

Canton Wins Again

1917

By PFRA Research

Leo Lyons liked to talk about the time he took his Rochester Jeffersons team to Canton in 1917 and got walloped 49-0. According to Lyons, as he was walking off the field, he found himself beside Jim Thorpe, "You know, Jim," he said, "some day this game will draw like professional baseball. We should form a league."

The way Leo told it, although he didn't exactly say so, you got the idea that no one had ever thought of a pro football league before that moment. You might even draw the conclusion that there never would have been a National Football League had Leo not come up with his brainstorm.

Leo managed the Jeffersons from before World War I until they went belly up as NFL members in 1925. Then he hung around league meetings year after year until the owners finally named him Unofficial League Historian to give him a reason for being there. Until he died in 1976, Leo used his position to unofficially promote Leo Lyons as one of the more important founders of the league. Thanks to interviews with Leo, one popular history of pro football devotes five pages to the Rochester Jeffersons -- a team that won three league games in its six league seasons -- while allowing some of the stronger teams only a paragraph or two. And one respected pro football encyclopedia places the founding of the league in 1919 at a pre-season meeting in Canton that Leo remembered attending. Of course there was no such 1919 meeting, the league wasn't founded that year, and it's likely that Leo didn't get back to Canton until 1921.

And just for the record, the Canton newspapers identified the team that Canton slaughtered in 1917 not as Leo's Jeffersons but as a service team -- the Syracuse 47th Infantry -- and the actual score was 41-0. Nevertheless, it's quite possible that Lyons mused about forming a league while he watched his team -- whatever his team was that day -- get its butt kicked in Canton. After all, that idea had been all over the sports pages the previous spring.

The hot rumor had been that the major baseball owners were ready to jump in and form a pro football counterpart to their diamond leagues. There was never anything to it. As soon as Connie Mack of Philadelphia and Barney Dreyfuss of Pittsburgh pointed out the losses they'd suffered when they fielded football teams back in 1902, the other baseball owners dropped the idea like a teflon pop fly.

Three Indiana pro teams -- Wabash, Pine Village, and Hammond -- formed a mini-league in 1917 but apparently its only purpose was to produce a round-robin schedule. Even that was too binding for

the Ft. Wayne Friars, Indiana's other strong pro team. They opted to remain independent.

It is quite likely that midwest team managers would have formed a real pro football league during the summer of 1917 had the United States not entered World War I on April 6 of that year. For three years, the profits made by an America sitting on the sideline of World War I while selling food and goods to war-torn Europe had helped fuel pro football expansion in the Midwest. The game had grown to the point where it was ready to take on some structure, at least among the major teams. More troubling, salaries were rising as more and more famous college stars followed Thorpe into the pro ranks. A league binding all the major teams together was a way to control spending by setting salary levels and forcing all league members to abide by them.

But the nation's entry into the war as a participant changed things. Once that happened, with many players being drafted or enlisting, no manager was willing to tie himself to an agreement when he didn't know what kind of team he'd be able to put on the field. According to Jack Cusack, the call-ups to the service also affected game attendance adversely. No doubt some of the drop off was because a number of potential fans were away in uniform, but it's also true that interest in gridiron wars slumped as interest in the real war increased.

Perhaps Cusack himself was responsible for some of the sag in attendance. His 1916 team had been so overpowering that Canton fans couldn't get very excited for 1917 games except those with the very strongest opponents. Furthermore, around Ohio and in neighboring states, interest in hometown teams had to be affected by the knowledge that the local elevens really couldn't compare to the bully-boys from Canton. "We're number two!" has never been a popular chant in America.

As many team managers expected, the cost of ringers -- "this-week's-stars" -- went up as fewer became available. Many strong teams settled for one or two good players and filled in with sandlotters. As a consequence, the quality of pro football in 1917 was down a peg from the level of the year before.

The fall-off wasn't noticeable in Canton, where Cusack had Thorpe, his talent, aura, and persuasion. Cusack brought in Milt Ghee, an All-American passer from Dartmouth who'd played a few games for the Bulldogs the year before. Ghee threw an incredible 17 touchdown passes in 1917. True, most of them came during Bulldogs' one-sided, early-season games, but it was still an amazing number for the time. No passer for a major pro team

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would top that number until the great Benny Friedman a decade later.

