

The Free Press' Short Story

The Perfect Baseball Battery

R. RAY BAKER

THE head up and shoulders back, Clark Prescott sprung along the campus walk at Holbrook Academy. He was pretending not to be aware that admiring eyes were gazing at him on every hand as the students hurried to their three-o'clock classes in the various buildings. Clark was anything but oblivious to those admiring glances. They made him tingle all over. Recognition had come at last. After that four-hit game he pitched against Sprague last Saturday, his status as a big man on campus was definitely established.

"Guess I've made 'em sit up and take notice," he told himself exultingly, turning at an intersection and heading for the dormitory where he roomed. As Clark had no three-o'clock class, he was free for an hour, to lounge and read in his room, before the daily baseball practice began. Upon entering the room, however, he seemed in no hurry to open a book. Instead, he stood for fully ten minutes before a mirror.

Finally he picked up a book at random from the desk, stretched out on theavenport, and started to read. The words seemed meaningless, for he found his mind straying to his own accomplishments. A knock at the door disturbed these gratifying reflections.

"Come in," called Clark. When he recognized his visitor he smothered a gasp of amazement and sprang to his feet. In the doorway stood Alex. Fliondell, President of Blue Blade, most exclusive of academy social organizations.

"So glad to find you home," drawled Alex, nonchalantly seating himself in a chair which Clark had placed for him. "Nice room this," he added.

"Well, not quite so nice as I'd like it, Mr. Fliondell. But I'm not planning to remain here long."

"What! Not leaving the academy, I hope. Why, the ball team couldn't get along, you know. Come, come, tell me it isn't so?"

"It isn't," Clark smilingly reassured him, while his already large bubble of self-esteem became somewhat more inflated. "What I mean is that I expect to join an organization and move in it. There have been several offers, and some of my friends are joining Emerson; so I have been considering—"

"Forget it!" snapped Alex. "That's what I came to see you about. The Blue Blade has decided to recognize you and that is the greatest distinction that can come to a Holbrook man. It means, of course, giving up all other societies, and, I may add, some of those rather common friends you speak about. No offense, of course, but really you're not in the same class. Take Jenkins, for instance. A good enough fellow, but very uncouth and all that sort of thing, you know."

Clark nodded slowly. A year ago he would have resented with an outburst of indignation such slighting references to Perry Jenkins, but of course in the past few months things had changed. Perry had been his very good friend for a long time. Back in Blackstone they had been chums, and they had formed the battery on the high school nine. They had agreed to come to Holbrook together but Perry Jenkins was unable, for financial reasons to accompany him, to the academy. He came a year later, after earning the money to defray his expenses.

Lately these two boys had been drifting apart. This had been evident for some time. They travelled in different sets, cheer conversations had different types. Clark Prescott was acclaimed this great pitcher in academy history, his performance on the mound was nothing less than brilliant. Perry Jenkins was a plodder, getting nowhere. He worked hard, perspired profusely behind the plate. He was just a fair catcher, with a fairly good throwing arm, and a fair batter. Nothing distinctive about him. Clark Prescott, realizing all these things, failed to resent the star on his one-time chum.

Thus conditions of social exclusiveness were imposed upon the pitcher, and he acquiesced. After a month of probation, so was customary, he would be a full-fledged Blue Blade. He was told.

When his visitor left Clark faintly hopped about the room in ecstasy. His cup now was full to the brim.

After practice that afternoon Clark Prescott found himself seeking toward the field house in the company of Perry Jenkins the chunky, red-headed, freckled catcher. After a strained silence for several paces Clark Prescott stopped to reclaim "Say, I forgot, I wanted to see Bindle. He's still back on the field. Excuse me, will you?"

As the pitcher turned back toward the diamond, where Coach Bindle was talking to the shortstop and left fielder, the catcher called after him: "Say, old top, how 'bout coming up to my room to-night? Some of the fellows will be there for a little feed. I got permission from the dean, so everything will be o.k."

"Sorry, but it can't be done. Another engagement. Thanks, though."

The red-headed catcher looked after his erstwhile chum and scratched his scalp. "It's getting him, I'm afraid," muttered Perry Jenkins, plodding alone, alone, to the field house.

