

Bibliography

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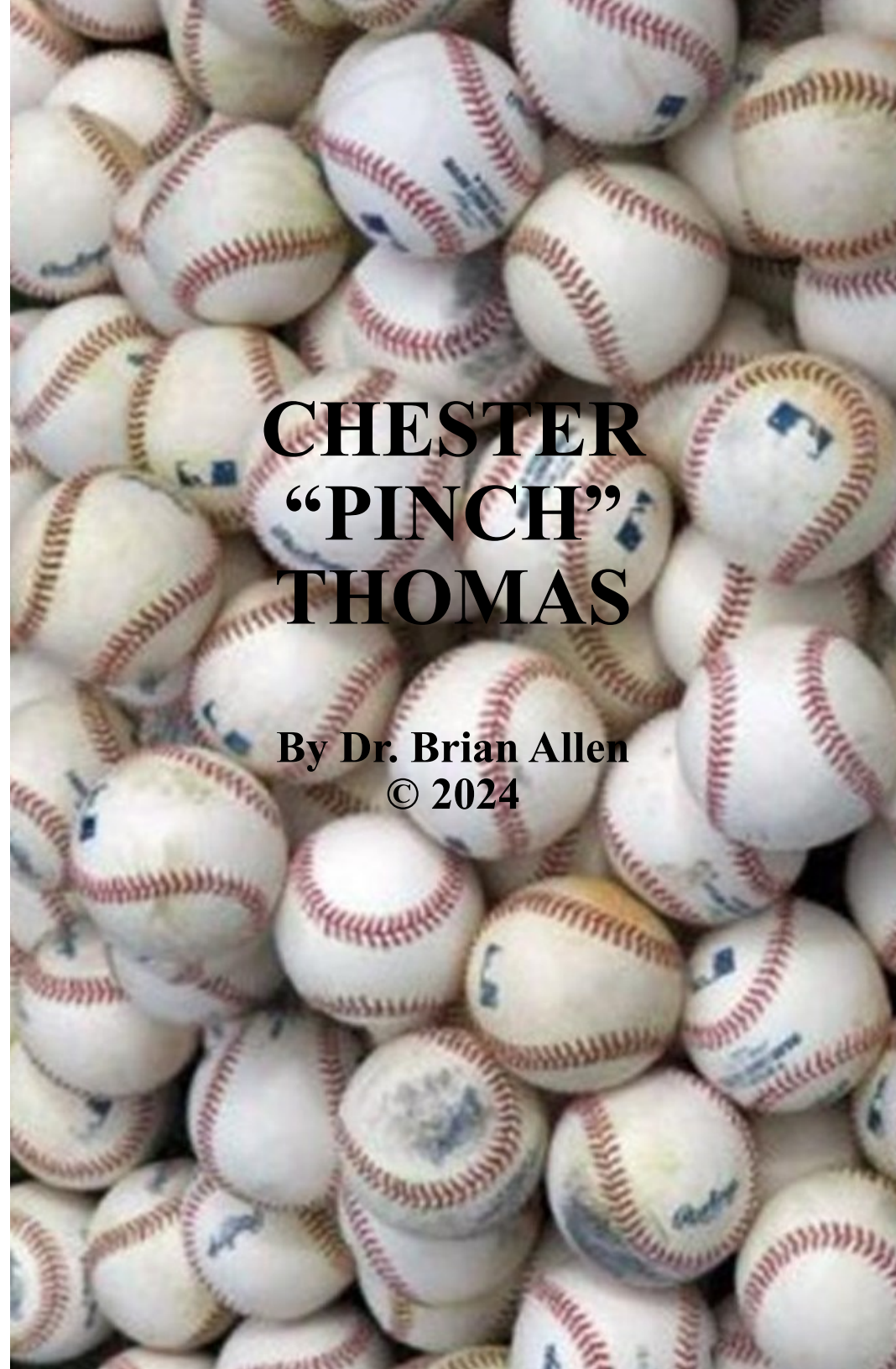
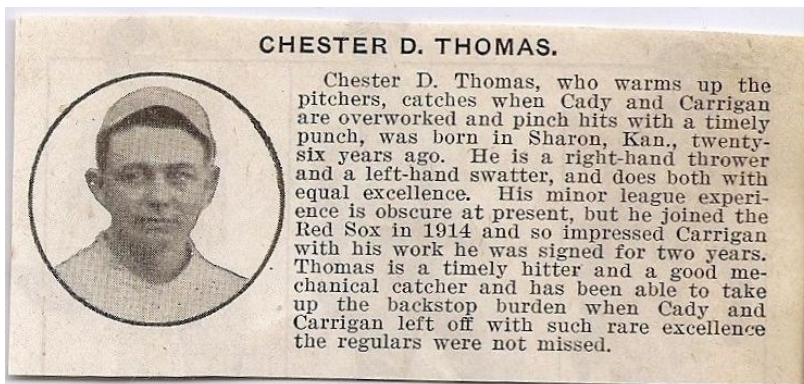
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1915 Sporting Life Article



CHESTER “PINCH” THOMAS

By Dr. Brian Allen
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21422085		1911	E100 THOMAS P.C.L.-TYPE I	1
20872639		1911	T212 OBAK THOMAS (SACRAMENTO)	4
14048716		1911	ZEENUT PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE THOMAS D381 FLEISCHMANN BAKERY CHESTER D. THOMAS AS TWO BUTTONS-WITH TAB	4
26792587		1916		2
15155				
988	173		BOSTON STORE CHESTER THOMAS	7
25659				
224	173	1917	COLLINS-McCARTHY CHESTER THOMAS	3
31796				
939	173	1917	COLLINS-McCARTHY CHESTER THOMAS BLANK BACK	5.5
25659				
225	173	1917	D328 WEIL BAKING CO. CHESTER THOMAS	4
46876				
578	173	1917	STANDARD BISCUIT CHESTER THOMAS E121 AMERICAN CARAMEL SERIES OF 80 CHESTER THOMAS	6
25659221		1921	HERPOLSCHEIMER'S CHESTER THOMAS	4
25659222		1921	HOLSUM BREAD CHESTER THOMAS E122 AMERICAN CARAMEL SERIES OF 80 CHESTER THOMAS	3
22322485		1922	THOMAS	4.5
09121417		1922	W575-1 CHESTER THOMAS HAND CUT	2
22868996		1922	W575-1 H.JOHNSON CHESTER THOMAS HAND CUT WITMOR CANDY CO. SERIES OF 80 CHESTER THOMAS TYPE 2	2MK
15751057		1923	ZEENUT PACIFIC COAST LEAGUE THOMAS (OAKLAND)-NO TAB-HAND CUT	2MK



THE RED CHECK-MARK INDICATES I HAVE AN EXAMPLE OF THE COLLECTIBLE IN MY COLLECTION.

CHESTER DAVID THOMAS BIOGRAPHY
per wikipedia.com

Chester David Thomas (January 24, 1888 – December 24, 1953) was a backup catcher in Major League Baseball who played from 1912 through 1921 for the Boston Red Sox (1912–17) and Cleveland Indians (1918–21). Listed at 5 ft 9.5 in (1.77 m), 173 lb., Thomas batted left-handed and threw right-handed. He was born in Camp Point, Illinois.

A fine defensive replacement, Thomas was the primary catcher for the Red Sox during three years, helping them to the World Championship in 1915 and 1916. In 1917 he led American League catchers with a .986 fielding percentage, but at the end of the season he was dealt to the Philadelphia Athletics, with two other players, in the same transaction that brought Joe Bush, Wally Schang and Amos Strunk to Boston. He did not appear in a game for the Athletics and was sold to the Indians. While in Cleveland, he won a third World Series ring in 1920. A good pinch-hitter as well, he hit .417 (13-for-31) from 1913 to 1918.

In a 10-season career, Thomas was a .237 hitter (245-for-1035) with two home runs and 102 RBI, including 88 runs, 27 doubles, eight triples, 12 stolen bases, and a .318 on-base percentage. In 423 catching appearances, he committed 52 errors in 1,948 chances for a .973 fielding percentage. Thomas died in Modesto, California at age 65.

On his World War 1 registration card he listed Medicine Lodge Kansas as his home of residence.

Buried at Cherokee Memorial Park, California

Postseason Batting

[Postseason Gamelog](#) · [Glossary](#) · [SHARE](#) · [Embed](#) · [CSV](#) · [Export](#) · [PRE](#) · [LINK](#) · ?

Year	Age	TM	Lg	Series	Opp	Rslt	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	BA	OBP	SLG	OPS	TB	GDP	HBP	SH	SF	IBB	
1915	27	BOS	AL	WS	PHI	W	2	5	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.200	.200	.200	.400	1		0	0	0	0	
1916	28	BOS	AL	WS	BRO	W	3	8	7	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	.143	.143	.429	.571	3		0	1	0	0	
1920	32	CLE	AL	WS	BRO	W	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					0		0	0	0	0	
3 Yrs (3 Series)								6	13	12	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	.167	.167	.333	.500	4		0	1	0	0
3 WS								6	13	12	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	.167	.167	.333	.500	4		0	1	0	0	

CHESTER PINCH THOMAS

Society for American Baseball Research (SABR)

By Joanne Hulbert

The train pulled out of South Station in Boston on February 18, 1911, heading for Los Angeles and the new location for Red Sox spring training (Redondo Beach, California). Several stops were made along the way as the party picked up players from Western League teams as well as returning veteran players. Manager Patsy Donovan intended to try out at least a dozen of the prospects, hoped to keep a few and farm out other potential players to West Coast clubs for further development. The catchers and first basemen were of particular interest; those positions were where Boston's roster needed improvement. At a stop-over in Chicago, several more veterans and a few Western Leaguers joined the team, and the train rolled on to Kansas City, where four recruits came aboard while a crowd of spectators waited to see Joe Wood make a brief appearance on the platform. Among the four joining the team was Chester David Thomas from Sharon, Kansas. Born on January 24, 1888, in Camp Point, Illinois, he had moved as a youngster with his family to Kansas. Known as Chet, Chess, Chubby Chester, Chatterer Chet, Tom, Thommy, the Golden West Receiver, the Kansan, the Baseball Populist, Goat, and Pinch, the sobriquet that became the enduring nickname among them. Thomas's brother said he was at a loss as to where it came from. Although Thomas was most frequently called Chet by the Boston scribes, perhaps his record as a pinch-hitter (13-for-31, .419) as a pinch hitter from 1913 to 1918 had all to do with the nickname.

Thomas started playing baseball as an infielder on local grounds in Kansas but found greater opportunities on the West Coast and took up the backstop position with the San Jose team of the California State League in 1908. In 1909 he split his time between Helena, Montana, of the Northwest League and the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League. The Chicago Cubs secured a 30-day option on Thomas, and not wanting to give him up so soon – he was merely on loan to the Helena club – the Oaks recalled him. At Oakland he was used as a pinch-hitter with great success, and was famous for getting on base by hitting weak but untouchable infield flies and for stopping basestealers.

Standard Fielding		Game Logs		Advanced Fielding Stats		Glossary · SHARE · Embed · CSV · Export · PRE · LINK · ?																					
Year	Tm	Lg	Age	Pos	G	GS	CG	Inn	Ch	PO	A	E	DP	Fld%	RF/9	RF/G	IgFld%	IgRF9	IgRF/G	PB	WP	SB	CS	CS%	IgCS%	PO Awards	
1912	BOS	AL	24	C	8			68.0	58	42	14	2	1	.966	7.41	7.00	.961	6.87	6.78	1		9	9	50%	42%		
1913	BOS	AL	25	C	31			214.0	179	135	41	3	2	.983	7.40	5.68	.967	6.63	6.56	5		36	29	45%	45%		
1914	BOS	AL	26	C	64	45	30	400.0	292	235	47	10	6	.966	6.34	4.41	.967	6.76	6.69	13		65	34	34%	45%		
1914	BOS	AL	26	1B	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	1.000	9.00	1.00	.980	10.80	10.60								
1915	BOS	AL	27	C	82	59	45	553.0	419	325	81	13	7	.969	6.61	4.95	.965	6.50	6.46	3		54	47	47%	43%		
1916	BOS	AL	28	C	90	63	42	611.0	415	321	86	8	7	.981	6.00	4.52	.974	6.32	6.33	4		56	45	45%	43%		
1917	BOS	AL	29	C	77	67	56	580.0	370	296	69	5	8	.986	5.66	4.74	.971	5.70	5.71	12		55	45	45%	45%		
1918	CLE	AL	30	C	24	18	15	179.0	115	85	24	6	2	.948	5.48	4.54	.970	5.47	5.51	0		18	12	40%	44%		
1919	CLE	AL	31	C	21	6	6	91.0	49	39	9	1	0	.980	4.75	2.29	.974	5.59	5.57	0		6	5	45%	45%		
1920	CLE	AL	32	C	7	3	1	26.0	17	14	3	0	0	1.000	5.88	2.43	.973	5.16	5.11	0		3	0	0%	48%		
1921	CLE	AL	33	C	19	7	6	85.0	34	27	3	4	0	.882	3.18	1.58	.971	4.92	4.89	0		5	1	17%	45%		
10 Seasons C					423	268	201	2807.0	1948	1519	377	52	33	.973	6.08	4.48	.969	6.20	6.15	38		307	227	43%	44%		
1 Season 1B					1	0	0	1.0	1	1	0	0	0	1.000	9.00	1.00	.980	10.80	10.60								
10 Seasons TOT					424	268	201	2808.0	1949	1520	377	52	33	.973	6.08	4.47	.969	6.20	6.16	38		307	227	43%	44%		

