

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis
Baum Henry Nietzsche Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac
Leslie Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Harte
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Cooke
Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Irving
Bunner Richter Chekhov Chambers Alcott
Doré Dante Swift Shaw Wodehouse
Pushkin Newton



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

TREDITION CLASSICS

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series. The creators of this series are united by passion for literature and driven by the intention of making all public domain books available in printed format again - worldwide. Most TREDITION CLASSICS titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades. At tredition we believe that a great book never goes out of style and that its value is eternal. Several mostly non-profit literature projects provide content to tredition. To support their good work, tredition donates a portion of the proceeds from each sold copy. As a reader of a TREDITION CLASSICS book, you support our mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion. See all available books at www.tredition.com.



The content for this book has been graciously provided by Project Gutenberg. Project Gutenberg is a non-profit organization founded by Michael Hart in 1971 at the University of Illinois. The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks. Project Gutenberg is the first and largest collection of public domain eBooks.

**A Ball Player's Career Being the
Personal Experiences and
Reminiscences of Adrian C.
Anson**

Adrian Constantine Anson

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Adrian Constantine Anson

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8472-2656-7

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations, such as Project Gutenberg, worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

To
My Father Henry Anson of
Marshalltown, Iowa,
to whose early training and sound advice I owe
my fame

CONTENTS

- I. – MY BIRTHPLACE AND ANCESTRY.
- II. – DAYS AT MARSHALLTOWN
- III. – SOME FACTS ABOUT THE NATIONAL GAME
- IV. – FURTHER FACTS AND FIGURES
- V. – THE GAME AT MARSHALLTOWN
- VI. – My EXPERIENCE AT ROCKFORD
- VII. – WITH THE ATHLETICS OF PHILADELPHIA
- VIII. – SOME MINOR DIVERSIONS
- IX. – WE BALL PLAYERS GO ABROAD
- X. – THE ARGONAUTS OF 1874
- XI. – I WIN ONE PRIZE AND OTHERS FOLLOW
- XII. – WITH THE NATIONAL LEAGUE
- XIII. – FROM FOURTH PLACE TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP
- XIV. – THE CHAMPIONS OF THE EARLY '80S
- XV. – WE FALL DOWN AND RISE AGAIN
- XVI. – BALL PLAYERS EACH AND EVERY ONE
- XVII. – WHILE FORTUNE FROWNS AND SMILES
- XVIII. – FROM CHICAGO TO DENVER
- XIX. – FROM DENVER TO SAN FRANCISCO
- XX. – TWO WEEKS IN CALIFORNIA
- XXI. – WE VISIT THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
- XXII. – FROM HONOLULU TO AUSTRALIA
- XXIII. – WITH OUR FRIENDS IN THE ANTIPODES
- XXIV. – BALL PLAYING AND SIGHT-SEEING IN AUSTRALIA
- XXV. – AFLOAT ON THE INDIAN SEA

XXVI. – FROM CEYLON TO EGYPT
XXVII.-IN THE SHADOW OF THE PYRAMIDS
XXVIII.-THE BLUE SKIES OF ITALY
XXIX. – OUR VISIT TO LA BELLE FRANCE
XXX.-THROUGH ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND
XXXI. – "HOME, SWEET HOME"
XXXII.-THE REVOLT OF THE BROTHERHOOD
XXXIII.-MY LAST YEARS ON THE BALL FIELD
XXXIV.-IF THIS BE TREASON, MAKE THE MOST OF IT
XXXV. – HOW MY WINTERS WERE SPENT
XXXVI-WITH THE KNIGHTS OF THE CUE
XXXVII-NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPING
XXXVIII. – L'ENVOI

CHAPTER I. MY BIRTHPLACE AND ANCESTRY.

The town of Marshalltown, the county seat of Marshall County, in the great State of Iowa, is now a handsome and flourishing place of some thirteen or fourteen thousand inhabitants. I have not had time recently to take the census myself, and so I cannot be expected to certify exactly as to how many men, women and children are contained within the corporate limits.

