

On This Date

August 17, 1915

On August 17, 1915, 22-year-old pitcher [Walter Ancker](#) signs a two-year deal with Connie Mack and the Philadelphia Athletics. A star pitcher with the Tenafly, N.J., team of the semipro North Jersey league, Ancker is given two weeks to report to Athletics on September 1.

At the time of his signing, the 6-foot-1, 190-pound right-hander is 15-2 for Tenafly, including two no-hitters. A week earlier he pitches a one-hitter and strikes out 14 in a 3-1 win over visiting Englewood.



On September 3, Ancker makes the difficult jump from the semipro ranks directly to the American League. The last-place Athletics are trailing 9-0 when the rookie takes to the mound in the top of the fifth inning. Shibe Park's public address announcer is forced to go to the mound to ask Ancker what his name is so that he can "enlighten" the crowd with his megaphone. [Tim Murnane](#), a former major league player and manager and a famous writer for the *Boston Globe* says Ancker was, "blushing like a school girl."

The first batter Ancker faces is pitcher [Ernie Shore](#), a Guilford (N.C.) College graduate and future sheriff, whom he retires on a ground ball to 40-year-old second baseman and future Hall of Famer [Nap Lajoie](#). The rest of the inning is a little tougher as he allows a double, a walk, has a wild pitch and hits two batters, increasing Boston's lead to 10-0. Over the next four innings he allows five hits, walks one, but does not allow any more runs.

In his two weeks, and four appearances, with the Athletics, Ancker is 0-0 with a 3.57 ERA. In 17 2/3 innings he allows 10 runs on 19 hits and 17 walks, with four strikeouts and three hit batters. A 60-year-old Ancker passes away on February 13, 1954, in Englewood, New Jersey.