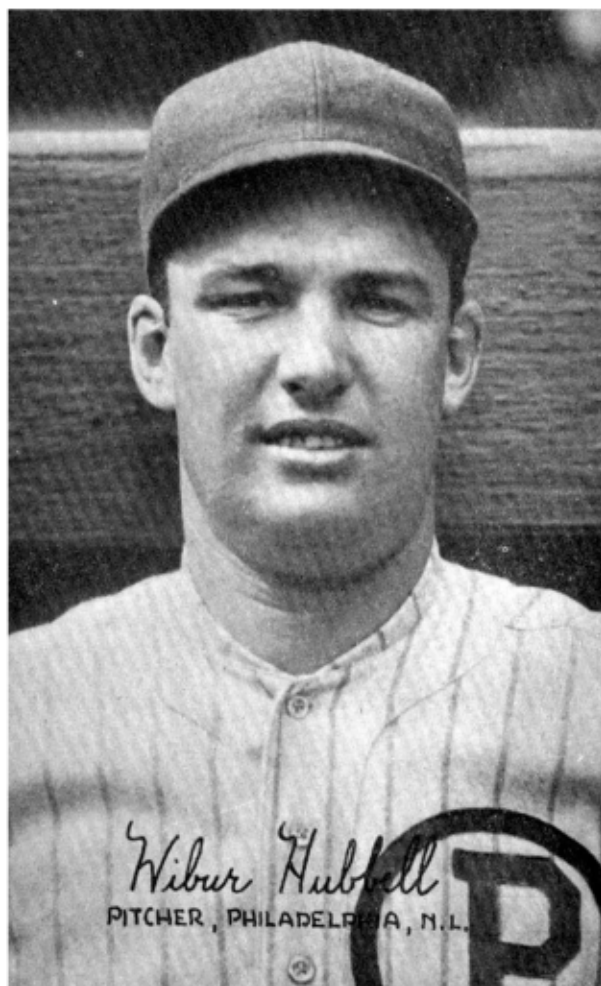


## Hidden History: Wilbur Hubbell: Buhl's National League Hero



Wilbur Hubbell, of Buhl, is seen at the age of 25 in this 1922 Philadelphia Phillies baseball card.

October 17, 2013 2:00 am • By Mychel Matthews [mmatthews@magicvalley.com](mailto:mmatthews@magicvalley.com)

**BUHL** • Baseball pitcher Wilbur William Hubbell believed he had found the rainbow's end. Hubbell was considered one of the best athletes in Idaho. Hubbell played on Buhl's 1914 Idaho State Champion high school football team, and excelled at baseball, basketball, track and swimming.

In 1919, the 22-year-old right-handed pitcher from Buhl jumped right to the majors. The 6-foot 2-inch hurler was touted as a coming star when he signed with the New York Giants. But real success eluded him.

At the end of his rookie year, the Giants traded Hubbell to the Philadelphia Phillies. In 1920, Hubbell won 9 of the 18 games that he pitched, and 9 of the 16 games he pitched in 1921.

In May 1922, the Phillies played the Brooklyn Dodgers in front of 2,500 fans at Shibe Park in Philadelphia. In the opening inning, Hubble pitched to Tom Griffith, and Griffith drove a line

drive, striking Hubble's head. "The ball flew like a projectile from a gun," wrote The New York Times that day. The result was a severe concussion and a fractured skull. The fracture radiated in three directions above Hubbell's right ear, the paper reported.

"Hubbell is at the Stetson Hospital fighting for his life," the Times wrote. "The injury is probably fatal." Phillies owner William Baker telegraphed Mrs. Hubbell in Buhl, telling her to come to Philadelphia immediately. But Hubbell didn't die, and after recovering, he continued to play — albeit poorly — for the Phillies.

Several years later, he seemed to regain his confidence. In 1924, the Times Herald of Cattaraugus, N.Y., wrote that Hubbell five years before, "had started in search of the end of the pitching rainbow. He made an exhaustive study of baseball, the Einstein theory, ragtime playing and Mah Jong in his efforts to locate the baseball pot of gold. But until the '24 season, his search seemed fruitless."

The season started well, but fizzled. The Phillies traded Hubbell to the Brooklyn Dodgers — the Brooklyn Robins, as the team was known then. In 1925, Hubble was traded to the minors. He went on to play for the Minneapolis Millers, the Reading Keystones, the Seattle Indians, the Oakland Oaks, the Sacramento Senators, and finally, at the age of 35, the Portland Beavers in 1932.

Hubble died in Lakewood, Colo., in 1980, at the age of 83.



WILBERT HUBBELL  
P.- Phila. National

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1925 Brooklyn Dodgers

1920

## REVISED CARD



PLAYER Hubbell, W. W.

30-31-32-33-34

CLUB Philadelphia N.

WRITE YOUR FULL NAME AND PERMANENT OR WINTER ADDRESS

POSITION P

NAME Wilbert W. Hubbell

BATS R OR LH RH

STREET

THROWS R OR LH RH

CITY

AGE June 17, 1897

STATE

HEIGHT 6-1½

1924:  
Henderson, Colo.  
Birthplace: San Francisco, Cal.

WEIGHT 195

CLUB WITH 19 19 New York N.

(Died 8/3/80 - LAKEWOOD, CO)

1932 Portland Ore. Tyler

- 1917 Semi pro  
18 New York <sup>NT</sup> N Kansas City <sup>NT</sup>  
18 Joplin <sup>o</sup> Newark  
18 New York <sup>N</sup>  
19 " <sup>NT</sup> Toronto <sup>o</sup>  
19 " "  
20 " <sup>NR</sup> Phila <sup>N</sup>  
23 Phila <sup>N</sup>  
~~25~~ "  
25 Brooklyn <sup>+</sup>  
26 Minneapolis  
28 " Reading  
29 " x Mission, S.F.  
30 Chattanooga <sup>(P)</sup> x Seattle  
31 Sacramento <sup>RD '32</sup>



**WILBUR HUBBELL**  
**PITCHER, PHILADELPHIA NATIONALS**