At the time that I first appeared upon the scene, however, the town was in a decidedly embryonic state, and outside of some half-dozen white families that had squatted there it boasted of no inhabitants save Indians of the Pottawattamie tribe, whose wigwams, or tepees, were scattered here and there upon the prairie and along the banks of the river that then, as now, was not navigable for anything much larger than a flat-bottomed scow.

The first log cabin that was erected in Marshalltown was built by my father, Henry Anson, who is still living, a hale and hearty old man, whose only trouble seems to be, according to his own story, that he is getting too fleshy, and that he finds it more difficult to get about than he used to.

He and his father, Warren Anson, his grandfather, Jonathan Anson, and his great-grandfather, Silas Anson, were all born in Dutchess County, New York, and were direct descendants of one of two brothers, who came to this country from England some time in the seventeenth century. They traced their lineage back to William Anson, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn, an eminent barrister in the reign of James I, who purchased the Mansion of Shuzsborough, in the county of Stafford, and, even farther back, to Lord Anson, a high Admiral of the English navy, who was one of the first of that daring band of sailors who circumnavigated the globe and helped to lay the foundation of England's present greatness.

I have said that we were direct descendants of one of two brothers. The other of the original Ansons I am not so proud of, and for this reason: He retained the family name until the Revolutionary war broke out, when he sided with the King and became known as a Tory. Then, not wishing to bear the same name as his, brother, who had espoused the cause of the Colonists, he changed his name

to Austin, and some of his descendants my father has met on more than one occasion in his travels.

My mother's maiden name was Jeanette Rice, and she, like my father, was of English descent, so you can see how little Swedish blood there is in my veins, in spite of the nickname of "the Swede" that was often applied to me during my ball-playing career, and which was, I fancy, given me more because of my light hair and ruddy complexion than because of any Swedish characteristics that I possessed.

Early in life my father emigrated from New York State into the wilds of Michigan, and later, after he was married, and while he was but nineteen years of age, and his wife two years his junior, he started out to find a home in the West, traveling in one of the old-fashioned prairie schooners drawn by horses and making his first stop of any account on the banks of the Cedar River in Iowa. This was in the high-water days of 1851, and as the river overflowed its banks and the waters kept rising higher and higher my father concluded that it was hardly a desirable place near which to locate a home, and hitching up his team he saddled a horse and swam the stream, going on to the westward. He finally homesteaded a tract of land on the site of the present town of Marshalltown, which he laid out, and to which he gave the name that it now bears. This, for a time, was known as "Marshall," it being named after the town of Marshall in Michigan, but when a post-office was applied for it was discovered that there was already a post-office of that same name in the State, and so the word "town" was added, and Marshalltown it became, the names of Anson, Anson town and Ansonville having all been thought of and rejected. Had the name of "Ansonia" occurred at that time to my father's mind, however, I do not think that either Marshall or Marshalltown would have been its title on the map.

It was not so very long after the completion of my father's log cabin, which stood on what is now Marshall-town's main street, that I, the first white child that was born there, came into the world, the exact date of my advent being April 17th, 1852. My brother Sturges Ransome, who is two years my senior, was born at the old home in Michigan, and I had still another brother Melville who died while I was yet a small boy, so at the time of which I write there were three

babies in the house, all of them boys, and I the youngest and most troublesome of the lot.

The first real grief that came into my life was the death of my mother, which occurred when I was but seven years old. I remember her now as a large, fine-looking woman, who weighed something over two hundred pounds, and she stood about five feet ten-and-a-half inches in height. This is about all the recollection that I have of her.

If the statements made by my father and by other of our relatives are to be relied upon, and I see no reason why they should not be, I was a natural-born kicker from the very outset of my career, and of very little account in the world, being bent upon making trouble for others. I had no particularly bad traits that I am aware of, only that I was possessed of an instinctive dislike both to study and work, and I shirked them whenever opportunity offered.

I had a penchant, too, for getting into scrapes, and it was indeed a happy time for my relatives when a whole day passed without my being up to some mischief.