Also back in the Bulldog kennel was the West Virginia Wesleyan coaching staff of "Greasy" Neale and John Kellison, better known in Canton as "Foster" and "Ketcham", or "Fisher" and "Patton", or "Whoever" and "Whatever." A third player accompanied Neale and Kellison from Wesleyan, a copper-skinned running back called "Anderson." The pseudonym fooled no one; he had played the last game of 1916 for the Bulldogs under his real name -- Pete Calac. Jim Thorpe's best friend, the former Carlisle star was NOT a coach at Wesleyan -- he was the college team's top player.

Late in the season, Foster, Ketchum, and Anderson failed to show up for a game. On their way to Canton, they'd heard that suspicious Wesleyan officials were checking rumors of their playing pro ball and planned to look in on the game. They spent that Sunday in Pittsburgh. After lying low for another week, Kellison and Calac reappeared as Bulldogs. Ketcham became "Wilson" and Anderson reappeared as "Andrews." Foster had no problem; another "Foster" had played in the game viewed by the Wesleyan officials.

The year 1917 saw the high-water mark in assumed names at Canton. Almost everyone seems to have been someone else for one game or another. Some pseudonyms were transparent. "Williams" was really Willaman, "Wells" was Welch, and "Ketcham" was, of course, Kellison. But was Welch "Moore" for another game? Or was "Moore" Gilroy who might have been "McNamara" the week before? And "Carpenter" was likely at least two different players for different games. The *Repository* and *Daily News* didn't always agree on the names used, and sometimes a player listed as one name in the lineup at the top of a game account would be called something else later in the text.

At this late date, about the only Canton player who can be absolutely identified game-by-game is Thorpe.

The increased use of fictitious names signifies an increased awareness of pro football among college and high school administrations. Fake names are usually thought of as indicating an undergraduate player, but far more commonly they were used by high school and college coaches whose schools frowned on their playing professionally.

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The Youngstown Patricians did their best to come up to Canton's level. With Notre Damer Stan Cofall as coach and star running back. They recruited a team that included several tried and true pros in the line. Cofall was joined in the backfield by Michigan's Ernest "Tommy" Hughitt, and Illinois' Bart Macomber. The season began well with an easy 36-0 win over a team from Wheeling. Cofall scored three touchdowns and Macomber rubbed salt in the West Virginians' wounds by kicking a field goal with five seconds left.

The next week it looked like another victory was at hand against the Pitcairn, Pa., Quakers. One of the better teams from the Pittsburgh area, the Quakers usually gave a good account of themselves when they journeyed into Ohio. They'd lose, but by a

respectable score. The week before invading Youngstown, they'd held Canton to 12-7. The Bulldogs had been without Thorpe who was finishing up the baseball season, and several other stars had not yet arrived, but the Patricians figured to earn some respect by beating the Quakers by a bigger margin than Canton had registered.

With five minutes left in the game, Youngstown was up 10-0, just about what could be expected. But then, Youngstown got greedy. Instead of sitting on their lead, the Patricians went to the air. Bad decision! A Pitcairn halfback intercepted and returned the ball for a touchdown -- 10-7. Then, a few moments later, Pitcairn moved to the the shadow of the Patricians' goal posts, and their kicker put a placement dead-bang through from the 20. Score tied!

A tie with Pitcairn was as bad as a loss as far as the Patricians were concerned. They tried to rectify the situation with desperation passes. Desperation turned to horror as Pitcairn intercepted again - - and again ran the ball back for a touchdown.

A 30-0 pummeling of the Columbus Panhandles at the end of October regained the Pats only a modicum of prestige. The Panhandles were down two Nessers and nowhere near what they'd been before. The missing Nessers happened to be the two brothers who were at that time the most effective players in the clan -- Al and Frank. The railroad had transferred Al to Akron where he continued his football career representing that city. Frank, known for his booming punts and long passes, was much in demand and played for several different teams in 1917. The 'Handles might have gotten by with four Nessers had they not also been without Lee Snoots and Emmett Ruh, both in the service. Snoots and Ruh were the only Panhandles with any speed.

In one terrible, three-week span, Columbus lost to Canton 54-0, to Youngstown 30-0, and to Massillon 28-0.

Youngstown went all out against Canton as November began. The Canton *Repository* called the game scheduled for Youngstown's Wright Field a "crucial test" for the Bulldogs and noted that the Patricians had added several famous players including Pitt's All-America center Bob Peck.