Two similar meetings occurred during the week, and Clark Prescott groped for

excuse to avoid social contacts with the catcher. "It's funny," said Perry Jenkins, looking downward. "I've been good friends all our lives, till recently."

"I'll tell you, Perry," said Clark, "just how it is. We've different types, have made different friends and are traveling different paths. We don't have many interests in common any more."

Again the red-headed catcher scratched his scalp, standing there on the campus walk in an attitude of bewilderment.

Finally Saturday arrived, bringing with it the game with Milton College. Milton usually had been regarded as a weak opponent for Holbrook, but there were rumors of a powerful nine this year. Facing this unknown quantity, Coach Bindle decided to start with his star twirler on the mound. The catcher for Holbrook was announced as Markham.

Perry Jenkins had appeared for practice as usual on Friday afternoon, but he was not with the team now lined up on the bench in the Holbrook dugout.

"Can't understand it," the coach told those who questioned him. "He called me on the phone at noon to-day and said he was quitting baseball. I went around to his room to argue with him, but couldn't find him. Anyway, Markham's probably as good."

The game began with the home team taking the field, according to custom. Clark Prescott walked slowly out to the box, smiling confidently, and accepted the new ball that the umpire tossed him. The first Milton batter was at the plate, eagerly swinging his stick. Markham gave the signal, and Clark nodded. It was a signal for a straight ball, and Clark, with perfect control, sent one spinning across the plate. The batter did not offer to strike, but a strike was called on him. The same signal followed, and again Clark nodded. The ball was laced out for a clean two-bagger that set the stands to screaming.

Holbrook's pitcher was anything but phenomenal in his performance that day. In the third inning he was jerked from the box, with the score four to nothing in favor of the visitors, and a second string pitcher took his place. This obscure person secured the game from the fire, and Holbrook was victor by one point.

"Batted out of the box!" raged Clark inwardly, not able to believe that which had happened was anything but a horrible dream. "Me—Clark Prescott—my perfect control and my wide sweeping out! They hit me as easily as a beginner, and that dub that nobody ever heard of goes in and holds 'em down. Wonder what the Blue Blade will think about me now?"

What the aristocratic campus society thought about the performance was not made known at once. When Clark Prescott again was batted out of the box in the next game, and Holbrook was defeated as a consequence of the hits made off him, Alex Fliondell paid another visit to the dormitory, and this time the news he brought was not so pleasant.

"You've got to snap out of it, Prescott," said Alex, politely but firmly. "We can't have failures in our organization."

"I can't," Clark understood it, faltered. "It seems as though something has gone out of me, some ingredient that made me a good pitcher. I still have control, my curves break well, but—but they hit me, and they didn't used to."

Meanwhile Perry Jenkins had been discovered in a new role. He had taken up hammer throwing in a big way, and prospects were that he would make a success of his new activity. All efforts of Coach Bindle and other interested persons failed to induce Perry to return behind the bat on the diamond.

"I'm sick of baseball," he insisted. "Of course the coach did not plead too strongly. I'm not begging the boys to play," he said after the second futile effort. "Anyway, Jenkins is no star catcher. I'd like to have two fairly dependable men to use back of the plate when I need them, but I'm not getting down on my knees to anyone."

The next game brought climax to the Holbrook baseball season. Evans Academy was the opponent, and the game was to be played on Evans territory. The rivalry between the two schools was one of those traditional rivalries that produce spectacles generally known as "annual classes." No championship was at stake, but this game was recognized on both campuses as the most important on the schedule.

For days before the game Clark was filled with anxiety. He scarcely could eat, and sleep was equally difficult. "I'm out of it for good if I funk in this game," he told himself repeatedly. "Out of baseball, out of the Blue Blade, out of everything. I'll quit school, that's what I'll do."

Game was all his former self-confidence. He still had control of the ball

and could make the old outcurve sweep across the plate as usual, but something was missing.

"I'll only find out what it is," he muttered, tossing restlessly in bed on the night before the game. "What is wrong with me, anyway?"

Suddenly, he leaped from bed, turned on a light and began pulling on his clothes. From beneath a pillow he took a watch and ascertained that the hour was eleven o'clock. "The coach would maroon me on a desert island if he found me out of bed at such a time," he told himself, but this thought did not detract him from his purpose.