Some of my father's people had arrived on the scene before my mother's death, and, attracting other settlers to the scene, Marshalltown, or Marshall as it was then called, was making rapid strides in growth and importance. The Pottawattomies, always friendly to the whites, were particularly fond of my father and I often remember seeing both the bucks and the squaws at our cabin, though I fancy that they were not so fond of us boys as they might have been, for we used to tease and bother them at every opportunity. Johnny Green was their chief, and Johnny, in spite of his looks, was a pretty decent sort of a fellow, though he was as fond of fire-water as any of them and as Iowa was not a prohibition State in those early days he managed now and then to get hold of a little. "The fights that he fought and the rows that he made" were as a rule confined to his own people.

Speaking of the Indians, I remember one little occurrence in which I was concerned during those early days that impressed itself upon my memory in a very vivid fashion, and even now I am disposed to regard it as no laughing matter, although my father enter-

tains a contrary opinion, but then my father was not in my position, and that, oftentimes, makes all the difference in the world.

The Pottawattamies were to have a war dance at the little town of Marietta, some six or seven miles up the river, and of course we boys were determined to be on hand and take part in the festivities. There were some twelve or fifteen of us in the party and we enjoyed the show immensely, as was but natural. Had we all been content to look on and then go home peacefully there would have been no trouble, but what boys would act in such unboyish fashion? Not the boys of Marshalltown, at any rate. It was just our luck to run up against two drunken Indians riding on a single pony, and someone in the party, I don't know who, hit the pony and started him, to bucking.

Angrier Indians were never seen. With a whoop and a yell that went ringing across the prairies they started after us, and how we did leg it! How far some of the others ran I have no means of knowing but I know that I ran every foot of the way back to Marshalltown, nor did I stop until I was safe, as I thought, in my father's house.

My troubles did not end there, however, for along in the darkest hours of the night I started from sleep and saw those two Indians, one standing at the head and one at the foot of the bed, and each of them armed with a tomahawk. That they had come to kill me I was certain, and that they would succeed in doing so seemed to me equally sure. I tried to scream but I could not. I was as powerless as a baby. I finally managed to move and as I did so I saw them vanish through the open door-way and disappear in the darkness.

There was no sleep for me that night, as you may imagine. I fancied that the entire Pottawattomie tribe had gathered about the house and that they would never be content until they had both killed and scalped me. I just lay there and shivered until the dawn came, and I do not think there was a happier boy in the country than I when the morning finally broke and I convinced myself by the evidence of my own eye-sight that there was not so much as even a single Indian about.

As soon as it was possible I told my father about my two unwelcome visitors, but the old man only laughed and declared that I had

been dreaming. It was just possible that I had, but I do not believe it. I saw those two Indians as they stood at the head and foot of my bed just as plainly as I ever saw a base-ball, and I have had my eye on the ball a good many times since I first began to play the game. I saw both their painted faces and the tomahawks that they held in their sinewy hands. More than that, I heard them as well as saw them when they went out.

That is the reason why I insist that I was not dreaming. I deny the allegation and defy the alligator!

There were two Indians in my room that night. What they were there for I don't know, and at this late day I don't care, but they were there, and I know it. I shall insist that they were there to my dying day, and they were there!

CHAPTER II. BOYHOOD DAYS AND MEMORIES.

What's in a name? Not much, to be sure, in many of them, but in mine a good deal, for I represent two Michigan towns and two Roman Emperors, Adrian and Constantine. My father had evidently not outgrown his liking for Michigan when I came into the world, and as he was familiar with both Adrian and Constantine and had many friends in both places he concluded to keep them fresh in his memory by naming me after them.

I don't think he gave much consideration to the noble old Romans at that time. In fact, I am inclined to believe that he did not think of them at all, but nevertheless Adrian Constantine I was christened, and it was as Adrian Constantine Anson that my name was first entered upon the roll of the little school at Marshalltown.

I was then in my "smart" years, and what I didn't know about books would have filled a very large library, and I hadn't the slightest desire to know any more. In my youthful mind book-knowledge cut but a small, a very small, figure, and the school house itself was as bad if not worse than the county jail.

The idea of my being cooped up between four walls when the sunbeams were dancing among the leaves outside and the bees

were humming among the blossoms, seemed to me the acme of cruelty, and every day that I spent bending over a desk represented to my mind just so many wasted hours and opportunities. I longed through all the weary hours to be running out barefoot on the prairies; to be playing soak-ball, bull pen or two old cat, on one of the vacant lots, or else to be splashing about like a big Newfoundland dog in the cool waters of Lynn Creek.