Player Value--Batters

WAR Explained (v2.2): 8+ MVP, 5+ A-S, 2+ Starter, 0-2 Sub, < 0 Rep1 · Glossary · SHARE · Embed · CSV · Export

Year	Age	Tm	Lg	G	PA	Rbat	Rbaser	Rdp	Rfield	Rpos	RAA	WAA	Rrep	RAR	WAR	waaWL%	162WL%	oWAR	dWAR	oRAR	Salary	Pos	Awards
1912	24	BOS	AL	13	33	-3	0	0	0	1	-2	-0.2	1	-1	-0.1	-0.1	.484	.499	-0.1	0.1	-1		/2
1913	25	BOS	AL	38	96	-1	-0	0	0	2	1	0.1	4	4	0.5	.502	.501	0.5	0.2	4		2	
1914	26	BOS	AL	66	146	-7	1	0	-1	2	-5	-0.6	6	0	-0.0	.491	.496	0.1	0.1	2		2/3	
1915	27	BOS	AL	86	225	-6	0	0	2	4	0	0.0	8	9	0.9	.500	.500	0.7	0.6	7		2	
1916	28	BOS	AL	99	266	4	-0	0	1	4	9	1.0	10	19	2.0	.511	.506	2.0	0.6	18		2	
1917	29	BOS	AL	83	238	-2	-0	0	4	2	0.2	9	11	1.1	.503	.501	1.1	0.4	11		2		
1918	30	CLE	AL	32	83	-3	0	0	-1	1	-2	-0.3	3	1	0.0	.490	.498	0.1	0.0	2		2	
1919	31	CLE	AL	34	51	-7	0	0	0	1	-6	-0.7	2	-4	-0.5	.479	.496	-0.5	0.1	-4		2	
1920	32	CLE	AL	9	12	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.1	0	2	0.1	.511	.501	0.1	0.0	1		\$4,800 /2	
1921	33	CLE	AL	21	46	0	0	0	-1	1	0	0.0	2	2	0.2	.501	.500	0.3	-0.0	3		\$4,800 /2	
10 Seasons					481	1196	-23	1	0	19	-3	-0.4	45	42	4.3	.499	.501	4.4	2.1	4.4	2.1	42	\$9,600
BOS (6 yrs)					385	1004	-15	1	0	2	17	5	0.5	38	4.4	.502	.501	4.3	2.1	4.1	41		
CLE (4 yrs)					96	192	-8	0	-2	2	-8	-0.9	7	-0	-0.2	.491	.498	0.0	0.1	0.1	2	\$9,600	

Thomas began the 1910 season with Oakland, was purchased by the Sacramento team in June, and returned to Oakland on August 1. After a game on August 7, a disagreement erupted between Thomas and fellow Oakland catcher Carl Mitze at a local watering hole. The *Oakland Tribune* reported that they “went at it hammer and tongs” until spectators stepped in and separated them. Bad blood had existed between the two men, and when Chet started bragging about how he had landed a two-bagger that broke up a game the previous week and he wanted to know why Mitze couldn’t come up with a big hit too. “Oh, I’m there with the big wallop all right,” Mitze countered, as he proceeded to plant a fist on Thomas’ jaw.ⁱ The fight would not be his last and it established his reputation as a loudmouthed scrapper.

Spring training 1911 gave the Red Sox a chance to see what their catcher prospect could do. In the first game, on February 25, Chet Thomas caught the first three innings for the Yannigans. The *Boston Globe’s* Tim Murnane reported that he “looked awfully good. He shot the ball to second and nailed Wagner by a city block.”

On March 14, while Chet was out on the town in San Francisco for a night of sightseeing with friends, his baseball career nearly came to an abrupt end when he was beaten by a gang of street thugs. He suffered a serious head injury and doctors feared he’d lose the sight of one eye. Thomas recovered with a just black eye, his sight undamaged, and the Red Sox investment intact. He was sent back to Sacramento for the 1911 season, and his reputation improved as a smart backstop who could pull many a pitcher out of a tough spot. By September 1911 Thomas’s his future as a member of the Boston Red Sox was set.

In 1912 the Red Sox ended their dalliance with Redondo Beach and returned to Hot Springs, Arkansas, for spring training. Thomas arrived on March 7 along with another new catcher, Hick Cady. They joined veteran Bill Carrigan and Les Nunamaker, the 1911 rookie catcher. At first, neither Thomas nor Cady got a chance to show much behind the plate as there were few attempts at basestealing, but Thomas eventually demonstrated his skill at pegging out runners at second and showed strong at-bats, all done with banter and bluster. Paul Shannon of the

Boston Post wrote that Thomas had an easy way of shooting the ball to the basemen with time to spare.

Although Thomas's official debut with the Red Sox took place on April 24, 1912, his first appearance at the new Fenway Park was on April 9, 1912 in the first game ever played at the ballpark— against Harvard College. Thomas raised a few eyebrows when he appeared behind the plate wearing a pair of new-fangled shinguards adjustable without the use of leather straps.

Les Nunamaker appeared in 35 games, Thomas appeared in 13 (eight as a catcher), Hick Cady caught 43, and Bill Carrigan dominated in 87 games. Carrigan, the dean of Red Sox catchers, had a theory endorsed by management that catchers and pitchers worked best in set pairs. Thomas spent his time warming up pitchers, caught when Cady and Carrigan were overworked – which was not often – and filled in as a pinch-hitter. His April 24 debut was against Walter Johnson, as a pinch-hitter for Carrigan in the ninth inning, and he was thrown out at first.

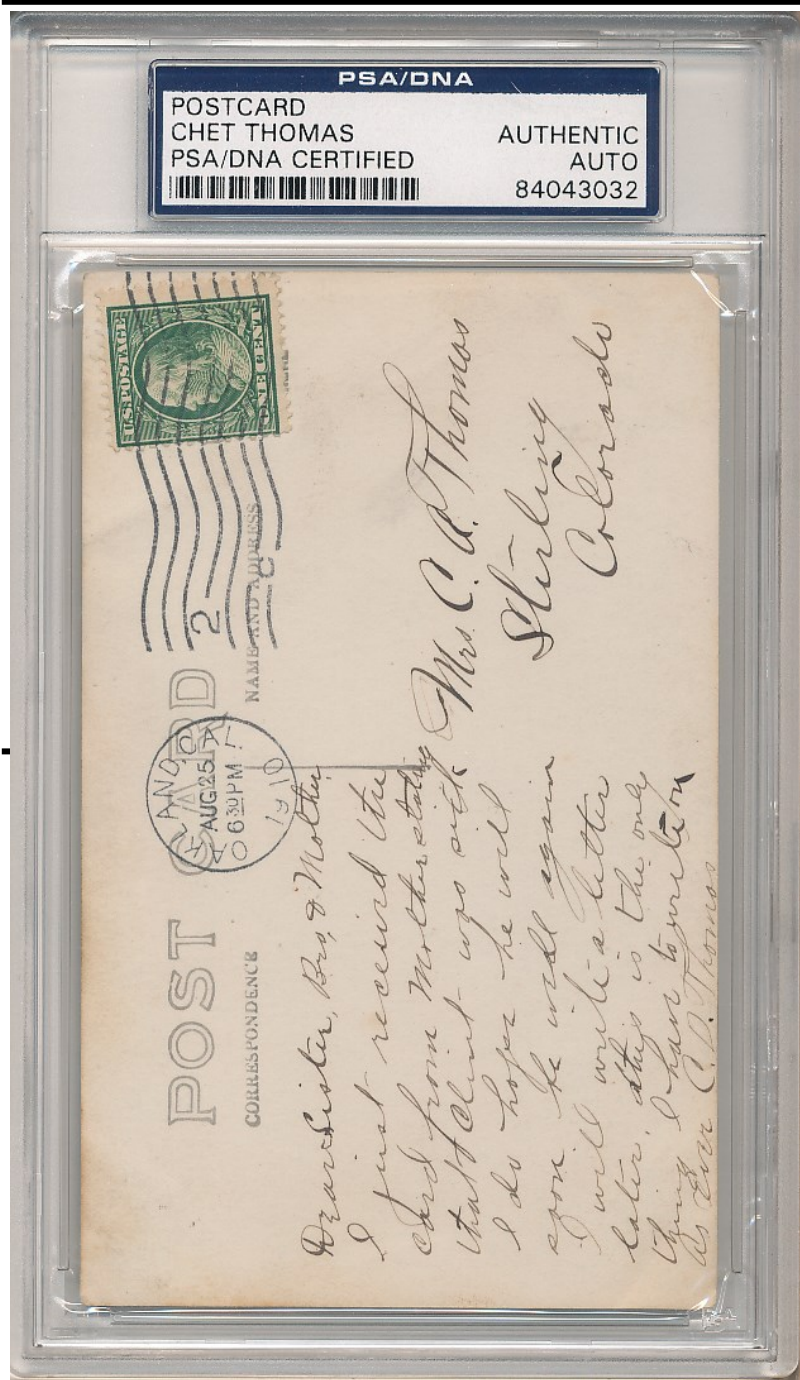
Despite his infrequent appearances in 1912 (and none at all in the World Series, which Boston won over the New York Giants), Thomas earned a portion of the World Series money. He had been signed for two years and although 1912 was a year for breaking in, the *Boston Evening Record* predicted that Pinch would “make good with a vengeance” once he was allowed more work.ⁱⁱⁱ Thomas spent the offseason working on his farm in Medicine Lodge, Kansas, and arrived in Hot Springs ready for spring training on March 3, 1913. Manager Jake Stahl decided to stay with the four 1912 catchers, and appointed former Red Sox catcher Duke Farrell, an 18-year veteran of the major leagues, to find out “just who’s who and what’s what” with the team’s pitching prospects.

As the 1913 season began the sportswriters fueled the fans with predictions of a World Series repeat performance, but April was a cruel month for the Red Sox. They lost the home opener 10-9 to the Philadelphia Athletics, a loss blamed on a play by catcher Hick Cady

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Standard Batting		More Stats		Game Logs		Splits		HR Log		Finders																				
Year	Age	Tm	Lg	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	BA	OBP	SLG	OPS	OPS+	TB	GDP	HBP	SH	SF	IBB	Pos	Awards	
1912	24	BOS	AL	13	33	30	0	6	0	0	0	5	1	0	2	3	.200	.250	.200	.450	26	6	0	1	0	1		/2		
1913	25	BOS	AL	38	96	91	6	26	1	2	1	15	1		2	11	.286	.309	.374	.682	97	34	1	2	1	2		2		
1914	26	BOS	AL	66	146	130	9	25	1	0	0	5	1	0	18	17	.192	.291	.200	.491	47	26	0	2	0	2		2/3		
1915	27	BOS	AL	86	225	203	21	48	4	4	0	21	3	2	13	20	.236	.286	.296	.581	76	60	1	7	1	7		2		
1916	28	BOS	AL	99	266	216	21	57	10	1	1	21	4		33	13	.264	.364	.333	.697	109	72	1	15	1	15		2		
1917	29	BOS	AL	83	238	202	24	48	7	0	0	24	2		27	9	.238	.333	.272	.606	86	55	2	7	2	7		2		
1918	30	CLE	AL	32	83	73	2	18	0	1	0	5	0		6	6	.247	.304	.274	.578	67	20	0	3	0	3		2		
1919	31	CLE	AL	34	51	46	2	5	0	0	0	2	0		4	3	.109	.180	.109	.289	-20	5	0	0	0	2		2		
1920	32	CLE	AL	9	12	9	2	3	1	0	0	0	0		3	1	.333	.500	.444	.944	148	4	0	0	0	0		/2		
1921	33	CLE	AL	21	46	35	1	9	3	0	0	4	0		10	2	.257	.422	.343	.765	95	12	0	1	0	1		2		
10 Yrs				481	1196	1035	88	245	27	8	2	102	12	2	118	85	.237	.318	.284	.602	78	294	5	40	5	40				
162 Game Avg.				162	403	349	30	83	9	3	1	34	4		40	29	.237	.318	.284	.602	78	99	2	13	2	13				
BOS (6 yrs)				385	1004	872	81	210	23	7	2	91	12	2	95	73	.241	.319	.290	.609	83	253	5	34	5	34				
CLE (4 yrs)				96	192	163	7	35	4	1	0	11	0	0	23	12	.215	.312	.252	.563	55	41	0	6	0	6				

Authentic Chester Thomas Autograph (1910)



panned as a bonehead move. They lost six of their first eight games as Hick tried to redeem himself. Thomas's first appearance in a game was on May 3, as a pinch-hitter for Hugh Bedient in the ninth inning of a losing effort against Washington. The Nationals had brought in Walter Johnson to pitch in the eight. Thomas missed three fast ones and dived head-first to the dirt after the third flew by. The invisible missile also passed the Washington catcher, Eddie Ainsmith, and hit the back wall while Pinch ran to first, but he was thrown out before he had made it halfway there. Much to the amusement of the crowd, umpire Tommy Connolly replayed Thomas's plate pratfall, spinning around as if the ball had merely touched his uniform and brought him crashing down like a ton of bricks.