Fifteen minutes later Clark was knocking softly on the door of another room in another dormitory. After repeating the summons three times, he finally was invited, in a sleepy voice, to "wait a minute." A ruffling at the lock followed, the swinging of a door, and the two friends were together. "I want you," said Clark Prescott eagerly, without waiting time on polite formalities, "to catch for Holbrook to-morrow."

Perry Jenkins scratched his scalp, gave vent to a couple of deliberate yawns, and shook his head. "I'm a hammer thrower now," he said decisively. "Not interested in catching any longer. See you again some time maybe, Mr. Prescott."

"This obviously was a hint to leave, and with drooping shoulders the pitcher moved slowly toward the door. With his hand on the knob he turned and held out his arms appealingly to the red-headed youth who was sitting on the edge of the bed.

"Perry, will you catch to-morrow for me—for old friendship's sake?"

Perry Jenkins stared moodily at the door, running his hands through his tousled red hair. Presently he looked up, and something like a grin spread across his freckled moon face. "Sure I will, Clark, if you put it that way."

Catch he did. Nothing was remarkable about his performance behind the plate, so far as the spectators were aware. He was just a fair catcher, doing a fair day's work, but one of his teammates had a different understanding of the situation.

Behind the plate, Perry Jenkins gave the signal for an incurve. Clark Prescott shook his head. Many batters had the habit of waiting on the first ball, and he entertained the idea that this particular Evans hitter was a waver. The catcher insisted on a curve, nevertheless, and finally Clark consented. The batter struck and missed by a good six inches. He hit the ball later, but it was an easy bouncer and he expired halfway to first.

Clark Prescott came back. That day his pitching was fully up to par. Hits were made, but not when they counted for scores. Several strike-outs were chalked up to his credit. He had perfect control, his curves broke well, and there was something else. Holbrook won by a score of seven to four.

As usual, there was an end-of-the-season banquet for the team that night, at an Evans hotel. Among the speakers was Coach Bindle, who spoke in glowing terms of the season's accomplishments and was particularly generous in his praise for Clark Prescott.

"I was afraid for a little while," said

the coach, "that Prescott had gone blind, lost his nerve, or something. I even thought he might have the swelled head. But to-day he delivered the goods, and I want to tell you that I consider him the best college pitcher to be had in this section of the state. Let's hear a few words from him."

Clark Prescott stood up and waited for the cheering to subside. His face was pale, but his eyes were bright. The expression on his countenance was strange. Usually pride was written there; now there was something almost apologetic. His voice was low when he spoke, but his words were firm and clear.

"Coach Bindle, and fellows: I've been called a good pitcher. I know I have control and some pretty fair curves. I'll admit I had a bad case of swelled head for awhile. I didn't lose my nerve, but I lost something else, and I'll tell you what it was. What I lost was my brains, fellows. They reside in the head of Perry Jenkins, over there. When he quit the team, they were not available any longer. That's what happened to me. All our lives, it seems, we've been a baseball battery, we two. I was a machine throwing balls, his brain was using up the batters, forming judgments, telling me

what to throw. It's the combination that did things for Holbrook—my arm and Jenkins' headwork. He didn't quit the team till I quit him. I want you to know that."

On Monday morning, when Alex Fliondell called on Clark Prescott, to offer his congratulations, another boy was in the room. "Er—excuse me," said Alex, staring at the catcher in evident disapproval. "I didn't know you had a guest. I just wanted to tell you that Blue Blade is satisfied, and your initiation is set for Thursday."

The three youths were standing, and now Clark Prescott touched Perry Jenkins on the shoulder, with an affectionate hand. "Mr. Fliondell," he said in cold, calm, polite tones, "I'd like you to meet Mr. Jenkins, my friend. And if you don't mind, you can take your Blue Blades and drop them in the river. May I suggest that the rustic bridge would be a good place for the ceremony? You see, Perry here is joining Emerson, and so am I—if they'll have me."

YOU CAN BANK ON IT!

You can bank on a great many things by using Old Company's Anthracite... quality, comfort and convenience. But, most important, you can actually bank the money that you save... for you get more heat because...