The Bulldogs' performance brought mixed reviews. Thorpe, Calac, and F.A. Dunn ran the ball with great effectiveness, but Ghee's passes were consistently off the mark. He had a good excuse; he came into the game running a temperature and then suffered a wrenched shoulder that sidelined him for the second half. The other Canton passers, mostly Neale and Thorpe, had no excuse at all. The Bulldogs threw an astonishing 30 times, yet completed a paltry six. The poor passing game stopped Canton drives again and again. Youngstown's attack was just the opposite. They ended up with negative yardage on the ground but completed seven of ten passes for over 160 yards.

The only score came in the first quarter when a Bulldog the *Repository* cloaked as "Black, tackle from one of the big eastern colleges," dropkicked a short field goal. "Black" was the University of Pennsylvania's 1916 captain Neil Matthews. Matthews joined a 1915 Penn teammate, "Unk" Russell, who had played most of the season for Canton under the name -- gasp! -- Russell. Even though he never came to Ohio to play, another player on the 1915 and '16

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Penn squad would have a more important pro football career than either Matthews or Russell. His name was Bert Bell.

In a post-game sidebar, the *Repository* explained that more than pride was at stake in the Canton-Youngstown game:

"There was plenty of Canton money taken over to Youngstown Sunday by auto, train or interurban but it could not find sufficient backers. Most of it had to come back again without being placed on the Bulldogs.

"The Youngstown fans had coin but they did not want straight bets on the result of the battle. They preferred to pick on various angles on the combat, such as two to five Canton doesn't score or two to three the Patricians do not. Around the hotels there was some coin to be found at 2 to 1 on Canton."

The 3-0 Canton victory was close enough that Youngstown still retained hope they could win the Ohio championship by beating Massillon and then topping the Bulldogs in a rematch at Canton. The first part proved do-able.

The Massillon Tigers stood 4-0, including a 27-0 win over pesky Pitcairn, when they cruised into Youngstown. Coach and captain Bob "Nasty" Nash, the former Rutgers star, had promised Massillon fans the championship at the beginning of the season. To that end he put together a team that was both big and rough, particularly in the line which boasted combative Charley Copley from Muhlenberg at one tackle, Washington and Jefferson's Al Wesbecher at center, and of course Nash himself at either tackle or end. Nash's nickname of "Nasty" was supposedly taken from a character in a popular play of the time, but there were those who suggested his rugged playing style would have made him "Nasty Nash" even had the play's character been called an altogether different name.

The Tigers may have been a bit overconfident when they took the field before 6,000 Patrician partisans. In the opening period, they were "caught napping." in the *Repository's* words, when Captain Cofall completed a 50-yard pass for a Youngstown touchdown.

Massillon used its considerable weight to crunch to a second quarter touchdown. "Tuss" McLaughry, the former Michigan A & M (Michigan State) fullback led the drive and scored the points, but quarterback "Shorty" Miller out of Penn State missed the conversion leaving the Pats in front 7-6 at the half.

The third quarter was scoreless and evenly fought but in the final period Cofall completed another long pass. This one went to quarterback Tommy Hughitt who was pulled down at the Tigers' ten. From there, line smashes did the job with Cofall going over. Macomber's conversion sealed the game 14-6.

Oddly headlined in the Canton *Daily News* -- "Patricians Pass Away to Defeat Tigers" -- the victory meant Youngstown was not dead but had thrust itself back into the role of Canton's chief challenger.

Massillon was still in shock a week later when it lost to Akron 3-0. The Patricians went to Canton for their make-or-break game at the best possible time. The Bulldogs were not at full strength. Thorpe was on the bench with a wrenched knee. Dunn sat beside him

nursing an ankle he'd injured two weeks earlier at Youngstown. Calac and Kellison were absent, but "Foster" showed up and was put in Calac's fullback slot. Ghee was the only regular backfield man available and he was coming off a week's vacation while he recovered from his Youngstown wounds. For halfbacks, Jack Cusack brought in Sam Willaman from Ohio State and Gus Welch, another Indian from Carlisle.

Despite their patched-together state, the Bulldogs took the opening kickoff and swept down the field. At the Patrician 20, Ghee threw a bullseye to "Foster" who forced his way into the end zone. A short time later, Welch earned his pay by racing 89 yards from scrimmage to put the Bulldogs up 13-0.

At that point, Canton went into its defensive mode, playing careful football. The game developed into a slow, dull shoving match punctuated by frequent penalties. By the second half, with no more Bulldog scoring or even a serious threat in sight, the 6,000 faithful began chanting "Thorpe! Thorpe! Thorpe!" but Big Jim remained on the bench.