About that time my father had considerable business to attend to in Chicago and was absent from home for days and weeks at a time. You know the old adage, "When the cat's away," etc.? Well, mouse-like, that was the time in which I played my hardest. I played hooky day after day, and though I was often punished for doing so it had but little effect. Run away from school I would, and run away from school I did until even the old man became disgusted with the idea of trying to make a scholar of me.

Sport of any kind, and particularly sport of an outdoor variety, had for me more attractions than the best book that was ever published. The game of base-ball was then in its infancy and while it was being played to some extent to the eastward of us the craze had not as yet reached Marshalltown. It arrived there later and it struck the town with both feet, too, when it did come.

"Soak Ball" was at this time my favorite sport. It was a game in which the batter was put out while running the bases by being hit with the ball; hence the name. The ball used was a comparatively soft one, yet hard enough to hurt when hurled by a powerful arm, as many of the old-timers as well as myself can testify. It was a good exercise, however, for arms, legs and eyes, and many of the ball players who acquired fame in the early seventies can lay the fact that they did so to the experience and training that this rough game gave to them.

So disgusted did my father finally become with the progress of my education at Marshalltown that he determined upon sending me to the State University at Iowa City. I was unable to pass the examination there the first time that I tried it, but later I succeeded and the old man fondly imagined that I was at last on the high road to wealth, at least so far as book-knowledge would carry me.

But, alas, for his hopes in that direction! I was not a whit better as a student at Iowa City than I had been at home. I was as wild as a mustang and as tough as a pine knot, and the scrapes that I managed to get into were too numerous to mention. The State University finally became too small to hold me and the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, then noted as being one of the strictest schools in the country, was selected as being the proper place for "breaking me into harness," providing that the said "breaking in" performance could be successfully accomplished anywhere.

To Notre Dame I went and if I acquired any honors in the way of scholarships during the brief time that I was there I have never heard of them. Foot-ball, base-ball and fancy skating engrossed the most of my attention, and in all of these branches of sport I attained at least a college reputation. As a fancy skater I excelled, and there were few boys of my age anywhere in the country that could beat me in that line.

The base-ball team that represented Notre Dame at that time was the Juanitas, and of this organization I was a member, playing second base. The bright particular star of this club was my brother Sturgis, who played the center field position. Had he remained in the business he would certainly have made his mark in the profession, but unfortunately he strained his arm one day while playing and was obliged to quit the diamond. He is now a successful business man in the old town and properly thankful that a fate that then seemed most unkind kept him from becoming a professional ball player.

Looking back over my youthful experiences I marvel that I have ever lived to relate them, and that I did not receive at least a hundred thrashings for every one that was given me. I know now that I fully deserved all that I received, and more, too. My father was certainly in those days a most patient man. I have recorded the fact elsewhere that I was as averse to work as I was to study, and I had a way of avoiding it at times that was peculiarly my own.

While I was still a boy in Marshalltown and before I had graduated (?) from either the State University or the college of Notre Dame, my father kept a hotel known as the Anson House. The old gentleman was at that tune the possessor of a silver watch, and to own

that watch was the height of my ambition. Time and again I begged him to give it to me, but he had turned a deaf ear to my importunities.

In the back yard of the hotel one day when I had been begging him for the gift harder than usual, there stood a huge pile of wood that needed splitting, and looking at this he remarked, that I could earn the watch if I chose by doing the task. He was about to take a journey at the time and I asked him if he really meant it. He replied that he did, and started away.

I don't think he had any more idea of my doing the task than he had of my flying. I had some ideas of my own on the subject, however, and he was scarcely out of sight before I began to put them into execution. The larder of the hotel was well stocked, and cookies and doughnuts were as good a currency as gold and silver among boys of my acquaintance. This being the case it dawned upon my mind that I could sublet the contract, a plan than I was not long in putting into practice.

