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MOORLAND-SPINGARN RESEARCH CENTER

Howard University, Washington, D. C.

EDWARD BOLDEN PAPERS

Collection 186-1 to 186-4

Prepared by:
Lonnie C. King, Jr.
December 1997

MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

Scope Note

The papers of Edward Bolden (1878 - 1946), entrepreneur and Federal employee cover the period from 1910 to the 1980s and is contained in two boxes of approximately one linear foot. The collection was donated by Hilda Bolden Shorter, the daughter of Edward Bolden, in 1984. The collection primarily traces Bolden's career in Negro baseball from 1910 until the 1940s; however, the majority of the papers span the period from 1920 to 1940.

For thirty-six years Bolden owned and/or managed two professional baseball teams in Pennsylvania. He was one of the pioneers in his sport and served as one of the links between the old Negro baseball leagues and modern day major league baseball. The collection provides a flashback to the time of segregation in American baseball when players of African descent could not play on the same team as white players.

Bolden, along with other postal workers, founded the Hilldale baseball club, thereby becoming one of the first baseball groups to be entirely controlled and financed by African Americans. In addition to being a part owner, Bolden was also the manager of the Hilldale team. The team was made up of teenage boys who played together for a period of years and formed the nucleus for the professional baseball team that came later. The collection has limited information on the Hilldale team between 1910 and 1920; however, in the 1920s, the team took off and became a major force in Negro professional baseball. The collection provides information on the first Negro World Series in 1924, between Hilldale

and the Kansas City Monarchs. In addition, it includes various news articles, printed materials, scrapbooks and other artifacts from the 1920s, including names of players and their batting averages. Bolden continued his ownership of the Hilldale team until the late 1920s, when internal bickering caused him and the other owners of the team to cease operating the team.

In 1933, Bolden organized the Philadelphia Stars and entered them into the Negro baseball league. This team, like Hilldale, also flourished under the leadership of Bolden. The collection contains printed materials about the Stars such as the *Colored Baseball and Sports Monthly* which was published in 1934. In addition, many news articles, photographs, and other memorabilia about the Philadelphia team from the 1930s to the 1940s are included. There are photographs of the East-West All Star Classic which was held at Comiskey Park in Chicago in 1941 where 50,485 people were in attendance.

During Bolden's long career, he was called the "Chief" and was recognized as a shrewd promoter and businessman who produced outstanding baseball teams. Concurrent with his tenure as a baseball owner, Bolden continued his employment as a postal clerk at the U. S. Post Office, finally retiring after 42 years.

Biographical Data

Edward Bolden

1882 January 17 Born in Concordville, Pa., to Perry and Hannah Bolden
Attended Public Schools in Delaware County, Pa.

? September 23 Married Nellie Anderson

1904 Philadelphia, Pa. Began work at U. S. Post Office in

1910 team in Darby, Pa. One of the organizers of Hilldale baseball

1928 team Ended relationship with Hilldale baseball

1933 Organized Philadelphia Stars baseball team

1946 March 28 Retired from U. S. Post Office

1950 September 28 Died of stroke at Fitzgerald Mercy Hospital,
Darby, Pa.

Series Description

Series A **Personal Papers**

Box 186-1 Includes biographical data, Pennsylvania motor vehicle registration card, writings by Bolden, U. S. Postal Service papers, obituary, order of service at funeral, condolences, press clippings regarding funeral, and program.

Series B **Correspondence**

Box 186-1 Consists of both personal and professional correspondence between Bolden, friends, family and business associates.

Series C **Hilldale Baseball Team**

Box 186-1 Includes 1920 and 1929 team schedule, and Darby Borough, Tri-Centennial Celebration papers.

Series D **Philadelphia Stars Baseball Team**

Box 186-1 Comprises blank stationary, list of players, Colored Baseball & Sports Monthly, October 1934, Flash, September, 1942, 1941 season pass, 1942 Opening Day Program agenda, Uniform Players Contract, 1947, financial papers (1950), 1947 Negro National League schedule, 1952 Negro American League program, Negro American League score cards, 1941 press release, and Negro American League Program, 1952.

Series E **Photographs**

Box 186-1 Images of Bolden, Philadelphia Stars, First Colored World Series, Hilda Shorter with Philadelphia Stars.

Series F **News Articles**

Box 186-1 Includes articles dating from 1940s through the 1980s about baseball.

Series G **Scrapbooks (1920, 1924, 1925, 1925)**

Box 186-2 Photocopies of four scrapbooks with various news articles, photographs, box scores, and other baseball information.

Series H **Oversized Photographs**

Item 186-3 Consists of five photographs, including First Colored World Series, 1924.

Series I **Restricted**

Box 196-4 Contains four original scrapbooks that are closed to research because of preservation concerns due to fragile condition.

Container List

Box Folder

A Personal Papers

186-1 1 In memoriam
 2 Writings by Bolden
 3 Employment information of Bolden
 4 Program Philadelphia Service Bureau of Professional
Basketball Umpires
 5 Motor Vehicle Registration
 6 Business Card

B Correspondence

 7 A - G
 8 Alexander, Raymond Pace
 9 Forbes, E. E.
 10 Gay, Eustace

 11 H - M
 12 Jackson, Kent
13 Lee, J. Artie
 14 Montgomery, George

 15 P - Z
 16 Pierce, Townsend
 17 Other Correspondents, Hilda Bolden

C Hilldale Baseball Team, 1920-1929, 1982

- 18 Record, 1920
- 19 Schedule, 1929
- 20 Programs, 1924, 1982

D Philadelphia Stars, 1934-1950

- 21 Colored Baseball Sports Monthly, October, 1934
- 22 Press Releases, about 1940
- 23 Opening Day Program, May 9, 1942
- 24 1947 Schedule
- 25 Uniform Player's Contract, April 17, 1947
- 26 Financial Papers, 1950
- 27 Negro American League Scorecard, about 1940

Box Folder

D Philadelphia Stars, continued

- 186-1 28 List of Players, undated
- 29 Season Pass, 1941
- 30 Negro American League Program, 1952
- 31 "Flash" publication, East West Classic, September, 1942
- 32 Blank Stationary

E Photographs, 1924-1927, undated

- 33 Bolden portraits
- 34 Bolden with automobile

Baseball Photographs

- 35 First Colored World Series Opening Game; October 11, 1924, Kansas City, Mo. (For original, see oversized).
- 36 First Colored World Series, Opening Game, October 3, 1924 (For original, see oversized)
- 37 Philadelphia Stars
- 38 Philadelphia Stars, East-West Game
- 39 Opening Game - Eastern League, May 9, 1927.
- 40 Shorter, Hilda Bolden

F News Articles, 1940-1980

- 41 Undated
- 42 1940s - 1950s
- 43 1970s
- 44 1980s

G Scrapbooks, 1920-1925

- 186-2 1 1920
 - 2 1920
 - 3 1924
 - 4 1925

186-3 **H Oversize Photographs**

- First Colored World Series, October 3, 1924;
Edward Bolden, owner, Charleston, manager
Philadelphia Stars, Baseball Club;
Opening Game, Eastern Colored League, May 9,
1927;
East - West Baseball Classic, Comisky Park, July27,
1941;
First Colored World Series, Opening Game, October 11,
1924.

186-4 **I Restricted**