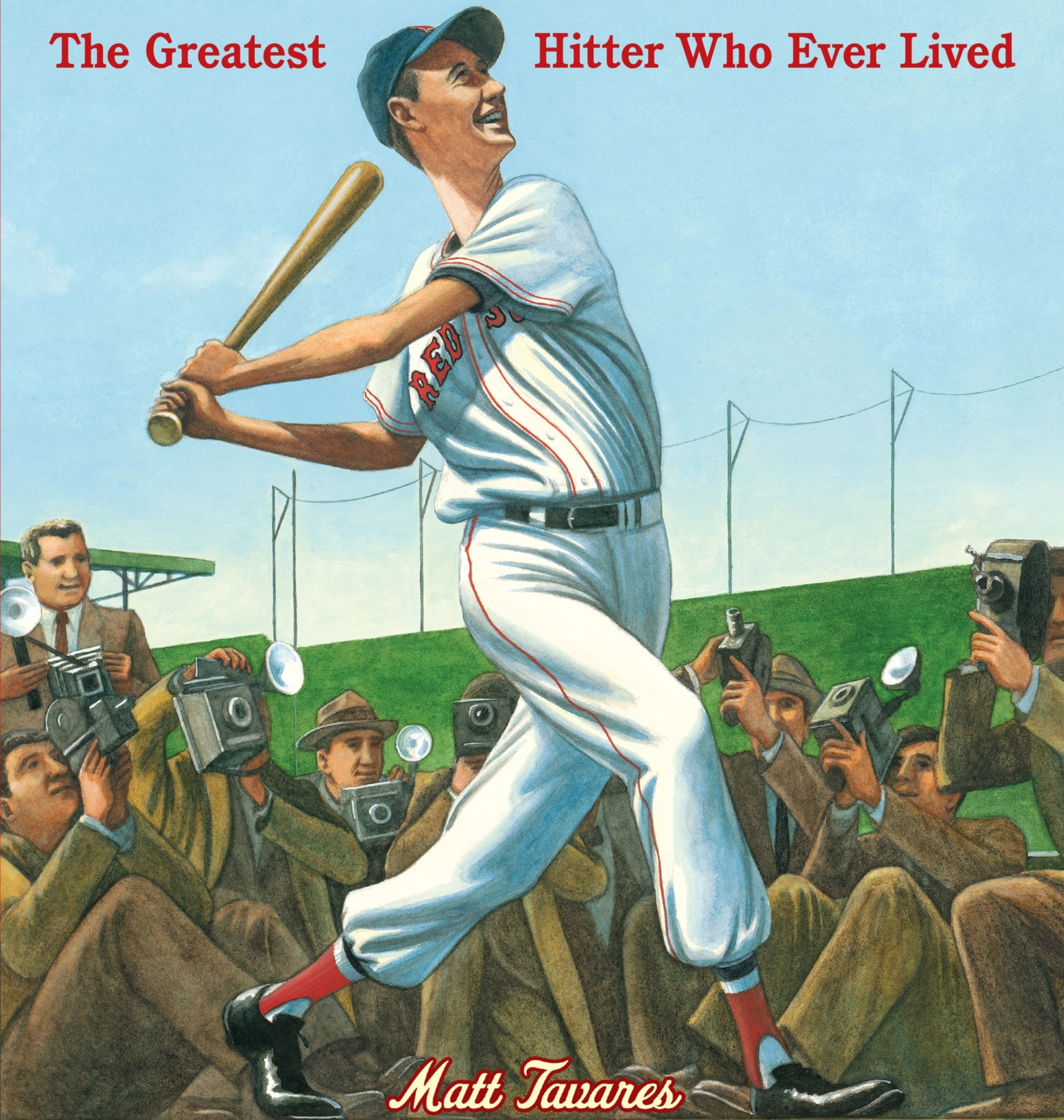


THERE GOES TED WILLIAMS

The Greatest

Hitter Who Ever Lived

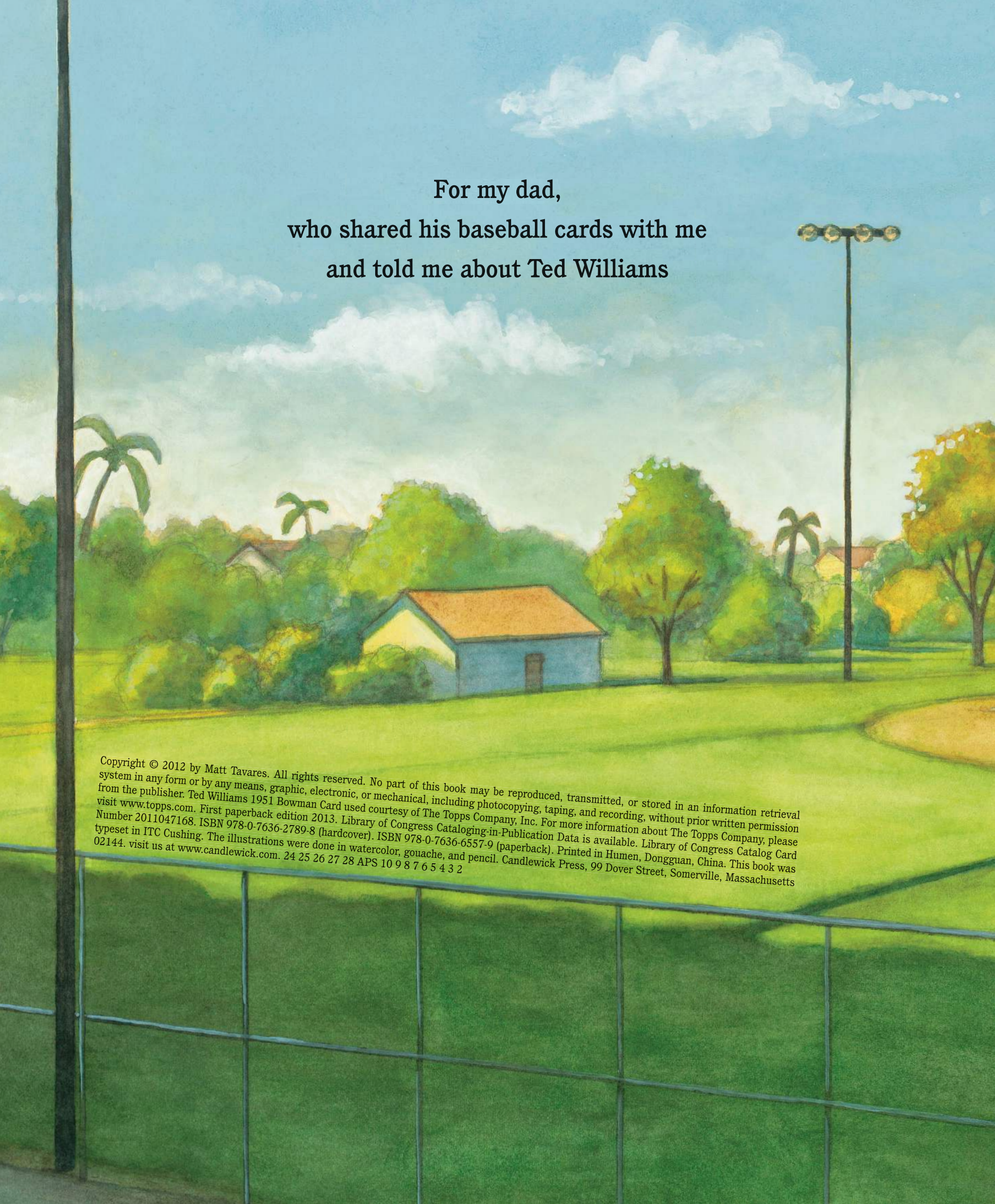


Matt Tavares

A man has to have goals—for a day, for a lifetime—
and that was mine, to have people say, “There goes
Ted Williams, the greatest hitter who ever lived.”