The loss spelled the end for the Patricians whose season closed with the final gun. Several of their stars, including Cofall and Peck, migrated to the Massillon Tigers. According to some accounts, it was the desertion by their best players that caused the Pats to end their season prematurely. However, it's equally likely that the Youngstown backers seeing no profit in playing out the string as an also-ran called it quits and the players simply looked for work elsewhere.

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In the three years since they'd returned to the football wars, the Massillon Tigers had consistently lost money and had consistently been disappointing. The two facts were connected.

Massillon was smaller than Canton, meaning it had a smaller fan base to support its football team. Not that the Massillon rooters weren't rabid. Each week of the football season merchants decked out their stores in Tiger orange and black, homeowners displayed encouraging signs in windows and on porches, parades were held, and the upcoming game was always the main topic of street-corner conversations. No city in Ohio had fans more loyal or enthusiastic. There just weren't enough of them! Moreover, the city lacked a first-class ballpark so that even the Tigers' biggest home games undersold. Under the circumstances, the only way to make the Tigers profitable was to use Peggy Parratt's old Akron scheme of bringing in just enough high-priced stars to win. Even then, the Tigers would have probably operated at a loss, but that might have been made up by its backers with judicious bets on important games. Of course such a course made winning not just a goal but a necessity.

Massillon took the second part first. They went all-out for victory, bringing in anyone they thought could help and damn the cost. No payroll figures exist, but some statements from Massillon backers and the number and reputations of the players who wore Tiger jerseys at different times strongly suggest that Massillon usually had the highest payroll in Ohio football on any given Sunday. So much for judicious spending!

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But in trying so hard to win, the Massillon backers shot themselves in the foot. They always looked for someone better. As a consequence, their lineup changed far more often than that of arch-rival Canton's. Man-for-man they could match up with the Bulldogs, but too often they played as strangers.

At Canton, Jack Cusack developed a corps of "Canton" players who returned week after week. Thorpe was the main man, but Neale, Calac, Ghee, Kellison, Dunn, "Horse" Edwards, Waldsmith, Fred Sefton, and several others could expect to have work every time the Bulldogs played. Cusack might bring in a new star from time to time, but his "regulars" were not likely to languish on the bench if they were healthy. That was important because a player who didn't play was usually paid at a reduced rate or often only reimbursed his expenses. And because the Bulldogs' lineup was more stable than the Tigers' Canton usually exhibited far better teamwork than Massillon.

This is not to say that teamwork on the professional gridirons of the time compared to that found on the best college elevens. Pro teams didn't practice together enough to develop smooth machines. Often their only pre-game session as a team was a run-through of plays on the morning of the game. Sometimes a particular star wouldn't even arrive in town until shortly before kickoff. College football fans were fond of saying that a good college team could beat the best pro team, and they were probably right. But they were wrong when they said it was because of the collegians' "spirit." The difference was that the collegians might practice together fifteen hours a week; the pros were lucky to get in fifteen minutes.

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With its first big game with Canton coming up, Massillon's leaders followed their usual routine and hired the biggest star they could find. They shoved Bob Nash aside and put Charlie Brickley, the famous Harvard drop-kicker and All-America, in charge. Next to Thorpe, Brickley was probably the most famous football player around. Ivy League stars, particularly those from Harvard or Yale were automatically assumed to know more about winning football games than bumpkins from the midwest.

And Brickley had a plan.

To oppose the Bulldogs, Brickley benched the seasoned pros who'd been winning games for the Tigers and brought in a lineup of small but fast former Ivy League-type players, actually the Army Ambulance Corps team from Allentown, Pennsylvania. Brickley expected his whippets to run rings around the heavier Bulldogs for a quarter or so. Then he planned to bring in his veteran pros to clean up the by-then exhausted Cantons. It was a master plan worthy of Custer's at the Little Bighorn.

Canton took the opening kickoff and drove 77 yards straight down the field to a touchdown against Brickley's light brigade. Brickley rushed his seasoned veterans on to the field, but it was too late. Canton went on to a 14-3 win.

Brickley went back to the east.

The victory over Massillon pretty well wrapped up the Ohio championship for the Bulldogs, but they still had a tough foe to get past if they were to claim the U.S. title. Canton had agreed to take on the Detroit Heralds at Navin Field on Thanksgiving Day. Cusack usually didn't like to schedule Thanksgiving Day games because so many of his players would be necessarily absent coaching their college or high school teams. A game with the Heralds, however, figured to bring out a big crowd.