By midseason the Red Sox bench was a hospital ward with every one of the regulars except Hooper and Speaker out of the lineup at one time or another. By July 16 team President Jim McAleer, frustrated with the way the team's fortunes were going, replaced manager Jake Stahl with Bill Carrigan. One result of the managerial shakeup meant less time on the bench for Pinch Thomas. By August Chet had improved his average from .189 to .267, and on September 29, the left-handed-hitting catcher hit his first major-league home run, an inside-the-park job at the Polo Grounds in New York off Yankees started Ray Fisher. By the end of the season his average was a respectable .286 in 38 games, 31 as catcher. With no return to the World Series, Thomas returned to his Kansas farm, "where drops of rain are prized like diamonds at certain times of the year."^v The 1914 Red Sox, extending the trend, had four catchers on the roster: Carrigan, Cady, Nunamaker, and Thomas. The quartet, wrote Tim Murnane in the *Globe*, seldom got injured and were able to stay in good shape as a consequence of their rotation schedule. Although the backstops were touted as the "finest string of catchers of any club in the country," the primitive protective equipment, a pitching staff that was considered far below that needed to be competitive in the American League, and the physical impact inherent in the catching position was a constant threat.^{vi} Pinch started occasionally, and often picked up late innings to relieve the exhausted manager, who still preferred to monitor his pitching staff from behind the plate.

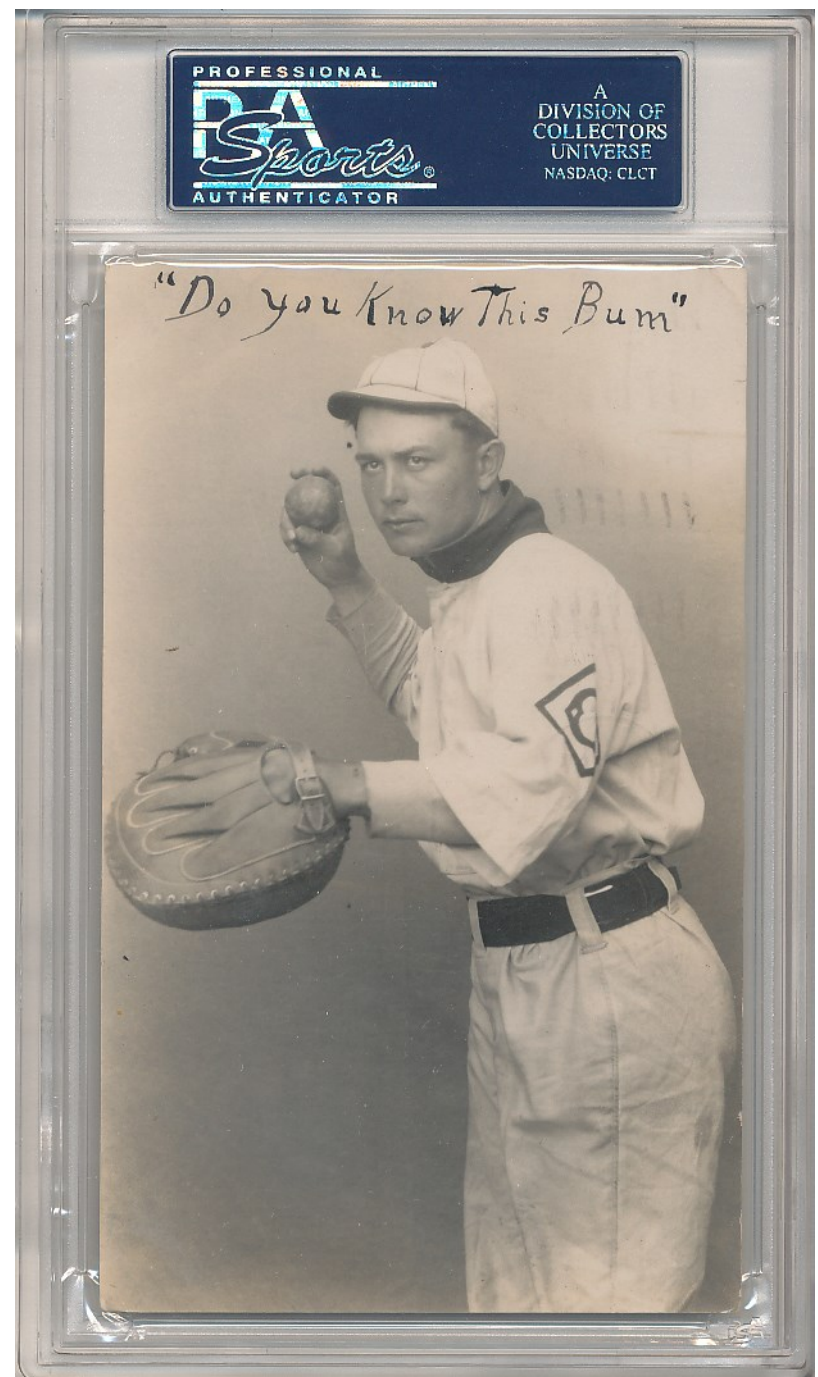
Authentic Chester Thomas Autograph (1910)

For a spell, Thomas himself was among the wounded. In a game in June, the Philadelphia Athletics' Weldon Wyckoff singled to center and Tris Speaker threw the ball to home in an attempt to stop Wally Schang at the plate, but the ball hit Pinch in the eye, causing a deep gash. He "dropped as if he had been shot, and it was several minutes before he recovered sufficiently," wrote Murnane.^{vii} The once "finest string of catchers" was now reduced to just Hick Cady, as Carrigan was also nursing wounds he sustained when he was spiked in a game against the Senators and Les Nunamaker was gone, sold to the Yankees on May 13.

Pinch's recovery stretched into weeks, but he eventually returned, playing an occasional relief inning until the end of the 1914 season. He posted his worst average with the Red Sox, .192, with nine runs and five runs batted in in 66 games. After the season, trade rumors included one that had Boston sending Thomas and Del Gainer to St. Louis for Browns first baseman and occasional backstop Jack Leary. Browns manager Branch Rickey would have none of it. A Red Sox pitching rookie, George Herman Ruth, who appeared in only five games in 1914, looked as though he'd be a good match for the catcher, who sometimes mixed his plate appearances with fisticuffs.

Bill Carrigan continued the battery joint ventures in 1915, pairing Hick Cady with Dutch Leonard and Ernie Shore, while Pinch Thomas tried his hand catching Ruth and Rube Foster. Carrigan, Cady, and Thomas all tried working with Carl Mays, with mixed results. Mays, an underhand pitcher with no previous major-league experience before arriving at Hot Springs, was a challenge. During a batting practice warm-up on April 9, Thomas stopped a Mays wild pitch, and was fortunate the ball did not hit him in the face after hitting the ground in front of him.

When the season began, Thomas became the everyday catcher while Bill Carrigan looked for ways to move the team out of fifth place. Erratic pitching was a problem and fielding needed improvement, but the catchers were doing well. In mid-June the Red Sox left fifth place behind and were tied with the Detroit Tigers for second. Chet ap-



Unkown Date



Babe Ruth holding Chester Thomas's baby

peared in more games than Cady and Carrigan, handled veteran Joe Wood, endured the wild pitches of Carl Mays and formed a solid partnership with Babe Ruth. Boston whittled away the Chicago White Sox' lead and on July 18 Boston was ahead in the pennant race. Smoky Joe was magnificent on the mound, wrote Tim Murnane, and praise was heaped upon Chet Thomas, not only for his handling of the pitching staff but also for his most timely and effective hitting. "Too much cannot be said for the superb all-round work of Chester Thomas in the series here," the scribe wrote from Chicago in July. "There was no department of the position in which he did not outpoint [White Sox catcher Ray] Schalk."

Although Thomas had done more catching during the regular season than Cady and Carrigan, before the World Series Murnane wrote that Thomas was a fine catcher when healthy, but that an injury during a game in Cleveland had forced him to cut back, and he was out of shape and had lost his famous ability to throw out basestealers.

Chicago sportswriter Hugh Fullerton, in his pre-Series analysis, acknowledged Thomas's skill handling left-handed pitchers and his ability to prevent stolen bases – although his throwing was occasionally erratic – and considered Boston to be in a comfortable position since the Red Sox pitching staff kept runners to a minimum. The Red Sox defeated the Philadelphia Phillies, four games to one, for Boston's third World Series championship.

In 1916, despite preseason trade rumors that had Thomas going to Cleveland along with Joe Wood and Ray Collins, Chet was ready to work for Boston, and he did not want to start on the wrong foot. When assigned his room at the Copley Square Hotel, he was handed a key to Room 23. At the time, the number of 23 had a negative connotation along the lines of being forced by someone to leave quickly. Chet complained to Tillie Walker, "What do you think of that. Giving me Room 23. Gee whiz, the season hasn't opened yet and he's trying to start me with 23! Not on your life." He demanded a different room from the desk clerk.

1915 Chester in a Suit

During spring training catcher Sam Agnew, acquired from the St. Louis Browns, received more attention than Chet, but by May Carrigan reconsidered partnering Agnew with Babe Ruth. During a game in May against Washington, the Babe walked nine batters, three in the eighth inning alone, and Carrigan concluded that Sam was the wrong guy to handle Babe's curves. Pinch returned to the lineup when Babe was pitching. "The wonderful form of George Ruth may be justifiably traced to Thomas," wrote a Boston sports scribe. "He has coached the Baltimorean ever since they mobilized at the ramparts in Hot Springs. Ruth has become accustomed to look to Chubby Chester for advice."

Pinch continued to pull an occasional boner, causing Carrigan to reconsider catching Ruth himself. The Babe wasn't having an impressive start in 1916, either, for by mid-May he hadn't yet hit a home run. Chet caught basestealer Ty Cobb twice in one game in May. By his own count he figured that he stopped Cobb 10 times in 1916 and missed just twice, the best record of any catcher in the American League.^{xi} He was working harder than ever to earn back his place as the primary backstop, and his hitting was improving, too. Carrigan had also tried Thomas with Ernie Shore, the emery-ball hurler, but the relationship broke down. In June Thomas and Shore had a ninth-inning argument, Chet accusing "Emery" of crossing him up. The Shore-Thomas battery would never be the same.

The 1916 season was Chet's best year in baseball. Along with his partnership with the Babe, he also caught the frequently erratic Carl Mays, already earning a reputation for beanballs, and was credited with handling Mays as well as anyone could. When not in the lineup, he warmed up the pitchers before games, or was on the coaching lines "making as much noise as 'Sea Lion' Charlie Hall used to do."

In August Pinch's reputation as a fighter emerged again when he swapped punches with Browns third baseman Jimmy Austin, who had accused the Red Sox' Rube Foster of trying to bean him. Pinch called Jimmy yellow, told him to stand up and strike out. Austin missed the next pitch, Chet added more insults, and Jimmy took a swing at Chet's head, catching him on the side of the face. Pinch responded



Chester far left

Boston Redsox-date unknown(pinch?)



1911 Pacific Coast League Team



1963 —1916 Big League Manager Baseball

Bat:	LEFT			
Throw:	RIGHT			
G	Pos	F	T	PH
90	C	4	M30	-
PINCH THOMAS				
BB	12			
BA	26			
2B	41-58			
3B	31-32			
HR	1-2			
K	8			
SBA	43			

with three punches to Jimmy's face, and Austin's return shot hit umpire Ollie Chill instead of Chet. Thomas and Austin were both suspended indefinitely, public outrage erupted about violence on the baseball diamond, and Red Sox President James Lannin issued a statement defending Thomas's actions: "Had Thomas not gone after Austin and fought back I would have fined him for his lack of aggression." A few days later Thomas was back in the lineup.

The 1916 World Series win – the Red Sox defeated the Brooklyn Robins four games to one – capped Boston's fourth championship season, and Bill Carrigan announced his retirement from baseball. A gang of players, including the Babe, Pinch, Jack Barry, Tillie Walker, and a few others celebrated Boston's fourth championship with a hunting trip to Lake Squam in New Hampshire, a gift from the Draper-Maynard Company. Besides duck hunting, the outing included a boxing match between Ruth and first baseman Doc Hoblitzel refereed by Pinch, who wisely ruled the match a draw

Chet Thomas liked playing in Chicago, and the reason became clear when he secretly wed cabaret dancer, Doxie Emmerson-Love on December 23, 1916. The *Chicago Tribune* reported the details of the romance and the wedding held at City Hall, while the *Boston Globe* printed just a brief announcement. A native of San Francisco, Doxie had caught the eye of the Boston backstop and he had returned to the Central Inn on Wabash Avenue every time he was in town over the previous two baseball seasons. With the 1916 season over, Chet had returned to his farm in Medicine Lodge, Kansas, but, finding it lonesome on the prairie in mid-December, boarded a train for Chicago and proposed to Doxie. She accepted, vowing also to abandon the Chicago café scene and move to Medicine Lodge to become a farmer's wife. "The people in this café don't know I'm going to quit dancing and go away out west and live with the cows and chickens," said Mrs. Thomas just after finishing an exhibition of her art, "but I know I'm going to like the new life." For his part, Chet said, "The folks down in Kansas don't know anything about this, but I know it will be all right with them after they see her."

