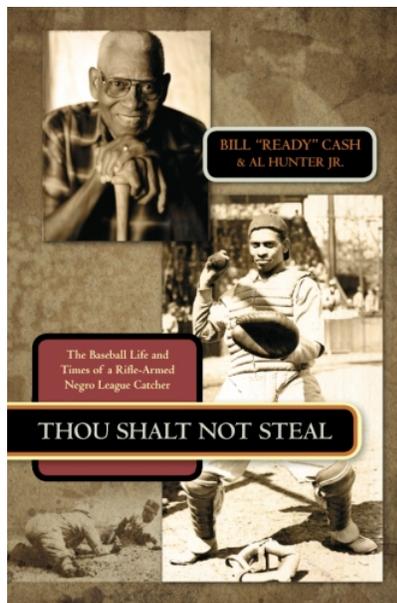


# THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

THE BASEBALL LIFE AND TIMES OF A RIFLE-ARMED NEGRO LEAGUE CATCHER



**By Bill 'Ready' Cash  
and Al Hunter Jr.**

Hailed as "one of the best (Negro League) autobiographies written," *Thou Shalt Not Steal: The Baseball Life and Times of a Rifle-Armed Negro League Catcher* (Love Eagle Books) tells the intriguing story of Bill "Ready" Cash, the standout catcher for the Negro League's Philadelphia Stars from 1943 to 1950. Bill had a powerful arm, a potent bat, and knowledge of the game that would embarrass today's major leaguers.

In his award-winning book Cash, a two-time Negro League All-Star, shares compelling stories about growing up in Philadelphia and later facing the likes of Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige, and Henry Aaron. He vividly recalls his successful playing days in Mexico, the Caribbean, South America and Canada, and how a run-in with a white umpire in 1946 may have squashed his chances to make it to the majors.

Co-author Al Hunter Jr. deftly weaves extensive interviews with Cash into the historical context of the 20th

century, when Blacks struggled for acceptance not only on the ball field, but in America society as well.

Cash was 92 when he died in September 2011, three months before his book was published. But he left an indelible legacy; *Thou Shalt Not Steal* is about baseball and American history, love and loyalty, struggle and success.

**Praise for  
THOU SHALT NOT STEAL  
2012 Winner, Robert Peterson  
Recognition Award, SABR's  
Negro Leagues Committee**

"One of the best autobiographies written" -- Larry Lester, chairman of the Society for American Baseball Research, Negro Leagues Committee

"A moving memoir of a Negro League all-star, recommended." -- Midwest Book Review

"*Thou Shalt Not Steal* stands out from other athlete biographies, as it feels like you are sitting on the couch next to Cash as he reels you in with the details of his life and career, while neither bragging nor complaining." -- Nick Diunte, Examiner.com

"Hunter has written a tremendous book on Cash." -- Donald Hunt, The Philadelphia Tribune

... (A) fast-paced narrative of a gifted baseball talent, as well as a hard-working blue collar devoted husband and family man." -- Reid Champagne, Wilmington (Del.) News Journal

"Truly an enjoyable, informative read."--

Judge's comment, Writer's Digest 20th Annual Self-Published Book Awards

## The Authors



Al Hunter Jr. of West Philadelphia spent nearly 30 years as an award-winning journalist.



Bill 'Ready' Cash, a Negro League All-Star who lived in Elmwood and West Philadelphia, was always ready to play ball.

*Thou Shalt Not Steal:*  
The Baseball Life and  
Times of a Rifle-Armed  
Negro League Catcher



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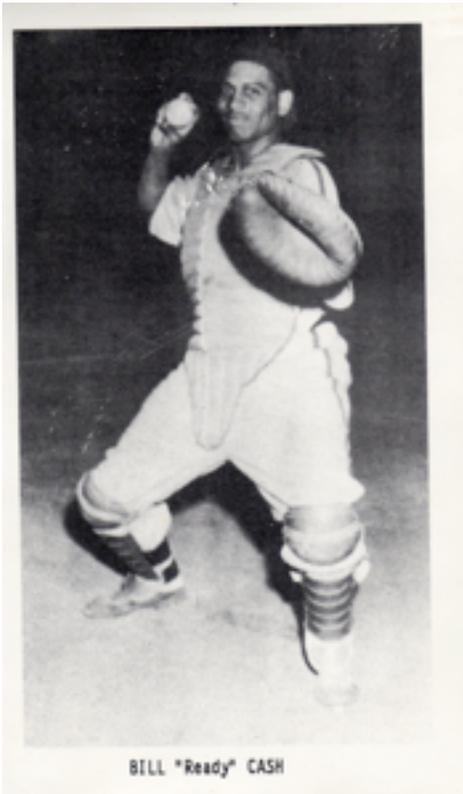
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## Author Biography



**William Walker "Ready" Cash Sr.**, born February 21, 1919, in Round Oak, Georgia, was a powerhouse catcher for the Philadelphia Stars of the Negro Leagues from 1943 to 1950. He also played in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Venezuela, and Canada.