Many hands make quick work, and it was not long before I had a little army of boys at work demolishing that wood pile. The chunks that were too big and hard to split we placed on the bottom, then placed the split wood over them. The task was accomplished long before the old gentleman's return, and when on the night of his arrival I took him out and showed him that such was the case he looked a bit astonished. He handed over the watch, though, and for some days afterwards as I strutted about town with it in my pocket I fancied it was as big as the town clock and wondered that everybody that I met in my travels did not stop to ask me the time of day.

It was some time afterwards that my father discovered that the job had been shirked by me, and paid for with the cakes and cookies taken from his own larder, but it was then too late to say anything and I guess, if the truth were known, he chuckled to himself over the manner in which lie had been outwitted.

The old gentleman seldom became very angry with me, no matter what sort of a scrape I might have gotten into, and the only time that he really gave me a good dressing down that I remember was when I had traded during his absence from home his prize gun for a Llewellyn setter. When he returned and found what I had done he

was as mad as a hornet, but quieted down after I had told him that he had better go hunting with her before making so much fuss. This he did and was so pleased with the dog's behavior that he forgave me for the trick that I had played him. That the dog was worth more than the gun, the sequel proved.

A man by the name of Dwight who lived down in the bottoms had given his boy instructions to kill a black-and-tan dog if he found it in the vicinity of his sheep. The lad, who did not know one dog from another, killed the setter and then the old gentleman boiled over again. He demanded pay for the dog, which was refused. Then he sued, and a jury awarded him damages to the amount of two hundred dollars, all of which goes to prove that I was even then a pretty good judge of dogs, although I had not been blessed with a bench show experience.

I may state right here that my father and I were more like a couple of chums at school together than like father and son. We fished together, shot together, played ball together, poker together and I regret to say that we fought together. In the early days I got rather the worst of these arguments, but later on I managed to hold my own and sometimes to get even a shade the better of it.

The old gentleman was an athlete of no mean ability. He was a crack shot, a good ball player and a man that could play a game of billiards that in those days was regarded as something wonderful for an amateur. My love of sport, therefore, came to me naturally. I inherited it, and if I have excelled in any particular branch it is because of my father's teachings. He was a square sport, and one that had no use for anything that savored of crookedness. There was nothing whatever of the Puritan in his makeup, and from my early youth he allowed me to participate in any sort of game that took my fancy. He had no idea at that time of my ever becoming a professional. Neither had I. There were but few professional sports outside of the gamblers, and even these few led a most precarious existence.

I was quite an expert at billiards long before I was ever heard of as a ball player. There was a billiard table in the old Anson House and it was upon that that I practiced when I was scarcely large enough to handle a cue. It was rather a primitive piece of furniture,

but it answered the purpose for which it had been designed. It was one of the old six pocket affairs, with a bass-wood bed instead of slate, and the balls sometimes went wabbling over it very much the same fashion as eggs would roll if pushed about on a kitchen table with a broomstick. In spite of having to use such poor tools I soon became quite proficient at the game and many a poor drummer was taken into camp by the long, gawky country lad at Marshalltown, whose backers were always looking about for a chance to make some easy money.

Next to base-ball, billiards was at that time my favorite sport and there was not an hour in the day that I was not willing to leave anything that I might be engaged upon to take a hand in either one of these games.

When it came to weeding a garden or hoeing a field of corn I was not to be relied upon, but at laying out a ball ground I was a whole team. The public square at Marshalltown, the land for which had been donated, by my father, struck me as being an ideal place to play ball in. There were too many trees growing there, however, to make it available for the purpose. I had made up my mind to turn it into a ball ground in spite of this, and shouldering an ax one fine morning I started in.

How long it took me to accomplish the purpose I had in view I have forgotten, but I know that I succeeded finely in getting the timber all out of the way. It was hard work, but you see the base-ball fever was on me and that treeless park for many a long day after was a spot that I took great pride in.

At the present time it is shaded by stately elms, while, almost in the center of its velvet lawn, flanked by cannon, stands a handsome stone courthouse that is the pride of Marshall County.

Then it was ankle deep in meadow grass and surrounded by a low picket fence over which the ball was often batted, both by members of the home team and by their visitors from abroad.

Many a broken window in Main Street the Anson family were responsible for in those days, but as all the owners of stores on that thoroughfare in the immediate vicinity of the grounds were base-