

The discovery that the modern game of baseball originated in the mind of the late Gen Abner Doubleday would have immensely surprised that doughty old warrior, perhaps, had he lived to enjoy such unexpected honors. That he originated the game cannot, of course, be affirmed with the utmost confidence, for the testimony gathered by the special committee, whose report is printed in Spalding's baseball guide for the present year, scarcely pretends to do more than affirm that the most exhaustive investigation carries the game no farther back than young Doubleday's performance in marking out a diamond for ball players about the year 1829. That he did this one day is the evidence of an elderly individual who claims to have been present at the time, and whose veracity and competency as a witness the committee unreservedly acknowledges. That the idea of the diamond, the salient structural characteristic of baseball, would have had its birth in the military mind of one like Doubleday is argued plausibly, and one may accept the theory of his being the real founder of the game, so long as there is no better account of its origin. It is a pity that this interesting discovery was not made before Gen Doubleday's death in 1893. He could have thrown some light upon the question, probably. The fact that he had never advanced a claim to being the founder of American baseball is not necessarily adverse to the conclusion of the committee, for the general was interested in other things than sport. Besides, he might have forgotten all about his youthful achievement. It is somewhat droll, finally, to honor a distinguished army officer and civil war hero in this manner, long after his death, for his war record will be utterly lost in the immortal fame he may now be destined to achieve as the founder of the national game.