



"Falls City Baseball Club, W. Dunstan Mgr, W. Crable Capt." Date given is 1904.

Featured from Collections: Art McGill and Fall City Baseball

In June of 1943, shortly after the death of Art McGill, Andrew McCann wrote a long article for the *Snoqualmie Valley Record* about his memories of Art and of early baseball in Fall City. He speaks of 1907, when a baseball park was built on the Jack Bush property just over the bridge from Fall City, and McCann was voted manager for the season that ended with a winning percentage of 800!

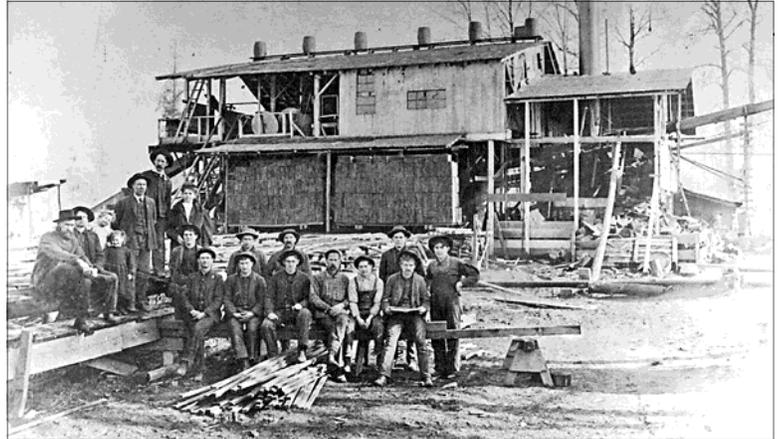
Baseball Career of the Late Art McGill

A story of the outstanding baseball career of the late Art McGill, by one who knew him well as a faithful employee and great ball player.

By Andrew McCann, North Bend



The photo at right, dated c1905, shows McCann's Shingle Mill, where Art McGill is among the crew, far right behind the bench.



In 1912, Artie is shown driving a wagon in front of Burns & Son store.

In June of 1943, Art McGill died and was buried in the Fall City Cemetery. Andrew McCann, who knew him well, was inspired to write a long article for the *Snoqualmie Valley Record*, shown on the following pages.

6/43

Artie McGill Passes Away

Meadowbrook Resident Dies in Seattle Hospital Following Long Illness.

Artie C. McGill of Meadowbrook, prominent Upper Valley resident, passed away at a Seattle Hospital June 14, 1943 following an illness of several months.

Mr. McGill was born in Sedan, Kan., on January 30, 1885 and before moving to Meadowbrook three years ago had been a resident of Fall City for 32 years.

A shingle weaver by trade, he was employed by the Pearce & Stow Shingle Mill at North Bend until failing health compelled him to retire.



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The passing of Art McGill last week (whom I had known well for about 35 years) revived pleasant memories of my acquaintance with a most remarkable young man, in many respects, all of which were unusually good, particularly pertaining to baseball.

It was in 1907, as I remember it, Art first began to work for me in the Fall City mill. The town then seemed to have baseball talent beyond its share as a small country place, and within a week some more good ball players located here. It was then decided we should build a good baseball park, and above all spend much in preparing a diamond that would equal any in the state. So a lease was secured for the park on the Jack Bush farm just across the river where grandstands were built and the grounds fenced.

Snoqualmie Valley Record
June 1943

About this time (my memory is somewhat hazy about just what next took place towards baseball organization after a lapse of thirty odd years) but I have a faint recollection of a rancher named Elmer Likes being the moving spirit in a good start of arrangements. However, the boys in a weak moment elected me to be their manager. What I lacked in managerial ability I tried to make up for in liberal contributions and enthusiasm to attain desired aims.

When we got playing games it was readily seen that our team had more than average playing ability, for we defeated many of the best amateur teams Seattle could send to Fall City, winding up the playing year with the phenomenal winning percentage of 800.