—Ted Williams



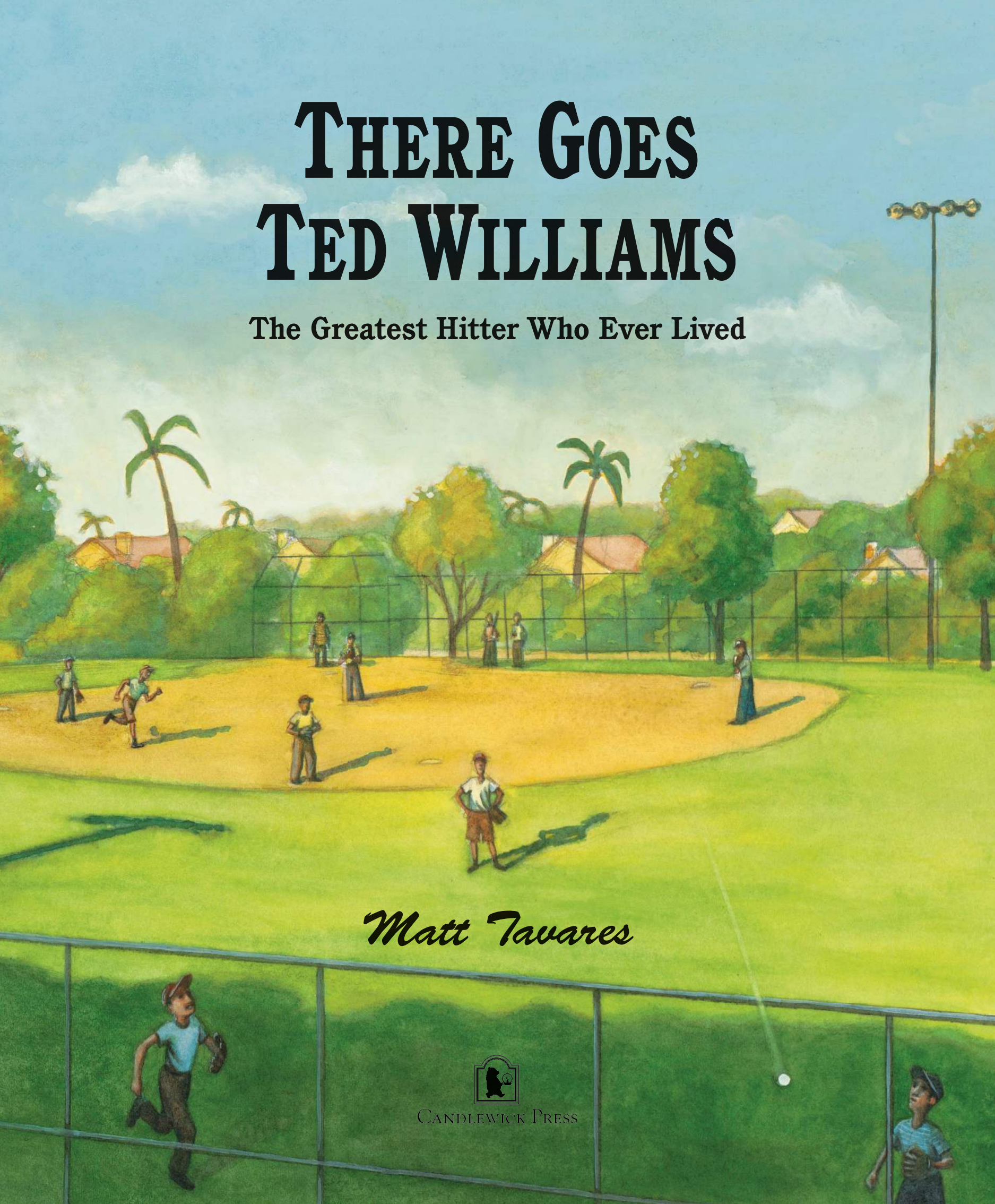


For my dad,
who shared his baseball cards with me
and told me about Ted Williams

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THERE GOES TED WILLIAMS

The Greatest Hitter Who Ever Lived



Matt Tavares



CANDLEWICK PRESS

The lights turn on
at the North Park playground
in San Diego, California.
The other kids leave.
They need to be home in time for dinner.
They have to go do their homework.

But not Ted Williams.
Ted Williams can stay out
as late as he wants.

All by himself, he practices his swing.
Two on, two out, last of the ninth,
he says to himself,
down three to one, two balls, two strikes,
and here's the pitch . . .