J. B. Mackenzie & Son
Coal and Coke, Lumber, Builders' Supplies, Contractors
ACTON PHONE 48

THE SOLID FUEL FOR SOLID COMFORT

The Cancer Crusade

Fighting the Great Scourge with Knowledge—A Campaign to Wise Out Ignorance, Fear and Neglect

J. W. B. McCullough, M.D., D.P.H.

A WORD TO WOMEN ABOUT CANCER

Nearly everyone has had during life some sort of growth or tumor; it may have been only a wart which may appear on any part of the body. Most growths are harmless. Many never need removal. Some even of insignificant beginnings are dangerous. It is of the highest importance to determine the true character of every growth or tumor, whether great or small, whose existence is known or suspected.

What are Tumors? Elsewhere in these articles on cancer it has been pointed out that the body is composed of countless millions of cells and that a tumor is a group of cells which grows independently of the rest of the tissues and serves no useful purpose. As a rule tumors grow from unhealthy tissues, a tissue perhaps which has been inflamed, irritated or over-exposed to sun or weather. A few forms of tumor show a hereditary tendency. Most tumors show no hereditary trace whatever. Some persons seem to be more susceptible to tumors than others. This is not an unusual circumstance. Some persons take colds or other affections more readily than others. Tuberculosis, for example, more readily in some families than others but tuberculosis is no longer considered an hereditary disease.

Women are peculiarly liable to tumors in the breast and uterus. These tumors occur usually after 35 years of age, occasionally earlier. Many of the tumors of women are simple and without danger. Nearly all tumors begin with apparently trivial symptoms. It is a pity that at the beginning they did not present the pain of a toothache. If they did, more attention would be paid to them. It is an encouraging fact that among all tumors of the human body there are none which so readily respond to early treatment as those peculiar to women. It is encouraging too, that only 25% or less, of breast tumors are cancerous.

Tumors of the breast begin, as do tumors everywhere, as a single cell. A growth in the breast should be discovered when no larger than a bean. This is the moment for action. The character of the tumor should at once be determined. If cancerous, surgery is the best means of treatment. Surgery in these early cases of breast tumor offers 90% of cure. The delayed case may mean over 90% of failure. There must be no delay in dealing with a tumor.

On Monday morning, when Alex Fliondell called on Clark Prescott, to offer his congratulations, another boy was in the room. "Er—excuse me," said Alex, staring at the catcher in evident disapproval. "I didn't know you had a guest. I just wanted to tell you that Blue Blade is satisfied, and your initiation is set for Thursday."

The three youths were standing, and now Clark Prescott touched Perry Jenkins on the shoulder, with an affectionate hand. "Mr. Fliondell," he said in cold, calm, polite tones, "I'd like you to meet Mr. Jenkins, my friend. And if you don't mind, you can take your Blue Blades and drop them in the river. May I suggest that the rustic bridge would be a good place for the ceremony? You see, Perry here is joining Emerson, and so am I—if they'll have me."

On Monday morning, when Alex Fliondell called on Clark Prescott, to offer his congratulations, another boy was in the room. "Er—excuse me," said Alex, staring at the catcher in evident disapproval. "I didn't know you had a guest. I just wanted to tell you that Blue Blade is satisfied, and your initiation is set for Thursday."

The three youths were standing, and now Clark Prescott touched Perry Jenkins on the shoulder, with an affectionate hand. "Mr. Fliondell," he said in cold, calm, polite tones, "I'd like you to meet Mr. Jenkins, my friend. And if you don't mind, you can take your Blue Blades and drop them in the river. May I suggest that the rustic bridge would be a good place for the ceremony? You see, Perry here is joining Emerson, and so am I—if they'll have me."

Women are peculiarly liable to tumors in the breast and uterus. These tumors occur usually after 35 years of age, occasionally earlier. Many of the tumors of women are simple and without danger. Nearly all tumors begin with apparently trivial symptoms. It is a pity that at the beginning they did not present the pain of a toothache. If they did, more attention would be paid to them. It is an encouraging fact that among all tumors of the human body there are none which so readily respond to early treatment as those peculiar to women. It is encouraging too, that only 25% or less, of breast tumors are cancerous.

Tumors of the breast begin, as do tumors everywhere, as a single cell. A growth in the breast should be discovered when no larger than a bean. This is the moment for action. The character of the tumor should at once be determined. If cancerous, surgery is the best means of treatment. Surgery in these early cases of breast tumor offers 90% of cure. The delayed case may mean over 90% of failure. There must be no delay in dealing with a tumor.