1912 Boston World Series Team Pic



Doxie was a devoted baseball wife, accompanying Chet to spring training in Hot Springs in March 1917. She went horseback riding with Helen Ruth, and after practice was over the wives joined their husbands on Ozark mountain hikes. Doxie was just beginning to learn more about her husband and his multifaceted baseball job. When Chet was on the coaching line at first base his verbal outbursts might have shocked her if she had not sat far away behind the dugout. Chet would spit on his hands and call on all the Roman gods to witness the base hit that was soon to occur, shout encouragement to the Boston baserunners, and harass the opposing first sacker. That first year of their marriage, she stayed in Boston at their apartment in the Fenway area and often attended games. On May 24, 1917, with the US having joined in the Great War, Pinch Thomas registered for the draft as the law of the land required. He was exempt from serving due to his marital status.

Jack Barry was the new manager and Harry Frazee was the new owner of the team in 1917. Although Chet had had a successful year in 1916, appearing in 99 games with 216 at-bats and hitting .264, another year brought new challenges and competition. His average in 1917 dropped to .238 in 83 games played, but he was the best catcher the Red Sox had, and he was still Babe Ruth's preferred batterymate. By the end of their partnership, Pinch Thomas had caught 68 of Babe Ruth's 144 Red Sox starts, including 10 of his 17 shutouts. Sam Agnew was next with 24 starts.

Ed Martin of the *Boston Daily Globe* called the game against the Washington Senators at Fenway Park on June 23, 1917, the best pitching seen in Boston since 1904. Ruth was the starting pitcher, Thomas was his catcher. The first Washington batter, second baseman Ray Morgan, received four balls, according to umpire Brick Owens. Ruth accused Owens of missing the call on two of them, and a verbal battle erupted between pitcher and umpire as the Babe charged home plate. Pinch Thomas placed himself between the outraged pitcher and his intended target, but Babe, swinging with both hands, caught Brick behind the left ear. Manager Barry and several policemen dragged Ruth off the field as Ernie Shore stepped up on the mound and

Babe Ruth & Pinch Photograph



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

1915 Fatima Cigarettes Boston Team Photo



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

warmed up. Agnew replaced Thomas behind home plate. Ernie Shore went on to a “no-hit, no-man-reach-first” (for Shore, at least) game. Shore confessed that he did not know he had achieved the feat until Thomas rushed up to him and shook his hand after the last out. “I was wondering what the occasion was,” Shore said sheepishly. “Chet told me and then I realized the one ambition of my baseball career. I have always wanted to turn in a no-hit game but have just missed it.”

After the 1917 season Thomas spent the winter in California. Back in Boston, trade talks between the Red Sox and the Philadelphia Athletics brewed up a deal that brought Joe Bush, Amos Strunk, and catcher Wally Schang to Boston and gave Veau Gregg, rookie outfielder Merline “Officer” Kopp, Chet Thomas, and \$60,000 to Connie Mack. The deal was considered a coup for Boston and a terrific blow to the Athletics, amid predictions that it paved the way for Boston to win the 1918 pennant. Stuffy McInnis said he hoped Pinch would help the Athletics, “for he is very capable as far as the mechanical end of the game goes and particularly good for head work. He’ll find Connie a great fellow to work for and I know he’ll give his best from the start.”

1915 Boston Team Post-card—Ruth Rookie



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

But it didn’t turn out that way. Thomas, devastated by the trade, blamed the sports reporters for deflating his worth. At spring training in March, he considered quitting baseball and said he had been working during the offseason for a movie company in California. He did not want to report to Philadelphia, and his relationship with Connie Mack deteriorated when he demanded more money than Mack considered reasonable. In Mack’s opinion, Chet’s reputation had been inflated by the pitchers he worked with.^{xvii} Chet figured he could not have been such a detriment to the team as some writers said. As for the pitchers shoring him up, he claimed Babe Ruth would have been traded or released by Bill Carrigan if it had not been for him, and that he had broken in most of the other pitchers on the Red Sox team. All he wanted was to retire from baseball with everyone’s goodwill.

Thomas played no games with the Athletics. In June he was sold to the Cleveland Indians but spent two months in California with the movie company. He joined the team in August and appeared in 32

games, 24 of them as a catcher, and also was employed as the third-base coach. Along the sidelines his role as the “bull-throated barker” was credited with winning games for the Indians as Chet kept up streams of verbal harassment that drove opposing pitchers off the mound and knocked fielders off-kilter.^{xix} Indians manager Lee Fohl used Pinch as a pinch-hitter 11 times and he delivered on five occasions, finishing the season with a pinch-hitting average of .454. At the end of the season he returned to his purchasing department job with the California movie company.

Pinch returned to Cleveland in 1919 and caught 21 games, appearing in 34 overall. His legendary reputation on the third-base line followed him back to Philadelphia, where the newspapers complained about his antics, calling him a rank nuisance. In 1920 Thomas filled in as manager of the team while Tris Speaker accompanied the body of Ray Chapman home. His time presiding behind the plate decreased sharply; he caught in just nine games and spent more time on the coaching line, where his errorless judgment was said to have preserved many a baserunner and his verbal outbursts continued to be an opposing pitcher’s nightmare. In 1921 he appeared in 21 games, his last on June 19. By then his attention was focused on Los Angeles and the movie business, where he had secured a job as an assistant director.

In 1928 Thomas appeared in the movie *Warming Up* with baseball players Mike Donlin and Truck Hannah. What became of his life subsequently is open to speculation. Chet and Doxie were divorced, she went back to Kansas with their son, and in 1930, Chet was living in a rooming house in Modesto, California. In 1936 the American League president received the following letter:

(Next page)

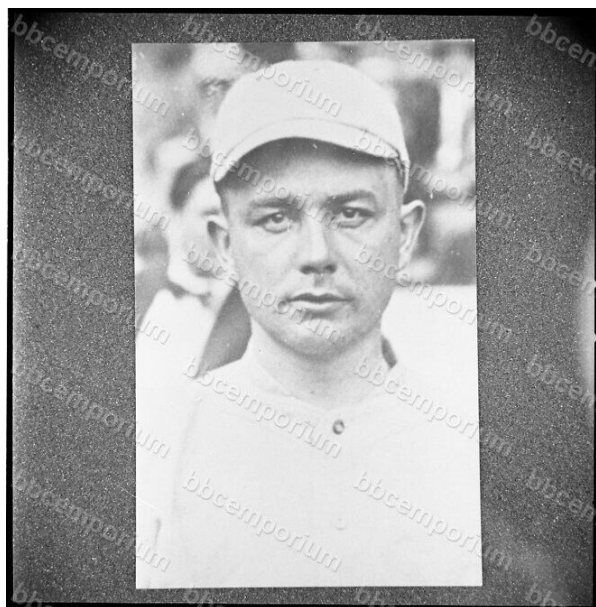
Boston Redsox 1915



Boston Redsox 1916



Jim Rowe Archive—photo negative



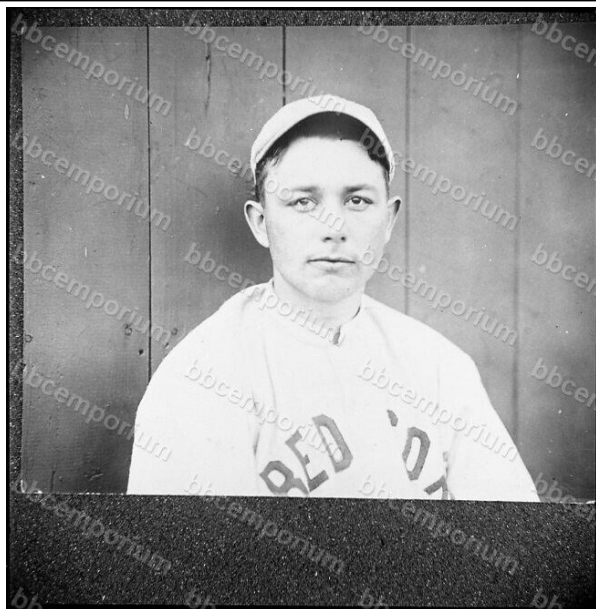
Mr. William Harridge,

On April 22 you presented lifetime passes to a number of old ball players. Among these was the name of Chet Thomas of Sharon, Kansas. I am Chet Thomas's son. My dad is in a state hospital and will never be able to use this pass. I would like to have the pass as a keepsake. Could it be possible for me to get it? Or have you sent it to Kansas. As I have already told you he is not in Kansas. Any information you could send me on the matter would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

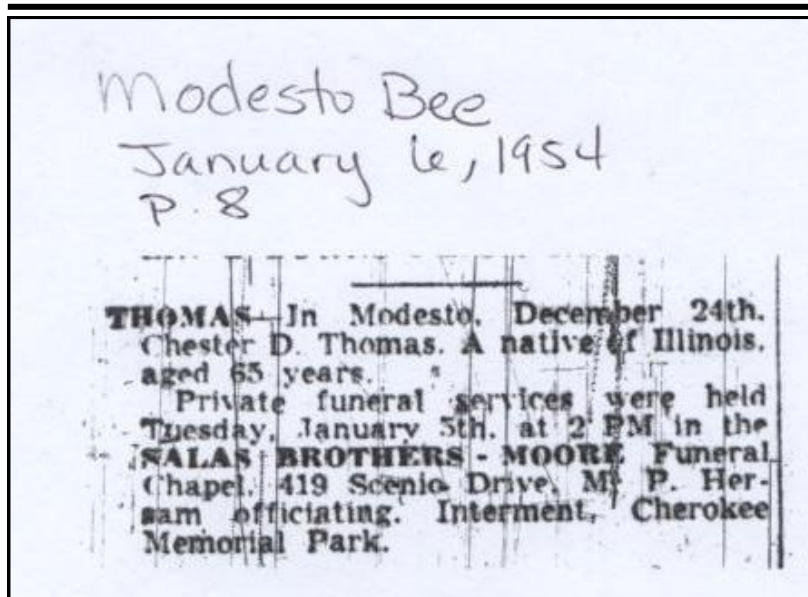
Chester Frank Thomas

Jim Rowe Archive—photo negative



Pinch Thomas died at the Modesto State Hospital in California on December 24, 1953. The cause of death was listed as pulmonary edema, amputation of the left leg above the knee due to arteriosclerosis, recurrent infection, gangrene, and peripheral vascular disease with the contributory, unrelated condition of psychosis. He is rarely mentioned among catchers, coaches, or other memorable characters. Chet Thomas' greatest defender and booster was himself and once gone he faded into part of the hidden history of baseball, only to appear from time to time attached to another's story. Let it be less so now.