(continued next page)

In this first portion of McCann's article, he mentions getting to know Art McGill when he worked at McCann's Shingle Mill in Fall City. He gives the date for this and subsequent events as 1907, but notes that it is "after a lapse of thirty odd years." The leasing of land from Jack Bush and the building of "a diamond ... equal to any in the state" with grandstands and fenced grounds occurred at this time. The baseball team photo on the first page appears to have been taken in such a setting, but date given is 1904.



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Our first year was highly successful financially and otherwise. The attendance was always good; crowds came in buckboards to the games glad to pay the 25 cents admission to the park, and much betting was done, most of which was in favor of Fall City.

Along about 1908 the Fall City team had gained quite a reputation as having as good a team as any in other large towns, for it had always put up a great game, so had no trouble inducing the best amateur teams to play on the fine grounds at Fall City.

After the close of the first successful year, at a meeting, the Fall City team voted Art McGill the most alert and valuable player of the bunch, many declaring Art's alertness had saved the day and punctured such sharp practices as ringing in batters by an opposing team on the short end of the score. When they tried during the excitement of the game to ring in a good hitter out of turn, Art would call time without any noise or fuss and get a score card going up to the umpire telling him in his softly spoken voice that the batter was out of turn. And again when rules were disputed Art would demonstrate his canny ability of knowing and memorizing the rules and just interpretations, which always commanded the respect of the umpire, his team, and opponents alike.

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"crowds came in buckboards to the games glad to pay the 25 cents admission to the park, and much betting was done, most of which was in favor of Fall City."

Art McGill "voted the most alert and valuable player"

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But this time the success of the Fall City team had become so well known that a ball scout for the big leagues visited Fall City before a Sunday game and sought out the manager to discuss the players. He called on me upon arrival (I think he was from one of the big time teams.)

Of course, I did my best to boost the ability of Dan Hayes and Dave Payne, pitchers he seemed most interested in. But he also became much interested in Art McGill, the catcher, when I told him of the team voting him the most valuable player. After I had elaborated on the many fine qualities of Art, the scout became enthusiastic and said "he'd keep an eye on him too, during the game." "You say," he continued, "he has no aspirations to be drafted as he thinks he wouldn't make good as he is too light." "That might be true, and he might not be able to stand the

intensive rigors of endless practice to become a star, but from what you say of him it might be he could become useful during training periods in boosting the morale and harmony among the boys."

I don't remember at this late day, what, if any, talk the scout had then with Art, but I do know Art was so unassuming and averse to any kind of ballyhoo and publicity he'd probably discourage any approach of the scout.

By about 1909 the ranks of that great Fall City team had become so depleted by draft and financial inducements from bigger towns that interest dwindled so that the subsequent activities of the team have become too faded in my memory to recall. But I remember that the first big break came when Dan Hayes and Dave Payne were drafted by the big league. Other big towns were also about that time, trying to induce these boys to join them, but the scouts beat them to the punch.

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"By about 1909 the ranks of that great Fall City team had become ...depleted by draft and financial inducements from bigger towns..."



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I recall that Snoqualmie, too, became ambitious to have, and succeeded in gathering, a great team. A pitcher named Marion Welch was purchased by the Coast League. Snoqualmie played many close games with Fall City, which attracted great crowds, but for the most part Fall City relied on Seattle and other big towns for competition.

Sad to relate, Pitchers Dave Payne and Dan Hayes, about the zenith of their incipient baseball fame, became pathetic victims of T. B.

Getting back to Art McGill, though I can truthfully say he had everything in the way of quick thinking, alertness, and fine disposition, qualities so essential to a ball player, whether football or baseball, and anyone who knew him best must have profited in life's best lessons if they were wise enough to heed.

I well remember Art saying he disliked so much training and practice he found necessary to keep up with his game, as he found if he didn't he became a bum player.

Of course, some teams have been organized in the Valley since then but I think it is safe to say none met with the outstanding success of the 1907-1909 Fall City team, through the exceptional abilities of the late Art McGill.

END

Conclusion of the McCann article.

The photo below is from a collection of historic photos shown in the *Snoqualmie Valley Record* on June 25, 1953. No date is given for the photo, but Art McGill and pitchers Dan Hayes and Dave Paine are among the players named in McCann's article.