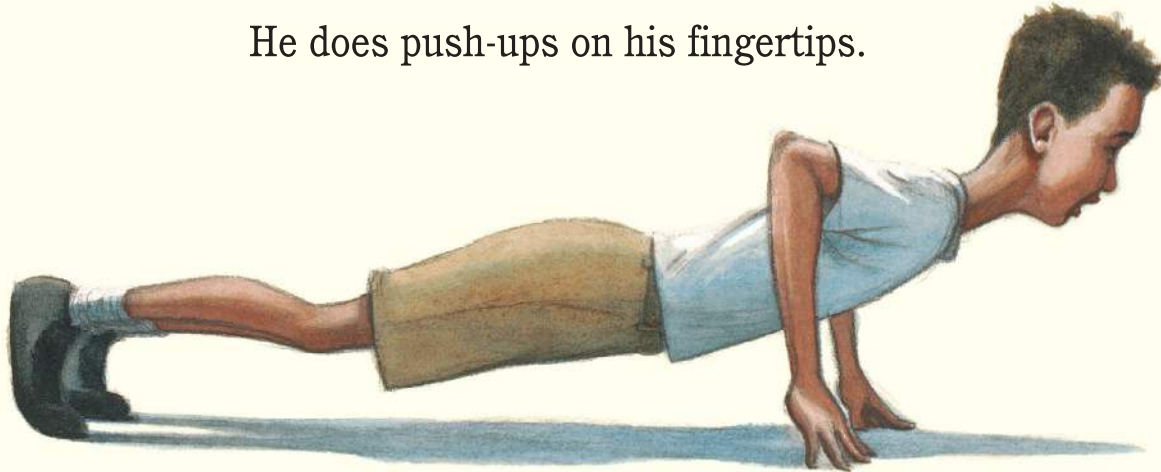
HOME RUN!

Every time.