Chester David Thomas Obituary



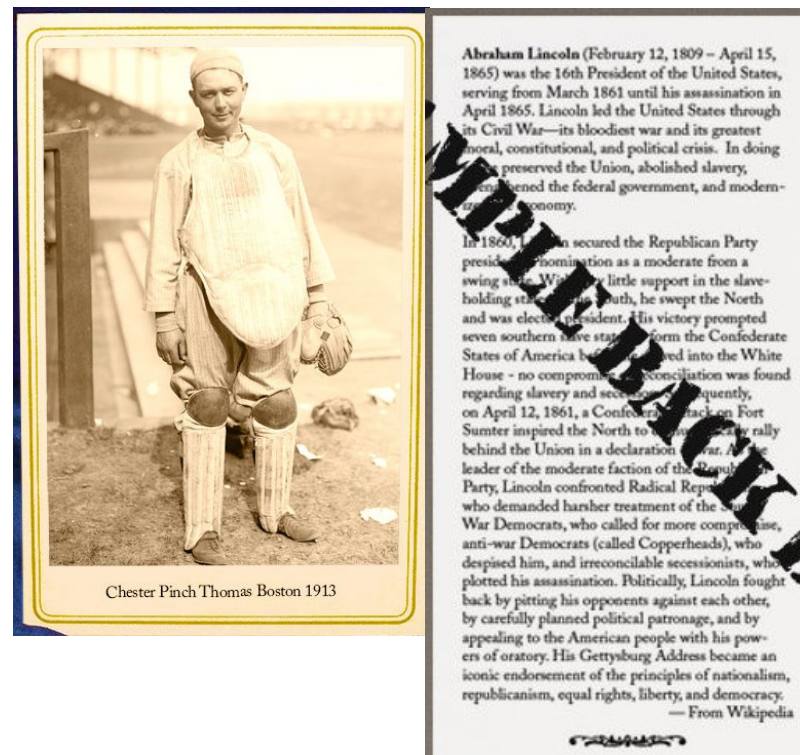
Chester David Thomas 1930 Census

Household	Name	Relationship	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Color	Birth	Year	Month	Day
703 124 152	Egan R	Head	30	M	W	W	18	5		
	Maria J	Wife	42	F	W	W	18	5		
	Edgar J	Son	39	M	W	W	18	5		
	Helen R	Daughter	35	F	W	W	18	5		
	Peter Spigg P	Brother	52	F	W	W	18	5		
705 122 157	Thomas Chester D	Head	35	M	W	W	42	12		
	Linclair Irene M	Wife	35	F	W	W	72	11		
707 123 165	Hoody Austin	Father	93	M	W	W	18	11		
	Hawkins Carl	Head	32	M	W	W	22	11		
	Helen C	Wife	23	F	W	W	23	11		

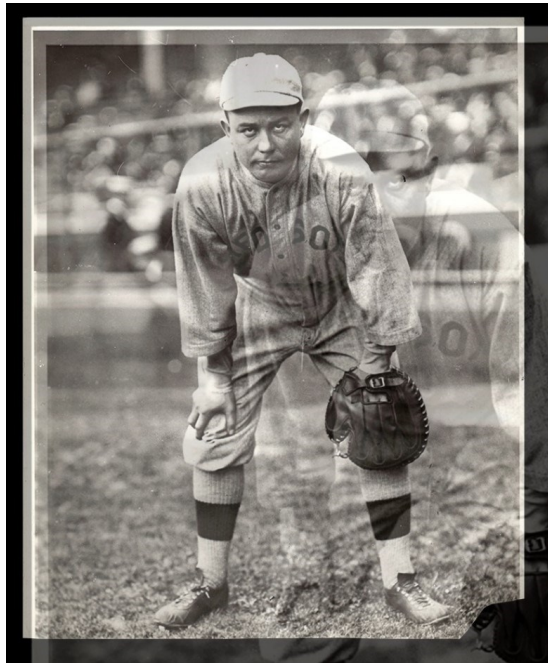
World War 1 registration card and the 1930 Census are from Ancestry.com

Handmade historical reproduction Cabinet Card. The photograph is a Fujifilm Archival Quality Matte Photo Print from the original photograph. Each card has a short bio on the reverse which makes it useful as a history teaching tool in addition to interesting, enjoyable art for display.

Mounted on sturdy chipboard the overall card is approx. 4.75" x 7.25"



1910's-20's Red Sox Original Charles Conlon News Service



1915 Harris & Ewing Paul Thompson News Service



Chester David Thomas WW1 Registration Card

Form 1 REGISTRATION CARD No. 7

1 Name in full *Chester David Thomas Jr*

2 Home address *Medicine Lodge, Kans*

3 Date of birth *January 24 1888*

4 Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention to become a citizen? *Natural born*

5 Where were you born? *Camp Point, Ill*

6 If not a citizen of what country are you a citizen or subject?

7 What is your present trade, occupation, or office? *Ball player*

8 By whom employed? *Eastern American League Boston*

9 Where employed? *Boston Mass*

9 Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? *Wife*

10 Married or single (which)? *Married* Race (specify which)? *Caucasian*

11 What military service have you had? Rank *None* branch *None* years *None* Nation or State *None*

12 Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)? *Wife*

I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.

Chester David Thomas

15-2-1-A REGISTRAR'S REPORT

1 Tall, medium, or short (specify which)? *Tall* Slender, medium, or stout (which)? *Medium*

2 Color of eyes? *Brown* Color of hair? *Brown* Bald? *No*

3 Has person lost arm, leg, hand, foot, or both eyes, or is he otherwise disabled (specify)? *No*

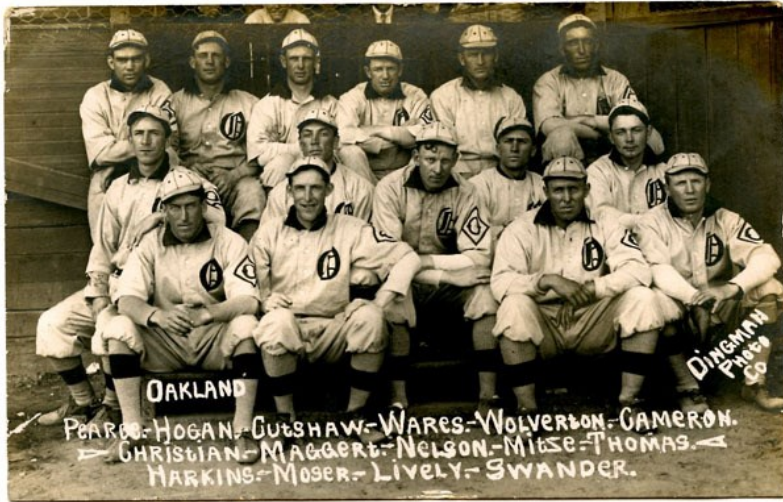
I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

M. P. Switzer
Registrar

Precinct *Medicine Lodge*
County *Barber*
State *Kansas*

5/24/17
(Date of report)

1910 Oakland Oaks Postcard *Dingman Photo Co.*



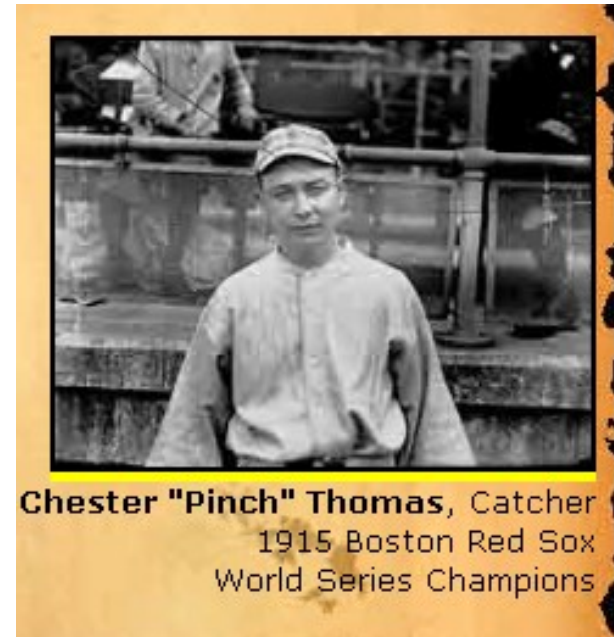
Chester Thomas in his second minor league season—Far right 2nd row



This 1910 Oakland Oaks Team Postcard was auctioned in the Brockelman and Luckey Auctions Fall 2013 Auction- Lot #34

Winning bid: \$361.13

Boston Redsox (1915)

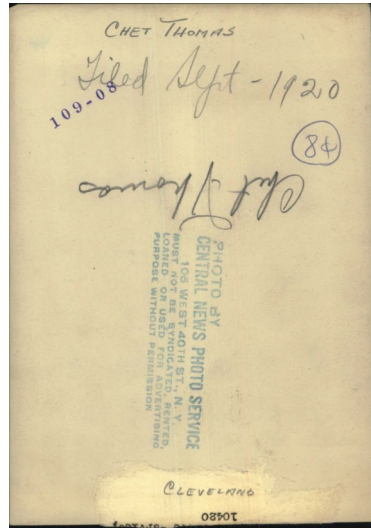


**Chester "Pinch" Thomas, Catcher
1915 Boston Red Sox
World Series Champions**

Boston Redsox (1917)



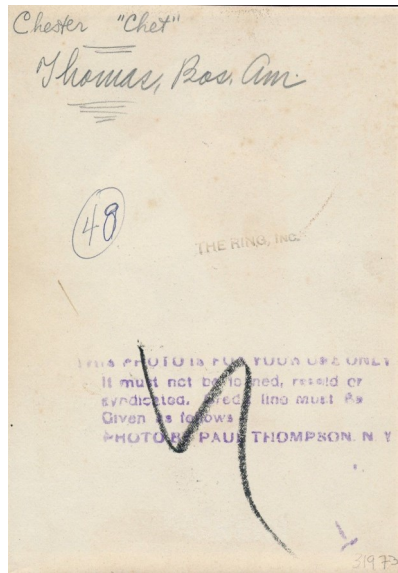
Cleveland Indians Type 1 (September 1920)



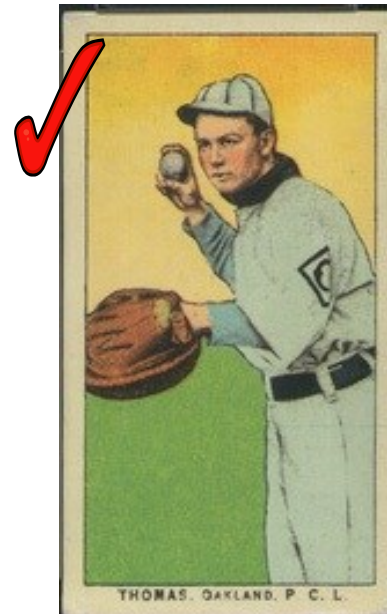
1910 Obak T212 (Oakland) 2 #110 "Perfect Aroma"



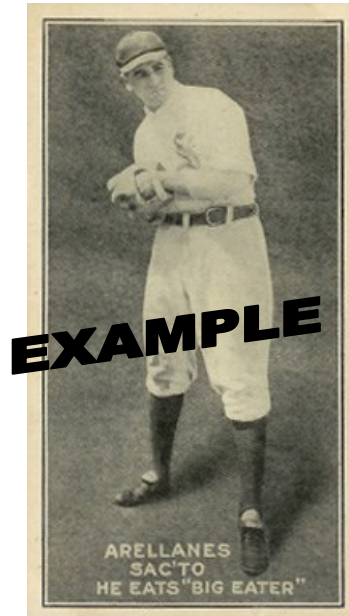
Boston Redsox Type 1 (1912-1917)



1910 Obak T212 (Oakland) 2 #110 "ALWAYS A PLEASURE"



1911 Big Eater Sacramento Salons E-Unc. (Set of 20) #17



Distributed circa 1911 features only players of the Pacific Coast League Sacramento Solons. The size is 2 1/8" x 4" on black and white card stock. Blank back reverse.

Very rare! "Big Eaters" is thought to be a candy novelty.

VG= \$700.00
EX= \$1,000.00
NM= \$2,750.00

I need an authentic example!

1911 Obak Premiums/Cabinets T4 (Set of 175) #65 or 66?



Distributed with the T212 Obak Premiums. The cards measure about 5" x 7" and printed on cardboard paper. There is no printing on the back of the cards and must be identified by the sister card in the T212 set.

VG= \$1,725
EX= \$2,875
NM= \$5,750

I need an authentic example of this card.

Cleveland Indians (1918-1921)

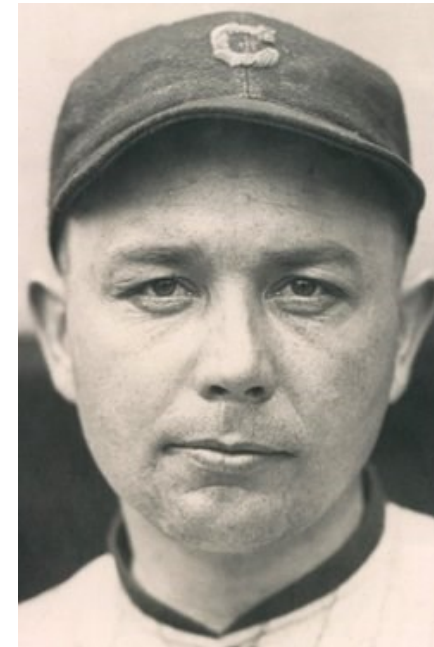


Photo: www.findagrave.com

Cleveland Indians (1918-1921)



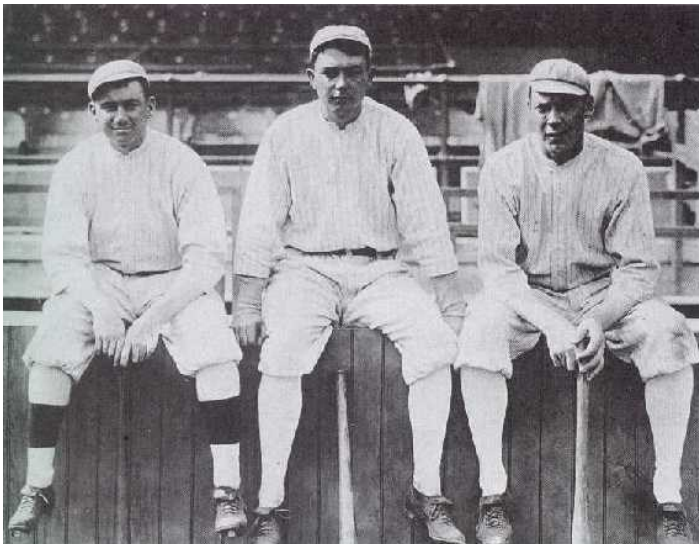
Photograph Bain News Service

Boston Redsox (1912-1917)