The Heralds, Michigan's champions, had one of their best teams. They'd easily whipped Hammond and Wabash from Indiana, slaughtered the All-Buffalos from New York, topped a team from Racine, Wisconsin, and bested three Ohio teams: the Cincinnati Celts, Toledo Maroons, and Columbus Panhandles. Their only loss had been to a strong Camp Custer service team. A win over Canton would make them irrefutably the top pro team in the land.

The key to the Heralds success was an Ohio man. Norb Sacksteder could be found in a Dayton Triangle uniform in most years but the Heralds had him in 1917. His specialty was the breakaway dash. At 5'9" and 172 pounds, Sacksteder was extremely fast and devastatingly shifty. Although he was no great shakes at plunging into the line, any time he could get into the open he was very likely to go all the way. Most of his touchdowns -- and he'd racked up a least a dozen for the Heralds by the time Canton arrived in town -- came on end runs from midfield or farther out.

An excellent crowd of 8,000 put off Thanksgiving dinner to visit Navin Field. They saw a ferociously played first half that might have gone either way but in fact went neither. The Bulldogs kept Sacksteder in check but couldn't sustain an offense themselves. When the period ended 0-0, visions of a national championship danced in Detroit heads. Significantly, Thorpe hadn't played. Big Jim opened the second half in the Canton backfield and was unceremoniously dropped for a yard loss the first time he touched the football. Perhaps that got his dander up because for the next several minutes he and Pete Calac put on a brilliant exhibition of line-smashing. In bits and chunks, the two Carlisle buddies moved the ball inexorably down the field 70 yards. Then, as Detroit gathered itself to repel one last smash, Milt Ghee flipped a short pass to Greasy Neale who stepped over the goal line for a touchdown.

That single drive constituted the only offensive fireworks for the day, but it gave Canton the seven points it needed to win. From then on both teams played remarkable defense. But though there was no more scoring, Sacksteder's proclivity for breakaway jaunts kept Detroit fans hopeful to the end. Virtually to a man the Bulldogs declared the Heralds to be the toughest opponent they'd faced all season.

The Bulldogs' season should have ended on that high note, but they still had their second meeting with Massillon to get out of the way. Surprisingly, that Sunday the Tigers managed a 6-0 upset on a pair of field goals by ex-Notre Dame star Stan Cofall. Canton, playing its third game in eight days and with the championship in the bag, couldn't get untracked. To make matters worse, Thorpe was injured early in the second quarter by a bit of Cofall play that the Indian considered less than sporting. He limped through the rest of the game but was obviously hampered.

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Despite the upset, Canton was generally regarded as the U.S. champion; Massillon couldn't make a serious claim. The Tigers had lost their first game with the Bulldogs by a larger margin and dropped two other games to lesser opponents. It had not been a good season for Massillon. They lost three games on the field, and their backers dropped \$4,700 at the gate.

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Jack Cusack wrote: "Many of the stories written about the great Jim Thorpe were pure fabrication. One such tale that went the rounds was that Jim's shoulder pads were made of sheet metal or cast iron. Maybe they felt like that to the men the big Indian tackled or knocked aside on his terrific plunges through the line, but the only metal involved was just enough interior ribbing to hold the layers of felt padding in place. I had those pads made at Jim's suggestion. They were constructed of hard sole leather, riveted together, and their legality was never questioned while Thorpe played for me. The Indian and I planned to put them on the market and advertise them as 'The Jim Thorpe Shoulder Pad,' but the manufacturer we approached feared that they might be classed as illegal, and we abandoned the project."

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With the collapse of the Columbus Panhandles, the Dayton Triangles were left as the strongest team in the southern part of Ohio. Indeed, the Tris went through an eight-game season undefeated but their competition was second-rate. Worse, it took the Dayton Tris three earnest tries to get past the so-so Cincinnati Celts. After playing 7-7 and 0-0 ties, the Triangles finally downed the Celts at Dayton 13-0 on December 2.