What are Tumors? Elsewhere in these articles on cancer it has been pointed out that the body is composed of countless millions of cells and that a tumor is a group of cells which grows independently of the rest of the tissues and serves no useful purpose. As a rule tumors grow from unhealthy tissues, a tissue perhaps which has been inflamed, irritated or over-exposed to sun or weather. A few forms of tumor show a hereditary tendency. Most tumors show no hereditary trace whatever. Some persons seem to be more susceptible to tumors than others. This is not an unusual circumstance. Some persons take colds or other affections more readily than others. Tuberculosis, for example, more readily in some families than others but tuberculosis is no longer considered an hereditary disease.

Women are peculiarly liable to tumors in the breast and uterus. These tumors occur usually after 35 years of age, occasionally earlier. Many of the tumors of women are simple and without danger. Nearly all tumors begin with apparently trivial symptoms. It is a pity that at the beginning they did not present the pain of a toothache. If they did, more attention would be paid to them. It is an encouraging fact that among all tumors of the human body there are none which so readily respond to early treatment as those peculiar to women. It is encouraging too, that only 25% or less, of breast tumors are cancerous.

Tumors of the breast begin, as do tumors everywhere, as a single cell. A growth in the breast should be discovered when no larger than a bean. This is the moment for action. The character of the tumor should at once be determined. If cancerous, surgery is the best means of treatment. Surgery in these early cases of breast tumor offers 90% of cure. The delayed case may mean over 90% of failure. There must be no delay in dealing with a tumor.

What are Tumors? Elsewhere in these articles on cancer it has been pointed out that the body is composed of countless millions of cells and that a tumor is a group of cells which grows independently of the rest of the tissues and serves no useful purpose. As a rule tumors grow from unhealthy tissues, a tissue perhaps which has been inflamed, irritated or over-exposed to sun or weather. A few forms of tumor show a hereditary tendency. Most tumors show no hereditary trace whatever. Some persons seem to be more susceptible to tumors than others. This is not an unusual circumstance. Some persons take colds or other affections more readily than others. Tuberculosis, for example, more readily in some families than others but tuberculosis is no longer considered an hereditary disease.

Women are peculiarly liable to tumors in the breast and uterus. These tumors occur usually after 35 years of age, occasionally earlier. Many of the tumors of women are simple and without danger. Nearly all tumors begin with apparently trivial symptoms. It is a pity that at the beginning they did not present the pain of a toothache. If they did, more attention would be paid to them. It is an encouraging fact that among all tumors of the human body there are none which so readily respond to early treatment as those peculiar to women. It is encouraging too, that only 25% or less, of breast tumors are cancerous.

Tumors of the breast begin, as do tumors everywhere, as a single cell. A growth in the breast should be discovered when no larger than a bean. This is the moment for action. The character of the tumor should at once be determined. If cancerous, surgery is the best means of treatment. Surgery in these early cases of breast tumor offers 90% of cure. The delayed case may mean over 90% of failure. There must be no delay in dealing with a tumor.

What are Tumors? Elsewhere in these articles on cancer it has been pointed out that the body is composed of countless millions of cells and that a tumor is a group of cells which grows independently of the rest of the tissues and serves no useful purpose. As a rule tumors grow from unhealthy tissues, a tissue perhaps which has been inflamed, irritated or over-exposed to sun or weather. A few forms of tumor show a hereditary tendency. Most tumors show no hereditary trace whatever. Some persons seem to be more susceptible to tumors than others. This is not an unusual circumstance. Some persons take colds or other affections more readily than others. Tuberculosis, for example, more readily in some families than others but tuberculosis is no longer considered an hereditary disease.

GETTING THE TASTE OF IT
"Sarah, you'll have to stop feedin' that cow on shredded wheat. It's dangerous." "Why is it dangerous, Ed?" "Well, this mornin' at milkin she darn near chewed my whiskers off."

CERTAINLY NOT
Interviewer—What have you to say about anonymous letters?
Professor—They're stupid! I read them but I never answer them.

JUST HUNGRY
Mary had a little lamb—
You've heard this oft before—
And then she passed her plate again
And had a little more.