Photograph Bain News Service

Boston Redsox (1912-1917)

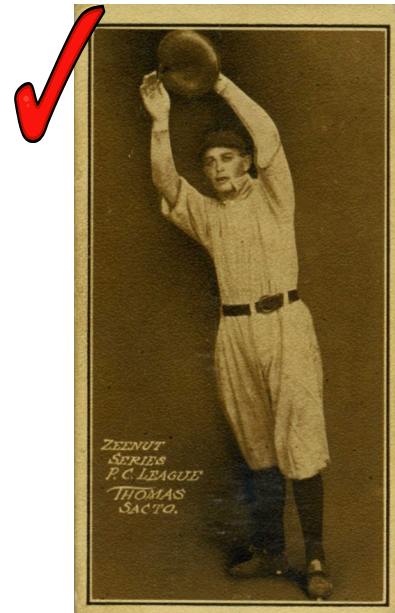


*Unknown (left), Chester "Pinch" Thomas (Middle), Forrest "Hick" Cady (right)
Photo by Encyclopedia of Baseball Catchers*

1911 Bishop Coast League E100 #27



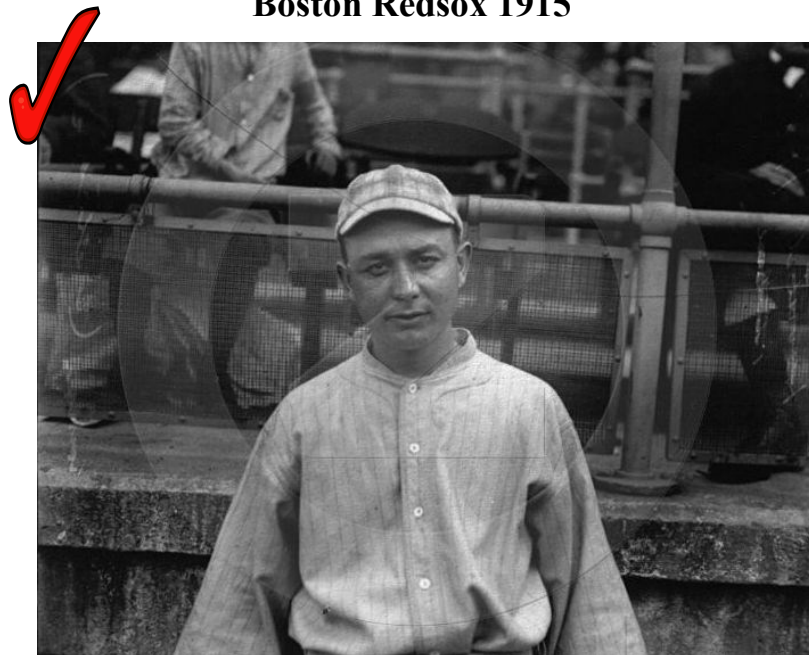
1911 Zeenuts #78



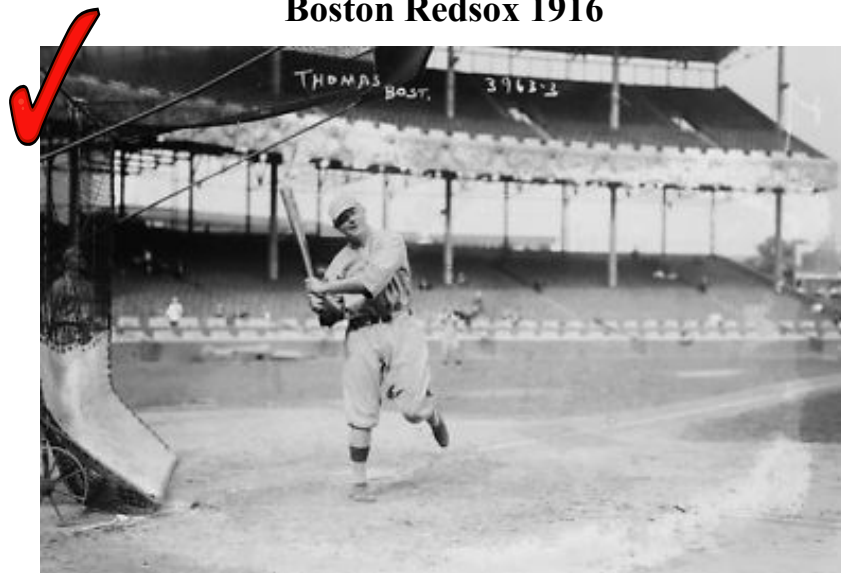
1911 Obak T212 (Sacramento) 3 #317



Boston Redsox 1915

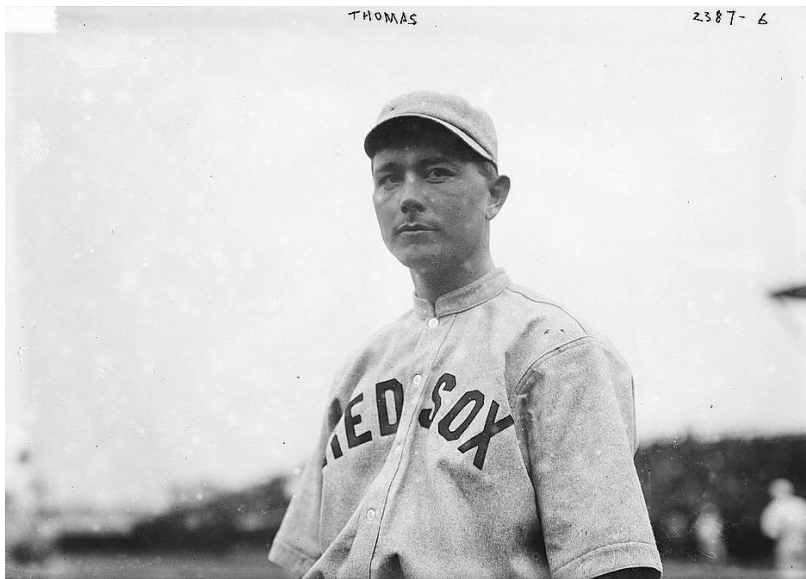


Boston Redsox 1916



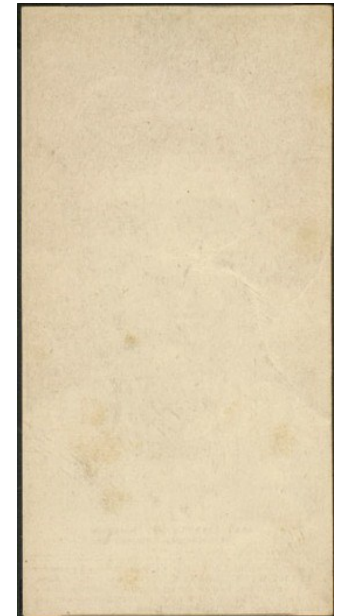
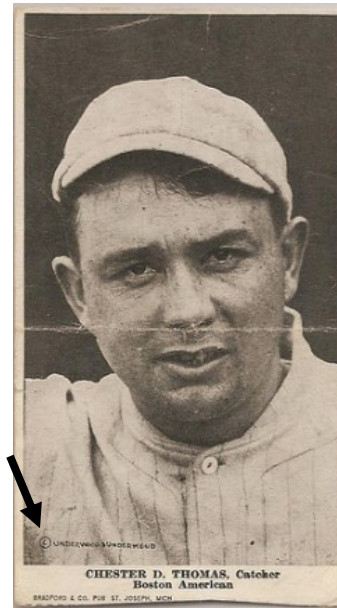
*This is the base photograph used for many 1916-1922 Chester Thomas cards.
Photograph Bain News Service*

Boston Redsox 1913



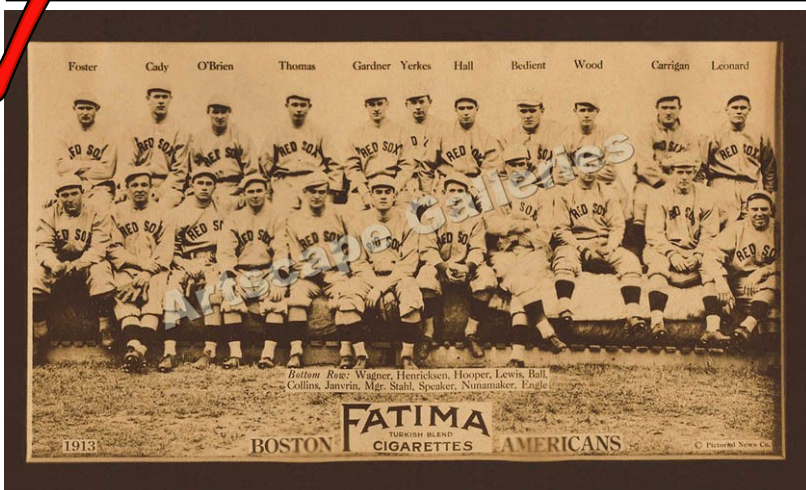
Photograph Bain News Service

1916 Fleischmann Bread D381 (one-button) #97

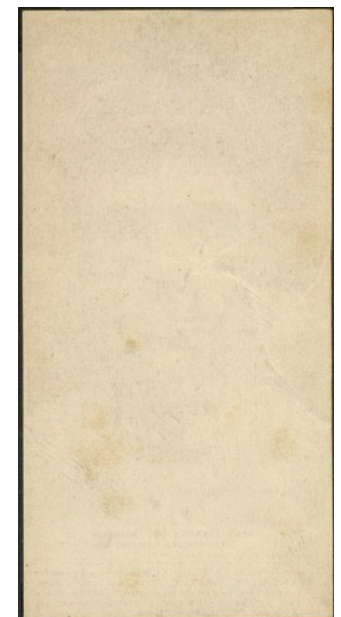
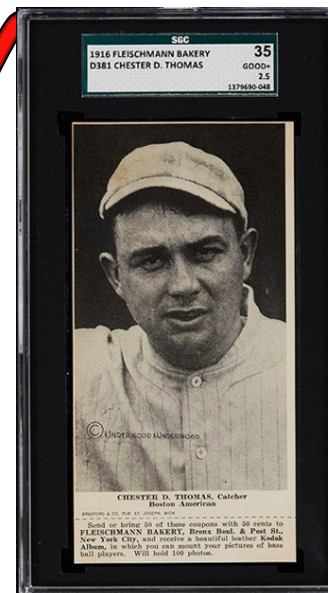


The 1916 Fleischman photos from yanksfan09 on Flickr.com

Boston Redsox 1913



1916 Fleischmann Bread D381 (two-buttons) #97



1917 Boston Store H801-8 #173

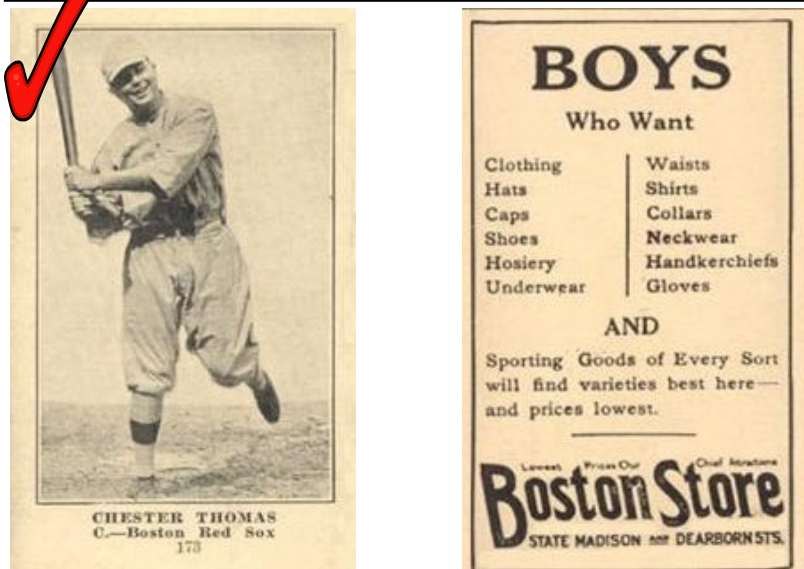
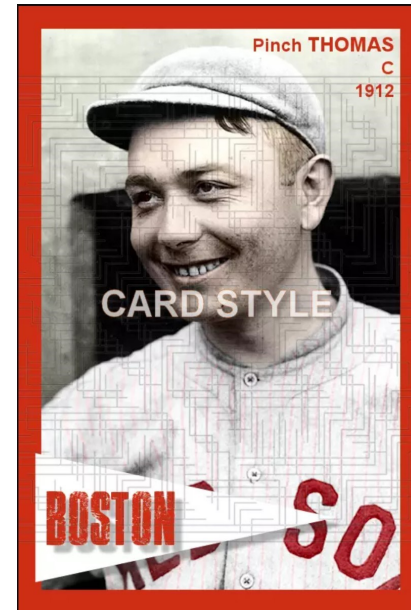
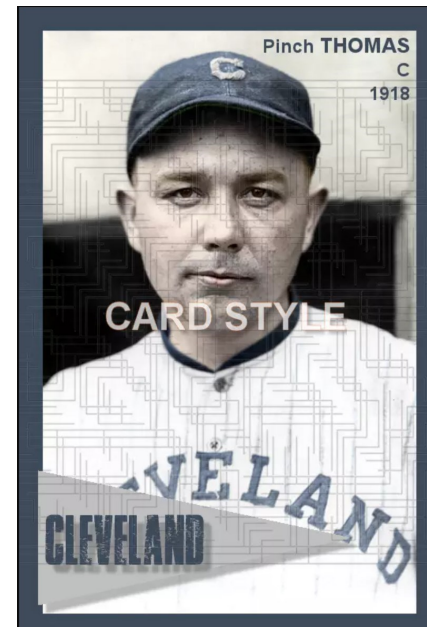