That Indiana League completed its season. The Hammond Clabby's finished ahead of the Wabash A.A. and Pine Village and then knocked off non-league Ft. Wayne to earn clear title to the state championship. According to *Spalding's Official Football Guide*, Hammond also won the independent championships of Iowa and Illinois. Hammond's best player and perhaps the best player in pro football aside from Thorpe was John "Paddy" Driscoll, the triple threat back out of Northwestern. "He was prominent in every game," Chicago sportswriter Leo Fischer wrote, "and was responsible through his individual efforts for several of Hammond's victories. He also kicked the longest field goal of the season -- 50 yards." During the 1920s, Driscoll would put together a Hall of Fame career with the Chicago Cardinals and Bears.

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After the season, a "Cleveland critic" chose an all-pro team from among the four major northeastern Ohio teams:

LE	Bob Nash, Massillon (Rutgers)
LT	Pike Johnson, Massillon (Washington & Lee)
LG	Al Nesser, Akron (Sandlotter)
C	Bob Peck, Youngstown & Massillon (Pittsburgh)
RG	Doc Spears, Canton (Dartmouth)
RT	Charley Copley, Massillon (Muhlenburg)
RE	Roy Burrell, Akron (Sandlotter)
QB	Milt Ghee, Canton (Dartmouth)
LH	Jim Thorpe, Canton (Carlisle)
RH	Stan Cofall, Youngstown & Massillon (Notre Dame)

FB F.A. Dunn, Canton (Dickinson)

This elicited a partisan but nonetheless interesting discussion of the merits of the best players by the Canton *Repository*.

"Having seen the Bulldogs in action from the beginning until the end of the recent season, we can but wonder why a Cleveland critic should place only four of them on his all-professional eleven. It is probably because he saw them only occasionally.

"The entire Bulldog crew would not make a poor all-professional team. In fact it would look just as strong, seemingly a bit stronger, than any formed from selects from Canton, Massillon, Akron, and Youngstown. Picking the best out of such an array of stars as could be found on these four teams is a tough job, any way it is taken.

"The Clevelander named Spears, Ghee, Thorpe and Dunn from the Bulldogs. But why only they? Why not take the entire Canton backfield, leaving Cofall out altogether, shifting Dunn to right half and placing Andrews at full? Cofall never accomplished anything on the offensive against Canton, except the two field goals in the final game. He is a great defensive player and a good punter, but with Thorpe hanging around no other punter is needed. Andrews is a far more valuable man on the offense, with his powerful rushes through the line. The Bulldog backfield combination outclassed anything it encountered and Andrews was no small factor in the success.

"Nash at left and Burrell, of Akron, on right -- Canton will hardly agree to this, with two such stars available as Sefton and Neale. Hardly a real gain was made around either man all season, and in both Massillon-Canton games Thorpe circled Nash successfully. Nash is a good man, a real star, but his place is at tackle. Burrell hasn't the class of Neale, one of the most valuable men who ever wore the red and white of Canton.

"An end who could very easily be placed over Nash and Burrell, on a par at least with the Canton men, is French, of Massillon. He is thought to be (Guy) Chamberlin, an All-American man from Nebraska. But he played only one game, the second Tiger-Bulldog battle. His work stood out like a lighthouse in mid-ocean.

"Alf Nesser, of Akron, is a corking good guard but he doesn't look the equal of Russell of the Bulldogs. For one thing, he doesn't know as much football as the scrapper from Penn. The Cleveland critic places two Massillon men on the tackles -- Johnson of Wash-Lee and Copley of Muhlenburg. But they couldn't open up holes for the Massillon backs, with the result that the Tigers' rushing attack netted less than nothing in both Canton games. Mathews, of Penn, was not outplayed during the season, which gives him a rather good claim for a berth. Edwards and Ketcham, the other Bulldog tackles, played about evenly during the season. They looked just as good and better than Copley.

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"Peck, of Pitt, was an All-American center during his college days but that fact alone does not make him the all-pro choice. He was up against Waldsmith three times and didn't have a bit on the Canton man. In fact Waldsmith seemed the better of the two, with more accuracy in his passes and a keener eye in following the ball. Peck was guilty of two poor passes in the final game, which gave the ball to Canton on the Tiger 16-yard line. Such things count against a man more heavily than mere reputation count for him.

"Taking it by and large, the entire Canton team would suit the Canton fans as an all-professional bunch. With the possible exception of French, or Chamberlin, there was not a man in sight who would have added any power to the Bulldog varsity."

So Canton, Thorpe and Cusack had yet another championship. Canton fans rejoiced while in Massillon, Youngstown, Akron, and Cleveland the word was "Shut up and deal!"

But the next "deal" would be a long time coming.