

August 16, 1941

Jolly Johnny Might Be Termed Mr. Jamestown

Carefree and a bit of a clown on occasion, especially when the falcons are on the road, but a serious-minded enterprising fellow away from the ball park, Roly Poly Johnny Newman came into his own last night as an honorary citizen of the City of Jamestown. In fact the Baron of the Big Bingles was designated by Hizzoner Leon F. Roberts as an honorary mayor, police and fire chiefs of this municipality, his term to expire at the cessation of the Pony League playoffs. Thereupon, Mr. Newman, late of Chicago, aspires to become a 100 percent citizen of Jamestown and find employment here for the off-season.

There was a different Newman on the diamond for about half an hour last night in Civic stadium. Johnny and his comely helpmate and Manager Greg Mulleavy received gifts from the Pythians and the fans. Newman's teammates presented the Mighty Mastodon of the Mace a defense bond. Hugh V.N. Bodine, emcee, discoursed as entertainingly as anyone can on such an occasion and then took a telegram from one of his aides. Mr. Bodine read:

“Dearest John: Wish we could be with you in your happiness tonight, but be sure our hearts are there in Jamestown. God Bless you... Mother and Dad”

At the microphone a moment later, the Sovereign of Smack, who belted his way into pre-eminence in the Pony League, paused for a moment. There was mist in his eyes. The favor of fandom and the touching message from his parents overcame the normal emotions of the good-natured slugger. He choked a bit, but finally spoke in clear tones:

“I sometimes try to joke a bit out there on the field, but tonight's there's no room in my heart for that. Mrs. Newman and I thank you very sincerely.”

The Pythians gave the Newmans a valuable silver service and presented to Mrs. Newman, who stood there slim, lovely and radiant under her titian thatch, a beautiful corsage. Mr. Bodine handed Johnny a jar containing currency and coins, the gift of run-of-the-mine fans. Dick Shearman produced a regulation-sized balsa bat weighing but four ounces. Opening the ceremonies, Mayor Roberts announced the honorary appointments and gave the fellow he called the Blonde Bomber a “key” to the city.

It was all very impressive, a fully deserved tribute to an exceedingly popular athlete.

For Johnny Newman the PL Home Run King, the Sovereign of Smack, Sultan of Swat, Baron of the Big Bingles, Belting Beauty, Blonde Bomber... a long reign in the throne room.