Image from www.vintagecardprices.com

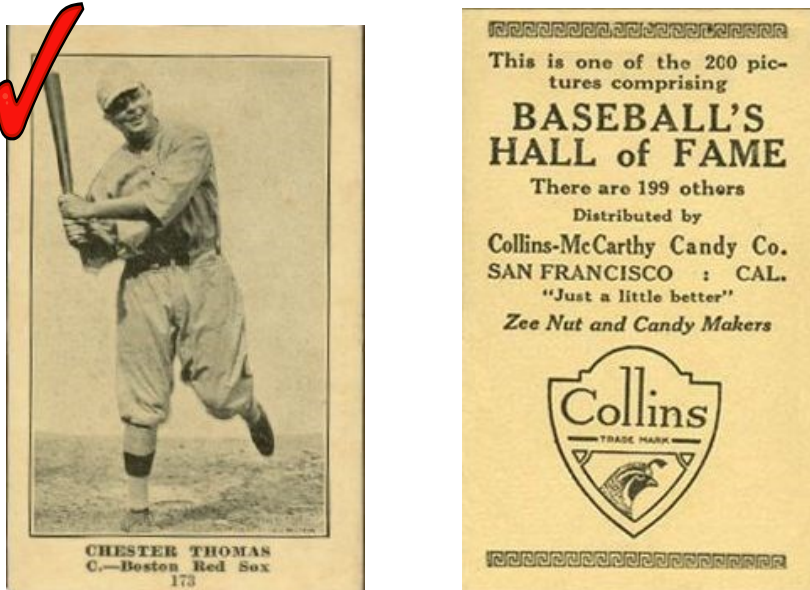
Boston Red Sox 1912 Novelty Card



Cleveland 1918 Novelty Card



1917 Collins-McCarthy E135
(advertisement on back) #173



Boston Redsox– 1913 B&W Negative

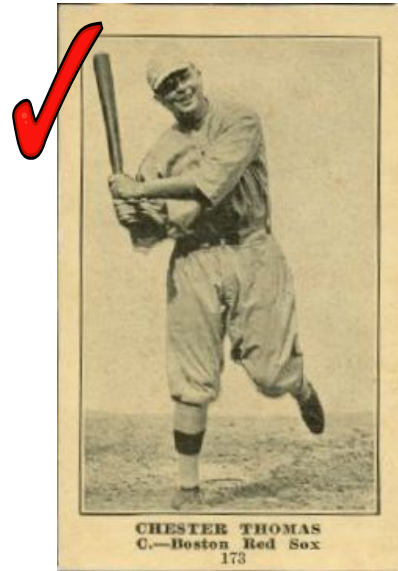


Boston Redsox 1913

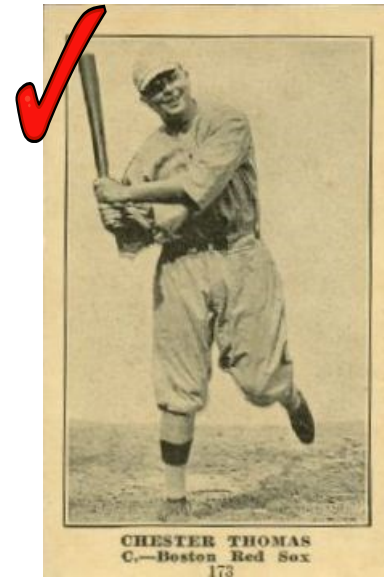


Harris & Ewing Collection

1917 Collins-McCarthy E135 (blank back) #173



1917 Standard Biscuit D350-2 #173



This is an advertising variant of the Collins-McCarthy

1917 Weil Baking Co. D328 #173



THIS is one of a series of 200
action pictures of Major
League Baseball Players, com-
prising Baseball's Hall of Fame.
H. Weil Baking Co.
4914 PRYTANIA STREET
NEW ORLEANS :: LA.

Image courtesy of www.vintagecardprices.com

1921 E121 American Caramel Series of 80
(Top line ends with "the") #105—Common Variant



This set consists of pictures of eighty of the
leading
BASE BALL STARS
—of the—
AMERICAN AND NATIONAL LEAGUES
—Made only by—
AMERICAN CARAMEL COMPANY,
LANCASTER AND YORK, PENNA.

Boston Redsox— 1912



Pinch Thomas, Joe Wood, & Casey Hagerman
I am unclear if this is Chester Thomas (far left) or another Thomas.
From the George Grantham Bain Collection

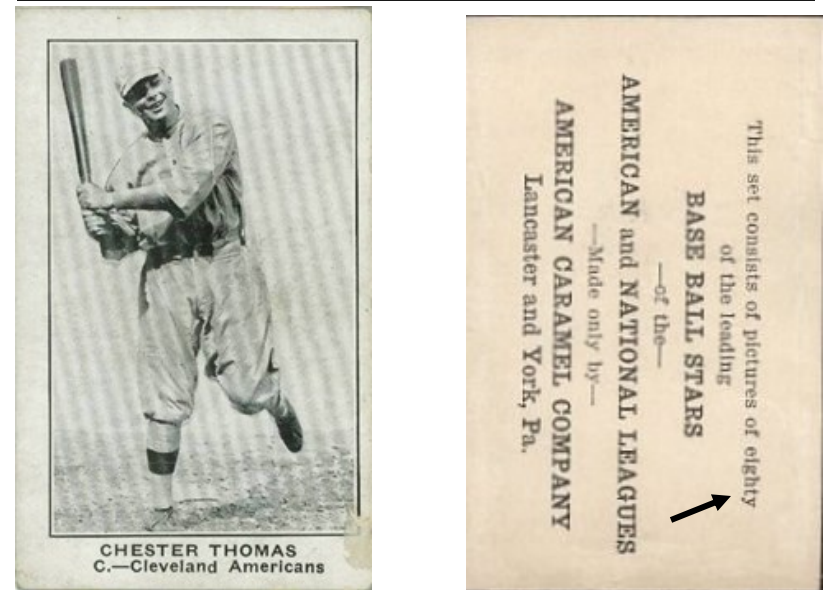
Boston Redsox— 1912



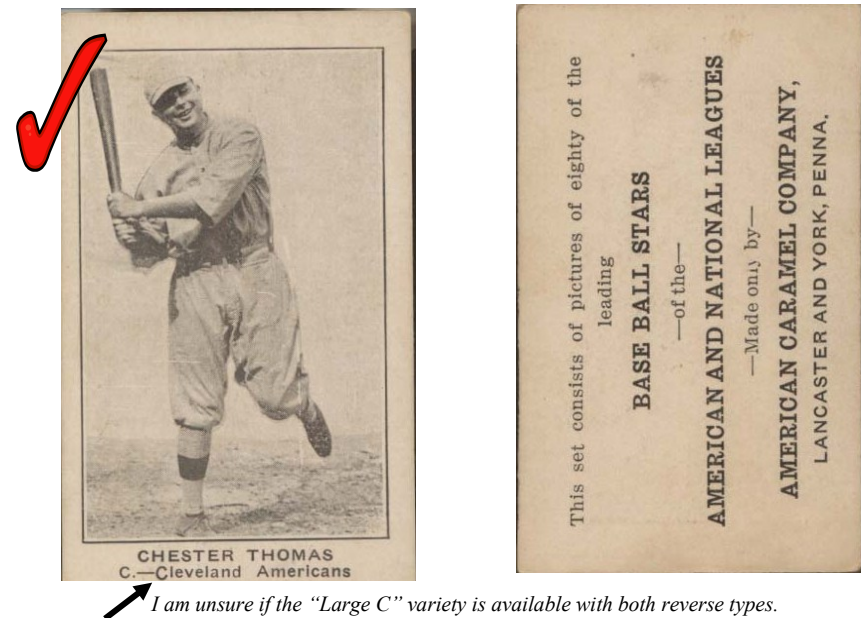
2011 Zeenut Game Card



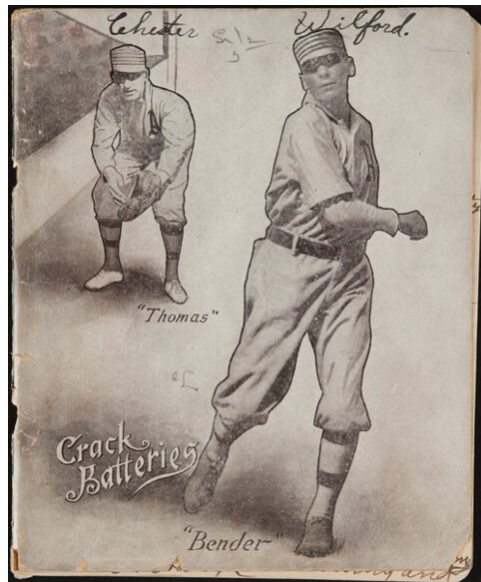
**1921 E121 American Caramel Series of 80
(top line ends with "eighty") #105- RARE variant**



**1921 E121 American Caramel Series of 80
(Large C of Cleveland) #105**



1910 Crack Batteries Advertisement



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

1921 Standard Biscuit D350-3
 "...80 Photographs." #98—*RARE Variant*



A photograph of a member of either the American or National League will be found in every 5 and 10 cent package of our products. Each set contains 80 photographs.

STANDARD BISCUIT COMPANY
 San Francisco, Cal.
 Sole Makers of Paradise Sodas

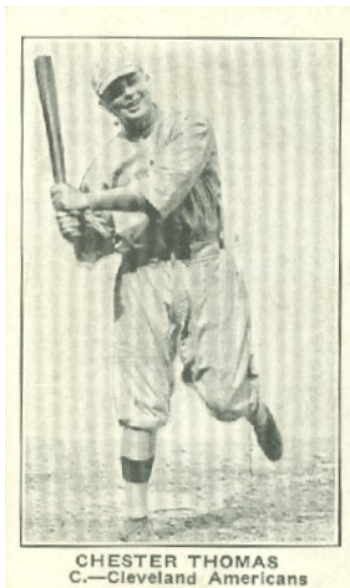
1980's APBA Baseball Game Card

Bats: **Left** Throws: **Right**
 Height: **5-10** Weight: **173**
 Born: **1-24-88** Sharon, Kansas
 Chester David
 "Pinch"
THOMAS
 Catcher (6)

11- 0-1	31- 9-6	51- 9-6
12-25-7	32-26-7	52-27-7
13-14-6	33- 7-2	53-18-6
14-30-8	34-31-8	54-32-8
15-10-6	35-14-6	55- 8-5
16-28-6	36-33-6	56-14-6
21-30-6	41-24-6	61-22-6
22- 7-2	42-12-6	62-38-6
23-26-6	43-29-6	63-31-6
24-13-6	44-17-4	64-36-6
25- 8-6	45-14-6	65-35-8
26-14-6	46-32-6	66- 0-1

J-3

1921 Standard Biscuit D350-3
 "...80 to the Set" #98—*Common Variant*



A photograph of a member of either the American or National League will be found in every 5 and 10 cent package of our products. There are 80 to the set.

STANDARD BISCUIT COMPANY
 San Francisco, Cal.
 Sole Makers of Paradise Sodas

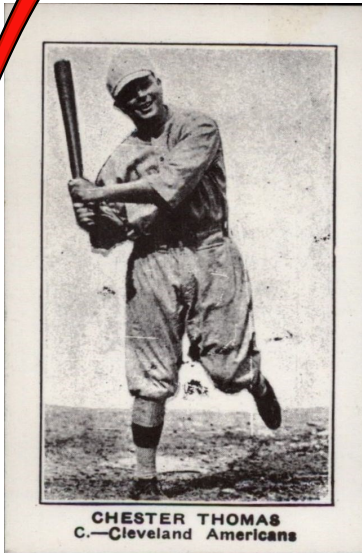
1992 APBA Baseball Game Card

Bats: **Left** Throws: **Right**
 Height: **5-10** Weight: **173**
 Born: **1-24-88** Sharon, Kansas
 Chester David
 "Pinch"
THOMAS
 (S) Catcher (6)

11- 6	31- 9	51- 9
12-25	32-26	52-27
13-14	33- 6	53-19
14-30	34-31	54-32
15- 8	35-36	55- 8
16-28	36-14	56-34
21-14	41-28	61-14
22- 7	42-14	62-38
23-13	43-29	63-13
24-14	44-17	64-14
25- 8	45-14	65-35
26-14	46-12	66- 6

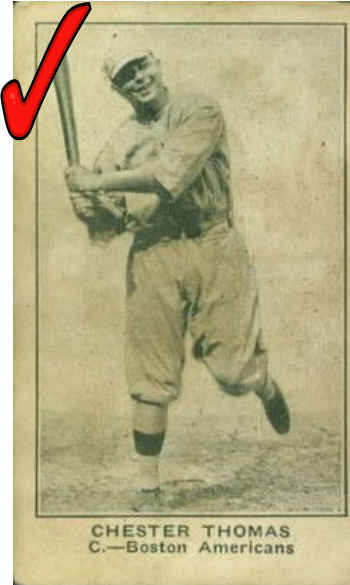
J-4 © Copyright 1992 APBA

1972 TCMA 1922 American Caramel Reprint



This set consists of pictures of 120 of the
leading
BASE BALL STARS
© 1972 TCMA —of the—
AMERICAN AND NATIONAL LEAGUES
—Made only by—
AMERICAN CARAMEL COMPANY,
LANCASTER AND YORR, PENNA.

