

William Davitte Calhoun (1890-1955) / Robert Parker Garner (1914-1978)

William Davitte Calhoun was born in Rockmart on June 23, 1890 to parents William Alexander Calhoun and Sara Endora Davitte Calhoun. At twenty-two years of age after attending Georgia Tech, Calhoun entered the Major Leagues as a pitcher for the Boston Braves. The lanky, 6 feet, 180-pound, left-handed player debuted with the team on April 24, 1913, a long way from his hometown in northwest Georgia. Teammates called the young Calhoun, "Mary". His baseball career was cut short by injury suffered in the first year.

The Boston Braves originated in Boston in 1871. The team's playing tenure ended there in 1952 with a move to Milwaukee and the rebrand as the Milwaukee Braves. Playing their last season in Milwaukee in 1965, the Braves opened in the Fulton County Stadium as the Atlanta Braves in 1966. The move made Atlanta the home of the first major league professional sports team to call the Deep South home.

William Davitte Calhoun lived his adult life away from Rockmart. He died in Sandersville, GA in 1955 at the age of sixty-five, a couple of years after his former team began play in Milwaukee. Calhoun did not live to see the team's move to Atlanta, a mere fifty miles from the quiet town of his youth and the location of his final resting place in Rose Hill Cemetery. Calhoun is buried along side his parents, an infant brother and an infant sister.

Another Rockmart man who made a name for himself playing baseball was **Robert Parker Garner**, also buried here in Rose Hill Cemetery. A generation after Calhoun played for the Braves, Parker was part of team play during spring training with the Major League team, the Washington Senators. However, he failed to appear in regular season play with the team. The Senators later became the Minnesota Twins.

The right-handed Parker distinguished himself playing in the minor leagues as a pitcher and outfielder. Unusual for a baseball player was his height. He towered over other players at 6 feet seven inches tall. He played on farm teams in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Nashville, Tennessee; Trenton, New Jersey; Salisbury, Maryland; Charlotte, North Carolina and even Puerto Rico.

Robert Parker Garner also played in the Northwest Georgia Textile League. Later he made his living as a house painter continuing to live in the Rockmart area. He died at age sixty-four in 1978 and is buried beside his wife in Rose Hill Cemetery.

We honor the sporting achievements of William David Calhoun and Robert Parker Garner, Rockmart natives, as the city marks 150 years.

Sources: William Davitte Calhoun
Findagrave.com
Wikipedia.org

Robert Parker Garner
Family Scrapbook on loan to Rockmart History Museum
Rockmart Journal, article by Doug Hawley, date unkn

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William Davitte Calhoun c. 1913