; and finally a wonderful recital of Casey at the Bat by Chief Meyers.

The names Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth and Honus Wagner don't resonate as much as they used to. As the decades go by even the old-timers among us haven't been around long enough to remember them. They've pretty much become historical, iconic figures, like the stoic-looking George Washington on a dollar bill. It's a bit of a sad reminder of the inexorable march of time, but what a great relief to know that this treasure chest of a book is around to keep their memories alive. The author got the idea for it in 1961 when he read that Ty Cobb had died. Realizing that many of Cobb's contemporaries would soon suffer the same fate, he set out to meet as many of them as he could and record--literally with a tape recorder--their stories for posterity. Twenty six of them are recounted here. Some of these guys are hall-of-famers, some of them not even close, but all of them--every single one--had a load of interesting tidbits to share. Baseball was a different game back then. America was a different place. The first great thing about the book is that you get at least several takes on the great ballplayers. One of the fellows, for example, playing Detroit, talked about being a little nervous about Cobb, whom they had all heard would sharpen his spikes. A Detroit player, however, mentioned that Cobb never sharpened his spikes. Not that they didn't discourage the other team from thinking so. Walter Johnson had an arm like a bullwhip, but he was a nice enough guy and a friend of Sam Crawford. Late in the game, if his team was ahead by enough runs, he'd toss a meatball in to Crawford and let him belt it. He never did that for Cobb, though, who he hated. Cobb could never figure out why Crawford was able to hit him.

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