1921 Holsum Bread D327 #173

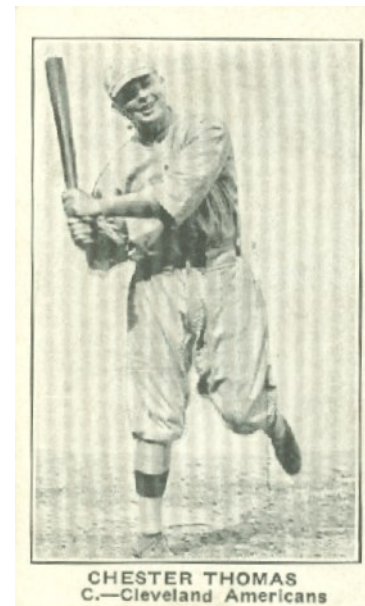


Play the Holsum Game!
This game consists of 80 different Base
Ball Stars; one star in every loaf of
Holsum Bread
H. WEIL BAKING COMPANY
4914 PRYTANIA STREET

1972 APBA Baseball Game Card

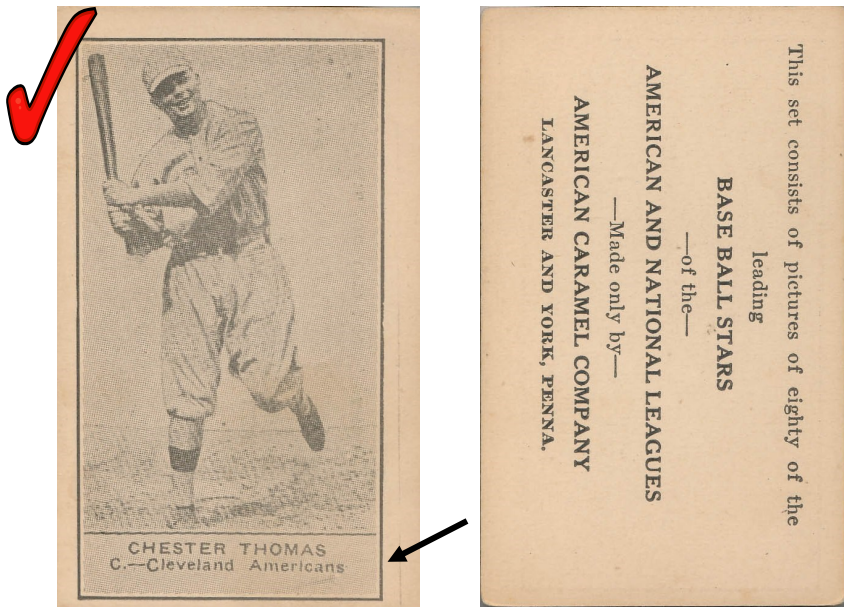
Bats: Left		Throws: Right	
Height: 5-10		Weight: 173	
Born: 1-24-88 Sharon, Kansas			
Chester David			
"Pinch"			
THOMAS			
Catcher (5)			
11- 7	31-38	51- 9	
12-25	32-26	52-27	
13-14	33- 7	53-18	
14-30	34-31	54-32	
15-10	35-36	55- 8	
16-28	36-33	56-34	
21-30	41-24	61-29	
22- 7	42-13	62-12	
23-25	43-29	63-31	
24-30	44- 8	64-13	
25- 9	45- 4	65-35	
26-32	46-27	66- 4	

1921 Herpolsheimer's #182 (only one copy known)



HERPOLSHEIMER'S
Boys Fashion Shop
THE HOME OF
BOY'S FASHIONABLE CLOTHING
SECOND FLOOR

1922 E122 American Caramel (Series of 80) #71

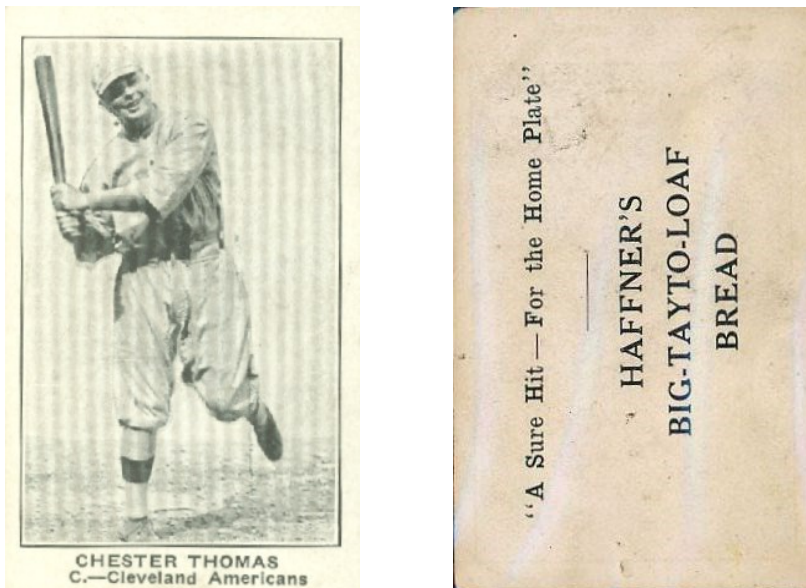


*Note the black box encompasses the photo, name, and team.
The black box differentiates the 1921 and 1922 American Caramel issues*

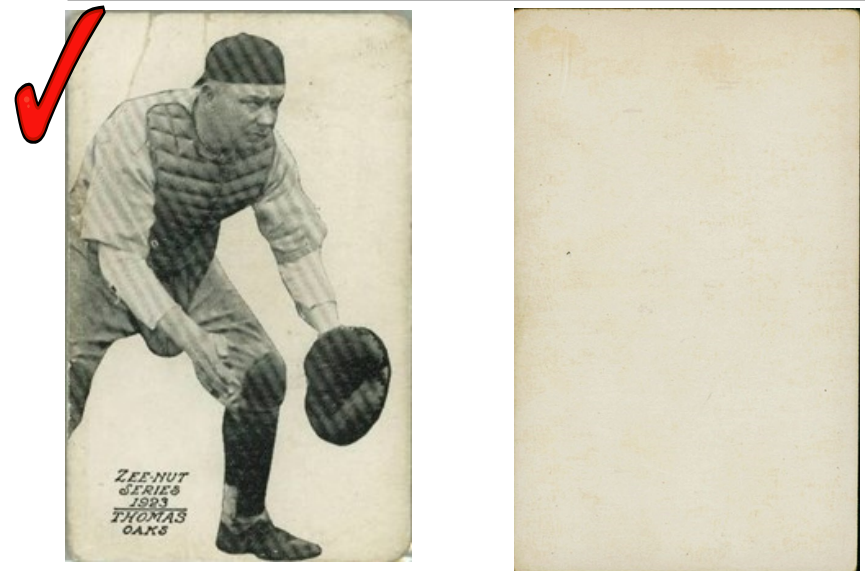
1922 W575-1 Henry Johnson Back



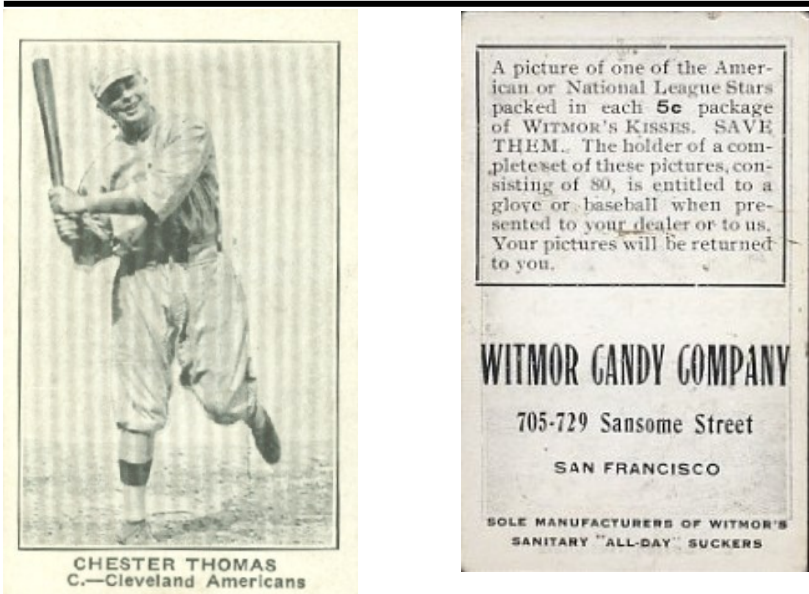
1922 Haffner's Big-Tayto-Loaf Bread #181



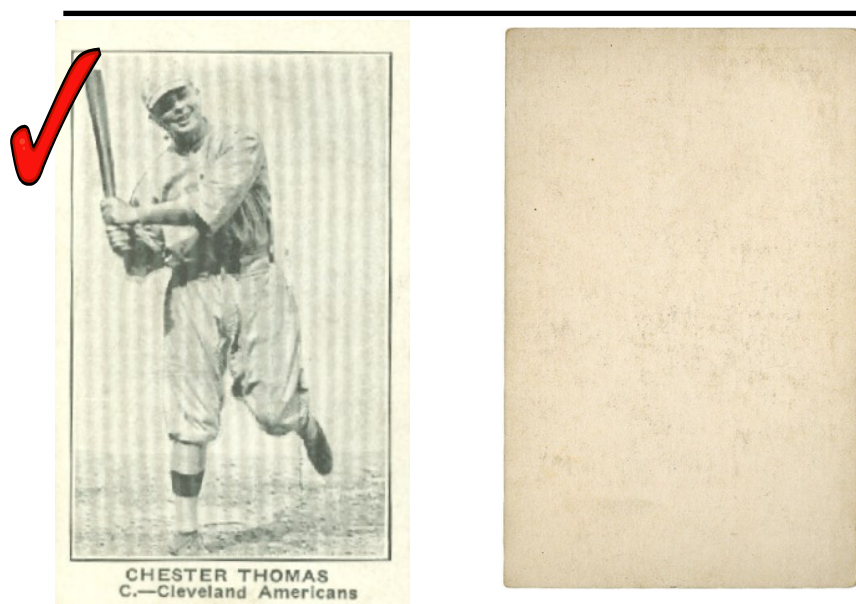
1923 Zeenuts #57



1922 Witmor Candy Co. (Vertical reverse) #98

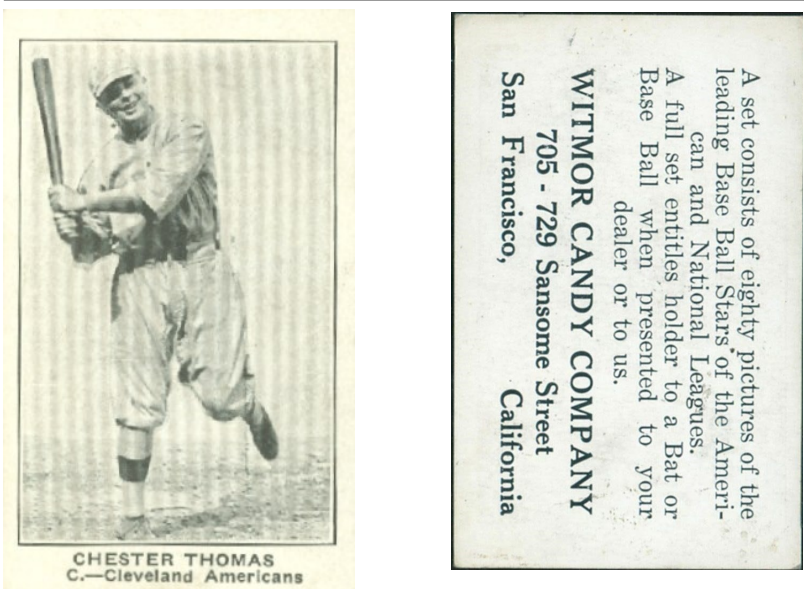


1921-1922 W575-1 (Blank Back) #182



This is the obverse base card for most of the 1922 issues.

1922 Witmor Candy Co. (Horizontal-reverse) #98



1922 Gassler's American Maid Bread #181

