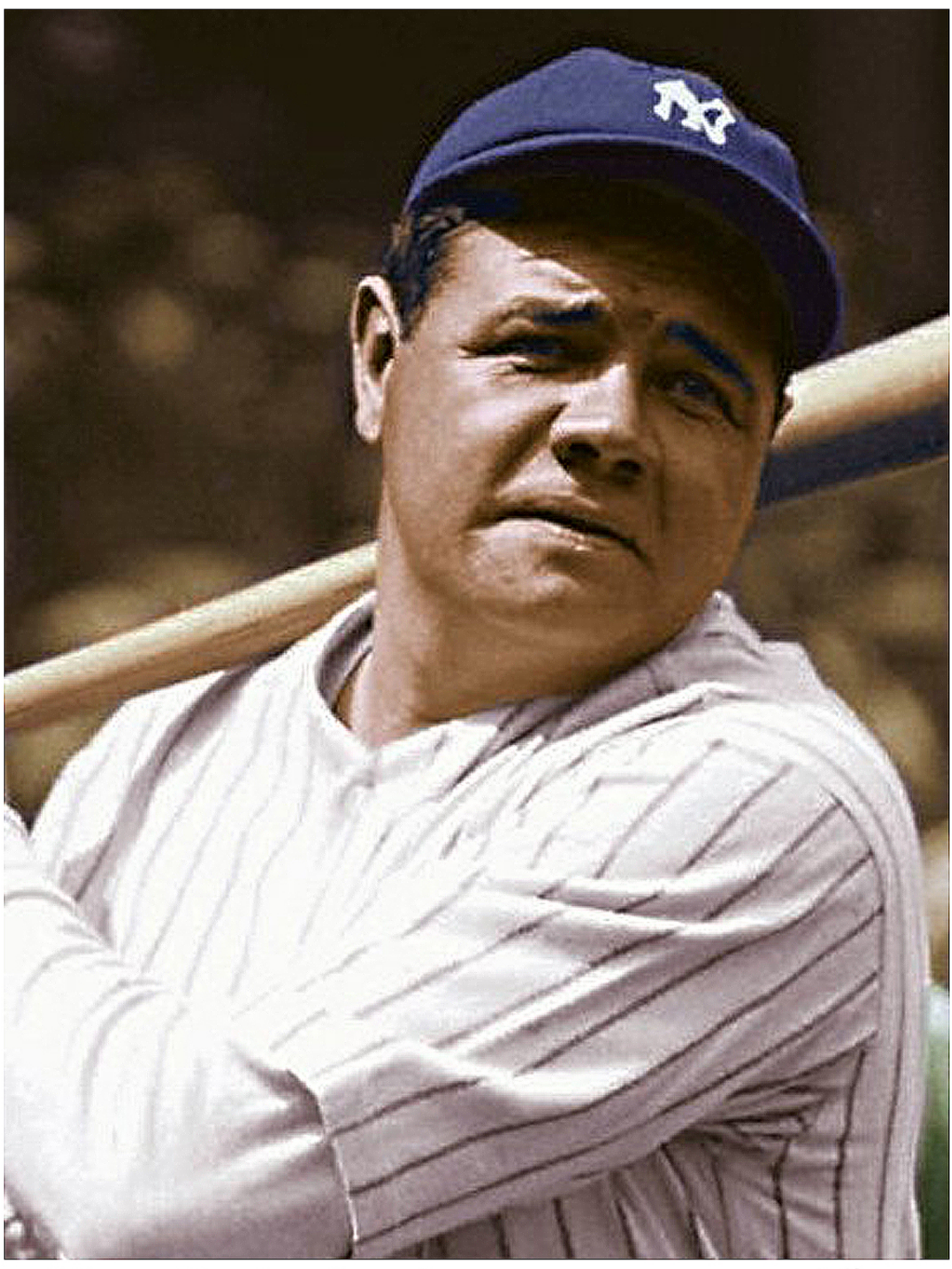
GENTRY
August 1 — November 1, 1952
~PAGE 75~

Sultan of Swat Slams Number Sixty

Babe Ruth Proves He's Mister Baseball



New York, October 1, 1927 . . . The happiest man in the world today, even happier than the great Bambino himself, is Joe Forner, 40-year-old Yankee fan of 1937 First Avenue, Manhattan, who caught the sixtieth and record breaking home run ball that the mighty Babe bashed into the stands. If you value your eardrums keep away from that First Avenue address for the next week, for Mister Forner is no shrinking violet, as even the Babe can attest.

The mighty blow came off a southpaw throw of Tom Zachary, Senator pitcher, as he saw his low, hard one belted into Babe's favorite parking place, the right field bleachers. This hit not only set a record, but won the game since the score was deadlocked at two-two in the eighth, when the Pasha of Bash stepped to the rubber with one out and Koenig on third.

Zach and the crowd alike were tense for here was raw drama in the making. Pre-season writers had speculated that the Babe was washed up and about ready for the shelf. If so, they forgot to mention that whoever did the washing put in an overdose of starch, for the Bambino's stickwork got crisper and more devastating as the season progressed. Here was a chance to perform a home run feat that was almost impossible. 59 homers had been laid to the Babe's credit. This was the moment.

OldMagazineArticles.com

Zachary sneaked the first throw over for a called strike and the crowd moaned. The next one was high and outside for a ball. On the next pitch, the Sultan of Swat crashed his willow against the horschide which went sailing like a bat out of the nether regions. The gang in Ruthsville stood up and outlined the path of its flight. It dropped half way to the top of the bleachers and was a fitting hit to break his 1921 record of 59 homers.

While his teammates went as crazy as the crowd, the king of belters jogged slowly around the sacks making sure to touch each bag firmly and carefully. As he reached home a truly presidential rain of torn paper confetti deluged him while the ball game to all intents and purposes ended then and there. The Babe grinned sheepishly as he ambled out to the field where the citizens of Ruthsville rose to a man and gave him a handkerchief salute. The happy hero entered into the spirit of clowning and did a series of comic salutes to the adoring crowd.

The disconsolate Zachary, unwilling conspirator in the record setting feat, said in an interview that the pitch he threw had *everything* on it. It was low, fast and on the inside. The Babe pulled away from the plate, then stepped up and golfed the pitch on a line into the stands. Catcher Muddy Ruel and Umpire Bill Dinneen both claim the ball was more than ten feet fair as it sailed over the bleacher barrier.

•

Note: George Herman (Babe) Ruth is unquestionably the greatest figure ever associated with our national pastime. He was born in Baltimore, February 6, 1895. Most of his childhood was spent at an orphanage, St. Mary's Industrial School, in that city. He left the institution in 1914 to become an outfielder and pitcher for the Baltimore Orioles. That same year he was sold "upstairs" to the Boston Red Sox where he became a great left-handed pitcher. He played with the Yankees from 1920 to 1934 and such was his skill and his hold on the fans that the Stadium became known as the House That Ruth Built. His last public appearance was at a premiere of the "Babe Ruth Story," a moving picture made in his honor. He died a few months after this (August 16, 1948) after a two-year war against cancer, at Memorial Hospital, New York City.

OldMagazineArticles.com