

A. MARTIN, 88, DIES; NOTED IN BASEBALL

Was First Pitcher to Hurl the
Slow Curved Ball, Which
He Developed in '60s.

WOUNDED IN CIVIL WAR

Became a Hero of the Game in
1871 While Playing With the
Old Mutual Team Here.

Alphonse Martin, the first pitcher to hurl the slow curve ball, which he developed while he was in the Union Army during the Civil War, died Saturday at his home, 188-20 Palo Alto Avenue, Hollis, Queens. He was 88 years old.

Just prior to the Civil War, when feeling was running high between the North and South, Mr. Martin joined a schoolboy baseball team known as the Unions. When the war broke out he enlisted with Hawkins's Zouaves, Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteers. He was wounded in fighting at Antietam, but was not discharged from the army until after the war, when he began pitching for amateur teams, including the then famous Empire Club of New York.

When professional baseball was started about 1869 Mr. Martin became a member of the famous Mutuals of New York. At that time he was known as Phoney Ball Martin, and after playing with the Mutuals for several seasons he became a member of the Eckfords of Brooklyn.

He returned to the Mutuals in 1871 to become the baseball hero of the day in New York. After that he pitched for the Troy Club for several seasons and then retired.

In 1909 Will Irwin, describing one of the Civil War games in Collier's Weekly, stated:

"On Roanoke Island, Hawkins' Zouaves formed two scrub teams. A young volunteer pitcher won for his side by a weak, puzzling delivery which baffled the batsmen. It was Alphonse Martin, first in line of great American pitchers."

For the last fifteen years Mr. Martin had been residing in Hollis. Surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Estelle Philips, with whom he lived; a son, Alphonse Martin, and two grandchildren, Walter and Wilbur Philips, all of Hollis.