



# Gateway to the Majors: Williamsport and Minor League Baseball (Keystone Books®)

*James P. Quigel, Louis E. Hunsinger*

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Although many people know Williamsport, Pennsylvania, as the "birthplace of Little League Baseball," it is a city with a rich professional baseball tradition. Since the earliest days of the Pennsylvania State Association in the nineteenth century, professional minor league baseball has flourished in Williamsport, and over the years hundreds of players and managers have passed through historic Bowman Field on their way to the major leagues, including Jim Bunning, Ferguson Jenkins, and Nolan Ryan. *Gateway to the Majors* is a comprehensive history of professional minor league baseball in Williamsport from the earliest days up until the present.

This book breaks new ground by weaving in social history and collective biography to capture the essence of the minor league experience in one city. Drawing upon local Williamsport newspapers, extensive oral histories of former players, baseball administrators, boosters and fans, rare photograph collections, and primary source material from the Baseball Hall of Fame Library and Archives, *Gateway to the Majors* reconstructs the totality of the professional baseball experience.

Beyond chronicling the seasons, this book sheds light on the contributions of Williamsport native Tommy Richardson as a pioneering minor league administrator and promoter of the game. The accompanying appendix of former Williamsport players who played in the Major Leagues is a valuable reference tool for baseball historians. This book also illustrates how the city's relationship with baseball forged a distinct civic identity and national reputation as "Baseball Town, USA."

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