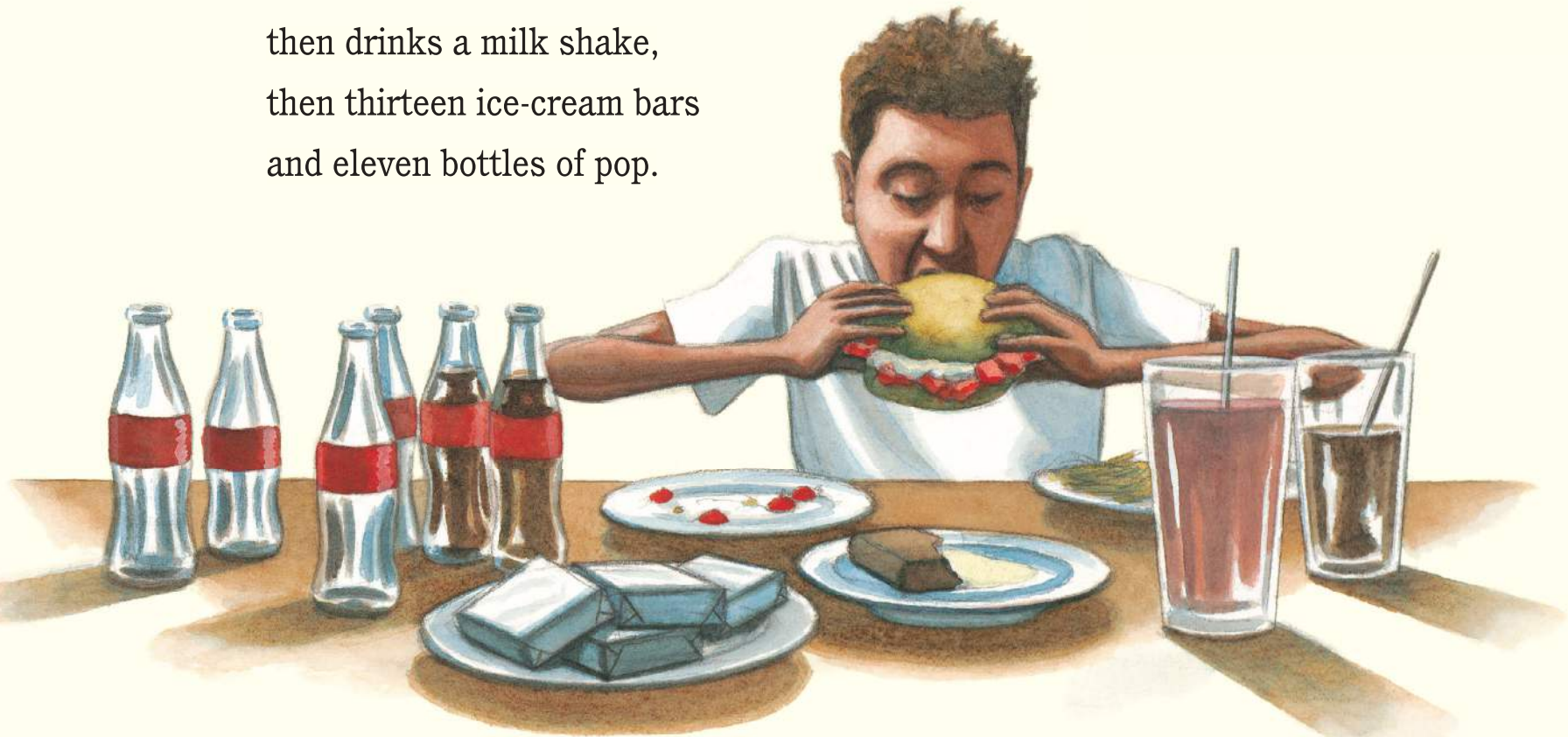


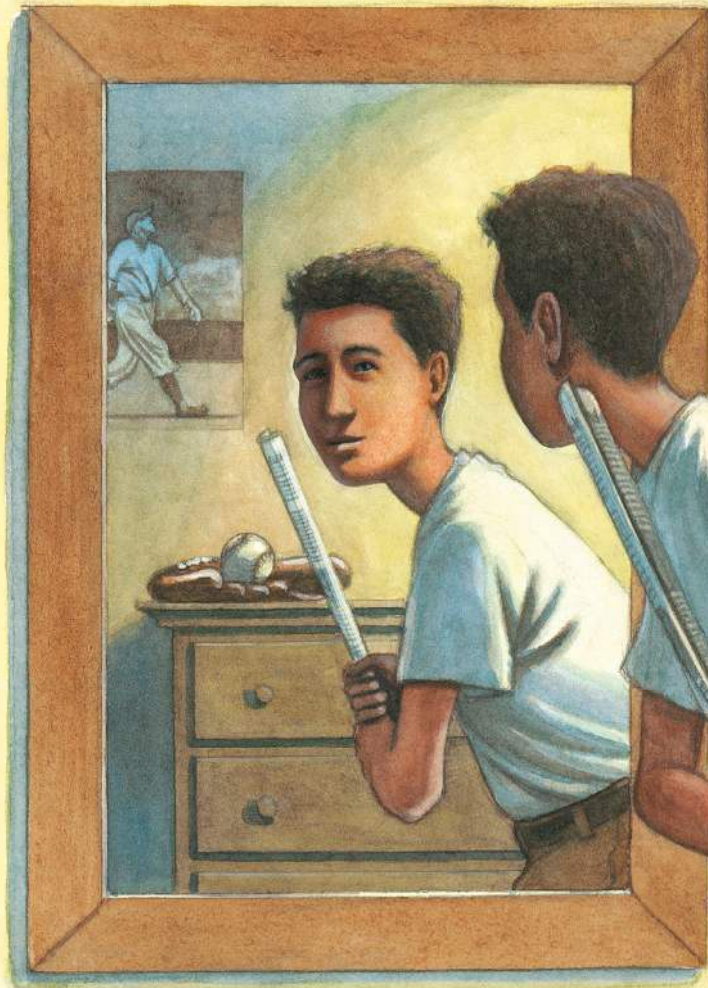
Ted Williams wishes he wasn't so skinny.
He hates when the kids at the playground
call him Bird Legs.

He does push-ups every day.
First twenty a day, then thirty, forty,
fifty, one hundred.
He does push-ups on his fingertips.



He eats and eats and eats,
trying to gain weight.
One afternoon he eats a shortcake,
then drinks a milk shake,
then thirteen ice-cream bars
and eleven bottles of pop.





As he gets older,
he keeps practicing.
He is always swinging something—
a bat, or a stick, or a pillow,
or a rolled-up newspaper.
He watches his swing in the mirror,
again and again and again.
Two on, two out, last of the ninth . . .