When Bill came to Philadelphia with his mother and brothers to join his father in 1924, they were southern ragamuffins escaping a dismal farming life in Georgia. Poor and new to the city, the Cashes ate white potatoes and ribs and dug up wooden railroad ties to burn for heat. But soon young Bill and his brothers discovered baseball, and playing with cobbled bats and balls wrapped with packing tape, they challenged all comers in Elmwood, their diverse neighborhood.

Baseball became Bill's passion. Nicknamed "Ready" because he was always ready to play ball, Bill dropped out of Ovebrook High School to work and help the family. In 1943 he joined the Stars and played for them for seven years -- going against the likes of Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige, Larry Doby, and Roy Campanella. He built a reputation as one of the league's best catchers and was named to the prestigious East-West All-Star Team in 1948 and 1949. "If I could catch, hit and throw like you," white catcher Clint "Scrap Iron" Courtney once told Bill, "I'd be the greatest thing the

American League ever had."

But Bill's chances to make it to the majors was stymied, some say, by a controversial play in 1946 where he accidentally clipped a white umpire. And Bill believes he was blackballed by the Chicago White Sox organization after he refused to cooperate with them. He didn't take kindly to liars.

Bill's talents were also displayed in other countries including Cuba (Almendares, Marianao), the Dominican Republic (Licey, Santiago), Mexico (Mexico City, Culiacan, Obregon, Hermosillo) Venezuela (Vargas), Canada (Granby, Brandon-Manitoba), and remote parts of the United States in the 1940s and '50s. During his travels, Bill faced racism: he couldn't eat in certain restaurants, or sleep in the same hotel as his white roommates - even though he was the team's best player.

Bill, who also participated in the 1960s civil rights movement, was the father of three children, Bill Jr., Janet (deceased), and Michael. He is enshrined in three local halls of fame. Bill was a Shriner, a member of the First African Baptist Church of Darby Township, Pa., and 33<sup>rd</sup>-degree Prince Hall Mason. He was married for 63 years to Sadie, who passed in 2003.

Sadly, Bill did not live to see his autobiography published. He died September 12, 2011, just three months before his book came out.

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## Author Biography

**Al Hunter Jr.** spent nearly thirty years in the newspaper business as an award-winning reporter, editor, jazz columnist, and editorial writer.



In his seventeen years at the *Philadelphia Daily News*, the city's feisty tabloid, Al spent a decade covering the music industry, specifically jazz and R&B. In 2004, he joined the editorial board, where he shaped public opinion on issues such as education, violence, and the arts. He left the *Daily News* in September 2008, convinced that God had other plans for him. He is currently enrolled in the master of education program with certification at Cabrini College in Radnor, Pa.

Al met Bill "Ready" Cash in 1996 and spent hundreds of hours interviewing him -- mostly at his and Sadie's dining room table in West Philadelphia -- and attended many of his Negro League functions and personal appearances.

Al received his Bachelor of Arts in journalism in 1980 from Shippensburg State College and worked at newspapers in Indiana and Delaware before joining the *Daily News* as night city editor in 1991. In 1996, Al moved to the features department and covered the city's jazz and R&B scene.

Al has made numerous presentations to children and community groups about journalism. For several years he served as a judge on the Philadelphia region's Ronald McDonald House Charities/African American Future Achievers scholarship panel. He was an instructor at the *Daily News'* Urban Journalism Workshop, where high school students learn how to report, write and publish a newspaper. He was an adjunct professor of journalism at Temple University and an instructor at the Dell East Music Business Institute.

Al has held several leadership positions with the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, including president from 1997 to 2001. A flutist, he has taught and volunteered in the music department at the KIPP Philadelphia School in North Philadelphia.

Al was editorial consultant for Grammy-award winning singer Dionne Warwick's autobiography, *My Life, as I See It*, written with David Freeman Wooley. Al's work has appeared in *Down Beat* and *Heart & Soul* magazines. He has written CD liner notes for the Prestige jazz label, Reika Records, and Four String Records. In 1999, he won first place in the Keystone Press Awards for a selection of his work with the *Daily News*. In 2004, he was presented with the Visions in Jazz Visionary Award for his writing, and in 2005 was inducted into the Chris' Jazz Café Hall of Fame. He is host of *Del Val Now*, a public affairs television program on the Tredyffrin Township (Pa.) public access cable system.

A voracious reader, music lover, and sports fan, Al lives in West Philadelphia.