AN INDUSTRIOUS CHAP
The banker was questioning the Negro applicant for a chauffeur's job.
"Are you married?" the banker asked.
"Nawwah, boss," replied the applicant.
"Nawwah; Ah makes mah own livin—"

Only 9th ORIGINAL NARVO SALE

DON'T MISS THESE SAVINGS

10 DAYS LEFT ANNUAL SALE NARVO

For Sale by - **WM. R. LASHBROOK**
HARDWARE, PAINTS, PLUMBING MILL STREET, ACTON



- | | |
|---|---|
| Pineapples
MEDIUM LARGE
Cuban — Delicious
Flavor — each | Oranges
NAVELS
Sweet—Medium Large
Delicious — per dozen |
| Bananas
3 Golden Yellow
lbs. for | POTATOES
Good Mealy Cookers
per Peck |
| TOMATOES
2 FIRM RIPE
lbs. for | CELERY
2 Nice Size Stalks
for |
| Cabbage 2 lbs.
NEW Delicious Green Heads | POTATOES
4 NEW
lbs. for |
| LEMONS
5 Full of Juice
for | CUCUMBERS, H. H. RADISHES and Other FRUITS, etc. |

CARROLL'S LIMITED

FREE DELIVERY

BABY WEEK

Heinz or Aylmer Infants FOODS 1 tin 19c	Sunlight SOAP 4 cakes 24c
For All Children—Cream of WHEAT 14c, 22c	Rinso or LUX 1 1/2 pks 23c
Libby's Tomato JUICE 2 10-oz. tin 9c	P. & G. White Naptha SOAP 3 bars 10c
St. Charles Evaporated MILK 10-oz. tin 8c	Old English No-Rub WAX 1 tin 49c
Crown Brand Corn SYRUP 8-1/2 tin 16c	Metal Polish BRASSO 1 tin 13c

E. D. Smith's PURE JAM RASPBERRY OR STRAWBERRY 32 oz. Jar 39c

Fresh Chocolate Puff BISCUITS 2 lbs. 27c

Golden Ribbon White CORN 3 17-oz. tins 25c

Lowey's Assorted SUGAR PLUMS Big Bag 10c

For Cakes or Puddings CURRANTS 2 lbs. 25c

Our Economy COFFEE 1 lb. 23c

Our Dandee TEA 1 lb. pkg 43c

Eagle Brand Pie BLUEBERRIES 2 No. 2 Tins 25c

Graves Pie APPLES No. 4 Tin 10c

McLaren's Powdered JELLIES 2 pkgs 9c

Bon Ton Toilet TISSUE 5 Rolls 14c

Burford Ontario PEACHES 2 No. 2 Tins 25c

Silver Ribbon Choice TOMATOES No. 2 1/2 Tin 10c

Belle City PEAS 17-oz. Tin 9c

RED ROSE TEA 1/2-lb. red pkg 31c

1/2-lb. Orange Pekoe 36c

Delicately Perfumed LUX SOAP cake 6c

Kirk's Hardwater Soap CASTILE 2 cakes 9c

Maple Leaf Pure LARD 2 1-lb. pkgs 23c

Prevent Moth Damage with FLY-GO 8-oz. bl. 20c

Hedlund's Jiffy DINNER 16-oz. Tin 14c

Sure Lite MATCHES 3 Boxes 19c

Heinz Cooked SPAGHETTI 2 Med Tins 21c

Catacar Dry Ginger ALE plus deposit 4 1/2 bls. 48c

To Pack Eggs—Water GLASS 2 Tins 25c

Our Naturally-Aged Old CHEESE 1 lb. 25c

Wet Pack SHRIMPS Tin 17c

Ground Black PEPPER 1/2-lb. 10c

Sifted or Regal SALT 3 1/2-lb. pkgs. 10c

Carroll's Pure Baking POWDER 16-oz. Tin 17c

BROCK'S Bird Seed 10-oz. pkg 14c

Bird Gravel 2 pkgs. 17c

Canada's Cheapest Salt Value Big New Tin 39c

KNOX'S KNOX'S SALTS

Free Delivery

PHONE 158

GOOD SHOES FOR YOUNG AND OLD
"Correctly Fitted"
R. D. RACHLIN, Acton