

ART HOLLAND, JR..

Arthur S. "Dutch" Holland was born on August 24, 1917, to Arthur M. and Clara (Beyer) Holland, in Norway, Iowa. Art, Senior, nicknamed "Pal", played on town teams over many years, at least since 1910, with players like Ralph Buchanan and Oscar Pickart, and had passed hiacumen down to his namesake.

During the fall of 1934, Art was one of the high school's top pitchers on a team that included Lyle Kimm, Melvin Primrose, and Everett Frimml. Under Coach Wesley Daniels, Holland and the Tigers won the 1935 Benton County Tournament with a 3-1 victory over Keystone at Garrison, and qualified for the district tournament at Central City. Norway, however, lost to Maquoketa 9-7 in the final.

Art graduated from Norway High School in 1935, and after some time in the railroad business, became the second player from the town to play professional baseball. In 1939, the twenty-one year old signed as a catcher with the Mitchell *Kernels* of the Class 'D' Western League. Though he hit a pedestrian .243 that year, he committed only nineteen errors in 789 chances in the field. That brilliant fielding found him a spot on the Sioux City *Soos* for the 1940 campaign. With the *Soos* (the team moved to back to Mitchell in July of that year), his batting average improved to .254 and his fielding average swelled to .992. In short, through 107 games, Holland committed a mere six errors at what is, arguably, the most difficult position in sport.

The brilliant play garnered Holland a slot on the 1941 roster of the Cheyenne *Indians*, managed by former American League infielder John Kerr. Now twenty three years old, he was at a critical evaluation point as a 'prospect', but Holland appeared in only forty eight games that season, and his batting average slid to .224. Baseball, however, became a memory when the nation went to war the next year. Art enlisted in the Army in 1941.

Art was one of five Holland brothers from Norway to serve in World War II, along with Cyril, Leon, Creighton and Blaine, and the railroad that employed his father 'Pal', the Chicago and North Western Railroad, took out an advertisement in the Benton County newspaper praising the family's sacrifice. It began, "On a 5 ½ mile stretch of cable track, just outside Norway, Iowa, Section Foreman Arthur M. "Pal" Holland keeps himself and his crew busy.", and then went on to list the brothers by name and service, and to acknowledge their collective contribution to the nation. Certainly other families sent many of their sons (and daughters) off to war, but the Holland five gave the community of Norway just one more reason to buy war bonds.

After training in El Paso, Texas, Holland was assigned to an anti-aircraft artillery unit, the 128th AAA Gun Battalion, and then sent to Europe. There he saw a good deal of action, and was later awarded the Purple Heart for wounds sustained in combat.

While in training in El Paso, he and then-fiancée Mary Shimek (a later inductee into the Iowa Softball Hall of Fame) had slipped across the border, to Juarez, Mexico, to be married. Eldest daughter, Penny, was born while Art was serving in the Army, and their family ultimately grew to six, including another daughter, Lynn, and two sons, Tom and Doug.

After the war, Holland returned to Cedar Rapids and took a job at Wilson Meatpacking, and also played with, and coached, the company's team in the Manufacturers-and-Jobbers league. Throughout the '50s and '60s, Art also umpired a number of games in both Norway and Watkins, and in 1970 and 1971 he (assisted by Hal Trosky) managed the Cedar Rapids Legion team to the Iowa state championship and a spot in the national Legion tournament.

Art Holland was considered a good man by almost everyone who knew him. He was a wonderful family man and father, and very well regarded by his friends and neighbors. Those that played baseball with him universally agree on something else: he was tough. In one game, Holland was behind the plate for Norway and Walford's Obed Lee tried to score from second base on a line drive to left field. Lee rounded third and, as the ball sailed in

to Art, who had blocked the plate perfectly, saw that he was almost certainly out at home. He put up his arms to cushion himself during the inevitable collision.

The crash knocked out one of Art's teeth, but Lee was out and Holland, despite the blood, remained in the game. As an unusual afterward to the story, a little over a week later, Lee – now working on the Tow family farm – complained at dinner one night of a sore on his arm that wouldn't heal. He kept picking at the contusion, and at one point gave it a squeeze. Out popped a fragment of Art Holland's missing tooth. The tooth had shattered as it popped out. Yes, Art Holland was one tough ballplayer.

In 1980, Holland retired from Wilson, and he and Mary joined daughter Penny and her family in retirement in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. There, on June 15, 1987, Art passed away.